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Three allegorical novels of Mari Sandoz: Slogum House, Capital City and the Tom-Walker

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THREE ALLEGORICAL NOVELS OF MARI SANDOZ: SLOGUM HOUSE, CAPITAL CITY, AND THE TOM-WALKER

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Chapter I

Introduction

"The whole allegorical aspect of my fiction . . . has been almost entirely neglected," Mari Sandoz complained to one of her editors.[1] And in 1965, only a year before her death, she expressed the wish to another editor that her "three allegorical novels might be published together" and enclosed "a sort of discussion of the three books--and their interrelationships." Sandoz apologized for this explanatory material, saying, "I was too sick when I wrote it."[2] This document she entitled, "Slogum House, Capital City, The Tom-Walker: The Three Allegorical Novels by Mari Sandoz (rising out of her concern about the contemporary world)" (S to A). It contains a clear, if brief, statement of her allegorical intent in these novels.

Northrop Frye, in his Anatomy of Criticism, states: "We have actual allegory when a /writer/ explicitly indicates the relationship of /her/ images to examples and precepts, and so tries to indicate how a commentary on /her/ should proceed. A writer is being allegorical whenever it is clear that /she/ is saying 'by this I also (allos) mean that.'"[3] In her "sort of discussion" Sandoz says her narratives in each of her allegories also mean something else. Slogum House "is an allegorical study of any will-to-power nation," based on "the story of a ruthless will-to-power woman" (S to A). Capital City represents "the organized society of any region, country or planet selling itself out to the haters and extra-legal forces of armed men," so that the "threats within an organized

society" (as opposed to the more open frontier society) might be explored (S to A). The Tom-Walker is "a study of the neurotic and psychopathic aspects of post-war society," relating the experiences of three veterans from three wars, "each man's injury /symbolizing/ the war damage to his society" (S to A).

Each of the three allegories is concerned with an aspect of fascist or totalitarian behavior and the accompanying disintegration of individual freedom. Together they present three stages of disintegration. In Slogum House, the state of fluid land titles has made aggressive control of the community possible for a single character, Gulla Slogum, much as a single nation could take over a world in flux. The money made from the rising value of land in Capital City, without a corresponding interest in increasing the means of production and employment, leads to a parasitic situation in which the city feeds off the state to the projected doom of both in a totalitarian take-over of state government. A nation could be taken over in a similar way by a parasitic corruption of society on all levels. Finally, The Tom-Walker reflects the continued complication of society and government in America as it moves toward disaster. The country yearns for the escapist excitement of the war years and seems oblivious, even with the knowledge of the atomic developments of World War II, of the "momentary death hanging over an unaware escapist world" (S to A). The subjection of America by an atom-bomb-wielding senator chillingly displays the vulnerability of the world to control by demagogues bearing atomic weapons.

Sandoz has given a direct exposition of her aims, but "allegory is still a structure of images, not of disguised ideas, and commentary has to proceed with it exactly as it does with all other literature, trying to see what precepts and examples are suggested by the imagery as a whole."[4]

It has been my purpose in this study of Sandoz's three allegorical novels to interpret her images in their "contrapuntal technique,"[5] as they take their place in the unity of the allegory. I have also tried to indicate the ways in which Sandoz's work follows the concept of allegory as it has been understood and documented.

Sandoz's choice of the technique of allegory to express her "concern about the contemporary world" expresses her passion for freedom, her dedication to ideals, and her belief that through allegory readers can be moved to change and action. Angus Fletcher in his study of allegory concludes:

> In a word, I suspect they /allegorical works/ are monuments to our ideals. They do not mimetically show us the human beings who need these ideals, but they examine the philosophic, theological, or moral premises on which we act, and then they confront us with the perfection of certain ideals, the depravity of others. . . . allegories are the natural mirrors of ideology.[6]

The descent of her characters to an ignominious existence, certain defeat, or an apocalyptic ending reveals the modernity of Sandoz's works, for, "there is nowadays a sort of inverse glory . . . a cherished moral depravity which we impose on our alienated heroes to connect them with our times."[7] Frye feels fictions may be classified by the "hero's power of action":

> If inferior in intelligence to ourselves, so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration, or absurdity, the hero belongs to the ironic mode. This is still true when the reader feels that he is or might be in the same

> situation, as the situation is being judged by the norms of a greater freedom.[8]

Sandoz used foreordained allegory to awaken her reader to his or her freedom for action. She saw in the danger of totalitarianism a darker dimension of humankind she felt needed to be acknowledged and understood. She believed that a "stern facing of facts in this world makes us so much more sympathetic and understanding, not only of the less fortunate but of the trials and tribulations of great men and women in high places."[9]

To a woman who wrote asking why Sandoz included "all those beastly inhuman acts of his life"[10] in her book about her father, Old Jules, she responded: "There is a law of nature that demands compensation for all things. The tall tree has deep roots, the high mountain deep canyons, the bright day the dark night."[11] It was her father, she said, who "taught us to accept no theory or dogma without close inspection and to keep eternal vigilance over our freedom of thought."[12] To Sandoz, the dark was a challenge, and her allegorical novels demonstrate her willingness to do battle against a totalitarian dark in the cause of freedom. Perhaps it was this comprehension of the dark as well as the age in which she wrote that marks her allegory as what Fletcher calls a katagogy[13], a downward spiral toward the dark, rather than an anagogy, an ideal or visionary movement:

> The katagogic, regressive character of modern allegories comes out not only in their imagery, which is increasingly low and disgusting and ironical, but in their very form, where the hero moves gradually into a more restricted range of action, into an imprisoning hole or cave.[14]

A reviewer of Slogum House in 1937 remarked on the use of this type of imagery by a woman:

> I can think offhand of no other woman writer in this country who seems so entirely free from feminine reticences. If it may not be said that she writes like a man, it is at least true that she writes like a woman who is fully aware of the worst in human nature and willing to accept it, too, without being thrown off her balance by its existence.[15]

Another reviewer called Capital City "an exceptionally pungent and challenging piece of social criticism,"[16] and a corresondent wrote Sandoz after the publication of The Tom-Walker, "You do not conceive of your function as a writer as merely that of entertaining the reader, but rather that of dynamiting him into a realization of social and economic facts. Your Tom-Walker may be much more of a prophecy than most of us now realize."[17] Sandoz saw herself as formed by the frontier:

> Almost from their first steps, the homesteader's children had to meet new situations, make decisions, develop a self-dicipline if they were to survive. They learned dependence upon one's neighbors, and discovered the interrelationship of earth and sky and animal and man. They could see, in their simpler society, how national and international events conditioned every day of their existence. They learned to rescue themselves in adulthood as they had once scrabbled under the fence when heel flies drove the milk cows crazy.[18]

Mari Sandoz in her three allegorical novels has disciplined herself to the intricate mode of allegory. She has used her knowledge of human

beings with their need for mutual dependence and trust and her feeling for the unity not only of humankind, but of the land and all that is on it, to form her works and reach her reader. She writes out of her sensitivity to the importance of local, national, and international events in the shaping of individual existence. Sandoz believes these events are, in turn, shaped by the actions of each person in the world. She would place the imprint of her ideals and her impulse to action on each of her readers that all might learn to "scrabble under the fence" in a time of peril.

Chapter II

Slogum House, "A Gray Wart in A Calloused Palm"

In discussing her first allegorical novel, Slogum House, Sandoz explained that "on the surface Slogum House is a story of violence and mystery in the struggle for land in a small portion of the west, but on the second level it is an allegorical study of any will-to-power nation that uses force to overcome opposition, prostitutes justice and the true and the beautiful, and emasculates any really dangerous opposition. . . ."[1]

For Sandoz there was a progressive connection between the will-to-power individual and the will-to-power nation. She saw a great danger in the threat of such an individual to a community and the consequent threat of a corrupted community to the rest of the world. Sandoz had read Mein Kampf in a German edition and found in Hitler the epitome of a "will-to-power" individual, and, "As a trained observer, /she/ tried to visualize the methods a person like Hitler might employ in an attempt to dominate the world, and to duplicate them on a smaller scale in her story."[2] In Slogum House Sandoz /dealt/ with subjects of great and enduring concern to her--the will-to-power individual and the threat of fascism to modern society."[3] At the time Sandoz was writing Slogum House, Germany was well embarked on its European land grab and plans for world domination, and Sandoz was among the few who could see beyond the isolationist sentiments then rampant in America. She felt she needed to raise awareness not only of the present world situation but also of the ongoing struggle between those who recognize freedom as a right and a responsibility and those who

would wrest it from all others. And she chose the device of allegory to present her moral questions in a narrative framework:

> What distinguished allegory from other literary forms is its principal interest in presenting a doctrinal or philosophic position about the world. This contrasts with "novelistic" fiction, where the principal interest is in narrative, in the telling of a story.[4]

Sandoz does tell a story and,

> It is a remarkably sweeping and ironic picture of America's last frontier during a period of half a century. . . . Mari Sandoz shows herself so closely informed of the life of her own country--its history, its physical aspect, its economic roots and political necessities--that a reader even slightly acquainted with the literature of the Middle West could identify not only the scene of her story but the very decade in which any given action must have occurred.[5]

The writer's genius in an allegory is to maintain a reader's interest in the story while at the same time enabling a connection in the reader's mind between the characters and the assertations of truth which they represent. In an allegory,

> As we read, we have two tendencies working on us--the dialectic, the author's attempts to ascertain or reveal a set of truths which can be expressed in doctrinal or philosophical terms; and the narrative, the arrangement of characters and events in a pattern more or less mimetic. . . . there is a subtle

and continual interweaving of the two modes.[6]

When the power of a story reaches and moves the reader, the power and meaning of allegory can be fully realized. The thoughts and emotions the narrative elicits must facilitate the acceptance of the philosophical content.

In choosing allegory for Slogum House, Sandoz chose a mode that "says one thing and means another." It is a "fundamental process for encoding our speech."[7] A careful analysis of Sandoz's narrative in terms of her own statement of allegorical intent reveals the nature of the code and the message implicit within it.

Sandoz's study of a "will-to-power nation" is shown in her depiction of a "will-to-power individual" wielding power through a carefully constructed central system, using the vulnerabilities of a community to extend and solidify her power base and threatening the area beyond the community. This individual represents the potential misuse of power by a nation. Sandoz suggests in the individual's motives and devices the psychological impulses underlying a drive to power (impulses which also affect a nation's actions) and the sociological phenomena that result from the effects of a power drive in a community (or from the domination of one nation over others). Allegory is especially appropriate for Sandoz's political theme because it can reach beyond the individual's actions to the roots of the universal tension between conflict and cooperation, between corrupt power and the freedom it invariably truncates. In the depiction of her will-to-power individual, Sandoz encapsulates a basic conflict in which justice and the true and the beautiful are endangered by force:

At the heart of any allegory will be found this conflict

> of authorities. One ideal will be pitted against another, its opposite: thus the familiar propagandist function of the mode, thus the conservative satirical function, thus the didactic function. The mode is hierarchical in essence. . . . Hierarchy is never simply a system giving people their "proper place"; it goes further and tells them what their legitimate powers are. Any hierarchy is bound to elicit sharp emotive responses toward these powers. We are therefore able to describe the mode from a dynamic point of view. Allegories are far less often the dull systems that they are reputed to be than they are symbolic power struggles.[8]

Sandoz realized that this power struggle of force against freedom is a continual reoccurrence in our civilization, and in her first description of Slogum House she calls it, "a gray wart in the pit of a worn and calloused palm,"[9] indicating the incipient evil of the will-to-power individual, an ever-present virus in an aged world.

Sandoz creates Gulla Slogum as the will-to-power individual; her family becomes her centralized power system and the community her often unwilling but unresistant dupes. Gulla's power seems to dwarf or destroy all power brought against her, and her land grab symbolizes the territorial greed of a nation bent on world dominance. Sandoz said that the story "covering a span of time from early 1900's into the 1930's, is . . . of a ruthless will-to-power woman in a region of fluid land titles where she can use her roadhouse on a freight trail to gain control of more and more territory" (S to A).

Gulla is a woman who "extends her power through her two elder sons, who are cowards except when the guns are in their hands," and she "prostitutes the courts through two of her handsome daughters and

emasculates the young Frenchman who threatens her system when the handsomest daughter falls in love with him" (S to A). Gulla's elder sons are the armed control of the state in the allegorical nation, while the prostitution of the law through the prostitution of her daughters suggests the way a nation can be corrupted by the corruption of its institutions. The Frenchman's emasculation dramatically parallels Sandoz's memory (in 1965) of how "Hitler was to emasculate the France of 1940" (S to A). Slogum House was published in 1937.

To recreate what she saw as the "camouflage of practical virtue, as Mussolini made the trains run on time and Hitler put labor in its place" (S to A), Sandoz wrote that,

> the menace of Slogum House is plain but one thing keeps the mob from gathering to clean the place out--the eldest daughter, who scorns the practices about her but furnishes clean beds and good meals for the travelers on the road. She stays even as the mother's power increases and the number of dead grows, the wounded too, cared for by the ineffectual Rudy Slogum, the husband and father who lives on the other side of the hogback. (S to A)

The eldest daughter, Libby, and her father, Ruedy, are camouflage for Gulla, and in the allegory they are symbols for those elements of society which are used in a corrupt power drive. They allow themselves to be used against their own good judgement. Libby and Ruedy, like the other characters, are understood through their relationship to Gulla, and the way in which Sandoz develops the character and meaning of Gulla assumes prime importance. The narrative and allegory proceed together, for "a good allegory, like a good poem, does not exhibit devices or

hammer away at intentions. It beguiles the reader with a continuous interplay between subject and sense in the storytelling, and the narrative, the story itself, means everything."[10]

Sandoz asked an author who sent a manuscript for criticism, "Why isn't the telling concrete and living instead of abstract and devitalized?"[11] Sandoz's portrayal of Gulla in Slogum House is vital. Gulla is a woman desperate to escape her background, to forget that "she was the fifth of twelve children in a river-bottom family, with a mother who laid the cards and brewed tansy, pennyroyal, and like concoctions for luckless girls who were in need" (SH, p. 36). She is also anxious to usurp her husband Ruedy's aristocratic, cultured, and traditional heritage, for "having married quality, determined quality she would be" (SH, p. 38).

Sandoz gives Gulla Haber Slogum a name that foreshadows developments in her characterization. "Gulla" suggests "gull," to trick, deceive, or cheat, and since her full name is "Regula," the prefix "re" can mean repetition as in again and again. "Gulla" could also mean "gullet" in reference to devouring in a bestial sense, a way in which Sandoz often portrays Gulla. Her maiden name, "Haber," has echoes in the obsolete "hab," to have or get, and "Slogum," the name she receives, or steals, from Ruedy, has sibilant intimations of a "slough of despond," a lost condition, a tradition mired in the backwash of a changing order. Character's names add to the total impact of the characterization:

> These names operate like secret causes: when they are understood, the activities of the persons who are named are understood. The more enigmatic the name, in competent hands, the freer the range of possible activity within the

> fiction, and the more illuminating the final disclosure of the name's referent.[12]

Throughout the narrative Sandoz traces Gulla's drive to power in acts of stealing, cheating, and devouring--letting nothing slip from her grasp for long or in full measure. At Spring Slough, where Gulla settled "her" family after the trek west, the house is built, the windmill "acquired," the necessary stock purloined by "Slogum purchase, wherever they were to be found" (SH, p. 46). Her power respected no one, whatever the circumstances might be. Even "From the Rickers, with nothing but a houseful of children and a few muskrat traps piled outside the door, she took the traps" (SH, p. 47). Gulla cheats those who stood in line at the land office to file, who "clung doggedly to their places, without food or water, against all offers to sell out, through the long night and the heat of the summer morning on the shimmering prairie" (SH, p. 262). When the office opened, the good claims were gone, but "Gulla got her filings in early," and "properly post-dated. Otherwise they were legal enough" (SH, p. 266).

Sandoz lays more serious claim to Gulla's cheating power in the dramatic courtroom scene where Gulla's sons, Hab and Cash are on trial for murder. The case is nearly closed against them when they turn evidence with a "switched" corpse. Murder is clearly one of Gulla's tools, with cheating to insure its success. Gulla's aggression can also express the aggression of the totalitarian nation. Her need for more and more land, her callous treatment of others' rights, including the already deprived, and her willingness to use any means to gain what she feels she needs to become "quality," are totalitarian tactics. Stealing, cheating, and murdering become acts which are necessary to

stay in power, and as Sandoz develops Gulla's greed and grasp for increased power, they are used for expansion as well as for control.

Sandoz often portrays Gulla in similes and metaphors that suggest her inhumanity, her animal or beastly nature, and implies a demonic element. Gulla displays the demoniacal persistence and monstrous bewitchment of some beast whose will never flagged, driven by the desire for mastery. She represents a negative power in its attenuation of human value that is often characteristic of allegory.[13] The "present common idea of a daemon is of a wild, unkempt, bestial, monstrous, diabolic creature. . . ."[14]

Sandoz depicts Gulla's "little eyes half buried in the flesh of her broad face, but ready to catch the first movement of a black cloth signal," much as an animal would watch for a sign of danger or empowerment. And having triumphed over her prey, "Satisfied, she went back, her felt soles soft as the padded feet of a heavy animal on the rag runner of her room" (SH, p. 5). Gulla perceives herself in animal images. When Ruedy comes with one of his few protests, Gulla says, "now he, too, was coming to plague her like the rest--like blowflies at the shoulder of a plough-galled horse, biting, laying maggots to rot and fester and eat" (SH, p. 143). And after "more and more in both counties owed her money," Gulla "seldom laid the cards any more, for these methods of looking into the future were for the hound who was chasing the rabbit, not the one who had the rabbit in his jaws" (SH, p. 311).

