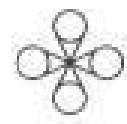
THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES



JOSEPH CAMPBELL

BOLLINGEN SERIES XVII

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
PRINCETON AND OXFORD

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TO MT FATHER AND MOTHER

First Edition, *1949*
Second Edition, 1968
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Library of Congress Control No. 200306H0H4
ISBN: 0-691-11924-4-

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PREFACE TO THE 1949 EDITION

"THE TRUTHS contained in religious doctrines are after all so distorted and systematically disguised," writes Sigmund Freud, "that the mass of humanity cannot recognize them as truth. The case is similar to what happens when we tell a child that newborn babies are brought by the stork. Here, too, we are telling the truth in symbolic clothing, for we know what the large bird signifies. But the child does not know it. He hears only the distorted part of what we say, and feels that he has been deceived; and we know how often his distrust of the grown-ups and his refractoriness actually take their start from this impression. We have become convinced that it is better to avoid such symbolic disguisings of the truth in what we tell children and not to withhold from them a knowledge of the true state of affairs commensurate with their intellectual level."[1]

It is the purpose of the present book to uncover some of the truths disguised for us under the figures of religion and **mythology** by bringing together a multitude of not-too-diffiailt examples and letting the ancient meaning become apparent of itself. The old teachers knew what they were saying. Once we have learned to read again their symbolic language, it requires no more than the talent of an anthologist to let their teaching be heard. But first we must learn the grammar of the symbols, and as a key to this mystery I know of no better modern tool than psychoanalysis. Without regarding this as the last word on the subject, one can nevertheless permit it to serve as an approach. The second step will be then to bring together a host of myths and folk tales from even' corner of the world, and to let the symbols

Sigmund Freud: The future of an illusion (translated by James Strachey et al., Standard Edition, XXI; London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), pp. 44—45 (Orig. 19-27.)

speak for themselves. The parallels will be immediately apparent; and these will develop a vast and amazingly constant statement of the basic truths by which man has lived throughout the millenniums of his residence on the planet.

Perhaps it will be objected that in bringing out the correspondences I have overlooked the differences between the various Oriental and Occidental, modern, ancient, and primitive traditions. The same objection might be brought, however, against any textbook or chart of anatomy, where the physiological variations of race are disregarded in the interest of a basic general understanding of the human physique. There are of course differences between the numerous mythologies and religions of mankind, but this is a book about the similarities; and once these are understood the differences will be found to be much less great than is popularly (and politically) supposed. My hope is that a comparative elucidation may contribute to the perhaps not-quite-desperate cause of those forces that are working in the present world for unification, not in the name of some ecclesiastical or political empire, but in the sense of human mutual understanding. As we are told in the Vedas: "Truth is one, the sages speak of it by many names."

For help in the long task of bringing my materials into readable form, I wish to thank Mr. Henry Morton Robinson, whose advice greatly assisted me in the first and final stages of the work, Mrs. Peter Geiger, Mrs. Margaret Wing, and Mrs. Helen McMaster, who went over the manuscripts many times and offered invaluable suggestions, and my wife, who has worked with me from first to last, listening, reading, and revising.

J. C.
New York City
June 10, 1948

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2004 COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

What Does the Soul Want?

. MYTH IS THE SECRET OPENING THROUGH WHICH THE NEXHAUST1BLE ENERGIES OF THE COSMOS POUR INTO HUMAN CULTURAL MANIFESTATION. . . .

—Joseph Campbell

A Preamble

I AM HONORED to be invited to write this introduction to the work of a soul I have regarded in many ways for so long. The context and substance of Joseph Campbell's lifework is one of the most recent diamonds on a long, long necklace of other dazzling gemstones that have been mined by humanity—from the depths, and often at great cost—since the beginning of time. There is no doubt that there is strung across the eons—a strong and fiery-wrought chain of lights, and that each glint and ray represents a great work, a great wisdom preserved. The lights on this infinite ligature have been added to, and continue to be added to, link by link.

A few of the names of those who have added such lights are still remembered, but the names of those who ignited most of the lights have been lost in time. However, it can be said that we are descended from them all. This phenomenon of the necklace of lights should not be understood as some mere trinket. Its reality is that it has acted, since forever, as a swaying, glowing lifeline for human souls trying to find their ways through the dark.

Joseph Campbell was born in 1904, and his work continues to attract the interested reader, the experienced seeker, and the neophyte as well, for it is written with serious-mindedncss and

such brio, and so little mire. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* is about the heroic journey, but it is not written, as some works on the subject are, by a mere onlooker. It is not written by one simply hyper-fascinated with mythos, or by one who bowdlerizes the mythic motifs so that they no longer have any electrical pulse to them.

No, this work is authored by a genuinely inspirited person who himself was once a novice, that is, a beginner who opened not just the mind, but also the longing heart, all in order to be a vessel for spiritual realities—ones greater than the conclusions of the ego alone. Over time, Campbell became to many people an example of what it means to be a master teacher. While granting merit to the pragmatic, he also carried the sensibilities of a modern mystic—and even in old age, a time during which many may feel they have earned the right to be irritable and remote, Campbell continued to be intensely capable of awe and wonder.

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, via numerous myths, he shows how the heroic self seeks an exacting spiritual countenance, that is, a higher way of holding and conducting oneself. This heroic way offers depth of insight and meaning. It is attentive to guides along the way, and invigorates creative life. We see that the journey of the hero and heroine are most often deepened via ongoing perils. These include losing one's way innumerable times, refusing the first call, thinking it is only one thing when it really is, in fact, quite another—as well as entanglements and confrontations with something of great and often frightening magnitude. Campbell points out that coming through such struggles causes the person to be infused with more vision, and to be strengthened by the spiritual life principle — which, more than anything else, encourages one to take courage to live with effrontery and mettle.

Throughout his work too, time and again, he does not offer pap about the mediocre, timid, or tired ruts of spiritual life. Instead, he describes the *frontiers* of spiritual matters as he envisions them. One can see in the tales he chooses to tell that he knows a heroic endeavor draws a person into timeless time. There, the intents and contents of spirit, soul, and psyche are

not logged according to artificial stops normally assigned to mundane time. Now life is measured instead by the depth of longing to remember one's own wholeness, and by the crackle of efforts to find and keep alive the most daring and tin diminished heart.

In the oldest myths from Babylonia, Assyria, and other ancient populations, the storytellers and poets, who pecked **with** styluses on stone or etched with pigment on hand-wrought paper or cloth, beautifully detailed a particular idea about psychic resonance—one that modern psychoanalysts, mythologists, theologians, and artists also continue to take up with interest. **This** very old idea about mythic reverberation was understood as one which takes place in a triad between Creator, individual human being, and the larger culture. Each mysteriously and deeply affects and inspires the others.

Thus, in a number of ancient Babylonian and Assyrian tales, the psychological, moral, and spiritual states of the heroic character, of the king or queen, were directly reflected in the health of the people, the land, the creatures, and the weather. When the ruler was ethical and whole, the culture was also. When the king or queen was ill from having broken taboos, or had become sick with power, greed, hatred, sloth, envy, and other ailments, then the land fell into a famine. Insects and reptiles rained down from the skies. People weakened and died. Everyone turned on one another, and nothing new could be born.

Campbell brings this ancient idea into his work too. Borrowing the term *monomyth*, a word he identifies as one coined by James Joyce, he puts forth the ancient idea—that the mysterious energy for inspirations, revelations, and actions in heroic stories **worldwide** is also universally found in human beings. People who find resonant heroic themes of challenges and questing in their own lives, in their goals, creative outpourings, in their day- and night-dreams—are being led to a single psychic fact. That is, that the creative and spiritual lives of **individuals** influence the outer world as much as the mythic world influences the individual.

By restating this primordial understanding, Campbell offers hope that the consciousness of the individual can prompt, prick, and prod the whole of humankind into more evolution. His thesis,

like those of the ancients—and as put forth also, but in different ways, by Freud, Jung, and others—is that by entering and transforming the personal psyche, the surrounding culture, the life of the family, one's relational work, and other matters of life can be transformed too. Since time out of mind, this has been understood as being best effected by journeying through the personal, cosmological, and equally vast spiritual realities. By being challenged via the failings and fortunes one experiences there, one is marked as belonging to a force far greater, and one is changed ever after.

Campbell acted as a lighted fire for many. The mythic matters he resonated to personally also attracted legions of readers and listeners worldwide. In this way, he gathered together a tribe of like-minded individuals, thinkers, and creators. His book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, continues to be one of the major rendezvous sites for those who seek the meridians where "what is purely spirit" and "what is purely human" meet and create a third edition of a finer selfhood.

What will follow now in the first half of this introduction for Joseph Campbell's work are specific details about the continuing importance of mythic stories in current times, the energies that support such, and how the body of myths and stories can become corrupted, undernourished, assaulted, even destroyed—and yet return again and again in fresh and unusual ways. The second half of the introduction is devoted to additional commentary about Joseph Campbell's work as a thinker and artist of his time and our time also.

One last word now before we pass through the next portal: *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* has shed light for many men and women since it was first published. The hearts and souls who are attracted to this work may have lived few years of life or may have had many years on earth. It does not matter how long one has lived, for, you see everything begins with inspiration, and inspiration is ageless—as is the journey. With regard to the heroic, so much is unpredictable; but there are two matters, above all, about which a person can be certain—struggle on the journey is a given, but also there will be splendor.

The Search for the Highest Treasure

In an ancient story called "The Conference of the Birds,"[1] a flock of a thousand birds, during a time of great upheaval and darkness, suddenly glimpse an image of wholeness—an illumined feather. They thusly feel encouraged to take a long and arduous journey to find out what amazing bird this illumined feather belongs to. This narrative in poetic form was written in the eleventh century by the Persian Sufi mystic Farid ad-Din Attar. It tells about a remarkable saga with many long episodes that precisely describe the psyche's perilous journey to seek the Soul of souls.

When the illumined feather floats down from the sky, one of the wisest of the birds reveals that this feather is in fact a precognition—a visionary glimpse of the Simorgh, the Great One. Oh, how the birds are buoyed up then. The birds are of many different kinds: short-beaked, long-billed, fancy-plumed, plain-colored, enormous, and tiny. But, regardless of size, shape, or hue, the birds who have witnessed this sudden and evanescent sight of the lighted feather band together. They make thunder as they rise up into the sky, all in order to seek this radiant source. They believe this sovereign creature to be so wondrous that it will be able to light their darkened world once again. And thus the creatures begin the grueling quest.

There are many old European "fool tales" that begin with similar motif's. There is one version told in my old country family, which we called "The Hidden Treasure." The story revolves around a group of brothers who were told by their father the King that, whosoever could bring back to him the golden treasure of "what has great price and yet is priceless," should inherit his kingdom. Two of the brothers rush off with their maps and plans and schemes in hand. They are certain they will reach the goal first.

But the third brother is portrayed as a fool. He throws a feather up into the air, where it is taken up by the wind. He follows in the direction the feather leads him. His brothers jeer at

him and say he will never learn and never be successful. After all, he is only a fool, and fools inherit nothing but more foolishness until the end of their days.

Yet, at the last, the fool does find the treasure, for the wafting feather has led him to more and more canny insights and opportunities. The feather has magical powers that guide the heretofore hapless hero to live more soulfully, and in full spirit and compassion. Thus he finds a way of being that is "of this earth and yet not of this earth." There is a "great price" to be paid to live in such an attitude of wholeness, for it means one must abandon the old unconscious way of life, including, for the fool, some of one's former self-indulgent foolishnesses.

At the same time, however, the ability to live while being "of this earth and yet not of this earth" is "priceless," for such a stance brings contentment and strength of the finest kinds to the heart, spirit, and soul. Thusly, having found this truer way of life to be "of high cost and yet priceless," the former fool lives free and claims his father's reward.

Meanwhile, the other two brothers are still somewhere out in the flats, busily calculating where to go next to find the treasure. But their requirements for finding something of value are unwise. They maintain that they will try anything and look anywhere for the treasure, as long as the ways and means to do so avoid all difficulty, yet also satisfy their every appetite. In seeking to avoid all peril, discomfort, and "all love that might ever cause us heartache,[11] they thus find and bring to themselves only the empty assets of self-delusion and an aversion to real life.

In "The Conference of Birds," there are some birds who also wander off the path and those who flee it. The birds are, in essence, questing for the fiery phoenix, that which can rise from its own ashes back up into illumined wholeness again. In the beginning, the thousand birds set out to enter into and pass through seven valleys, each one presenting different barriers and difficult challenges. The thousand birds endure increasingly hostile conditions, terrible hardships, and torments—including horrifying visions, lacerating doubts, nagging regrets. They long to turn back. They are filled with despair and exhaustion. The

creatures receive no satisfaction, nor rest, nor reward for a very long time.

Thus, more and more of the birds make excuses to give up. The attrition rate continues, until there are only thirty birds left to continue this harsh flight that they all had begun with such earnest hearts—all in quest for the essence of Truth and Wholeness in life—and, beyond that, for that which can light the dark again.

In the end, the thirty birds realize that their perseverance, sacrifice, and faithfulness to the path—is the lighted feather, that this same illumined feather lives in each one's determination, each one's fitful activity toward the divine. The one who will light the world again—is deep inside each creature. That fabled lighted feather's counterpart lies ever hidden in each bird's heart.

At the end of the story, a pun is revealed. It is that *Si-Morgh* means *thirty birds.* The number thirty is considered that which makes up a full cycle, as in thirty days to the month, during which the moon moves from a darkened to a lit crescent, to full open, to ultimate maturity, and thence continues on. The point is that the cycle of seeing, seeking, falling, dying, being reborn into new sight, has now been completed.

There is one last advice given to anyone else who might glimpse such a lighted feather during darkness and long to follow it to its source. The counsel is presented by the writer of the story, and in absolute terms—as if to say, there will be no more shilly-shallying around regarding "Ought I to go where 1 am called? or not?" The definitive guidance is this:

Whosoever desires to explore The Way—
Let them set out—*for what more is there to say?*

These words were written nine hundred years ago. They portray a timeless idea about *how* to journey to the curve around which one finds one's wholeness waiting. These w-ords of wisdom have continued to surface over the eons. They point to the same parallels on the map of spirit, marking the entry points with big red X's: "Here! Here is the exact place to start, the exact attitude to take."

Three hundred years after Farid ad-Din Attar wrote his "Conference of the Birds," the ancient poetry of Mayan *Popul Vuh* was first translated into Spanish. One part of that poetic saga tells about the great journey four companions are about to undertake—a journey into a hard battle to recover a stolen treasure. **They** are frightened and say to the ethereal warrior-entity that leads them, "What if we die? W'hat if we are defeated?" And the enormous brute force that guides them—rather than being aloof and hardened, replies, "Do not grieve. I am here. Do not be afraid." And they are comforted and strengthened to go forward. The greater force gives no coddling, but rather encouragement woven through with compassion, which says, in essence, "You can go forward, for you are not alone; I will not leave you."

The idea to go forward, to seek wholeness without pausing to reconsider, debate, or procrastinate one more time—this is found too in the twentieth-century poet Louise Bogan's work. She writes in the same crisp vein about commencing the momentous journey. Her poem, entitled "The Daemon," refers to the angel that each person on earth is *believed* to be born with, the one who guides the life and destiny of that child on earth. In the piece, she questions this greater soulful force about going forward in life. **The** daemon answers her quintessential question with the ancient answer:

It said, "Why not?"
It said, "Once more."

These responsories are an echo from twenty-one hundred years ago, when the venerable first-century-BCE rabbi, **Hiltel,** encouraged in his mishnah, "If not now, when?[11] This simple and powerful encouragement to go on with the journey has been expressed in different words, at different times, to the yearning but timid, to the uncertain, the jaded, the hesitant, the dawdlers, the postponers, the fakers, the foolish, and the wise. Thus, since the beginning of time, humanity has lurched, walked, crawled, dragged, and danced itself forward toward the fullest life with soul possible.

The journey to the treasure is undertaken with as much valor and vision as each can muster. Even when one's will or one's understanding wavers, the creative gifts to follow and learn this larger life are fully present. People may be unprepared, but they are never unprovisioned. Each person is born with the wherewithal **fully** intact.

What Does the Soul Truly Want?

If the world of mythos is a universe, I come from a tiny archipelago of deeply ethnic families, composed of household after household of Old World refugees, immigrants, and storytellers who could not read or write, or did so with grave difficulty. But they had a rich oral tradition, of which I have been in a long life's study as a *cantadora*—that is, a carrier and shelterer of mythic tales, especially those coming from my own ancestral *Mexicano* and *Magyar* traditions.

My other lifework is that of a post-trauma specialist and diplomate psychoanalyst. With the aim of helping to repair torn spirits, I listen to many life dramas and dream narratives. From repeatedly seeing how the psyche yearns when it is inspired, confused, injured, or bereft, I find that, above all, *the soul wants stories.*

If courage and bravery are the muscles of the **spiritual** drive that help a person to become whole, then stories are the bones. Together, they move the episodes of the life myth forward. Why stories"? Because the soul's way of communicating is to teach. And its language is symbols and themes—all of which have been found, since the beginning of time, in stories. I would even go so far as to say, the soul *needs* stories. That radiant center we call soul is the enormous aspect of psyche which is invisible, but which can be palpably felt. When in relationship with the soul, we sense our highest aspirations, our most uncanny knowings,

our mystical understandings, and our spontaneous inspirations and unleashings of creative ideas.

We speak of the soul infusing us with the humane and sacred qualities of life that gratify longings deep within. Thus, via dream-images, evocative moments, and story plots—the soul appears to stimulate the psyche's innate yearning to be taught its greater and lesser parts, to be comforted, **lifted,** and inspired toward the life that is "just a little bit lower than the angels."

There is a "hearing capacity" in the psyche. It loves to listen to all manner of nourishing, startling, and challenging dramatic patterns—the very ones found in tales. It matters little how the stories arrive—whether they take shape in day-time reveries, night-time dreams, or through the inspired arts, or are told simply by human beings in any number of ways. They are meant to be conveyed in blood-red wholeness and authentic depth.

In my work of listening to others telling about the many images and ideas that colonize them, stories, regardless of the forms they are given, are the only medium on earth that can clearly and easily mirror every aspect of the psyche—the cruel, the cold and deceptive, the redemptive, salvific, desirous, the tenacious aspects, and so much more. If one did not know oneself, one could listen to a dozen profound stories that detail the pathos of the hero's or heroine's failures and victories. Thence, with some guidance, a person would soon be far better able to name, in oneself and others, those critical and resonant elements and facts that compose a human being.

There was a serious piece of advice given by the very old people in our family. It was that every child ought to know twelve complete stories before that child was twelve years old. Those twelve tales were to be a group of heroic stories that covered a spectrum—of both the beautiful and the hellacious—from life-long loves and loyalties, to descents, threats, and deaths, with rebirth ever affirmed. No matter how much "much" a person might otherwise possess, they were seen as poor—and worse, as imperiled—if they did not know stories they could turn to for advice, throughout and till the very end of life.

There Must Be a River: Ever and Ever,
There Must Be a River

In the past two centuries there has been much erosion of the oral storytelling tradition. Many clans and groups, when too quickly forced into another culture's ideals, have been de-stabilized economically and therefore often de-tribalized as well. This can cause entire groups to become abruptly and painfully un-storied. Sudden **monetary** need can cause the young and old to be separated from one another, as the younger ones travel far away seeking income. The same occurs when there is massive loss of hunting, fishing, or farming habitat. People must break family ties to seek farther and farther from home for their sustenance.

For thousands of years, a solid oral tradition has depended, in many cases, first of all, on having a close-knit and related group **to** tell stories to. There must also be a time and place to **tell** the stories, including special times to tell certain stories—such as, in my foster father's Hungarian farm-village, where love stories with a certain erotic flavor to them were told in latest winter. This was to encourage babies to be made then and, it was hoped, to be delivered before the hard work of first harvest came in the late summer.

Elena and Nicolae Ceaus.escu's murderoiis regime in late twentieth-century Romania destroyed hundreds of living, thriving smail farm-villages, and disenfranchising the people who had worked those fertile lands for centuries. The two dictators said they were "modernizing" the peasants—but, in reality, they were killing them. The Ceau§escus were like the Kraken of Greek mythos, which tries to devour and destroy anything of beauty, till nothing but its own grotesque hulk is left standing.

Many dear souls I spoke to in Bucharest had been literally forced from their farmhouses by their own government. They were driven thence into the city, to live in one of the hundreds of ugly, drab, cement-block high-rise apartments the Ceaus_escus had ordered to be built. Bucharest was once called "the Paris of

the Balkans," for it had such gracious ancient villas, beautiful houses, and buildings made by incredible Old World craftsmen. The despots destroyed over seven thousand villas, homes, churches, monasteries, synagogues, and a hospital, in order to put up their dead garden of gray concrete.

I met wild artists, and gracious young and old people, who were still deeply scarred after the nightmare tyranny of the Ceaus.escus had fallen. But the people were still filled with guarded hope. One group of old women told me that there in the city, the young girls no longer knew the love stories traditionally used to draw the interest of suitors. Though the lovely young girls' physical beauty surely would attract them, how would any suitor determine whether a girl knew anything about deep life if she did not know the stories about all the beauties and dead ends of life? If she were naive about the challenging themes revealed in stories, how would the girl therefore be able to withstand the ups and downs of marriage?

How did the young girls lose their stories? They normally would **have** learned them at the river, where village women of all ages washed clothes together. Now that their lands had been confiscated and their villages plowed under and replaced by huge (and largely inept) "state-run" agricultural cooperatives, now that the villagers had been "removed" to the city, each tiny urban apartment had one small sink. This is where the women were to wash their family's ctothes evermore. There was no river in the projects. No river: no gathering place. No gathering place: no stories.

Yet, since time out of mind, for those souls no longer able or allowed to live the integral village life, it has been amazing how faithfully these people have found other ways to "dig" psychic rivers wherever they are, so that the stories can still flow on. The need for stories—to engender relationships, and creativity, and to grow the souls of all—does not ever cease. This mysterious drive to have the succor of stories remains, even in the midst of crises.

The former farm-women now living in the big Romanian city no longer had the village river, so they made a story circle in the

eldest one's tiny home. Her living room became the river. The old women put out the word that all the other women should all bring their daughters; that they would make them clothes-modern ones, like those displayed in the store windows. The excellent old seamstresses thus sewed and talked and told the old stories of love and life and death; and the girls, taking delight in their new clothes and in gratitude for the hands that made them, were taught, at last, the needed stories. It was a different river than before, that is true. But the women still knew where in the heart the headwaters lay—the river that ran through their hearts, uniting them, was still as deep and clear as it had ever been.

The Story Function Will Not Die

One of the most remarkable developments that criss-cross the world, no matter how urbanized a people may become, no matter how far they are living from family, or how many generations away they are born from a tight-knit heritage group—people everywhere nonetheless will form and re-form "talking story" groups. There appears to be a strong drive in the psyche to be nourished and **taught,** but also to nourish and teach the psyches of as many others as possible, with the best and deepest stories that can be found.

For those who are able to read, perhaps the hunger for stories may be partially met through the daily reading of a newspaper, especially those rare kind of heroic stories to be found in longer feature articles. These allow the reader to "be with" the story, to follow the leitmotifs patiently, to give consideration to each part, to allow thoughts and feeling to arise, and so to speak, to flood the fertile psychic delta.

When I teach journalists, writers, and filmmakers about authentic story, its archetypal parts and powers, and how a story may become compelling, or may fail to be—I encourage them to be brave by taking time to tell the whole story, not just *story*

simplex as the overculture too often seems to demand. A longer piece, with archetypal themes intact, invites the psyche to enter the story, to immerse in the undergirdings and nuances of another human being's wild fate.

When stories are shortened to "bytes," all the most profound symbolic language and themes—and thereby the deeper meanings and nourishments—are left out. The too-short or superficial story colludes in supporting a mad culture that insists that human beings remaining frazzled, ever on the run—rather than inviting them, by the telling of a compelling story at some length, to slow down, to know that it is alright to sit down now, that it is good to take rest, and to listen with one's inner hearing to something that is energizing, engaging, instructive, and nourishing in one way or another.

To supplement the written word, or as an alternative to it, many people who are "un-villaged" recreate **villages** wherever they go. Thus they gather with others at a crossroads, or at a certain cafe, the gyros shop, the bakery, the breakfast-place, at the curb, or on the street corners—all to "jape and jaw," that is, to talk long-windedly and jokingly with peers about each one's latest exploits. And in between the exploits, they tell all the old personal and mythic stories each can remember. These are all reassertions of tribal **story** gatherings. Sometimes, too, people gather with others around the "central hearth" of a book, and thereby draw strength and guidance from it and from each other.

Parks across the world are filled every day with adults and teenagers who share the mundane stories of their days with one another. The themes of great love, and no love, and new love that they have lived firsthand, form the center of many of the stories they tell each other. Even when people no longer remember the old stories, they can pick up the great heroic themes again, as they study their own and other people's lives. Many of the true stories of human love-life are but echoes of the themes found in the heroic legends of Abelard and Heloise (lovers who were driven apart by others), or Eros and Psyche (the big misstep in love), or Medea and Jason (the jealousy, envy, and revenge of insanely possessive love).

In restaurants, there are many chairs reserved in perpetuity for "The Ladies Club," or "The Outrageous Older Women's Club," and many other coteries, covens, and circles—the whole point of which is to tell, trade, make stories. Around the world, at any given time, there are legions of old men walking to gather together at their designated story place. It is a pub, a bench outside or inside a store or arcade, a table—often outdoors, under trees. My elderly and vital father-in-law, a former estimator and installer of burglar-alarms for American District Telegraph, meets his cronies religiously. Several times a week they gather at Mickey-D's, which is what MacDonatd's chain of restaurant is called by "da guys" in Chicago.

"The Mickey-D's Good Guys[1] Club" is the formal name they have given their gathering. They are a group that includes many grizzled and handsome old union truck- and tanker-drivers. Their clan ritual is to bring up every serious, foolish, and noble story they have heard on the news or read in the newspaper. They discuss the world's terrible woes in detail then, and suggest theoretical—but always heroic—solutions. They agree that "If only everyone would just take our good advice, the world would be a much better place by tomorrow morning."

The desire to make, tell, and hear stories is so profound that groups and clubs are formed for that precise purpose. There are pods of drinking "regulars," civic meetings, church fellowships, celebrations, sanctifications, homecomings, reunions, birthday parties, holiday gatherings, high holy days, porch-stoop sittin's, readers' groups, therapy groups, news meetings, planning sessions, and other occasions are used to call people to be together. The point of it all certainly includes the stated reason the gathering was called, but, underlying it, it is about stories—the ones that will be traded, hooted out, acted out, suppressed, reveled in, approached, interpreted, and laughed over—wherever like-minded people come together.

And after such meetings, though gifts might have been exchanged or door prizes given out, though arguments might have taken place, alliances begun, ended, or strengthened, learnings achieved or delayed, what is remembered most—and told over

and over again—is nut the trinkets or the mundane proceedings so much, as the stories that unfolded there, and often the love that carried them.

Thus one more link of story-associations is forged so that the group can be bound together. As the matriarch of my family, it is my job to lead in many ways. **Thus,** I often say to my fissioning, active family, "We have to go somewhere together soon now. We have to make new memories together now." By such means, people all across the world experience continuing new stories to bind and rebind their self-made clans together. For everyone, from war veterans to families, from co-workers to classmates, from survivors to activists, religious and artists, and more, the stories they share together bind them more faithfully, through the heart and soul, to each other and to the spirit, than almost any other bond.

In Extremis:
The Story Finds a Way

To be *in extremis* means to be in severe circumstances, to be near the point of death. This can be the exact condition of the psyche at certain times, depending on the quality of one's choices and/or the terrible twists of fate. Then, even if the means for sharing stories is almost completely disassembled—as when persons are incarcerated in prison—the human spirit **will** still find a way to receive and to convey stories.

I have had a ministry to the imprisoned for many years. People in penitentiaries can communicate a story in a quick pantomime passing in the corridors. They will write short stories in letters that are flushed down one toilet, and retrieved from another toilet that has been linked with the first. People imprisoned learn to tell stories in sign language, sticking their arms out through the cell bars so other people imprisoned in cells further down the line can see their hands. They then literally spell out letters to the words in the air and make inventive gestures as well. Pictures

and paintings are made. These often resemble ex-votos that describe an episode in life or death, and these are often smuggled from cell to cell. People learn how to tell brief stories of success and failure by merely letting their eyes do the telling as they pass by each other.

The story-making and story-receiving functions persevere, no matter what. There are many egregious events recorded in history wherein a person or a people have been massacred. In their last room, on the walls, in the dirt, they drew a picture or wrote the story of what was happening to them, using anything they had, including their own blood. People who have fallen and been fatally injured in the wilderness have been known to manage to use their own cameras to photograph themselves, or to write in a journal, or gasp into a tape recorder the story of their last days. The drive to tell the story is profound.

Secret-keeping is a risky affair for the same reason. There is something in the psyche that recognizes a wrongful act and wants to tell the story of how it came about and what action ought be undertaken to correct it. The tale of "The King with the Ears of an Ass" is a case in point. It is an interesting story about personal politics. In the story, the king has committed a wrong. As a result, the long tender ears of a donkey suddenly erupt on his head.

He anxiously begins to let his hair grow to disguise these bodacious ears. He allows his barber to trim his hair, but only a tiny bit, and only if the barber will keep his horrible secret. The barber agrees. Yet, though he is a good man, it is soon killing him to keep the secret. So, with full desire to remain loyal to his promise, the barber goes out each night and digs a shallow little hole in the ground by the river. He leans down to the opening in the earth and whispers the secret: "Psssst, the king has the ears of an ass." He then pats the dirt back into the opening, turns, and goes to his bed greatly unburdened.

However, over a short time, reeds grow up from the openings he has made in the earth. Shepherds pass by and see these lovely strong reeds growing there. They cut them for flutes. But the moment the shepherds put their lips to the newly made flutes, the flutes must cry out, "The king has the ears of an ass!"

Myth and Dream

WHETHER we listen with aloof amusement to the dreamlike mumbo jumbo of some red-eyed witch doctor of the Congo, or read with cultivated rapture thin translations from the sonnets of the mystic Lao-tse; now and again crack the hard nutshell of an argument of Aquinas, or catch suddenly the shining meaning of a bizarre Eskimo fain' tale: it will be always the one, shape-shifting yet marvelously constant story that we find, together with a challengingly persistent suggestion of more remaining to be experienced than will ever be known or told.

Throughout the inhabited world, in all times and under every circumstance, the myths of man have flourished; and they have been the living inspiration of whatever else may have appeared out of the activities of the human body and mind. It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation. Religions, philosophies, arts, the social forms of primitive and historic man, prime discoveries in science and technology, the very dreams that blister sleep, boil up from the basic, magic ring of myth.

The wonder is that the characteristic efficacy to touch and inspire deep creative centers dwells in the smallest nursery fairy tale—as the flavor of the ocean is contained in a droplet or the whole mystery of life within the egg of a flea. For the symbols of mythology are not manufactured; they cannot be ordered, invented, or permanently suppressed. They are spontaneous productions of the psyche, and each bears within it, undamaged, the germ power of its source.

What is the secret of the timeless vision? From what profundity of the mind does it derive? Why is mythology everywhere the same, beneath its varieties of costume? And what does it teach?

Today many sciences are contributing to the analysis of the riddle. Archaeologists are probing the ruins of Iraq, Honan,

Thus it goes with the psyche. Story erupts, no matter how deeply repressed or buried. Whether in night-dreams, or through one's creative products, or the tics and tocks of neurosis, the story will find its way up and out again.

Sometimes an entire culture colludes in the gradual destruction of its own panoramic spirit and breadth of its teaching stories. Purposefully, or without awareness, this is done by focusing almost exclusively only on one or two story themes, inhibiting or forbidding all others, or only excessively touting a favorite one or two. Whether these narrowly defined or overly vaunted stories are predictable and repetitive ones about the same aspects of sex or violence, over and over again, and little else, or they are about how sinful or stupid people are, and how they ought be punished—the effect is the same. The story tradition becomes so narrowed that, like an artery that is clogged, the heart begins to starve. In physiology, as in culture, this is a life-threatening symptom.

Then the psyches of individuals may resort to scraps and tatters of stories offered them via various channels. And they will take them, often without question, the same way people who are starving will eat food that is spoiled or that has no nutritional value, if none other is available. They might hope to find such poor food somehow replenishing, even though it can never be so—and might sicken them to boot. In a barren culture, one or two fragmentary story-themes play, like a broken record, broadcasting the same notes over and over again. At first it may be slightly interesting. Then it becomes irritating. Next it becomes boring and hardly registers at all. Finally it becomes deadening. The spirit and mind and body are made narrower, rather than radiant and greater, by its presence, as they are meant to be.

Such flattened-out stories, with only one or two themes, are far different from heroic stories, which have hundreds of themes and twists and turns. Though heroic stories may also contain sexual themes and other motifs of death, evil, and extinction, they are also only one part of a larger universal rondo of stories, which includes themes of spirit overriding matter, of entropy, of glory in rebirth, and more. Sex, death, and extinction stories are useful in order for the psyche to be taught about the deeper life. But to be taught the full spectrum of stories, there must be a plethora of mythic components and episodes that progress and resolve in many different ways.

It is from innocent children that I learned what happens when a young soul is held away from the breadth and meaningful nuances of stories for too long. Little ones come to earth with a panoramic ability to hold in mind and heart literally thousands of ideas and images. The family and culture around them is supposed to place in those open channels the most beautiful, useful, deep and truthful, creative and spiritual ideas we know. But very many young ones nowadays are exposed almost exclusively to endless "crash and bash" cartoons and "smack 'em down" computer games devoid of any other thematic components. These fragmentary subjects offer the child no extensive depth of storyline.

When I have taught children as an artist-in-residence in the schools, I have found that many children were already starved for deep story before they had reached second grade. They tended to know only those from sit-com television, and they often reduced their writings to these drastically narrowed themes: "A man killed another man." "He killed him again and again. Period." "They lived, they died. The end." Nothing more.

One fine way parents, teachers, and others who cherish the minds of the young can rebalance and educate modern children's psyches is to tell them, show them, and involve them in deeper stories, on a regular basis. They can also begin to interpret daily life in mythic story terms, pointing out motifs, characters, motives, perils, and the methods of finding one's way. By these means and more, the helpers override the immense repetition of one-point-only stories that so much contemporary media and culture so harp on ad infinitum. The mythic is as needed as air and water. The mythic themes not only teach, but also nourish and, especially, energize the psyche. The vast world of story is where the child's spirit will find these most consistently. The radical knowledge and amazements found in stories ought to be every child's daily inheritance.

Amongst adults, too, the need and desire for story are so great, that even though storylines in the collective may have deteriorated, and become obsessive, drilling, and repetitive, or else corrupted, human beings will find apertures through which to create fresh and new stories—from underground. From outside the culture or at its edges, inventive and inspired souls will not allow the stories to be subverted. They will resurrect the "lost stories" in new ways that restore their depth and surprise—that are capable of uplifting, testing, and altering the psyche.

Currently, it is on the internet that gifted "frontier" writers and artists gather to create stories together. It is in web-zines, through cyber-art, the fabulae of game design, and in other wildly inventive never-before-seen forms, that any impoverishment to deep story the over-culture has caused is being overthrown. What an amazement it has been to us mere mortals to find that the reality now exists for "a voice greater" to be broadcast via the binary-code blips of ones and zeroes—a process, I am toid, which mirrors the binary code used by the synapses in the human brain. The computer transport system has become the circuitry for *la voz mitologico*, the mythic voice, to potentially address the entire planet within seconds. How mythic is that? Very.

The "underground" artists understand how to use this window to psyche, and unleash their stories with an intense understanding of the motives, successes, failures, and possibilities in mythic life. They will not be crushed under the boots of the latest societal obsession that endarkens. They see that the soul does not scrimp on images, and they, as creators, must therefore avoid, whenever possible, casting any images in too tight a way so that there is no room left for the wind of the holy spirit to pass through and rearrange everything—sometimes blow it all away—all in order to bring wonder and meaning. The ones who can both allow and withstand this rapid-fire process are the new myth-makers and reformers of the cultures of our times.

It is not too much to say that lack of compelling and unpredictable heroic stories can deaden an individual's and a culture's overall creative life—can pulverize it right down to powder. It is not too much to say that an abundance of compelling and unpredictable heroic stories can re-enspirit and awaken a drowsing psyche and culture, filling both with much-needed vitality and novel vision. From the ancient storytellers to the present, the idea has always been: As go the souls that lead, so goes the culture.

The Repair Needed In and For This World

STORY CAN MEND, AND STORY CAN HEAL.

Certainly, we have hardly ever faced a world in worse shape *or* in greater need of the lyrical, mystical, and common-sensical. There seem to be large and perpetual pockets where fair and sustaining values are more pale than they should be. But when we consider Plato, Strabbo, and the apostles Paul and John, and many others over the centuries, we see that they also wrote about their times as being likewise devoid of proper "management and meaning." It appears that "culture at edge of utter corruption" and "world at the edge of utter destruction" are two of the oldest themes to be found in stories of the human race.

But there are always those too, who have created and written about last-minute and long-term redemptions. They are the ones who give out stories that stir—that give succor and bread enough for the crossing. I think of story-givers like Abraham Joshua Heschel. The title of one of his books is a story in itself that says it all: *I Asked for Wonder*. He wrote that the culmination of life carries a more and more clear disposition to achieve moral virtue. His stories, exegeses, philosophy, and mystical views revolve around the idea that life ought to have poignant incomparables in it. He urged persons to "the ecstasy of deeds"—that is, "to go beyond oneself, to outdo oneself—and thence to "go beyond one's own needs, and illumine the world."

Others, including the Persian poet-priest Kabir, tell instructive stories through poetry using themes like this: First thing in

the morning, do not rush off to work, but take down your musical instrument and **play** it. Then test your work in the same way. If there is no music in it, then set it aside, and go find what has music in it again.

In this way the old teaching stories helped others to remember the most loved sources of life. Stories told by the Buddha often contain the message "Harm no life." The texts of the Bhagavad Gita record battlefield discussions wherein the leader reveals that it is the love in all things that makes up the heart of manliness and womanliness. All these convey soulful encouragement through story. In his lyric hymns, Homer writes that the mother, Demeter, while seeking her lost child, "tears down her hair like dark wings" and flies over the surface of the earth in search of her beloved. She will not rest until she finds her heart again. These all serve as examples of the kind of guidance for rediscovering the radiant center that is often found in heroic story.

There is a living concept of repair that has called to many in our lifetime—even seized some of us when we were only children just walking along one day. This concept embodies the idea that the world has a soul, and, thereby, if it is the soul that wants stories, then the world needs stories too—stories of repair, strength, and insight. If the world has a soul, then story informs and heals and spiritually grows the cultures, and the peoples within those cultures, through its universal cache of idioms and images.

In ancient Hebraic, this concept is known as *tikkun olam;* meaning *repair of the world soul.* This is a living concept, for it requires endeavor—a daily one, and sometimes even an hourly one. It is a commitment to a way of right conduct, a form of living meditation, a kind of contemplative pragmatic. I understand it this way: *Tikkun olam* is giving one's attention and resources to repair that part of the world that is right before you, precisely within your spiritual, psychological, and physical reach—according to **soul's** sight, not ego's alone.

I understand the artful methods of *tikkun olam,* handed down generation to generation, to be of the most simple and humble kind: the spiritual sight that has enough of a glowing heart behind

it to see beneath the surface of things; to care for others beyond oneself; to translate suffering into meaning; to find the edges of hope, and to bring it forward with a plan; a willingness to find insight through struggle; an ability to stand and withstand what one sees that is painful; and, in some way, to gentle the flurry; to take up broken threads as well and tie them off; to reweave and mend what is torn, to patch what is missing; to try for perception far beyond the ego's too-often miniscule understanding.

All these ways of *tikkun olam* are recorded in different ways in stories—in heroic stories about bad roads, poor judgments, dark nights, dreadful starts, mysterious ghosts, terrible ambushes, great strengths, mercies, and compassions. **All** these actions for repair of the world soul also constitute the growing of one's own soul: By their acts ye shall know them. By reaching out to the world, as a more and more individuated soul, one also repairs the ravel of oneself—for whatever of the world has gone awry and can be aided, is sometimes in similar needful condition in the personal psyche as well. In many ways, we can see the evidences that the inner life strengthens the outer life, and vice versa. And it is stories that can unite these two precious worlds—one mundane, the other mythic.

The Human Heroic Figure

It would appear, were we to follow the long genealogy of heroes and heroines in mythos, that it is via the soul being stolen, mismanaged, disguised, disrupted, pre-empted or trodden upon, that some of the purest features of the psyche may rise up and begin to long for—call for—the return of that radiant companion and counsel.

In stories, the force of soul is conveyed in so many ways. Sometimes it is represented by such symbols as the darling princess, the handsome prince, the tiny or wounded creature, the holy chalice, the cloak of invisibility, the golden fleece, the answer to the riddle, the seven-league boots, the creature who

reveals the secret, or the proof that there is yet left in the world one last honest human being.

Since first daylight, the revelatory actions and lessons found in the oldest tales are ignited by and revolve around the loss of the precious thing. And then come the efforts, detours, and inspirations that suddenly appear whilst in pursuit of the recovery of the greatest treasure.

How may one do this? *The people,* the tribes, the groups and the clans of the world keep heroic mythos alive—keep stories important to the soul alive—by telling them, and then by trying to live them out in some way that brings one into more wisdom and experience than one had before. The same is given to us to do on our life's journeys also—to seek and follow the personal life myth, to see our worst and best attributes mirrored back to us in stories.

Once embarked, there will be times, as occurred in the life of the hero Odysseus, when one will have to search one's ways through crushing life circumstances, and, often enough, have to start all over again—while at the same time having to resist seductions that invite one to stray off the path.

On the mythic journey, like Demeter, most human beings will be called at least once, and perhaps many times in a lifetime, to set aside passive longing, and instead to fly up to the highest light, or even into the face of convention—"taking the heat" in order to find the truth of things, in order to bring one's Beloved back home.

And counter to Oedipus and the sad motifs found in the story-play *Oedipus Rex,* perhaps we will also have reason in life to resist throwing away the spiritual child self, and instead to unburden and uncurse what has been misunderstood, and particularly what is innocent. We may also find good reason to refuse to blind ourselves, as Oedipus did, to the evils of the world or our own foibles, and instead to try to live in full disclosure and integrity.

In tribal groups, whether stories of the journeys of the heroic soul end humorously, tragically, or grandly, each kind of terminus is still considered an object lesson, a window through which one can see the broad continuum of how the soul can not only be known more and more, but how it can also, through courage and consciousness, be grown to greater capacity. The soul is not known or realized less when a tale comes to no good end—only differently. In tales, as in life, increase can come as much as from travail and failure as much as when the episode ends with a comfortable or lovely result.

Most persons who have been through hell of various kinds-war, massacre, assault, torture, profound sorrows, will tell that, even though they still fee! sick with the weight of it all, and perhaps also ill with regrets of one kind or another—they are nevertheless learning how to swim strong to reach the able raft of the soul. Though there is something to be said for those rare heroes and heroines who sit on the undisturbed shore enjoying the intense beauty of the soulrise, I am more on the side of those who must swim the torrents while crying out for help. In all, they are striving hard not to drown before they can reach the safety of the souPs arms. And most who have been so deeply harmed will tell you that, all the while they are swimming, they feel their own soul is rowing toward them with the strongest, deepest of strokes that can only come from One who loves without limits.

