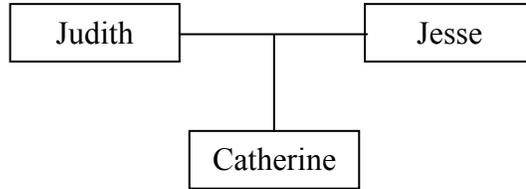


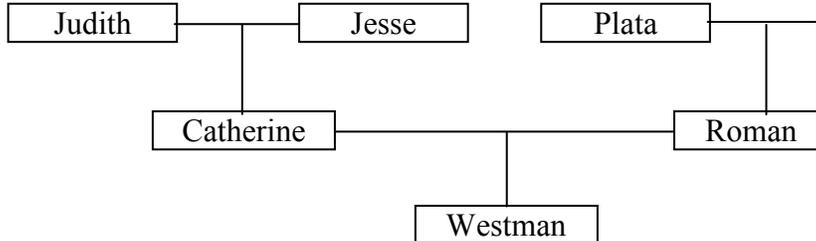
## WESTMAN – an allegory

We begin our story with Judith patiently waiting for the man that she knows will one day come to rescue her from her difficult life. When Jesse appears and announces that he is the one, a night of passion ensues in which each promises everlasting dedication to the other.

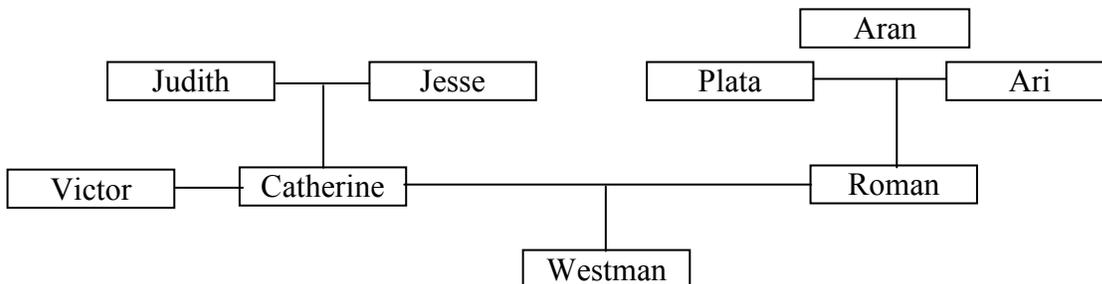
But at morning's light Judith wakes up, takes one look at Jesse beside her, and decides that this is not the man after all. She wakes him up, hands him his shoes and sends him packing over his confused objections. She returns to waiting only to soon discover that she is pregnant.



Judith will have nothing to do with her daughter Catherine who very nearly dies at a young age but somehow manages to survive alone on the streets. Nurtured by the belief that her father will some day return for her, Catherine ekes out a scruffy existence, eventually blooming into a tough, beautiful young woman. Roman, the richest, finest man in town, who has always looked down on her, sees her anew one day and, the difference in their ages and stations notwithstanding, falls completely in love. He takes her in, introduces her to his mother Plata, and together they make a lady of her: a powerful and imperious lady at that. Westman is their child.



Not long after Westman's birth, Victor appears on the scene. He is nasty, brutish and tall. Engaging Roman in a fight he scores an impressive win and takes Catherine and Westman as his prize. In humiliation, Roman leaves his wife and child and moves east to set up new lodging. This move puts him back in touch with his father, Ari, whom he has not seen in some time. While Catherine sets about civilizing Victor, Roman gets reacquainted with his parents who have been living with the friendly, but mysterious, Aran.



Growing up under Catherine and Victor, Westman is a quiet and respectful child in his younger years. The first inklings of discontent surface when he goes to visit his father and comes face-to-face with Aran and his venerable, wise grandparents who expose him to a world of new, provocative ideas. Catherine, a domineering mother, is a bit worried but tolerant; she recognizes the old folks' wisdom and trusts Westman's obedient nature to keep him in line. About this time, Victor announces that he has had enough of Catherine and moves north to his own place.

Westman's adolescence changes everything. At about 13 years old, he begins to explore his surroundings, finding places that no one he knows has seen before. On one of these trips he has a truly remarkable experience, to which we will return a bit later. To the pure delight of his mother and with her unmitigated support, Westman begins to paint and to sing, pouring out an explosion of creative work.

Catherine is tremendously proud of her son but slightly worried about the effect that strange places and new ideas might have on him. And with good reason: a lethal brew of grandparents' teachings, new insights, and plain teenage rebellion has begun to do its work. Westman becomes progressively less willing to submit to Catherine's dictates and her world view. He insists that he can, and will, think for himself, in the new ways that he has discovered. Their final, ferocious conflict climaxes with Westman leaving home, to live with Victor, who is more tolerant of Westman's natural curiosity.

Westman and Victor are soon to have their own conflicts, as Westman asserts himself as a grown man, tired of being under Victor's control. They fight and Westman does indeed gain his independence only to find himself, now twenty years old, caught in an internal struggle between his desire to pursue the material aspects of his life, and the uneasiness he feels about his increasingly tenuous grasp on the abstracts of truth and reality.

This ends the story proper. Following are three peripheral vignettes, skipped in the initial telling.