There are other non-human references for Gulla. Gulla's preoccupation with the rites of magic demonstrates her witch-like behavior. Laying the cards as her mother did, she is alarmed by the death card and,

> Scrambling up from the floor and stepping carefully out of

> the circle, she waddled to the outside door, her loose buttocks shaking in her hurry. . . . And as she stood there a dark shadow slipped silently between her feet and out into the night. . . . Libby's black cat. She hurried back to her room, took three hairs from her first-born out of an envelope, put them on the old fire shovel, and, touching a match to them, carried the bit of pungent ashes three times around the house to break the spell of bad luck. (SH, p. 30)

Gulla's stamina and persistence suggest the demonic, as she,

> guided the bucking breaker bottom through the hardpan sod, swung the spade over the smooth strips, and dropped the seed corn in the crevices of its blade as no man of the region could, her strong thighs untiring even when she was still drained from nursing the twins. (SH, p. 40)

Sandoz provides a humane influence with Ruedy, Gulla's husband, but he is always under attack, compromised by Gulla, as the humane aspects of a society are threatened by a totalitarian government. Ruedy suffers Gulla's domination, but he retains a stubborn independence that struggles against her determination to belittle or graft on his roots and culture her distorted image of what culture should be. In Ruedy's one-room soddy where he maintains a separate residence (the filing means more Slogum land), he has on his hand-carved whatnot "the triple miniature frame of the Slogum sisters in Ohio and their dainty mother" (SH, p. 53). By contrast,

> It was for the parlor of the new house that Gulla had enlargements of Ruedy's sisters made by a bicycle-riding

> picture agent. When he saw Annette he made the mother a special price--two for twenty-five dollars in real life colors, half in trade. (SH, p. 59)

Ruedy confesses he married Gulla because he was taught "that one accepts the responsibility of one's actions" (SH, p. 321). The source of Ruedy's strength is his cultural sense of values. Yet Ruedy is the pivot of Gulla's thirst for power, both in providing her with a family and in supplying by his heritage the motive power of her ambition:

> . . . Gulla had hung the large map of Dumur County over her desk, with its far red arc that should one day be Slogum line fence, the ranches inside all gone. This and the house overlooking Slogum Acres in Ohio, Gulla would have, and nothing should stand in the way. (SH, p. 60)

Little wonder that Sandoz chose "Ruedy," a name of "rue," denoting sorrow, distress, repentance, and regret. The name further ties him to the woman who reared him, the Grossmutter, Libbette Ruedy Slogum. He is the link between Libbette and his daughter, Libby. The three represent a tradition of civilization which can exist in limited freedom but can flourish only in the absence of domination and force. These characters form a trinity of decency, but always under the domination of Gulla.

Ruedy has some moments of surcease in his home in Spring Branch Canyon, over the hogback from Gulla's Spring Slough, on the land he had gotten over Gulla's objections:

> Ruedy, with a flash of the independence and stubbornness of the Grossmutter, entered his homestead and timber claim on

> the unproductive land on the far side of the ridge. "Just doing that to spite me," Gulla complained to the government officials. "All bluffs and gravel--won't feed a goat--" (SH, pp. 43-44)

Here Ruedy buttresses himself against Gulla's overwhelming presence, channels water from the spring for his ponds, grows his plants, and tends his pet antelope. He is surrounded by the beauty of nature even in times of deep distress, as,

> The latening moon came up red over the eagle's nest at the head of the canyon. Tongues of light pushed down between the slim cottonwoods, searching out the little house, the gardens and the pools, the little antelope sleeping in a plot of fragrant clover. But Ruedy was still hunched in the shadows, heavy as a waterlogged stone. (SH, p. 138)

Sandoz's "waterlogged" image reflects the one she has chosen earlier for Gulla, "her face heavy as a soaked clay bank" (SH, p. 65). Sandoz protects Ruedy with the beauty of the moment at the same time that she exposes him to distress, a distress brought on by Gulla's actions, the reflected heaviness and saturation of the image emphasizing Gulla's domination of his life. The beauty of Ruedy's latent strength and the desperation of his present plight are implied in the moment. And Gulla's evil and her inability to comprehend good have been underscored by Sandoz's complex interweaving of beauty and ugliness.

Ruedy endures the horror that Gulla inflicts upon all around her, until in his very endurance there seems to be virtue. He bears guilt for his compliance in her life. Sandoz depicts him as having no expression

of personal power save a goodness and a gentleness that too often are seen only in terms of weakness, for it appears always within the context of Gulla's strength. Ruedy seems unable to resist implicit involvement in Gulla's machinations, her presence hovering over all his acts and drawing him into hers. Sandoz constructs in Ruedy a haven for the parade of bodily-harmed family members and friends. He cares for them and cures them of Gulla-wrought ills, even as he remains a part of the system that has maimed them. Sandoz shows Ruedy's "bitter medicine" able to ease but not erase the cruel effects of Gulla's power--"Rue" is also a woody herb with bitter leaves, used medicinally.[15]

Gulla finally comes to Ruedy as one more patient, this time the victim of her own gross nature. Gulla's reign of corruption ends with the corruption of her own body. She lies, moribund, "her flesh laying around her, loosening its hold on the bone, her eyes closed on a good world that fed her and kept her warm" (SH, p. 391). But Gulla leaves in the world that corruption which she has fed. Since the evil that Gulla has set in motion outlasts her in the completion of acts she has begun and in the continuing process that she has encouraged in others (the doing of overt evil and the compromising of good), the continuing conflict of evil and good has been highlighted by Sandoz, with the accompanying need for awareness and resistance. Ruedy admits he killed Gulla's brutal brother, Butch. Ruedy's reluctant compliance in Gulla's world of violence has finally resulted in violent action, an action against his own principles, and Sandoz attests to the impotence of the best intentions of civilization in the face of barbarity, when those intentions are not based on an effective resistance to that barbarity.

Libby, the oldest daughter, displays self-reliance and decency thwarted and, on occasion, perverted. She is the Libby of the "clean

beds and best biscuits," the "camouflage" for Gulla's dirty works. Gulla's twisted sense of the sexual, callous in her denial of Ruedy (once she had decided her family of seven was "enough for her purpose") (SH, p. 39), and horrifying in her debasement of her twin daughters in prostitution for her own gain, reaches a deeper perversion in Gulla's accusation of Libby and her father, Ruedy. When Gulla thinks Libby has spent the night at Ruedy's, "the woman's mouth stretched into a sly, knowing viciousness. 'It don't look right, you know, a grown daughter, sneaking out all night with her girl-chasin' maiden-crackin' father--'" (SH, p. 165). Sandoz throws the shadow of Gulla's warped sensibilities, her inability to conceive of anything except power, upon the relationship of Ruedy and Libby. It darkens the traits which Libby shares with Ruedy, her independence that is so necessarily covert, her ability to nurture, usually called upon by someone in extremity, and her impotent fury at being constantly co-opted and allowing herself to be so co-opted.

Libby and Ruedy are a doubling device used by Sandoz in Slogum House. Representing different aspects of the same allegorical quality, they enable Sandoz to indicate metaphorical nuances in the hierarchical structure.[16] Libby, as a younger generation, is tied more closely to Gulla, as the youth in work camps in a totalitarian nation might be. She is more open to corruption and more liable to escape.

Early in the narrative, Sandoz builds tension by suggesting that secondary characters can and will escape Gulla's talons, but with Libby, as with the others, the hope is always short-lived. There is challenge in the way Libby replies to her mother's plaintive "You think you got the right to quit me now I'm getting together a nice start for you all?" Libby's astonished rejoinder is,

> "A start for us--and how did you get it? . . . Do you think

> I don't know there must be people in the world who manage to eat without lying, cheating, stealing, even murder and the prostitution of their daughters?" (SH, p. 112)

Yet Libby returns to help care for her younger brother, an ill runaway. Sandoz demonstrates Libby's deepest impulses of love and caring as intertwined in such a way with Gulla's grasping life that there seems no escape. Gulla suggests that Leo Platt, the "sturdy tree of a man" (SH, p. 69) who loves Libby, might be influenced by her to help Gulla's schemes. The vehemence of Libby's reply demonstrates Gulla's power to incite to violence those around her, whatever their characteristic impulses might be:

> Libby slapped the ball of crust flat on the board, came closer to her mother, her mouth suddenly lean as a cut in the crust she had just been working, the knife in her hand. "So--because he's beyond your dirty fingers you want me to drag him in. Well, just let me tell you--you do him like Bullard or René and there'll be more buzzards flying over Slogum land!" (SH, p. 210)

The violence in Slogum House is seldom far from the surface of the narrative, suggesting allegorically that violence is never far from the surface in any society. Sandoz planned Slogum House as the "presentation of a society where violence is untrammeled."[17] Gulla's sons, Hab and Cash, and Gulla's convict brother, Butch, form another trinity, a trinity of violence that demonstrates the pressures a violent power must withstand, even while it bends that violence to its own gain. Gulla's oldest sons are her most pliable tools in organized violence, and "Gulla, through

Hab and Cash, had taken something from every one of the settlers. . . . And after that the Slogum sons kept well out of gunshot of the Niobrara brush patches in the light of day" (SH, pp. 47-48).

Allegorically, Hab represents the primary use of force that welds the heritage of a country and a corrupt government. Hab, as his name suggests, is all Haber, and Ruedy's parentage is denied both by his physical appearance and by Gulla's admission, though he is the child whose supposed conception made the marriage a necessity. Remembering that "hab" means "to get" makes his bearing of his mother's name appropos, and Hab's greed controls his life, a greed reflected from Gulla.

Cash bears a name that refers to a term long accepted in literary and general use as a term for money, available for easy, uncomplicated, and quick transactions. Cash is used by his mother in such a way for gain. Cash is also a ready coinage of Ruedy, undoubtedly his father's son in his appearance and his weakness. Sandoz accentuates the difference between the two sons when Gulla calls Hab, at eighteen, "a Haber, a man, with the courage and beard of a man," while she looks "with contempt upon the whitish fuzz on the flushed, sullen face of Cash and the circle of short, curly, red-brown beard that bordered Ruedy's sensitive mouth" (SH, p. 44).

Hab turpentines the dog loved by his younger brother, Ward, showing a casual violence that seems neither to know nor care about its own strength except for purposes of amusement. Cash, on the other hand, is pictured by Sandoz in a gross, sensual degeneracy of sensitivity. He yells at René, "Git out of my way, you goddam gelding--" (SH, p. 365), publishing the fact of René's castration, which was done by Cash, Hab, and Butch, with Butch wielding the knife. Butch, loving torture, exceeds Gulla's orders to scare this lover of the beautiful Annette. Violence

without purpose is inimical to totalitarian plan.

Sandoz allegorically constructs a parallelism of violence: Hab represents armed forces trained for violence and the crushing of resistance; Cash is the callousness bred by violence that destroys civilization and its cultivated sensibilities. Butch, in his raw violence, incites Hab's tendency to senseless violence and Cash's self-indulgent debauchery. When Gulla comes home from a trip, she finds Hab guarding the door to the private parlor,

> . . . his hand on his gun.
>
> Without a sign to him Gulla kicked the door open. . . . On the rose silk settee lay Cash, his boots up on the back, his face purple-red, a whiskey bottle on the floor beside his dangling hand. Butch, in sock feet, was astride a little gold chair, telling dirty stories. (SH, p. 147)

The other four children of Gulla and Ruedy also demonstrate parallel construct. Annette and Cellie are twins, as are Ward and Fannie (the youngest in the family), and they are used by Sandoz to delineate the effect of a blatant power drive on different elements of society in the allegorical nation. Annette and Cellie are first presented by Sandoz as together, and they remain together for most of the narrative. They lie, symbolically, in bed:

> In the green-blinded duskiness, the twenty-year-olds, supposed to be asleep whispered the foolish words of their lovers between them and laughed softly as they lay with squares of flannel dipped in sweet milk upon their faces, for at Slogum House, as elsewhere, beauty is a precious thing. (SH, p. 6)

In Gulla's deposition of their lovers, one by murder, and one by castration, both to protect this precious beauty and to rid herself of two men who might thwart her criminal acts, Sandoz carries Gulla's infection of the private sphere to the public sphere, for she has "saved" the twins to use for institutional control. In the narrative the twins are vehicles for prostitution of justice: allegorically they are the institutions of society that cooperate with and conform to a totalitarian power-driven government, becoming in themselves corrupt. The twins trade favors to the sheriff and judge to protect Gulla from the law: they lose twice, first their heart's desire and then the corruption of that desire. As the twins aid in corruption, they become corrupt. Sandoz picked a perversion of justice that turns on the vulnerability of public officials to prostitution and bribery: allegorically she has shown institutions corruptible by appeal to human vices.

Corruption expands through the generations. Ruedy's sisters, the "Ohio Slogums" that fire Gulla's desire for power, represent tradition and heritage; their namesakes, Annette and Cellie, represent the corruption of that tradition and heritage. "Annette" has possible meanings of the Late Greek, "Anna," taken from the Hebrew, "Hannah," denoting graciousness. It is also close to "annex," to attach, especially to a larger or more significant thing, recalling the Latin, "annectere," to bind or tie. To René Dumur, Annette was "like the Bohemian waxwing he found in a snow-bound cedar once, the dark crest and the bits of red wax on the wings almost unbearably beautiful" (SH, p. 125).

René's attempt to elope with Annette and his resulting castration is Sandoz's metaphor for the attempted destruction of an established community or the emasculation of another country by a totalitarian power.

René is the son of the founder of the town and county of Dumur. Dumur suggests "demur," a form of protest that is often weak and ineffective. René is maimed as the freedom of the community is maimed by Gulla, and as the freedom of the world, country by country, is maimed by a nation committed to aggression.

The internal disintegration of the aggressor nation is suggested by the disintegration of Annette, who with the loss of Rene is tied in prostitution to the serving of Gulla's wishes until she is too old, too faded to be of use to her. Annette is cut off from the outside world except in the pursuit of Gulla's aims, is threatened with rape by Butch, and ends in a twisted and superficial profession of Christian vocation:

> Annette sought solace . . . in religion and good works, particularly in the very wicked and booming potash towns over in the next county, where two visiting evangelists were laboring. When she didn't come home for a week Gulla went down to get her and found her singing "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" in a single board saloon with the sky pilots, one of them in a dusty Prince Albert, flowery as a cactus patch in June in his speech and a little unsteady on his feet. (SH, pp. 323-24)

Passion and religious feeling have both been prostituted and with the additional factor of the loss of Rene's potency, Sandoz has demonstrated the paralyzing power of Gulla's effect upon the community in the areas of love and faith as well as the allegorical destruction of those traditional values in society.

Cellie's physical beauty, a traditional value, is not appreciated

by Gulla who denies beauty, finds it trivial, or uses it for power. Allegorically Cellie symbolizes the beauty and spirit of the arts and culture as they are gradually degraded and destroyed by material goals. Cellie's name brings to mind "cell," a basic unity of being, or "cella," the body of the temple. Her full name, "Marcella," is the term for a once stylish hair arrangement. Cellie can no longer renew herself nor bring a freshness to those around her, the fate of arts in a society dedicated to propaganda and cultural efforts that reward greed. Cellie's disintegration after the murder of her lover parallels the disintegration of Annette. When Cellie lost thought for her appearance, "Gulla scolded her about her sloppiness, her clothes thrown on anyway, and no corset." Cellie reminded the miserable Ruedy of a Grossmutter adage, "Like lemon pie, very good fresh, but soon stale" (SH, pp. 83-84). Cellie's body has received little respect and she wears a hat, "a little too small and too bright a blue for her florid face and gray, curly bob" (SH, p. 393), an act of diminished taste and discrimination.

The innocents of Sandoz's story suffer Gulla's cruelty with little chance of recourse or protection. They portray the unfortunates of the allegorical society, a society that has no interest in taking a nurturing role. Ward, Gulla's youngest son, is an innocent and he is sympathetic to the other innocents, Babbie, the pregnant hired girl, and Dodie, the crippled hired man. Ward is tender with his stray dog, Wolf, as Ruedy is tender with his pet antelope. Whatever nurture Ward receives, Sandoz provides by the ministrations of Libby and Ruedy, and Ward observes that,

> the family was separated in little bunches like cattle or horses in a pasture. Gulla with Hab, Cash until lately with Hab, too, but away from Gulla, the two girls together, and

> Libby with the father. He, Ward, with Fanny gone, was alone, like a colt on a hillside, except that not far away were Libby and Ruedy. (SH, p. 99)

In his innocence, sensitivity, and longing for freedom, Ward is prey for Gulla, who wants to insure his servitude and obedience, the only response that a totalitarian government would have for its most vulnerable citizens. The alternative is destruction, if servitude and obedience are not forthcoming. The name "Ward" indicates watchman, guard, or keeper, and Ward protects others when he can, while needing protection himself. It also means one whose heritage is in another's hands or under the control of a guardianship. Gulla's control of Ward is brutal and she uses the incipient brutality of the community to aid that control, as a society that has been brutalized can be manipulated to turn on its innocents. Through innuendoes Gulla incites the brothers of Ward's girlfriend to beat him so severely that he is left a walking invalid, saved by Ruedy, but never well again.

Ironically, Sandoz depicts Ward, the innocent, collecting rent from Gulla's tenants, many dispossessed and hired to run what had been their own land. Even here Ward endears himself to the renters by his innate kindness, yet sees that Gulla's difficult and often unfair demands are met. This curiously uninvolved serving of Gulla, as a society in the allegory might be served by those intimidated but somehow basically untouched poses an integral innocence that cannot be corrupted no matter how ill used, a strength in weakness.

Ward's twin, Fanny, is Sandoz's reversal of that possibility. Fanny is a symbol for complete corruption--to an extent that corruption has its own innocence, for it has occurred so early that there has been

no moment of choice, no other example. A totalitarian government often segregates its youngest members for indoctrination. Gulla is determined to have a cultured Slogum in her power system and ships Fanny to school in the East, with only an occasional letter as contact. In earlier usage "fanny" was a term for the female pudenda, rather than buttocks. Fanny, artificially separated from Ruedy and Libby, who might have sustained her as they did Ward, is encouraged to adopt false values, a rape of the innocent. The positive values of Ruedy and Libby are affirmed by the comparison of Ward and Fanny. When Fanny returns as a young adult "seriously impaired by frequent abortions and venereal disease" and suffering from "advanced consumption" (SH, p. 269), she represents the bankruptcy of building a culture on a debased foundation. Sandoz has exposed the folly and danger in the false indoctrination of the young.

There is little in Fanny's community that would have sustained her other than Ward, Libby, Ruedy, and their few friends. Sandoz constructs a community around Gulla that is rough and does little to oppose Gulla's tactics. It is to the community's advantage that the freighters find clean beds, the best biscuits, and the best upstairs girls at Slogum House. This "camouflage of practical virtue" is allegorically recognized as the virtues of a well-run totalitarian society. Gulla spies on the guests in her hidden passageway with impunity and gain, apeing the spy techniques of a sophisticated and unprincipled nation. Another side of society comes to Slogum House--fugitives that "smelled out Gulla's place as a refuge. . . . Anyway, strange men began to slip up Spring Slough like coyotes in the dusk" (SH, p. 46). Gulla uses them for her dirtiest work, suggesting fugitives are so used in every corrupt society.

People in the community cannot seem to pull themselves together for concerted action, as in a world threatened by a fascist state there is often indecision and ill-formed action. Even when Pastor Zug and his congregation lose their new church, board by board to "Slogum purchase," there is anger but no reprisal. Allegorically, the nations threatened by a totalitarian thrust might well find within their own boundaries the seeds of violence and corruption. Sandoz presents a certain "mirroring" in the community of Gulla's violence. Pastor Zug appears in the midst of the mob that forms when the fradulent and predated land filing become known, "a post held high in his two hands" (SH, p. 264). No action is taken, but a "man of peace" has been compromised.