This is the underlayment of mythos, as I understand it: that there is a soul; that it wishes to be free; that it loves the human it inhabits; that it will do all it can to shelter the one it loves; and that it wants to be known, listened to, followed, given an enlarged broadcast range, granted leadership in the quest for experience that carries such worth for the higher self—and that its language is stories.

The Mythic Question

Over these many decades of being a keeper of stories, I have come to see that almost invariably every story, myth, legend, saga, and folktale begins with a poignant question of one kind or another. In tales, this premiere query may be spoken—or only

inferred. But regardless, the poignant question strikes a spark to the engine that ignites the heart. This starts up the energy of the story; it rolls the story forward. The mythic tale unfolds in response to that single igniting question.

Thus Odysseus answers, throughout his entire saga in *The Odyssey,* the single mythic question posed at the beginning, the one which could be phrased as: How do I ever find true home again"? Demeter is the Greek Mother Goddess, the essence of nurturance for earth and for humans. She undertakes a horrible, grief-stricken journey to seek and retrieve her innocent daughter who had been snatched down into the dark underworld against her **will.** Throughout Demeter's unfolding story, the question is posed: To what great lengths can the immortal soul be pressed and still retrieve the Beloved? The account of Oedipus in the play by Sophocles, throughout to its end, answers a question like this: What darkness, dead-zones, and deaths can occur when secrets are not revealed and truth is not told?

This question at the beginning of a story—or at any point along one's own life line—grants the seeker a bar to measure against, to see then which directions to take most profitably in order to find one's own answers. The transformative question grants a scale on which to weigh which portion of each learning one might most **fruitfully** keep, and which parts or pieces can be bypassed or left behind as ballast, as one continues on the quest.

Thus Odysseus leaves behind Circe, the Sirens, and Calypso, all of whom seek to lure and imprison him with their charms. His question is how to find his way back home to Ithaca, which symbolizes, along with his wife and children, his true home. His answer unfolds, as Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, author of *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus,* would write many centuries later, "Nothing contributes so much to tranquilizing the mind as a steady purpose—a point on which the sou! may fix its intellectual eye." Odysseus has only to stay to his purpose to find home. That is the wild answer.

In mythic tales, the soul poses the question, and all things are measured against the soul's interest. Though sometimes the answers to one's most unifying and electrifying questions seem

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to come from out of nowhere, more often too, in mythos, the answers come only from a hard labor that is kept to day after day. Thereby, if one is seeking gold, one must go where gold is and suffer through the travail to get there—and then use all of one's brawn and wits to mine for it, and to recognize it when one sees it.

The grandmother in "Jack and the Beanstalk" does not realize the golden opportunity her grandson has been given, when she has it right in her hands. In that tale, the land and people are in a terrible famine. She throws away what she thinks are the "useless beans" that Jack has brought home, having traded the family cow for them. Out the window the beans go. But, overnight, they grow into a giant "tree of life" that allows Jack to bring home a goose, which lays golden eggs, and other riches that reverse the long famine. The ogre, signifying a coarse and dominant quality in the psyche, is defeated.

Likewise, in mythos and tales, if one is looking for wood, one must go to the forest. If one is looking for life, one must go to the eternal life-giver—and/or the eternal death-dealer—in order to find the needed understandings to wrest free the answer to the riddle, all in order to answer the question most dear to one's soul—the one used to motivate and locomote true consciousness. Thereby, whatever adventures, misfortunes, detours, and gratifications occur along the road—all are seen as moving the self toward learning and transformation. Obstacles and preformed ogres rise up regularly. They confound and injure the hero and heroine. Thus the seekers find, at many different levels, a multitude of responses to that single question posed at the beginning-responses that increase their life-giving capacities.

Odysseus finds more answers to his question—where is true home? —by meeting and outmaneuvering the she-monsters of the sea, Scylla and Charybdis, which attempt to destroy him and all his mates. He meets Aeolus, the king of the winds, who gives him a sack filled with a wind that will take him within sight of home. But Odysseus falls asleep; and his crew thinks there is booty in the sack, so they pry it open. The wind that rushes out pushes them so far from home that they literally lose themselves.

Through these perils and more, he learns the way home is mazed with hazards that force him to take chances and to make choices—and he learns to not fall asleep. All that he endures is also presented to human beings in the same way during times of duress. One either forgets one's spiritual commitment and is thereby blown farther from true home, or else one becomes, in those moments, more determined to fulfill the question, to become more expansive, more docile, more fierce—whatever is required—than one had been just moments before.

Thereby the hero and heroine are made more durable, more able to enter into mystery, more adept at defeating what is often seemingly invisible and cloud-like, yet which carries impact enough to crush us to death, or else blow us off course and away from our stated goal. These heroes and heroines are often the ones who—though dragged, drugged, dumped, or seduced into peril—manage to call to the soul for support and correction of trajectory. The soul will answer, and aim the person toward the best results that can be managed at the moment.

The complications that thwart the hero and heroine of myth are called *complexes* in depth psychology. Complexes are to be met, confronted, evaded, amplified, transformed, contained, or triumphed over. These blockages appear suddenly in life too. They erupt from one's own unconscious, in forms resembling anything from irritating needle-toothed ankle-biters to huge, bellowing screed-spreaders—or, more subtly, as something we long for or are easily seduced by, but which is poisonous to us at its core.

The sidestepping of such obstacles is a common motif in myths. Yet, ironically, it is change of direction that often greatly furthers the life of the soul. Demeter does so with style. She sees that she is at a dead end and must give up trying to make a Demophoon, a mortal child, into an immortal, so as to replace her own lost immortal child. That desire to "replace" does not fulfill the soulful need which guides her seeking—which is not to replace, but to *find*. Ultimately, she turns toward eliciting answers to her daughter's whereabouts, by *focusing* and *extending* her power through enlistment of the aid of another.

One of her tripartite sisters, Hekate, encourages them to fly up to the face of Helios, the sun. There they bravely demand, in the heckle tones of crones, to be told where Demeter's Beloved is being hidden. And Helios, who sees all, tells them of the young girl's abduction by Hades, the dark God of the Underworld. Thence Hekate and Demeter utilize this information to force those who conspired to steal the daughter to instead return her to the world again.

Also in mythos, we see the failures to understand that one has choices. Poor Oedipus finds his tragic answers to the question, What will be lost if one does not overturn the projections and pronouncements of others? When he was born, the Oracle claimed he would be doomed to kill his father and marry his mother. His parents—attempting to evade the curse for themselves, but without being willing to risk confrontation or counterbalance—leave him to die in the woods.

But he is rescued by shepherds and, when he is grown, he is challenged one night by a stranger on a bridge. Both he and the stranger are astride horses, but neither will yield to let the other pass first. In the ensuing struggle, Oedipus kills the bold stranger. Later it is revealed to him that the man murdered was his own father .. . the father who had been held away from him for so long, by secret-keeping and other nefarious means.

As the story goes on, Oedipus's incomparable grief over wrongful identity and futile relationships causes him to blind himself to any further sights of the painful truths that swirl around him. These awful possibilities are also offered to us when we are on the journey—we may too not, at first, ask the most useful questions needed. We might try to lie down in psychological slumber and ignorance, or give in to the crabbed and destructive expectations of something, within and outside ourselves as well, that wishes to block knowledge of our soulful origins. Thence, we may suddenly be shocked awake to all the ruin that we have become so swamped by. We may not ever want to see or feel again. But, of course, our story goes on—whereas Oedipus's ended. We will have another episode, then another, in which there will be opportunity to change course, to see and do differently—and better.

In many ways the saga of Oedipus is one of being terribly weakened by believing that fate alone is a greater force than free will, even though there is indeed something dark and unformed in the psyche that believes such to be so. However, it is not so, ultimately. In mythos there are far more resurrections and returns than ever there are cinema screens that simply go blank at the end.

The idea, since forever, has been that story is a conveyance, a vehicle, to use in order to think, to move forward through life. At the end of a life that has meaning, the point is not that one is perfected, but that one will still carry a view of self and the world that is divine—and not just some kind of lazy drift. The point is to have enough stories that guide—that will allow life's closing act to end with one's heart still bright, despite the gales that have passed through it—so that it can be said that one has lived with spiritual audacity.

The Spirit and the Academic: Joseph Campbell

Let us now speak more about Joseph Campbell, his life and work. Jung often spoke about essential attitudes needed to support a quality life of the soul. He said a certain kind of spiritedness was needed, as well as a certain kind of resistance to societal pressures—pressures that might cause a person to become divorced from a life of meaning.

In his later years, Joseph Campbell wore his clothes a little like a coat hook wears the jacket thrown onto it. He walked with a utilitarian gait that was clearly meant only to carry him from one side of the room to the other. When he spoke, he often became so enthused and talked so fast that his words just tumbled out.

Seeing and listening to him over the years, it was easy to note his genuine love for the essence of the mythic. He particularly loved the similarities of themes to be found in mythos, calling upon these themes to be unifiers of disparate groups rather than dividers. He managed, throughout his always accessible scholarly work, to utterly resist putting on the slightest of airs about it all. Though he occasionally made a small misstep, common to his time, revealing a preconception about certain tribal affairs, he gave no effort to appear low-, high-, middle-, or any other kind of brow.

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Rather, as the lines of mythos are lived out within the spiritual vessels of closely woven family groups, in traditional clans, and living tribes, he became a central vessel which poured out to others too. No matter where in the world they live, the worldwide tribe he stil! teaches, through his published books and films, is united by their complementary desire to know—to find meaning that matters—in the interior and the outer worlds, both.

Whether an individual is at the very beginning of life's inquiry, or in the deadly middle struggle between ego and higher self, or near the lighted terminus where the soul is more finely seen and embraced—Campbell was interested in providing substance for the long journey ahead.

He used a language that was easily understood by those he was speaking to. He kept to all these simple ways of being, even though he lived in a world that sometimes confuses the messenger with the *living message.* That he resisted those ideologues and demagogues who consistently attempt to press all things that once were graceful and filled with love into an artificial and one-sided shape, is a grace.

I have heard that some thought Campbell sometimes did not write in a sufficiently high scholarly form. It is true that he concerned himself with the activities of spirit and soul, mythos and fairytales, religious exegesis—the invisible arms that hold up the world of human spirit. It is true that he pursued these with all the gusto of a child let out of school, and running toward the open sea.

Perhaps it was this eagerness and fervor that caused some to talk—to tsk-tsk—to question his seriousness and mien. But one must remember that the mythic root of the word *intellectual* means to seek to understand, to enter the nature of a thing and

try to understand it from the inside, not just the outside; and that *academic* means, at its heart, to sit "among the groves," to have a relationship with one's teacher in the midst of beauty and nature, as was once undertaken in the oldest lyceums; . . . and that *scholarly* means "of a school," characteristic of one devoted to weighing and pondering—just as a young acolyte gives him- or herself to study of sacred Torah — studying deeply with the gift of the love of learning fully intact. And all these Campbell kept to in his own original way. His scholarship embraced all these facets and more.

It is a fact that he was loved by many for his "everyman" demeanor. Yet, at times as he spoke on his favored subjects, he sometimes took on the eerie quality of looking older or younger than his real age. Anyone who has been in the presence of a great storyteller has seen this phenomenon. I have experienced this in great singers, too. Richard Strauss's work, *Four Last Songs*, is a composition about people of great age who are remembering the goodness and fears of life. I have heard several gifted sopranos sing Strauss's song-cycle. By virtue of the spare and evocative words, by means of the heart-piercing music, and the hush of the listeners, the singers may suddenly begin to look like ancient beings. Something other than the mundane self seems to have come into them.

Campbell had this quality, too. Sometimes, as he told his work aloud with such passion, that he looked a thousand years old, like an ageless being himself, an old man before the fire. Yet at other times, he looked youthful as he displayed his gentle humorist's gift alongside his earnestness. These personifications of the essences underlying the mythic are seen in tribal groups, too, wherein the teller gradually seems to take on the appearance of a child, an old person or a creature, as they tell the deeper and deeper aspects of the tale.

Some were said to be shocked at his late-in-life interest in and attendance at a Grateful Dead concert, then one of the preeminent rock groups of his time. All I could think was, *"jAndele!* Yes, go on!" The Grateful Dead papered the world with posters, books, album covers, decals, and stickers detailing their much-vaunted

leitmotif of death in various skeletal forms. Their depictions of skill! and skeleton-images were most often surrounded by symbols of living roses, iridescent rainbows, and full-blown color.

"The Dead's[11] aura was similar to the old Greek stories about the souls of the dead who somehow became lost on their ways to their final places of happiness and peace. In the tales, a living human sees them and takes pity on them, helping to put them on the right path, for which the ghostly souls are forever grateful. In this way, the Grateful Dead's name itself, and their logos, were similar to those found in ancient and eternal images representing death of the old, and rebirth of new life—all in continuous cycle.

But there is this oddity in the deep storytellers isn't there? A stop at the shores of a Grateful Dead concert is not too much different than any other episode during a great odyssey. Jason and the Argonauts made many stops, both at sea and on land, meeting with any number of mysterious and unusual creatures. Too, the same was true for Hercules, for Perseus, for Demeter during her search for her daughter and later her respite under the mountain to remake herself. Compelling experiences add to the development of the hero and heroine.

For a living soul following a personal life-myth as Campbell did, almost everything of interior and exterior life is approached as though it is an old story just now returned to new life. The riddle of honor being worked out by Falstaff and others in Shakespeare's *Henry IV* plays can be seen in many modern politicians and leaders, who wrestle with the same issues. Every soul who desires a transformative life has to give time to a regular Herculean clearing of the Augean stables.

Hasn't everyone lived through friendships that play out as if one were dealing with the God of the Morose in Nahua mythos, who is guaranteed to infect with his depressive thoughts anyone he touches? Isn't there also a good deal of life that is like the crazy, whirling dances of King David and his retinue, on their way to home? He exhorts everyone to wear their most colorful clothing, to crash their finger-cymbals loud, to sing at the top of their lungs, and to raise the dust with their dancing feet—to

make a joyous noise to show their God how much divine vitality exists on earth.

To call up modern versions of the old stories, one has to go forth and live life. As a result then, one will have the challenge of not only living the story, taking it all in, but also interpreting it in whatever ways are useful. So too, one will reap the reward of telling all about it afterward. One's interest in the world, and in having experiences, is really an interest in hearing, having, living one more story, and then one more, then one more story, till one cannot live them out loud any longer. Perhaps it should be said that the drive to live out stories is as deep in the psyche, when awakened, as it is compelling to the psyche to listen to stories and to learn from them.

The Wild Man and the Wild Woman

Campbell writes about the masculine and feminine archetypes in his work. Sometimes there has been a confusion regarding modern depth psychology and mythology, and what these gendered images represent. Recall that an archetype is a representation of the Irrepresentable. It is a shard of something so enormous that the greater thing cannot be apprehended by the mundane mind. But smaller images of the greater—the kinds that are found in art, mythos, music, dance, and story—can be grasped by us mere mortals.

Some think that certain symbols stand only for women, and certain other symbols, especially those found in mythos, stand only for men. But, at bottom, all represent forces of immense creative energy within any psyche. Though there have been certain human attributes assigned to "the masculine" and others to "the feminine," both, and all, actually have their full share of power, strength, fierceness, receptivity, and creativity.

In mythos, the heroic attributes belong to both feminine and masculine, both to men and to women, and to children and

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creatures and spirits and sky and earth and the Self as well. Thus an individual of any gender can become entranced by and learn from the mythic figure of the ancient wild man Campbell writes about in these pages. He tells us about a fabulous wild-man figure from Russian tales called the "Water Grandfather," who also goes by the name Dyedushka Vodyasnoy.

Water Grandfather lives just beyond the boundary of the conscious culture. He lives in "the danger zone" of ideas, longings, and yearnings—some sanctioned, some not. Those with smaller and less well-lit minds try unsuccessfully to exile him. Water Grandfather is a shapeshifter. His psyche closely mimics the divine attributes, as well as human foibles and less-than-lovely attitudes found in ordinary people. This mix flows within every individual as he or she struggles to become stable, useful, and wildly creative.

Then there is the wild woman. Campbell writes about this character—so dear to my heart. The wild woman is found in every culture across the world. Campbell describes her as a true poet would. And, based on his descriptions, what woman could not understand the wild woman's attributes? Indeed, what woman would not want to live these out as her own, or has not thought of hoping to master them—including the part Campbell mentions in this book about having a wild abode to herself up in the mountains where she can, like the wild women, "maintain households, like human beings"? This image alone would make most women chortle about the heroic feminine desire to be *of herself, unto herself,* and *of the domestic and yet of the mild natures,* all at the same time.

But ultimately, examining these and other figures in mythic tales of many kinds—isn't it odd?—the more one studies and learns, the more one sees the mythic journey as not one belonging to any gender per se, regardless of the gender of the heroes and heroines or the antagonists presented in tales. With enough story mileage on you, and with enough life lived in potholes as well as at pinnacles, and—without confusing the very real issues of parity and disparity between men and women in many cultures across the world—one begins to see that the mythic quest

is the journey of the soul. It is one that has its yin and its yang, its hard and soft, its easy and challenging, its durable and its delicate—all the attributes, deficits, and more, portrayed by mythic persons and creatures in tales since time began.

Growing New and Future Generations of Souls

One of the things I have thought about a good deal as I reread *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* most recently is how Campbell's work, it seems, will still be relevant many decades forward in time. This is not an easy thing to effect. Kipping stories from their roots and contexts won't pass muster. Just telling a good story won't do it. This is because the energy-source of the story is not the story itself. The energy of mythos comes from something underlying the story. What lies behind the story is the same as the energy-source that makes a car go. It is not the chassis, no matter how classy or shapely it might be. The primary force that makes the car go is not even in the engine.

It is rather the spark that is thrown from one mysterious striking-place to that which can catch fire. The spark catches there, ignites, and flames upward. Yes, there is something more to story language than jiist words. Some venture to explain it this way, saying that there is something of the daemon in real time, that the angelic force souls said to come with when they are born on earth, is what dances under a work, any work, that strikes deep chords. In whatever terms or metaphors this process might be described by, it is what gives a work its timeless faculty.

Once could say it is a phenomenon precisely related to the idea of the *monomyth* that Campbell defines; something larger than life infuses the human—if they can break themselves open and accept it. Then, that which infuses the human infuses the work, which then in turn infuses the culture. I do not think this phenomenon can be faked or manufactured, but I know that one can be called to it, and, if so, will be pressed to it, will be held to

it by many tethers—some beautiful and some fearsome—once one has agreed to serve.

It can be said that in this way, by showing the unifying mythic factors from diverse cultures, Campbell's work speaks also to persons of different ages in the here and now. This includes souls who were not even born when he first published this book and others of his works.

In the midst of writing this piece, I had asked one of my grown children to read the first chapters of *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.* My youngest daughter is a young mother who wears kitten heels and the latest spiked-up hair. Her most keen interests are in house design, legal business, and in acting as a fierce activist for children. She carries her love of heritage in her strong ties to Mexico, and although she shares my love of the Gipsy Kings and Paco de Lucia flamenco, she also listens to music by musicians with no last names that I know little about, even though willing to learn.

Like many of her generation, she loves to read, but will not sit still for writings that are overly ornamented with obscure references not explained clearly, or that hold no "relationship" to her mind and to what she values most in life. As a child, she once called a book she was assigned to read in Lit class "a dust sandwich."

So in 2003, this child who was born in the early 1970s, began reading *The Hero with a Thousand Faces,* which Campbell completed in 1948. She immediately connected to his ideas about the story of Oedipus. "A brokenhearted hero," she called him, and had her own lush interpretation of the myth. She was delighted to "think with .Joseph Campbell" about destiny as a mythic endeavor. She added this book to others she has that are authored by people who, on her terms, "get it."

I have seen too, from years of teaching sections of Campbell's work and the work of other writers concerned with spiritual and mythic life to high-school students, that, as it has ever been, the psyche cannot awaken to deeper motifs and grasp these all by itself. Most recently, while fulfilling a three-year commitment to teach and assist verv dear, very smart, and tough young people

recovering from the massacre at Columbine High School, I noted once again, often within just a few pages of focusing on the language and concepts of *any* ancient mythic journey, that even the badly injured can regain hope to restore their hearts. They are thus inspired to find new energy for their torn spirits, tying these matters to the spiritual belief-systems they have already, or seeking out new systems that make sense to them at the soul level. I know no more perfect definition of good healing than this: a return to spiritual nobility.

With exposure to the ideas about mythic spirit, a person's view of the world expands and, at the same time, is often spiritually validated too. Learning about the mythic gives the young, the naive, and the uninitiated, the wounded, and the adventurous the much-needed language of travail and repair, of opening and descent and rising again. It is difficult to evolve, inquire, and to "come back," when one does not have the words to describe what ails one's own depths—what one longs for, and what one's own soul truly wants and needs.

Throughout many of their pages, Campbell's works offer such a psychic kinship—for the newly arrived and newly awakened souls who are here now, even though he himself has long passed from this earth. How mythic is that? Also, very.

The Shoulders We Stand On

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell speaks about how Freud and Jung were deeply committed students of the continuum of human behavior and the unconscious. He points to their special interest in the plausible call that rises within human beings—the call that causes individuals who have been living highly externalized lives to stop, take notice, and redirect themselves to a higher self—or else suffer becoming more and more lackluster and world-weary.

Hence the person who has tired of the curios offered by culture, or one who has been broken from a brittle shell and is wandering in shock—awakens slowly, or all at once—choosing to move toward a larger life that **includes** spirit and soul. Now, the person sets out on a journey downward and begins to map and find the resources of a richer interior life—one that can also inform outer life. This quest has been understood, since time out of mind, as one undertaken in order to feel alive again, to remember and to keep what is holy in life. It is a journey to find a truer selfhood; one that cannot be easily corrupted by the outer world, or by time. The impulse fulfills a longing to unearth and reveal one's greatest and deepest shadows and gifts. It provides the balances required for a person to feel one thing especially—contentment.

By his compilations and examinations of many of the world's heroic myths and stories, and by tying them to the processes of transformation as outlined in those stories, Campbell emphasizes that this kind of inquiry, to know the truest self, takes much time. It is true, there is no drive-through enlightenment. He patiently tells about any number of mystical pathways. And, in his choice of myths to explore, he is sympathetic to many of the most impoverished protagonists in tales. They are the ones who have the most frail qualities or resources to begin with. Yet they too will find a heroic way through the jumble and tangle of the mysteries of transformation.

Campbell supported having faith in this often ridiculed and diminished, but most highly valuable, self. By the end of many myths, this neglected self will often prove to be the trove of all manner of numinosity, pragmatics, foibles, and treasures—just right for the conflicts and heroics needed to meet aggressive challenges, and to give birth to the more tender, more strengthened new self. There can be no doubt that Campbell was a champion of the pilgrim who endured.

He understood how Freud and .Jung, and other thinkers of the twentieth-century Euro-American philosophical and psychological disciplines, had held open the doors of perception, consciousness, and meaning for many people of their time. Often drawing on the works, words, and rituals of the ancient peoples,

these men had become part of a new generation which, like all cultures and generations of thinkers and artists preceding them, pointed out—once again—the critical soulful needs and nourishments of and for their cultural worlds—in the attitudes and language of their time.

Many other teachers, artists, and thinkers have come to earth since then, and more will continue to arrive. Some come also with the talents to see and speak of psychic matters in new and different ways *for their times.* Many of the current ones are the descendents of those tribal groups reported on in anthropology and ethnology, and so have posited many first-hand understandings and corrections for the tales and rituals that have sometimes lost shape in various ways over the centuries.

These contemporary thinkers, many of them giants in their fields, will take up the work of their philosophical and spiritual elders. They are and will be the next generation rising up to help keep open those gigantic doors of perception. Since forever, the best amongst them neither "discover" nor "found" anything. They remember. They remember that they are remembering. They tell what has been since the beginning of time. As Campbell has put it many times: the Mythic is the one deed done by many, many people.

This keeping open the way is, in every generation, an essential, ethical, and righteous endeavor; for if the doorways that lead to cognition of the greater human are left to the drift of culture—any culture—those same doors will, by the weight of neglect, fall down and bar all ingress. Thereafter, the rich storied knowledge and traditions about the inner relationship between the human being and their souls would be severed instead of served. If one does not speak of a thing, it disappears. If story is repressed, forbidden, or forgotten—until it is spoken about again—it becomes lost to the world. If this disappearance of stories were ever to occur utterly, humans would become the most bereft creatures on the face of the earth.

We have stories in the northwoods about how the animals often act as kindred spirits—for one another, and sometimes for human beings too. For instance, there are stories told in our

family about the "starving times," that is, the winters "when nothing moves," and the snow-pack is hard and more than waist-high. Then, the smaller animals might waste away, for they cannot breach the walls of snow and ice.

But also during these harsh times, the caribou, the elk, and the moose, with their big bodies, are able to shoulder their ways through the snow-pack. They act as the snowplows. To see a huge mammal do this is awesome. They leap and claw and paw. They kick and drill and drive hard. They butt up against, push with antlers, shoulders, every muscle of their haunches straining, while the snow flies off in giant plates and the grunting of their voices make so much steam rise up into the cold air.

Thus, these gigantic creatures literally make roadways through the frozen lands. Then the little creatures use the trail-blazings the bigger creatures have made with their bodies. These pathways will now allow others to go on with their lives, to hunt, to stay alive, to grow—and, especially, to find their way to the water.

There are many humans who have had big shoulders too. And, as a result, others have found their ways through. I have a deep sense of those who have gone before me in life, those who blazed trails that were perhaps not easier, but kept the way open to the blessed water.

Joseph Campbell is certainly like one of those big-shouldered caribou. From knowing him and his work, I know that this assertion of his place in time might cause him to act a little shuffle-toed and embarrassed. But in another way, because the reference to the caribou is mythic, it would delight him as well.

With regard to the same motif, I am certain too that thousands of unknown others acted as the caribou for Joseph Campbell. It must never go without saying that the many "big shoulders" that supported him came from *los antepasados,* the ancestors, of us and others who belong to gifted, fierce, ethnic, and tribal people from all over the world—particularly those **with** "long memory"—that is, those who handed down psychic and spiritual legacies consciously from generation to generation, those who have, in some way, kept the rites, ceremonies, and stories alive. There

are many who have been caring for the mythic lines all these many millennia, treasuring them, preserving them, repairing them, telling them. By these means, the ancients have been instrumental, and the moderns as well, in keeping open the lifelines that are needed by every last soul on earth.

This is the main point, it seems to me, for anyone who has the calling of healer, storyteller, poet, artist, leader—as Walt Whitman counseled, "to embrace all our contradictions"; and then, to keep the way open; to keep plowing through the coldest, and most difficult terrain; to keep alive the hearts of whatever one can; to give, insofar as one is able, every soul a chance to hear about, to find, to know that we still are, will always be, have always been … the most direct and open paths back to the water.

Here All Will Dwell Free: so went the inscription over the doorway of a shelter for travelers on pilgrimage in the Grimms' story, "The Handless Maiden." Dwelling free means to follow the divine impulse, to live in a way that is not restricted to what others say and insist on, but to follow one's broadest, deepest sense about how to be, to grow, and live. Campbell himself dwelt free by nourishing whatever mythos he gathered into his heart and mind, and offering the rendering of them to others—through teaching and dancing and especially through "being alive with" others. He did not hold himself away from real life's experiences. In fact, he emphasized that such was *the way* to experience the mythic—not just read or talk about it. Neither did he hold himself away from meaningful and heartfelt endeavors, which he termed "bliss."

When Bill Moyers, the executive editor of the film series *The Power of Myth*, and the interviewer of Joseph Campbell, asked with such visible longing about how the journey is carried forward via the heroic deed, Campbell named two ways. He said: ". . . [One] is a physical deed, as in saving the life of another. But the second kind is spiritual. It is the one who has learned or found something in the supernormal range of human spiritual life, and then came back and communicated it."

Joseph Campbell fits the second sense well, and, I have no doubt that, amongst many of his close readers, he fits the first description also—as one who saved the psychic lives of others by his dedication to reminding people that their lives are sacred. Consider this book a time-capsule, then: one in which the words, and the numen behind them, are as fresh as the day the author wrote them.

Reader, turn the page now. Joseph Campbell is waiting for you, and as usual, the professor is in full mythic voice. . . .

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Women Who Run With the Wolves

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The bibliography for the Commemorative Edition was compiled under the direction of Dr. Richard Buchen, Special Collections Librarian and Curator of the Joseph Campbell and Marija Gimbutas Library at Pacifica Graduate Institute. This commemorative edition is the first to include any bibliography for this seminal book, and Princeton University Press wishes to thank Dr. Buchen and his staff for generously contributing their time and expertise to this project.

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PROLOGUE

The Monomyth

Crete, and Yucatan. Ethnologists are questioning the Ostiaks of the river Ob, the Boobies of Fernando Po. A generation of orientalists has recently thrown open to us the sacred writings of the East, as well as the pre-Hebrew sources of our own Holy Writ. And meanwhile another host of scholars, pressing researches begun last century in the field of folk psychology, has been seeking to establish the psychological bases of language, myth, religion, art development, and moral codes.

Most remarkable of all, however, are the revelations that have emerged from the mental clinic. 'Hie bold and truly epoch-making writings of the psychoanalysts are indispensable to the student of mythology; for, whatever may be thought of the detailed and sometimes contradictory interpretations of specific cases and problems, Freud, Jung, and their followers have demonstrated irrefutably that the logic, the heroes, and the deeds of myth survive into modern times. In the absence of an effective general mythology, each of us has his private, unrecognized, rudimentary, yet secretly potent pantheon of dream. The latest incarnation of Oedipus, the continued romance of Beauty and the Beast, stand this afternoon on the corner of Forty-second Street and fifth Avenue, waiting for the traffic light to change.

"I dreamed," wrote an American youth to the author of a syndicated newspaper feature, "that I was reshingling our roof. Suddenly I heard my father's voice on the ground below, calling to me. I turned suddenly to hear him better, and, as I did so, the hammer slipped out of my hands, and slid down the sloping roof, and disappeared over the edge. I heard a heavy thud, as of a body falling.

"Terribly frightened, I climbed down the ladder to the ground. There was my father lying dead on the ground, with blood all over his head. I was brokenhearted, and began calling my mother, in the midst of my sobs. She came out of the house, and put her arms around me. 'Never mind, son, it was all an accident,[1] she said. 'I know you will take care of me, even if he is gone.' As she was kissing me, I woke up.

"I am the eldest child in our family and am twenty-three years old. I have been separated from my wife for a year; somehow, we could not get along together. I love both my parents dearly, and have never had any trouble with my father, except that he insisted that I go back and live with my wife, and I couldn't be happy with her. And I never will."[1]

The unsuccessful husband here reveals, with a really wonderful innocence, that instead of bringing his spiritual energies forward to the love and problems of his marriage, he has been resting, in the secret recesses of his imagination, with the now ridiculously anachronistic dramatic situation of his first and only emotional involvement, that of the tragicomic triangle of the nursery—the son against the father for the love of the mother. Apparently the most permanent of the dispositions of the human psyche are those that derive from the fact that, of all animals, we remain the longest at the mother breast. Human beings are born too soon; they are unfinished, unready as yet to meet the world. Consequently their whole defense from a universe of dangers is the mother, under whose protection the intra-utcrine period is prolonged.[2] Hence the dependent child and its mother constitute for months after the catastrophe of birth a dual unit, not only physically but also psychologically/ Any prolonged absence of the parent causes tension in the infant and consequent impulses of aggression; also, when the mother is obliged to hamper the child, aggressive responses are aroused. Thus the first object of the child's hostility is identical with the first object of its love,

[1] Clement Wood, *Dreams: Their Meaning and Practical Application* (New York: Greenberg: Publisher, 1931), p. 124 "The dream material in this book," states the author (p. viii), "is drawn primarily from the thousand and more dreams submitted to me each week for analysis, in connection with my daily feature syndicated throughout the newspapers of the country. This has been supplemented by dreams analysed by me in my private practice." In contrast to most of the dreams presented in the standard works on the **subject,** those in this popular introduction to Freud come from people not undergoing analysis. They are rcmarkablj ingenuous.

-' Geza Roheim, *The Origin and Function of Culture* (Nervous and Mental Disease Monographs, No. 69, New York, 1943), pp. 17-25.

[1] D. T. Burlingham, "Die Einfuhlung des Kleinkindes in die Mutter," *Imago,* XXI, p. 429; cited by Geza Roheim, *War, Crime and the Covenant* (Journal of Clinical Psvchopathologv, Monograph Series No 1 Monticdlo N.Y., 1945), jj.l.

and its first ideal (which thereafter is retained as the unconscious basis of all images of bliss, truth, beauty, and perfection) is that of the dual unity of the Madonna and Bambino.[1]

The unfortunate father is the first radical intrusion of another order of reality into the beatitude of this earthly restatement of the excellence of the situation within the womb; he, therefore, is experienced primarily as an enemy. To him is transferred the charge of aggression that was originally attached to the "bad," or absent mother, while the desire attaching to the "good," or present, nourishing, and protecting mother, she herself (normally) retains. This fateful infantile distribution of death *{thanatos: destrudo)* and love *(eros: libido)* impulses builds the foundation of the now celebrated Oedipus complex, which Sigmund Freud pointed out some fifty years ago as the great cause of our adult failure to behave like rational beings. As Dr. Freud has stated it: "King Oedipus, who slew his father Laius and married his mother Jocasta, merely shows us the fulfilment of our own childhood wishes. But, more fortunate than he, we have meanwhile succeeded, in so far as we have not become psychoneurotics, in detaching our sexual impulses from our mothers and in forgetting our jealousy of our fathers."[3] Or, as he writes again: "Every pathological disorder of sexual life is rightly to be regarded as an inhibition in development."[6]

> *For many a man hath seen himself in dreams*
> *His mother's mate, but he who gives no heed*
> *To such like matters bears the easier fate.*[7]

[4] Roheim, *War, Crime and the Covenant, p.* 3.

[3] Freud. *The Interpretation of Dreams* {translated by James Strachey, Standard Edition, IV; London: The Hogarth Press, 1953), p. 262. (Oig. 1900.)

[5] *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, III:* "The Transformations of Puberty" (translated by James Strachey, Standard Edition, VII; London: The Hogarth Press, 1953), p. 208. (Orig. 1905.)

[7] Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus,* 981-983.

It has been pointed out that the father also can be experienced as a protector and the mother, then, as a temptress. This is the way from Oedipus to Hamlet. "O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that 1 have bad dreams" *(Hamlet* II. ii). "All neurotics," writes Dr. Freud, "are either Oedipus or Hamlet."

The sorry plight of the wife of the lover whose sentiments instead of maturing remain locked in the romance of the nursery may be judged from the apparent nonsense of another modern dream; and here we begin to feel indeed that we are entering the realm of ancient myth, but with a curious turn.

"I dreamed," wrote a troubled woman, "that a big white horse kept following me wherever I went. I was afraid of him, and pushed him away. I looked back to see if he was still following me, and he appeared to have become a man. I told him to go inside a barbershop and shave off his mane, which he did. When he came out he looked just like a man, except that he had horse's hoofs and face, and followed me wherever I went. He came closer to me, and I woke up.

"I am a married woman of thirty-five with two children. I have been married for fourteen years now, and I am sure my husband is faithful to me."[8]

The unconscious sends all sorts of vapors, odd beings, terrors, and deluding images up into the mind—whether in dream, broad daylight, or insanity; for the human kingdom, beneath the floor of the comparatively neat little dwelling that we call our consciousness, goes down into unsuspected Aladdin caves. There not only jewels but also dangerous jinn abide: the inconvenient or resisted psychological powers that we have not thought or dared to integrate into our lives. And they may remain unsuspected, or, on the other hand, some chance word, the smell of a landscape, the taste of a cup of tea, or the glance of an eye may touch a magic spring, and then dangerous messengers begin to appear in the brain. These are dangerous because they threaten the fabric of the security into which we have built ourselves and

And as for the case of the daughter (which is one degree more complicated), the following passage will suffice tor the present thumbnail exposition. "I dreamed last night that my father stabbed my mother in the heart. She died. I knew no one blamed him for what he did, although 1 was crying bitterly. The dream seemed to change, and he and I seemed to be going on a trip together, and I was very happy. 1 hi-, is 1lif dreLini ot an unmarried voting woniati of tivfnT\-tour (\\ uud. *op, cit.,* p. 130).

[5] Wood, *op. cit.,* pp. 92-93.

our family- But they are fiendishly fascinating too, for they carry keys that open the whole realm of the desired and feared adventure of the discovery of the self. Destruction of the world that we have built and in which we live, and of ourselves within it; but then a wonderful reconstruction, of the bolder, cleaner, more spacious, and fully human life—that is the lure, the promise and terror, of these disturbing night visitants from the mythological realm that we carry within.

Psychoanalysis, the modern science of reading dreams, has tatight us to take heed of these unsubstantial images. Also it has found a way to let them do their work. The dangerous crises of self-development are permitted to come to pass under the protecting eye of an experienced initiate in the lore and language of dreams, who then enacts the role and character of the ancient mystagogue, or guide of souls, the initiating medicine man of the primitive forest sanctuaries of trial and initiation. The doctor is the modern master of the mythological realm, the knower of all the secret ways and words of potency. His role is precisely that of the Wise Old Man of the myths and fairy tales whose words assist the hero through the trials and terrors of the weird adventure. He is the one who appears and points to the magic shining sword that will kill the dragon-terror, tells of the waiting bride and the castle of many treasures, applies healing balm to the almost fatal wounds, and finally dismisses the conqueror, back into the world of normal life, following the great adventure into the enchanted night.

When we turn now, with this image in mind, to consider the numerous strange rituals that have been reported from the primitive tribes and great civilizations of the past, it becomes apparent that the purpose and actual effect of these was to conduct people across those difficult thresholds of transformation that demand a change in the patterns not only of conscious but also of unconscious life. The so-called rites of passage, which occupy such a prominent place in the life of a primitive society (ceremonials of birth, naming, puberty, marriage, burial, etc.), are distinguished by formal, and usually very severe, exercises of

FIGURE 1. Sileni and MM

severance, whereby the mind is radically cut away from the attitudes, attachments, and life patterns of the stage being left behind.[9] Then follows an interval of more or less extended retirement, during which are enacted rituals designed to introduce the life adventurer to the forms and proper feelings of his new estate, so that when, at last, the time has ripened for the return to the normal world, the initiate will be as good as reborn.[10]

[51] In such ceremonials as those of birth and burial, the significant effects are, of course, those experienced by the parents and relatives. All rites of passage are intended to touch not only the candidate but also every member of his circle.

[10] A. van Gennep, *Les rites depassage* (Paris, 1909).

Most amazing is the fact that a great number of the ritual trials and images correspond to those that appear automatically in dream the moment the psychoanalyzed patient begins to abandon his infantile fixations and to progress into the future. Among the aborigines of Australia, for example, one of the principal features of the ordeal of initiation (by which the boy at puberty is cut away from the mother and inducted into the society and secret lore of the men) is the rite of circumcision. "When a little boy of the Murngin tribe is about to be circumcised, he is told by his fathers and by the old men, 'The Great Father Snake smells your foreskin; he is calling for it.' The boys believe this to be literally true, and become extremely frightened. Usually they take refuge with their mother, mother's mother, or some other favorite female relative, for they know that the men are organized to see that they are taken to the men's ground, where the great snake is bellowing. The women wail over the boys ceremonially; this is to keep the great snake from swallowing them."[11]—Now regard the counterpart from the unconscious. "One of my patients," writes Dr. C. G. Jung, "dreamt that a snake shot out of a cave and bit him in the genital region. This dream occurred at the moment when the patient was convinced of the truth of the analysis and was beginning to free himself from the bonds of his mother-complex."[12]

It has always been the prime function of mythology and rite to supply the symbols that carry the human spirit forward, in counteraction to those constant human fantasies that tend to tie it back. In fact, it may well be that the very high incidence of neuroticism among ourselves follows from the decline among us of such effective spiritual aid. We remain fixated to the unexorcised images of our infancy, and hence disinclined to the

[11] Geza Koheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream* (New York: International Universities Press, 1945), p. 178.

[12] C. G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation* (translated hy R. F. C. Hull, Collected Works, vol. 5: New York and London, 2nd edition, 1967), par. 585. (Orig. 1911—12, *Wandlungen und Symbolc tier Libido*, translated by Beatrice M. Hinkle *OS Psychology of the Unconscious*, 1916. Revised by Jung 1952.)

necessary passages of our adulthood. In the United States there is even a pathos of inverted emphasis: the goal is not to grow old, but to remain young; not to mature away from Mother, but to cleave to her. And so, while husbands are worshiping at their boyhood shrines, being the lawyers, merchants, or masterminds their parents wanted them to be, their wives, even after fourteen years of marriage and two fine children produced and raised, are still on the search for love—which can come to them only from the centaurs, sileni, satyrs, and other concupiscent incubi of the rout of Pan, either as in the second of the above-recited dreams, or as in our popular, vanilla-frosted temples of the venereal goddess, under the make-up of the latest heroes of the screen. The psychoanalyst has to come along, at last, to assert again the tried wisdom of the older, forward-looking teachings of the masked medicine dancers and the uitch-doctor-circumcisers; whereupon we find, as in the dream of the serpent bite, that the ageless initiation symbolism is produced spontaneously by the patient himself at the moment of the release. Apparently, there is something in these initiatory images so necessary to the psyche that if they are not supplied from without, through myth and ritual, they will have to be announced again, through dream, from within—lest our energies should remain locked in a banal, long-outmoded toy-room, at the bottom of the sea.

Sigmund Freud stresses in his writings the passages and difficulties of the first half of the human cycle of life—those of our infancy and adolescence, when our sun is mounting toward its zenith. C. G. Jung, on the other hand, has emphasized the crises of the second portion—when, in order to advance, the shining sphere must submit to descend and disappear, at last, into the night-womb of the grave. The normal symbols of our desires and fears become converted, in this afternoon of the biography, into their opposites; for it is then no longer life but death that is the challenge. What is difficult to leave, then, is not the womb but the phallus—unless, indeed, the life-weariness has already seized the heart, when it will be death that calls with the promise of bliss that formerly was the lure of love. Full circle.

from the tomb of the womb to the womb of **the** tomb, we come: an ambiguous, enigmatical incursion into a world of solid matter that is soon to melt from us, like the substance of a dream. And, looking back at what had promised to be our own unique, unpredictable, and dangerous adventure, all we find in the end is such a series of standard metamorphoses as men and women have undergone in every quarter of the world, in all recorded centuries, and under every odd disguise of civilization.

The story is told, for example, of the great Minos, king of the island empire of Crete in the period of its commercial supremacy: how he hired the celebrated artist-craftsman Daedalus to invent and construct for him a labyrinth, in which to hide something of which the palace was at once ashamed and afraid. For there was a monster on the premises—which had been born to **Pasiphae,** the queen. Minos, the king, had been busy, it is said, with important wars to protect the trade routes; and meanwhile Pasiphae had been seduced by a magnificent, snow-white, sea-born bull. It had been nothing worse, really, than what Minos' own mother had allowed to happen: Minos[1] mother was Europa, and it is well known that she was carried by a bull to Crete. The bull had been the god Zeus, and the honored son of that sacred union was Minos himself—now everywhere respected and gladly served. How then could Pasiphae have known that the fruit of her own indiscretion would be a monster: this little son with human body but the head and tail of a bull?