**SAM - Westman's child.** This was a remarkable episode in one of Westman's early trips of exploration. In a far away place he met a woman, although "met" is not exactly the right word because she was a being of a totally different sort than himself. This woman, Iberia, was distinctly "less" than he -- more solid, more earthly, but less profound, less real. In fact, one could say that he was a god and she a mortal. Like Westman, Iberia was on an adventure of discovery, exploring an ancient house that she had found. Despite their dissimilar natures Westman was smitten with her and did manage to demonstrate his affection concretely enough to leave her with child. To Iberia, the romance consisted of no more than of a mystical, dream-remembered experience and the virgin birth of the twins Sam and Andy. From the house she had been exploring, Iberia also took a young girl, Angelita, whose lot was changed from that of a free spirit to a maid, unwillingly pressed into Iberia's service.

Iberia returned to her hometown with the three children: her twin sons and Angelita. She was met by Frank and John, the town's outstanding citizens and most bitter rivals. They were both immediately struck with the promise of the twins. After considerable conflict and cajoling, John took over as foster father to the boys. He raised them until Sam, in his adolescence, began to chaff under John's stern command, and wrestled himself free, by trouncing John.

**ARAN'S STORY.** Aran lived as a wild free spirit until his adolescence when a god-woman, Jessica, visited him. (Some suspect that this was Jesse returned in female form). She appeared briefly and left suddenly, but the encounter completely focused and energized Aran who proceeded to worship her and to tell everyone he could about her. In his travels he met Iberia, and although he was to her as a god is to a mortal, he was immensely attracted to her. He approached her to join him as a mate in his quest to spread Jessica's message but, with considerable difficulty, she spurned his advances. At the moment when she finally convinced him to leave her be, Westman appeared and broke through her tattered defenses.

**MADAME SOLÉ.** There was another encounter, later in Westman's adolescence. He first met Madame Solé when he was 17 years old. She was older, mysterious, earthy and beautiful. He wooed her clumsily and won her more through intimidation than through much reciprocal affection on her part. When Westman was 19, distracted by the angst of his uncertainty, Madame Solé took the opportunity to walk out on him. Her departure left him a bit confused -- he had fancied that he treated her well and she was appreciative -- but he carried on without ever really bothering to understand why she left, determined that he would succumb to neither self-pity nor guilt.

Now that the story is really over we can provide the key to the metaphor.

### **THE METAPHOR**

Westman = the western mind/western philosophy

Judith = the Jews

Jesse = Jewish Messiahs (including Jesus)

Catherine = the Catholic Church

Roman = the Roman Empire. His trip is the move of the Roman Empire to the East

Victor = the German tribes (Visigoths) who overthrow Rome. Victor's move away Catherine represents the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire. Victor also plays another role: he represents the hand of overt, repressive politics against which the democratic growth of the West had to struggle.

Ari = Aristotle, rediscovered by Roman's move east.

Plata = Plato (who had earlier contributed significantly to Christian theology via St. Augustine in Catherine's initial contact with Plata)

Aran = the Arabic people, preservers of Greek philosophy, particularly Aristotle.

Iberia = Spain

Sam = the United States

Andy = Canada

John = England

Frank = France

Madam Sole = the third world colonies

Westman's adolescence is the period of global exploration and the Renaissance. The conflicts with Catherine are the Reformation and the scientific revolution in which western philosophy frees itself from the Church. The final fight is the condemnation of Galileo at which point the force of western

civilization deserts Rome and moves north to Germany, France and England. The fights with Victor are the evolution of the democratic tradition in the West.

**Westman -- a chronology of the teens**

With a little slippage in the early years, one might imagine Westman as aging one year per century since the year one thousand. That is to say Westman just turned twenty. This explains the current situation. The West is now a rowdy, dangerous young man -- strong enough to do real harm, with only the beginning of the wisdom to control that capability. Ultimately, one can hope for progress, assuming that this youngster is smart enough to survive his most perilous years and grow into the wisdom that age can confer. We can now ask Westman to provide for us the most interesting event in each of his teen years.

Century/ Age	Westman ...		Event	
10	is sent on a trip to a strange place		Crusades	
11	meets his grandfather		Aristotle rediscovered	
12	extracts a promise from Victor to consult him in important decisions		Magna Carta	
13 and 14	starts to paint, write and sing meets Iberia		Renaissance US created	
15	fights with his mother/leaves to live with Victor.		the Reformation	
16	learns that the world is a predictable place		Science	
17	fights with Victor; moves out on his own. meets Madame Solé		Revolutions Global exploration	
18 19	in the day ... works and makes goods	at night ... worries and wonders	the day ... industry	the night ... uncertainty and relativity

[Century #10 is not the 10<sup>th</sup> century, it is Westman’s 10<sup>th</sup> year, i.e. the years 1000-1099, which is the 11<sup>th</sup> century]

**Performances**

The stories of Westman and Sam exist as musical presentations. The former is done oratorio style -- singers stand up and sing backed up by a slide presentation. The show has two parts. The first develops Westman’s genealogy with songs sung by the participants (Judith, Jesse, and so on) describing the details of the story. The second part, by a solo singer, is Westman’s description of the above events of his teen years. The slides are particularly crucial to this part because the song is sung from Westman’s view while the slides provide the key to the story.

SAM exists as a two-hour, music-only play that was presented in 1995 as part of Glendale Community College’s theater season.

I have been known to perform pieces of these at coffeehouses, libraries and vacant corner lots.

# THE GENEALOGY OF THE WESTERN MIND