Sandoz uses the weather and natural surroundings as metaphor to support characterization. The land of storms and drought and burning sun that she knew so well and the land of beauty which she loved reflect the evil or good of the characters. Gulla's surrounds were often dreary, "a little wind, a few drops of rain heavy as chilling lead in the dust, perhaps a crash of thunder or two, then more sun" (SH, p. 63). The land Gulla settled was "hardpan flat, lying on the table. . . . Cut off from the sandhills by a ridge like a hog scratching himself against the sky" (SH, pp. 42-43). The weather invaded Gulla's thoughts, as "From her door, Gulla Slogum watched the night fade into the red sky of morning that spoke to her of a troubled day" (SH, p. 61). Gulla charted "the sheriff sales increase as the grass shriveled and the bones of the land lay bare" (SH, p. 82). Gulla did not see the prairie flower, or hear birdsongs, or smell the earth rich with spring, much as a nation bent on conquest would be unaware of the natural beauty within its boundaries or the creative forces of nature except as they hindered

or helped its advance.

In contrast, Libby looked,

> down the slope of the hogback into the deep, timbered canyon of Spring Branch, its walls matted with wild roses in bloom, to where her father, Ruedy Slogum, worked in his gardens, his flowers and his fish ponds. (SH, pp. 4-5)

Ruedy enjoyed his garden and watched as "early fireflies laced his trees and a chuckle of water on stones and the smell of cress and wild roses came up the bluff on the light wind of evening" (SH, p. 23). Libby "brought home wild plums sugar-sweet and fragrant" and "arms full of goldenrod or purple fire stick" (SH, p. 164), and after the September frost she walked "through the brightening timber of the Niobrara, the ash turning a delicate yellow, the creepers blood-red against the silvery buffalo-berry brush that hung like smoke along the second bottom" (SH, p. 164). The connection of Libby and Ruedy with the earth springs from their awareness and appreciation, allegorically an enduring but endangered value. When Libby intercepts Ruedy's plan to hang himself she admits that she has thought of such a thing, too: "It would be worth losing the sun for all time, the song of the bobolink as he climbed up from the spring earth, even the wind in one's face, to escape." She reminds Ruedy that it "was not for her, or for him--him least of all, for he was not a Slogum but a Ruedy" (SH, p. 203).

Sandoz ends Slogum House with the land, the sky, the wind, and Ruedy, the same grouping of elements with which she began her story. With this circular structure, Sandoz suggests unchanging allegorical reality. The wind sways Ruedy's car as he drives home, happy with the news of the

mortgage moratorium--Gulla's projection of evil has been countered in a move that comes too late for many. At Slogum House the wind,

> . . . banged the door, rattled the old windows. Behind the chicken coop it lifted a broad, flat Russian thistle from the weeds, lifted it twice, until at last it was loose and rolling awkwardly, end over end, past the silent windmill and up the worn old path of the hogback that stood against the whitish sky. (SH, p. 400)

The wind leaves Hab's body, as it dangles from the windmill, his scarf caught in the gears, much as the gears of a fascist nation might finally destroy the instigators of its movement. The primary inflictors of violence in the narrative have been brought by Sandoz to some kind of reckoning. Ruedy, Libby, and their friends are left to represent the enduring, ongoing traditions of society, damaged but alive. Those who value freedom in Slogum House are representative of those who value freedom in society in any place, at any time. Their endurance and courage will be tested again and again, for in the world of allegory the conflict is always alive--only in life can it be won for the moment. Sandoz's freedom lovers are not heroic people, only steadfast lovers of "justice, and the true and the beautiful" (S to A), who struggle, as they are able, against their fate. Sandoz's epigraph, a quote from one of her characters, comes to mind:

> The sky knows no hunger, and the earth heals her wounds, but the time of man is short.
>
> --Milt Green, CHAPTER XV

Chapter III

Capital City, The "Damned Old Prostitute"

Discussing her three allegorical novels, Sandoz describes how she turned from Slogum House, "the story of a will-to-power individual" who depicted allegorically a will-to-power nation threatening the world, to Capital City, for her "next concern was with the threats within an organized society." Capital City, a composite of "ten state capitals between the Mississippi and the Rockies," carries the allegorical message of the danger of an "organized society of any region, country or planet selling itself out to the haters and extra-legal forces of armed men."[1] In the narrative of Capital City, Sandoz uses "the city as the main character--with each type of its citizens represented, more or less, by one individual."[2] The perversion of Franklin, the capital city of the mythical state of Kanewa, becomes the potential perversion of a whole society, and the weakness and strength of the various elements in the allegorical society. Franklin develops a parasitical nature that threatens the freedom of all those who live in Kanewa, as a fascist society threatens the world.

Before writing Capital City, Sandoz subscribed to the newspapers of ten state capitals, and "during the writing she made a study of the racist, anti-democratic individuals and forces revealed in the papers" (S to A). She also visited each of the capitals and the larger cities in their states, looking for the same type of information. And it was from

these papers, which she was reading,

> during the ten weeks or so from state fair time to election day, /that/ she laid out the book, hastened by a visit from two booted and gun-holstered Silver Shirts who came to her apartment in Lincoln, Nebraska, to shut her "loud mouth." . . . These findings she extended like graphs to a possible take-over by election time. (S to A)

In stressing the parasitical nature of Franklin, Sandoz felt "these capitals not only live off the money earned by the rest of the state, but also give false standards of culture to a population which always looks to its state capital for its 'cue.'"[3] Franklin, "whose most quoted publicity line was taken from the oratory of the capital fight with Grandapolis, seventy years ago, pledging itself eternally to envision and disseminate the highest attributes of cultural living to all the great state of Kanewa,"[4] expresses in ideals what Sandoz feels a capital city should be. Sandoz ironically shows how her capital city, Franklin, betrays that pledge to culture, an irony that works in the service of her allegory:

> Like all analogy, irony accumulates and condenses meanings with the force of poetic imagery. It first proposes a basic congruence between two things which have a patent incongruence underlying them. Then it presents for consideration certain instances of this incongruence, but uses these to reinforce the proposed view of congruence, as though the obvious and basic dissimilarity could not really matter.[5]

Sandoz's irony measures reality against an ideal articulated in her

forward:

> Here, in the region that required far over a hundred years to settle, with all the nations of the earth contributing, I have placed my state of Kanewa, with the high white tower of its capitol encircled by a stone frieze dedicated to its citizens, the fricze of the Peoples of the World.

Sandoz shows Franklin straying from the ideal expressed by its capitol and stated in its envisioning vow. Sometimes it is the plight of the university students:

> Every fall it was the same; the ambitious, the impressionable, the idealistic youth of the state swarming into the capital city. . . . /They/ got their first glimpse of the magnificence of man from his handiwork on the campus, the fieldhouse, the huge grey football stadium, the Greek-letter castles on the terraced Row, and from the capitol building that overlooked all the city. If they made a frat, the local sponsor had them out to tea or a smoker on Blue Ridge, talked to them of his kind of success, of ways to get ahead in the world. . . . If the student turned out to be exceptional at all he was driven out; if studious he went away on a fellowship. . . . Those who stayed in Franklin or had to return to their home communities disseminated the ideals--economic, political, and cultural--of the capital city. (CC, p. 135)

Sandoz contrasts the ideals of the city to actual practices with a caricature of newspaper editorializing:

> Serious matters must be coming up in the capital city, for the World was running its Culture, its C line, as the newsrooms called it, this week over its editorials:--
>
> To envision and disseminate the highest attributes of cultural living to all the great state of Kanewa (CC, p. 213)

The image of Franklin as a model for the state is parodied in the description given by a trial judge during the pious investigation of a local abortionist, as he "denounced the hysterical interest of the town, 'Unconcerned with the evils of society, these people gorge themselves on the morbid details like buzzards after a hard winter'" (CC, p. 198).

The parasitic nature of the city of Franklin appears in the opening paragraph: "In the evening sun of September the capital city lay along the bed of the Little Grand River like a cluster of lice along the vein of a yellowing leaf" (CC, p. 3). This introductory image works as a "threshold image," which "not only initiates the opening episode and states the theme . . . but the narrative itself continues to refer back to it."[6] Sandoz uses both a parasite and a prostitute image repeatedly in refering to the city directly and in establishing a metaphorical referent to the allegorical society. The city leeches on those for whom it should be a beacon and sells out personal integrity and moral relationship to the highest bidder.

The Franklin fair bustles "with extra girls, who followed fairs and celebrations like wheat tramps the harvest. . . . depending upon themselves and perhaps a leg man loose in the crowd for their customers" (CC, p. 4), while the "tower of the state capitol building rose tall and remote as always, a slim white pinnacle lost against the pale sky of the

flatlands of Kanewa" (CC, p. 4). The tower, placed directly in the context of this prostitution image allegorically suggests a phallic violation of the state by the capital city and the danger of dissociation of ideals from daily actions. Sandoz's image for this escapist quality is "a layering of smoke and mist /that/ hung over the city and the Little Grand and only the capitol tower rose through it, into the pale, clear sky that promised an uneventful day" (CC, p. 25). A clear separation of the tower and the common life of the city occurs in a metaphor of mist: "the morning tower of the capitol /was/ a grey pillar in the fog as the early workers hurried out to start the day" (CC, p. 99).

With the coming of winter, Sandoz's image of the capitol tower is one of somber isolation,

> the capitol tower standing grey and alone all day long. Often at night it was only a pale, unrooted column rising among moving clouds, sooty black shadows thrown among the stone figures about its top by the cold steady lightning of the ground beams. (CC, p. 310)

The "lightning" image suggests the violent "storm" that is being generated by the alienating parasitical and prostitute nature the city has assumed. The tower fulfills its metonymic purpose in this multitude of images, many of them part of a naturalist report of city life:

> . . . there has often been confusion as to the function of the naturalist detail of so much allegory. . . . this detail now appears not to have a journalistic function; it is more than the mere record of observed facts. It serves instead the purposes of magical containment, since the more the allegorist

> can circumscribe the attributes, metonymic and synecdochic, of his personae, the better he can shape their fictional destiny. Naturalistic detail is "cosmic," universalizing, not accidental as it would be in straight journalism.[7]

The capitol's magical imagery and a character's ironical, deflating commentary are juxaposed, suggesting a conflict between illusion and reality:

> Out of the suburbs somewhere a long beam of light reached in to pick the white, globed dome of the capitol from the darkness. It was followed by another and another, until the dome floated like some cold, low-hanging planet. Gradually the light crept downward, over the sculptured frieze of the People of the World and lower, until the whole tower stood out tall and white and alone against the blue sky of evening. (CC, p. 6)

Sandoz disrupts the reader's appreciation of such a beautiful image with the harsh comments of a character named Coot, who in his direct, pithy comments throughout the narrative displays the ability of the artist in society. As his name indicates, he makes diving plunges and ferocious swoops upon meaning, no matter how much that meaning may be disguised in the depths of hypocrisy, much as a coot would bring up a fat fish from the murk of the water. Of the lighted capitol, Coot says,

> Well, there she sits, our capital city, the damned old prostitute. . . . Nothing but a damn, bloodsucking old parasite. Don't produce nothing, just living off the capitol

> and the university--and through them got a hand in every Goddamn pocket in the state. All taking and no giving. A prostitute--and worse--. (CC, p. 6)

The shift from descriptive beauty to ironic comment is jarring, an example of an allegorist's method of disrupting the reader's expectations of the narrative to call attention to the allegory:

> When a reader is reading the "literal level" (in traditional parlance), he is actually reading the "metaphorical" level--that is, he watches the imaginary action in his mind's eye: the landscape flies by, the pilgrimage goes on with its bustle. The only way to return a reader from imagining such a distracing "level" of action to thoughts about the significance this action ought to hold for him is to deny him the colorful journey.[8]

The comments of Coot are typical of the comments and events which steadily diminish the stature of the city of Franklin, allegorically representing the effect diminishing values have upon a society. Prostitution references appear in views of the Fall Festival:

> With rumble and blare the parade passed the capitol building and its statue of the seated Benjamin Franklin, weary and withdrawn, his heavy-lidded eyes looking down. . . .
>
> Slowly the parade crept on into the earlier city, past the old Kanawa Hotel, "A woman with every dollar room," on to the chamber of commerce building, the help out on the balcony by special permission for a view of the city's magnificence. (CC, pp. 15-16)

Sandoz pyramids evidence of the city as a prostitute and parasite. In Franklin, "gradually one factory after another had closed down, partly because of the general centralization of the last forty years. Yet many in smaller towns around kept going, even expanded." The response is immediate: "Perhaps the Franklinites found it easier just to live off the state through the capitol. Something like two thirds of Kanewa's annual budget of around twenty million dollars was spent here" (CC, pp. 275-76). The dependent nature of those who trade heavily on others' labor and the "instinctive fear of the parasite for the man who produces" (CC, p. 200) is accentuated by Sandoz. These reiterations of the "threshold text" constitute a constant commentary on that text:

> If we understand allegories to unfold as narrative investigations of their own threshold texts, we can see the relationship between allegory as narrative and allegory as critical commentary in a new, clearer light. The allegorical author simply does what the allegorical critic does; but /she/ writes a commentary on /her/ own text rather than someone else's. And /her/ "commentary" of course is not discursive, but narrative, a fact which complicates the matter but which does not detract from the simplicity of the shape.[9]

Sandoz's commentary in the character of Coot exposes the function and plight of the artist in society. Coot, as Asa Bruce Harcoot, built the first brick kilns in Franklin and established the Farmers National Bank, only to lose it all in the bank closings of the nineties. Discouraged though somewhat enlightened, he withdrew his utilitarian energies from society and chose to live as observer and commentator.

Coot's irony is invaluable to Sandoz's narrative, but her ideals call for action or commentary that leads to action. Sandoz may be remembering the criticism of her father, who considered "writers and artists the maggots of society,"[10] and expressing her own feeling that "every injustice in the world is partly your responsibility and that every step of progress is part of your right to take joy in"[11] when she creates a writer, Abigail Allerton. While Coot comments ironically on Franklin, Abigail produces an investigative book, the naturalistic reporting "circumscribing" Coot's metaphorical jabs.

Abigail, a name which means "thine handmaiden," is handmaiden to the city of Franklin with the revelations in her book, Anteroom for Kingmakers, a story of the political wheelings and dealings, and buying and selling that took place in the old Frontier Hotel. She is also handmaiden to the allegory, as her last name, Allerton, indicates, because she lays open the corruption by business lobbyists of the state legislators who visited their hospitality rooms in the hotel, where "all the major sell-outs of Kanewa prior to the period of utility expansion took place. . . . an honest legislator, like an honest senator, was one who stayed bought" (CC, p. 144). The danger of legislative corruption in any society is called to the reader's attention. Though Franklin turns against Abigail for her exposures, Sandoz ironically turns the city back to fawn on her when her story is purchased for a motion picture, even to restoring her place on the faculty of Kanewa University. Abigail's colleague comments, "There was more the author might have told" (CC, p. 151), a statement Sandoz may have been making about her own discretion in Capital City, suggesting it is a frank but restrained commentary on society. Sandoz's sister, Caroline, said,

> . . . Mari was never one to create a circumstance or an incidence. Every tale she tells, every sordid incident, can be found in counterpart among the people that she knew. Even allegories are based on truth. . . .
>
> Mari did not fear the law for she felt she was well within the truth, but she knew the danger of wounded vanity, and so she always told a little less than the real life situation, no matter how poignant nor acid.[12]

In constructing her narrative, Sandoz makes her commentary by using what she called an "over-the-shoulder" point of view or "seeing /the/ story from /the/ vantage point of a character's shoulder, and dipping into his mind as wished."[13] With the city itself as her main character and subject of her "threshold image," Sandoz is often peering over the city's shoulder. On the night of the coronation (one of Sandoz's burlesques of the pretensions of society), the "hot, dusty streets were thick with cars all the way from Grand Vista Country Club out on Boulder Heights down to Silver City, the Coney Island of the Middle West; from the prairie villas along Blue Ridge across to the squatter shacks in Herb's Addition" (CC, p. 3).

Sandoz pictures the streamline trains as an image of power and luxury when "with short, hoarse whistles of warning they swept past the blocked highways toward the smoky old depot, running easy and smooth as oil--the special trains for the Fall Festival and the annual coronation of the emperor and empress of the land of Kanewa" (CC, p. 4). While,

> in the business section, neon signs came on, a flashing of red and yellow on top of the Buffalo Hotel, a steady green over the Franklin National Bank, with Hammond's the Finest

> Store of the Middle West, lengthened far above the other buildings by its vertical stripes of cold, steady blue neon from street to roof. (CC, p. 6).

Bits of the city map intersperse the narrative until the story is saturated with the streets, the buildings, the heights and depths of its geography, and allegorically, the heights and depths of its aspirations. The reader can look,

> down upon Philadelphia Avenue that ran through the capital city from Boulder Heights and Blue Ridge almost to the Polish bottoms, swung around the university and the fairgrounds and then straight away past the reformatory to the penitentiary. All together it was called Horseshoe Boulevard, with one end at the ridge and the other at the prison, and the lower Franklinites liked to say that many a man had seen both of them. (CC, pp. 13-14)

The details of the city begin to be seen as a commentary on the people in the city. The relation of various parts of the city expresses the hierarchical structure and the location of power. The detail also reveals the distortion of human relationships as they are forced into that structure, demonstrating allegorically the danger of such a disjunction in the healthy functioning of society. The beginnings of corruption are allied with the moneyed class:

> . . . out on Blue Ridge headlights began to move away from cocktail parties and string up Boulder Heights, named for Clem Boulder, an early register of deeds. Old Clem had falsified his books and sold the hogback he didn't own to

> the country club. After his departure, and a painful second purchase, the clubhouse was finally built and called Grand Vista because it overlooked the unhurrying ditch through Mud Creek Sink that was called Little Grand River. The man's name stuck with the heights. (CC, p. 9)

And the chicanery of the transaction stuck with the upper class, Sandoz indicates, for the name of the new emperor of Kanewa was kept secret until the crowning "since an emperor-elect landed in jail by coronation day for tricks with the paper of his bank" (CC, p. 9).

The buildings in the city represent people in a particular social strata, with the allegorical impact of that strata. The mansions on Blue Ridge concentrate the force of power; the Labor Temple, the force of those in struggle for power; and the shacks and caves of Herb's Addition, the force of disillusioned impotence. The disintegrative force of impotent citizens is as operative on a society as the forces of power, and presents one of the allegorical dangers of society. In Sandoz's narrative the totalitarian forces feel Herb's Addition must be destroyed, calling into question the economic and social implications of this strata in society--that it exists, that it is a threat to some. The Labor Temple on the parade route, "its high steps full of watchers too, overalled men, broad, strong, many youngish . . . striking truckers" (CC, p. 16), represents the strata of society in struggle for power, a struggle which exists potentially in every society where police may use "billies and blackjacks on their picket lines" (CC, p. 16).