Society has blamed the queen greatly; but the king was not unconscious of his own share of guilt. The bull in question had been sent by the god Poseidon, long ago, when Minos was contending with his brothers for the throne. Minos had asserted that the throne was his, by divine right, and had prayed the god to send up a bull out of the sea, as a sign; and he had sealed the prayer with a vow to sacrifice the animal immediately, as an offering and symbol of service. The bull had appeared, and Minos took the throne; but when he beheld the majesty of the beast that had been sent and thought what an advantage it would be to possess such a specimen, he determined to risk a

merchant's substitution—of which he supposed the god would take no great account. Offering on Poseidon's altar the finest white bull that he owned, he added the other to his herd.

The Cretan empire had greatly prospered under the sensible jurisdiction of this celebrated lawgiver and model of public virtue. Knossos, the capital city, became the luxurious, elegant center of the leading commercial power of the civilized world. The Cretan fleets went out to every isle and harbor of the Mediterranean; Cretan ware was prized in Babylonia and Egypt. The bold little ships even broke through the Gates of Hercules to the open ocean, coasting then northward to take the gold of Ireland and the tin of Cornwall,[13] as well as southward, around the buige of Senegal, to remote Yorubaland and the distant marts of ivory, gold, and slaves.[14]

But at home, the queen had been inspired by Poseidon with an ungovernable passion for the bull. And she had prevailed upon her husband's artist-craftsman, the peerless Daedalus, to frame for her a wooden cow that would deceive the bull—into which she eagerly entered; and the bull was deceived. She bore her monster, which, in due time, began to become a danger. And so Daedalus again was summoned, this time by the king, to construct a tremendous labyrinthine enclosure, with blind passages, in which to hide the thing away. So deceptive was the invention, that Daedalus himself, when he had finished it, was scarcely able to find his way back to the entrance. Therein the Minotaur was settled: and he was fed, thereafter, on groups of living youths and maidens, carried as tribute from the conquered nations within the Cretan domain.[13]

Thus according to the ancient legend, the primary fault was not the queen's but the king's; and he could not really blame her, for he knew what he had done. He had converted a public

[13] Harold Peake and Herbert John fleure, *The Way of the Sea* and *Merchant Venturers in Bronze* (Yale University Press, 1929 and 1931).

[14] Leo Frobenius, *Das unbekannte Afrika* (Munich: Oskar Beck, 1923), pp. 10-11.

" Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* VIII, 132 ПЋ; IX, 736 ff.

event to personal gain, whereas the whole sense of his investiture as king had been that he was no longer a mere private person. The return of the bull should have symbolized his absolutely selfless submission to the functions of his role. The retaining of it represented, on the other hand, an impulse to egocentric self-aggrandizement. And so the king "by the grace of God[1] became the dangerous tyrant Holdfast—out for himself. Just as the traditional rites of passage used to teach the individual to die to the past and be reborn to the future, so the great ceremonials of investiture divested him of his private character and clothed him in the mantle of his vocation. Such was the ideal, whether the man was a craftsman or a king. By the sacrilege of the refusal of the rite, however, the individual cut himself as a unit off from the larger unit of the whole community: and so the One was broken into the many, and these then battled each other—each out for himself—and could be governed only by force.

The figure of the tyrant-monster is known to the mythologies, folk traditions, legends, and even nightmares, of the world; and his characteristics are everywhere essentially the same. He is the hoarder of the general benefit. He is the monster avid for the greedy rights of "my and mine." The havoc wrought by him is described in mythology and fain' tale as being universal throughout his domain. This may be no more than his household, his own tortured psyche, or the lives that he blights with the touch of his friendship and assistance; or it may amount to the extent of his civilization. The inflated ego of the tyrant is a curse to himself and his world—no matter how his affairs may seem to prosper. Self-terrorized, fear-haunted, alert at every hand to meet and battle back the anticipated aggressions of his environment, which are primarily the reflections of the uncontrollable impulses to acquisition within himself, the giant of self-achieved independence is the world's messenger of disaster, even though, in his mind, he may entertain himself with humane intentions. Wherever he sets his hand there is a cry (if not from the housetops, then more miserably—within every heart): a cry for the redeeming hero, the carrier of the shining blade, whose blow, whose touch, whose existence, will liberate the land.

Here one can neither stand nor lie nor sit
There is not even silence in the mountains
But dry sterile thunder without rain
There is not even solitude in the mountains
But red sullen faces sneer and snarl
From doors of mud cracked houses[16]

The hero is the man of self-achieved submission. But submission to what? That precisely is the riddle that today we have to ask ourselves and that it is everywhere the primary virtue and historic deed of the hero to have solved. As Professor Arnold J. Toynbee indicates in his six-volume study of the laws of the rise and disintegration of civilizations,[17] schism in the soul, schism in the body social, will not be resolved by any scheme of return to the good old days (archaism), or by programs guaranteed to render an ideal projected future (futurism), or even by the most realistic, hardheaded work to weld together again the deteriorating elements. Only birth can conquer death—the birth, not of the old thing again, but of something new. Within the soul, within the body social, there must be—if we are to experience long survival—a continuous "recurrence of birth" *(palingenesia)* to nullify the unremitting recurrences of death. For it is by means of our own victories, if we are not regenerated, that the work of Nemesis is wrought: doom breaks from the shell of our very virtue. Peace then is a snare; war is a snare; change is a snare; permanence a snare. When our day is come for the victory of death, death closes in; there is nothing we can do, except be crucified—and resurrected; dismembered totally, and then reborn.

Theseus, the hero-slayer of the Minotaur, entered Crete from without, as the symbol and arm of the rising civilization of the Greeks. That was the new and living thing. But it is possible also for the principle of regeneration to be sought and found within the very walls of the tyrant's empire itself. Professor

[16] T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company; London: Faber and Faber, 1922), 340-345.

[17] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (Oxford University Press, 1934), Vol. VI, pp. 169-175.

Toynbee uses the terms "detachment" and "transfiguration" to describe the crisis by which the higher spiritual dimension is attained that makes possible the resumption of the work of creation. The first step, detachment or withdrawal, consists in a radical transfer of emphasis from the external to the internal world, macro- to microcosm, a retreat from the desperations of the waste land to the peace of the everlasting realm that is within. But this realm, as we know from psychoanalysis, is precisely the infantile unconscious. It is the realm that we enter in sleep. We carry it within ourselves forever. All the ogres and secret helpers of our nursery are there, all the magic of childhood. And more important, all the life-potentialities that we never managed to bring to adult realization, those other portions of ourself, are there; for such golden seeds do not die. If only a portion of that lost totality could be dredged up into the light of day, we should experience a marvelous expansion of our powers, a vivid renewal of life. We should tower in stature. Moreover, if we could dredge up something forgotten not only by ourselves but by our whole generation or our entire civilization, we should become indeed the boon-bringer, the culture hero of the day—a personage of not only local but world historical moment. In a word: the first work of the hero is to retreat from the world scene of secondary effects to those causal zones of the psyche where the difficulties really reside, and there to clarify the difficulties, eradicate them in his own case (i.e., give battle to the nursery demons of his local culture) and break through to the undistorted, direct experience and assimilation of what C. G. Jung has called "the archetypal images."[18] This is the process known to Hindu and Buddhist philosophy as *viveka*, "discrimination."

[18] "Forms or images of a collective nature **which** occur practically all over the earth as constituents of myths and at the same time as autochthonous, individual products of unconscious origin" (C. G. Jung, *PSI.I, hology ami Religion* [Collected Works, vol. 11; New York and London, 1958], par. 88. Orig. written in English 1937. See also his *Psychological Types*, index.)

As Dr. Jung points out ***(Psychology and** Religion*, par. 89), the theory of the archetypes is by no means his own invention. Compare Nietzsche;

"In our sleep and in our dreairis we pa^s tlivnu^li the whole thought of earlier humanity. I mean, in the same way that man reasons in his dreams, he

The archetypes to be discovered and assimilated are precisely those that have inspired, throughout the annals of human culture, the basic images of ritual, mythology, and vision. These "Eternal

reasoned when in the w aking state many thousands of \ cars. . . . The dream carries us back into earlier states of human culture, and affords us a means of understanding h better"[1] (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human all too Human*, Vol. I, 13; cited by Jung, *Psi/thohgy ami Religion*, par. 89, n. 17).

Compare Adolf Bastian's theory of the ethnic "Elementary Ideas," which, in their primal psychic character (corresponding to the Stoic *Logoi spermatikoi)*, should be regarded as "the spiritual (or psychic) germinal dispositions out of which the whole social structure has been developed organically," and, as such, should serve as bases of inductive research *(Ethniscke Elementargedanken in derLekre vom Mencken*, Berlin, 1895, Vol. I, p. ix).

Compare Franz Boas: "Since Waitz's thorough discussion of the question of the unity of the human species, there can be no doubt that in the main the mental characteristics of man are the same all over the world" *(The Mind of Primitive Man*, p. 104. Copyright, 1911 by The Macmulan Company and used with their permission). "Bastian was led to speak of the appalling monotony of the fundamental ideas of mankind all over the globe" *(ibid.*, p. 155). "Certain patterns of associated ideas may be recognized in all types of culture" *(ibid.*, p. **228).**

Compare Sir James d. Lrazer: "\\ e need not, uith some enquirers in ancient and modern times, suppose that the Western peoples borrowed from the older civilization of the Orient the conception of the Dying and Reviving God, together with the solemn ritual, in which that conception was dramatically set forth before the eyes of the worshippers. More probably the resemblance which may be traced in this respect between the religions of the East and West is no more than what we commonly, though incorrectly, call a fortuitous coincidence, the effect of similar causes acting alike on the similar constitution of the human mind in different combines and imLer dill ere ill. skies (*Th* (>ohi:* •• ***Bough,*** one-volume edition, p. 386. Copyright, 1922 by The MacmiUan Company and used with their permission).

Compare Sigmund Freud: "I recognized the presence of symbolism in dreams from the **very** beginning. But it was only by degTees and as my experience increased that I arrived at a full appreciation of its extent and significance, and I did so under the influence of . . . Wilhelm Stekel. . . . Stekel arrived at his interpretations of symbols by way of intuition, thanks to a peculiar gift for the direct understanding of them. . . . Advances in psycho-analytic experience have brought to our notice patients who have shown a direct understanding of dream-symbolism of this kind to a surprising extent. . . . This symbolism is not peculiar to dreams, hut is characteristic of unconscious ideation, in particular among the people, and it is to be found in folklore, and in popular myths, legends, linguistic idioms,, proverbial wisdom and current jokes, to a more complete extent than in dreams." ***{The** Interpretation of Dreams*, translated by James Strachey, Standard Edition, V, pp. 350-351.)

Ones of the Dream"[H] are not to be confused with the personally modified symbolic figures that appear in nightmare and madness to the still tormented individual. Dream is the personalized myth, myth the depersonalized dream; both myth and dream are symbolic in the same general way of the dynamics of the psyche. But in the dream the forms are quirked by the peculiar troubles of the dreamer, whereas in myth the problems and solutions shown are directly valid for all mankind.

The hero, therefore, is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms. Such a one's visions, ideas, inspirations come pristine from the primary springs of human life and thought. Hence they are eloquent, not of the present, disintegrating society and psyche, but of the unquenched source through which society is reborn. The hero has died as a modern man; but as eternal man—perfected unspecific, universal man—he has been reborn. His second solemn task and deed therefore (as Toynbee declares and as all the mythologies of mankind indicate) is to return then to us, transfigured, and teach the lesson he has learned of life renewed.[20]

Dr. Jung points out that he has borrowed his term *archetype* **from** classic sources: Cicero, Pliny, the *Corpus Hermeticum,* Augustine, etc. *(Psychology and Religion,* par. 89). Bastian notes the correspondence of his own theory of "Elementary Ideas" with the Stoic concept of the *Logoi spermatikoi.* The tradition of the "subjectively known forms" (Sanskrit: *antarjneya-rupa)* is, in fact, coextensive with the tradition of myth, and is the key to the understanding and use of mythological images—as will appear abundantly in the following chapters.

^ This is Geza Roheim's translation of an Australian Aranda term, *altjiranga mitjina,* which refers to the mythical ancestors who wandered on the earth in the time called *altjiranga nakala,* "ancestor was." The word *altjira* means: (a) a dream, (b) ancestor, beings who appear in the dream, (c) a story (Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream,* pp. 210-211).

[20] It must be noted against Professor Toynbee, however, that he seriously misrepresents the mythological scene when he advertises Christianity as the only religion teaching this second task. AW religions teach it, as do all mythologies and folk traditions everywhere. Professor Toynbee arrives at his misconstruction by way of a trite and incorrect interpretation of the Oriental ideas of Nirvana, Buddha, and Bodhisattva; then contrasting these ideals, as he misinterprets them, with a very sophisticated rereading of the Christian idea of the City of God. This

"I was walking alone around the upper end of a large city, through **shimmy,** muddy streets lined with hard little houses," writes a modern woman, describing a dream that she has had. "I did not know where I was, but liked the exploring. I chose one street which was terribly muddy and led across what must have been an open sewer. I followed along between rows of shanties and then discovered a little river flowing between me and some high, firm ground where there was a paved street. This was a nice, perfectly clear river, flowing over grass. I could see the grass moving under the water. There was no way to cross, so I went to a little house and asked for a boat. A man there said of course he could help me cross. He brought out a small wooden box which he put on the edge of the river and I saw at once that with this box I could easily jump across. I knew all danger was over and I wanted to reward the man richly.

In thinking of this dream I have a distinct feeling that I did not have to go where I was at all but could have chosen a comfortable walk along paved streets. I had gone to the squalid and muddy district because I preferred adventure, and, having begun, I had to go on... . When I think of how persistently I kept going straight ahead in the dream, it seems as though I must have known there was something fine ahead, like that lovely, grassy river and the secure, **high,** paved road beyond. T**hinking** of it in those terms, it is like a determination to be born—or rather to be born again—in a sort of spiritual sense. Perhaps some of us have to go through dark and devious ways before we can find the river of peace or the highroad to the soul's destination."[21]

The dreamer is a distinguished operatic artist, and, like all who have elected to follow, not the safely marked general highways of the day, but the adventure of the special, dimly audible call that comes to those whose ears are open within as well as

is what leads him to the error of supposing that the salvation of the present world-situation might lie in a return to the arms of the Roman Catholic church,

[21] Frederick Pierce, *Dreams and Personality* (Copyright, 1931 by D. Appleton and Co., publishers), pp. 108-109.

without, she has had to make her way alone, through **difficulties** not commonly encountered, "through shimmy, muddy streets"; she has known the dark night of the soul, Dante's "dark wood, midway in the journey of our life," and the sorrows of the pits of hell:"

Through me is the way into the woeful city,
Through me is the way into eternal woe.
Through me is the way among the Lost People.[22]

It is remarkable that in this dream the basic outline of the universal mythological formula of the adventure of the hero is reproduced, to the detail. These deeply significant motifs of the perils, obstacles, and good fortunes of the way, we shall find inflected through the following pages in a hundred forms. The crossing first of the open sewer,[23] then of the perfectly clear river flowing over grass,[24] the appearance of the willing helper at the critical **moment,**[25] and the high, firm ground beyond the final stream (the Earthly Paradise, the Land over Jordan):[36] these are

[22] Words **written** over the Gate of Hell:

Per me si va nella citta dolente,
I Cr Vjtf SI L7J fJdt Cit flilj I'J'IhyV.
Per me si va tra lit Perduta ***Gente.***
-Dante, "Inferno," **III,** 1-3.

The translation is by Charles Eliot Norton, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1902); this and the following quotations, by permission of the publishers.

[23] Compare Dante, "Inferno," XIV, 76-84, *(op. cit,,* Vol. I, p. 89): "a little brook, the redness of which still makes me shudder . . . which the sinful women share among them."

[24] Compare Dante, "Purgatorio," XXVIII, 22-30 *(op. cit,* Vol. II, p. 214,): "A stream . . . which with its little waves was bending toward the left the grass that sprang upon its bank. All the waters that are purest here on earth would seem to have some mixture in them, compared with that which hides nothing."

[25] Dante's Virgil.

^ "Those who in old time sang of the Golden Age, and of its happy state, perchance, upon Parnassus, dreamed of this place: here was the root of mankind innocent; here is always spring, and every fruit; this is the nectar of which each of them tells" ("Purgatorio," XXVIII, 139-144; *op.rit.*. Vol. II, p. 219).

the everlastingly recurrent themes of the wonderful song of the soul's high adventure. And each who has dared to harken to and follow the secret call has known the perils of the dangerous, solitary transit:

A sharpened edge of a razor, hard to traverse,
A difficult path is this—poets declare![21]

The dreamer is assisted across the water by the gift of a small wooden box, which takes the place, in this dream, of the more usual skiff or bridge. This is a symbol of her own special talent and virtue, by which she has been ferried across the waters of the world. The dreamer has supplied us with no account of her associations, so that we do not know what special contents the box would have revealed; but it is certainly a variety of Pandora's box—that divine gift of the gods to beautiful woman, filled with the seeds of all the trouble and blessings of existence, but also provided with the sustaining virtue, hope. By this, the dreamer crosses to the other shore. And by a like miracle, so will each whose work is the difficult, dangerous task of self-discovery and self-development be portered across the ocean of life.

The multitude of men and women choose the less adventurous way of the comparatively unconscious civic and tribal routines. But these seekers, too, are saved—by virtue of the inherited symbolic aids of society, the rites of passage, the grace-yielding sacraments, given to mankind of old by the redeemers and handed down through millenniums. It is only those who know neither an inner call nor an outer doctrine whose plight truly is desperate; that is to say, most of us today, in this labyrinth without and within the heart. Alas, where is the guide, that fond virgin, Ariadne, to supply the simple clue that will give us courage to

[3] *Katha Upanishad,* 3—14. (Unless otherwise noted, my quotations of the Upanishads will be taken from Robert Ernest Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, translated from the Sanskrit,* Oxford University Press, 1931).

The Upanishads are a class of Hindu treatise on the nature of man and the universe, forming a late part of the orthodox tradition of speculation. **The**

face the Minotaur, and the means then to find our way to freedom when the monster has been met and slain?

Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, fell in love with the handsome Theseus the moment she saw him disembark from the boat that had brought the pitiful group of Athenian youths and maidens for the Minotaur. She found a way to talk with him, and declared that she would supply a means to help him back out of the labyrinth if he would promise to take her away from Crete with him and make her his wife. The pledge was given. Ariadne turned for help, then, to the crafty Daedalus, by whose art the labyrinth had been constructed and Ariadne's mother enabled to give birth to its inhabitant. Daedalus simply presented her with a skein of linen thread, which the visiting hero might fix to the entrance and unwind as he went into the maze. It is, indeed, very little that we need! But lacking that, the adventure into the labyrinth is without hope.

FiciUBE 2. Minotauromachy

The little is close at hand. Most curiously, the very scientist who, in the service of the sinful king, was the brain behind the horror of labyrinth, quite as readily can serve the purposes of freedom. But the hero-heart must be at hand. For centuries Daedahis has represented the type of the artist-scientist: that curiously disinterested, almost diabolic human phenomenon, beyond the normal bounds of social judgment, dedicated to the morals not of his time but of his art. He is the hero of the way of thought — singlehearted, courageous, and full of faith that the truth, as he finds it, shall make us free.

And so now we may turn to him, as did Ariadne. The flax for the linen of his thread he has gathered from the fields of the human imagination. Centuries of husbandry, decades of diligent culling, the work of numerous hearts and hands, have gone into the hackling, sorting, and spinning of this tightly twisted yarn. Furthermore, we have not even to risk the adventure alone; for the heroes of all time have gone before us; the labyrinth is thoroughly known; we have only to follow the thread of the hero-path. And where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god; where we had thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves; where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence; where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world.

Tragedy and Comedy

"Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." With these fateful words, Count Leo Tolstoy opened the novel of the spiritual dismemberment of his modern heroine, Anna Karenina. During the seven decades that have elapsed since that distracted wife, mother, and blindly impassioned mistress threw herself beneath the wheels of the train—thus

terminating, with a gesture symbolic of what already had happened to her soul, her tragedy of disorientation—a tumultuous and unremitting dithyramb of romances, news reports, and unrecorded cries of anguish has been going up to the honor of the bull-demon of the labyrinth: the wrathful, destructive, maddening aspect of the same god who, when benign, is the vivifying principle of the world. Modern romance, like Greek tragedy, celebrates the mystery of dismemberment, which is life in time. The happy ending is justly scorned as a misrepresentation; for the world, as we know it, as we have seen it, yields but one ending: death, disintegration, dismemberment, and the crucifixion of our heart with the passing of the forms that we have loved.

"Pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the human sufferer. Terror is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the secret cause."[28] As Gilbert Murray has pointed out in his preface to Ingram Bywater's translation of the *Poetics* of Aristotle,[29] tragic *katharsis* (i.e., the "purification" or "purgation" of the emotions of the spectator of tragedy through his experience of pity and terror) corresponds to an earlier ritual *katharsis* ("a purification of the community from the taints and poisons of the past year, the old contagion of sin and death"), which was the function of the festival and mystery play of the dismembered bull-god, Dionysos. The meditating mind is united, in the mystery play, not with the body that is shown to die, but with the principle of continuous life that for a time inhabited it, and for that time was the reality clothed in the apparition (at once the sufferer and the secret cause), the substratum into which our selves dissolve when the "tragedy that breaks man's face"[30] has split, shattered and dissolved our mortal frame.

[28] James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (The Modern Library; Random House, Inc.), p. £39.

[29] Aristotle, *On the Art of Poetry* (translated by Ingram Bywater, with a preface by Gilbert Murray, Oxford University Press, 1920), pp. 14-16.

[30] Robinson *Jeffers^Roan Stallion* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1925), p. 20.

Appear, appear, whatso thy shape or name,
0 Mountain Bull, Snake of the Hundred Heads,
Lion of the Burning flame!
0 God, Beast, Mystery, come![31]

This death to the logic and the emotional commitments of our chance moment in the world of space and time, this recognition of, and shift of our emphasis to, the universal life that throbs and celebrates its victory in the very kiss of our own annihilation, this *amor fati,* "love of fate," love of the fate that is inevitably death, constitutes the experience of the tragic art: therein the joy of it, the redeeming ecstasy:

My days have run, the servant I,
Initiate, ofldaean Jove;
Where midnight Zagreus roves, I rove;
I have endured his thunder-cry;
Fulfilled his red and bleeding feasts;
Held the Great Mother's mountain flame;
1 am set Free and named by name
A Bacchos of the Mailed Priests.[52]

Modern literature is devoted, in great measure, to a courageous, open-eyed observation of the sickeningly broken figurations that abound before us, aroimd us, and within. Where the natural impulse to complain against the holocaust has been suppressed—to cry out blame, or to announce panaceas—the magnitude of an art of tragedy more potent (for us) than the Greek finds realization: the realistic, intimate, and variously interesting tragedy of democracy, where the god is beheld crucified in the catastrophes not of the great houses only but of every common home, every scourged and lacerated face. And there is no make-believe about heaven, future bliss, and compensation, to alleviate the bitter

[31] Euripides, *Bucchae,* 1017 (translated by Gilbert Murray).

[Ja] Euripides, *The. Cretans,* frg. 475, ap. Porphyry, *De abstinentia,* IV. 19, trans. Gilbert Murray. See discussion of this verse'by Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to a study of Greek Religion* (3rd edition, Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 478-500.

majesty, but only utter darkness, the void of unfulfillment, to receive and eat back the lives that have been tossed forth from the womb only to fail.

In comparison with all this, our little stories of achievement seem pitiful; Too well we know what bitterness of failure, loss, disillusionment, and ironic unfulfillment galls the blood of even the envied of the world! Hence we are not disposed to assign to comedy the high rank of tragedy. Comedy as satire is acceptable, as fun it is a pleasant haven of escape, but the fairy tale of happiness ever after cannot be taken seriously; it belongs to the never-never land of childhood, which is protected from the realities that will become terribly known soon enough; just as the myth of heaven ever after is for the old, whose lives are behind them and whose hearts have to be readied for the last portal of the transit into night—which sober, modern Occidental judgment is founded on a total misunderstanding of the realities depicted in the fairy tale, the myth, and the divine comedies of redemption. These, in the ancient world, were regarded as of a higher rank than tragedy, of a deeper truth, of a more difficult realization, of a sounder structure, and of a revelation more complete.

The happy ending of the fairy tale, the myth, and the divine comedy of the soul, is to be read, not as a contradiction, but as a transcendence of the universal tragedy of man. The objective world remains what it was, but, because of a shift of emphasis within the subject, is beheld as though transformed. Where formerly life and death contended, now enduring being is made manifest—as indifferent to the accidents of time as water boiling in a pot is to the destiny of a bubble, or as the cosmos to the appearance and disappearance of a galaxy of stars. Tragedy is the shattering of the forms and of our attachment to the forms; comedy, the wild and careless, inexhaustible joy of life invincible. Thus the two are the terms of a single mythological theme and experience which includes them both and which they bound: the down-going and the up-coming *(kathodos* and *anados),* which together constitute the totality of the revelation that is life, and which the individual must know and love if he is to be purged

(kathursis = purgatorio) of the contagion of sin (disobedience to the divine will) and death (identification with the mortal form).

"All things are changing; nothing dies. The spirit wanders, comes now here, now there, and occupies whatever frame it pleases. . . . For that which once existed is no more, and that which was not has come to be; and so the whole round of motion is gone through again."[1n1] "Only the bodies, of which this eternal, imperishable, incomprehensible Self is the indweller, are said to have an end."[34]

It is the business of mythology proper, and of the fairy tale, to reveal the specific dangers and techniques of the dark interior way from tragedy to comedy. Hence the incidents are fantastic and "unreal": they represent psychological, not physical, triumphs. Even when the legend is of an actual historical personage, the deeds of victory are rendered, not in lifelike, but in dreamlike figurations; for the point is not that such-and-such was done on earth; the point is that, before such-and-such could be done on earth, this other, more important, primary thing had to be brought to pass within the labyrinth that we all know and visit in our dreams. The passage of the mythological hero may be over-ground, incidentally; fundamentally it is inward—into depths where obscure resistances are overcome, and long lost, forgotten powers are revivified, to be made available for the transfiguration of the world. This deed accomplished, life no longer suffers hopelessly under the terrible mutilations of ubiquitous disaster, battered by time, hideous throughout space; but with its horror visible still, its cries of anguish still tumultuous, it becomes penetrated by an all-suffusing, all-sustaining love, and a knowledge of its own unconquered power. Something of the light that blazes invisible within the abysses of its normally opaque materiality breaks forth, with an increasing uproar. The dreadful mutilations are then seen as shadows, only, of an immanent,

[33] Ovid, *Met/tmorphases.* XV, 165-167; 184-185 (translation by Frank Justus Miller, the Loeb Classical Library).

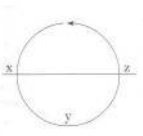
[51] *Bhagavad Gita.* 2:18 (translation by Swami Nikhilananda, New York, 1944).

imperishable eternity; time yields to glory; and the world sings with the prodigious, angelic, but perhaps finally monotonous, siren music of the spheres. Like happy families, the myths and the worlds redeemed are all alike.

• 3 •

The Hero and the God

The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation—initiation—return:* which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth."



A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.

Prometheus ascended to the heavens, stole fire from the gods, and descended. Jason sailed through the Clashing Rocks into a sea of marvels, circumvented the dragon that guarded the Golden fleece, and returned with the fleece and the power to wrest his rightful throne from a usurper. Aeneas went down into the underworld, crossed the dreadful river of the dead, threw a sop to the three-headed watchdog Cerberus, and conversed, at last, with the shade of his dead father. All things were unfolded to him: the

Viking Press, Inc., 1939), p. 581.

destiny of souls, the destiny of Rome, which he was about to found, "and in what wise he might avoid or endure **every** burden."[15] He returned through the ivory gate to his work in the world.

A majestic representation of the difficulties of the hero-task, and of its sublime import when it is profoundly conceived and solemnly undertaken, is presented in the traditional legend of the Great Struggle of the Buddha. The young prince Gautama Sakyamuni set forth secretly from his father's palace on the princely steed Kanthaka, passed miraculously through the guarded gate, rode through the night attended by the torches of four times sixty thousand divinities, lightly hurdled a majestic river eleven hundred and twenty-eight cubits wide, and then with a single sword-stroke sheared his own royal locks—whereupon the remaining hair, two finger-breadths in length, curled to the right and lay close to his head. Assuming the garments of a monk, he moved as a beggar through the world, and during these years of apparently aimless wandering acquired and transcended the eight stages of meditation. He retired to a hermitage, bent his powers six more years to the great struggle, carried austerity to the uttermost, and collapsed in seeming death, but presently recovered. Then he returned to the less rigorous life of the ascetic wanderer.

One day he sat beneath a tree, contemplating the eastern quarter of the world, and the tree was illuminated with his radiance. A young girl named Sujata came and presented milk-rice to him in a golden bowl, and when he tossed the empty bowl into a river it floated upstream. This was the signal that the moment of his triumph was at hand. He arose and proceeded along a road which the gods had decked and which was eleven hundred and twenty-eight cubits wide. The snakes and birds and the divinities of the woods and fields did him homage with flowers and celestial perfumes, heavenly choirs poured forth music, the ten thousand worlds were filled with perfumes, garlands, harmonies, and shouts of acclaim; for he was on his way to the great Tree of Enlightenment, the Bo Tree, under which he was to

[16] Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 892.

redeem the universe. He placed himself, with a firm resolve, beneath the Bo Tree, on the Immovable Spot, and straightway was approached by Kama-Mara, the god of love and death.

The dangerous god appeared mounted on an elephant and carrying weapons in his thousand hands. He was surrounded by his army, which extended twelve leagues before him, twelve to the right, twelve to the left, and in the rear as far as to the confines of the world; it was nine leagues high. The protecting deities of the universe took flight, but the Future Buddha remained unmoved beneath the Tree. And the god then assailed him, seeking to break his concentration.

Whirlwind, rocks, thunder and flame, smoking weapons with keen edges, burning coals, hot ashes, boiling mud, blistering sands and fourfold darkness, the Antagonist hurled against the Savior, but the missiles were all transformed into celestial flowers and ointments by the power of Gautama's ten perfections. Mara then deployed his daughters, Desire, Pining, and Lust, surrounded by voluptuous attendants, but the mind of the Great Being was not distracted. The god finally challenged his right to be sitting on the Immovable Spot, flung his razor-sharp discus angrily, and bid the towering host of the army to let fly at him with mountain crags. But the Future Buddha only moved his hand to touch the ground with his fingertips, and thus bid the goddess Earth bear witness to his right to be sitting where he was. She did so with a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand roars, so that the elephant of the Antagonist fell upon its knees in obeisance to the Future Buddha. The army was immediately dispersed, and the gods of all the worlds scattered garlands.

Having won that preliminary victory before sunset, the conqueror acquired in the first watch of the night knowledge of his previous existences, in the second watch the divine eye of omniscient vision, and in the last watch understanding of the chain of causation. He experienced perfect enlightenment at the break of day.[37]

[L»] This is tlii[1] most importam sin^'l[L] monK-nt ni < lr;i.-nl;il n,\ tiiology, a conn-

Then for seven days Gautama—now the Buddha, the Enlightened—sat motionless in bliss; for seven days he stood apart and regarded the spot on which he had received enlightenment; for seven days he paced between the place of the sitting and the place of the standing; for seven days he abode in a pavilion furnished by the gods and reviewed the whole doctrine of causality and release; for seven days he sat beneath the tree where the girl Sujata had brought him milk-rice in a golden bowl, and there meditated on the doctrine of the sweetness of Nirvana; he removed to another tree and a great storm raged for seven days, but the King of Serpents emerged from the roots and protected the Buddha with his expanded hood; finally, the Buddha sat for seven days beneath a fourth tree enjoying still the sweetness of liberation. Then he doubted whether his message could be communicated, and he thought to retain the wisdom for himself; but the god Brahma descended from the zenith to implore that he should become the teacher of gods and men. The Buddha was thus persuaded to proclaim the path.[3a] And he went back into the cities of men where he moved among the citizens of the

Enlightenment (the Bo Tree) and Christ on Holy Rood (the Tree of Redemption) are analogous figures, incorporating an archetypal World Savior, World Tree motif, which is of immemorial antiquity. Many other variants of the theme will be found among the episodes to come. The Immovable Spot and Mount Calvary are images of the World **Navel,** or World Axis (seep. 37, *infra).*

The calling of the Earth to witness is represented in traditional Buddhist art by images of the Buddha, sitting in the classic Buddha posture, with the right hand resting on the right knee *and* its fingers lightly touching the ground.

The point is that Buddhaiiood, Enlightenment, cannot br comiTiiiriicatrd. but only the *way* to Enlightenment. This doctrine of the incommunicability of the Truth which is beyond names and forms is basic to the great Oriental, as well as to the Platonic, traditions. Whereas the truths of science are communicable, being demonstrable hypotheses rationally founded on observable facts, ritual, mythology, and metaphysics are but guides to the brink of a transcendent illumination, die final step to which must be taken by each in his own silent experience. Hence one of the Sanskrit terms for sage is *muni,* "the silent one." *Sdkyamuni* (one of the titles of Gautama Buddha) means "the silent one or sage *{muni)* of the Sakya clan." Though he is the founder of a widely taught world religion, the ultimate core of his doctrine remain? concealed, necessarily, in silence.

world, bestowing the inestimable boon of the knowledge of the **Way.**[39]

The Old Testament records a comparable deed in its legend of Moses, who, in the third month of the departure of Israel out of the land of **Egypt,** came with his people into the wilderness of Sinai; and there Israel pitched their tents over against the mountain. And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called unto him from the mountain. The Lord gave to him the Tables of the Law and commanded Moses to return with these to Israel, the people of the Lord.[40]

Jewish folk legend declares that during the day of the revelation diverse rumblings sounded from Mount Sinai, "flashes of lightning, accompanied by an ever swelling peal of horns, moved the people with mighty fear and trembling. God bent the heavens, moved the earth, and shook the bounds of the world, so that the depths trembled, and the heavens grew frightened. His splendor passed through the four portals of fire, earthquake, storm, and hail. The kings of the earth trembled in their palaces. The earth herself thought the resurrection of the dead was about to take place, and that she would have to account for the blood of the slain she had absorbed, and for the bodies of the murdered whom she covered. The earth was not calmed until she heard the first words of the Decalogue.

"The heavens opened and Mount Sinai, freed from the earth, rose into the air, so that its summit towered into the heavens, while a thick cloud covered the sides of it, and touched the feet of the Divine Throne. Accompanying God on one side, appeared twenty-two thousand angels with crowns for the Levites, the only tribe that remained true to God while the rest worshiped the Golden Calf. On the second side were sixty myriads, three thousand five hundred and fifty angels, each bearing a crown of

[39] Greatly abridged from *Jataka,* Introduction, i, 58-75 (translated by Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism in Translations* (Harvard Oriental Series, 3) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1896, pp. 56-87), and the *Lalitavutara* as rendered by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), pp. 24-38.

[40] Exodus, 19:3-5.

fire for each individual Israelite. Double this number of angels was on the third side; whereas on the fourth side they were simply innumerable. For God did not appear from one direction, but from all simultaneously, which, however, did not prevent His glory from filling the heaven as well as the earth. In spite of these innumerable hosts there was no crowding on Mount Sinai, no mob, there was room for all."[41]

As we soon shall see, whether presented in the vast, almost oceanic images of the Orient, in the vigorous narratives of the Greeks, or in the majestic legends of the Bible, the adventure of the hero normally follows the pattern of the nuclear unit above described: a separation from the world, a penetration to some source of power, and a life-enhancing return. The whole of the Orient has been blessed by the boon brought back by Gautama Buddha—his wonderful teaching of the Good Law—just as the Occident has been by the Decalogue of Moses. The Greeks referred fire, the first support of all human culture, to the world-transcending deed of their Prometheus, and the Romans the founding of their world-supporting city to Aeneas, following his departure from fallen Troy and his visit to the eerie underworld of the dead. Everywhere, no matter what the sphere of interest {whether religious, political, or personal), the really creative acts are represented as those deriving from some sort of dying to the world; and what happens in the interval of the hero's nonentity, so that he comes back as one reborn, made great and filled with creative power, mankind is also unanimous in declaring. We shall have only to follow, therefore, a multitude of heroic figures through the classic stages of the universal adventure in order to see again what has always been revealed. This will help us to understand not only the meaning of those images for contemporary life, but also the singleness of the human spirit in its aspirations, powers, vicissitudes, and wisdom.

The following pages will present in the form of one composite adventure the tales of a number of the world's symbolic carriers of the destiny of F-veryman. The first great stage, that of the

[41] Louis Ginzbcrg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publkation Society of America, 1911), Vol. Ill, pp. 90-94.

separation or *departure,* will be shown in Part I, Chapter I, in five subsections: (1) "The Call to Adventure," or the signs of the vocation of the hero; (2) "Refusal of the Call," or the folly of the flight from the god; (3) "Supernatural Aid," the unsuspected assistance that comes to one who has undertaken his proper adventure; (4) "The Crossing of the first Threshold"; and (5) "The Belly of the Whale," or the passage into the realm of night. The stage of *the trials and victories of initiation* will appear in Chapter II in six subsections: (1) "The Road of Trials," or the dangerous aspect of the gods; (2) "The Meeting with the Goddess" *(Magna Mater),* or the bliss of infancy regained; (3) "Woman as the Temptress," the realization and agony of Oedipus; (4) "Atonement with the Father"; (5) "Apotheosis"; and (6) "The Ultimate Boon."

The return and reintegration with society, which is indispensable to the continuous circulation of spiritual energy into the world, and which, from the standpoint of the community, is the justification of the long retreat, the hero himself may find the most difficult requirement of all. For if he has won through, like the Buddha, to the profound repose of complete enlightenment, there is danger that the bliss of this experience may annihilate all recollection of, interest in, or hope for, the sorrows of the world; or else the problem of making known the way of illumination to people wrapped in economic problems may seem too great to solve. And on the other hand, if the hero, instead of submitting to all of the initiatory tests, has, like Prometheus, simply darted to his goal (by violence, quick device, or luck) and plucked the boon for the world that he intended, then the powers that he has unbalanced may react so sharply that he will be blasted from within and without—crucified, like Prometheus, on the rock of his own violated unconscious. Or if the hero, in the third place, makes his safe and willing return, he may meet with such a blank misunderstanding and disregard from those whom he has come to help that his career will collapse. The third of the following chapters will conclude the discussion of these prospects under six subheadings: (1) "Refusal of the Return," or the world denied; (2) "The Magic Flight," or the escape of Prometheus; (3) "Rescue from Without"; (4) "The Crossing of the Return Threshold," or the return to the world of common day; (5) "Master of the Two Worlds"; and (6) "Freedom to Live," the nature and function of the ultimate boon.[42]

The composite hero of the monomyth is a personage of exceptional gifts. Frequently he is honored by his society, frequently unrecognized or disdained. He and/or the world in which he finds himself suffers from a symbolical deficiency. In fairy tales this may be as slight as the lack of a certain golden ring, whereas in apocalyptic vision the physical and spiritual life of the whole earth can be represented as fallen, or on the point of falling, into ruin.

Typically, the hero of the fairy tale achieves a domestic, microcosmic triumph, and the hero of myth a world-historical, macrocosmic triumph. Whereas the former—the youngest or despised child who becomes the master of extraordinar}' powers—prevails over his personal oppressors, the latter brings back from his adventure the means for the regeneration of his society as a whole. Tribal or local heroes, such as the emperor Huang Ti, Moses, or the A2tec Tezcatlipoca, commit their boons to a single folk; universal heroes—Mohammed, Jesus, Gautama Buddha—bring a message for the entire world.

Whether the hero be ridiculous or sublime, Greek or barbarian, gentile or Jew, his journey varies little in essential plan. Popular tales represent the heroic action as physical; the higher religions show the deed to be moral; nevertheless, there will be found astonishingly little variation in the morphology of the adventure, the character roles involved, the victories gained. If one or another of the basic elements of the archetypal pattern is omitted from a given fairy tale, legend, ritual, or myth, it is

[12] This circular adventure of the hero appears in a negative form in stories of the deluge type, where it is not the hero who goes to the power, but the power that rises against the hero, and again subsides. Deluge stories OCCUT in every quarter of the earth. They form an integral portion of the archetypal myth of the history of the world, and so belong properly to Fart II of the" present discussion: "The Cosmogonic Cycle."' The deluge hero is a symbol of the germinal vitality of man surviving even the worst tides of catastrophe and sin-'

bound to be somehow or other implied—and the omission itself can speak volumes for the history and pathology of the example, as we shall presently see.

Part II, "The Cosmogonic Cycle," unrolls the great vision of the creation and destruction of the world which is vouchsafed as revelation to the successful hero. Chapter I, *Emanations*, treats of the coming of the forms of the universe out of the void. Chapter II, *The Virgin Birth*, is a review of the creative and redemptive roles of the female power, first on a cosmic scale as the Mother of the Universe, then again on the human plane as the Mother of the Hero. Chapter III, *Transformations of the Hero*, traces the course of the legendary history of the human race through its typical stages, the hero appearing on the scene in various forms according to the changing needs of the race. And Chapter IV, *Dissolutions*, tells of the foretold end, first of the hero, then of the manifested world.

The cosmogonic cycle is presented with astonishing consistency in the sacred writings of all the continents,[41] and it gives to the adventure of the hero a new and interesting turn; for now it appears that the perilous journey was a labor not of attainment but of reattainment, not discovery but rediscovery. The godly powers sought and dangerously won are revealed to have been within the heart of the hero all the time. He is "the king's son" who has come to know who he is and therewith has entered into the exercise of his proper power—"God's son," who has learned to know how nnich that title means. From this point of view the hero is symbolical of that divine creative and redemptive image which is hidden within us all, only waiting to be known and rendered into life.

"For the One who has become many, remains the One undivided, but each part is all of Christ," we read in the writings of Saint Symeon the younger (949-1022 A.D.). "I saw Him in my house," the saint goes on. "Among all those everyday things He

[41] The present volume is **not concerned with the historical discussion of this** circumstance. That task is **reserved for a work now under preparation. The** present volume is a comparat**ive, not genetic, study. Its purpose is to show that** essential parallels exist in th**e myths themselves as well as in the interpretations** and applications that the sa**ges have announced for them.**

appeared unexpectedly and became unutterably united and merged with me, and leaped over to me without anything in between, as fire to iron, as the light to glass. And He made me like fire and like light. And I became that which I saw before and beheld from afar. I do not know how to relate this miracle to you. . . . I am man by nature, and God by the grace of God."[44]

A comparable vision is described in the apocryphal Gospel of Eve. "I stood on a loftly mountain and saw a gigantic man and another a dwarf; and I heard as it were a voice of thunder, and drew nigh for to hear; and He spake unto me and said: I am thou, and thou art I; and wheresoever thou mayest be I am there. In all am I scattered, and whensoever thou wiliest, thou gatherest Me; and gathering Me, thou gatherest Thyself."[45]

The two—the hero and his ultimate god, the seeker and the found—are thus understood as the outside and inside of a single, self-mirrored mystery, which is identical with the mystery of the manifest world. The great deed of the supreme hero is to come to the knowledge of this unity in multiplicity and then to make it known.

The World Nave!

The effect of the successful adventure of the hero is the unlocking and release again of the flow of life into the body of the world. The miracle of this flow may be represented in physical terms as a circulation of food substance, dynamically as a streaming of energy, or spiritually as a manifestation of grace. Such varieties of image alternate easily, representing three degrees of condensation of the one life force. An abundant harvest

[44] Translated by Dom Ansgar Nelson, O.S.B., in *The Soul Afire* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1944), p. 303.

[45] Quoted by Epiphanius, *Adversus kaereses*, xxvi, 3.

is the sign of God's grace; God's grace is the food of the soul; the lightning bolt is the harbinger of fertilizing rain, and at the same time the manifestation of the released energy of God. Grace, food substance, energy: these pour into the living world, and wherever they fail, life decomposes into death.

The torrent pours from an invisible source, the point of entry being the center of the symbolic circle of the universe, the Immovable Spot to the Buddha legend,[46] around which the world may be said to revolve. Beneath this spot is the earth-supporting head of the cosmic serpent, the dragon, symbolical of the waters of the abyss, which are the divine life-creative energy and substance of the demiurge, the world-generative aspect of immortal being.[1] The tree of life, i.e., the universe itself, grows from this point. It is rooted in the supporting darkness; the golden sun bird perches on its peak; a spring, the inexhaustible well, bubbles at its foot. Or the figure may be that of a cosmic mountain, with the city of the gods, like a lotus of light, upon its summit, and in its hollow the cities of the demons, illuminated by precious stones. Again, the figure may be that of the cosmic man or woman (for example the Buddha himself, or the dancing Hindu goddess Kali) seated or standing on this spot, or even fixed to the tree (Attis, Jesus, Wotan); for the hero as the incarnation of God is himself the navel of the world, the umbilical point through which the energies of eternity break into time. Thus the World Navel is the symbol of the continuous creation: the mystery of the maintenance of the world through that continuous miracle of vivification which wells within all things.

Among the Pawnees of northern Kansas and southern Nebraska, the priest, during the ceremonial of the Hako, draws a circle with his toe. "Hie circle represents a nest," such a priest is reported to have said, "and it is drawn by the toe because the eagle builds its nest with its claws. Although we are imitating the bird making its nest, there is another meaning to the action;

[46] *Supra, p.* 30.

Xills is ilie serpent tiint ji'uti'L'ti <i (lir 13I.Ldtia;i, rrir- litili ^^]'''•K iir-^] la^ •nligliticnment. See *supra,* p. 31.

we are thinking of Tirawa making the world for the people to live in. If you go on a high hill and look around, you will see the sky touching the earth on every side, and within this circular enclosure the people live. So the circles we have made are not only nests, but they also represent the circle Tirawa-atius has made for the dwelling place of all the people. The circles also stand for the kinship group, the clan, and the tribe."[411]

The dome of heaven rests on the quarters of the earth, sometimes supported by four caryatidal kings, dwarfs, giants, elephants, or turtles. Hence, the traditional importance of the mathematical problem of the quadrature of the circle: it contains the secret of the transformation of heavenly into earthly forms. The hearth in the home, the altar in the temple, is the hub of the wheel of the earth, the womb of the Universal Mother whose fire is the fire of life. And the opening at the top of the lodge—or the crown, pinnacle, or lantern, of the dome—is the hub or midpoint of the sky: the sun door, through which souls pass back from time to eternity, like the savor of the offerings, burned in the fire of life, and lifted on the axis of ascending smoke from the hub of the earthly to that of the celestial wheel.[49]

Thus filled, the sun is the eating bowl of God, an inexhaustible grail, abundant with the substance of the sacrifice, whose flesh is meat indeed and whose blood is drink indeed.""[0] At the same time it is the nourisher of mankind. The solar ray igniting the hearth symbolizes the communication of divine energy to the womb of the world—and is again the axis uniting and turning the two wheels. Through the sun door the circulation of energy is continuous. God descends and man ascends

[M] Alice C. fletcher, *The Hako: A Pawnee Ceremony* (Twenty-second Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology, part 2; Washington, 1904), pp. 243-244.

"At the creation of the world," a Pawnee high priest said to Miss fletcher, in explanation of the divinities honored in the ceremony, "it was arranged that there should be lesser powers. Tirawa-atius, the mighty power, could not come near to man, could not be seen or felt by him, therefore lesser powers were permitted. They were to mediate between man and Tirawa" *(ibid., p.* 27).

[4]. See Ananda K. *(.* iVmaaMVLiwv, "Symbolism <•ii thA Dunie. *I he JaJn/n Historical Quarterly,* Vol. XIV, No. 1 (March, 1938).

through k. **"I** am **the** door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.""[1] "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.™[2]

For a culture still nurtured in mythology the landscape, as well as every phase of human existence, is made alive with symbolical suggestion. The hills and groves have their supernatural protectors and are associated with popularly known episodes in the local history of the creation of the world. Here and there, furthermore, are special shrines. Wherever a hero has been born, has wrought, or has passed back into the void, the place is marked and sanctified. A temple is erected there to signify and inspire the miracle of perfect centeredness; for this is the place of the breakthrough into abundance. Someone at this point discovered eternity. The site can serve, therefore, as a support for fruitful meditation. Such temples are designed, as a rule, to simulate the four directions of the world horizon, the shrine or altar at the center being symbolical of the Inexhaustible Point. The one who enters the temple compound and proceeds to the sanctuary is imitating the deed of the original hero. His aim is to rehearse the universal pattern as a means of evoking within himself the recollection of the life-centering, life-renewing form.

Ancient cities are built like temples, having their portals to the four directions, while in the central place stands the major shrine of the divine city founder. The citizens live and work within the confines of this symbol. And in the same spirit, the domains of the national and world religions are centered around the hub of some mother city: Western Christendom around Rome, Islam around Mecca. The concerted bowing, three times a day, of the Mohammedan community throughout the world, all pointing like the spokes of a world-extensive wheel to the centering Kaaba, constructs a vast, living symbol of the "submission" *(islam)* of each and all to Allah's will. "For it is He," we read in the Koran, "that will show you the truth of all that ye do."[53] Or again: a great temple can be established anywhere.

[11] *Ibid.,* 10:9. [12] *Ibid.,* 6:56. [13] Koran, 5:108.

Because, finally, the All is everywhere, and anywhere may become the seat of power. Any blade of grass may assume, in myth, the figure of the savior and conduct the questing wanderer into the sanctum sanctorum of his own heart.

The World Navel, then, is ubiquitous. And since it is the source of all existence, it yields the world's plenitude of both good and evil. Ugliness and beauty, sin and virtue, pleasure and pain, are equally its production. "To God all things are fair and good and right," declares Heraclitus; "but men hold some things wrong and some right."[34] Hence the figures worshiped in the temples of the world are by no means always beautiful, always benign, or even necessarily virtuous. Like the deity of the Book of Job, they far transcend the scales of human value. And likewise, mythology does not hold as its greatest hero the merely virtuous man. Virtue is but the pedagogical prelude to the culminating insight, which goes beyond all pairs of opposites. Virtue quells the self-centered ego and makes the transpersonal centeredness possible; but when that has been achieved, what then of the pain or pleasure, vice or virtue, either of our own ego or of any other? Through all, the transcendent force is then perceived which lives in all, in all is wonderful, and is worthy, in all, of our profound obeisance.

For as Heraclitus has declared: "The unlike is joined together, and from differences results the most beautiful harmony, and all things take place by strife."[50] Or again, as we have it from the poet Blake: "The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword, are portions of eternity too great for the eye of man."[56]

The difficult point is made vivid in an anecdote from Yoruba-land (West Africa), which is told of the trickster-divinity Edshu. One day, this odd god came walking along a path between two fields. "He beheld in either field a farmer at work and proposed to play the two a turn. He donned a hat that was on the one side

[14] Heraclitus., fragment 102.
[15] Heraclitus, fragment 46.
[16] William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell,* "Proverbs of Hell."

red but on the other white, green before and black behind [these being the colors of the four World Directions: i.e., Edshu was a personification of the Center, the *axis mundi,* or the World Navel]; so that when the two friendly farmers had gone home to their village and the one had said to the other, 'Did yon see that old fellow go by today in the white hat?' the other replied, 'Why, the hat was red.' To which the first retorted, 'It was not; it was white." 'But it was red,' insisted the friend, 'I saw it with my own two eyes.' 'Well, you must be blind,' declared the first. 'You must be drunk,' rejoined the other. And so the argument developed and the two came to blows. When they began to knife each other, they were brought by neighbors before the headman for judgment. Edshu was among the crowd at the trial, and when the headman sat at a loss to know where justice lay, the old trickster revealed himself, made known his prank, and showed the hat. 'The two could not help but quarrel,' he said. 'I wanted it that way. Spreading strife is my greatest joy.[1n57]

Where the moralist would be filled with indignation and the tragic poet with pity and terror, mythology breaks the whole of life into a vast, horrendous Divine Comedy. Its Olympian laugh is not escapist in the least, but hard, with the hardness of life itself—which, we may take it, is the hardness of God, the Creator. Mythology, in this respect, makes the tragic attitude seem somewhat hysterical, and the merely moral judgment shortsighted. Yet the hardness is balanced by an assurance that all that we see is but the reflex of a power that endures, untouched by the pain. Thus the tales are both pitiless and terrorless—suffused with the joy of a transcendent anonymity regarding itself in all of the self-centered, battling egos that are born and die in time.

[n7] Leo Frobenius. *Und Afrika sprach. . . .* (Berlin: Vita, Deutsches Verlagshaus, 1912), pp. 243-245. Compare the strikingly similar episode recounted of Othin (Wotan) in the *Prose Edda,* "Skaldskaparmal" I ("Scandinavian Classics," Vol. V, New York, 1929, p. 96). Compare also Jehovah's command in Exodus, 32:27: "Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his compiTiii_>ti, ;iiid t^ erv man his neighbor.[1*]

PART I

The Adventure of the Hero

CHAPTER 1

Departure

The Call to Adventure

"LONG long ago, when wishing still could lead to something, there lived a king whose daughters all were beautiful, but the youngest was so beautiful that the sun itself, who had seen so many things, simply marveled every time it shone on her face: Now close to the castle of this king was a great dark forest, and in the forest under an old lime tree a spring, and when the day was very hot, the king's child would go out into the wood and sit on the edge of the cool spring. And to pass the time she would take a golden ball, toss it up and catch it; and this was her favorite plaything.

"Now it so happened one day that the golden ball of the princess did **not** fall into the little hand lifted into the air, but passed it, bounced on the ground, and rolled directly into the water. The princess followed it with her eyes, but the ball disappeared; and the spring was deep, so deep that the bottom could not be seen. Thereupon she began to cry, and her crying became louder and louder, and she was unable to find consolation. And while she was lamenting in this way, she heard someone call to her: 'What is the matter, Princess? You are crying so hard, a stone would be forced to pity you.' She looked around to see where the voice had come from, and there she beheld a frog, holding its fat, ugly head out of the water. 'Oh, it's you, old Water Plopper,' she said. 'I am crying over my golden ball,

which has fallen into the spring.' 'Be calm; don't cry,' answered the frog. 'I can surely be of assistance. But what will you give me if I fetch your toy for you?' 'Whatever you would like to have, dear frog,' she said; 'my clothes, my pearls and jewels, even the golden crown that I wear.' The frog replied, 'Your clothes, your pearls and jewels, and your golden crown, I do not want; but if you will care for me and let me be your companion and playmate, let me sit beside you at your little table, eat from your little golden plate, drink from your little cup, sleep in your little bed: **if** you **will** promise me that, I will go straight down and fetch your golden ball.' 'All right,' she said. 'I promise you anything you want, if you will only bring me back the ball.' But she thought: 'How that simple frog chatters! There he sits in the water with his own kind, and could never be the companion of a human being.'

"As soon as the frog had obtained her promise, he ducked his head and sank, and after a little while came swimming up again; he had the ball in his mouth, and tossed it on the grass. The princess was elated when she saw her pretty toy. She picked it up and scampered away. 'Wait, wait,' called the frog, 'take me along; I can't run like you.[1] But what good did it do, though he croaked after her as loudly as he could"? She paid not the slightest heed, but hurried home, and soon had completely forgotten the poor frog—who must have hopped back again into his spring."[1]

This is an example of one of the ways in which the adventure can begin. A blunder—apparently the merest chance—reveals an unsuspected world, and the individual is drawn into a relationship with forces that are not rightly understood. As Freud has shown,[2] blunders are not the merest chance. They are the result of suppressed desires and conflicts. They are ripples on the surface of life, produced by unsuspected springs. And these may be very deep—as deep as the soul itself. The blunder may amount to the opening of a destiny. Thus it happens, in this

[1] *Grimms'Fairy Talcs*, No. 1, "The Frog King."

[2] *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. (Standard Edn., VI; orig. 1901.)

fairy tale, that the disappearance of the **ball** is the first sign of something coming for the princess, the frog is the second, and the unconsidered promise is the third.

As a preliminary manifestation of the powers that are breaking into play, the frog, coming up as it were by miracle, can be termed the "herald"; the crisis of his appearance is the "call to adventure." The herald's summons may be to live, as in the present instance, or, at a later moment of the biography, to die. It may sound the call to some high historical undertaking. Or it may mark the dawn of religious illumination. As apprehended by the mystic, it marks what has been termed "the awakening of the self."[3] In the case of the princess of the fairy tale, it signified no more than the coming of adolescence. But whether small or great, and no matter what the stage or grade of life, the call rings up the curtain, always, on a mystery of transfiguration—a rite, or moment, of spiritual passage, which, when complete, amounts to a dying and a birth. The familiar life horizon has been outgrown; the old concepts, ideals, and emotional patterns no longer fit; the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand.

Typical of the circumstances of the call are the dark forest, the great tree, the babbling spring, and the loathly, underestimated appearance of the carrier of the power of destiny. We recognize in the scene the symbols of the World **Navel.** The frog, the little dragon, is the nursery counterpart of the underworld serpent whose head supports the earth and who represents the life-progenitive, demiurgic powers of the abyss. He comes up with the golden sun ball, his dark deep waters having just taken it down: at this moment resembling the great Chinese Dragon of the Kast, delivering the rising sun in his jaws, or the frog on whose head rides the handsome young immortal, Han Hsiang, carrying in a basket the peaches of immortality. Freud has suggested that all moments of anxiety reproduce the painful feelings of the first separation from the mother—the tightening of the breath,

[1] Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism, A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1911), Part II, "The Mystic Way," Chapter II, "The Awakening of the Self."

congestion of the blood, etc., of the crisis of birth.[4] Conversely, all moments of separation and new birth produce anxiety. Whether it be the king's child about to be taken from the felicity of her established dual-unity with King Daddy, or God's daughter Eve, now ripe to depart from the idyl of the Garden, or again, the supremely concentrated Future Buddha breaking past the last horizons of the created world, the same archetypal images are activated, symbolizing danger, reassurance, trial, passage, and the strange holiness of the mysteries of birth.

The disgusting and rejected frog or dragon of the fairy tale brings up the sun ball in its mouth; for the frog, the serpent, the rejected one, is the representative of that unconscious deep ("so deep that the bottom cannot be seen") wherein are hoarded all of the rejected, unadmitted, unrecognized, unknown, or undeveloped factors, laws, and elements of existence. Those are the pearls of the fabled submarine palaces of the nixies, tritons, and water guardians; the jewels that give light to the demon cities of the underworld; the tire seeds in the ocean of immortality which supports the earth and surrounds it like a snake; the stars in the bosom of immortal night. Those are the nuggets in the gold hoard of the dragon; the guarded apples of the Hesperides; the filaments of the Golden Fleece. The herald or announcer of the adventure, therefore, is often dark, loathly, or terrifying, judged evil by the world; yet if one could follow, the way would be opened through the walls of day into the dark where the jewels glow. Or the herald is a beast (as in the fain' tale), representative of the repressed instinctual fecundity within ourselves, or again a veiled mysterious figure—the unknown.

The story is told, for example, of King Arthur, and how he made him ready with many knights to ride ahunting. "As soon as he was in the forest, the King saw a great hart afore him. This hart will I chase, said King Arthur, and so he spurred the horse, and rode after long, and so by fine force he was like to have smitten the hart; whereas the King had chased the hart so long, that his horse lost his breath, and fell down dead; then a yeoman fetched the King another horse. So the King saw the hart embushed, and his horse dead; he set **him** down by a fountain, and there he fell in great thoughts. And as he sat so, him thought he heard a noise of hounds, to the sum of thirty. And with that the King saw coming toward him the strangest beast that ever he saw or heard of; so the beast went to the well and drank, and the noise was in the beast's belly like unto the questyng of thirty couple hounds; but all the while the beast drank there was no noise in the beast's belly: and therewith the beast departed with a great noise, whereof the King had great marvel.'"

Or we have the case—from a very different portion of the world—of an Arapaho girl of the North American plains. She spied a porcupine near a cottonwood tree. She tried to hit the animal, but it ran behind the tree and began to climb. The girl started after, to catch it, but it continued just out of reach. "Well![11] she said, "I am climbing to catch the porcupine, for I want those quills, and if necessary I will go to the top." The porcupine reached the top of the tree, but as she approached and was about to lay hands on it, the cottonwood tree suddenly lengthened, and the porcupine resumed his climb. Looking down, she saw her friends craning up at her and beckoning her to descend; but having passed under the influence of the porcupine, and fearful for the great distance between herself and the ground, she continued to mount the tree, until she became the merest speck to those looking from below, and with the porcupine she finally reached the sky.[6]

[1] Sigrmind l-'reud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (translated by James Strachey, Standard Edition, XVI; London: The Hogarth Press, 1963), pp. 396-97. (Orig. **1916-17.)**

"questyng heast" marks the beginning of the mysteries associated with the Quest of the Hoh Grail.

[6] George A. Dorsey and Alfred L. Kroeber, *Traditions of the Arapaho* (field Columbia Museum, Publication 81, Anthropological Scries. Vol. V; Chicago, 1903), p. 300. Reprinted in Stith Thompson's *Tales of the North American Indians* (Cambridge, Mass., 1929),]>. 128.

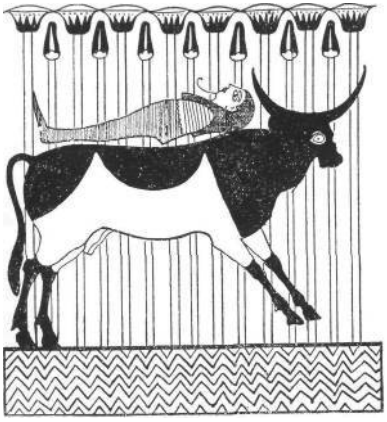


FIGURE 3. Osiris in the Form of a Bull Transports His Worshiper to the Underworld

Two dreams will suffice to illustrate the spontaneous appearance of the figure of the herald in the psyche that is ripe for transformation. The first is the dream of a young man seeking the way to a new world-orientation:

"I am in a green land where many sheep are at pasture. It is the 'land of sheep.[1] In the land of sheep stands an unknown woman and points the way.'"

[7] C. G. Jung, *Psychology ami Alchemy* (Collected Works, vol. 12; New York and London, 1953), pars. 71, 73. (Orig. 1935.)

The second is the dream of a young girl whose girl companion has lately died of consumption; she is afraid that she may have the disease herself.

"I was in a blossoming garden; the sun was just going down with a blood-red glow. Then there appeared before me a black, noble knight, who spoke to me with a very serious, deep and frightening voice: 'Wilt thou go with me?' Without attending my answer, he took me by the hand, and carried me away."[8]

Whether dream or myth, in these adventures there is an atmosphere of irresistible fascination about the figure that appears suddenly as guide, marking a new period, a new stage, in the biography. That which has to be faced, and is somehow profoundly-familiar to the unconscious—though unknown, surprising, and even frightening to the conscious personality—makes itself known; and what formerly was meaningful may become strangely emptied of value: like the world of the king's child, with the sudden disappearance into the well of the golden ball. Thereafter, even though the hero returns for a while to his familiar occupations, they may be found unfruitful. A series of signs of increasing force then will become visible, until—as in the following legend of "The Four Signs," which is the most celebrated example of the call to adventure in the literature of the world—the summons can no longer be denied. The young prince Gautama Sakyamuni, the Future Buddha, had been protected by his father from all knowledge of age, sickness, death, or monkhood, lest he should be moved to thoughts of life renunciation; for it had been prophesied at his birth that he was to become either a world emperor or a Buddha. The king—prejudiced in favor of the royal vocation—provided his son with three palaces and forty thousand dancing girls to keep his mind attached to the world. But these only served to advance the inevitable; for while still relatively young, the youth exhausted for himself the fields of fleshly joy and became ripe for the other experience.

[8] Wilhelm **Stekel,** *Die* ***Sprache des Traurtws*** (Wiesbaden; Verlag von -I. F. Bergmann. 1911), p. 352. Dr. Stekel points out the relationship of the blood-red glow to the thought of the blood coughed up in consumption.

The moment he was ready, the proper heralds automatically appeared:

"Now on a certain day the Future Buddha wished to go to the park, and told his charioteer to make ready the chariot. Accordingly the man brought out a sumptuous and elegant chariot, and, adorning it richly, he harnessed to it four state horses of the Sindhava breed, as white as the petals of the white lotus, and announced to the Future Buddha that everything was ready. And the Future Buddha mounted the chariot, which was like to a palace of the gods, and proceeded toward the park,

" 'The time for the enlightenment of the prince Siddhartha draweth nigh,' thought the gods; 'we must show him a sign[1]: and they changed one of their number into a decrepit old man, broken-toothed, gray-haired, crooked and bent of body, leaning on a staff, and trembling, and showed him to the Future Buddha, but so that only he and the charioteer saw him.

"Then said the Future Buddha to the charioteer, 'Friend, pray, who is this man? Even his hair is not like that of other men.' And when he heard the answer, he said, 'Shame on birth, since to every one that is born old age must come.[1] And agitated in heart, he thereupon returned and ascended his palace.

" 'Why has my son returned so **quickly?**' asked the king.

"'Sire, he has seen an old man,' was the reply; 'and because he has seen an old man, he is about to retire from the world.[1]

" 'Do you want to kill me, that you say such things? Quickly get ready some plays to be performed before my son. If we can but get him to enjoying pleasure, he will cease to think of retiring from the world.' Then the king extended the guard to half a league in each direction.

"Again on a certain day, as the Future Buddha was going to the park, he saw a diseased man whom the gods had fashioned; and having again made inquiry, he returned, agitated in heart, and ascended his palace.

"And the king made the same inquiry and gave the same order as before; and again extending the guard, placed them for three quarters of a league around.

"And again on a certain day, as the Future Buddha was going to the park, he saw a dead man whom the gods had fashioned; and having again made inquiry, he returned, agitated in heart, and ascended his palace.

"And the king made the same inquiry and gave the same orders as before; and again extending the guard placed them for a league around.

"And again on a certain day, as the Future Buddha was going to the park, he saw a monk, carefully and decently clad, whom the gods had fashioned; and he asked his charioteer, 'Pray, who is this man?' 'Sire, this is one who has retired from the world'; and the charioteer thereupon proceeded to sound the praises of retirement from the world. The thought of retiring from the world was a pleasing one to the Future Buddha."[5]

This first stage of the mythological journey—which we have designated the "call to adventure"—signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown. This fateful region of both treasure and danger may be variously represented: as a distant land, a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves, or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountaintop, or profound dream state; but it is always a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, superhuman deeds, and impossible delight. The hero can go forth of his own volition to accomplish the adventure, as did Theseus when he arrived in his father's city, Athens, and heard the horrible history of the Minotaur; or he may be carried or sent abroad by some benign or malignant agent, as was Odysseus, driven about the Mediterranean by the winds of the angered god, Poseidon. The adventure may begin as a mere blunder, as did that of the princess of the fairy tale; or still again, one may be only casually strolling, when some passing

[5] Reprinted by permission of the publishers from Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism in Translations* (Harvard Oriental Series, 3) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1896, pp. 56-57.

phenomenon catches the wandering eye and lures one away from the frequented paths of man. Examples might be multiplied, ad infmitum, from every corner of the world.[10]

Refusal of the Call

Often in actual life, and not infrequently in the myths and popular tales, we encounter the dull case of the call unanswered; for it is always possible to turn the ear to other interests. Refusal of the summons converts the adventure into its negative. Walled in boredom, hard work, or "culture," the subject loses the power of significant affirmative action and becomes a victim to be saved. His flowering world becomes a wasteland of dry stones and his life feels meaningless—even though, like King Minos, he may through titanic effort succeed in building an empire of renown. Whatever house he builds, it will be a house of death: a labyrinth of cyclopean walls to hide from him his Minotaur. All he can do is create new problems for himself and await the gradual approach of his disintegration.

"Because I have called, and ye refused ... I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you." "For

[10] In the above section, and throughout the following pages, I have made no attempt to exhaust the evidence. To have done so (after the manner, for example, of Frazer, in *The Golden Bough)* would have enlarged my chapters ppxliiijioush without making the main line of the monomyth an;- clearer. Instead, I am giving in each section a few striking examples from a number of widely scattered, repre-sirTimuv<r traditions. Durmg the course oi thr work 1 shift \\i\ MmnTis gradually, so that the reader may savor the peculiar qualities, of the various styles. By the time lie coiiii^s *i"* thi^ last piAi^e, he n'lll have reviewed an imtnense nuii'ibei^ "I mythologies. Should he wish to prove whether all might have been cited for owrv section of rlir monomyth, he need unh Tum In sonic- of the source volumes enumerated in the footnotes and ramble through a few of the multitude of tales.

the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them."[11]

Time Jesum transeuntem et non revertentem: "Dread the passage of Jesus, for he does not return."[12]

The myths and folk tales of the whole world make clear that the refusal is essentially a refusal to give up what one takes to be one's own interest. The future is regarded not in terms of an unremitting scries of deaths and births, but as though one's present system of ideals, virtues, goals, and advantages were to be fixed and made secure. King Minos retained the divine bull, when the sacrifice would have signified submission to the will of the god of his society; for he preferred what he conceived to be his economic advantage. Thus he failed to advance into the life-role that he had assumed—and we have seen with what calamitous effect. The divinity itself became his terror; for, obviously, if one is oneself one's god, then God himself, the will of God, the power that would destroy one's egocentric system, becomes a monster.

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own'mind; and in the mist of tears
*I hid from Him, and under running laughter}**

One is harassed, both day and night, by the divine being that is the image of the living self within the locked labyrinth of one's own disoriented psyche. The ways to the gates have all been lost: there is no exit. One can only cling, like Satan, furiously, to oneself and be in hell; or else break, and be annihilate at last, in God.

"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whum thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."[13]

" Proverbs, 1:24-27, 32.

[12] "Spiritual books occasionally quote [this) Latin saying which has terrified more than one soul" (Ernest Dimnet, *The Art of Thinking,* New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1S29, pp. 203-204).

[11] Francis Thompson, *The Hound of Heaven,* opening lines.

The same harrowing, mysterious voice was to be heard in the call of the Greek god Apollo to the fleeing maiden Daphne, daughter of the river Peneus, as he pursued her over the plain. "O nymph, O Peneus' daughter, stay!" the deity called to her—like the frog to the princess of the fairy tale; "I who pursue thee am no enemy. Thou knowest not whom thou fleest, and for that reason dost thou flee. Run with less speed, I pray, and hold thy flight. I, too, will follow with less speed. Nay, stop and ask who thy lover is."

"He would have said more," the story goes, "but the maiden pursued her frightened way and left him **with** words unfinished, even in her desertion seeming fair. The winds bared her limbs, the opposing breezes set her garments aflutter as she ran, and a light air flung her locks streaming behind her. Her beauty was enhanced by flight. But the chase drew to an end, for the youthful god would not longer waste his time in coaxing words, and, urged on by love, he pursued at utmost speed. Just as when a Gallic hound has seen a hare in an open plain, and seeks his prey on flying feet, but the hare, safety; he, just about to fasten on her, now, even now thinks he has her, and grazes her very heels with his outstretched muzzle; but she knows not whether or not she be already caught, and barely escapes from those sharp fangs and leaves behind the jaws just closing on her: so ran the god and maid, he sped by hope and she by fear. But he ran the more swiftly, borne on the wings of love, gave her no time to rest, hung over her fleeing shoulders and breathed on the hair that streamed over her neck. Now was her strength all gone, and, pale with fear and **utterly** overcome by the toil of her swift flight, seeing the waters of her father's river near, she cried: 'O father, help! If your waters hold divinity, change and destroy this beauty by which I pleased o'er well.' Scarce had she thus prayed when a down-dragging numbness seized her limbs, and her soft sides were begirt with thin bark. Her hair was changed to leaves, her arms to branches. Her feet, but now so swift, grew fast in sluggish roots, and her head was now but a tree's top. Her gleaming beauty alone remained."[13]

[13] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* I, 504-55.1 (translation by Frank Justus Miller, the Loeb Classical Library).

This is indeed a dull and unrewarding finish. Apollo, the sun, the lord of time and ripeness, no longer pressed his frightening suit, but instead, simply named the laurel his favorite tree and ironically recommended its leaves to the fashioners of victory wreaths. The girl had retreated to the image of her parent and there found protection—like the unsuccessful husband whose dream of mother love preserved him from the state of cleaving to a wife."

The literature of psychoanalysis abounds in examples of such desperate fixations. What they represent is an impotence to put off the infantile ego, with its sphere of emotional relationships and ideals. One is bound in by the walls of childhood; the father and mother stand as threshold guardians, and the timorous soul, fearful of some punishment,[1,] fails to make the passage through the door and come to birth in the world **without.**

Dr. Jung has reported a dream that resembles very closely the image of the **myth** of Daphne. The dreamer is the same young man who found himself *(supra,* p. 55) in the land of the sheep—the land, that is to say, of unindependence. A voice within him says, "I must first get away from the father"; then a few nights later: "a snake draws a circle about the dreamer, and he stands like a tree, grown fast to the earth."[1]*[1] This is an image of the magic circle drawn about the personality by the dragon power of the fixating parent.[19] Brynhild, in the same way, was protected in her virginity, arrested in her daughter state for years, by the circle of the fire of all-father Wotan. She slept in timelessness until the coming of Siegfried.

Little Briar-rose (Sleeping Beauty) was put to sleep by a jealous hag (an unconscious evil-mother image). And not only the child, her entire world went off to sleep; but at last, "after long, long years," there came a prince to wake her. "The king and queen (the conscious good-parent images), who had just come

[16] *Supra,* p. 5.
[17] Freud: castration complex.
[18] Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy,* pars. 58, 62.
[lJ] The serpent (in **mythology** a symbol of the terrestrial waters) corresponds precisely to Daphne's father, the river Peneus.

home and were entering the hall, began to fall asleep, and with them the whole estate. All the horses slept in the stalls, the dogs in the yard, the pigeons on the roof, the flies on the walls, yes, the fire that flickered on the hearth grew still and slumbered, and the roast ceased to simmer. And the cook, who was about to pull the hair of the scullery boy because he had forgotten something, let him go and fell off to sleep. And the wind went down, and not a leaf stirred in the trees. Then around the castle a hedge of thorns began to grow, which became taller every year, and finally shut off the whole estate. It grew up taller than the castle, so that nothing more was seen, not even the weathercock on the roof."[20]

A Persian city once was "enstoned to stone"—king and queen, soldiers, inhabitants, and all—because its people refused the call of Allah.[21] Lot's wife became a pillar of salt for looking back, when she had been summoned forth from her city by Jehovah.[22] And there is the tale of the Wandering Jew, cursed to remain on earth until the Day of Judgment, because when Christ had passed him carrying the cross, this man among the people standing along the way called, "Go faster! A little speed!" The unrecognized, insulted Savior turned and said to him, "I go, but you shall be waiting here for me when I return."[21]

Some of the victims remain spellbound forever (at least, so far as we are told), but others are destined to be saved. Brynhild was preserved for her proper hero and little Briar-rose was rescued by a prince. Also, the young man transformed into a tree dreamed subsequently of the unknown woman who pointed the way, as a mysterious guide to paths unknown.[34] Not all who hesitate are lost. The psyche has many secrets in reserve. And these are not disclosed unless required. So it is that sometimes

[21] ***The*** *Thousand Nights and One Night*, **Richard F.** Burton **translatioi** (Bombay, 1885), **Vol.** 1, pp. 164-167.

[22] Genesis, **19:26.**

[20] Werner Zirus, *Ahasverus, di-r Ewige Jude* (Staff- und Motiv₆es,(.-hichle de deutschen Literatur 6, Berlin and Leipzig, 1930), p. 1.

[34] *Supra*, p. 54.

the predicament following an obstinate refusal of the call proves to be the occasion of a providential revelation of some unsuspected principle of release.

Willed introversion, in fact, is one of the classic implements of creative genius and can be employed as a deliberate device. It drives the psychic energies into depth and activates the lost continent of unconscious infantile and archetypal images. The result, of course; may be a disintegration of consciousness more or less complete (neurosis, psychosis: the plight of spellbound Daphne); but on the other hand, if the personality is able to absorb and integrate the new forces, there will be experienced an almost super-human degree of self-consciousness and masterful control. This is a basic principle of the Indian disciplines of yoga. It has been the way, also, of many creative spirits in the West.[23] It cannot be described, quite, as an answer to any specific call. Rather, it is a deliberate, terrific refusal to respond to anything but the deepest, highest, richest answer to the as yet unknown demand of some waiting void within: a kind of total strike, or rejection of the offered terms of life, as a result of which some power of transformation carries the problem to a plane of new magnitudes, where it is suddenly and finally resolved.

This is the aspect of the hero-problem illustrated in the wondrous Arabian Nights adventure of the Prince Kamar al-Zaman

[M] See Otto Rank, Art *and Artist*, translated by Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Int.. 1943), pp. 40-41: "If we compare the neurotic with the productive type, it is evident that the former suffers from an excessive check on his Impulsive life. . . . Both are distinguished fundamentally from the average type, who accepts himself as he is, by their tendency to exercise their volition in reshaping themselves. There is. however, this difference: that the neurotic, in this voluntary remaking of his ego. does not get beyond the destructive preliminary work and is therefore unable to detach the whole creative process from his own person and transfer it to an ideological abstraction. The productive artist also begins . . . with that re-creation of himself which results in an ideologically constructed ego; [but in his easel this ego is then in a position '<i ^hiii ;he cre^iu •; w ill-pi '\|\~*i-v* from hi* own person to ideological representations of that person and thus render it objective. It must be admitted tnut this pr'ic •-s i^ 1C: . ,| *i;:;'iA^ if. iii lil li cl I'J u !thin the Individual hon- self, and that not only in its constructive, but also in its destructive aspects. This explains why hardly any productive work gets through without morbid

and the Princess Budur. The young and handsome prince, the only son of King Shahriman of Persia, persistently refused the repeated suggestions, requests, demands, and finally injunctions, of his father, that he should do the normal thing and take to himself a wife. The first time the subject was broached to him, the lad responded: "O my father, know that I have no lust to marry nor doth my soul incline to women; for that concerning their craft and perfidy I have read many books and heard much talk, even as saith the poet:

Now, an of women ask ye, I reply: —
In their affairs I'm versed a doctor rare!
When man 's head grizzles and his money dwindles,
In their affection he hath naught for share.

And another said:

Rebel against women and so shalt thou serve Allah the more;
The youth mho gives women the rein must forfeit all hope to soar.
They'll baulk him when .seeking the strange device, Excelsior,
Tho' waste he a thousand of years in the study of science and lore."

And when he had ended his verses he continued, "O my father, wedlock is a thing whereto I will never consent; no, not though I drink the cup of death."

When the Sultan Shahriman heard these words from his son, light became darkness in his sight and he was full of grief; yet, for the great love he bore him, lie was unwilling to repeat his wishes and was not angry, but showed him all manner of kindness.

After a year, the father pressed again his question, but the youth persisted in refusal, with further stanzas from the poets. The king consulted with his wazir, and the minister advised: "O king, wait another year and, if after that thou be minded to speak to him on the matter of marriage, speak not to him privily, but address him on a day of state, when all the emirs and wazirs are present with the whole of the army standing before thee. And when all are in crowd then send for thy son, Kamar al-Zaman, and summon him; and, when he cometh, broach to him the matter of marriage before the wazirs and grandees and officers of

state and captains; for he will surely be bashful and daunted by their presence and will not dare to oppose thy will."

When the moment came, however, and King Shahriman gave his command before the state, the prince bowed his head awhile, then raising it towards his father, and, being moved by youthful folly and boyish ignorance, replied: "But for myself I will never marry; no, not though I drink the cup of death! As for thee, thou art great in age and small of wit: hast thou not, twice ere this day and before this occasion, questioned me of the matter of marriage, and I refused my consent? Indeed thou dotest and art not fit to govern a flock of sheep!" So saying Kamar al-Zaman unclapsed his hands from behind his back and tucked up his sleeves above his elbows before his father, being in a fit of fury; moreover, he added many words to his sire, knowing not what he said, in the trouble of his spirits.

The king was confounded and ashamed, since this befell in the presence of his grandees and soldier-officers assembled on a high festival and state occasion; but presently the majesty of kingship took him, and he cried out at his son and made him tremble. ITien he called to the guards standing before him and commanded, "Seize him!" So they came forward and laid hands on him and, binding him, brought him before his sire, who bade them pinion his elbows behind his back and in this guise make him stand before the presence. And the prince bowed down his head for fear and apprehension, and his brow and face were beaded and spangled with sweat; and shame and confusion troubled him sorely. Thereupon his father abused him and reviled him and cried, "Woe to thee, thou son of adultery and nursling of abomination! How durst thou answer me in this wise before my captains and soldiers'? But hitherto none hath chastised thee. Knowest thou not that this deed thou hast done were a disgrace to him had it been done by the meanest of my subjects?" And the king ordered his mamelukes to loose his elbow-bonds and imprison him in one of the bastions of the citadel.

So they took the prince and thrust him into an old tower in which there was a dilapidated salon, and in its midst a ruined well, after having first swept it and cleansed its floor-rags and

set therein a couch on which they laid a mattress, a leathern rug, and a cushion. And then they brought a great lantern and a wax candle; for that place was dark, even by day. And lastly the mamelukes led Kamar al-Zaman thither, and stationed a eunuch at the door. And when all this was done, the prince threw himself on the couch, sad-spirited, and heavyhearted, blaming himself and repenting of his injurious conduct to his father.

Meanwhile in the distant empire of China, the daughter of King Ghazur, lord of the Islands and the Seas and the Seven Palaces, was in like case. When her beauty had become known and her name and fame been bruited abroad in the neighboring countries, all the kings had sent to her father to demand her of him in marriage, and he had consulted her on the matter, but she had disliked the very word wedlock. "O my father," she had answered, "I have no mind to marry; no, not at all; for I am a sovereign lady and a queen suzerain ruling over men, and I have no desire for a man who shall rule over me." And the more suits she refused, the more her suitors' eagerness increased and all the royalties of the inner Islands of China sent presents and rarities to her father with letters asking her in marriage. So he pressed her again and again with advice on the matter of espousals; but she ever opposed to him refusals, till at last she turned upon him angrily and cried: "O my father, if thou name matrimony to me once more, I will go into my chamber and take a sword and, fixing its hilt on the ground, will set its point to my waist; then will I press upon it, till it come forth from my back, and so slay myself?'

Now when the king heard these words, the light became darkness in his sight and his heart burned for her as with a flame of fire, because he feared lest she should kill herself; and he was filled with perplexity concerning her affair and the kings her suitors. So he said to her: "If thou be determined not to marry and there be no help for it: abstain from going and coming in and out." Then he placed her in a house and shut her up in a chamber, appointing ten old women as duennas to guard her, and forbade her to go forth to the Seven Palaces. Moreover, he made it appear that he was incensed against her, and sent letters

to all the kings, giving them to know that she had been stricken with madness by the Jinn.[2"]

With the hero and the heroine both following the negative way, and between them the continent of Asia, it will require a miracle to consummate the union of this eternally predestined pair. Whence can such a power come to break the life-negating spell and dissolve the wrath of the two childhood fathers?

The reply to this question would remain the same throughout the mythologies of the world. For, as is written so frequently in the sacred pages of the Koran: "Well able is Allah to save." The sole problem is what the machinery of the miracle is to be. And that is a secret to be opened only in the following stages of this Arabian Nights' entertainment.

. 3 .

Supernatural Aid

For those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is with a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass.

An East African tribe, for example, the Wachaga of Tanganyika, tell of a very poor man named Kyazimba, who set out in desperation for the land where the sun rises. And he had traveled long and grown tired, and was simply standing, looking hopelessly in the direction of his search, when he heard someone approaching from behind. He turned and perceived a decrepit little woman. She came up and wished to know his business. When he had told her, she wrapped her garment around him, and, soaring from the earth, transported him to the zenith, where the sun pauses in the middle of the day. Then with a mighty din a great company of men came from eastward to that place, and in the

[u] Abridged from Burton, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 213-228.

midst of them was a brilliant chieftain, who, when he had arrived, slaughtered an ox and sat down to feast with his retainers. The old woman asked his help for Kyazimba. The chieftain blessed the man and sent him home. And it is recorded that he lived in prosperity ever after.[24]

Among the American Indians of the Southwest the favorite personage in this benignant role is Spider Woman—a grandmotherly little dame who lives underground. The Twin War Gods of the Navaho on the way to the house of their father, the Sun, had hardly departed from their home, following a holy trail, when they came upon this wonderful little figure: "The boys traveled rapidly in the holy trail, and soon after sunrise, near Dsilnaotil, saw smoke arising from the ground. They went to the place where the smoke rose, and they found it came from the smoke hole of a subterranean chamber. A ladder, black from smoke, projected through the hole. Looking down into the chamber they saw an old woman, the Spider Woman, who glanced up at them and said: 'Welcome, children. Enter. Who are you, and whence do you come together walking?[1] They made no answer, but descended the ladder. When they reached the floor she again spoke to them, asking: 'W[h]ither do you two go walking together?[1] 'Nowhere in particular,' they answered; 'we came here because we had nowhere else to go.' She asked this question four times, and each time she received a similar answer. Then she said: 'Perhaps you would seek your father?' 'Yes,' they answered, 'if we only knew the way to his dwelling.' 'Ah!' said the woman, 'it is a long and dangerous way to the house of your father, the Sun. There are many monsters dwelling between here and there, and perhaps, when you get there, your father may not be glad to see you, and may punish you for coming. You must pass four places of danger—the rocks that crush the traveler, the reeds that cut him to pieces, the cane cactuses that tear him to pieces, and the boiling sands that overwhelm him. But I shall give you something to subdue your enemies and preserve your lives.' She gave them a charm called 'feather of the alien

[24] **Braofl Gutmann,** *Volksbuch der Wadschagga* (Leipzig, 1914), p. 144.

gods,' which consisted of a hoop with two life-feathers (feathers plucked from a living eagle) attached, and another life-feather to preserve their existence. She taught them also this magic formula, which, if repeated to their enemies, would subdue their anger: 'Put your feet down with pollen. Put your hands down with pollen. Put your head down with pollen. Then your feet are pollen; your hands are pollen; your body is pollen; your mind is pollen; your voice is pollen. The trail is beautiful. Be still.'"[25]

The helpful crone and fairy godmother is a familiar feature of European fair)' lore; in Christian saints' legends the role is commonly played by the Virgin. The Virgin by her intercession can win the mercy of the Father. Spider Woman with her web can control the movements of the Sun. The hero who has come under the protection of the Cosmic Mother cannot be harmed. The thread of Ariadne brought Theseus safely through the adventure of the labyrinth. This is the guiding power that runs through the work of Dante in the female figures of Beatrice and the Virgin, and appears in Goethe's *Faust* successively as Gretchen, Helen of Troy, and the Virgin. "Thou art the living fount of hope," prays Dante, at the end of his safe passage through the perils of the Three Worlds; "Lady, thou art so great and so availest, that whoso would have grace, and has not recourse to thee, would have his desire fly without wings. Thy benignity not only succors him who asks, but oftentimes freely foreruns the asking. In thee mercy, in thee pity, in thee magnificence, in thee whatever of goodness is in any creature, are united."[29]

[24] Washington Matthews, *Navaho Legends* (Memoirs of the American Folklore Society, Vol. V, New York, 1897), p. 109.