The fairgrounds are the symbol for the farmers and farm communities of outstate Kanewa and are filled with,

> many women with curled heads and new fall hats, only the sunburnt faces of the children at their heels suggesting that they might be from the farm. . . .
>
> There were farmers too, some with thirty, forty years at the plow behind them, sunburnt, walking heavily, heads down and eyes on the ground, in the habit of men with their earth. (CC, pp. 29-30)

They are immediately stripped of any dignity by Sandoz in an acid reference to the,

> sifting of townspeople among the visitors, too, complaining of the crowd, as though it weren't real money in their pockets, and of the heat and the dust. . . . the Franklinites [were] genteelly condescending or openly amused at the hick holiday, as a gay and nimble flea might observe the clumsy gambolings of a sheep dog at the end of a heavy day. (CC, p. 30)

The nightclub, El Troc, in Sandoz's description of its inauspicious beginnings, represents the aspirations of Franklin's middle class, based on economic risk and a desire to use others to step higher:

> In the market speculation days the new Grand Vista clubhouse looked so magnificently down upon the lesser folk of the city that two more country clubs were organized, and plans accepted for buildings and financing, one in semi-Algerian, the other in Southwest Spanish. One . . . was completed during the fading promises of the 1920's. . . . But the market went before they got the cracks in the swimming pool tarred. (CC, pp. 88-89)

Sandoz includes a group that is closer to their roots as an antidote to Franklin's parasitical way of life. The location of this strata is "Little Warsaw," the home of the Polish people of the alkali bottoms, a people "industrious and adaptable. They were the first to take advantage of the FHA loans to improve their homes. They changed readily from brick hands into good green workers, sodders, planters, and yard men" (CC, p. 84). Their connection with the soil, like the farmers at the fair, indicates their tie with reality, and the narrative fact that they "planted and nursed the lawns and gardens of the city, the finest between Denver and the Mississippi" (CC, p. 84), refers allegorically to the beauty of truth this kind of integrity can bring, even to a stricken society.

Franklin, true to Sandoz's structure, uses and exploits the Poles, preventing them from being more than hosts for the financial and physical appetites of Franklin business and Franklin businessmen:

> Their energetic wives took over the office buildings when six o'clock came; they did much of the sewing and most of the fine laundry of the town. But there wasn't much opportunity for the younger ones, those who wanted to be American, with American work in stores, and offices and banks. (CC, p. 84)

Some wealthy Franklin men expand this parasitical encroachment on the Polish people. Sandoz's examples of metaphorical metamorphoses depict this seduction of value, for "many of the girls had fur coats," taking on the covering of an animal nature, "beauty-parlor curls close-clustered as sleeping caterpillars" suggesting the development of the voracious mouth of a feeding larva, and "several even managed leopard-skin coats, the current successor to grey squirrel for kept ladies in the capital

city" (CC, p. 84), an acceleration of rapaciousness. In the narrative this is a sad, though not surprising, situation, but in the allegory it becomes a terrifying engulfment and corruption of the highest values of society.

The suicide of a "coronation duke" during the coronation ceremonies opens the narrative, illuminating another aspect of this phenomena of prostituting and parasitical behavior. This business man is a decent but weak man, and he has found his only value and comfort with a Polish woman. The fact that this has not saved him from self-destruction emphasizes the perverted perception that Franklinites share in the matter of incorporating value into their own lives. Their grasping for value results in illicit coupling, not in fulfillment. With the selection of a Polish woman as beauty queen, Sandoz brings the citizens of Franklin into this warped search for vitality, a vitality they find only through others and not in themselves.

Almost all couple relationships in Capital City are unhappy. Sandoz suggests that conditions of integrity and trust must exist for healthy relationships. A bedfast man and the scrub woman who care for him in their shack in Herb's Addition are exceptions (and he is killed in the destruction of that area). There are tentative promises for future happiness for some at the close of the book, but the direction of allegorical action clouds even this possibility.

The center of degenerative descent in Franklin is Blue Ridge, where the wealthy have their homes. Blue Ridge rises out of the city like some giant bloated tick, the opulence of the mansions the epitome of parasitic glut. In the description of the rebuilt mansion, Welleshaven, Sandoz scores the marriage of money and irresponsible greed.

Welleshaven swells with,

> thirty-nine rooms, eight baths, and a stone court, the whole thing painted buttermilk white with the iron grille fencing around the grounds and across the second-floor balconies, front and back, white too. . . . and others besides the Okies of Herb's Addition took to calling the house The Wedding Cake. (CC, p. 287)

The parasitical infection of all Franklin is blazoned on a sign that the labor element carries in the parade:

> In the center of the group half a dozen men carried a long white sign at least ten feet high between them, giving the shrinking income of the state since the World War, the shrinking production of Franklin, and the sharply rising amount of tax money spent in the city. And under it, in flaming red letters, was the line: BLOODSUCKING CAPITAL CITY! (CC, p. 171)

In the founding of Herb's Addition, obstensibly for benevolent purposes, Sandoz develops a metaphor for the underlying sickness of Franklin. The founder willed the land to the "Knights of the Road," people of little economic value to Franklin, and "left plans and money for the building and upkeep of a shelterhouse, with heat, water, and toilet facilities, and a penny coffee and doughnut corner" (CC, p. 112). This generous gesture has been made out of pique rather than goodwill, with economic revenge as motive, for the bequest was the result of the city's "one big land feud" (CC, p. 109). The donor punished the city for

legalizing a garbage dump between his land and the city (to profit another landowner). The bequest declared that "Within this forty-acre park outside the city limits no one should ever be questioned or disturbed except for criminal offense" (CC, p. 112).

With Herb's Addition, Sandoz not only ironically comments on the history of economic greed in Franklin but also allegorically condemns the use of the dispossessed as pawns in a material struggle. The end is not sufficient to excuse the means. The residents, in some "thirty shacks" and a "half a dozen dugouts and caves" (CC, p. 113), are considered parasites by the community, an inverse scapegoating of their own sins, and "there were protesting letters to the papers, and denunciatory editorials about the festering sore at the gateway of the noble city of Franklin" (CC, p. 112).

The location of Herb's Addition on the "clay slope from Stone House almost to the Polish bottoms" (CC, p. 112), places this community between the value-oriented Polish area and the real "festering sore" of Franklin, the Stone House on the crest of Grandview Hill, visited by "cars full of men in dark tan uniforms--Gold Shirts, it was said" (CC, p. 10). The location of the three areas shows by geographic progression the city's passage from the immigrant's and settler's hopes and ideals to the virulency of fascism, a passage encouraged by economic aggression and exploitation.

The juxaposition also serves Sandoz's allegorical concept of the continual struggle between freedom and oppression, with Herb's Addition representing those who relish their independence, even in dire circumstances, and Stone House, the gathering place for those filled with hatred and committed to a violent coercion of others to fill their own needs. The firing of Herb's Addition by the forces of Stone House warns

of the destruction a society that allows and fosters aggression must face.

Geographical and architectural detail allegorically establish the hierarchical relationship of the elements in Franklin:

> As a conceptual instrument allegory makes possible a cosmic view of the intrinsic relationships of all objects and beings, each of which, by attribute or action, discloses in respect to itself the typical likeness and unlikeness in every other object and being.[14]

Sandoz employs the geography of the city to aid allegorical concepts, while in the narrative geography continues its mimetic function. Blue Ridge and its Welleshavens are contrasted not only with Herb's Addition but also with the Polish bottoms and the Labor Temple, as "concept allegory serves to define or devise states of separateness and togetherness, oppositions and unities." Yet the narrative proceeds with its story line, and "in the practical completion of its design, the allegorical work dispenses with the concept of allegory, as something preconceived, in order to achieve the fullest fictional manifestation of life." Sandoz's city and her characters interact in a vital narrative, though allegorically symbolic, for "allegory, which is symbolic in method, is realistic in aim and in the content of its perception."[15]

Characters delineate the geographical sections of the city, showing in detail its parasitical nature in action (and reaction to what little resistance is shown). In the narrative action of the Gold Shirts, Sandoz demonstrates their virulence and the terminal nature of their will-to-power. The "goose-stepping Gold Shirts" in the parade "shake threatening fists

toward the hecklers." When someone yells the name of "the secondhand dealer whose windows were broken twice the last month, a Gold Shirt or two broke step" (CC, p. 16). The labor striker's legal Labor Day parade to the capitol is broken up by "clubs of police chopping like axes, crunching flesh and bone, the deputies jeering, swearing, their guns ready in their hands," and the reader is alerted to "some of the deputies that looked like Gold Shirts" (CC, pp. 35,38).

With the assertation by some that the Gold Shirts "were really a fine thing. . . . They were doing for the young men what boy scouting did for the sprouts" (CC, p. 40), Sandoz ties the action of her city to the formation of fascist youth groups and cadres that some European cities fostered in the 1930's. In several incidents Sandoz shows that the city is beyond effective reaction to even vivid manifestations of unchecked power. Boys who went up to check out the long vacant Stone House return with "cut heads, black eyes, and fright-guarded tongues" (CC, p. 68), and two refugee children are killed in a hit and run accident whispered to be the work of a man "to be promoted at Stone House" (CC, p. 128). The driver is never apprehended, "And ain't nothing going to be done about it. The police, they got their orders" (CC, p. 128). When a young man is found "tied to a tree, a gag in his mouth, his back blood-crusted and swollen from a clubbing, with three teeth knocked out and his jawbone broken from a kick in the face" (CC, p. 228), the Franklin papers "minimized the incident as student hazing, a little extreme, to be sure, as hazings sometimes were" (CC, p. 228).

Sandoz's culmination of her story with the Gold Shirts giving orders to the national guardsmen becomes the inevitable end of a complex progression indicting most of Franklin, guilty either by their overt

action or their unwillingness or inability to stem that action at its origin. Allegorically the concentric circles of a vulnerable government widen as far as government itself exists. Sandoz has "extended her graph" in the allegory as well as in the narrative.

In extending that graph, Sandoz constructs by nature images a seasonal context within which she depicts the ongoing disintegration of the city in its economic, political, and social life. Natural cycles, beginning in the late summer and progressing through autumn and into winter, suggest that parasiticism and decay may be followed by regeneration. Sandoz offers the hope of regeneration (even in the midst of a pessimistic realism), expressing her hope that her allegory might alert the reader to the need for awareness and action and renewal of human institutions.

In her first paragraph Sandoz connects the land, which renews itself in continuous cycle, and the constructions of humankind, which must be maintained to retain their shape and form as envisioned. She describes the surroundings of the capital city, where "On both sides of the alkali bottoms the breaks climbed away to wide farming tables, their canyons pushing deep through the fertile pasture lands, gullying the sun-browned stubblefields, washing the rich corn ground to the clay. The scattering of old trees along the fence line were peeling," and in concluding this sentence, "many of the weathered farmsteads stood bleak-eyed and empty," Sandoz brings in the human, mortal element (CC, p. 3). People have built and left these farm homes, and the buildings will not renew themselves as the land does, nor do human institutions have a regenerative nature, unless human beings will guard those things of value to them. And while Sandoz's narrative follows the calendar months with the events that will culminate in disaster, in her allegory there is always the conflict between freedom

and the forces which would deny freedom, for allegory knows no calendar.

In the narrative, "the actual time is brief enough--from a night in September when the socially elect of Franklin are gathered to celebrate the annual coronation of an Emperor and Empress of Kanewa," a group representative of those who leech off others, "to a November day distinguished by the final election returns," an election that reveals how far the decay has reached into the citizens not only of Franklin, but of Kanewa. There is "a big home-coming football game," an example of escapism in the middle of events that are leading to disaster, and "a pitched battle between striking truck drivers and armed strikebreakers, ably assisted by the Gold Shirts and a detachment of the National Guard,"[16] bringing into existence the armed state toward which the events have been irrevocably moving with no significant opposition.

Sandoz punctuates the coronation with a description that brings the reality of the natural world into the make-believe world of the society of the capital city:

> At last the coronation night was done, and the slow morning on its way. Gradually the noise died from the highways and the wind over the dry cornfields quieted into the grey silence of dawn, the shallow dawn of the flatlands, with bright day striking swift as an arrow through every east window. Even the cows chewing quietly in the gullies swallowed their cuds half-finished and stood up to eat, for the sun was suddenly in their eyes. (CC, p. 25)

At times Sandoz's nature metaphors maintain the contact of the urbanite with a more natural and whole world, a regenerative world valued in the allegory. When a business man,

> established his first two-pump gas station at the edge of Franklin, he was welcomed as new money coming into a town that had seen it going the other way a long, long time. But lately he was branching out fresh and lively as bindweed in a clover patch, and finally some of the Franklinites began to inquire a little. (CC, p. 53)

Bindweed is uncontrolled growth threatening a cash money crop, the image fitting the parasitical pattern of Franklin. In another context the thought of a lost love lies with one man "as the memory of a lost June sun lies in the frozen heart of January" (CC, p. 86). The renewal of love will not come again as June surely will, Sandoz indicates, unless it is through human action, and a concern of the allegory is to motivate action.

The seasons are allied with the events of the community, fortelling the dying of the society as well as the dying of the year. Nature is in unity with the diseased affairs of society, yet in contrast because of its power of organic regeneration. Not only does winter threaten the new crop as "two days of a leaning wind cleared the air, swept the scattered trees naked as dead November, and cracked the earth around the new wheat" but it also reflects the drear conditions of business and "Down in the capital city the shadows were lengthening early across Philadelphia Avenue, and a small grey wind collected bits of paper into deserted doorways, many empty since the Harding days" (CC, p. 233).

Sandoz couples the first snow and the fire that destroys Herb's Addition, thus joining the inevitability of snow and the inevitability of disaster in the exploitive climate of Franklin. It also mimics the illusionary veiling of realities that cannot be ignored or wished away. Disaster settles into the town like the snow settles "against the idle

taxi wheels while the drivers pulled up their collars and read of summer in their Western Story Magazines." And Franklinites are still unaware of their true situation as fire trucks race "toward Herb's Addition that seemed to be one bright blaze behind a veiling of powdery snow" (CC, pp. 298-99).

Sandoz's characters have a general unawareness of where parasitical infection begins or where it will end. The characters are secondary in the allegorical interpretation; the city is the main figure. Characters are subsumed under the general geographical categories.

A character who understands but does not act is Hamm Rufe. As passive protagonist in the narrative, Hamm alerts the reader to the need for action. One reviewer of Capital City claimed Sandoz had "little use for those liberals who waste their time trying to see both sides of a picture."[17] Sandoz's description of Hamm, "passing forty and shabby-neat in old suit pants and a laundried grey shirt" and "like his mother's people, clean-jointed, lean-flanked, men of decision and action" (CC, p. 5), creates an image that is as important to the allegory as to the narrative:

> But while both the energy and the coherence of the /allegorical/ work derive from the narrative, it is often through visual detail and imagery that the clarity of particular parts of the system and their connection with the whole is established.[18]

Sandoz bestows an outstanding feature on Hamm that allegorically represents the internal damage he has already suffered, as a blemish will appear on a wormy fruit: he had a "scar that cut across his left cheek and through the bridge of his nose, the stiff wrist broken by the

same blow--these also belonged to a man of action." The description also furthers Hamm's passive image, for "even the scar and the break had come to him as a spectator" (CC, p. 5).

Hamm Rufe's name has allegorical meaning: "Linguists have surmised that the custom of designating things by attributive names is the first evidence of metaphor in language."[19] A "ham" is an inexpert performer, someone less effective, less skilled, though "center stage." The word "rufe" is of doubtful origin and meaning, perhaps coming from "rof" meaning "valiant, stout, and strong." Sandoz has accented the ambivalence of Hamm's nature in both his description and name: he has the heritage of action, but it has become blighted. The reflection of the same traits in name, physical characteristics, and action assures the basically static nature of characters in an allegory. Like the elements they mirror, they have their assigned place in the conflict, with little opportunity for change.

Hamm's scar is a symbol of his ambivalence and extends in meaning to the source of that ambivalence, the wound of his alienation from his family and community. Ironically, the scar also protects him from recognition by his mother, Hallie Rufer Hammond, one of the city's richest and most powerful figures. Hamm is a chronic runaway, first as a child, then as a teen-age draft evader, and finally as an anonymous citizen--a man who could take his place in the city's power structure if he had the courage and will. Hamm is unable to face his family in honest struggle, or to live with integrity as Rufer Hammond. He represents those who, rather than fight, construct a wall against parasitical infection to prevent further personal damage.

An early challenge for Hamm is the material conservatism of his

father "who put up a five-story building, with full basement and electric lights throughout" (Franklin's largest department store, Hammonds) and "treated his wife's political radicalism with silence" (CC, p. 46). Sandoz creates the deepest scars for Hamm in his mother's change from the young wife who marched in a torchlight parade in opposition to McKinley imperialism, "with her two-year-old son, Rufer, tied safely to her back like a papoose," to the woman (when Hamm was nineteen and a pacifist) on the "county council of defense" (CC, p. 46). Hallie Rufer's vulnerability to the encroaching selfish and aggressive way of life in Franklin implies allegorically that any person is in danger of having his or her ideals co-opted by the insiduous growth of unchallenged perversions. And Hamm's flight rather than fight reaction demonstrates the disorienting result of disillusionment.

Sandoz's suggests in Hamm's grandfather, settler George Rufer, the same integrity and tie to reality that she portrays in the Polish of Little Warsaw. Hallie, his daughter, is an early "student" of Rufer's liberal thought and action, and "hallier" has that connotation. Rufer's character accentuates the ironic fate of his daughter, the "student" who became Hallie Rufer Hammond, wife of an ambitious business man and then, as widow, one of the "three old women who run the capital city" (CC, p. 12). The name, "Rufer," validates the "valiant, stout, and strong" of "Rufe," a corruption of "Rufer," just as Hamm's ability to act on principle has been corrupted despite the example of his grandfather. In the narrative the "old women" might naturally be expected to outlive their husbands and carry on their exploitive policies, but allegorically a generational progression of corruption has been exposed by Sandoz, the sons, grandsons of stalwart pioneers, too weakened to do more than carry out orders, flee, or die.