Pollen is a symbol of spiritual energy among the American Indians of the Southwest. It is used profusely in all ceremonials, both to drive evil away and to mark out the symbolical path of life. (For a discussion of the Navaho" symbolism of the adventure of the hero, see Jeff King, Maud Oakes, and Joseph Campbell, *Where the Two Came to Their Father, A Navaho War Ceremonial,* Bollingen Series T, and edn., Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. 33-49.)

[25] Dante, "Paradiso," XXX11I, 12-21 (translation by Charles Eliot Norton, *op. cit.,* Vol. **III,** p. 252; quoted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers).

What such a figure represents is the benign, protecting power of destiny. The fantasy is a reassurance—a promise that the peace of Paradise, which was known first within the mother womb, is not to be lost; that it supports the present and stands in the future as well as in the past (is omega as well as alpha); that though omnipotence may seem to be endangered by the threshold passages and life awakenings, protective power is always and ever present within the sanctuary of the heart and even immanent within, or just behind, the unfamiliar features of the world. One has only to know and trust, and the ageless guardians will appear. Having responded to his own call, and continuing to follow courageously as the consequences unfold, the hero finds all the forces of the unconscious at his side. Mother Nature herself supports the mighty task. And in so far as the hero's act coincides with that for which his society itself is ready, he seems to ride on the great rhythm of the historical process. "I feel myself," said Napoleon at the opening of his Russian campaign, "driven towards an end that I do not know. As soon as I shall have reached it, as soon as I shall become unnecessary, an atom will suffice to shatter me. Till then, not all the forces of mankind can do anything against me."[10]

Not infrequently, the supernatural helper is masculine in form. In fairy lore it may be some little fellow of the wood, some wizard, hermit, shepherd, or smith, who appears, to supply the amulets and advice that the hero will require. The higher mythologies develop the role in the great figure of the guide, the teacher, the ferryman, the conductor of souls to the afterworld. In classical myth this is Hermes-Mercury; in Egyptian, usually

[3] See **Oswald** Spengter. *The Decline of the Went,* translated by Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1926-28), Vol. I, p. 144. "Supposing." mkls Spongier, "that Napoleon himself, as 'empirical person,' had fallen at Marengo—then that which he *signified* would have been actualized in some other form." The hero, who in this sense and to this degree has become depersonalized, incarnates, during the period of his epochal action, the dynamism of the culture process; "between himself as a fact and the other facts there is a harnioiu of mt:iipliysical Hi\ilim" *i /hid.,* p. 1 \2). I his corresponds Id '] llamas Otrlvle's idea of the Hero Kiniii, ;is " \blenian (Of *Heroes, Hero-Worship and The Heroic in History,* Lecture VI).

Thoth (the ibis god, the baboon god); in Christian, the Holy Ghost.[31] Goethe presents the masculine guide in *Faust* as Mephistopheles—and not infrequently the dangerous aspect of the "mercurial" figure is stressed; for he is the lurer of the innocent soul into realms of trial. In Dante's vision the part is played by Virgil, who yields to Beatrice at the threshold of Paradise. Protective and dangerous, motherly and fatherly at the same time, this supernatural principle of guardianship and direction unites in itself all the ambiguities of the unconscious—thus signifying the support of otir conscious personality by that other, larger system, but also the inscrutability of the guide that we are following, to the peril of all our rational ends.[32]

The hero to whom such a helper appears is typically one who has responded to the call. The call, in fact, was the first announcement of the approach of this initiatory priest. But even to those who apparently have hardened their hearts the supernatural guardian may appear; for, as we have seen: "Well able is Allah to save."

During Hellenistic times an nmalgamatton of Hermes and 1 both was effected in the figure of Hermes Trismegistus, "Hermes Thrice Greatest," who **Was** regarded as the patron and teacher of all the arts, and especially of alchemy. The "hermetically" scaled retort, in which were placed the mystical metals, was regarded as a realm apart—a special region of heightened forces comparable to the mythological realm; and therein the metals underwent strange metamorphoses and transmutations, symbolical of the transfigurations of the soul under the tutelage of the supernatural. Hermes was the master of the ancient mysteries of initiation, and represented that coming-down of divine wisdom into the world which is represented also in the incarnations ol divine saviors (see *infra,* pp. 342-345). (See C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy,* part III, "Religious Ideas in Alchemy." (Orig. 1936.) For the retort, setpar. 338. For Hermes Trismegistus, see par. 173 and index, *s.v.*

"- The following dream supplies a vivid example of the fusion of opposites in the unconscious: "I dreamed that 1 had gone into a street of brothels and to one of the girls. As I entered, she changed into a man, who was lying, half clothed, on a sofa. He said: 'It doesn't disturb you (that I am now a man)?' The man looked old, and he had white sideburns. He reminded me of a certain chief forester who was a good friend of my father." (Wilhelm Stekel, *Die Sprache des Traumes,* pp. 70-71.) "All dreams," Dr. Stekel observes, "have a bisexual tendency. Where the bisexuality cannot be perceived, it is hidden in the latent dream content" i *ihid-,* p. 71).

And so it happened, as it were by chance, that in the ancient and deserted tower where Kamar al-Zaman, the Persian prince, lay sleeping, there was an old Roman well,[33] and this was inhabited by a Jinniyah of the seed of Iblis the Accursed, by name Maymunah, daughter of Al-Dimiryat, a renowned king of the Jinn.[34] And as Kamar al-Zaman continued sleeping till the first third of the night, Maymunah came up out of the Roman well and made for the firmament, thinking to listen by stealth to the converse of the angels; but when she reached the mouth of the well, and saw a light shining in the tower room, contrary to custom, she marveled, drew nigh, entered within the door, and beheld the couch spread, whereon was a human form with a wax candle burning at his head and the lantern at his feet. She folded her wings and stood by the bed, and, drawing back the coverlid, discovered Kamar al-Zaman's face. And she was motionless for a full hour in admiration and wonderment, "Blessed be Allah," she exclaimed when she recovered, "the best of Creators!" for she was of the true-believing Jinn.

Then she promised herself that she would do no hurt to Kamar al-Zaman, and became concerned lest, resting in this desert place, he should be slain by one of her relatives, the Marids/[5]

[33] The well is symbolical of the unconscious. Compare that of the fairy story of the Frog King, *supra*, pp. 45^17.

[34] Compare the frog of the fairy tale. In pre-Mohammedan Arabia the Jinn (singular: *m.* Jinni; / Jinniyah) were haunting-demons of the deserts and wilderness. Hairy and misformed, or else shaped as animals, ostriches, or serpents, they were very dangerous to unprotected persons. The Prophet Mohammed admitted "the existence of these heathen spirits (Koran, 37:158), and incorporated them in the Mohammedan system, which recognizes three created intelligences under Allah: Angels formed of light, Jinn of subtle fire, and Man of the dust of the earth. The Mohammedan Jinn have the power of putting on any form they please, but not grosser than the essence of fire and smoke, and they can thus make themselves visible to mortals. There are three orders of Jinn: flyers, walkers, and divers. Many are supposed to have accepted the True Faith, and these are regarded as good; the rest are bad. The latter dwell and work in close association with the Fallen Angels, whose chief is Iblis ("the Despairer").

[35] An Ifrit {Ifritah) is a powerful Jinni (Jinniyah). The Marids are a particularly powerful and dangerous (-lass of Jinn.

Bending over him, she kissed him between the eyes, and presently drew back the sheet over his face; and after a while she spread her wings and, soaring into the air, flew upwards till she drew near to the lowest of the heavens.

Now as chance or destiny would have it, the soaring Ifritah Maymunah suddenly heard in her neighborhood the noisy flapping of wings. Directing herself by the sound, she found it coming from an Ifrit called Dahnash. So she swooped down on him like a sparrow hawk, and when he was aware of her and knew her to be Maymunah, the daughter of the king of the Jinn, he was sore afraid, and his side muscles quivered, and he implored her to forbear. But she challenged him to declare whence he should be coming at this hour of the night. He replied that he was returning from the Islands of the Inland Sea in the parts of China, the realms of King Ghayur, Lord of the Islands and the Seas and the Seven Palaces.

"There," said he, "I saw a daughter of his, than whom Allah hath made none fairer in her time." And he launched into great praise of the Princess Budur. "She hath a nose,[11] said he, "like the edge of a burnished blade and cheeks like purple wine or anemones blood-red: her lips as coral and cornelian shine and the water of her mouth is sweeter than old wine; its taste would quench hell's fiery pain. Her tongue is moved by wit of high degree and ready repartee: her breast is seduction to all that see (glory be to Him Who fashioned it and finished it!); and joined thereto are two upper arms smooth and rounded; even as saith of her the poet Al-Walahan:

She hath wrists which, did her bangles not contain.
Would run from out her sleeves in silvern rain."

The celebration of her beauty continued, and when Maymunah had heard it all she remained silent in astonishment. Dahnash resumed, and described the mighty king, her father, his treasures, and the Seven Palaces, as well as the history of the daughter's refusal to wed. "And I," said he, "O my lady, go to her every night and take my fill of feeding my sight on her face and I kiss her between the eyes: yet, of my love to her, I do her no

hurt." He desired Maymunah to fly back with him to China and look on the beauty, loveliness, stature, and perfection of proportion of the princess. "And after, if thou wilt," said he, "chastise me or enslave me; for it is thine to bid and to forbid."

Maymunah was indignant that anyone should presume to celebrate any creature in the world, after the glimpse she had just had of Kamar al-Zaman. "Faugh! Faugh!" she cried. She laughed at Dahnash and spat in his face. "Verily, this night I have seen a young man," said she, "whom if thou saw though but in a dream, thou wouldst be palsied with admiration and spittle would flow from thy mouth." And she described his case. Dahnash expressed his disbelief that anyone could be more handsome than the Princess Budur, and Maymunah commanded him to come down with her and look.

"I hear and I obey," said Dahnash.

And so they descended and alighted in the salon. Maymunah stationed Dahnash beside the bed and, putting out her hand, drew back the silken coverlet from Kamar al-Zaman's face, when it glittered and glistened and shimmered and shone like the rising sun. She gazed at him for a moment, then turning sharply round upon Dahnash said: "Look, O accursed, and be not the basest of madmen; I am a maid, yet my heart he hath waylaid."

"By Allah, O my Lady, thou art excusable," declared Dahnash; "but there is yet another thing to be considered, and that is, that the estate female differeth from the male. By Allah's might, this thy beloved is the likest of all created things to my mistress in beauty and loveliness and grace and perfection; and it is as though they were both cast alike in the mold of seemlihead.[1]

The light became darkness in Maymunah's sight when she heard those words, and she dealt Dahnash with her wing so fierce a buffet on the head as well-nigh made an end of him. "I conjure thee," she commanded, "by the light of my love's glorious countenance, go at once, O accursed, and bring hither thy mistress whom thou lovest so fondly and foolishly, and return in haste that we may lay the twain together and look at them both as they lie asleep side by side; so shall it appear to us which be the goodlier and more beautiful of the two."

And so, incidentally to something going on in a zone of which he was entirely unconscious, the destiny of the life-reluctant Kamar al-Zaman began to fulfil itself, without the cooperation of his conscious will.[36]

The Crossing of the First Threshold

With the personifications of his destiny to guide and aid him, the hero goes forward in his adventure until he comes to the "threshold guardian" at the entrance to the zone of magnified power. Such custodians bound the world in the four directions — also up and down—standing for the limits *c* the hero's present sphere, or life horizon. Beyond them is dark less, the unknown, and danger; just as beyond the parental watch is danger to the infant and beyond the protection of his society danger to the member of the tribe. The usual person is more than content, he is even proud, to remain within the indicated bounds, and popular belief gives him every reason to fear so much as the first step into the unexplored. Thus the sailors of the bold vessels of Columbus, breaking the horizon of the medieval mind—sailing, as they thought, into the boundless ocean of immortal being that surrounds the cosmos, like an endless mythological serpent biting its taiF—had to be cozened and urged on like children, because of their fear of the fabled leviathans, mermaids, dragon kings, and other monsters of the deep.

The folk mythologies populate with deceitful and dangerous presences every desert place outside the normal traffic of the village. For example, the Hottentots describe an ogre that has been occasionally encountered among the scrubs and dunes. Its eyes

[1] Adapted from Burton, *op. cit.*. Vol. HI, pp. 223-230.

[36] Compare the serpent of the dream, *supra*, p. 38.

are set on its instep, so that to discover what is going on it has to get down on hands and knees, and hold up one foot. The eye then looks behind; otherwise it is gazing continually at the sky. This monster is a hunter of men, whom it tears to shreds with cruel teeth as long as fingers. **The** creature is said to hunt in packs.[38] Another Hottentot apparition, the Hai-uri, progresses by leaping over clumps of scrub instead of going around **them.**[39] A dangerous one-legged, one-armed, one-sided figure—the half-man—invisible if viewed from the offside, is encountered in many parts of the earth. In Central Africa it is declared that such a half-man says to the person who has encountered him: "Since you have met with me, let us fight together." If thrown, he will plead: "Do not kill me. I will show you lots of medicines"; and then the lucky person becomes a proficient doctor. But if the half-man (called *Chiruwi*, "a mysterious thing") wins, his victim dies.[40]

The regions of the unknown (desert, jungle, deep sea, alien land, etc.) are free fields for the projection of unconscious content. Incestuous *libido* and patricidal *destrudo* are thence reflected back against the individual and his society in forms suggesting threats of violence and fancied dangerous delight—not only as ogres but also as sirens of mysteriously seductive, nostalgic beauty.

[38] Leonhard S. Schultze, *Aus Namaland und Kalahari* (Jena, 1907), p. 392.

[39] *Ibid.* pp. 404, 448.

[40] David Clement Scott, *A Cyclopaedic Dirtirmary of the Mimg'anja Language spoken in British Central Africa* (Edinburgh, 1892), p. 97.

Compare the following dream of a twelve-year-old boy: "One night I dreamt of a foot. I thought it was lying down on the floor and I, not expecting such a thing, fell over it. It seemed to be the same shape as my own foot. The foot suddenly jumped up and started running after me; I thought I jumped right through the window, ran round the yard out into the street, running along as fast as my legs would carry me. I thought I ran to Woolwich, and then it suddrill", caught :ii<' Lint' 'hi'iik m<\ :iiii thi?n I woke- up. I havr drTamt about this foot several times."

The boy had heard a report that his **father,** who was a sailor, had recently had an accident at sea in which he had broken his ankle (C. W. Kimmins, *Children's Dreams, An Unexplored Land;* London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1937, p. 107).

"**The foot,"** writes Dr. Freud, "ii, an age-old sexual symbol which occurs even in mythology" ***(Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality,*** p. 155). The name Oedipus, it' should be noted, means "the swollen footed."'

The Russian peasants know, for example, of the "Wild Women" of the woods who have their abode in mountain caverns where they maintain households, like human beings. They are handsome females, with fine square heads, abundant tresses, and hairy bodies. They fling their breasts over their shoulders when they run and when they nurse their children. They go in groups. With unguents prepared from forest roots they can anoint and render themselves invisible. They like to danee or tickle people to death who wander alone into the forest, and anyone who accidentally chances upon their invisible dancing parties dies. On the other hand, for people who set out food for them, they reap the grain, spin, care for the children, and tidy up the house; and if a girl will comb out hemp for them to spin, they will give her leaves that turn to gold. **They** enjoy human lovers, have frequently married country youths, and are known to make excellent wives. But like all supernatural brides, the minute the husband offends in the least their wiiimsical notions of marital propriety, they disappear without a trace.[41]

One more example, to illustrate the libidinous association of the dangerous impish ogre with the principle of seduction, is Dyedushka Vodyanoy, the Russian **"Water** Grandfather." He is an adroit shapeshifter and is said to drown people who swim at midnight or at noon. Drowned or disinherited girls he marries. He has a special talent for coaxing unhappy women into his tolls. He likes to dance on moonlit nights. Whenever a wife of his is about to have a baby, he comes into the villages to seek a midwife. But he can be detected by the water that oozes from the border of his garments. He is bald, tun bellied, puffy cheeked, with green clothing and a tall cap of reeds; but he can

[41] Compare V. J. Mansikka, in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* Vol. IV, p. 628; article "Demons and Spirits (Slavic)." The cluster of articles by a number of authorities, gathered together in this volume under the general heading "Demons and Spirits" (treating severally of the African, Oceanic, Assyro-Babv Ionian, Buddhist, Celtic, Chinese, Christian, Coptic, ITUA prian, {j-rrr'k, Htrbreu, Indian. Jjin, J^\jiiiinse. Jewish. Moslem. Parisian, Roman, Slavic, Teutonic, and Tibetan varieties}, is an excellent introdnction to the subject.

also appear as an attractive young man, or as some personage well known in the community. This Water Master is not strong ashore, but in his own element he is supreme. He inhabits the deeps of rivers, streams, and ponds, preferring to be close beside a mill. During the day he remains concealed, like an old trout or salmon, but at night he surfaces, splashing and flopping like a fish, to drive his subaqueous cattle, sheep, and horses ashore to graze, or else **to** perch up on the mill wheel and quietly comb his long green hair and beard. In the springtime, when he rouses from his long hibernation, he smashes the ice along the rivers, piling up great blocks. Mill wheels he is amused to destroy. But in a favorable temper he drives his fishherds into the fisherman's net or gives warning of coming floods. The midwife who accompanies him he pays richly with silver and gold. His beautiful daughters, tall, pale, and with an air of sadness, transparently costumed in green, torture and torment the drowned. They like to rock on trees, beautifully singing.[12]

The Arcadian god Pan is the best known Classical example of this dangerous presence dwelling just beyond the protected zone of the village boundary. Sylvanus and Faunus were his Latin counterparts.*' **He** was the **inventor** of the shepherd's pipe, which he played for the dances of the nymphs, and the satyrs were his male companions.[44] The emotion that he instilled in human beings who by accident adventured into his domain was "panic" fear, a sudden, groundless fright. Any trifling cause then—the break of a twig, the flutter of a leaf—would flood the mind with imagined danger, and in the frantic effort to escape from his own aroused unconscious the victim expired in a flight of dread. Yet Pan was benign to those who paid him worship, yielding the

[42] *Ibid.,* p. 629. Compare the Lorelei. Markka's discussion of the Slavic forest-, field-, and water-spirits is based on Hanus Machal's comprehensive *Ndkres slavanskiho bdjesbvi* (Prague, 1891), an English abridgment of which will he found in Machal's *Slavic Mythology* (The Mythology of All Races, Vol. **III,** Boston, 1918).

•" In Alexandrian times Pan was identified with the ithyphallic Egyptian divinity **Min,** who was, among other things, the guardian of desert roads.

boons of the divine hygiene of nature: bounty to the farmers, herders, and fisherfolk who dedicated their first fruits to him, and health to all who properly approached his shrines of healing. Also wisdom, the wisdom of Omphalos, the World Navel, was his to bestow; for the crossing of the threshold is the first step into the sacred zone of the universal source. At Lykaion was an oracle, presided over by the nymph Erato, whom Pan inspired, as Apollo the prophetess at Delphi. And Plutarch numbers the ecstasies of the orgiastic rites of Pan along with the ecstasy of Cybele, the Bacchic frenzy of Dionysos, the poetic frenzy inspired by the Muses, the warrior frenzy of the god Ares (=Mars), and, fiercest of all, the frenzy of love, as illustrations of that divine "enthusiasm" that overturns the reason and releases the forces of the destructive-creative dark.

"I dreamed," stated a middle-aged, married gentleman, "that I wanted to get into a wonderful garden. But before it there was a watchman who would not permit me to enter. I saw that my friend, Fraulein Elsa, was within; she wanted to reach me her hand, over the gate. But the watchman prevented that, took me by the arm, and conducted me home. 'Do be sensible—after all!' he said. 'You know that you musn't do that.'"[45]

This is a dream that brings out the sense of the first, or protective, aspect of the threshold guardian. One had better not challenge the watcher of the established bounds. And yet—it is only by advancing beyond those bounds, provoking the destructive other aspect of the same power, that the individual passes, either alive or in death, into a new zone of experience. In the language of the pigmies of the Andaman Islands, the word

[45] Wilhelm Stekel, *Fortschritte und Technik der Traumdeutung* (Wien—Leipzig–Bern: Verlag für Medizin, Weidmann und Cie., 1935), p. 37.

The watchman symbolizes, according to Dr. Stekel, "consciousness, or, if one prefers, the aggregate of all the morality and restrictions present in consciousness. Freud," continues Dr. Stekel, "would describe the watchman as the 'superego.' But he is really only an 'interego.' Consciousness prevents the breaking through of dangerous wishes and immoral actions. This is the sense in which watchmen, police officials and officers in dreams are in general to be interpreted" (*ibid.* pp. 37–38).

FIGURE 4. Ulysses and the Sirens

oko-jumu ("dreamer," "one who speaks from dreams") designates those highly respected and feared individuals who are distinguished from their fellows by the possession of supernatural talents, which can be acquired only by meeting with the spirits—directly in the jungle, through extraordinary dream, or by death and return."*[6] The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown; the powers that watch at the boundary are dangerous; to deal with them is risky; yet for anyone with competence and courage the danger fades.

In the Banks Islands of the New Hebrides, if a young man coming back from his fishing on a rock, towards sunset, chances to see "a girl with her head bedecked with flowers beckoning to him from the slope of the cliff up which his path is leading him; he recognizes the countenance of some girl of his own or a neighboring village; he stands and hesitates and thinks she must be a mae;[47] he looks more closely, and observes that her elbows

[*] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, 1933), pp. 175-177.

[*] An amphibious sea *nskc* marked with bands of dark and light color, always more or IPSS dreaded whenever it is seen.

and knees bend the wrong way; this reveals her true character, and he flies. If a young man can strike the temptress with a dracaena leaf she turns into her own shape and glides away a snake." But these very snakes, the *mae,* so greatly feared, are believed to become the familiars of those who have intercourse with them.[1] Such demons—at once dangers and bestowers of magic power—every hero must encounter who steps an inch outside the walls of his tradition.

Two vivid Oriental stories will serve to illuminate the ambiguities of this perplexing pass and show how, though the terrors will recede before a genuine psychological readiness, the overbold adventurer beyond his depth may be shamelessly undone.

The first is of a caravan leader from Benares, who made bold to conduct his richly loaded expedition of five hundred carts into a waterless demon wilderness. Forewarned of dangers, he had taken the precaution to set huge chatties filled with water in the carts, so that, rationally considered, his prospect of making the passage of not more than sixty desert leagues was of the best. But when he had reached the middle of the crossing, the ogre who inhabited that wilderness thought, "I will make these men throw away the water they took." So he created a cart to delight the heart, drawn by pure white young oxen, the wheels smeared with mud, and came down the road from the opposite direction. Both before him and behind marched the demons who formed his retinue, heads wet, garments wet, decked with garlands of water lilies both blue and white, carrying in their hands clusters of lotus flowers both red and white, chewing the fibrous stalks of water lilies, streaming with drops of water and mud. And when the caravan and the demon company drew aside to let each other pass, the ogre greeted the leader in a friendly manner. "Where are you going?" he politely asked. To which the caravan leader replied: "We, sir, are coming from Benares. But you are approaching decked with water lilies both blue and white, with lotus flowers both red and white in your hands, chewing the

[1] R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians, their Anthropology and Folklore* (Oxford University Press, 1891), p. 189.

fibrous stalks of water lilies, smeared with mud, with drops of water streaming from you. Is it raining along the road by which you came? Are the lakes completely covered with water lilies both blue and white, and lotus flowers both red and white?"

The ogre: "Do you see that dark green streak of woods? Beyond that point the entire forest is one mass of water; it rains all the time; the hollows are full of water; everywhere are lakes completely covered with lotus flowers both red and white." And then, as the carts passed one after another, he inquired: "What goods do you have in this cart—and in that? The last moves very heavily; what goods do you have in that?" "We have water in that," the leader answered. "You have acted wisely, of course, in bringing water thus far; but beyond this point you have no occasion to burden yourself. Break the chatties to pieces, throw away the water, travel at ease.[11] The ogre went his way, and when out of sight, returned again to his own city of ogres.

Now that foolish caravan leader, out of his own foolishness, took the advice of the ogre, broke the chatties, and caused the carts to move forward. Ahead there was not the slightest particle of water. For lack of water to drink the men grew weary. They traveled until sundown, and then unharnessed the carts, drew them up in a contracted circle, and tied the oxen to the wheels. There was neither water for the oxen nor gruel and boiled rice for the men. The weakened men lay down here and there and went to sleep. At midnight the ogres approached from the city of ogres, slew the oxen and men, every one, devoured their flesh, leaving only the bare bones, and, having so done, departed. The bones of their hands and all their other bones lay scattered about in the four directions and the four intermediate directions; five hundred carts stood as full as ever.[15,

The second story is of a different style. Tt is told of a young prince who had just completed his military studies under a world-renowned teacher. Having received, as a symbol of his

[4I] *Jataka,* 1:1. Abridged from the translation by Eugene Watson Burlingamt *Buddhist Parables* (Yale University Press, 1922), pp. 32-34. Reprinted by per mission of the publishers.

distinction, the title Prince Five-weapons, he accepted the five weapons that his teacher gave him, bowed, and, armed with the new weapons, struck out onto the road leading to the city of his father, the king. On the way he came to a certain forest. People at the mouth of the forest warned him. "Sir prince, do not enter this forest,[1' they said; "an ogre lives here, named Sticky-hair; he kills every man he sees."

But the prince was confident and fearless as a maned lion. He entered the forest just the same. When he reached the heart of it, the ogre showed himself. The ogre had increased his stature to the height of a palm tree; he had created for himself a head as big as a summer house with bell-shaped pinnacle, eyes as big as alms bowls, two tusks as big as giant bulbs or buds; he had the beak of a hawk; his belly was covered with blotches; his hands and feet were dark green. "Where are you going?" he demanded. "Halt! You are my prey!"

Prince Five-weapons answered without fear, but with great confidence in the arts and crafts that he had learned. "Ogre," said he, "I knew what I was about when I entered this forest. You would do well to be careful about attacking me; for with an arrow steeped in poison will I pierce your flesh and fell you on the spot![11]

Having thus threatened the ogre, the young prince fitted to his bow an arrow steeped in deadly poison and let fly. It stuck right in the ogre's hair. Then he let fly, one after another, fifty arrows. All stuck right to the ogre's hair. The ogre shook off every one of those arrows, letting them fall right at his feet, and approached the young prince.

Prince Five-weapons threatened the ogre a second time, and drawing his sword, delivered a masterly blow. The sword, thirty-three inches long, stuck right to the ogre's hair. Then the prince smote him with a spear. That also stuck right to his hair. Perceiving that the spear had stuck, he smote him with a club. That also stuck right to his hair.

When he saw that the club had stuck, he said: "Master ogre, you have never heard of me before. I am Prince Five-weapons. When I entered this forest infested by you, I took no account of

bows and suchlike weapons; when I entered this forest, I took account only of myself. Now I am going to beat you and pound you into powder and dust!" Having thus made known his determination, with a yell he struck the ogre with his right hand. His hand stuck right to the ogre's hair. He struck him with his left hand. That also stuck. He struck him with his right foot. That also stuck. He struck him with his left foot That also stuck. Thought he: "I will beat you with my head and pound you into powder and dust!" He struck him with his head. That also stuck right to the ogre's hair.'[0]

Prince Five-weapons, snared five times, stuck fast in five places, dangled from the ogre's body. But for all that, he was unafraid, undaunted. As for the ogre, he thought: "This is some lion of a man, some man of noble birth—no mere man! For although he has been caught by an ogre like me, he appears neither to tremble nor to quake! In all the time I have harried this road, I have never seen a single man to match him! Why, pray, is he not afraid"?" Not daring to eat him, he asked: "Youth, why are you not afraid? Why are you not terrified with the fear of death?"

"Ogre, why should I be afraid? for in one life one death is absolutely certain. What's more, I have in my belly a thunderbolt for weapon. If you eat me, you will not be able to digest that weapon. It will tear your insides into tatters and fragments and will kill you. In that case we'll both perish. That's why I'm not afraid!"

Prince Five-weapons, the reader must know, was referring to the Weapon of Knowledge that was within him. Indeed, this young hero was none other than the Future Buddha, in an earlier incarnation."[1] "What this youth says is true," thought the ogre, terrified with the fear of death. "From the body of this lion of a man, my stomach would not be able to digest a fragment of flesh even so small as a kidney bean. I'll let him go!" And he let Prince Five-weapons go. The Future Buddha preached the Doctrine to him, subdued him, made him self-denying, and then transformed him into a spirit entitled to receive offerings in the forest. Having admonished the ogre to be heedful, the youth departed from the forest, and at the mouth of the forest told his story to human beings; then went his way.[32]

As a symbol of the world to which the five senses glue us, and which cannot be pressed aside by the actions of the physical organs, Sticky-hair was subdued only when the Future Buddha, no longer protected by the five weapons of his momentary name and physical character, resorted to the unnamed, invisible sixth: the

^° It has been pointed out that this adventure of Prince Five-weapons is the earliest known example of the celebrated and well-nigh universal tar-baby story, of popular folklore. (See Aurelio M. Espinosa: "Notes on the Origin and History of the Tar-Baby Story," *Journal of American Folklore,* 43, 1930, pp. 129-209; "A New Classification of die Fundamental Elements of the Tar-Baby Story on the Basis of Two Hundred and Sixty-Seven Versions," *ibid.,* 56, 1943, pp. 31-37; and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "A Note on the Stiekfast Motif," *ibid.,* 57, 1944, pp. 128-131.)

[51] The thunderbolt *(vajra) h* one of the major symbols in Buddhist iconography, signifying the spiritual power of Buddhahood (indestructible enlightenment) which shatters the illusory realities of the world. The Absolute, or Adi Buddha, is represented in the images of Tibet as Vajra-Dhara (Tibetan: *Dorje-Chang)* "Holder of the Adamantine Bolt."

In the figures of the gods that have come down from ancient Mesopotamia <Sumer and Akkad, Babylonia and Assyria) the thunderbolt, in the same form as the vajra, is a conspicuous element (See Plate XXI); from these it was inherited by Zeus.

We know also that among primitive peoples warriors may speak of their weapons as thunderbolts. *Sicitl in coelo e! in terra:* the initiated warrior is an agent of the *CLi* inc ^ il !! i ![*• ii"LUiiin^ is not oul\ m mauiinl out also in MIH*!! i*"il skills. Magic (the supernatural power of the thunderbolt), as well as physical fort-Y :md rhi^iiK'al poiMHi. £ivs the lethal rncrgy to his blows. \ ronsimimali' master would require no physical weapon at all; the power of his magic word would suffice.

The parable of Prince five-weapons illustrates this theme. But it also teaches that the one who relies or prides himself upon his merely empirical, physical l^ha r.'K^^i [^ •]ll":'Lhl' ' ILIUI~]L^. ' \\ ' J1 L]YL' h<'V 1 lii^ IIK'U]^•• i *ı U 1ıır^. \^ Tlteb Ol"-Coomaraswamy, "who can be involved in the coils of an aesthetic experience ["the five points" being the five senses], but is able, by an intrinsic moral supe-

P]I-I'ITI . . 1 i > I III-I'Lıw' 1I1'1I ı ı 1 1, ,j IH 1 ' \\ ıl ıı' \~ı-j^'Mıı' II ıIICI'I'S ^ I 0ıı rII II 0[ı j'ı'ı•ı'1I ^^ı

Folklore, 57, 1944, p. 129).

[52] *Jataka,* 55:1. 272-275. Adapted, with slight abridgment, from the translation of Eugene Watson Burlingame, *op. cit.,* pp. 41—Ii. Keprinted by permission of Yale University Press, publishers.

divine thunderbolt of the knowledge of the transcendent principle, which is beyond the phenomenal realm of names and forms. Therewith the situation changed. He was no longer caught, but released; for that which he now remembered himself to be is ever free. The force of the monster of phenomenality was dispelled, and he was rendered self-denying. Self-denying, he became divine—a spirit entitled to receive offerings—as is the world itself when known, **not** as final, but as a mere name and form of that which transcends, yet is immanent within, all names and forms.

The "Wall of Paradise," which conceals God from human sight, is described by Nicholas of Cusa as constituted of the "coincidence of opposites," its gate being guarded by "the highest spirit of reason, who bars the way until he has been overcome."" The pairs of opposites (being and not being, life and death, beauty and ugliness, good and evil, and all the other polarities that bind the faculties to hope and fear, and link the organs of action to deeds of defense and acquisition) are the clashing rocks (Symplegades) that crush the traveler, but between which the heroes always pass. This is a motif known throughout the world. The Greeks associated it with two rocky islands of the Euxine Sea, which clashed together, driven by winds; but Jason, in the Argo, sailed between, and since that time they have stood apart.*[1] The Twin Heroes of the Navaho legend were warned of the same obstacle by Spider Woman; protected, however, by the pollen symbol of the path, and eagle feathers plucked from a living sun bird, they passed between."

As the rising smoke of an offering through the sun door, so goes the hero, released from ego, through the walls of the world—leaving ego stuck to Sticky-hair and passing on.

[13] Nicholas of Cusa, *De visione Dei, 9,* II; cited hy Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "On the One and Only Transmigrant" *(Supplement to the Journal of the American Oriental Society,* April-June, 1944), p. 25.

[14] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* **VII,** 62; XV, 33H.

[15] *Supra,* p. 64.

The Belly of the Whale

The idea that the passage of the magical threshold is a transit into a sphere of rebirth is symbolized in the worldwide womb image of the belly of the whale. The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown, and would appear to have died.

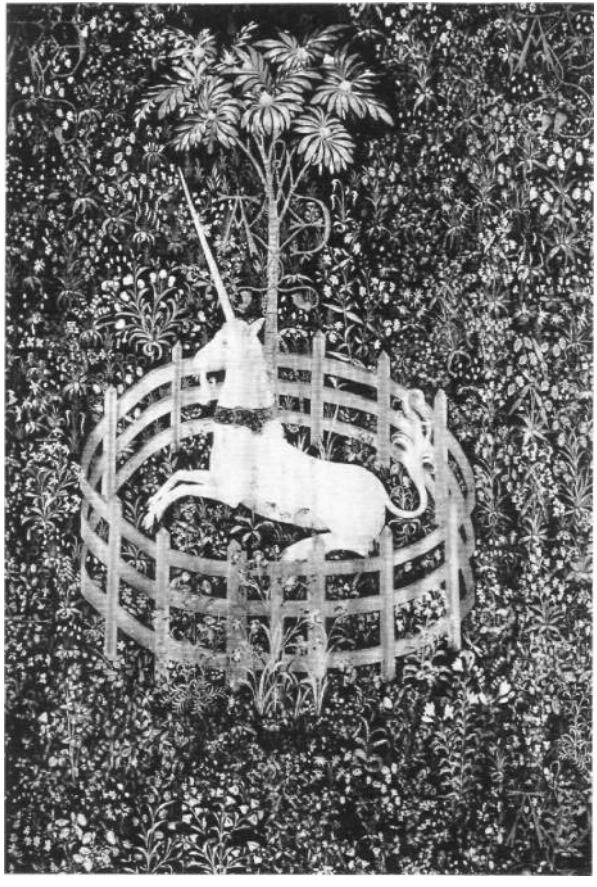
Mishe-Nahma, King ofFishes,
In his wrath he darted upward,
Flashing leaped into the sunshine,
Opened his greatjaws and swallowed
Both canoe and Hiawatha[56]

The Eskimo of Bering Strait tell of the trickster-hero Raven, how, one day, as he sat drying his clothes on a beach, he observed a whale-cow swimming gravely close to shore. He called: "Next time you come up for air, dear, open your mouth and shut your eyes." Then he slipped quickly into his raven clothes, pulled on his raven mask, gathered his fire sticks under his arm, and flew out over the water. The whale came up. She did as she had been told. Raven darted through the open jaws and straight into her gullet. The shocked whale-cow snapped and sounded; Raven stood inside and looked around."

The Zulus have a story of two children and their mother swallowed by an elephant. When the woman reached the animal's stomach, "she saw large forests and great rivers, and many high

[55] Longfellow, *The Song of Hiawatha,* VIII. The adventures ascribed by Longfellow to the Iroquoh chieftain Hiawatha belong properly to the Algonquin culture hero iVlanabozho. Hiawatha u;is an actual historical pi'i'^nna:^' i it the sixteenth century. See p. 274, note 1, *infra.*

[57] Leo Frobenius, *Das Zeitalter des Sonnengottes* (Berlin, 1904), p. 85.



II. The Captive Unicorn (trance)

III. The Mother of the Gods (Nigeria)

IV. The Deitv in War Dress (Bali)

V. Sekhmet, The Goddess (Egypt)

VI. Medusa (Ancient Rome)

VII. The Sorcerer (Paleolithic Cave Painting, French Pyrenees)

lands; on one side there were many rocks; and there were many people who had built their village there; and many dogs and many cattle; all was there inside the elephant."[58]

The Irish hero, finn MacCool, was swallowed by a monster of indefinite form, of the type known to the Celtic world as a *peist.* The little German girl, Red Ridinghood, was swallowed by a wolf. The Polynesian favorite, Maui, was swallowed by his great-great-grandmother, Hine-nui-te-po. And the whole Greek pantheon, with the sole exception of Zeus, was swallowed by its father, Kronos.

The Greek hero Herakles, pausing at Troy on his way homeward with the belt of the queen of the Amazons, found that the city was being harassed by a monster sent against it by the sea-god Poseidon. The beast would come ashore and devour people as they moved about on the plain. Beautiful Hesione, the daughter of the king, had just been bound by her father to the sea rocks as a propitiatory sacrifice, and the great visiting hero agreed to rescue her for a price. The monster, in due time, broke to the surface of the water and opened its enormous maw. Herakles took a dive into the throat, cut his way out through the belly, and left the monster dead.

This popular motif gives emphasis to the lesson that the passage of the threshold is a form of self-annihilation. Its resemblance to the adventure of the Symplegades is obvious. But here, instead of passing outward, beyond the confines of the visible world, the hero goes inward, to be born again. The disappearance corresponds to the passing of a worshiper into a temple-where he is to be quickened by the recollection of who and what he is, namely dust and ashes unless immortal. The temple interior, the belly of the whale, and the heavenly land beyond, above, and below the confines of the world, are one and the same. That is why the approaches and entrances to temples are flanked and defended by colossal gargoyles: dragons, lions, devil-slayers with drawn swords, resentful dwarfs, winged bulls. These are

[Jfi] Henry Callaway, *Nursery Tales and Traditions uf the Zulus* (London. 1868), p. 331.

I. The Monster Tamer (Sumer)

VIII. The Universal Father, Viracocha, Weeping (Argentina)

the threshold guardians to ward away all incapable of encountering the higher silences within. They are preliminary embodiments of the dangerous aspect of the presence, corresponding to the mythological ogres that bound the conventional world, or to the two rows of teeth of the whale. They illustrate the fact that the devotee at the moment of entry into a temple undergoes a metamorphosis. His secular character remains without; he sheds it, as a snake its slough. Once inside he may be said to have died to time and returned to the World Womb, the World Navel, the Earthly Paradise. The mere fact that anyone can physically walk past the temple guardians does not invalidate their significance; for if the intruder is incapable of encompassing the sanctuary, then he has effectually remained without. Anyone unable to understand a god sees it as a devil and is thus defended from the approach. Allegorically, then, the passage into a temple and the hero-dive through the jaws of the whale are identical adventures, both denoting, in picture language, the life-centering, life-renewing act.

"No creature," writes Ananda Coomaraswamy, "can attain a higher grade of nature without ceasing to exist."[39] Indeed, the physical body of the hero may be actually slain, dismembered, and scattered over the land or sea—as in the Egyptian myth of the savior Osiris: he was thrown into a sarcophagus and committed to the Nile by his brother Set,"[0] and when he returned from the dead his brother slew him again, tore the body into fourteen pieces, and scattered these over the land. The Twin Heroes of the Navaho had to pass not only the clashing rocks, but also the reeds that cut the traveler to pieces, the cane cactuses that tear him to pieces, and the boiling sands that overwhelm him. The hero whose attachment to ego is already annihilate passes back and forth across the horizons of the

[59] Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "Akimcanna: Self-Naughting" *(New Indian Antiquary,* Vol. III. Bombay, 1940), p. 6, note 14, citing and discussing Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, 63, 3.

[60] The sarcophagus or casket is an alternative for the belly of the whale. Compare Moses in the bulrushes.

world, in and out of the dragon, as readily as a king through all the rooms of his house. And therein lies his power to save; for his passing and returning demonstrate that through all the contraries of phenomenality the Uncreate-Imperishable remains, and there is nothing to fear.

And so it is that, throughout the world, men whose function it has been to make visible on earth the life-fructifying mystery of the slaying of the dragon have enacted upon their own bodies the great symbolic act, scattering their flesh, like the body of Osiris, for the renovation of the world. In Phrygia, for example, in honor of the crucified and resurrected savior Attis, a pine tree was cut on the twenty-second of March, and brought into the sanctuary of the mother-goddess, Cybele. There it was swathed like a corpse with woolen bands and decked with wreaths of violets. The effigy of a young man was tied to the middle of the stem. Next day took place a ceremonial lament and blowing of trumpets. The twenty-fourth of March was known as the Day of Blood: the high priest drew blood from his arms, which he presented as an offering; the lesser clergy whirled in a dervish-dance, to the sound of drums, horns, flutes, and cymbals, until, rapt in ecstasy, they gashed their bodies with knives to bespatter the altar and tree with their blood; and the novices, in imitation of the god whose death and resurrection they were celebrating, castrated themselves and swooned.[1n1]

And in the same spirit, the king of the south Indian province of Quilacare, at the completion of the twelfth year of his reign, on a day of solemn festival, had a wooden scaffolding constructed, and spread over with hangings of silk. When he had ritually bathed in a tank, with great ceremonies and to the sound of music, he then came to the temple, where he did worship before the divinity. Thereafter, he mounted the scaffolding and, before the people, took some very sharp knives and began to cut off his own nose, and then his ears, and his lips, and all his members,

[61] Sir James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (one-volume edition), pp. 347—349. Copyright, 1922 by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

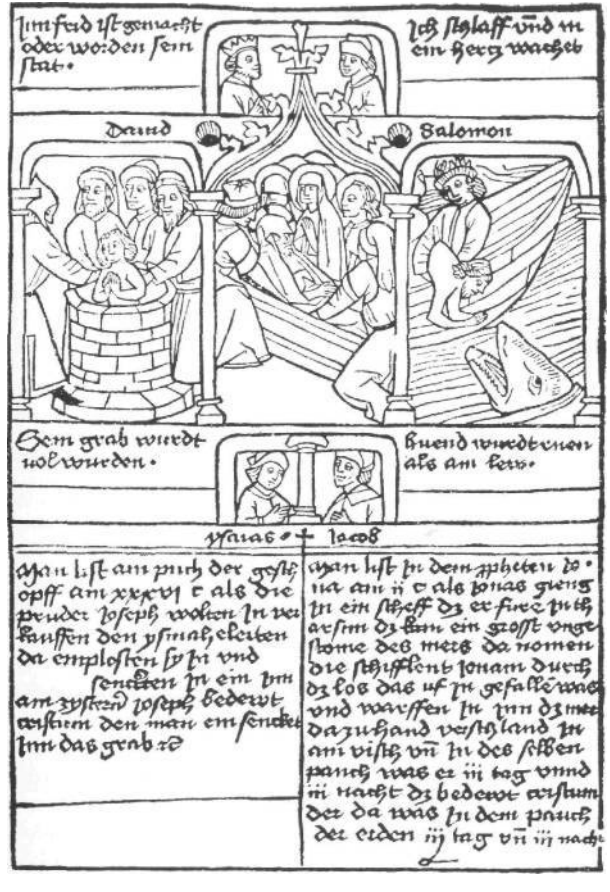


FIGURE 5. The Night-Sea Journey
Joseph in the Well: Entombment of Christ: Jonah and the Whale

and as much of his flesh as he was able. He threw it away and round about, until so much of his blood was spilled that he began to faint, whereupon he summarily cut his throat.[62]

[62] Duarte Barbosa, A *Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt Society, London, 1866), p. 172; cited by Frazer, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-275. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

This is the sacrifice that King Minos refused when he withheld the bull from Poseidon. As Frazer has shown, ritual regicide was a general tradition in the ancient world. "In Southern India," he writes, "the king's reign and life terminated with the revolution of the planet Jupiter round the sun. In Greece, on the other hand, the king's fate seems to have hung in the balance at the end of every eight years . . . Without being unduly rash we may surmise that the tribute of seven youths and seven maidens whom the Athenians were bound to send to Minos every eight years had some connexion with the renewal of the king's power for another octennial cycle" *(ibid.,* p. 280). The bull sacrifice required of King Minos implied that he would sacrifice himself, according to the pattern of the inherited tradition, at the close of his eight-year term. But he seems to have offered, instead, the substitute of the Athenian youths and maidens. That perhaps is how the divine Minos became the monster Minotaur, the self-annihilate king the tyrant Holdfast, and the hieratic state, wherein every man enacts his role, the merchant empire, wherein each is out for himself. Such practices of substitution seem to have become general throughout the antique world toward the close of the great period of the early hieratic states, during the third and second millenniums B.C.

CHAPTER

Initiation

The Road of Trials

ONCE having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials. This is a favorite phase of the myth-adventure. It has produced a world literature of miraculous tests and ordeals. The hero is covertly aided by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before his entrance into this region. Or it may be that he here discovers for the first time that there is a benign power everywhere supporting him in his superhuman passage.

One of the best known and most charming examples of the "difficult tasks" motif is that of Psyche's quest for her lost lover, Cupid.[1] Here all the principal roles are reversed: instead of the lover trying to win his bride, it is the bride trying to win her lover; and instead of a cruel father withholding his daughter from the lover, it is the jealous mother, Venus, hiding her son, Cupid, from his bride. When Psyche pleaded with Venus, the goddess grasped her violently by the hair and dashed her head upon the ground, then took a great quantity of wheat, barley, millet, poppy seed, peas, lentils, and beans, mingled these all together in a heap, and commanded the girl to sort them before night. Psyche was aided by an army of ants. Venus told her,

[1] Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* (Modern Library edition), pp. 131-141.

next, to gather the golden wool of certain dangerous wild sheep, sharp of horn and poisonous of bite, that inhabited an inaccessible valley in a dangerous wood. Rut a green reed instructed her how to gather from the reeds round about the golden locks shed by the sheep in their passage. The goddess now required a bottle of water from a freezing spring high on a towering rock beset by sleepless dragons. An eagle approached, and accomplished the marvelous task. Psyche was ordered, finally, to bring from the abyss of the underworld a box full of supernatural beauty. But a high tower told her how to go down to the world below, gave her coins for Charon and sops for Cerberus, and sped her on her way.

Psyche's voyage to the underworld is but one of innumerable such adventures undertaken by the heroes of fairy tale and myth. Among the most perilous are those of the shamans of the peoples of the farthest north (the Lapps, Siberians, Eskimo, and certain American Indian tribes), when they go to seek out and recover the lost or abducted souls of the sick. The shaman of the Siberians is clothed for the adventure in a magical costume representing a bird or reindeer, the shadow principle of the shaman himself, the shape of his soul. His drum is his animal—his eagle, reindeer, or horse; he is said to fly or ride on it. The stick that he carries is another of his aids. And he is attended by a host of invisible familiars.

An early voyager among the Lapps has left a vivid description of the weird performance of one of these strange emissaries into the kingdoms of the dead.[2] Since the yonder world is a place of everlasting night, the ceremonial of the shaman has to take place after dark. **The** friends and neighbors gather in the flickering, dimly lighted hut of the patient, and follow attentively the gesticulations of the magician. First he summons the helping spirits; these arrive, invisible to all but himself. Two women in ceremonial attire, but without belts and wearing linen hoods, a man without hood or belt, and a girl not as yet adult, are in attendance.

[3] Knud Leem, *Beskrivelse over Finmarkens Lapper* (Copenhagen, 1767), pp. 475-^78. An English translation will be found in John Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in AH Parts of the World* (London, 1808), Vol. I, pp. 477-478.

The shaman uncovers his head, loosens his belt and shoestrings, covers his face with his hands and begins to twirl in a variety of circles. Suddenly, with very violent gestures, he shouts: "Fit out the reindeer! Ready to boat!" Snatching up an ax, he begins striking himself about the knees with it and swinging it in the direction of the three women. He drags burning logs out of the fire with his naked hands. He dashes three times around each of the women and finally collapses, "like a dead man." During the whole time, no one has been permitted to touch him. While he reposes now in trance, he is to be watched so closely that not even a fly may settle upon him. His spirit has departed, and he is viewing the sacred mountains with their inhabiting gods. The women in attendance whisper to each other, trying to guess in what part of the yonder world he now may be.[3] If they mention the correct mountain, the shaman stirs either a hand or a foot. At length he begins to return. In a low, weak voice he utters the words he has heard in the world below. Then the women begin to sing. The shaman slowly awakes, declaring both the cause of the illness and the manner of sacrifice to be made. Then he announces the length of time it will take for the patient to grow well.

"On his laborious journey," reports another observer, "the shaman has to encounter and master a number of differing obstacles *(pudak)* which are not always easily overcome. After he has wandered through dark forests and over massive ranges of mountains, where he occasionally comes across the bones of other shamans and their animal mounts who have died along the way, he reaches an opening in the ground. The most difficult stages of the adventure now begin, when the depths of the underworld with their remarkable manifestations open before him. . . . After he has appeased the watchers of the kingdom of the dead and

[illegible] the women [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] world, in which case his spirit may fail to return to the body. Or the wandering spirit of an enemy shaman may engage him in battle or else lead him astray. It is said that there have been many shamans who failed to return. (E. J. .Tessen, *Ajhandling om de Norske Finners og Lappers Hec/en-ikc Religion*, p. 31. This work is included in Leem's volume, *op. cit.*, as an appendix with independent pagination.)

made his way past the numerous perils, he comes at last to the Lord of the Underworld, Erlik himself. And the latter rushes against him, horribly bellowing; but if the shaman is sufficiently skillful he can soothe the monster back again with promises of luxurious offerings. This moment of the dialogue with Erlik is the crisis of the ceremonial. The shaman passes into an ecstasy.[1][4]

"In every primitive tribe," writes Dr. Geza Roheim, "we find the medicine man in the center of society and it is easy to show that the medicine man is either a neurotic or a psychotic or at least that his art is based on the same mechanisms as a neurosis or a psychosis. Human groups are actuated by their group ideals, and these are always based on the infantile situation.™ "The infancy situation is modified or inverted by the process of maturation, again modified by the necessary adjustment to reality, yet it is there and supplies those unseen Hbidinal ties without which no human groups could exist.[10] The medicine men, therefore, are simply making both visible and public the systems of symbolic fantasy that are present in the psyche of every adult member of their society. "They are the leaders in this infantile game and the lightning conductors of common anxiety. They fight the demons so that others can hunt the prey and in general fight reality."[7]

And so it happens that if anyone—in whatever society—undertakes for himself the perilous journey into the darkness by descending, either intentionally or unintentionally, into the crooked lanes of his own spiritual labyrinth, he soon finds himself in a landscape of symbolical figures (any one of which may swallow him) which is no less marvelous than the wild Siberian world of *the pudak* and sacred mountains. In the vocabulary of the mystics,

[1] Unn Harva. *Ij i<: rcl/^iGxci \ or.'tt lUtuufit d' i ultmscheu* 1 *other* ("Folklore Fellows Communications," No. 125, Helsinki, 1938), pp. 558-559; following G. N. Potanin, *Occrki severo-zapadnay Mongolh* (St. Petersburg, 1881), Vol. IV, pp. 64-65.

[1] Geza Roheim, *The Origin and Function of Culture* (Nervous and Mental Disease Monographs, No. 69), pp. 38-39.

[4] *Ibid., p.* 38.

[1] *Ibid.,-p.* 51.

this is the second stage of the Way, that of the "purification of the self," when the senses are "cleansed and humbled,[1] and the energies and interests "concentrated upon transcendental things";[8] or in a vocabulary of more modern turn; this is the process of dissolving, transcending, or transmuting the infantile images of our personal past. In our dreams the ageless perils, gargoyles, trials, secret helpers, and instructive figures are nightly still encountered; and in their forms we may see reflected not only the whole picture of our present case, but also the clue to what we must do to be saved.

"I stood before a dark cave, wanting to go in," was the dream of a patient at the beginning of his analysis; "and I shuddered at the thought that I might not be able to find my way back."[51] "I saw one beast after another," F.manuel Swedenborg recorded in his dream book, for the night of October 19-20, 1744, "and they spread their wings, and were dragons. I was flying over them, but one of them was supporting me."[10] And the dramatist Friedrich Hebbel recorded, a century later (April 13, 1844): "In my dream I was being drawn with great force through the sea; there were terrifying abysses, with here and there a rock to which it was possible to hold."[11] Themistocles dreamed that a snake wound itself around his body, then crept up to his neck and when it touched his face became an eagle that took him in its talons and, carrying him upward, bore him a long distance, and set him down on a golden herald's staff that suddenly appeared, so safely that he was all at once relieved of his great anxiety and fear.[12]

[1] Undcrhill, *op. cit.*. Part II, Chapter III. Compare *supra*, p. 51, note 3.

[5] Willielm Stekel, *Fortschritte urid Technik der Traumdeutung*, p. 124.

[10] *Svedenborgs Drommar, 1774*, "Jemte andra hans anteckningar efter original-handskrifter meddelade af G. E. Klemming" (Stockholm 1859), quoted in Ignaz Jezower, *Das Buck der Trdume* (Berlin: Ernst Roivohlt Verlug, 1928), p. 97.

Swedenborg's own comment on this dream was as follows: "Dragons of this kind, which do not reveal themselves as dragons until one sees their wings, symbolize false love. I am just now writing on this subject" (Jezower, p. 490).

[11] Jezower, *op. cit., p.* 166.

[" Plutarch, *Tkemistoctes*, 2(1; Jezower, *op. cit.,* p. 18.

The specific psychological difficulties of the dreamer frequently are revealed with touching simplicity and force:

"I had to climb a mountain. There were all kinds of obstacles in the way. I had now to jump over a ditch, now to get over a hedge, and finally to stand still because I had lost my breath." This was the dream of a stutterer.[13]

"I stood beside a lake that appeared to be completely still. A storm came up abruptly and high waves arose, so that my whole face was splashed[1i]; the dream of a girl afraid of blushing (ereutho-phobia), whose face, when she blushed, would become wet with perspiration.[14]

"I was following a girl who was going ahead of me, along the dark street. I could see her from behind only and admired her beautiful figure. A mighty desire seized me, and I was running after her. Suddenly a beam, as though released from a spring, came across the street and blocked the way. I awoke with my heart pounding." The patient was a homosexual; the transverse beam, a phallic symbol,[1"

"I got into a car, but did not know how to drive. A man who sat behind me gave me instructions. Finally, things were going quite well and we came to a plaza, where there were a number of women standing. The mother of my fiancee received me with great joy." The man was impotent, but had found an instructor in the psychoanalyst.""

"A stone had broken my windshield. I was now open to the storm and ram. Tears came to my eyes. Could I ever reach my destination in this car?" The dreamer was a young woman who had lost her virginity and could not get over it.[17]

"I saw half of a horse King on the ground. It had only one wing and was trying to arise, but was unable to do so." The patient was a poet, who had to earn his daily bread by working as a journalist.[151

[1J] **Stekel,** *Fartschritte und Technik drr Traumdeutung,* p. 150.
[" ***Ibid.*****, p. 153.**
[a***IbuL.:p.4£.***
[16***Ibid.*****, p. 208.**
[17***Ibid.*****, p. 216.**
[18***Ibid., p.* **224.**

"I was bitten by an infant." The dreamer was suffering from a psychosexual infantilism.[1i-1]

"I am locked with my brother in a dark room. He has a large knife in his hand. I am afraid of him. 'You **will** drive me crazy and bring me to the madhouse,[1] I tell him. He laughs with malicious pleasure, replying: 'You **will** always be caught with me. A chain is wrapped around the two of us.[1] I glanced at my legs and noticed for the first time the thick iron chain that bound together my brother and myself." The brother, comments Dr. Stekel, was the patient's illness-^0

"I am going over a narrow bridge," dreams a sixteen-year-old girl. "Suddenly it breaks under me and I plunge into the water. An officer dives in after me, and brings me, with his strong arms, to the bank. Suddenly it seems to me then that I am a dead body. The officer too looks very pale, like a corpse."[21]

"The dreamer is absolutely abandoned and alone in a deep hole of a cellar. The walls of his room keep getting narrower and narrower, so that he cannot stir." In this image are combined the ideas of mother womb, imprisonment, cell, and grave.[22]

"I am dreaming that I have to go through endless corridors. Then I remain for a long time in a little room that looks like the bathing pool in the public baths. They compel me to leave the pool, and I have to pass again through a moist, slippery shaft, until I come through a little latticed door into the open. I feel

[v'*Ibid.,p.* 159.
[lr:: *Ibid., p. 21.*
[2i Stekel, *Die Sprache des Traumes,* p. 200. "Naturally," writes Dr. Stekel.
[1 'to be dead' here means 'to be alive.' She begins to live'and the officer 'lives' with her. They die together. This throws *a* glaring light on the popular fantasy **ofthe** the double-suicide.[11]

It should be noted also that this dream includes the well-nigh **universal** mythological image of the sword bridge (the razor's edge, ***supra,*** p. 19), which appears in the romance of Lancelot's rescue of Queen Guinevere from the castle of King Death (see Heinrich Zimmer, *The King and the Corpse,* ed. J. Campbell (New York: Bollingen Series, 1948), pp. 171-172; also U. L. Coomaraswamy, "The Perilous Bridge of Welfare," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies,* 8).

"- Stekel, *Die* ***Sprache*** *des Traume*s, **p. 287.**

tike one newly born, and I think: 'This means a spiritual rebirth for me, through my analysis.[1] "[23]

There can be no question: the psychological dangers through which earlier generations were guided by the symbols and spiritual exercises of their mythological and religious inheritance, we today (in so far as we are unbelievers, or, if believers, in so far as our inherited beliefs fail to represent the real problems of contemporary life) must face alone, or, at best, with only tentative, impromptu, and not often very effective guidance. This is our problem as modern, "enlightened" individuals, for whom all gods and devils have been rationalized out of existence.^[4] Nevertheless, in the multitude of myths and legends that have been preserved to us, or collected from the ends of the earth, we may yet see delineated something of our still human course. To hear and profit, however, one may have to submit somehow to purgation and surrender. And that is part of our problem: just how to do that. "Or do ye think that ye shall enter the Garden of Bliss without such trials as came to those who passed away before you?"[21]

The oldest recorded account of the passage through the gates of metamorphosis is the Sumerian myth of the goddess Inanna's descent to the nether world.

From the "great above" she set her mind toward
the "great below,"
The goddess, from the "great above" she set her
mind toward the "great below,"

™ *Ibid., p.* 286.

[21] "The problem is not new," writes Dr. C. G. Jung, "for all ages before us have believed in gods in some form or other. Only an unparalleled impoverishment of symbolism could enable us to rediscover the gods as psychic factors, that is, as archetypes of the unconscious. . . . Heaven has become for us the cosmic space of the physicists, and the divine empyrean a fair memory of things that once were. But 'the heart glows,' and a secret unrest gnaws at the roots of our being." ("Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious." *ed. cit.,* par. 50.)

[25] Koran, 2:214,

Inanna, from the "great above" she set her mind
toward the "great below."

My lady abandoned heaven, abandoned earth,
To the nether world she descended,
Inanna abandoned heaven, abandoned earth,
To the nether world she descended,
Abandoned lordship, abandoned ladyship,
To the nether world she descended.

She adorned herself with her queenly robes and jewels. Seven divine decrees she fastened at her belt. She was ready to enter the "land of no return," the nether world of death and darkness, governed by her enemy and sister goddess, Ereshkigal. In fear, lest her sister should put her to death, Inanna instructed Ninshubur, her messenger, to go to heaven and set up a hue and cry for her in the assembly hall of the gods if after three days she should have failed to return.

Inanna descended. She approached the temple made of lapis lazuli, and at the gate was met by the chief gatekeeper, who demanded to know who she was and why she had come. "I am the queen of heaven, the place where the sun rises," she replied. "If thou art the queen of heaven," he said, "the place where the sun rises, why, pray, hast thou come to the land of no return"? On the road whose traveler returns not, how has thy heart led thee?" Inanna declared that she had come to attend the funeral rites of her sister's husband, the lord Gugalanna; whereupon Neti, the gatekeeper, bid her stay until he should report to Ereshkigal. Neti was instructed to open to the queen of heaven the seven gates, but to abide by the custom and remove at each portal a part of her clothing.

To the pure Inanna he says:
"Come, Inanna, enter."

Upon her entering the first gate,
The shugurra, the "crown of the plain" of her head, was removed.
"What, pray, is ***this?"***

"Extraordinarily, O Inanna, have the decrees of the nether world been perfected,
0 Inanna, do not question the rites of the nether world."

Upon her entering the second gate,
The rod of lapis lazuli was removed.
"What, pray, is this?"
"Extraordinarily, 0 Inanna, have the decrees of the nether world been perfected,
O Inanna, do not question the rites of the nether world."

Upon her entering the third gate,
The small lapis lazuli stones of her neck were removed.
"What, pray, is thin?"
"Extraordinarily, 0 Inanna, have the decrees of the nether world been perfected,
0 Inanna, do not question the rites of the nether world."

Upon her entering the fourth gate,
The sparkling stones of her breast were removed.
"What, pray, is this?"
"Extraordinarily, O Inanna, have the decrees of the nether world been perfected,
0 Inanna, do not question the rites of the nether world."

Upon her entering the fifth gate.
The gold ring of her hand was removed.
"What, pray, is this?"
"Extraordinarily, 0 Inanna, have the decrees of the nether world been perfected,
O Inanna, do not question the rites of the nether world."

Upon her entering the sixth gate,
The breastplate of her breast was removed.
"What, pray, is this?"
"Extraordinarily, O Inanna, have the decrees of the nether world been perfected,
O Inanna, do not question the rites of the nether world."

Upon her entering the seventh gate,
All the garments of ladyship of her body were removed.
"What, pray, is this?"
"Extraordinarily, 0 Inanna, have the decrees of the nether world been perfected,
0 Inanna, do not question the rites of the nether world."

Naked, she was brought before the throne. She bowed low. The seven judges of the nether world, the Anunnaki, sat before the throne of Ereshkigal, and they fastened their eyes upon Inannai—the eyes of death.

At their word, the word which tortures the spirit,
The sick woman was turned into a corpse,
The corpse was hung from a stake.[26]

Inanna and Ereshkigal, the two sisters, light and dark respectively, together represent, according to the antique manner of symbolization, the one goddess in two aspects; and their confrontation epitomizes the whole sense of the difficult road of trials. The hero, whether god or goddess, man or woman, the figure in a myth or the dreamer of a dream, discovers and assimilates his opposite (his own unsuspected self) either by swallowing it or by being swallowed. One by one the resistances are broken. He must put aside his pride, his virtue, beauty, and life, and bow or submit to the absolutely intolerable. Then he finds that he and his opposite are not of differing species, but one flesh.[27]

[26] S. N. Kramer, *Sumeritin Mythology* (American Philosophical Society Memoirs, Vol. XXI; Philadelphia, 1944}, pp. 86-93. The mythology of Sumer is of especial importance to us of the West; for it was the source of the Babylonian, Assyrian, Phoenician, and Biblical traditions, (the last giving rise to Mohammedanism and Christianity), as well a* an important Jnfiuence in the religions of the pagan Celts, Creeks, Romans, Slavs, and Cermans.

[27] Or, as James Joyce has phrased it: "equals of opposites, evolved by a one-same power of nature or ol spirit, as tlit: sole condition and means of its himundher manifestation and polarised for reunion by the symphysis of their antipathies" *(I-'innegans Wake,* p. 92].

The ordeal is a deepening of the problem of the first threshold and the question is still in balance: Can the ego put itself to death? For many-headed is this surrounding Hydra; one head cut off, two more appear—unless the right caustic is applied to the mutilated stump. The original departure into the land of trials represented only the beginning of the long and really perilous path of initiator)' conquests and moments of illumination. Dragons have now to be slain and surprising barriers passed—again, again, and again. Meanwhile there will be a multitude of preliminary victories, unretainable ecstasies, and momentary glimpses of the wonderful land.

The Meeting with the Goddess

The ultimate adventure, when all the barriers and ogres have been overcome, is commonly represented as a mystical marriage *(Is 6? ya/ios)* of the triumphant hero-soul with the Queen Goddess of the World. This is the crisis at the nadir, the zenith, or at the uttermost edge of the earth, at the central point of the cosmos, in the tabernacle of the temple, or within the darkness of the deepest chamber of the heart.

In the west of Ireland they still tell the tale of the Prince of the Lonesome Isle and the Lady of Tubber Tintye. Hoping to heal the Queen of Erin, the heroic youth had undertaken to go for three bottles of the water of Tubber Tintye, the flaming fairy well. Following the advice of a supernatural aunt whom he encountered on the way, and riding a wonderful, dirty, lean little shaggy horse that she gave to him, he crossed a river of fire and escaped the touch of a grove of poison trees. The horse with the speed of the wind shot past the end of the castle of Tubber Tintye; the prince sprang from its back through an open window, and came down inside, safe and sound.

"**The** whole place, enormous in extent, was filled with sleeping giants and monsters of sea and land—great whales, long slippery eels, bears, and beasts of every form and kind. The prince passed through them and over them till he came to a great stairway. At the head of the stairway he went into a chamber, where he found the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, stretched on a couch asleep. Til have nothing **to** say to you,' thought he, and went on to the next; and so he looked into twelve chambers. In each was a woman more beautiful than the one before. But when he reached the thirteenth chamber and opened the door, the flash of gold took the sight from his eyes. He stood awhile till the sight came back, and then entered. In the great bright chamber was a golden couch, resting on wheels of gold. The wheels turned continually; the couch went round and round, never stopping night or day. On the couch lay the Queen of **Tubber** Tintye; and if her twelve maidens were beautiful, they would not be beautiful if seen near her. At the foot of the couch was Tubber Tintye itself—the well of fire. There was a golden cover upon the well, and it went around **continually** with the couch of the Queen.

" 'Upon my word,[1] said the prince, Til rest here a while.' And he went up on the couch and never left it for six days and nights."[2]*

The Lady of the House of Sleep is a familiar figure in fairy tale and myth. We have already spoken of her, under the forms of Brynhild and little Briar-rose.[29] She is the paragon of al! paragons of beauty, the reply to all desire, the bliss-bestowing goal of every hero's earthly and unearthly quest. She is mother, sister, mistress, bride. Whatever in the world has lured, whatever has seemed to promise joy, has been premonitory of her existence—in the deep of sleep, if not in the cities and forests of the world. For she is the incarnation of the promise of perfection; the soul's assurance that, at the conclusion of its exile in a world of organized inadequacies, the bliss that once was known will be known again; the comforting, the nourishing, the "good"

[2V] Jeremiah Curtin, *Myths and Folk-Lore of Ireland* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1890), pp. 101-106.

[25] *Supra,* pp. 57-58.

mother—young and beautiful—who was known to us, and even tasted, in the remotest past. Time sealed her away, yet she is dwelling still, like one who sleeps in timelessness, at the bottom of the timeless sea.

The remembered image is not only benign, however; for the "bad" mother too—(1) the absent, unattainable mother, against whom aggressive fantasies are directed, and from whom a counter-aggression is feared; (2) the hampering, forbidding, punishing mother; (3) the mother who would hold to herself the growing child trying to push away; and finally (4) the desired but forbidden mother (Oedipus complex) whose presence is a lure to dangerous desire (castration complex)—persists in the hidden land of the adult's infant recollection and is sometimes even the greater force. She is at the root of such unattainable great goddess figures as that of the chaste and terrible Diana—whose absolute ruin of the young sportsman Actaeon illustrates what a blast of fear is contained in such symbols of the mind's and body's blocked desire.

Actaeon chanced to see the dangerous goddess at noon; that fateful moment when the sun breaks in its youthful, strong ascent, balances, and begins the mighty plunge to death. He had left his companions to rest, together with his blooded dogs, after a morning of running game, and without conscious purpose had gone wandering, straying from his familiar hunting groves and fields, exploring through the neighboring woods. He discovered a vale, thick grown with cypresses and pine. He penetrated curiously into its fastness. There was a grotto within in, watered by a gentle, purling spring and with a stream that widened to a grassy pool. This shaded nook was the resort of Diana, and at that moment she was bathing among her nymphs, absolutely naked. She had put aside her hunting spear, her quiver, her unstrung bow, as well as her sandals and her robe. And one of the nude nymphs had bound up her tresses into a knot; some of the others were pouring water from capacious urns.

When the young, roving male broke into the pleasant haunt, a shriek of female terror went up, and all the bodies crowded about their mistress, trying to hide her from the profane eye.

But she stood above them, head and shoulders. The youth had seen, and was continuing to see. She glanced for her bow, but it was out of reach, so she quickly took up what was at hand, namely water, and flung it into Actaeon's face. "Now you are free to tell, if you can," she cried at him angrily, "that you have seen the goddess nude."

Antlers sprouted on his head. His neck grew great and long, his eartips sharp. His arms lengthened to legs, and his hands and feet became hooves. Terrified, he bounded—marveling that he should move so rapidly. But when he paused for breath and drink and beheld his features in a clear pool, he reared back aghast.

A terrible fate then befell Actaeon. His own hounds, catching the scent of the great stag, came baying through the wood. In a moment of joy at hearing them he paused, but then spontaneously took fright and fled. The pack followed, gradually gaining. When they had come to his heels, the first of them flying at his flank, he tried to cry their names, but the sound in his throat was not human. They fixed him with their fangs. He went down, and his own hunting companions, shouting encouragement at the dogs, arrived in time to deliver the *coup de grace*. Diana, miraculously aware of the flight and death, could now rest appeased.[30]

The mythological figure of the Universal Mother imputes to the cosmos the feminine attributes of the first, nourishing and protecting presence. The fantasy is primarily spontaneous; for there exists a close and obvious correspondence between the attitude of the young child toward its mother and that of the adult toward the surrounding material world.[31] But there has been

[30] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, III, 138-252.

[31] Cf. J. C. Flugel, *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family* ("The International Psycho-Analytical Library," No. 3, 4th edition; London: The Hogarth Press, 1931), chapters sii and xiii.

"There exists," Professor Flugel observes, "a very general association on the one hand betu een 1 lif notion •-] mind, -^pint or sou! unH lln' idt';i of the father or ot masculinity; and on the oilier hand between the notion of the body or of matter (materia-that which belongs to the mother) and the idea of the mother or of the feminine principle. The repression of the emotions and feelings

also, in numerous religious traditions, a consciously controlled pedagogical utilization of this archetypal image for the purpose of the purging, balancing, and initiation of the mind into the nature of the visible world.

In the Tantric books of medieval and modern India the abode of the goddess is called Mani-dvipa, "The Island of Jewels."[32] Her couch-and-throne is there, in a grove of wish-fulfilling trees. The beaches of the isle are of golden sands. They are laved by the still waters of the ocean of the nectar of immortality. The goddess is red with the fire of life; the earth, the solar system,

relating To the mother [in our Judeo-Christian monotheism] has, in virtue of this association, produced a tendency to adopt an attitude of distract, CDI' or hostility towards the human body, the Earth, and the whole material Uni with a corresponding tendency to exalt and overemphasize the spiritual elements, whether in man or in the general scheme of things. It seems very probable that a good many of the more pronounicdlv idealistic tendtwii's in philosophy may owe much of their attractiveness in many minds to a sublimation of this reaction against the mother, while the more dogmatic and narrow forms of materialism may perhaps in their turn represent a return of the repressed feelings originally connected with the mother" *(ibid.,* p. 145, note 2).

:- The sacred writings (Shastras) of Hinduism are divided into four classes: (1) Shruti, which are regarded as direct divine revelation; these include the four Vedas (ancient books of psalms) and certain of the Upanishads (ancient books of philosophy); (2) Smriti, which include the traditional teachings of the orthodox SLJ^I'^. caiKiiKL'.l instructions I or domestic ceiviiiiji:!..]!"., ;md ctruuri works of secular ami religious kiu ; *{i')* Purfinn. which aiv the Hindu mythological and epic works par excellence; these treat of cosmogonic, theological, astronomical, and physical knowledge; and (4) Tantra, texts describing techniques and rituals for the worship of deities, and for the attainment of supranormal power. Among the Tantras are a group of particularly important scriptures (called Agamas) which are supposed to have been revealed directly by the Universal" God Shiva and his Goddess Parvati. (They are termed, therefore, "The Fifth Veda.") These support a mystical tradition known specifically as "The Tantra. which hus exercised :i pLiTvi-{\ <- in Rue rice ori the later forms of Hindu and Buddhist iconography. Tantric symbolism was carried by medieval Buddhism out of India into Tibet, China, and Japan.

The following description of the Island of Jewels is based on Sir John Woodroffe, *Shakti and Shakta* (London and Madras, 1929), p. 39, and Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization,* ed. by J. Campbell (New York: Bollingen Series, 1946), pp. 197-211. For an illustration of the mystical island, see Zimmer, Figure 66.

the galaxies of far-extending space, all swell within her womb. For she is the world creatrix, ever mother, ever virgin. She encompasses the encompassing, nourishes the nourishing, and is the life of everything that lives.

She is also the death of even-thing that dies. The whole round of existence is accomplished within her sway, from birth, through adolescence, maturity, and senescence, to the grave. She is the womb and the tomb: the sow that eats her farrow. Thus she unites the "good" and the "bad," exhibiting the two modes of the remembered mother, not as personal only, but as universal. The devotee is expected to contemplate the two with equal equanimity. Through this exercise his spirit is purged of its infantile, inappropriate sentimentalities and resentments, and his mind opened to the inscrutable presence which exists, not primarily as "good" and "bad" with respect to his childlike human convenience, his weal and woe, but as the law and image of the nature of being.

The great Hindu mystic of the last century, Ramakrishna (1836-1886), was a priest in a temple newly erected to the Cosmic Mother at Dakshineswar, a suburb of Calcutta. The temple image displayed the divinity in her two aspects simultaneously, the terrible and the benign. Her four arms exhibited the symbols of her universal power: the upper left hand brandishing a bloody saber, the lower gripping by the hair a severed human head; the upper right was lifted in the "fear not" gesture, the lower extended in bestowal of boons. As necklace she wore a garland of human heads; her kilt was a girdle of human arms; her long tongue was out to lick blood. She was Cosmic Power, the totality of the universe, the harmonization of all the pairs of opposites, combining wonderfully the terror of absolute destruction with an impersonal yet motherly reassurance. As change, the river of time, the fluidity of life, the goddess at once creates, preserves, and destroys. Her name is Kali, the Black One; her title: The Ferry across the Ocean of Existence.[31]

[31] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakriskna,* translated into English with an imroduc:ion by Swami Nikhilananda (New York, 1942), p. 9.

INITIATION

One quiet afternoon Ramakrishna beheld a beautiful woman ascend from the Ganges and approach the grove in which he was meditating. He perceived that she was about to give birth to a child. In a moment the babe was born, and she **gently** nursed it. Presently, however, she assumed a horrible aspect, took the infant in her now ugly jaws and crushed it, chewed it. Swallowing it, she returned again to the Ganges, where she disappeared.[34]

Only geniuses capable of the highest realization can support the mil revelation of the sublimity of this goddess. For lesser men she reduces her effulgence and permits herself to appear in forms concordant with their undeveloped powers. Fully to behold her would be a terrible accident for any person not spiritually prepared: as witness the unlucky case of the lusty young buck Actaeon. No saint was he, but a sportsman unprepared for the revelation of the form that must be beheld without the normal human {i.e., infantile) over- and undertones of desire, surprise, and fear.

Woman, in the picture language of mythology, represents the totality of what can be known. The hero is the one who comes to know. As he progresses in the slow initiation which is life, the form of the goddess undergoes for him a series of transfigurations: she can never be greater than himself, though she can always promise more than he is yet capable of comprehending. She lures, she guides, she bids him burst his fetters. And if he can match her import, the two, the knower and the known, will be released from every limitation. Woman is the guide to the sublime acme of sensuous adventure. By deficient eyes she is reduced to inferior states; by the evil eye of ignorance she is spellbound to banality and ugliness. But she is redeemed by the eyes of understanding. The hero who can take her as she is, without undue commotion but with the kindness and assurance she requires, is potentially the king, the incarnate god, of her created world.

[34] *Ibid., pp.* 21-22.

THE MEETING WITH THE GODDESS

A story, for example, is told of the five sons of the Irish king Eochaid: of how, having gone one day ahunting, they found themselves astray, shut in on every hand. Thirsty, they set off, one by one, to look for water. Fergus was the first: "and he lights on a well, over which he finds an old woman standing sentry. The fashion of the hag is this: blacker than coal every joint and segment of her was, from crown to ground; comparable to a wild horse's tail the grey wiry mass of hair that pierced her scalp's upper surface; with her sickle of a greenish looking tusk that was in her head, and curled till it touched her ear, she could lop the verdant branch of an oak in full bearing; blackened and smoke-bleared eyes she had; nose awry, wide-nostrilled; a wrinkled and freckled belly, variously unwholesome; warped crooked shins, garnished with massive ankles and a pair of capacious shovels; knotty knees she had and livid nails. The beldame's whole description in fact was disgusting. 'That's the way it is, is it"?' said the lad, and 'that's the very way,' she answered. 'Is it guarding the well thou art?' he asked, and she said: 'it is.' 'Dost thou licence me to take away some water?' 'I do,' she consented, 'yet only so that I have of thee one kiss on my cheek.[1] 'Not so,' said he. 'Then water shall not be conceded by me.' 'My word I give,[1] he went on, 'that sooner than give thee a kiss I would perish of thirst![1] Then the young man departed to the place where his brethren were, and told them that he had not gotten water."

Olioll, Brian, and Fiachra, likewise, went on the quest and equally attained to the identical well. Each solicited the old thing for water, but denied her the kiss.

Finally it was'Niall who went, and he came to the very well. " 'Let me have water, woman![1] he cried. 'I will give it,[1] said she, 'and bestow on me a kiss.' He answered: 'forby giving thee a kiss, I will even hug thee!' Then he bends to embrace her, and gives her a kiss. Which operation ended, and when he looked at her, in the whole world was not a young woman of gait more graceful, in universal semblance fairer than she: to be likened to the last-fallen snow lying in trenches every portion of her was, from crown to sole; plump and queenly forearms, fingers long

and taper, straight legs of a lovely hue she had; two sandals of the white bronze betwixt her smooth and soft white feet and the earth; about her was an ample mantle of the choicest fleece pure crimson, and in the garment a brooch of white silver; she had lustrous teeth of pearl, great regal eyes, mouth red as the rowan-berry. 'Here, woman, is a galaxy of charms,' said the young man. 'That is true indeed.' 'And who art **tfaou?'** he pursued. '"Royal Rule" am I,' she answered, and uttered this:

"'KingofTara! I am Royal Rule___'

" 'Go now,' she said, 'to thy brethren, and take with thee water; moreover, thine and thy children's for ever the kingdom and supreme power shall be. … And as at the first thou hast seen me ugly, brutish, loathly—in the end, beautiful — even so is royal rule: for without battles, without fierce conflict, it may not be won; but in the result, he that is king of no matter what shows comely and handsome forth."[35]

Such is royal rule? Such is life itself. The goddess guardian of the inexhaustible well—whether as Fergus, or as Actaeon, or as the Prince of the Lonesome Isle discovered her—requires that the hero should be endowed with what the troubadours and minnesingers termed the "gentle heart." Not by the animal desire of an Actaeon, not by the fastidious revulsion of such as Fergus, can she be comprehended and rightly served, but only by gentleness: *aware* ("gentle sympathy") it was named in the romantic courtly poetry of tenth- to twelfth-century Japan.

Within the gentle heart Love shelters himself.
As birds within the green shade of the grove.
Before the gentle heart, in nature's scheme.
Love was not, nor the gentle heart ere Love.
For with the sun, at once,

[35] Standish H. **O'Grady,** *Siha Gaddka* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1892), **Vol. II,** pp. 370-372. Variant versions **will** be found in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales,* "The Tale of the Wyf of Bathe"; in (Sower's *Tale ofFlorent;* in the mid-fifteenth-century poem, *The Weddyngc of Sir Gawen and Dame Ragnell;* and in the seventeenth-century ballad, *The Marriage of Sir Gawaine.* See W. F. Bryan and Germaine Dempster, *Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* (Chicago. 1941).

So *sprang the light immediately; nor was*
Its birth before the sun's.

And Love hath his effect in gentleness
Of very self; even as
Within the middle fire the heat's excess.[36]

The meeting with the goddess (who is incarnate in every woman) is the final test of the talent of the hero to win the boon of love (charity: *amor fati),* which is life itself enjoyed as the encasement of eternity.

And when the adventurer, in this context, is not a youth but a maid, she is the one who, by her qualities, her beauty, or her yearning, is fit to become the consort of an immortal. Then the

FIGURE 6. Isis in the Form of a Hawk Joins Osiris in the Underworld

[36] Guido Guinicelli di Magnano (1-230-75?), *Of the Gen Ik Heart,* translation by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Dante and his Circle* (edition of 1874; London: Ellis and White), p. 291.

heavenly husband descends to her and conducts her to his bed—whether she will or no. And if she has shunned him, the scales fall from her eyes; if she has sought him, her desire finds its peace.

The Arapaho girl who followed the porcupine up the stretching tree was enticed to the camp-circle of the people of the sky. There she became the wife of a heavenly youth. It was he who, under the form of the luring porcupine, had seduced her to his supernatural home.

The king's daughter of the nursery tale, the day following the adventure at the well, heard a thumping at her castle door: the frog had arrived to press her to her bargain. And in spite of her great disgust, he followed her to her chair at table, shared the meal from her little golden plate and cup, even insisted on going to sleep with her in her little silken bed. In a tantrum she plucked him from the floor and flung him at the wall. When he fell, he was no frog but a king's son with kind and beautiful eyes. And then we hear that they were married and were driven in a beautiful coach back to the young man's waiting kingdom, where the two became a king and queen.

Or once again: when Psyche had accomplished all of the difficult tasks, Jupiter himself gave to her a draft of the elixir of immortality; so that she is now and forever united with Cupid, her beloved, in the paradise of perfected form.

The Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches celebrate the same mystery in the Feast of the Assumption:

"The Virgin Mary is taken up into the bridal chamber of heaven, where the King of Kings sits on his starry throne."

"O Virgin most prudent, whither goest thou, bright as the morn? all beautiful and sweet art thou, O daughter of Zion, fair as the moon, elect as the sun.'"[1]

[1] Antiphons for the Least of file Assumption *oi* (ht' Blcs^il \ ir^in M;n^\ (August IS), at Vespers: from the Roman Missal.

• 3 "

Woman as the Temptress

The mystical marriage with the queen goddess of the world represents the hero's total mastery of life; for the woman is life, the hero its knower and master. And the testings of the hero, which were preliminary to his ultimate experience and deed, were symbolical of those crises of realization by means of which his consciousness came to be amplified and made capable of enduring the full possession of the mother-destroyer, his inevitable bride. With that he knows that he and the father are one: he is in the father's place.

Thus phrased, in extremest terms, the problem may sound remote from the affairs of normal human creatures. Nevertheless, every failure to cope with a life situation must be laid, in the end, to a restriction of consciousness. Wars and temper tantrums are the makeshifts of ignorance; regrets are illuminations come too late. The whole sense of the ubiquitous myth of the hero's passage is that it shall serve as a general pattern for men and women, wherever they may stand along the scale. Therefore it is formulated in the broadest terms. The individual has only to discover his own position with reference to this general human formula, and let it then assist him past his restricting walls. Who and where are his ogres"? Those are the reflections of the unsolved enigmas of his own humanity. What are his ideals'? Those are the symptoms of his grasp of life.

In the office of the modern psychoanalyst, the stages of the hero-adventure come to light again in the dreams and hallucinations of the patient. Depth beyond depth of self-ignorance is fathomed, with the analyst in the role of the helper, the initiatory priest. And always, after the first thrills of getting under way, the adventure develops into a journey of darkness, horror, disgust, and phantasmagoric fears.

The crux of the curious difficulty lies in the fact that our conscious views of what life ought to be seldom correspond to what

life really is. Generally we refuse to admit within ourselves, or within our friends, the fullness of that pushing, self-protective, malodorous, carnivorous, lecherous fever which is the very nature of the organic cell. Rather, we tend to perfume, whitewash, and reinterpret; meanwhile imagining that all the flies in the ointment, all the hairs in the soup, are the faults of some unpleasant someone else.

But when it suddenly dawns on us, or is forced to our attention, that everything we think or do is necessarily tainted with the odor of the flesh, then, not uncommonly, there is experienced a moment of revulsion: life, the acts of life, the organs of life, woman in particular as the great symbol of life, become intolerable to the pure, the pure, pure soul.

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! 0 God! God!

So exclaims the great spokesman of this moment, Hamlet:

How weary, stale, fiat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to ***this!***[39]

The innocent delight of Oedipus in his first possession of the queen turns to an agony of spirit when he learns who the woman is. Like Hamlet, he is beset by the moral image of the father. Like Hamlet, he turns from the fair features of the world to search the darkness for a higher kingdom than this of the incest and adultery ridden, luxurious and incorrigible mother. The seeker of the life beyond life must press beyond her, surpass the temptations of her call, and soar to the immaculate ether beyond.