George Rufer, who has resettled from Philadelphia, states the original ideals of Franklin. He is guided in founding and naming the city by "old Ben's words on property's place in society" (CC, p. 46). The name George carries the connotation of heroism or founder, as in St. George or George Washington, and George Rufer is one of Sandoz's characters who backs the integrity of his ideals with action. After "there was agitation to name the capital city after someone besides a drunken sot, as the dry element called Franklin" (CC, p. 47), Rufer decides to act:

> Old George, sick and shaky on his feet, went down to see his lawyer to set up an endowment for the cramped capitol grounds: fifty thousand dollars for "Expansion of the capitol site in the city of Franklin" and a thousand dollars annually for its upkeep, provided that a large statue he would order were erected and maintained in a position "permanently available to the public." (CC, pp. 47-48)

George Rufer strikes to the center of Sandoz's arugument. The inscription on the statue states an ideal which Franklin, in its parasitical, draining ways has managed to reverse, and reverse beyond recall:

> Private property . . . is a creature of society and is subject to the calls of that society whenever its necessities shall require it, even to its last farthing . . .
>
> BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (CC, p. 48)

But when the capitol was built, there was a "wide span of unbroken lawn between the /inscription/ and the main business avenue of the capital

city" (CC, p. 48). And George Rufer was dead, as the spirit of the city which he had founded was dead. Alive were the descendents of the old independents, "only poor little roadside weeds swaying towards the dodder that would suck their blood and move over them to the next" (CC, p. 147).

Two other characters who model action in the service of ideals (for the reader) are Stephani Kolhoff and Carl Halzer. Stephani is the Polish wife of Hamm, separated from him because he can not operate in her world of action. In his days as a labor reporter,

> He went from one strife region to another; from one social ulcer to another, the outspoken Stephani called it. She went with him, always a part of the nation-wide, world-wide struggle; he never more than an observer, a bystander. (CC, p. 118).

Stephani rescued Hamm when he was struck down "as a sympathetic reporter" in a police strike in Boston by "a uniformed man [who] brought a rifle down two-handed, like a woodchopper's axe, across his face and the wrist" (CC, p. 116). Soon, in a shift of authority, it is Hamm who follows Stephani, a shift allegorically emphasizing the crucial difference between a leader and an onlooker:

> He went to all these places with Stephani, for long ago she had openly become the leader, as she really was from the moment she dragged him into her basement home. He was like those others born in Franklin, mere followers, his brother and all the others here, content with the feel of money flowing under their hands, their mothers' money, or their

> grandmothers',or someone much farther removed; even exhilarated by the movement, as though it were their own making, like the blanket of green plantlets rising and falling with the pulse of a turgid stream. (CC, p. 119)

When Stephani's active role brings her to Franklin to investigate the new farmer's organization in Kanewa, she finds Hamm still unable to take direct action. He is acting manager of the local co-op and doing some reportorial work for magazines, on the edge of action.

The other character of action, Carl Halzer, is as able to face personal danger in a time of need as Stephani (her name is the feminine version of Stephen, recalling the first Christian martyr). Halzer appears in a "time of need," at the moment in the Labor Day parade when "men with clubs and guns [were] jumping from the running boards upon the surprised, paralyzed marchers, who tried to shield their women, to fall back and keep out of trouble" (CC, p. 35). Again, Sandoz accentuates Hamm's passive role for: "The big flag-bearer went down, a woman too, her voice rising to a high shriek, and as a dozen times before in his life, Hamm Rufe wanted to run, to put his arm over his scarred face and run" (CC, p. 35). Sandoz directly juxaposes the action of Halzer, insisting on the immediate contrast between one who will not act and one for whom action is the only answer:

> Suddenly a big man came plowing through the crowd. His bushy hair, the brown of weathered wrapping paper, towered high over all the rest, his eyes dark and piercing under thick, sun-bleached brows. Pulling people aside as though parting bushes in his way, he halted between the guns of the

> advancing deputies and penned-in marchers. Defiantly he threw his overall jumper down before the officers. (CC, pp. 35-36)

Halzer is a man "who knew a citizen's rights and could see he got them" (CC, p. 36). Carl's physical description tallies with the meaning of his name, which is "strong, robust fellow," and his action suggests that "Halzer" may have some connection with "halberd," or battle axe. Halzer has been known in the state legislature as the "Bellowing Bull of Bashan," both for his strength and his willingness to speak loudly for his convictions. Halzer and Stephani are further linked in a note left them by Hamm, who intends one more disappearing act:

> Congratulations, and a long and happy life together, my two most beloved.
>
> HAMM (CC, p. 336)

With the embrace between Halzer and Stephani that accompanies the finding of the note, Sandoz satisfies a romantic development in the narrative, allegorically she unites these powers of action and elevates them as the acknowledged force for freedom. The death of Hamm, or the death of "inaction" was necessary to release this power.

Sandoz extends hope for the allegorical society by the election of Halzer to Congress, yet questions this hope, for a fascist governor has also been elected by the state of Kanewa. The conceptual framework of allegory is one of hierarchical values and possibilities. The certainties reside in the ranking of values, their stationary quality, and the ceaseless struggle of conflicting entities. Allegories "confront us with the perfection of certain ideals, the depravity of others."[20]

The existence of both stationary values (which are represented in the narrative with geography, architecture, and characterization) and of possibilities (which can be represented only by progression or change that varies from the pattern established) creates complexity:

> The two directions in which transformations may work in allegories, either toward greater freedom or toward imprisonment and fixity . . . reflect the paradox suggested in the common forms of allegorical action. The narrative form of many allegories appears to display incompatible tendencies: towards the repetition of structurally similar incidents, which produces the effect of immobility, and toward some kind of large-scale movement, which suggests the possibility of radical change.[21]

Hallie Rufer changes and toward the close of the narrative shows "progressive evolution, education, and enlightenment"[22] She still carries the name of Hammond but she has turned from her "quiet acquisition of business buildings and locations through foreclosures by the Kanewa Investment Company" (CC, p. 49), which she owns. She takes responsibility for the future by rebuilding Herb's Addition. Hallie's desire to protect the striking truckers at her warehouse (while most of Franklin is at the football game) is the fulcrum for the change in her son, Hamm. He finally takes action that places him in personal danger.

Sandoz's model for action, the "energetic, vital, partisan Stephanie," said to Hamm when they first part, "Maybe we all have to see somebody we love smashed down and killed before we can get mad enough to do anything. . . . When you see that, you will fight too, my beloved.

And perhaps it will not be too late" (CC, p. 119). For Hamm it is too late. He watches Hallie run "into two Gold Shirts stomping down men with their boot heels, swinging the butts of their rifles upon them" (CC, p. 342):

> "Here comes an old she-Red!" one whooped, and hit the woman across the shoulder with his gun. She went down on one knee, her sun goggles flying off. A man jerked her back, shouted a warning to her in a familiar voice as he tripped, the fall knocking a revolver from his hand. (CC, p. 342)

Hamm is killed with a blow from a rifle butt, a blow to his face, but not before Hallie has recognized him or the reader has recognized the heroism of his action. In an ironic touch, the mob is swept away by the victorious football fans streaming from the stadium, "the fighters were carried along like loose grass in a flood-roaring gully" (CC, p. 342), and Sandoz has combined the elements of escapism and violence in a vacuum of negation.

Space has been left for Sandoz's picture of Hallie, as she "wiped the blood from the crushed temple, the scarred cheek. . . . a face singularly untouched by life, the boyish face of Rufer Hammond" (CC, p. 343). Sandoz has created a scene with a haunting "Pieta" quality, recalling Christ and his mother, and "steadily the mother looked down upon it, her eyes long dried of their tears for this beloved first-born son" (CC, p. 343). Often "in allegory its characters acquire more meaning and power as the narrative proceeds, until they function almost like deities."[23] By their acts of heroism Sandoz has raised Hamm and Hallie to the level of Stephanie and Halzer,

indicating "deification" resulting from action taken in the preservation of ideals.

Sandoz culminates the scene and the book with the takeover by the Gold Shirts and the National Guardsmen, now under their command. They march to the capitol, yet the capitol looks much as always,

> . . . the white stone tower lifting its frieze of the Peoples of the World high into the clear, calm air of November. At the foot of the capitol the last rays of the sun gilded the outlines of the figure of Franklin and the granite plaque behind. (CC, p. 343)

The dissociation of action from ideals, the abandonment of "the calls of society," the parasitic degeneration have resulted in totalitarian control, and "from up the avenue, toward the hotel, came one faint burst of cheering" (CC, p. 343). Sandoz has led her reader to recognize that as "escapism," and to know it is not the direction to go.

Chapter IV

The Tom-Walker, "Roaring Against the Wind"

In The Tom-Walker, Mari Sandoz chose for her third allegorical theme "a study of the neurotic and psychopathic aspects of post-war society."[1] In this study she continues to explore the exploitation of society that results from greed, the danger of the drive for power by some individuals in that society, and the folly of an escapist reaction by others to such a threatened society. However, her primary focus is on the pernicious effect of war upon a society. War creates a public that demands "someone to make the lovely decisions that will bring back the war boom prices, war emotionalism, excesses and sensationalism, and war-time aggressions too, vaulting national boundaries as casually as a boy on stilts [tom-walkers] goes over a rut" (S to A).

Sandoz shows this effect in a narrative set in an area that stretches from Ohio to Wyoming,

> through a soldier of the Civil War returning with a leg amputated, his son bringing gassed lungs home from World War I, and his grandson from World War II carrying an inoperable piece of shell in the heart, so deep that the slightest movement of the metal could bring sudden death. (S to A)

Though the narrative deals with a section of the country quite familiar

to Sandoz, "She is not to be thought of as a regional writer in the narrow sense of the word. She herself remarked that her writing was not true "regionalism," for she was interested in human conflict, which, she felt, was much the same the world over."[2] Any society that has not understood the forces which generate and profit from war is a potential audience for her allegorical warning.

The narrative is a "study of these veterans, all more or less an embarrassment to their families and their communities, but on the allegorical level each man's injury symbolizes the war damage to his society" (S to A). As allegorist Sandoz "wants to communicate certain generalized formulations about the nature of human experience and the organization of the world and shapes /her/ narrative so as to reveal these gradually and persuasively to the reader."[3]

Sandoz accomplishes this revelation in three "books," each book relating the story of one of the soldiers. Milton Stone, the boy who returns with "the amputated leg from the Civil War /has/ an irreparable loss but plain to see" (S to A). He has been advised by a Spanish-American War veteran, "You'll hafta run home like the devil beatin' tan bar' the minit the shootin' stops if you want any flags flyin' for you, and folks not actin' like you been doin' a stretch in the pen."[4] But Milton's stay in the hospital spoils that plan and in his thoughts as he reaches home by rail, Sandoz poses him in his sincerity, his fears, and his vulnerability:

> All Milton had hoped for today was that Lucinda would be at the depot so he could tell her right off he wasn't holding her to a crutch-cripple, a one-legger, and give her back the little prayer book he carried down to the sea and

> around. Now the loafers would spread the bad news like a pup tearing home from a skunk killing. He should have written about the leg himself when he found out the hospital hadn't. . . . But the pain and misery was such a long dark cave, his handwrite almighty awkward to carry bad tidings, and his spelling, too. (TTW, p. 6)

The wry tone in the last of his thoughts is typical of Sandoz's stance in this third allegorical book. Her humor is ironic and often bitter. It carries a "we hurt so much we might as well laugh to ease the pain" message. In a letter shortly after finishing The Tom-Walker (in 1946), Sandoz wrote:

> . . . if my diagnosis of postwar society as not only unwilling to assume its responsibilities but even to face the fact that any exist is correct, the theme rather precludes easy acceptance by a cautious, postwar publisher, in spite of the humor and horseplay in the book.[5]

And she also told a friend, "there's fun in the book for those who won't see the implications."[6] For those who see the implications, Milton's reception by his fiance, family and community amount to outright rejection of the one-legged veteran. The visual sign of the missing leg reminds them of the atrocities of war, and returning veterans place an economic and psychological burden on society. Sandoz continues this depiction of rejection, evasion, and escapism in the second "book," when Milton's son Martin returns with "a gassed lung /which/ is less obvious but more damaging, an inner sickness that is more disturbing," and potentially more threatening to society (S to A). Society's reaction to Martin's return after World War I continues "the usual post-war

unwillingness to take up the burden of peace-time moderation and responsibility" (S to A). The mail carrier who gives him a lift from the station warns, ". . . Hain't no work if that's what you're after" (TTW, p. 145). His girl, who has been writing him "Lovingly, Ever yours, Nancy" (TTW, p. 144), is married and pregnant, "puffed out like a Frog featherbed, it seemed like more of the gas dreams, all the dope they gave him" (TTW, p. 147). While he is still reeling from this news a young boy asks him, "What's eatin' you, soldier? . . . Pa figgers all you fellers from war's a little bugs" (TTW, pp. 148-149), as even the young of society join the insensitive, scornful reaction pattern. Sandoz caps this reception with the disappointing reaction of Milton, Martin's father. Martin's memories go back to when,

> I'd lay in the hospital and think about him, a right guy, and now, night before last, he sets there talking about shooting the striking miners down for trying to hold onto a living wage, favors hiring thugs and gunmen against them, and he's the man who's been voting with the Pops and talking about sloughing out the teeth of every Pinkerton man with his pipe leg. (TTW, p. 151)

Martin's gassed lungs are not as obvious as Milton's missing leg. And Martin's reception is not one of outright horror and turning away from him as Milton's had been. The reaction to Martin results more from others' preoccupation with civilian life and civilian problems that leave him invisible, unseen, and unwanted. Milton's post-war world is one in which many wanted the war to continue until they had built their war profits to a comfortable level, while in Martin's

post-war world people would like for someone to "bring back the war boom prices" and make things all right for them. Their profiting from the war is less direct, less gross, more denied.

In the third "book" Sandoz projects the ultimate danger in post-war psychosis, an inevitable move toward atomic destruction. Martin's son, a second Milton, returns from battle with a more dangerous wound and though "the punctured heart of the second world war is invisible too," it is far more deadly (S to A). Society is not moved to effective concern even with the threat of the atom bomb, the "momentary death hanging over an unaware, escapist world" (S to A) that is Sandoz's allegorical equivalent for Milton's wound. Young Milton also arrives home late from the war, his wound received not in battle but on a reclamation study in China while still in service, "A fine opportunity for a boy from the high plains, he cabled Hazel" (TTW, p. 280). Sandoz jabs at pre-war isolationism:

> The Chinese interpreter found their equipment wrapped in an old Chicago newspaper that denounced the war as Roosevelt Imperialism, and here they were, those imperialistic American soldiers. So he killed two of them over the breakfast fire and put a bullet into Milton. . . . (TTW, p. 280)

Milton's return is an escalation of the preoccupation and escapism that dominated his father's generation:

> First there was Hazel, changed from a bright, pretty girl, in love with the romance of a soldier husband off to the war, into a handsome young woman, cool and aloof in her

> shining hair, and calmly looking out for herself and her daughter, as she had these four years. (TTW, p. 285)

Young Milton has to listen to Martin complain, as Martin had listened to Old Milton. Martin's gripes are about the "foolish shortages and restrictions" that have slowed work on the new house, "Damned expensive, too. . . . Not that they couldn't afford it, but every stick would have been paid for if the A-bomb had held off another six months" (TTW, p. 291). Alienated and out of work, young Milton finds himself,

> in the faded overalls of a choreboy, thin and sunburnt, his mustache gone as not fitting to his new life that was somehow as unmanning as the old instinctive mutilations of combat: the ironed bootheel in the crotch of the fallen enemy, the stallion whirling to kick, the bull with his lifting gore. (TTW, p. 284)

Sandoz has reiterated the rejection of the veteran and the unconcern of society for either his or their own plight. The complexities of the post-World War II America and the enormity of the possibilities for aggression are developed in this third "book," and they make the efforts of the few who are aware seem doomed to frustration and defeat:

> Once post-war society was open to graft and corruption from any big-promising public facade offering escape from mundane reality but after World War II the demagog anywhere could grasp the ultimate power of blackmail with the atom bomb. (S to A)

And this is what happens at the conclusion of The Tom-Walker. Sandoz expresses her mortal concern in the action of one of her characters, a

"demagogue" who as senator takes over the nation with the threat of a bomb: allegorically his action is the domination of the world by an aggressive nation, an action Sandoz hoped publication of The Tom-Walker might help prevent. She replied to a correspondent,

> Yes, I'm disturbed, too, about the world, as your letter shows you to be. Because it seemed that I must add my little to the fight, I've written a novel . . . of three men who return with three wars won . . . even before they get home, the purposes of the war were already cast aside, the victory sold.[7]

Because Sandoz brings each man home from the war a tardy soldier (representing the ideals for which the war was fought and the damages sustained by society in the larger context of that conflict), his return lags behind the initial flush of victory. The cool reception he receives reflects the quickly fading nature of the conquering hero image, the accompanying evanescence of any national interest in or agreement on ideals. There is a concerted resentment of the destruction and dislocation caused both by the war and the ending of the war. In the narrative Sandoz's soldiers bear the burden of this disillusionment, as though distilling it from the agitation around them, while the nation (and allegorically the world) moves toward atomic disaster.

Each returning soldier is beset by memories, and, as is so often true in allegory, "The main direction of the action is . . . signalled at the outset."[8] Sandoz fills their thoughts with nostalgia and the recognition of change, emotions shared by the society in general, emotions productive of fear and rejection. Milton Stone returns by rail from the Civil war hospital in which he has recuperated, watching

now the adjacent Ohio River that he knew so well in his youth: "There was only a scattering of larger craft on the river now: a white galleried boat or two moving slowly against a reluctant scarf of water" (TTW, p. 3). This symbol of a slow-moving society has been replaced by "flatboats, rafts, dugouts and other stragglers /which/ were as thick as waterbugs, the biggest run since the stampede for the frontier at Lincoln's first call for men five years ago" (TTW, p. 3). The image of waterbugs, a quick darting insect, contrasts with Sandoz's first image of stately steam-powered craft and introduces the feeling of change that leads to her next image. As Milton's train passes, "the stench of engine smoke hung long after the last blueness was gone" (TTW, p. 3), and the rapid progression towards the west as well as to industrial power has been indicated by the progression of images. Bugs and stench are not positive images.

The first rejection of Milton is a hidden one, as Sandoz prefigures what will be an increasing subtlety in the rejection of each soldier, reflecting the way the society increasingly protects itself from its rejection of its war aims and its inability to pursue the heart of those aims in the won peace. A girl had been "hurrying up the back path behind the row of blooming lilacs as the train neared," an allegorical symbol for the naivete of the old culture with its refinements and expectations, but when she sees that "the soldier was leaning on a crutch and that one britches leg was folded over high above the knee," she turns and runs back down the path (TTW, p. 3). Milton's rejection by his parents is more direct and brutal, for they represent the societal element that has profited from the war. They are dismayed at the diminishing of their profits.

Sandoz uses military images and idiom in Milton's thought and speech (as she does with each soldier), as though he cannot drop the impression of war any more than those at home can accept the changes from the war and its ending. In meeting his parents, Milton cringes in thought, "Now the time for the bad news faced Milton like a Reb position to be taken by naked steel" (TTW, p. 11). His father is like an enemy:

> "Why, you damn clamp-mouth young scalawag! Coming home a legless cripple!--sneaking in like a whipped cur!" he roared. "Or did your mother encourage this fraud, this breech of filial duty?" (TTW, p. 11)

Even belated sympathy is accompanied by, "If that damned Johnson wasn't such a goddamned Reb himself, or if the war could have lasted another year, been stretched out even six months--" (TTW, p. 12).

Milton's son Martin's homecoming after World War I follows this pattern of rejection, but here Sandoz uses a rejection of ideas, of philosophy, in old Milton's reaction to his son, "--more like walking into a land mine. First off his father had done a complete backdown from everything he used to preach" (TTW, p. 151). Using the military idiom again, Sandoz has internalized the process of rejection, has changed it from a surface greed reaction to a perversion of understanding of reality. She has also added an element of viciousness to the soldier's reaction, diplayed in Martin's inability to accept the sight and fact of "his girl," Nancy, pregnant, with two small children and a husband. Like Milton's father, she and her surroundings become an enemy position:

> So he left, the young woman standing at the door of the

> house made of cement blocks molded to look like gray stone. And when the ragged little dog came running after, to smell his heels in friendliness, Martin whirled and kicked him in the belly with the expertness of an infantryman taking out a Heinie. In sudden exultation he ran after the dog, kicking him again and again, until he lay a helpless and broken lump of hide and bone while Nancy screamed her anger from the porch. (TTW, p. 148)

Many of the expressions and actions in The Tom-Walker are rough, crude, and brutal; they assault the reader. Sandoz represents the times and people of which she wrote. Also "only allegories directly ask 'Do you want to put this part in?' implicitly querying at the same time 'And what does it say of you that you want to put it in or leave it out?'" The reader is challenged by Sandoz's idiom, recognizing a "weighty self-consciousness not merely at the end of the narrative but at each stage of the reading experience where the text constantly invites and then exposes the reader's imposition of meaning."[9] Martin's experience introduces a new level of frustration and impotence. There is growing complexity in integrating ideals with social reality. Martin's father's reactions to frustration were fierce, but not unexpected--Milton's response to his cousin's "Furthermore, I do not care to bandy words with an uncouth, inebriated bluecoat cripple," was:

> "Oh, so you don't bandy words with a bluecoat crip? No, by God, but you took good care to see you stopped no bullets, you goddamn bounty puke!" he said, and knocked his fist in his cousin's mouth, short, neat and quick, as he had learned in the

> army, leaving Sumner gap-mouthed, spitting bloody teeth. (TTW, p. 19)

The directness of Milton's action in punching an assailant and the indirectness of Martin's action in kicking a defenseless dog to death to express the anger he felt towards Nancy are a contrast that suggests a progression in internalizing and redirecting anger. Milton II faces further neurosis, frustration, and repression (symbolized by his need to avoid excitement because of his wound). Milton punches "a pink-skinned, dude-shirted publicity man from New York" (TTW, p. 288):

> So Milton had hit him, just once, with a left, but Pinkie went down like a sack of potatoes. It bent Milton too, in a clutch of pain, but straightening himself against it, he stumbled out through the watching crowd, the sweat suddenly heavy and cold on his face. (TTW, p. 288)

Milton's reactions after that incident center around inaction, acquiescence, and internalization of violence. He cannot reply to Martin's explanation ". . . I was like you fellows then. Coming back from the wars, you won't face things as they are, reality, as the docs call it. You probably won't for ten, twenty years" (TTW, p. 293):

> Milton could only look down at his GI shoes. So his father had had to accept it after all, the point of view old Milt offered him on his return, and Hiram and old Sarah to Milt before that. It was almost like the day he had to watch his father walk down the Argonne road. (TTW, p. 294)

Martin left for the psychiatric hospital the day he walked "down the

Argonne road," no longer able to control his fits of violence. Now young Milton has to accept frustration and impotence. Milton marvels over the changes the dam and irrigation have made in the farm, many of them implemented by him before he left for war. His younger brother, Marty, cuts him short,

> "I guess we had about enough of that kind of stuff, like tunneling under the Divide down in Colorado, and that talk about damming the Missouri. But with the power companies buying up big space in all the papers, we'll get it stopped. Time we got to doing for ourselves, individual initiative. . . ." (TTW, p. 294)

Again Sandoz shows Milton pulling his punches:

> Only long GI'ing helped Milton hold his hand from his brother, kept him from reminding Marty that under individual initiative this was a string farm--as life still was over so much of the earth, with the gamble of drouth and flood and handtilling on remote, impoverished lands. (TTW, p. 294)

Sandoz felt that turning away from what she saw as cooperative use of resources to aid the land's productivity was a mistake. She wrote to a friend:

> Other peoples all over the world are wise enough to profit from our more liberal thinking, from our develpment of things like TVA, etc., while we are discarding them. TVA is in for serious, perhaps total curtailment in congress this spring. In Nebraska the hydros and REA were crippled last year. And

> constantly men from as far as Asia come to Nebraska to try to learn some of the Know-how.[10]

In despair for the plight of veterans she wrote another friend, "First we send them out to die for our mistakes of the postwar period, then we give them no homes, and now no future--."[11]

Young Milton's return introduces the greatest danger to the future in a way that emphasizes both his damaged heart and the deadly atomic threat to society. As he looks out the plane window he sees that,

> the island of Manhattan was suddenly gone, a great, gray gold-burnt cloud rising over it, rolling, billowing upward, mushrooming into the sun. Automatically the soldier clapped a hand to his eyes, the lump under his patch of ribbons turning in his breast, sharp, cutting his breath. It had come, the sudden, monstrous thing. (TTW, p. 267)

Perverted double meaning of nature imagery suggests the perversion of societal meaning: it is only "a foolish boll of sun-limned fog drifting away over Long Island now that the plane swung west. The young soldier wanted to laugh, sheepish as a pants-filling repple. . . ." (TTW, pp. 267-68), the unnatural, grotesque and evil vision laid to rest for the moment. Milton must come to terms with his injury as his society needs to face the possibility of atomic destruction. In the process of compromise, each veteran depicts allegorically the dangerous tendencies of post-war society.

The first Milton's amputated leg is as evident as the Civil War destruction of land and property, representing the severance of many ties. Milton's struggle to find a substitute for his leg results in several botched "solutions," much as the reconstruction efforts after

the Civil War were marred by ignorance and mishandling. Milton's name can be understood in its Teutonic background of "mill town," or the early industrial society. Sandoz's use of the surname, "Stone," sets the three veterans up as boundary markers or memorials of events, the first use of stones. Stone is also of an enduring nature, and the Stones are survivors, if sufferers.

Milton suffers the efforts of his mother, Sarah, to fit him to an expensive artificial leg, though with his crutch he had learned to vault "as fast as some great tom-walking giant" (TTW, p. 52), but the stump got raw to festering; all the old pain of the malahacked leg came back" (TTW, p. 51). Milton whittles a wooden peg leg for himself, emphasizing the make-do qualities of the society:

> To Milton the whole difficult time since he left the hospital, all the misery and confusion everywhere, seemed somehow tied in with the loss of his leg. Everything done blind and foolish: the expensive rubber leg Sarah sold for five dollars; the soldiers faunching around to get started again, keep alive; the thousands pulling out West--all makeshifts, awkward as his peg leg. Like his tom-walker, as those who saw him vault puddles and picket fences called it. (TTW, p. 69)

The tom-walking image is used by Sandoz in a "vaulting over troubles" sense, both for Milton in the narrative, and allegorically to indicate the "leaping ahead of calamity" stance of the depressed post-war society. Milton finally consummates his marriage in a campside scene. Lucinda makes a thoughtless comment that nearly drives him away, but "Feeling scurvy-mean about going without a say why, or anything, he turned the

girl toward him." Finding her crying, Milton,

> . . . wiped his fingers gently over /the tears/ and kissed them away, shyly at first, ashamed, and then her eyelids too, and her lips, her throat, until his months of pain and misery seemed forgotten, all the confusion, the humiliation of his return melted away, and something grew great within him until he felt powerful and gigantic, a tom-walker to stride the world. (TTW, p. 50)

Sandoz signals a new meaning for the tom-walker when Milton acquires a piece of pipe for a leg: Milton becomes what "he himself would have called a goddamn crip, one who used his mutilation against the world, either as an appeal to its pity and shame, or as a means of aggression" (TTW, p. 86). Milton's new found "roaring against the wind" allegorically represents the aggresive stance of the country:

> ". . . It is like he find all at once the sunrise in the pocket,: the Old Country blacksmith said to the loafers watching the peddler swing his pipe leg up to the seat of his medicine wagon.
>
> "Or an old soldier who's just cut a new set of teeth on bar lead."
>
> "Yeh, well, maybe a lot of other folks is goin' do the same. Looks like the whole country's gettin' ready to rise up, come fall election time." (TTW, p. 86)

The "rising up" never accomplishes reforms, for even in the Senate "Anybody can get in with money enough to buy up a few legislators"

(TTW, p. 98), and cartels begin operating abroad at the expense of American labor and markets. Sandoz's portrayal of tom-walking gains another meaning, an allegorical expression of "America's spreading like a Goliath since the war, talking over wires strung out, harnessing the lightning for our lamps, sending messages clear under the sea, and vaulting the continent on steam trains fast as the wind" (TTW, p. 104). The reader is reminded of Sandoz's epigraph:

> "But none can escape the Paphlagonian, his eye is everywhere. And what a stride! He has one leg on Pylos and the other in the Assembly; his rump is exactly over the land of the Chaonians, his hands are with the Aetolians and his mind with the Clopidians.
>
> --DEMOSTHENES
>
> THE KNIGHTS: ARISTOPHANES

The common people "get less to eat, maybe without so much as a sod roof over them. . . . No reaper or sewing machine saves their backs" (TTW, p. 105), for all they have are their tom-walking, tall-tale dreams.

Sandoz develops Milton as a tall-tale legend in his own time, "old Iron Leg on the western routes" (TTW, p. 87), indicating Americas's hunger for heroes and the perpetuation of certain values via the uniquely American tall tale, values of accomplishment, grandeur, and bravery:

> By now his name and the exploits of his leg had spread from Kansas to Dakota. It was told that he could bat a rock so high it fell in a shower of meteors 'way over Colorado and set the range afire; could jump the Missouri

> and back without touching the ground on the far side, and with a little oiling he would surely drive off the eclipse coming the twenty-ninth of July. (TTW, p. 105)

Milton's son Martin resents the Old Iron Leg stories about his father. Martin can see the deception and danger involved in such societal fantasies when they are used for escape as well as for entertainment. Martin's grappling with the failures of his own generation reveals how many problems have been inheirited from Milton's generation, many of them the result of a refusal to face reality. A homestead in Wyoming where the fresh air and farm labor benefit his gassed lungs helps Martin. There is no homestead for society, as damaged as Martin's lungs and displaying symptoms of rottenness, a distorted view of reality:

> But they was all flying high during the war, mortgaging the land for fancy prices for fancy machinery and stuff--trucks and combines and tractors to run night and day--and needin' 'em, too, with the labor shortage and the government hollerin' for wheat. They was all hot shots, havin' to have silk shirts and big cars and Delco lights, and them square cement block houses you see stickin' up all around--ten, twelve rooms for folks what'd lived in a two-room soddy for mebby twenty years. Mostly they got 'em done enough so they could set up an old heater over the register that they couldn't use because the war boom was busted before they got the furnace in. (TTW, p. 146)

The country's anger over this frustration is paralleled in Martin's

frustration. His wife Penny is more competent at ranching than he, the weather is dry and the crops often wither, the markets are poor when there is a crop. Martin continues to exhibit the violent anger he displayed in kicking Nancy's dog to death, but now it is directed toward the buckskin horse: Martin would hold him, "slashing at him again and again with the bridle, cursing himself breathless, until the horse finally stood still, but shaking, his bloody nostrils flaring, his uninjured eye wild" (TTW, p. 175). Anger rises in the community over irrigation plans blocked, banks closing, mortgages coming due, and the defeat of the World Court. And there is little to be done about it. Martin's name indicates "martial" or "war-like," but this is a war with a hidden enemy, and Martin despairs:

> But for all his work his backside was always out, his children's too, because a few unknown people somewhere, people unknown and unknowing, had the power of life and death over him--unlimited power and no responsibility. Yet no man could escape responsibility for the whole, and it was a sickness to pretend less, and brought sickness upon all the helpless, the sickness of frustration and defeat. (TTW, p. 254)

Martin's anger rises to a peak as he nearly kills his son Milton with a manure fork, "the boy's face turned up white and twisting in terror" (TTW, p. 258). The scene prepares the reader for Martin's psychiatric commitment, action he takes himself after final gross cruelty to the buckskin. For the nation there is no psychiatric care, only the escalation of acts that culminate in another war.

The country becomes a split personality, one part dominating and exploiting while the other part cringes and suffers. Neither part recognizes its unity with the other or sees the means for integration. Unity with other nations is beyond realization as long as the country lacks wholeness and continues to take its aggressive tactics abroad.

The memory of his father's fits of anger and the danger of his own wound are young Milton's hedges against the expression of his own anger. The hedges against anger for the nation are the memory of atomic destruction it has wrought and the fear of its own destruction. Milton and the country sublimate reality, adopting an "out of sight, out of mind" stance. The doctor orders Milton to "live quietly, moderately, without unusual physical exertion or emotional excess" (TTW, p. 281). Milton writes his wife and her reply is metaphor for the "business as usual" attitude adopted by the country. Repressed anger and fear and "tom-walking" expectations appear in her reply:

> It was mean knowledge to be carrying around, to write home about, sweat out an answer. Hazel's letter came, calm and with a little woman-blaming. It was too bad, when he might have been home, with the war all over. She was to be loaned to district headquarters for the election campaign at a substantial increase, and with good contacts. Who could tell what might come of it for him? (TTW, pp. 281-82)

Sandoz injects an ironically humorous note in Milton's personal method of coping: he has a "slick piece of equipment he had dreamed up for modern escapists--Sergeant Stone's Portable, Extradimensional Hole" (TTW, p. 268), a portable hole being an infantryman's substution

for the flush toilet. Milton can dump anything into his disappearing sock and do away with it, from the fears of children to the suspicions of police officers:

> Finally the Portable Hole routine got him out, although he had to do it with a damp handkerchief rolled up like a sock. Pretending to be ready to talk, he started his rigamarole, making the handkerchief disappear with a dozen matches and his cigarette inside, then finding the smoldering butt on one of the cops. The officer laughed, foolish and mystified as a kid, and remembering Milton's picture in the papers, sent to Windsor for his wallet and identification. (TTW, p. 340)

Despite his "portable hole," Milton recognizes the menacing progression of sickness in the country and Sandoz uses a common allegorical device of commentary on the narrative to unify the work, with Milton as commentator:

> Yes, Milton agreed, wearily. In old Iron Leg's day it was plain as that leg cut off, the great region devastated and the many young men gone, but instead of facing this, the country turned itself over to graft and corruption and general irresponsibility. The common man's resources, his markets, even his currency were destroyed. (TTW, p. 357)

Milton can name the problems of the post-Civil War period, but when he comes to the post-World War I years, he is less specific, indicating society's greater complexity: "And the same thing in Martin's day, except that the burnt lung was less plain to see, the damage a sickness fooling

even Old Iron Leg for a while" (TTW, p. 357). Then Milton brings into focus what had happened in "Martin's day," with the explanation of what is happening in his own post World War II period. Sandoz implies that the forces gathering earlier can now be seen in their full power:

> Now all the world was sick, the danger terrible and immediate and complete, but nobody caring what happened the other times--domestic rape, the great international economic and industrial combines tom-walking, with hunger and the A-bomb used like a club everywhere, and the people blinded, refusing to see, moving in an uneasy dream. (TTW, p. 357)

Sandoz employs dream imagery here, as she had suggested illusion in the cloud-bomb imagery. She continues that imagery with Milton in the last scene of the book, suggesting that the line between illusion and reality is thin and difficult to define. Milton awakes in the hospital from an uneasy "dream." Is the take-over of the nation (and allegorically the world) by the A-bomb holding senator real or part of Milton's anesthetic? The bullet is safely removed, his body built a protective wall between it and his heart. His heart has been saved by "walling off" his wound, but there may be little world left for him.

To Martin on the brink of a new life, and the relieved reader, Sandoz reveals the Senator's picture on the wall of the military hospital, confounding both "dream" and "reality." It is the final thrust of Sandoz's allegorical insistence on the damning results of progressive societal sickness, an insistence supported not only by the main characters but also by the secondary characters in the narrative.