For a God called him—called him many times,
From many sides at once: "Ho, Oedipus,

[38] *Hamlet*, I, ii, 129-137.

Thou Oedipus, why are we tarrying?
It is full long that thou art stayed for; come!"[38]

Where this Oedipus-Hamlet revulsion remains to beset the soul, there the world, the body, and woman above all, become the symbols no longer of victory but of defeat. A monastic-puritanical, world-negating ethical system then radically and immediately transfigures all the images of myth. No longer can the hero rest in innocence with the goddess of the flesh; for she is become the queen of sin.

"So long as a man has any regard for this corpse-like body,[40] writes the Hindu monk Shankaracharya, "he is impure, and suffers from his enemies as well as from birth, disease and death; but when he thinks of himself as pure, as the essence of the Good, and the Immovable, he becomes free. . . . Throw far away this limitation of a body which is inert and filthy by nature. Think of it no longer. For a thing that has been vomited (as you should vomit forth your body) can excite only disgust when it is recalled again to mind.[1140]

This is a point of view familiar to the West from the lives and writings of the saints.

"When Saint Peter observed that his daughter, Petronilla, was too beautiful, he obtained from God the favor that she should fall sick of a fever. Now one day when his disciples were by him, Titus said to him: 'You who cure all maladies, why do you not fix it so that Petronilla can get up from her bed?' And Peter replied to him: 'Because I am satisfied with her condition as it is.' This was by no means as much as to say he had not the power to cure her; for, immediately, he said to her: 'Get up, Petronilla, and make haste to wait on us.[1] The young girl, cured, got up and came to serve them. But when she had finished, her father said to her: 'Petronilla, return to your bed!' She returned, and was straightway taken again with the fever. And later, when

[39] *Oedipus Coloneus*, 1615-17.
[40] Shankaracharya, *Vhxkachudumani*, 396 and 414, translated by Swami Madhavananda (Mayavati. 1932).

she had begun to be perfect in her love of God, her father restored her to perfect health.

"At that time a noble gentleman named Flaccus, struck by her beauty, came to bid for her hand in marriage. She replied: 'If you wish to marry me, send a group of young girls to conduct me to your home!' But when these had arrived, Petronilla directly set herself to fast and pray. Receiving communion, she lay back in her bed, and after three days rendered her soul up to God."[41]

"As a child Saint Bernard of Clairvaux suffered from headaches. A young woman came to visit him one day, to soothe his sufferings with her songs. But the indignant child drove her from the room. And God rewarded him for his zeal; for he got up from his bed immediately, and was cured.

"Now the ancient enemy of man, perceiving little Bernard to be of such wholesome disposition, exerted himself to set traps for his chastity. When the child, however, at the instigation of the devil, one day had stood staring at a lady for some time, suddenly he blushed for himself, and entered the icy water of a pond in penance, where he remained until frozen to his bones. Another time, when he was asleep, a young girl came naked to his bed. Bernard, becoming aware of her, yielded in silence the part of the bed in which he lay, and rolling over to the other side returned to steep. Having stroked and caressed him for some time, the unhappy creaUire presently was so taken with shame, in spite of her shamelessness, that she got up and fled, full of horror at herself and of admiration for the young man.

"Still again, when Bernard together with some friends one time had accepted the hospitality of the home of a certain wealthy lady, she, observing his beauty, was seized with a passion to sleep with him. She arose that night from her bed, and came and placed herself at the side of her guest. But he, the minute he felt someone close to him, began to shout: 'Thief! Thief!' Immediately thereupon, the woman scurried away, the entire house was

" Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend,* LXXVI, "Saint Pctronitla, Virgin." (Compare the tale of Daphne, p. 56 *supra.)* The later Church, unwilling ti think of St. Peter as having begotten a child, speaks of Petronilla as his ward.

on its feet, lanterns were lit, and everybody hunted around for the burglar. But since none was found, all returned to their beds and to sleep, with the sole exception of this lady, who, unable to close her eyes, again arose and slipped into the bed of her guest. Bernard began to shout: 'Thief!' And again the alarms and investigations! After that, even a third time this lady brought herself to be spurned in like fashion; so that finally she gave up her wicked project, out of either fear or discouragement. On the road next day the companions of Bernard asked him why he had had so many dreams about thieves. And he replied to them: 'I had really to repel the attacks of a thief; for my hostess tried to rob me of a treasure, which, had I lost it, I should never have been able to regain.'

"All of which convinced Bernard that it was a pretty risky thing to live together with the serpent. So he planned to be quit of the world and enter the monastic order of the Cistercians."[42]

Not even monastery walls, however, not even the remoteness of the desert, can defend against the female presences; for as long as the hermit's flesh clings to his bones and pulses warm, the images of life are alert to storm his mind. Saint Anthony, practising his austerities in the Egyptian Thebaid, was troubled by voluptuous hallucinations perpetrated by female devils attracted to his magnetic solitude. Apparitions of this order, with loins of irresistible attraction and breasts bursting to be touched, are known to all the hermit-resorts of history. *"Ah! bel ermitel bel ermite! . . . Si tu posais ton doigt sur mon epaule, ce serait comme une trainee de feu dans tes veines. La possession de la moindre place de mon corps t'emplira d'une joieplus ve'he'mente que la conquete d'un empire. Avance tes l&ures. . . .* "[4S]

Writes the New Englander, Cotton Mather: *"The Wilderness* through which we are passing to the Promised Land is all filled with Fiery flying serpents. But, blessed be God, none of them have hitherto so fastened upon us as to confound us utterly! All our way to Heaven ties by *Dens of Lions* and the *Mounts of*

-Ibid., CXV1L

[13] Gustavo Flaubert, *La tentation dc Saint Antoine* (La reine de Saba).

Leopards; there are incredible Droves of Devils in our way——We are poor travellers in a world which is as well the Devil's Field, as the Devil's *Gaol;* a world in which every Nook whereof, the Devil is encamped with Bands of Robbers to pester all that have their faces looking Zionward."[44]

Atonement with the Father

"The Bow of God's Wrath is bent, and the Arrow made ready on the String; and Justice bends the Arrow at your Heart, and strains the Bow; and it is nothing but the mere Pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any Promise or Obligation at all, that keeps the Arrow one Moment from being made drunk with your Blood. . . ."

With these words Jonathan Edwards threatened the hearts of his New England congregation by disclosing to them, unmitigated, the ogre aspect of the father. He riveted them **to** the pews with images of the mythological ordeal; for though the Puritan prohibited the graven image, yet he allowed himself the verbal. "The Wrath," Jonathan Edwards thundered, "the Wrath of God is like great **Waters** that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher till an Outlet is given; and the longer the Stream is stopt, the more rapid and mighty is its Course when once it is let loose. 'Tis true, that Judgment against your evil Works has not been executed hitherto; the Floods of God's Vengeance have been withheld; but your Guilt in the mean Time is constantly increasing, and you are every Day treasuring up more Wrath; the Waters are continually rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere Pleasure of God that holds the Waters back

[44] Cotton Mather, *Wonders of the Invisible World* (Boston, 1693), p. 63.

that are unwilling to be stopt, and press hard to go forward; if God should only withdraw his Hand from the Flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery Floods of the Fierceness of the Wrath of God would rush forth with inconceivable Fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent Power; and if your Strength were Ten thousand Times greater than it is, yea Ten thousand Times greater than the Strength of the stoutest, sturdiest Devil in Hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it. . . ."[45]

Having threatened with the element water, Pastor Jonathan next turns to the image of fire. "The God that holds you over the Pit of Hell, much as one holds a Spider or some lothsome Insect over the Fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his Wrath towards you burns like Fire; he looks upon you as Worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the Fire; he is of purer Eyes than to bear to have you in his Sight; you are Ten thousand Times so abominable in his Eyes as the most hateful venomous Serpent is in ours. You have **offended** him infinitely more than ever a stubborn Rebel did his Prince; and yet 'tis nothing but his Hand that holds you from falling into the Fire every Moment. . . .

"O Sinner! . . . You hang by a slender Thread, **with** the Flames of Divine Wrath flashing about it, and ready every Moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no Interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep **off** the Flames of Wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one Moment. . . ."

But now, at last, the great resolving image of the second birth—only for a moment, however:

"Thus are all you that never passed under a great Change of Heart, by the mighty Power of the Spirit of GOD upon your souls, all that were never born again, and made new Creatures, and raised from being dead in Sin, to a State of new, and before altogether unexperienced Light and Life (however you may have reformed your Life in many Things, and may have had religious Affections, and may keep up a Form of Religion in your Families and Closets, and in the House of God, and may be strict in it)

[45] Ibid., p. 64.

you are thus in the Hands of an angry God; 'tis nothing but his mere Pleasure that keeps you from being this Moment swallowed up in everlasting Destruction."*[1]

"God's mere pleasure," which defends the sinner from the arrow, the flood, and the flames, is termed in the traditional vocabulary of Christianity God's "mercy"; and "the mighty power of the spirit of God," by which the heart is changed, that is God's "grace." In most mythologies, the images of mercy and grace are rendered as vividly as those of justice and wrath, so that a balance is maintained, and the heart is buoyed rather than scourged along its way. "Fear not!" says the hand gesture of the god Shiva, as he dances before his devotee the dance of the universal destruction.[46] "Fear not, for all rests well in God. The forms that come and go—and of which your body is but one—are the flashes of my dancing limbs. Know Me in all, and of what shall you be afraid?" The magic of the sacraments (made

[1] Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (Boston, 1742).

[46] Plate IX. The symbolism of this eloquent image has been well expounded by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Siva* (New York, 1917). pp. 56-66, and by Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization,* pp. 151-175. Briefly: the extended right hand holds the drum, the beat of which is the beat of time, time being the first principle of creation; the extended left holds the flame, which is the flame of the destruction of the created world; the second right hand is held in the gesture of "fear not," while the second left, pointing to the lifted left foot, is held in a position symbolizing "elephant[1]" (the elephant is the "breaker of the way through the jungle of the world," i.e., the divine guide): the right foot is planted on the back of a dwarf, the demon "Non-knowing," which signifies the passage of souls from God into matter, but the left is lifted, showing the release of the soul: the left is the foot to which the "elephant-hand" is pointing and supplies the reason for the assurance, "Fear not." The God's head is balanced, serene and still, in the midst of the dynamism of creation and destruction which is symbolized by the rocking arms and the rhythm of the slowly stamping right heel. This means that at the center all is still. Shiva's right earring is a man's, his left, *i* woman's; for the God includes and is beyond the pairs of opposites. Shiva's facial expression is neither sorrowful nor joyous, but is the visage of the Unmoved Mover, beyond, yet present within, the world's bliss and pain. The wildly streaming locks represent the long-untended hair of the Indian Yogi, now flying in the dance of life; for the presence known in the joys and sorrows of "life, and that found

non-dual, Being-Consciousness-Uliss. Shiva's bracelets, arm sands, ankle rings.

effective through the passion of Jesus Christ, or by virtue of the meditations of the Buddha), the protective power of primitive amulets and charms, and the supernatural helpers of the myths and fairy tales of the world, are mankind's assurances that the arrow, the flames, and the flood are not as brutal as they seem.

For the ogre aspect of the father is a reflex of the victim's own ego—derived from the sensational nursery scene that has been

and brahminical thread,* are living serpents. This means that he is made beautiful by the Serpent Power—the mysterious Creative Energy of God, which is the material and the formal cause of his own self-manifestation in, and as, the universe with all its beings. In Shiva's hair may be seen a skull, symbolic of death, the forehead-ornament of the Lord of Destruction, as well as a crescent moon, symbolic of birth and increase, which are his other boons to the world. Also, there is in his hair the flower of a datura—from which plant an intoxicant is prepared (compare the wine of Dionysos and the wine of the Mass). A little image of the goddess Ganges is hidden in Ms locks; for it is he who receives on his head the impact of the descent of the divine Ganges from heaven, letting the life- and salvation-bestoring waters then flow gently to the earth for the physical and spiritual refreshment of mankind. The dance posture of the God may be visualized as the symbolic syllable AUM a't or £*b* which is the verbal equivalent of the four states of consciousness and their fields of experience. (A: waking consciousness; U: dream consciousness; M: dreamless sleep: the silence around the sacred syllable is the Unmanifest Transcendent. For a discussion of this syllable, cf, *infra,* pp. 245-247, and note 16, p. 257.) Tlie God is thus within the worshiper as we!! as without.

Such a figure illustrates the function and value of a graven image, and show-s why long sermons are unnecessary among idol-worshipers. The devotee is permitted to soak in the meaning of the divine symbol in deep silence and in his own good time. Furthermore, just as the god wears arm bands and ankle rings. so does the devotee; and these mean what the god's mean. They are made of gold instead of serpents, gold (the metal that does not corrode) symbolizing immortality; i.e., immortality is the mysterious creative energy of God, which is the beauty of the body.

Many other details of life and local custom are similarly duplicated, interpreted, and thus validated, in the details of the anthropomorphic idols. In this way, the whole of life is made into a support for meditation. One lives in the niiclst ot a silent sermon all the time.

* The brahminical thread is a cotton thread worn by the members of the three upper castes (the so-called twice-born) of India. It is passed over the head and right arm, so diat it rests on the left shoulder and runs across the body (chest and back) to the right hip. This symbolizes the second birth of the twice-born, the thread itself representing the threshold, or sun door, so that the twice-born is dwelling at once in time and eternity.

left behind, but projected before; and the fixating idolatry of that pedagogical nonthing is itself the fault that keeps one steeped in a sense of sin, sealing the potentially adult spirit from a better balanced, more realistic view of the father, and therewith of the world. Atonement (at-one-ment) consists in no more than the abandonment of that self-generated double monster—the dragon thought to be God (superego)[4'] and the dragon thought to be Sin (repressed id). But this requires an abandonment of the attachment to ego itself; and that is what is difficult. One must have a faith that the father is merciful, and then a reliance on that mercy. Therewith, the center of belief is transferred outside of the bedeviling god's tight scaly ring, and the dreadful ogres dissolve.

It is in this ordeal that the hero may derive hope and assurance from the helpful female figure, by whose magic (pollen charms or power of intercession) he is protected through all the frightening experiences of the father's ego-shattering initiation. For if it is impossible to trust the terrifying father-face, then one's faith must be centered elsewhere (Spider Woman, Blessed Mother); and with that reliance for support, one endures the crisis—only to find, in the end, that the father and mother reflect each other, and are in essence the same.

When the Twin Warriors of the Navaho, having departed from Spider Woman with her advice and protective charms, had made their perilous way between the rocks that crush, through the reeds that cut to pieces, and the cactus plants that tear to pieces, and then across the boiling sands, they came at last to the house of the Sun, their father. The door was guarded by two bears. These arose and growled; but the words that Spider Woman had taught the boys made the animals crouch down again. After the bears, there threatened a pair of serpents, then winds, then lightnings: the guardians of the ultimate threshold.[48] All were readily appeased, however, with the words of the prayer.

Built of turquoise, the house of the Sun was great and square, and it stood on the shore of a mighty water. The boys entered it, and they beheld a woman sitting in the west, two handsome young men in the south, two handsome young women in the north. The young women stood up without a word, wrapped the newcomers in four sky-coverings, and placed them on a shelf. The boys lay quietly. Presently a rattle hanging over the door shook four times and one of the young women said, "Our father is coming."

The bearer of the sun strode into his home, removed the sun from his back, and hung it on a peg on the west wall of the room, where it shook and clanged for some time, going "tla, tla, tla, tla.[la]" He turned to the older woman and demanded angrily: "Who were those two that entered here today?" But the woman did not reply. The young people looked at one another. The bearer of the sun put his question angrily four times before the woman said to him at last: "It would be well for you not to say too much. Two young men came hither today, seeking their father. You have told me that you pay no visits when you go abroad, and that you have met no woman but me. Whose sons, then, are these?" She pointed to the bundle on the shelf, and the children smiled significantly at one another.

The bearer of the sun took the bundle from the shelf, unrolled the four robes (the robes of dawn, blue sky, yellow evening light, and darkness), and the boys fell out on the floor. He immediately seized them. Fiercely, he flung them at some great sharp spikes of white shell that stood in the east. The boys tightly clutched their life-feathers and bounded back. The man hurled them, equally, at spikes of turquoise in the south, haliotis in the west, and black rock in the north.[49] The boys always

[4'] Or "interego" (see *supra,* p. 75, note 45).

[la] Compare the numerous thresholds crossed by Inanna, *supra,* pp. 96–95

[v] Four symbolical colors, representing the points of the compass, play a prominent role in Navaho iconography and cult. They are white, blue, yellow, and black, signifying, respecti\ely, easl, south, west, and north. These correspond to the red, white, Ejreen, and black on the hat of the African trickster divinity Edshu (see p. 42, *supra);* for the House of the Father, like the Father himself, symbolizes the Center.

The Twin Heroes arc tested against the symbols of the four directions, to discover whether they partake of the faults and limitations of any one of the quarters.

clutched their life-feathers tightly and came bounding back. "I wish it were indeed true," said the Sun, "that they were my children."

The terrible father assayed then to steam the boys to death in an overheated sweatlodge. They were aided by the winds, who provided a protected retreat within the lodge in which to hide. "Yes, these are my children," said the Sun when they emerged—but that was only a ruse; for he was still planning to trick them. The final ordeal was a smoking-pipe filled with poison. A spiny caterpillar warned the boys and gave them something to put into their mouths. They smoked the pipe without harm, passing it back and forth to one another till it was finished. They even said it tasted sweet. **The** Sun was proud. He was completely satisfied. "Now, my children," he asked, "what is it you want from me? Why do you seek me?" The Twin Heroes had won the full confidence of the Sun, their father.[70]

The need for great care on the part of the father, admitting to his house only those who have been thoroughly tested, is illustrated by the unhappy exploit of the lad Phaethon, described in a famous tale of the Greeks. Born of a virgin in Ethiopia and taunted by his playmates to search the question of his father, he set off across Persia and India to find the palace of the Sun—for his mother had told him that his father was Phoebus, the god who drove the solar chariot.

"The palace of the Sun stood high on lofty columns, bright with glittering gold and bronze that shone like fire. Gleaming ivory crowned the gables above; the double folding doors were radiant with burnished silver. And the workmanship was more beautiful than the materials."

Climbing the steep path, Phaethon arrived beneath the roof. And he discovered Phoebus sitting on an emerald throne, surrounded by the Hours and the Seasons, and by Day, Month, Year, and Century. The bold youngster had to halt at the threshold, his mortal eyes unable to bear the light; but the father gently spoke to him across the hall.

}, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-113.

"Why have you come?" the father asked. "What do you seek, O Phaethon—a son no father need deny'?"

The lad respectfully replied: "O my father (if thou grantest me the right to use that name)! Phoebus! Light of the entire world! Grant me a proof, my father, by which all may know me for thy true son."

The great god set his glittering crown aside and bade the boy approach. He gathered him into his arms. Then he promised, sealing the promise with a binding oath, that any proof the lad desired would be granted.

What Phaethon desired was his father's chariot, and the right to drive the winged horses for a day.

"Such a request," said the father, "proves my promise to have been rashly made." He put the boy a little away from him and sought to dissuade him from the demand, "In your ignorance,[1] said he, "you are asking for more than can be granted even to the gods. Each of the gods may do as he will, and yet none, save myself, has the power to take his place in my chariot of fire; no, **not** even Zeus."

Phoebus reasoned. Phaethon was adamant. Unable to retract the oath, the father delayed as long as time would allow, but was finally forced to conduct his stubborn son to the prodigious chariot: its axle of gold and the pole of gold, its wheels with golden tires and a ring of silver spokes. The yoke was set with chrysolites and jewels. The Hours were already leading the four horses from their lofty stalls, breathing fire and filied with ambrosial food. They put upon them the clanking bridles; the great animals pawed at the bars. Phoebus anointed Phaethon's face with an ointment to protect it against the flames and then placed on his head the radiant crown.

"If, at least, you can obey your father's warnings," the divinity advised, "spare the lash and hold tightly to the reins. The horses go fast enough of themselves. And do not follow the straight road directly through the five zones of heaven, but turn off at the fork to the left—the tracks of my wheels you will clearly see. Furthermore, so that the sky and earth may have equal heat, be careful to go neither too high nor too low; for if you go too high

you will burn up the skies, and if **you** go too low ignite the earth. In the middle is the safest path.

"But hurry! While I am speaking, dewy Night has reached her goal on the western shore. We are summoned. Behold, the dawn is glowing. Boy, may P'ortune aid and conduct you better than you can guide yourself. Here, grasp the reins."

Tethys, the goddess of the sea, had dropped the bars, and the horses, with a jolt, abruptly started; cleaving with their feet the clouds; beating the air with their wings; outrunning all the winds that were rising from the same eastern quarter. Immediately—the chariot was so light without its accustomed weight—the car began to rock about like a ship tossing without ballast on the waves. The driver, panic-stricken, forgot the reins, and knew nothing of the road. Wildly mounting, the team grazed the heights of the sky and startled the remotest constellations. The Great and Little Bear were scorched. The Serpent lying curled about the polar stars grew warm, and with the heat grew dangerously fierce. Bootes took flight, encumbered with his plough. The Scorpion struck with his tail.

The chariot, having roared for some time through unknown regions of the air, knocking against the stars, next plunged down crazily to the clouds just above the ground; and the Moon beheld, in amazement, her brother's horses running below her own. The clouds evaporated. The earth burst into flame. Mountains blazed; cities perished with their walls; nations were reduced to ashes. That was the time the peoples of Ethiopia became black; for the blood was drawn to the surface of their bodies by the heat. Libya became a desert. The Nile fled in terror to the ends of the earth and hid its head, and it is hidden yet.

Mother Earth, shielding her scorched brow with her hand, choking with hot smoke, lifted her great voice and called upon Jove, the father of all things, to save his world. "Look around!" she cried at him. "The heavens are asmoke from pole to pole. Great Jove, if the sea perish, and the land, and all the realms of the sky, then we arc back again in the chaos of the beginning! Take thought! Take thought for the safety of our universe! Save from the flames whatever yet remains!"

Jove, the Almighty Father, hastily summoned the gods to witness that unless some measure were quickly taken all was lost. Thereupon he hurried to the zenith, took a thunderbolt in his right hand, and flung it from beside his ear. The car shattered; the horses, terrified, broke loose; Phaethon, fire raging in his hair, descended like a falling star. And the river Po received his burning frame.

The Naiads of that land consigned his body to a tomb, whereupon this epitaph:

Here Phaethon lies: in Phoebus' car he fared,
And though he greatly failed, more greatly dared.[51]

This tale of indulgent parenthood illustrates the antique idea that when the roles of life are assumed by the improperly initiated, chaos supervenes. When the child outgrows the popular idyl of the mother breast and turns to face the world of specialized adult action, it passes, spiritually, into the sphere of the father—who becomes, for his son, the sign of the future task, and for his daughter, of the future husband. Whether he knows it or not, and no matter what his position in society, the father is the initiating priest through whom the young being passes on into the larger world. And just as, formerly, the mother represented the "good" and "evil," so now does he, but with this complication—that there is a new element of rivalry in the picture: the son against the father for the mastery of the universe, and the daughter against the mother to *be* the mastered world.

The traditional idea of initiation combines an introduction of the candidate into the techniques, duties, and prerogatives of his vocation with a radical readjustment of his emotional relationship to the parental images. The mystagogue (father or father-substitute) is to entrust the symbols of office only to a son who has been effectually purged of all inappropriate infantile cathexes—for whom the just, impersonal exercise of the powers will not be rendered impossible by unconscious (or perhaps even conscious and rationalized) motives of self-aggrandizement, personal preference,

"> ' Ovid, *up. cit.,* II (adapted from Miller; Loeb Library).

or resentment. Ideally, the invested one has been divested of his mere humanity and is representative of an impersonal cosmic force. He is the twice-born: he has become himself the father. And he is competent, consequently, now to enact himself the role of the initiator, the guide, the sun door, through whom one may pass from the infantile illusions of "good" and "evil" to an experience of the majesty of cosmic law, purged of hope and fear, and at peace in the understanding of the revelation of being.

"Once I dreamed," declared a little boy, "that I was captured by cannon balls *[sic].* They all began to jump and yell. I was surprised to see myself in my own parlor. There was a fire, and a kettle was over it full of boiling water. They threw me into it and once in a while the cook used to come over and stick a fork into me to see if I was cooked. Then he took me out and gave me to the chief, who was just going to bite me when I woke up."'[2]

"I dreamed that I was at table with my wife," states a civilized gentleman. "During the course of the meal I reached over and took our second child, a baby, and in a matter-of-fact fashion proceeded to put him into a green soup bowl, full of hot water or some hot liquid; for he came out cooked thoroughly, like chicken fricassee.

"I laid the viand on a bread board at the table and cut it up with my knife. When we had eaten all of it except a small part like a chicken gizzard I looked up, worried, to my wife and asked her, 'Are you sure you wanted me to do this? Did you intend to have him for supper'?'

"She answered, with a domestic frown, 'After he was so well cooked, there was nothing else to do.' I was just about to finish the last piece, when I woke up."[S3]

This archetypal nightmare of the ogre father is made actual in the ordeals of primitive initiation. The boys of the Australian Murngin tribe, as we have seen, are first frightened and sent running to their mothers. The Great Father Snake is calling for their foreskins.[34] This places the women in the role of protectresses.

[i(] Wood, *op. cit.* pp. 218-219.
[j4] *Supra,* p. 8.

A prodigious horn is blown, named Yurlunggur, which is supposed to be the call of the Great Father Snake, who has emerged from his hole. When the men come for the boys, the women grab up spears and pretend not only to fight but also to wail and cry, because the little fellows are going to be taken away and "eaten." The men's triangular dancing ground is the body of the Great Father Snake. There the boys are shown, during many nights, numerous dances symbolical of the various totem ancestors, and are taught the myths that explain the existing order of the world. Also, they are sent on a long journey to neighboring and distant clans, imitative of the mythological wanderings of the phallic ancestors.[55] In this way, "within" the Great Father Snake as it were, they are introduced to an interesting new object world that compensates them for their loss of the mother; and the male phallus, instead of the female breast, is made the central point *(axis mundi)* of the imagination.

The culminating instruction of the long series of rites is the release of the boy's own hero-penis from the protection of its foreskin, through the frightening and painful attack upon it of the circumciser.[1"] Among the Arunta, for example, the sound of the bull-roarers is heard from all sides when the moment has arrived for this decisive break from the past. It is night, and in the weird light of the fire suddenly appear the circumciser and his assistant. The noise of the bull-roarers is the voice of the great demon of the ceremony, and the pair of operators are its apparition. With their beards thrust into their mouths, signifying anger, their legs widely extended, and their arms stretched forward, the

" W. Lloyd Warner, *A Black Civilization* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1937], pp. 260-285.

•"" "The father [i.e., circumciser] is the one who *separates* the child from the mother," writes Dr. Rohcim. "What is cut off the boy is really the mother. . . . The glans in the foreskin is the child in the mother" (Geza Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream,* pp. 72-73].

It is interesting to note the continuance to this day of the rite of circumcision in the Hebrew and Mohammedan cults, where the feminine element has been scrupulously purged from the official, strictly monotheistic mythology. "God frn'^ivrth noi lin MM nt 1'imiij^ oti'.-i s'iicK with Him," we read in the Kin'an. "The Pagans, leaving Allah, call but upon female deities" (Koran, 4:116, 117).

two men stand perfectly still, the actual operator in front, holding in his right hand the small flint knife with which the operation is to be conducted, and his assistant pressing close up behind him, so that the two bodies are in contact with each other. Then a man approaches through the firelight, balancing a shield on his head and at the same time snapping the thumb and first finger of each hand. The bull-roarers are making a tremendous din, which can be heard by the women and children in their distant camp. The man with the shield on his head goes down on one knee just a little in front of the operator, and immediately one of the boys is lifted from the ground by a number of his uncles, who carry him feet foremost and place him on the shield, while in deep, loud tones a chant is thundered forth by all the men. The operation is swiftly performed, the fearsome figures retire immediately from the lighted area, and the boy, in a more or less dazed condition, is attended to, and congratulated by the men to whose estate he has now just arrived. "You have done well," they say; "you did not cry out."[157]

The native Australian mythologies teach that the first initiation rites were carried out in such a way tiiat all the young men were **killed**-[58] The ritual is tiius shown to be, among other things, a dramatized expression of the Oedipal aggression of the elder generation; and the circumcision, a mitigated castration.[59] But the rites provide also for the cannibal, patricidal impulse of die younger, rising group of males, and at the same time reveal the benign self-giving aspect of the archetypal father; for during the long period of symbolical instruction, there is a time when the initiates are forced to live only on the fresh-drawn blood of the older men. "The natives," we are told, "are particularly interested in the Christian communion rite, and having heard about it from missionaries they compare it to the blood-drinking rituals of their own."[150]

[57] Sir Baldwin Spencer and F. **J. Gillen,** ***The*** *Arunta* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1927), Vol. I. pp. 201-203.

[58] Roheim, *The Eternal Ones ofthe Dream,* pp. 49 ff.

[59] *Ibid.,*\>.75.

[60] *Ibid.,* p. 227. citing R. and C. Berndt, "A Preliminary Report of Field Work in the Ooldea Region, Western South Australia," *Oceania,* **XII** (1942), p. 323.

"In the evening the men come and take their places according to tribal precedence, the boy lying with his head on his father's thighs. He mast make no movement or he will die. The father blindfolds him with his hands because if the boy should witness the following proceedings it is believed that *his father and mother will both die.* The wooden vessel or a bark vessel is placed near one of the boy's mother's brothers, who, having tied his arm lightly, pierces the upper part with a nosebone and holds the arm over the vessel until a certain amount of blood has been taken. The man next to him pierces his arm, and so on, until the vessel is filled. It may hold two quarts or so. The boy takes a long draught of the blood. Should his stomach rebel, the father holds his throat to prevent his ejecting the blood, because if it happens *his father, mother, sisters, and brothers would all die.* The remainder of the blood is thrown over him.

"From this time on, sometimes for a whole moon, the boy is allowed no other food than human blood, Yamminga, the mythical ancestor, having made this law. . . . Sometimes the blood is dried in the vessel and then the guardian cuts it in sections with his nose bone, and it is eaten by the boy, the two end sections first. The sections must be regularly divided or the boy will die."[61]

Frequently the men who give their blood faint and remain in a state of coma for an hour or more because of exhaustion/'[2] "In former times," writes another observer, "this blood (drunk ceremonially by the novices) was obtained from a man who was killed for the purpose, and portions of his body were eaten."[63] "Here," comments Dr. Roheim, "we come as near to a ritual representation of the killing and eating of the primal father as we can ever get."[64]

[61] Roheim, *The Eternal Ones ofthe Dream,* pp. 227-228, citing D. Bates, *The Passing ofthe Aborigines (*1939), pp. 41-43.

[62] Roheim, *The Eternal Ones ofthe- Dream,* p. 231.

[63] R. H. Mathews, "The Walloonggura Ceremony," *Queensland (ieogmphical Journal,* N. S., XV (1899-1900), p. 70; cited by Roheim, *The Eternal Ones ofthe Dream,* p. 232.

[64] In one recorded case, two of the boys looked vip when they were not supposed to. "Then the old men went forward, each with a stoni[1] knite in hand. Stooping over the two boys they opened veins in each. Out flowed the blood,

There can be no doubt that no matter how unilluminatcd the stark-naked Australian savages may seem to us, their symbolical ceremonials represent a survival into modern times of an incredibly old system of spiritual instruction, the far-flung evidences of which are to be found not only in all the lands and islands bordering the Indian Ocean, but also among the remains of the archaic centers of what we tend to regard as our own very special brand of civilization.[65] Just how much the old men know, it is difficult to judge from the published accounts of our Occidental observers. But it can be seen from a comparison of the figures of Australian ritual with those familiar to us from higher cultures, that the great themes, the ageless archetypes, and their operation upon the soul remain the same.

and the other men aU raised a death cry. The boys were lifeless. The old *wirreenuns* (medicine men). clipping their stone knives in the blood, touched with them the lips of all present. . . . The bodies of the Boorah victims were cooked. Each man who had been to five Boorahs ate a piece of this flesh; no others were allowed to see this done" (K. Langloh Farker, *I~hs Euahlayi Tribe,* 1905, pp. 72-73; cited by Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream,* p. 232).

^ For an astounding revelation of the survival in contemporary Melanesia of a symbolic system essentially identical with that of the Egypto-Babylonian, Trojan-CreUm "Irdjvrmtb cim'.plex *'A* the MTTPC! niiilritniLiis] R.r... LL Jr.bn Layard, *Stone Men ofMalekula* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1942). W. F. J. Knight, in his *Cumaean Gates* (Oxford, 1936), has discussed the evident relationship of the Malekulan "journey of the soul to the underworld" with the classical descent of Aeneas, and the Babylonian of Gilgamesh. W. J. Perry. *The Children of the Sun* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1923), thought he could recognize evidences of this cultuTe-continuity running all the way from **Egypt** and Sumer out through the Oceanic area" to North America. Many scholars have pointed out the dose correspondences between the details of the classical Greek and primitive Australian rites of initiation, notably Jane Harrison, *Themis, A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion* (2nd revised edition; Cambridge University Press, 1927).

It is still uncertain by what means and in what eras the mythological and cultural patterns of the various archaic civilizations may have been disseminated to the farthest corners of the earth; yet it can be stated categorically that tew (if :myj <:f the so-culled "primitive cultures"* studied b\ our anthropologist[1]-! represent autochthonous growths. They are, rather, local adaptations, provincial degenerations, and immensely old fossilizations, of folkways that were developed in very different lands, often under much less simple circumstances, and by other races.

ATONEMENT WITH THE FATHER

Come, 0 Dithyramb™,
Enter this my male womb.[66]

This cry of Zeus, the Thunder-hurler, to the child, his son, Dionysos, sounds the leitmotif of the Greek mysteries of the initiatory second birth. "And bull-voices roar thereto from somewhere out of the unseen, fearful semblances, and from a drum an image as it were of thunder underground is borne on the air heavy with dread.[1v17] The word "Dithyrambos" itself, as an epithet of the killed and resurrected Dionysos, was understood by the Greeks to signify "him of the double door," him who had survived the awesome miracle of the second birth. And we know that the choral songs (dithyrambs) and dark, blood-reeking rites in celebration of the god—associated with the renewal of vegetation, the renewal of the moon, the renewal of the sun, the renewal of the soul, and solemnized at the season of the resurrection of the year god—represent the ritual beginnings of the Attic tragedy. Throughout the ancient world such myths and rites abounded: the deaths and resurrections of Tammuz, Adonis, Mithra, Virbius, Attis, and Osiris, and of their various animal representatives (goats and sheep, bulls, pigs, horses, fish, and birds) are known to every student of comparative, religion; the popular carnival games of the Whitsuntide Louts, Green Georges, John Barleycorns, and Kostrubonkos, Carrying-out-Winter, Bringing-in-Summer, and Killing of the Christmas Wren, have continued the tradition, in a mood of frolic, into our contemporary calendar;"[8] and through the Christian church (in the mythology of the Fall and Redemption, Crucifixion and Resurrection, the "second birth" of baptism, the initiatory blow on the cheek at

[60] Euripides. *The liacchae,* 526 f.

"[7] Aeschylus, Frg. 57 (Nauck); cited by Jane Harrison *(Themis, p.* 61) in her discussion 'of the role of the bull-roarer in classical and Australian rites of initiation. For an introduction to the subject of the bull-roarer, see Andrew Lang, *Custom OIK! \l'ith* I2IKI n-.Kri"! i-cliuon; I Guidon: L,<nr\"Lijaris. (.in'L-n, and Co., 1885), pp. 29-44.

[a8] All of these are described and discussed at length by Sir James G. Frazer in *The Golden Bough.*

confirmation, the symbolical eating of the Flesh and drinking of the Blood) solemnly, and sometimes effectively, we are united to those immortal images of initiatory might, through the sacramental operation of which, man, since the beginning of his day on earth, has dispelled the terrors of his phenomenality and won through to the all-transfiguring vision of immortal being. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit oftered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"[6]*

There is a folktale told by the Basumbwa of East Africa, of a man whose dead father appeared to him, driving the cattle of Death, and conducted him along a path that went into the ground, as into a vast burrow. They came to an extensive area where there were some people. The father hid the son and went off to sleep. The Great Chief, Death, appeared the next morning. One side of him was beautiful; but the other side was rotten, maggots were dropping to the ground. His attendants were gathering the maggots. The attendants washed the sores, and when they had finished, Death said: "The one born today: if he goes trading, he will be robbed. The woman who conceives today: she will die with the child conceived. The man who cultivates today: his crops have perished. The one who is to go into the jungle has been eaten by the lion."

Death thus pronounced the universal curse, and returned to rest. But the following morning, when he appeared, his attendants washed and perfumed the beautiful side, massaging it with oil. When they had finished, Death pronounced the blessing: "The one born today: may he become wealthy. May the woman who conceives today give birth to a child who will live to be old. The one born today: let him go into the market; may he strike good bargains; may he trade with the blind. The man who is to enter the jungle: may he kill game; may he discover even elephants. Because today I pronounce the benediction."

[6] Hebrews, 9:1.3-14.

The father then said to the son: "If you had arrived today, many things would have come into your possession. But now it is clear that poverty has been ordained for you. Tomorrow you had better go."

And the son returned to his home.'[0]

The Sun in the Underworld, Lord of the Dead, is the other side of the same radiant king who rules and gives the day; for "Who is it that sustains you from the sky and from the earth? And who is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And who is it that rules and regulates all affairs?"[71] We recall the Wachaga tale of the very poor man, Kyazimba, who was transported by a crone to the zenith, where the Sun rests at noon;[73] there the Great Chief bestowed on him prosperity. And we recall the trickster-god Edshu, described in a tale from the other coast of Africa:[73] spreading strife was his greatest joy. These are differing views of the same dreadful Providence. In him are contained and from him proceed the contradictions, good and evil, death and life, pain and pleasure, boons and deprivation. As the person of the sun door, he is the fountainhead of all the pairs of opposites. "With Him are the keys of the Unseen. … In the end, unto Him will be your return; then will He show you the truth of all that ye did."'[4]

The mystery of the apparently self-contradictory father is rendered tellingly in the figure of a great divinity of prehistoric Peru, named Viracocha. His tiara is the sun; he grasps a thunderbolt in either hand; and from his eyes descend, in the form of tears, the rains that refresh the life of the valleys of the world. Viracocha is the Universal God, the creator of all things; and yet, in the legends of his appearances upon the earth, he is shown

[70] Le P. A. Capus des Peres-Blanes, "Contes, Chants et Proverbes des Basumbwa dans VAfriqiie Orientale," *Zeitschrift fur afiikaniscke und oceanische Sprachen*, Vol. 1ll (Berlin, 1897), pp. 363-364.

[71] Koran, 10:31.

[72] *Supri*, p. 63.

[73] *Supra*, p. 42. The Basumbwa (tale of the Great Chief, Death) and the Wachaga (tale of Kyazimba) are East African peoples; the Yoruba (talc of Edshu) inhabit the West Coast colony of Nigeria.

[71] Koran, 6:59, 60.

wandering as a beggar, in rags and reviled. One is reminded **of** the Gospel of Mary and Joseph at the inn-doors **of Bethlehem,**[75] and of the classical story of the begging of Jove and Mercury at the home of Baucis and Philemon.[76] One is reminded also of the unrecognized Edshu. This is a theme frequently encountered in mythology; its sense is caught in the words of the Koran: "wither-soever ye turn, there is the Presence of Allah."[77] **"Though** He is hidden in all things," say the Hindus, "that Soul shines not forth; yet He is seen by subtle seers with superior, subtle intellect."[7a] "Split the stick," runs a Gnostic aphorism, "and there is Jesus."

Viracocha, therefore, in this manner of manifesting his ubiquity, participates in the character of the highest of the universal gods. Furthermore his synthesis of sun-god and storm-god is familiar. We know it through the Hebrew mythology of Yahweh, in whom the traits of two gods are united (Yahweh, a storm-god, and El, a solar); it is apparent in the Navaho personification of the father of the Twin Warriors; it is obvious in the character of Zeus, as well as in the thunderbolt and halo of certain forms of the Buddha image. The meaning is that the grace that pours into the universe through the sun door is the same as the energy of the bolt that annihilates and is itself indestructible: the delusion-shattering light of the Imperishable is the same as the light that creates. Or again, in terms of a secondary polarity of nature: the fire blazing in the sun glows also in the fertilizing storm; the energy behind the elemental pair of opposites, fire and water, is one and the same.

But the most extraordinary and profoundly moving of the traits of Viracocha, this nobly conceived Peruvian rendition of the universal god, is the detail that is peculiarly his own, namely that of the tears. The living waters are the tears of God. Herewith the world-discrediting insight of the monk, "All life is

[7i] Luke, 2:7.
[7i] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* VIII, 618-724.
"Koran, 2:115.
[7n] *Katha Upanishad,* 3:12.

sorrowful," is combined with the world-begetting affirmative of the father: "Life must be!" In full awareness of the **life** anguish of the creatures of his hand, in full consciousness of the roaring wilderness of pains, the brain-splitting fires of the deluded, self-ravaging, lustful, angry universe of his creation, this divinity acquiesces in the deed of supplying life to life. To withhold the seminal waters would be to annihilate; yet to give them forth is to create this world that we know. For the essence of time is flux, dissolution of the momentarily existent; and the essence of life is time. In his mercy, in his love for the forms of time, this demiurgic man of men yields countenance to the sea of pangs; but in his full awareness of what he is doing, the seminal waters of the life that he gives are the tears of his eyes.

The paradox of creation, the coming of the forms of time out of eternity, is the germinal secret of the father. It can never be quite explained. Therefore, in every system of theology there is an umbilical point, an Achilles tendon which the finger of mother life has touched, and where the possibility of perfect knowledge has been impaired. The problem of the hero is to pierce himself (and therewith his world) precisely through that point; to shatter and annihilate that key knot of his limited existence.

The problem of the hero going to meet the father is to open his soul beyond terror to such a degree that he **will** be ripe to understand how the sickening and insane tragedies of this vast and ruthless cosmos are completely validated in the majesty of Being. The hero transcends life with its peculiar blind spot and for a moment rises to a glimpse of the source. He beholds the face of the father, understands—and the two are atoned.

In the Biblical story of Job, the Lord makes no attempt to justify in human or any other terms the ill pay meted out to his virtuous servant, "a simple and upright man, and fearing God, and avoiding evil." Nor was it for any sins of their own that Job's servants were slain by the Chaldean troops, his sons and daughters crushed by a collapsing roof. When his friends arrive to console him, they declare, with a pious faith in God's justice, that Job must have done some evil to have deserved to be so frightfully afflicted. But the honest, courageous, horizon-searching

sufferer insists that his deeds have been good; whereupon the comforter, Elihu, charges him with blasphemy, as naming himself more just than God.