Sandoz creates strong women characters, both in the wives of the three veterans and in the "other women" with whom the veterans are involved. The first Milton's wife, Lucinda, the "girl on the path," represents the crystallized sweetness of the past to which neither Milton nor his society can return. She makes,

> stiff little replies taught her at Miss Farnsworth's where she was sent the last two years learning lady ways, to walk with a glass of water on her head, paint violets on hair receivers, use embroidery hoops, play the piano a litte and, of course, roll bandages and scrape lint from old linen for the wounded while practicing genteel conversation, also offered in French for an additional fee. (TTW, p. 31)

Her "Miss Farnsworth" training bothers Milton, as the genteel past bothered the post-Civil War society, yet Lucinda shows a resiliency in crisis and misfortune that is beyond Milton; it is the stable strength of established convictions. When Lucinda and Milton move west it is Lucinda who at the camps,

> her netted hair still shining, her calico starched, visited among the women, stewed up onion syrup for the babies with the whooping cough, made rag nipples for their bottles of barley water when the mother-milk failed, or wrote letters back when someone had to be buried beside the road. She aked questions too. Did they make their own clothes, and had they heard about the new Women's Temperance Crusade? (TTW, p. 84)

Lucinda's skills and bearing are what the old tradition can give

to the new, and her position is strengthened by her name, coming from the Latin "lucida," meaning shining, or clear of mind, intelligible. Sandoz demonstrates the flirtation of tradition with the new graft and corruption with Lucinda's yearning for George Shefton, "one of that dirty outfit that helped draft dodgers. . . ." (TTW, p. 7), who continues his nefarious actions in post-war life, including seducing Lucinda. The "smooth" Shefton contrasts with Milton, the rough and recalcitrant young veteran she wed on the day of his return. Milton often humiliates her and when Milton's whore, Dolly Tabor, pays for Lucinda's seamstress skills with one of Milton's veteran's paychecks the opportunism of the west that Dolly represents is contrasted with the more civilized, if sometimes prim, element of society seen in Lucinda. Though Lucinda bears still-born twins early in the marriage and is cautioned to have no more (representative of the bankruptcy of tradition immediately after the war), she finally bears a child, Martin. He is conceived as a result of her unprecedented acceptance of Milton, not as the man she had hoped he would be, but as the man he is:

> "I'm not laying blame on you, Milton," she said, "I want you to understand that. You never got much from anybody except an empty pants leg. I failed you too. . . . I haven't even been a friend to you, Milton--and no wife at all." (TTW, pp. 137-38)

Martin's assessment of his mother gives her more credit, and in it Sandoz signals the end of an era, both women and the country have changed:

> His mother spent her life looking after a man who came

> home to her a war cripple; working, trying to keep him sober and out of trouble while she took in sewing to put pants on her son's backside until he was able to swing a spike maul on the section and she could take time off to die. . . .
>
> Well, her kind was gone. (TTW, pp. 152-53)

Martin meets and marries Penny after he discovers Nancy is no longer waiting for him. Penny, a unit of value, has an attractive measure of confidence, competence, worth, and wisdom. She is the product of a Wyoming ranch family and has the independence and openness, the honest and frankness that signify for Sandoz the better qualities of the new West, which include a professionalism in management of the land. Penny's father scoffs at the complaints of new settlers who are already leaving:

> Fresh-air fiends, the drylanders calls us, and I'll admit it don't come fresher than in Wyoming. But what makes my backside tired is that every slackpants what fails at everything else thinks he can come squat on a chunk of land and get rich farming. All they do is ruin the country, like them that busted up so much loose ground during the war--soil that blowed out of the county in a week. You don't make a farmer by pushing a shoe clerk or schooldad into a pair of overhalls and a rush hat. Farming and stock growing's a profession, like doctoring or preachin', and you got it to learn. (TTW, p. 166)

Penny's failure to "save" Martin from his increasing psychosis

suggests her virtues are not enough to counter-balance his illness just as good land practice cannot change the growing sickness of the country. The illness has progressed too far, is too deep, with the remedy too complicated and dependent upon the actions of too many people, to expect a quick cure. Sandoz, though trying to reach and change a large audience with her allegories, was skeptical about the outcome. She said, "But if enough of us get mad, the situation can be remedied--."[12] She wrote a correspondent about locale in The Tom-Walker:

> I've placed them successively west, the last in Wyoming on a synthetic creek in a synthetic county, partly because if I must write of events that break my heart, I can at least have a background I love. (Our sandhills are more nearly Wyoming, as you know, than Nebraska, both in climate and in people).[13]

Penny's maiden name of "Turner" fits her attempts to "turn" Martin from a murderous path. She does not have the strength or vision to help him maintain his ideals and still deal with his frustrations. Penny can be disturbed only by what threatens her relationship with her family or her land, an allegorical slap at those with character but narrowness of vision.

Martin and Penny's younger son, Marty, and a daughter, Rita, continue the farming tradition, suggesting a continuation of people with a close relationship with the land. Farming is threatened by agricultural policy and, at the book's end, by a totalitarian regime, as Penny looks to young Milton for help:

> The electricity bill had come today, the rate quadrupled

> and on a private company's billhead. . . .
>
> "I'm afraid they can force you out now, cut off the water. Why didn't you all get together with the officials before this, make a protest?"
>
> Slowly she folded the bill into the envelope, smoothing the flap. "Hughie Saul and his father tried it. They're in jail." (TTW, p. 349)

Milton again comments on society, expressing Sandoz's hopes for the west and the promise it holds. He remembers his words to a Swiss friend who was excited about the potential of harnessed nuclear power:

> So Milton told him about an American dream that was like a panoramic picture in his mind: the Missouri region to the mountains, two hundred million acres of arable, irrigable land, sloping, stream-laddered, ready for canal and grid-ironing by power lines, with great inland storage seas to reflect the kingfisher blue of the sky. Here cheap and clean power and fruitful lands would be brought together in a new society centered around a farm-factory unit: labor free of the blight of the old factory community, with its smoke and fumes and poverty and the dread of layoffs and shutdowns; agriculture free from the gamble of hot winds, drouth and floods--a dovetailing of farm and factory. (TTW, p. 350)

The west is too full of hardships and work for some and Martin found escape by resuming his friendship with Nancy. Old Milton's visits to prostitute Dolly Tabor represented the opportunism and seeking for excitement that brought many to the west: Martin's hunting up Nancy

introduces the Prohibition dodges that brought escapism and excitement to the country:

> Martin had been down to see Nancy Leite several times lately. . . . When Martin drove down he found the little business all right, off in the brakes, and Nancy fetching him a sample in a tin cup. Martin sniffed it, burned his mouth with it, and felt better for the refilling, or maybe it was because this time there were no children hanging at her skirt and she was light again, light as a filly twitching her butt around. (TTW, p. 210)

Martin wants to feel potent again, to be in control. He accuses the country of much the same action, seeking importance regardless of whom it slights at home:

> Old Cal's all for feedin' the murdering Krauts, ten million dollars for their relief, but he don't give a hoot about our kids with their backsides out. And okaying them a loan for a couple hundred billions to pay debts, and easy to guess what outfits Banker Dawes'll be building up with it. But watch old Cal snap that turtlemouth shut against any poor bastard what dares ask how the American farmer's going to pay out. (TTW, p. 209)

Martin's interest in Nancy is paralleled by Milton's appreciation of Nancy's daughter Agnes. There is a contrast between Martin's consuming interest in Nancy and Milton's inability to be absorbed in any woman. Even with his wife, Hazel, he is tentative, reacting quickly at any

rebuff. He worries about his condition; excitation may be fatal, and he is defensive rather than confrontive. Allegorically, the nation fears atomic attack and adopts a defensive stance in its management of domestic and foreign policy: "the public got sensationalism and war scares to justify the reports of bombers carrying a stock of A-bombs from Wichita to Alaska and stashed away from England around to Greece" (TTW, p. 317).

Milton replies to Hazel's cool and insinuating complaints about his hanging around the cafe where Nancy and Agnes work, "That Agnes comes mighty well stacked up," and when Hazel suggests he come with her to help her with the work for the senator in Montana primaries, he reacts, "anger drumming hard, but there was the bullet, and this was his wife, so he laughed, threw his head back. 'Me? You expect me to turn into a goddamn camp follower'" (TTW, p. 309)? Milton feels impotent and frustrated, shows interest in Agnes but does not act. He does nothing to detain Hazel: "It gave him the trembles to watch her, like a sixteen year old with his first beautiful woman, for tomorrow she was going away" (TTW, p. 315). Hazel leaves Milton for a job in Washington with the Senator. There is dissociation and disintegration expressed in the national election:

> The election returns moved westward like the migrations into the remoter regions, the House lost, the Senate too. . . . Now at last controls would come off: with no housing for the vets, labor's power to strike against the inflated dollar going. . . . (TTW, P. 317)

Milton is unable to penetrate Hazel's reserve. She is preoccupied

with the senatorial campaign and victory. And the citizens of the country cannot penetrate the patterns of power.

Hazel met Milton on his return with "a new convertible, yellow as a meadowlark's breast" (TTW, p. 285), on loan to her from the Senator. Sandoz uses nature imagery in the context of a materialistic and threatened world. Hazel takes Milton to a "modern little house set back on a grassy terrace, the entire southern wall of glass, no, some war plastic, perhaps, from the bomber plant" (TTW, p. 286). The image of nature rests uneasily within the industrial, military context. Hazel, herself, is on loan--from her bank job--to Senator Potter for work in his reelection campaign. She is touched with a nature image, too, but within a corrupted scene, as they, "sat on the couch together and made talk that was stiff as a Joe corraled by a duchess for tea, the green-flowered dress Hazel wore bringing out the light in her eyes, like sun on goldstone" (TTW, pp. 286-87).

The name "Hazel" suggests the word, "haze." Hazel is living in a "haze" of misperception, and in some ways she does "haze" or humiliate and ridicule Milton. She often uses detachment and preoccupation as her weapons. At a special encampment where the Senator is the main speaker, Milton tries (with little success) to contact Hazel until she wants him at a reception and answers his calls. She makes a point of his wound:

> Expecting me to drop dead for 'em! Milton thought angrily. It was an appalling thing, this showing him off for some political purpose, an incredible thing for a man's wife to do, incredible and hateful. (TTW, p. 336)

After this, Hazel seems to be beyond his reach and Milton searches

for Mary Barlow, a woman he has known in his brief stay in Denver. Again Sandoz demonstrates his inability to form a relationship of substance, for Mary has disappeared, involved in something from which Milton is excluded. When Penny asks about Mary, "Just the kind of woman you might fall in love with, rebound from Hazel," Milton represses his reaction:

> "Love?" Milton wanted to shout against her, his uneasiness and his helplessness fastening upon his mother's words. "What is love in these times except a man waking up to a dent in the pillow beside him?" (TTW, p. 349)

Milton is isolated from those he loves, an escalation of the isolation of Old Milton and Martin. The veterans in the novel attempt to give some support to each other. With Iron Leg it is the vets at Frenchy Brulley's little bar, or "Frenchy's spit and guzzle brigade, as the Temperance Crusaders called them" (TTW, p. 94). The vets are called "pension farks" and told "It's old soldiers like you's holdin' the country broke" (TTW, p. 95). Martin's friend, "Benny Green, the vet who ran the post office he called Argonne for his dead brother" (TTW, 176), is his companion and support. Often "Martin cranked up the old Chevvy and went to Benny's to sit in the shade of the dugout and talk army and how they had all looked forward to shucking out of uniform" (TTW, p. 191):

> "Yeh, I could hardly wait to get Betty over on her back," Benny laughed, his wife giggling a little, down deep within herself, but motioning her head toward the children, the two eldest making foot-houses over their bare toes and listening. (TTW, p. 192)

Milton hangs out at the Stockmen's Cafe, or gathers with other vets to loaf and talk. He "and half a dozen others were squatting against the wall of an empty war-time pool hall that the bank wouldn't turn over to be partitioned for rooms for vets" (TTW, p. 308) when Hazel finds him. She chides, "With those bums, dear, looking worse than any of them. . . ." Sandoz has patterned a progression of veteran support that serves the allegory. Iron Leg drinks and rails against the government with his army buddies; Martin visits with Benny, envying him his wife, who is slattern and always pregnant but thinks Benny is wonderful and can do anything; Milton has no close friends among the vets, except for his grandfather, Iron Leg, and they seem to talk more "at" each other. The country, like the veterans, has moved from a close knit group of people to a growing dissociation of people, even in the veterans who have common cause.

Sandoz seems to be shouting that there are people like Senator Potter who are capable of using atomic power for personal gain, that there are people like Hazel who can be charmed by money and jobs away from the values of their youth, that there are people like the Stones, young Milton's family, that seem sensible, caring people, but who cannot and will not see the danger, and in any case, can do little about it. Even Penny does not flinch when Marty suggests using "the bomb" for domination, and Milton is appalled by the perversity in his family,

> and in all others who were determining the future of the world around their dinner tables; joy in their destructiveness, deliberately willing to know nothing, to feel nothing except hatred for the responsibilities they would neither face nor recognize. (TTW, p. 300).

There have been a few, as there always are in Sandoz's allegories, who have tried to make a positive difference: Charley Powell, the doctor, gives the first Milton an opportunity to dream he might study medicine, and later, a job; Wheeler P. Scheeler neighbors with and befriends Martin and Penny; Plew Tollins, another neighbor, survives a cruel life yet remains kind; Milton's Mary Barlow, with her "easy, intimate smile that helped make something light and temporary of every man's handicap" (TTW, p. 345); Mary's friend, Hugo Dean, a history professor who understands history:

> At the peace conference in Paris Hugo had seen the terror of American A bombers nesting like jet-powered gorgons in the heart of Europe, rising to circle the earth and spreading their shadow. Disgusted, he returned to the university and talked hopelessly for a world federation. (TTW, p. 327)

These characters represent the ideals of the allegory and are used by Sandoz as norms by which the reader can measure other characters' awareness, advance, and regression.

Sandoz creates a hazy, almost disjointed narrative as the novel reaches its end, mixing reality and illusion. The narrative and characters begin to lose credibility. There is a hectic air about things. When Milton gives his Portable Hole routine at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon in Denver, he is offered the job of "clerical work over at one of the shallow coal mines around town when the army took over. Milton nodded his understanding. He had seen heavy equipment moved in, ready. 'Taking over from the strikers'" (TTW, p. 325). In bitter winter weather, Milton cannot find help for a small boy and his mother who are living in a small trailer--he pulls the trailer

to the capitol annex and has "one side of the canvas rolled up and the heater and lamp plugged in before some men came to look" (TTW, pp. 325-26). Wandering about trying to find Hazel at the encampment, he drags a burning child out of a demonstration A-bomb display, but too late to save his life. Penny gets "an airmail note from Hazel, not signed, but in her envelope. Nothing except a warning to keep quiet and sell the place immediately, that day, before it was worthless" (TTW, p. 343). The president is speaking on the radio:

> ". . . Deplorable conditions of fraud and thievery within your government . . . great irregularities and graft in the Departments of War and the Interior . . . members of Congress implicated, with plottings of violence against man and the peace among nations. I have requested resignations within the Cabinet and have been refused. As a consequence I am calling a special session of Congress and demanding a thorough investigation and impeachments." (TTW, p. 352)

Sandoz piles incredible event on incredible event, reminiscient of a tall tale, the new reality so perverted that it does become a tall tale, forcing the reader to ask, to think, to become unable to relax into a narrative that has been so realistic and now is taking on the dimensions of a fantasy. Again, the boundaries between reality and illusion, between dreams and awaking, between the tall tale (stretching deepest wishes and fears) and everyday life (snapping back to the mundane and possible) are explored. The reader is challenged to draw the distinction.

Milton waits in the gallery of the Senate for a showdown between the President and Senator Potter (a maker of earthenware vessels). The scene plays on illusion. Milton thinks "Perhaps it was all only a smoke screen, more sand in the eye, like the Red baiting that covered all the maneuvering for outposts and spheres of influence--outposts with A-headed rockets, spheres of influence when cartels vaulted every boundary" (TTW, p. 365), and "with the galleries warm, the weight of the sleepless night. . . . Milton Stone laid his arm on the marble ledge before him and dropped his head. . . . and he slept" (TTW, p. 366).

When he woke, but is he awake or dreaming? As the scene comes to its unbelievable and unthinkable conclusion, Sandoz mixes dream and reality like ambivalent and contradictory messages carried in the mind. She attempts to breach the easy dismissal of the unthinkable; that designated as unreal. Sandoz wishes to span the chasm between the individual's acceptance of death as a reality while at the same time he or she rejects personal extinction as an event too cataclysmic to comprehend. This is the reaction that makes the acceptance of possible atomic destruction difficult and so blocks action to prevent that destruction. If Sandoz can confuse the issue between reality and dream in her narrative, she introduces into the reader's mind doubt between reality and dream in his or her own mind and prepares the way for a change in perception of reality. Sandoz pointed out to a correspondent, "art is not the mere reproduction of life, or a good snapshot would be the height of art. It is life heightened into a higher significance by the imagination and the creative power of the artist."[14]

The first thing Milton sees is Hazel, on the floor beneath, dressed in a "greenish gold suit," the nature colors a contrast to the perversion

of nature in which she is involved:

> "Oh, yes!" he wanted to cry down to her, "your claque's in place all right, everything set. . . ." And cry out, too, like Iron Leg, that planes might circle the globe with no lime droppings to mark their path, and a market break without sunspots, but a fancy woman falls on her prat. (TTW, p. 366)

Nature images indicate perversion of natural events and connect Hazel to the fancy women of prostitution, the suicide Dolly Tabor, the repentant Nancy Leite. She has prostituted herself and is aiding in prostituting a government. Milton continues his thoughts, "And an old man must die. The old tom-walker was failing fast, Penny said, when Milton called yesterday to tell her the news of the bullet to be picked from his breast like a peanut from a pocket" (TTW, p. 366). Sandoz has closed another era, "The old Iron Leg who once turned cartwheels on a shining piece of pipe, nested cyclones in his coattails, was dying" (TTW, p. 366). Like the dreams of America, the tall tales have ended and a harsh reality begins. When Potter arrives on the floor "the women began to screech louder, some jerking themselves about, their mouths falling open, private moanings sweeping them" (TTW, p. 367), and Milton runs "to the can, retching hard as the first time he saw a bulldozer uncover a trenchful of the murdered men and women, had to help lay them out, see all their private mutilations" (TTW, p. 367). Sandoz hits hard with her comparison, suggesting civilian mental mutilations leading to death.

Hazel appears beside Milton in the balcony, gives him her purse with

a gun in it, leaving before he can remonstrate that "Milton Stone was not a killer, and a man didn't change his direction like one of those little tanks spinning on its axis" (TTW, p. 368). There is a distinction between war and peacetime killing; Milton refuses to kill because he feels they can still escape, "all Hazel had to do was walk out with him, her husband. Take Kathie and go away with him while there was time, let the people here at home find Potter out" (TTW, pp. 368-69). Milton looks at the purse in his hand, "like something from a morphia dream, something with a desperate troubling urgency that he could not grasp" (TTW, p. 369). His inability to grasp control, to take action, to understand a situation in its real perspective, not in its clouded appearance, warns of potential results of unawareness and inaction.

Potter asks for the President's resignation and then in appeal to childhood memories of last chances trumpets: "For the safety of America I demand your resignation while I count three. One. . ." (TTW, p. 370), detonating on "three" a distant atomic bomb that flashes and shakes the Congressional chambers:

> God--it had come! making real that moment Milton felt over New York, but this was a mushroom cloud he could have prevented with the weapon here under his hand, Hazel providing it, and the warning, plenty of warning. But he had been too much of a meathead, a self-centered meathead, instead of a man. (TTW, p. 371)

The force of the bomb shatters the illusion. As the guards hustle Milton from the capitol "the gray fog was ripped and torn by the blast and by the harsh wind that pushed against the rows of guards, blew

around the armor and steel surrounding the Capitol, and swept the empty streets beyond" (TTW, p. 372). Sandoz breaks the narrative at this point and resumes it with Milton coming out of the fog of anesthesia, a parallel action to the ripping of the fog of the street. The doctor is saying, "Simple--as picking a peanut out of a pocket" (TTW, p. 372), and Potter's picture is on the government hospital wall, "like the cheap official pictures he saw blowing around the bombed-out streets of Berlin, or found hidden in good Nazi beds" (TTW, p. 372). The peanut is the bullet that has been taken out of the pocket of Milton's heart; throughout the novel it has allegorically indicated the critical danger of potential atomic explosion near the heart of America. If Potter has picked the peanut from the pocket, it is only to destroy the heart of the country, not to protect it. The theraputic removal of the threat requires other tactics and Sandoz's allegorical task has been to bring the nature of the threat to the reader's attention. Like all allegories, Sandoz's work demands the thought and judgement of the reader:

> By virtue of the fact the immediate focus of the narrative is the language in which it is written, not only must the reader come to terms with the language in which such questions are asked, but he must also recognize that his answers--or such answers as seem to be indicated by the text--can be made only in language. This circular process ends in a self-consciousness the only way out of which may seem to be an arbitrary act of choice. Language does or does not lie.[15]

In choosing the mode of allegory, Sandoz reached for language to present the truth as she views it. The nature of the reader's task is to formulate the question, explore the answer, and to choose action or inaction in terms of the answer. The use of allegory suggests that Sandoz has written for more than personal reasons. Asked once by Louis Sandoz about her temper, she replied:

> I had the family temper until I was 16. Then suddenly I saw what a temper like that costs your family and friends, and yourself. I still become angry, but not so anyone knows it. . . . I'm always concerned with the larger issues. The kind of things that cause personal anger no longer interest me. I'm only interested in the things that make for a better world, a better chance for humanity.[16]

It is in this spirit that Mari Sandoz wrote The Tom-Walker.

Chapter V

Sandoz and Her Readers

In her three allegorical novels, Mari Sandoz narrated the progressive deterioration of national unity and effective government in America, roughly paralleling the national events of her own lifetime. As the daughter of a homesteader, she knew what it was like to live in a region where land ownership was being disputed and mortgages were coming due with money in a bank that had closed. Later, she lived in the capital of Nebraska, Lincoln, where she absorbed capital city attitudes, motives, and action that she caricatures. The Civil War took place twenty years before Sandoz's father arrived on the frontier scene, overlapping Milton's life in the West. Sandoz was very much a part of both World War periods. In Slogum House she warned of the danger of World War II, and when it came she felt she should do her part in it:

> Very much concerned about world affairs always, she attempted to join the WAC in 1944, hoping to remain a private and to go overseas. This would give her the satisfaction of trying to do something about the war that had concerned her for many years. . . . But she was rejected because of her blind eye. Frustrated in her attempt to take direct action in the war, she continued to use her historical writing to draw attention to the

> mistakes made in the past, mistakes she hoped men would avoid in the future.[1]

Sandoz was consumed with a need to communicate to others her very strong emotions about what was happening to the land, the people, and the government of her country. Allegory is often thought of as "an affair of the mind, not of the heart," but it is clear in Sandoz's case that her allegory, as much of allegory, "may also be taken as an emotive utterance and in this light shows an internal structure of such force that we do not long remain cold analysts of the geometric paradigm."[2] Sandoz comments on her ability to remain detached when she had some narrow escapes, including her "hair cut from her head twice by gunshot," and being "on a locoed horse when he broke into a blind running until he dropped."[3] She adds:

> There are, however, a few things in which I am deeply involved. Have you ever heard a prairie song lark rise into the clear thin air of the High Plains, spilling song golden as sunlight all about him? There are other things, too, that I cannot watch with detachment, things that anger me to the violence of my father. One is the sight of the earth exploited, and the other is the knowledge of man, red, white or whatever color, deprived of the right to walk in pride and dignity before all the world.[4]

Nature imagery is used in each of the allegories by Sandoz to support her value structure, reflecting her intense awareness of nature. She felt human beings could partake of the grandeur and endurance of

nature. Nature expressed for her the whole range of human possibility, from such diverse expression as lice on a leaf to the song of a prairie lark. If nature could represent people at their most disintegrative, then surely it could pose hope for an integrated organic unity for them as well.

Sandoz used the vernacular and colloquialisms, often a rougher language than most phrases in print in her time, to express what the people close to the land felt and thought. She believed one should write about what one knows. Sandoz once wrote on a student's paper, "Who the hell ever heard of a Doe dropping a Fawn in February? If you don't know what you're writing about, write about something you do know."[5] And the vernacular was well suited for reporting the views of the common people, so often bypassed in the making of public policy but vitally affected by it. In writing about this land, this people, and in the language she knew so well, she knew what she wanted to say, though she had doubts at times about saying it as well as wanted to. When she was sent a manuscript for an opinion she replied:

> . . . What I have to say on any manuscript is only my opinion and should be considered as only that. I believe the authoring business lies entirely between the writer and such gods as he recognizes. As an indication of what I think of the outsider's opinion: I've never asked anyone outside of a publisher's office to look at a manuscript of mine and what advice editorial offices have volunteered I always considered and as surely discarded as having no bearing

upon my purpose at all.[6]

Sandoz had self-assurance about the necessity and validity of these allegorical books in which she takes a prophetic stance. This meshing of the prophetic (as displayed in the projection of her allegories toward what will ultimately happen to individuals, societies and the world) with her extreme pragmatism (her hard-headedness about the realities of human nature and her intimate relationship with nature) results in a stunning combination. The effect on the reader is often exactly that, to stun with a truth recognizable at some level, but unpalatable and unwelcome to consciousness, perhaps as unwelcome as the news of betrayal by someone you love, the end of an illusion thought necessary to maintain your existence.

Her readers' reaction to each volume attests to or protests the book's truth. Sandoz wrote of visitors after the publication of Slogum House:

> An 81-year-old pioneer of South Dakota plodded up my stairs today and I found another just turned 75 from Kansas on the second landing, puffing, but determined. He had come to tell me about an old house he saw in Wyoming that was being advertised as the original of Slogum House. That makes five entries for the honor.[7]

A New York Times reviewer thought that:

> From here it looks as though there won't be many teas and receptions out in Lincoln, Neb., for Mari Sandoz and her new book, "Capital City". . . . well, doubtless tongues

> will wag on a Sunday morning outside the Congregational church on the corner of Twentieth and D. . . . the shock it can give to civic complacency is enormous.[8]

And after The Tom-Walker was published, Sandoz replied to a man who wrote accusing her of being a "parlor pink"[9]:

> . . . don't think I haven't received as abusive a letter as yours on The Tom-Walker. I got one just as violent from an avowed Communist, calling me a stooge of Capitalism.
>
> Your letter attests to your admiration for Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson. . . . Paine died, still denied citizenship by the reactionary congress of the nation he helped create. . . . a dangerous radical. . . .
>
> Nowhere in The Tom-Walker do I advocate anything as extreme as Jeffersonian democracy. I know the world is not ready for that.[10]

At the time of the acceptance of The Tom-Walker for publication, Sandoz wrote a friend, "the Red hunt, which I also have in the book, has been initiated. The pattern is so predictable that it's heart-breaking that my book and perhaps others of the same nature couldn't have been published earlier."[11] She warned another friend, "There will be great and appalling suppressions before our postwar civilian psychosis wears off. It's always the same in kind, only this time it's vastly greater in degree.[12]

Sandoz felt justified both by the reactions to her three allegorical novels and by events continuing in the direction she had predicted, though

the latter was of small comfort to her. She was disappointed the works were not perceived critically as allegorical. When Slogum House was published:

> . . . practically no one said anything about its larger purpose or meaning. Perhaps this was the author's fault. Writing as much for posterity as for her own generation, Sandoz tried to avoid the over-obvious. Her terseness of expression may have put the book beyond the grasp of most readers.[13]

Perhaps it was not the author's "fault." Perhaps it was the use of the unfamiliar mode of allegory which denied the reader his or her imaginative journey, working instead toward a raising of awareness:

> Allegory is structured according to ritualistic necessity, as opposed to probability, and for that reason its basic forms differ from mimetic plots in being less diverse and more simple in contour. . . . The mode is radically reductive and in that is at war with mimesis.[14]

Sandoz creates stories, characters, and imagery that are memorable, but there is, as is often true with allegory, "a diffusion of inner coherence, since the typical allegory threatens never to end. . . . Their sublime magnitude disallows true organic form."[15]

To offset this denial of organic form, to express her own being, and to offer by example an incentive to growth and change, Sandoz uses nature and the land constantly in her images. While the allegory must run its set course, nature can renew itself in an unlimited number

of regenerative cycles, so that it represents the organic development that allegory is denied.[16] Yet nature mimics in its unchanging patterns of growth, death, and regeneration, the unchanging pattern of conflict, resolution, conflict that exists in the dialectic of allegory. Hence the paradox is understood: both the organic and the allegorical are universal, both hold truth, both represent reality--though one changes and the other is changeless. The organic pattern remains when the individual plant dies. The allegorical ideal is unchanging regardless of the multiple manifestations in human apprehension and action. Sandoz believed the mortal human being, transient and vulnerable like the individual plant, must sense, comprehend, and act. As the individual plant propagates and continues in the pattern of nature, the individual translates the lifeless ideal into action and perpetuity. Action that declares ideals and affirms growth and change results in responsible power and a life of freedom and dignity--or death, and the ideals live on in others.

Ruedy, in Slogum House,

> saw Dumur as but one village in a great nation that was so short a time ago the land of promise, still the richest of all the world, and yet paralyzed, all activity halted except foreclosure and eviction and the lengthening lines of those who had no roof and bread. Through the gray fog of his helplessness rose the words of Jeremiah: "And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination." (SH, p. 394)

His depression lifts with the news that "the mortgage moratorium has

passed, with emergency clause" (SH, p. 395). Sandoz in her allegorical novels urges the protection and strengthening of heritage through awareness and action--with emergency clause.

Notes

Chapter I

Introduction

[1] Mari Sandoz, in Hostiles and Friendlies, ed. Virginia Faulkner (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1959), p. 139.

[2] Mari Sandoz, letter to Mary Abbot, Feb. 4, 1965, University of Nebraska Archives, Sandoz Collection, Love Library, Lincoln, Ne. All further references to this correspondence appear in the text and are identified by the initials "S to A."

[3] Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 90.

[4] Frye, p. 90.

[5] Frye, p. 90, talks about allegory as a contrapuntal technique, even when it is "continuous allegory."

[6] Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), p. 360-61, 368.

[7] Fletcher, p. 365.

[8] Frye, p. 34.

[9] Mari Sandoz, letter to Rose M. Pflug, March 11, 1936, UNA, SC.

[10] Rose M. Pflug, letter to Sandoz, March 9, 1936, UNA, SC.

[11] Sandoz to Pflug.

[12] Mari Sandoz, letter to Mrs. L. T. Rosser, March 6, 1936, UNA, SC.

[13] Fletcher, p. 142. Fletcher then quotes Frye in Anatomy of Criticism, p. 34, stating that "Frye has argued that Western literature shows a steady trend 'downward' in that it has become increasingly more and more

ironic in tone and point of view."

[14] Fletcher, p. 159.

[15] Herschel Bricknell, "Slogum House, Mari Sandoz's First Novel, Grimly Powerful Story of Nebraska Pioneers," rev. of Slogum House by Mari Sandoz, n.p., n.d., n.#pg., UNA, SC.

[16] Margaret Wallace, rev. of Capital City, by Mari Sandoz, The New York Times, Dec. 3, 1939, Sec. E, p. 2, col. d., UNA, SC.

[17] Harrison B. French, letter to Mari Sandoz, Oct. 19, 1947, UNA, SC.

[18] Mari Sandoz, "The Homestead in Perspective" in Sandhills Sundays and Other Recollections (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 21.

Chapter II

Slogum House, "A Gray Wart in a Calloused Palm"

[1] Mari Sandoz, letter to Mary Abbot, Feb. 4, 1965, University of Nebraska Archives, Sandoz Collection, Love Library, Lincoln, Ne. All further references to this correspondence appear in the text and are identified by the initials, "S to A."

[2] Scott L. Greenwell, "Fascists in Fiction: Two Early Novels of Mari Sandoz," Western American Literature, 12 (August 1977), p. 139.

[3] Greenwell, pp. 134-35. Greenwell tells of Sandoz's reading of Mein Kampf and her reactions.

[4] Peter Berek, The Transformation of Allegory from Spenser to Hawthorne (Amherst: Amherst College Press, 1962), p. 5.

[5] Margaret Wallace, "Slogum House and Other Recent Works of Fiction," rev. of Slogum House, by Mari Sandoz, The New York Times Book Review, Nov. 28, 1937, p. 6.

[6] Berek, p. 6.

[7] Angus Fletcher, The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), pp. 2-3.

[8] Fletcher, pp. 22-23.

[9] Mari Sandoz, Slogum House (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1937), p. 3. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[10] Edwin Honig, Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1959), p. 5.

[11] Mari Sandoz, letter to Ben Abramson, Oct. 10, 1938, UNA, SC.

[12] Stephen A. Barney, Allegories of History, Allegories of Love (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1979), p. 23.

[13] Barney, p. 36. "Fletcher observes that many of the fragmentations and realignments of the psyche which are characteristic of psychotic states have counterparts in reification allegories of projection, doubling, demoniacal persistance, dwarfishness, giganticism, and the various other forms of monstrous bewitchment. That mental states have physical components is characteristic both of psychopathology and of allegory."

[14] Fletcher, p. 39.

[15] Kathy Serenco, English Dept., University of Nebraska at Omaha, unpublished ms., Dec. 1980.

[16] Fletcher, p. 195. Fletcher discusses the use of doubling and symmetries within the plots and characterizations of allegories.

[17] Mari Sandoz, letter to Helen G. Walton, Oct. 19, 1944, UNA,SC.

Chapter III

Capital City, The "Damned Old Prostitute"

[1] Mari Sandoz to Mary Abbot, Feb. 4, 1965. University of Nebraska Archives, Sandoz Collection, Love Library, Lincoln, Ne. All further

references to this correspondence appear in the text and are identified by the initials "S to A."

[2] Mari Sandoz, letter to Estelle C. Laughlin, Jan. 27, 1940, UNA, SC.

[3] "Books and Romance are Main Interest," column in Lincoln Star, Aug. 18, 1939. UNA,SC.

[4] Mari Sandoz, Capital City (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1939), p. 7. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[5] Edwin Honig, Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 129.

[6] Maureen Quilligan, The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre (Ithaca, N. Y. : Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 52. Quilligan is refering to the statements of Edwin Honig in Dark Conceit, pp. 72-73.

[7] Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), pp. 198-99.

[8] Quilligan, p. 67.

[9] Quilligan, pp. 53-54.

[10] Mari Sandoz, "Autobiographical Sketch," in Hostiles and Friendlies, ed. Virginia Faulkner (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1959), p. xviii.

[11] Helen W. Stauffer, "Mari Sandoz: A Study of the Artist as Biographer," Diss. University of Nebraska, 1974, p. 55. Stauffer quotes from the Nebraska Educational Television Series, "Mari Sandoz Discusses Creative Writing," Spring, 1959, no. 2.

[12] Caroline Sandoz Pifer, Making of an Author (Gordon, Ne.: Gordon Journal, 1972), p. 43.

[13] Mari Sandoz, "Check Sheet for the New Novelist's Examination of His Work," prepared in connection with the television series, "Mari Sandoz Discusses Creative Writing," KUON-TV, University of Nebraska Television, Spring, 1959. Personal papers, Esther Charles Wright, Lincoln, Ne.

[14] Honig, p. 180.

[15] Honig, p. 180.

[16] Margaret Wallace, rev. of Capital City, by Mari Sandoz, The New York Times, Dec. 3, 1939, Sec. E, p. 2, col. d, UNA, SC.

[17] Margaret Wallace, The New York Times.

[18] Gay Clifford, The Transformations of Allegory (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 71.

[19] Honig, p. 118.

[20] Fletcher, p. 361.

[21] Clifford, pp. 33-34.

[22] Clifford, p. 34.

[23] Clifford, p. 68.

Chapter IV

The Tom-Walker, "Roaring Against the Wind"

[1] Mari Sandoz, letter to Mary Abbot, Feb. 4, 1965. University of Nebraska Archives, Sandoz Collection, Love Library, Lincoln, Ne. All further references to this correspondence appear in the text and are identified by the initials "S to A".

[2] Helen W. Stauffer, "Mari Sandoz: A Study of the Artist as Biographer," Diss. University of Nebraska 1974, Preface, i.

[3] Gay Clifford, The Transformations of Allegory (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 7.

[4] Mari Sandoz, The Tom-Walker (New York: Dial Press, 1947), p. 6. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[5] Mari Sandoz, letter to Jacques Chambrun, Jan. 27, 1947, UNA, SC.

[6] Mari Sandoz, letter to Jim VanLiew, April 12, 1947, UNA, SC.

[7] Mari Sandoz, letter to W. W. Arrasmith, March 5, 1944, UNA, SC.

[8] Clifford, p. 15.

[9] Maureen Quilligan, The Language of Allegory (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell Univeristy Press, 1979), p. 277.

[10] Mari Sandoz, letter to Watson Bidwell, Jan. 14, 1947, UNA, SC.

[11] Mari Sandoz, letter to Mamie Meredith, March 26, 1947, UNA, SC.

[12] Sandoz to Meredith.

[13] Sandoz to Arrasmith.

[14] Mari Sandoz, letter to Estelle Laughlin, Jan.27, 1940, UNA, SC.

[15] Quilligan, p. 278.

[16] Mari Sandoz, letter to Louis Sandoz, Oct. 28, 1947, UNA, SC.

Chapter V

Sandoz and Her Readers

[1] Helen W. Stauffer, "Mari Sandoz: A Study of the Artist as a Biographer," Diss. University of Nebraska 1974, p. 315.

[2] Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), p. 180.

[3] Mari Sandoz, "Brief Biographical Resume," 1953-54, unpublished ms., UNA, SC.

[4] Sandoz, "Biog. Resume."

[5] Ruby V. Pedersen, "The Portrait of Mari Sandoz as a Teacher," English Dept., Wayne State College, Wayne, Ne., unpublished ms., Oct. 1980, p. 4.

[6] Mari Sandoz, letter to Ben Abramson, Oct. 10, 1938, UNA, SC

[7] News item from the Herald, Miami, Florida, May 8, 1938, UNA,SC.

[8] Ralph Thompson, rev. of Capital City, by Mari Sandoz, The New York Times, Nov. 29, 1939, Sec E, p. 2, col. c, UNA, SC.

[9] Paul Cutler, letter to Mari Sandoz, Sep. 24, 1947, UNA, SC.

[10] Mari Sandoz, letter to Paul Cutler, Oct. 13, 1947, UNA, SC.

[11] Mari Sandoz, letter to Mamie Meredith, March 26, 1947, UNA, SC.

[12] Mari Sandoz, letter to Watson Bidwell, Jan. 14, 1947, UNA, SC.

[13] Scott L. Greenwell, "Fascists in Fiction: Two Early Novels of Mari Sandoz," Western American Literature, 12 (August 1977), p. 139.

[14] Fletcher, pp. 150-51.

[15] Fletcher, pp. 367-68.

[16] Kathy Serenco, English Dept., University of Nebraska at Omaha, unpublished ms., Dec. 1980. Serenco discusses Sandoz's use of nature.