When the Lord himself answers Job out of the whirlwind, He makes no attempt to vindicate His work in ethical terms, but only magnifies His Presence, bidding Job do likewise on earth in human emulation of the way of heaven: "Gird up thy loins now like a man; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. **Wilt** thou also disannul my judgment? Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayst be righteous'? Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud and abase him. Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret. Then I will also confess unto thee that thine own hand can save thee."[fl]

There is no word of explanation, no mention of the dubious wager with Satan described in chapter one of the Rook of Job; only a thunder-and-lightning demonstration of the fact of facts, namely that man cannot measure the will of God, which derives from a center beyond the range of human categories. Categories, indeed, are totally shattered by the Almighty of the Book of Job, and remain shattered to the last. Nevertheless, to Job himself the revelation appears to have made soul-satisfying sense. He was a hero who, by his courage in the fiery furnace, his unreadiness to break down and grovel before a popular conception of the character of the All Highest, had proven himself capable of facing a greater revelation than the one that satisfied his friends. We cannot interpret his words of the last chapter as those of a man merely intimidated. They are the words of one who has *seen* something surpassing anything that has been *said* by way of justification. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."[80] The pious comforters are humbled; Job is rewarded with a fresh house, fresh servants, and fresh daughters and sons. "After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons[1] sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."[81]

For the son who has grown really to know the father, the agonies of the ordeal are readily borne; the world is no longer a vale of tears but a bliss-yielding, perpetual manifestation of the Presence. Contrast with the wrath of the angry God known to .Jonathan Edwards and his flock, the following tender lyric from the miserable east-European ghettos of that same century:

Oh, Lord of the Universe
I will sing Thee a song.
Where canst Thou be found,
And where canst Thou not be found?
Where Jpass—there art Thou.
Where I remain—there, too, Thou art.
Thou, Thou, and only Thou.

Doth it go well—'tis *thanks to Thee.*
Doth it go ill—ah, 'tis also thanks to Thee.

Thou art, Thou hast been, and Thou wilt be.
Thou didst reign, Thou reignest, and Thou wilt reign.

Thine is Heaven, Thine is Earth.
Thoufillest the high regions,
And Thoufillest the low regions.
Wheresoever I turn, Thou, oh Thou, art there?[2]

[80] *Ibid.,* 42:5-6.
[81] *Ibid.,* 4-2:16-17.
[a]- Leon Stein, "Hassidic Music," *The Chicago Jewish Forum,* Vol. II, No. 1 (Fall, 194.3), p. 16.

Apotheosis

One of the most powerful and beloved of the Bodhisattvas of the Mahayana Buddhism of Tibet, China, and Japan is the Lotus Bearer, Avalokiteshvara, "The Lord Looking Down in Pity,[1] so called because he regards with compassion all sentient creatures suffering the evils of existence."[3] To him goes the millionfold-repeated prayer of the prayer wheels and temple gongs of Tibet: *Om mani padme hum,* "The jewel is in the lotus." To him go perhaps more prayers per minute than to any single divinity known to man; for when, during his final life on earth as a human being, he shattered for himself the bounds of the last threshold (which moment opened to him the timelessness of the void beyond the frustrating mirage-enigmas of the named and bounded cosmos), he paused: he made a vow that before entering the void he would bring all creatures without exception to enlightenment; and since then he has permeated the whole texture of existence with the divine grace of his assisting presence, so that the least prayer addressed to him, throughout the vast

Hinayana Buddhism **(the Buddhism surviving** in Ceylon, Burma, ar Siam) reverses the Buddha as a human hero, a supreme saint and sag Mahayana Buddhism, on the other hand (the Buddhism of the north), **regan** the Enlightened One as a world savior, an incarnation of the universal princ

A Bodhisattva is a personage on the point of Buddhahood: according to tl Hinayana view, an adept who will become a Buddha in a subsequent "reinca nation; according to the Mahayana view (as the following paragraphs w show), a type of world savior, representing particularly the universal princip of compassion. The word *bodhisattva* (Sanskrit) means: "whose being i

Mahayana Buddhism has developed a pantheon of many Bodhisattvas ar many past and future Buddhas. These all inflect the manifested powers of t\ transcendent, one and only Adi-Buddha ("Primal Buddha") (compare note 5 p. 81, *supra),* who is the highest conceivable source and ultimate boundary . all **being,** suspended in the void of nonbeing like a wonderful bubble.

spiritual empire of the Buddha, is graciously heard. Under differing forms he traverses the ten thousand worlds, and appears in the hour of need and prayer. He reveals himself in human form with two arms, in superhuman forms with four arms, or with six, or twelve, or a thousand, and he holds in one of his left hands the lotus of the world.

Like the Buddha himself, this godlike being is a pattern of the divine state to which the human hero attains who has gone beyond the last terrors of ignorance. "When the envelopment of consciousness has been annihilated, then he becomes free of all fear, beyond the reach of change.'[1]"' This is the release potential within us all, and which anyone can attain—through herohood; for, as we read: "All things are Buddha-things'[1,8n3 or] again (and this is the other way of making the same statement): "All beings are without self.[b]

The world is filled and illumined by, but does not hold, the Bodhisattva ("he whose being is enlightenment"); rather, it is he who holds the world, the lotus. Pain and pleasure do not enclose him, he encloses them—and with profound repose. And since he is what all of us may be, his presence, his image, the mere naming of him, helps. "He wears a garland of eight thousand rays, in which is seen fully reflected a state of perfect beauty. The color of his body is purple gold. His palms have the mixed color of five hundred lotuses, while each finger tip has eighty-four thousand signet-marks, and each mark eighty-four thousand colors; each color has eighty-four thousand rays which are soft and mild and shine over all things that exist. With these jewel hands he draws and embraces all beings. The halo surrounding his head is studded with five hundred Buddhas, miraculously transformed, each attended by five hundred Bodhisattvas, who are attended, in turn, by numberless gods. And when he puts his feet down to the ground, the flowers of diamonds and jewels that are scattered cover even-thing in all directions. The color of

[Bi] *Prajna-Paramita-Hrldaya Sutra;* "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. XLIX, Part II, p. 148; also, p. 154.

[ss] *Vajracchcdika* ("The Diamond Cutter"), 17; *ibid.,* p. 134.

his face is gold. While in his towering crown of gems stands a Buddha, two hundred and fifty miles high." [8]

In China and Japan this sublimely gentle Bodhisattva is represented nut only in male form, but also as female. Kwan Yin of China, Kwannon of Japan—the Madonna of the Far East—is precisely this benevolent regarder of the world. She will be found in every Buddhist temple of the farthest Orient. She is blessed alike to the simple and to the wise; for behind her vow there lies a profound intuition, world-redeeming, world-sustaining. The pause on the threshold of Nirvana, the resolution to forego until the end of time (which never ends) immersion in the untroubled pool of eternity, represents a realization that the distinction between eternity and time is only apparent—made, perforce, by the rational mind, but dissolved in the perfect knowledge of the mind that has transcended the pairs of opposites. What is understood is that time and eternity are two aspects of the same experience-whole, two planes of the same nondual ineffable; i.e., the jewel of eternity is in the lotus of birth and death: *om mani padme hum.*

The first wonder to be noted here is the androgynous character of the Bodhisattva: masculine Avalokiteshvara, feminine Kwan Yin. Male-female gods are not uncommon in the world of myth. They emerge always with a certain mystery; for they conduct the mind beyond objective experience into a symbolic realm where duality is left behind. Awonawilona, chief god of the pueblo of Zuni, the maker and container of all, is sometimes spoken of as he, but is actually he-she. The Great Original of the Chinese chronicles, the holy woman **T'ai** Yuan, combined in her person the masculine Yang and the feminine Yin.'" The cabalistic teachings of

[8] *Amilayur-Dkyana Sutra,* 19; *ibid.,* pp. 182-183.

[87] *Tang,* the light, active, masculine principle, and *Tin,* the dark, passive, and feminine, in their interaction underlie and constitute the whole world of forms ("the ten thousand things"). They proceed from and together make manifest *Tao:* the source and law of being. *Tao* means "road," or "way." Tao is the way or course of natun-. ck-sun\. cosmic "rclrf: 'lu' Absoluts made manifest, *'lao* is therrliirr also "truth.[1] "dy,li1 conduct.") *tm*^ Lind) *t/i* together LIS *1 no* are depleted thus: ^ *Tao* underlies the cosmos. *Tao* inhahits every created thing.

the medieval Jews, as well as the Gnostic Christian writings of the second century, represent the Word Made Flesh as androgynous-which was indeed the state of Adam as he was created, before the female aspect, Eve, was removed into another form. And among the Greeks, not only Hermaphrodite (the child of Hermes and Aphrodite),[w][1] but Eros too, the divinity of love {the first of the gods, according to Plato),[89] were in sex both female and male.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.""[0] The question may arise in the mind as to the nature of the image of God; but the answer is already given in the text, and is clear enough. "When the Holy One, Blessed be He, created the first man, He created him androgynous.'"-[11] The removal of the feminine into another form symbolizes the beginning of the fall from perfection into duality; and it was naturally followed by the discovery of the duality of good and evil, exile from the garden where God walks on earth, and thereupon the building of the wall of Paradise, constituted of the "coincidence of opposites,""[2] by which Man (now man and woman) is cut oft' from not only the vision **but** even the recollection of the image of God.

This is the Biblical version of a myth known to many lands. It represents one of the basic ways of symbolizing the mystery of creation: the devolvcment of eternity into time, the breaking of the one into the two and then the many, as well as the generation of new life through the reconjunction of the two. This image

[88] "To men 1 am Hermes; to women I appear as Aphrodite: I bear the emblems of both my parents" *{Anthoiogia Graeca ad Fidem Codices,* Vol. II).

"One part of him is his sire's, all else he has of his mother" (Martial, *Epigrams,* 4, 174; Loeb Library, Vol. II, p. 501).

Ovid's account of Hermaphrodites appears in the *Metamorphoses,* IV, 288 (T. Hampton Young. *Genital Abnormalities, Ifpriiutphrudilism, and Related Adrenal Diseases* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1937), Chapter I, "Hermaphroditism in Literature and Art."

[w] *Symposium.*

[1] Genesis. 1:27.

[11] *Midrash,* commentary on Genesis, Rabbah 8:1.

[98] *Supra, p.* H6.

stands at the beginning of the cosmogonic cycle,[5]*[3] and with equal propriety at the conclusion of the hero-task, at the moment when the wall of Paradise is dissolved, the divine form found and recollected, and wisdom regained.[94]

Tiresias, the blinded seer, was both male and female: his eyes were closed to the broken forms of the light-world of the pairs of opposites, yet he saw in his own interior darkness the destiny **of Oedipus."**[5] Shiva appears united in a single body with Shakti, his spouse-he the right side, she the left—in the manifestation known as Ardhanarisha, "The Half-Woman Lord."[96] The ancestral images of certain African and Melanesian tribes show on one being the breasts of the mother and the beard and penis of the father.[97] And in Australia, about a year following the ordeal of the circumcision, the candidate for full manhood undergoes a second ritual operation-that of subincision (a slitting open of the underside of the penis, to form a permanent cleft into the urethra). The opening is termed the "penis womb." It is a symbolical male vagina. The hero has become, by virtue of the ceremonial, more than man.[98]

The blood for ceremonial painting and for gluing white **bird's-down to** the body is derived by the Australian fathers from their subincision holes. They break open again the old wounds, and let it flow.[93] It symbolizes at once the menstrual blood of the vagina and the semen of the male, as well as urine, water, and male milk. The flowing shows that the old men have the source of **life** and nourishment within themselves;[100] i.e., that they and the inexhaustible world fountain are the same."[11]

The call of the Great Father Snake was alarming to the child; the mother was protection. But the father came. He was the guide and initiator into the mysteries of the unknown, As the original intruder into the paradise of the infant with its mother, the father is the archetypal enemy; hence, throughout life all enemies are symbolical {to the unconscious) of the father. "Whatever is killed becomes the father."[109] Hence the veneration in head-hunting communities (in New Guinea, for example) of the heads brought home from vendetta raids.[103] Hence, too, the irresistible compulsion to make war: the impulse to destroy the father is continually transforming itself into public violence. The old men of the immediate community or race protect themselves from their growing sons by the psychological magic of their totem ceremonials. They enact the ogre father, and then reveal themselves to be the feeding mother too. A new and larger paradise is thus established. But this paradise does not include the traditional enemy tribes, or races, against whom aggression is still systematically projected. All of the "good" father-mother content

[33] *Infra,* pp. 268-270.

marriages, glorified man, an androgynous angel, being a wife unto himself" *(Ulysses,* Modern Library edition, p. 210).

[95] Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus.* See also, Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* **III,** 324 ff., 511, and 516. For other examples of the hermaphrodite as priest, god, or seer, see Herodotus, 4, 67 (Rawlinson edition, Vol. **III,** pp. 46-47); Theophrastus, *Charactcres,* 16.10-11; and J. Pinkerton's *Voyage and Travels,* chapters 8, p. 427; "A New Account of the East Indies," by Alexander Hamilton. These are cited by Young, *op. cit.,* pp. 2 and 9.

[97] See Zimmer. *Myth.'u.>\c! Symbol: in Indian Art and Civilization,* Figure 70.

[57] See Plate X.

[98] Sec B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, ***Native*** *Tribes of Central Australia* (London, 1899), p. 263; Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream,* pp. 164-165. The subincision produces artificially a hypospadias resembling that of a certain class of hermaphrodites. (See the portrait of the hermaphrodite Marie Ange, in Young, *op, cit.,* p. 20.)

[TM] Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream,* p. 94.

[100] *Ibid.,* pp. 218-219.

[1LI] Compare the following view of the Bodhisattva Darmakara: "Out of his mouth there breathed a sweet and more than heavenly smell of sandal-wood. From all the pores of his hair there arose the smell of lotus, and he was pleasing to everybody, gracious and beautiful; endowed with the fulness of the best bright color. As his body was adorned with all the good signs and marks, there arose from the pores of his hair and from the palms of his hands all sorts of precious ornaments in the shape of all kinds of flowers, incense, scents, garlands, ointments, umbrellas, flags, and banners, and in the shape of all kinds of instrumental music. And there appeared also, streaming forth from the palms of his hands, all kinds of viands and drink, food, hard and soft, and sweetmeats, and all kinds of eni<>yiivni> and pleasures *(1 he Larger Sitkhav/rh-Vywha,* 10; "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. XLIX, Part 11, pp.'"26-27).

[''02] *Ibid.,* pp. 48-68.

is saved for home, while the "bad" is flung abroad and about: "for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"[104] "And slacken not in following up the enemy: if ye are suffering hardships, they are suffering similar hardships; but ye have hope from Allah, while they have none."[105]

Totem, tribal, racial, and aggressively missionizing cults represent only partial solutions of the psychological problem of subduing hate by love; they only partially initiate. Ego is not annihilated in them; rather, it is enlarged; instead of thinking only of himself, the individual becomes dedicated to the whole of *his* society. The rest of the world meanwhile (that is to say, by far the greater portion of mankind) is left outside the sphere of his sympathy and protection because outside the sphere of the protection of his god. And there takes place, then, that dramatic divorce of the two principles of love and hate which the pages of history so bountifully illustrate. Instead of clearing his own heart the zealot tries to clear the world. The laws of the City of God are applied only to his in-group (tribe, church, nation, class, or what not) while the fire of a perpetual holy war is hurled (with good conscience, and indeed a sense of pious service) against whatever uncircumcised, barbarian, heathen, "native," or alien people happens to occupy the position of neighbor.[1015]

The world is full of the resultant mutually contending bands: totem-, flag-, and party-worshipers. Even the so-called Christian nations—which are supposed to be following a "World" Redeemer-are better known to history for their colonial barbarity and internecine strife than for any practical display of that unconditioned love, synonymous with the effective conquest of ego, ego's world, and ego's tribal god, which was taught by their professed supreme Lord: "I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you. Bless them that curse you, and

[104] I Samuel, 17:26.

[105] Koran 4:104.

[1015] "For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love, this is an old rule" (from the Buddhist *Dhammapada,* **1:5; "Sacred** Books of **the East,"** Vol. X, Part I. p. 5; translation by Mas Miiller).

pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."[10a]

Once we have broken free of the prejudices of our own provincially limited ecclesiastical, tribal, or national rendition of the world archetypes, it becomes possible to understand that the supreme initiation is not that of the local motherly fathers, who then project aggression onto the neighbors for their own defense.

[107] Luke, 6:27-36.

Compare the following Christian letter:

In the Tear ofOur Lord 1682

To ye aged and beloved, Mr. John Higginson:

There be now at sea a ship called *Welcome,* which has on board 100 or more of the heretics and malignants called Quakers, with W. Perm, who is the chief scamp, at the head of them. The General Court has accordingly given sacred orders to Master Malachi Huscott, of the brig *Porpoise,* to waylay the said *Welcome* slyly as near the Cape of Cod as may be, and make captive the said Penn and his" ungodly crew, so that the Lord may be glorified and not mocked on the soil oi this iiew country " ill] ihir Ik-alb"li \\ or ship ot > hi M[1] people. Much spoil can be made of selling the whole lot to Barbadoes, where slaves fetch good pnecs in rum ;in<] ^i,iiii;ir ;isd u i- ^1ILLJ]i not only i*> the Lord i^i-n-nt good *h* punishing the wicked, but we shall make great good for His Minister and people.

Yours in the bowels of Christ.

COTTON MATHEK

(Reprinted by Professor Robert Phillips, *American Government and Its Problems,* Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941. and by Dr. Karl Menninger, *Love Against Hate,* Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942, p. 211.)

The good news, which the World Redeemer brings and which so many have been glad to hear, zealous to preach, but reluctant, apparently, to demonstrate, is that God is love, that He can be, and is to be, loved, and that all without exception are his children.[IOS] Such comparatively trivial matters as the remaining details of the credo, the techniques of worship, and devices of episcopal organization (which have so absorbed the interest of Occidental theologians that they are today seriously discussed as the principal questions of religion),[10u] are merely pedantic snares, unless kept ancillary to the major teaching. Indeed, where not so kept, they have a regressive effect: they reduce the father image back again to the dimensions of the totem. And this, of course, is what has happened throughout the Christian world. One would think that we had been called upon to decide or to know whom, of all of us, the Father prefers. Whereas, the teaching is much less nattering: "Judge not, that ye be not judged."[110] The World Savior's cross, in spite of the behavior of its professed priests, is a vastly more democratic symbol than the local flag.[111]

[108] Matthew, 22:37-40; Mark, 12:28-34; Luke, 10:25-37. Jesus is also reported to have commissioned his apostles to "teach all nations" (Matthew, 28:19), but not to persecute and pillage, or turn over to the "secular arm" those who would not hear. "Behold, 1 send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" *(ibid.,* 10:16).

[100] Dr. Karl Menninger has pointed out *{op. cit.,* pp. 195-196) that though Jewish rabbis, Protestant ministers, and Catholic priests can sometimes be brought to reconcile, on a broad basis, their theoretical differences, yet whenever they begin to describe the rules and regulations by which eternal life is to be achieved, they hopelessly differ. "Up to this point the program is impeccable," writes Dr. Menninger. "But if no one knows for certain what the rules and regulations are, it all becomes an absurdity." The reply to this, of course, is that given by Ramakrishna: "God has made different religions to suit different aspirants, times, and countries. All doctrines are only so many paths; but a path is by no means God Himself. Indeed, one can reach God if one follows any of the paths with whole hearted devotion.... One may eat a cake with icing either straight or sidewise. It will taste sweet either way" *(The Gospel of Sri Rumakriskna,* New York, 1941. p. 559).

[110] Matthew, 7:1.

[111] "And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way of consent. . . . **They** make the **king** glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies" (Hosea, 6:9; 7:3).

The understanding of the ftnal-and critical-implications of the world-redemptive words and symbols of the tradition of Christendom has been so disarranged, during the tumultuous centuries that have elapsed since St. Augustine's declaration of the holy war of the *Civitas Dei* against the *Civitas Diaboli,* that the modern thinker wishing to know the meaning of a world religion (i.e., of a doctrine of universal love) must turn his mind to the other great (and much older) universal communion: that of the Buddha, where the primary word still is peace-peace to ail beings.[112]

The following Tibetan verses, for example, from two hymns of the poet-saint Milarepa, were composed about the time that Pope Urban II was preaching the First Crusade:

Amid the City of Illusoriness of the Six World-Planes
The chief factor is the sin and obscuration born of evil works;
Therein the being followeth dictates of likes and dislikes,
Andfindeth ne'er the time to know Equality:
Avoid, O my son, likes and dislikes.[m]

If ye realize the Emptiness of All Things, Compassion
will arise within your hearts;
If ye lose all differentiation between yourselves and others, fit
to serve others ye will be;
And when in serving others ye shall win success, then shall ye
meet with me;
And finding me, ye shall attain to Buddhahood.[lu]

terms of the holy war and thus obscured. It is certainly true that there, as well as here, mam have known that thf pvipiT *\|' kl ot luirttr i^ not ufo^m pineal but psychological (compare Rumi, *Mathnawi, 2.* 2525: "What is 'beheading'? Slaying the carnal sou! in the holy war."); nevertheless, the popular and orthodox expression of both the Mohammedan and the Christian doctrines has been Sli tf[?]< H[?]jall> tJ-\|\t II Tl II1) I' /\ 3 V<*l\ M'pli)[?],t lLHI1^L1 I1'Liiting tO illSCtTT] in Cit PICT

[111] "The Hymn of the Final Precepts of the Great Saint and Bodhisattva Milarepa" *(ca.* 1051-1135 A.D.), from the *Jetsiin-Kahbum,* or Biographical History of Jetsiin-Milarepa, according to Lama Kazi Oawa-Samdup's English rendering, edited by W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa* (Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 285.

[1v] "The Hymn of the Yogic Precepts of Milarepa," *ibid.,* p. 27.1.

Peace is at the heart of all because Avalokiteshvara-Kwannon, the mighty Bodhisattva, Boundless Love, includes, regards, and dwells within (without exception) every sentient being. The perfection of the delicate wings of an insect, broken in the passage of time, he regards—and he himself is both their perfection and their disintegration. The perennial agony of man, self-torturing, deluded, tangled in the net of his own tenuous delirium, frustrated, yet having within himself, undiscovered, absolutely unutilized, the secret of release; this too he regards—and is. Serene above man, the angels; below man, the demons and unhappy dead: these all are drawn to the Bodhisattva by the rays of his jewel hands, and they are he, as he is they. The bounded, shackled centers of consciousness, myriadfold, on every plane of existence (not only in this present universe, limited by the Milky Way, but beyond, into the reaches of space), galaxy beyond galaxy, world beyond world of universes, coming into being out of the timeless pool of the void, bursting into life, and like a bubble therewith vanishing: time and time again: lives by the multitude: all suffering: each bounded in the tenuous, tight circle of itself—lashing, killing, hating, and desiring peace beyond victory: these all are the children, the mad figures of the transitory yet inexhaustible, long world dream of the All-Regarding, whose essence is the essence of Emptiness: "The Lord Looking Down in Pity."

But the name means also: "The Lord Who is Seen Within."[115] We are all reflexes of the image of the Bodhisattva. The sufferer

"The Emptiness of All Things" (Sanskrit: *s'unyatd,* "vnidness") refers, an the one hand, to the illusory nature of the phenomenal world, and on the other, to the impropriety of attributing such qualities as we may know from our experience of the phenomenal world to the Imperishable.

in the Heavenly Radiance of the Voidness,
1 m'.'r' ŁV41'ż<'l ·:·.'' •'1•:. ''·'. '•/ ćlitiV (if fOHiYp?.
YetItpervadethnilobjectsofknowledge;
Obeisance to the Immutable Voidness.

("Hymn of Milarepa in praise of his teacher," *ibid.* p. 137.)

"' *Avalokita* (Sanskrit) = "looking down," but also, "seen"; *isvara* = "Lord"; hence, both "The Lord Looking Down [in Pity]." and "The Lord Seen IWithin]" (n and *i* combine into *e* in Sanskrit; hence *Avalokitesvara).* See W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibetan Toga and Secret Doctrine* (Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 233, note 2.

within us is that divine being. We and that protecting father are one. This is the redeeming insight. That protecting father is every man we meet. And so it must be known that, though this ignorant, limited, self-defending, suffering body may regard itself as threatened by some other—the enemy—that one too is the God. The ogre breaks us, but the hero, the fit candidate, undergoes the initiation "like a man"; and behold, it was the father: we in Him and He in as.[116] The dear, protecting mother of our body could not defend us from the Great Father Serpent; the mortal, tangible body that she gave us was delivered into his frightening power. But death was not the end. New life, new birth, new knowledge of existence (so that we live not in this physique only, but in all bodies, all physiques of the world, as the Bodhisattva) was given us. That father was himself the womb, the mother, of a second birth.[11,]

This is the meaning of the image of the bisexual god. He is the mystery of the theme of initiation. We are taken from the mother, chewed into fragments and assimilated to the world-annihilating body of the ogre for whom all the precious forms and beings are only the courses of a feast; but then, miraculously reborn, we are more than we were. If the God is a tribal, racial, national, or sectarian archetype, we are the warriors of his cause; but if he is a lord of the universe itself, we then go forth as knowers to whom *all* men are brothers. And in either case, the childhood parent images and ideas of "good" and "evil[11] have been surpassed. We no longer desire and fear; we are what was

[1IS] The same idea is frequently expressed in the Upanishads; viz., "This self gives itself to that self, that self gives itself to this self. Thus they gain each other. In this form he gains yonder world, in that form he experiences this world[1ı] *(Aitareya Aranyaka, 2.* 3. 7). It is known also to the mystics of Islam:

i.e., that'which I was I am no more, the transcendent Cod is his own mirror. 1 say that I am my own mirror: tor 'u^ Ciod that speaks uuh m\ u>n£ur\ ^ind I have vanished" (Bayazid, as cited in *The Legacy of Mam,* T. W. Arnold and A. Guillaume, editors, Oxford Press, 1931, p. 216).

[117] "I came forth from Bayazid-ness as a snake from its skin. Then 1 looked. I saw that lover, beloved, and love are one, lor in the world of unity all can he one" (Bayazki,/w. *cit.).*

desired and feared. All the gods, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas have been subsumed in us, as in the halo of the mighty holder of the lotus of the world.

"Come," therefore, "and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he **will** bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."[118]

This is the sense of the first wonder of the Bodhisattva: the androgynous character of the presence. Therewith the two apparently opposite mythological adventures come together: the Meeting with the Goddess, and the Atonement with the Father. For in the first the initiate learns that male and female are (as phrased in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad)* "two halves of a split pea";[11y] whereas in the second, the Father is found to be antecedent to the division of sex: the pronoun "He" was a manner of speech, the myth of Sonship a guiding line to be erased. And in both cases it is found (or rather, recollected) that the hero himself is that which he had come to find.

The second wonder to be noted in the Bodhisattva myth is its annihilation of the distinction between life and release-from-life—which is symbolized (as we have observed) in the Bodhisattva's renunciation of Nirvana. Briefly, Nirvana means "the Extinguishing, of the Threefold Fire of Desire, Hostility, and Delusion."[120]

[118] Hosea, 6: 1-3.

[m] *Brihadaranyaku. Upaniskad,* 1. 4. 3. Cf. *infra,* p. 257.

[120] "'The verb *nirva* (Sanskrit) is, literally, 'to blow out,' not transitively, but as a fire ceases to draw. . . . Deprived of fuel, the fire of life is 'pacified,' i.e., 'jUi-m'hrd, \wi<-n 'hr :in mi has br^-r. ffHJ|< il. our áÍT£>in> lo \\\r 'p><'UT • ll Xin UULL" 'despiration in God.[1] . . . It is by ceasing to feed our fires that the peace is reached, of which it is well said in another tradition that 'it passeth understanding' " (Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism;* New York: The Philosophical Library, no date, p. 63). The word "de-spiration" is contrived from a literal Latinization of the Sanskrit *"'nirvana*"'; *nir* = "out, forth, autward, out of, out from, a\^ll^^ aiva\ Iroin"; *VCLTUI* = "blown''1; *ntt-^wtia* = "blown out, gone out, extinguished."

As the reader will recall: in the legend of the Temptation under the Bo Tree *(supra,* pp. 31-32) the antagonist of the Future Buddha was Kama-Mara, literally "Desire—Hostility,[1v] or "Love and Death," the magician of Delusion. He was a personification of the Threefold Fire and of the difficulties of the last test, a final threshold guardian to be passed by the universal hero on his supreme adventure to Nirvana. Having subdued within himself to the critical point of the ultimate ember the Threefold Fire, which is the moving power of the universe, the Savior beheld reflected, as in a mirror all around him, the last projected fantasies of his primitive physical will to live like other human beings—the will to live according to the normal motives of desire and hostility, in a delusory ambient of phenomenal causes, ends, and means. He was assailed by the last fury of the disregarded flesh. And this was the moment on which all depended; for from one coal could arise again the whole conflagration.

This greatly celebrated legend affords an excellent example of the close relationship maintained in the Orient between myth, psychology, and metaphysics. The vivid personifications prepare the intellect for the doctrine of the interdependence of the inner and the outer worlds. No doubt the reader has been struck by a certain resemblance of this ancient mythological doctrine of the dynamics of the psyche to the teachings of the modern Freudian school. According to the latter, the life-wish *(eros* or *libido,* corresponding to the Buddhist *Kama,* "desire") and the death-wish *(thanatos* or *destrudo,* which is identical with the Buddhist *Mara,* "hostility or death") are the two drives that not only move the individual from within but also animate for him the surrounding world.[121] Moreover, the unconsciously grounded delusions from which desires and hostilities arise are in both systems dispelled by psychological analysis (Sanskrit: *viveka)* and illumination (Sanskrit: *vidyd).* Yet the aims of the two teachings-the traditional and the modern-are not exactly the same.

[121] **Sigmund Freud.** *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (translated **by James Stvachey; Standard Edition, XVIII; London: The Hogarth Press, 1955).** ***Set*** **also Karl Menninger,** ***Love against Hate,*** **p. 262.**

Psychoanalysis is a technique to cure excessively suffering individuals of the unconsciously misdirected desires and hostilities that weave around them their private webs of unreal terrors and ambivalent attractions; the patient released from these finds himself able to participate with comparative satisfaction in the more realistic fears, hostilities, erotic and religious practices, business enterprises, wars, pastimes, and household tasks offered to him by his particular culture. But for the one who has deliberately undertaken the difficult and dangerous journey beyond the village compound, these interests, too, are to be regarded as based on error. Therefore the aim of the religious teaching is not to cure the individual back again to the general delusion, but to detach him from delusion altogether; and this not by readjusting the desire *(eras)* and hostility *(thanatos)—for* that would only originate a new context of delusion-but by *extinguishing* the impulses to the very root, according to the method of the celebrated Buddhist Eightfold Path:

Right Belief, Right Intentions,
Right Speech, Right Actions,
Right Livelihood, Right Endeavoring,
Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.

With the final "extirpation of delusion, desire, and hostility" (Nirvana) the mind knows that it is not what it thought: thought goes. The mind rests in its true state. And here it may dwell until the body drops away.

Stars, darkness, a lamp, a phantom, dew, a bubble,
A dream, a flash of lightning, and a cloud:
Thus we should look upon all that was made.[121,22]

The Bodhisattva, however, does not abandon life. Turning his regard from the inner sphere of thought-transcending truth (which can be described only as "emptiness," since it surpasses speech) outward again to the phenomenal world, he perceives

[123] *Vajracchedika,* 32; "Sacred Books of the East," *op. cit.,* p. 144.

without the same ocean of being that he found within. "Form is emptiness, emptiness indeed is form. Emptiness is not different from form, form is not different from emptiness. What is form, that is emptiness; what is emptiness, that is form. And the same applies to perception, name, conception, and knowledge."[123] Having surpassed the delusions of his formerly self-assertive, self-defensive, self-concerned ego, he knows without and within the same repose. What he beholds without is the visual aspect of the magnitudinous, thought-transcending emptiness on which his own experiences of ego, form, perceptions, speech, conceptions, and knowledge ride. And he is filled with compassion for the self-terrorized beings who live in fright of their own nightmare. He rises, returns to them, and dwells with them as an egoless center, through whom the principle of emptiness is made manifest in its own simplicity. And this is his great "compassionate act"; for by it the truth is revealed that in the understanding of one in whom the Threefold Fire of Desire, Hostility, and Delusion is dead, this world *is* Nirvana. "Gift waves" go out from such a one for the liberation of us all. "This our worldly life is an activity of Nirvana itself, not the slightest distinction exists between them."[124]

And so it may be said that the modern therapeutic goal of the cure back to life is attained through the ancient religious discipline, after all; only the circle traveled by the Bodhisattva is a large one; and the departure from the world is regarded not as a **fault,** but as the first step into that noble path at the remotest turn of which illumination is to be won concerning the deep emptiness of the universal round. Such an ideal is well known,

[125] The smaller *Prajna-Paramita-Hridaya Sutra; ibid.,* p. 153.

[1"] Nagarjuna. *Madhijuinik/i Skastra.*

"What is immortal and what is mortal arc harmoniously blended, for the;' arc not one, nor arc they separate" (Ashvaghosha).

"Thi.s view," writes Dr. Coomaraswamy, citing these texts, "is expressed with dramatic force in the aphorism, *Yas klesas so bodhi, yas samsaras tut nirvdnam.* 'That which is sin is also Wisdom, the realm of Becoming is also Nirvana'" (Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Buddha am! the Gospel of Buddhism;* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, [916, p. 24-5).

also, to Hinduism: the one freed in life *(jivan mukta),* desirelcss, compassionate, and wise, "with the heart concentrated by yoga, viewing all things with equal regard, beholds himself in all beings and all beings in himself. In whatever way he leads his life, that one lives in God."[125]

The story is told of a Confucian scholar who besought the twenty-eighth Buddhist patriarch, Bodhidharma, "to pacify his soul." Bodhidharma retorted, "Produce it and I will pacify it." The Confucian replied, "That is my trouble, I cannot find it." Bodhidharma said, "Your wish is granted." The Confucian understood and departed in peace.[12n]

Those who know, not only that the Everlasting lives in them, but that what they, and all things, really are *is* the Everlasting, dwell in the groves of the wish-fulfilling trees, drink the brew of immortality, and listen everywhere to the unheard music of eternal concord. These are the immortals. The Taoist landscape paintings of China and Japan depict supremely the heavenliness of this terrestrial state. The four benevolent animals, the phoenix, the unicorn, the tortoise, and the dragon, dwell amongst the willow gardens, the bamboos, and the plums, and amid the mists of sacred mountains, close to the honored spheres. Sages, with craggy bodies but spirits eternally young, meditate among these peaks, or ride curious, symbolic animals across immortal tides, or converse delightfully over teacups to the flute of Lan Ts'ai-ho.

The mistress of the earthly paradise of the Chinese immortals is the fairy goddess Hsi Wang Mu, "The Golden Mother of the Tortoise.[1r] She dwells in a palace on the K'un-lun Mountain, which is surrounded by fragrant flowers, battlements of jewels,

[1S] *Bhagavad Gita,* 6:29, 31.

This represents the perfect fulfillment of what Miss Evelyn Underhill termed "the goal of the Mystic Way: the True Unitive Life: the state of Divine Fecundity: Deification" *(op. cit., passim).* Miss Underhill, however, like Professor Toynbee *(supra,* p. 16, note 17), make the popular mistake of supposing that this ideal is peculiar to Christianity. "It is safe to say," writes Professor Salmon;[1], "that Occidental judgment 1ms been falsified, up to the present, by the need for self-assertion" (Alfred Salmony, "Die Rassenfrage in der Indienforsd-mng," *Snzialisttsche Xfoiiatsfiefte,* 8, Berlin, 1926, p. 534).

Coomarasivainy, *Hinduism mid Buddhism* * p. 74.

and a garden wall of **gold.**[127] She is formed of the pure quintessence of the western air. Her guests at her periodical "Feast of the Peaches" (celebrated when the peaches ripen, once in every sis thousand years) are served by the Golden Mother's gracious daughters, in bowers and pavilions by the Lake of Gems. Waters play there from a remarkable fountain. Phoenix marrow, dragon liver, and other meats are tasted; the peaches and the wine bestow immortality. Music from invisible instruments is heard, songs that are not from mortal lips; and the dances of the visible damsels are the manifestations of the joy of eternity in time.[128]

The tea ceremonies of Japan are conceived in the spirit of the Taoist earthly paradise. The tearoom, called "the abode of fancy," is an ephemeral structure built to enclose a moment of poetic intuition. Called **too** "the abode of vacancy," it is devoid of ornamentation. Temporarily it contains a single picture or flower-arrangement. The teahouse is called "the abode of the unsymmetrical": the unsymmetrical suggests movement; the purposely unfinished leaves a vacuum into which the imagination of the beholder can pour.

The guest approaches by the garden path, and must stoop through the low entrance. He makes obeisance to the picture or flower-arrangement, to the singing kettle, and takes his place on the floor. The simplest object, framed by the controlled simplicity of the tea house, stands out in mysterious beauty, its silence holding the secret of temporal existence. Each guest is permitted to complete the experience in relation to himself. The members of the company thus contemplate the universe in miniature, and become aware of their hidden fellowship with the immortals.

The great tea masters were concerned to make of the divine wonder an experienced moment; then out of the teahouse the influence was carried into the home; and out of the home distilled

[m] This is the wall of Paradise, see *supra,* pp. 82 and 141. We are now inside. Hsi Wang Mo is the feminine aspect of the Lord who walks in the Garden, who created man in his own image, male and female (Genesis, 1:27).

[138] Cf. E. T. C. Werner, *A Dictionary of Chinese Mythology* (Shanghai. 1932), p. 163.

into the nation.[12]-[1] During the long and peaceful Tokugawa period (1603-1868), before the arrival of Commodore Perry in 1854, the texture of Japanese life became so imbued with significant formal ization that existence to the slightest detail was a conscious expression of eternity, the landscape itself a shrine. Similarly, throughout the Orient, throughout the ancient **world,** and in the pre-Columbian Amerieas, society and nature represented to the mind the inexpressible. "The plants, rocks, fire, water, all are alive. They watch us and see our needs. They see when we have nothing to protect us," declared an old Apache storyteller, "and it is then that they reveal themselves and speak to us.[1,130] This is what the Buddhist calls "the sermon of the inanimate."

A certain Hindu ascetic who lay down to rest beside the holy Ganges, placed his feet up on a Shiva-symbol (a "lingam," a combined phallus and vulva, symbolizing the union of the God with his Spouse). A passing priest observed the man reposing thus and rebuked him. "How can you dare to profane this symbol of God by resting your feet on it?" demanded the priest. The ascetic replied, "Good sir, I am sorry; but will you kindly take my feet and place them where there is no such sacred lingam'?" The priest seized the ankles of the ascetic and lifted them to the right, but when he set them down a phallus sprang from the ground and they rested as before. He moved them again; another phallus received them. "Ah, I see!" said the priest, humbled; and he made obeisance to the reposing saint and went his way.

The third wonder of the Bodhisattva myth is that the first wonder (namely, the bisexual form) is symbolical of the second (the identity of eternity and time). For in the language of the divine pictures, the world of time is the great mother womb. The life therein, begotten by the father, is compounded of her darkness and his light.[131] We are conceived in her and dwell removed

[129] See Okakura Kakuzo, *The Book of Tea* **(New** York, 1906). See also Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (London, 1927), and Lafcadio Hearn, *Japan* (New York, 1904,).

[130] Morris Edward Opler, *Myths and Tales of the Jiraritla Apache India?is* (Memoirs of the American Folklore Society, VoL XXXI, 1938), *p.* 110.

[151] Compare *supra,* p. **143,** note 101.

from the father, but when we pass from the womb of time at death {which is our birth to eternity) we are given into his hands. The wise realize, even within this womb, that they have come from and are returning to the father; while the very wise know that she and he are in substance one.

This is the meaning of those Tibetan images of the union of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas with their own feminine aspects that have seemed so indecent to many Christian critics. According to one of the traditional ways of looking at these supports of meditation, the female form (Tibetan: *yum)* is to be regarded as time and the male *{yab)* as eternity. The union of the two is productive of the world, in which all things are at once temporal and eternal, created in the image of this self-knowing male-female God. The initiate, through meditation, is led to the recollection of this Form of forms *{yab-yum)* within himself. Or on the other hand, the male figure may be regarded as symbolizing the initiating principle, the method; in which case the female denotes the goal to which initiation leads. But this goal is Nirvana (eternity). And so it is that both the male and the female are to be envisioned, alternately, as time and eternity. That is to say, the two are the same, each is both, and the dual form *{yab-yum)* is only an effect of illusion, which itself, however, is not different from enlightenment.[1]-[12]

[""2] Comparatively, the Hindu goddess Kali *(supra,* p. 105) is shown standing on the prostrate form of the god Shiva, her spouse. She brandishes the sword of death, i.e., spiritual discipline. The hlood-dripping human head tells the devotee that he that loseth his life for her sake shall find it. The gestures of "fear not" and "bestowing boons" teach that she protects her children, that the pairs of opposites of the universal agony are not what they seem, arid that for one centered in eternity the phantasmagoria of temporal "goods" and "evils" is but a reflex of the mind—as the goddess herself, though apparently trampling down the god. is actnail j his blissful dream.

Beneath the goddess of the Island of Jewels (see *supra,* pp. 103-104) two aspects of the god are represented: the one, face upward, in union with her, is the creative, world-enjoying aspect; but the other, turned away, **is** the ***dens absconditua,*** the divine essence in and by itself, beyond event and change, inactive, dormant, v oicl. bi'vond even the wonder of the hermaphroditic mystery. (See Zimmer, ***Myths*** *and Symbols in Indian* **Art** *and Civilization,* pp. 210-214.)

This is a supreme statement of the great paradox by which the wall of the pairs of opposites is shattered and the candidate admitted to the vision of the God, who when he created man in his own image created him male and female. In the male's right hand is held a thunderbolt that is the counterpart of himself, while in his left he holds a bell, symbolizing the goddess. The thunderbolt is both the method and eternity, whereas the bell is "illumined mind[1]"; its note is the beautiful sound of eternity that is heard by the pure mind throughout creation, and therefore within itself.[133]

Precisely the same bell is rung in the Christian Mass at the moment when God, through the power of the words of the consecration, descends into the bread and wine. And the Christian reading of the meaning also is the same: *Et Verbum carofactum est,*[lM] i.e., "The Jewel is in the Lotus": *Om manipadme hum.*[155]

[m] Compare the dram of creation in the hand of the Hindu Dancing Shiva, *supra*, p. 118, note 46.

[134] "And the Word was made flesh"; verse of the Angelus, celebrating **the**

[131] In this chapter the following have been equated:

The Void	The World
Eternity	**Time**
Nirvana	San
Truth	IUusSLs
Enlightenment	Compassion
The God	**The** Goddess
The Enemy	The Friend
Heath	Birth
The Thunderbolt	The Bell
The Jewel	**The** Lotus
Subject	Object
Yab	Yum
Vang	Yin

Tao

Supreme Buddha
Bodhisattva
Jim Mukta
The Word Made Flesh

Compare the *Kaushhaki Upanishad*, 1:4, describing the hero who has reached

11 jb• orfil"]T7iii-\^ aricl! ''III'^ ;is •m^ (IaVIri'' ;i '])'iri\>l I >•ik^. 'Iri\vn UDOn the

• 6 •

The Ultimate Boon

When the Prince of the Lonesome Island had remained six nights and days on the golden couch with the sleeping Queen of **Tubber** Tintye, the couch resting on wheels of gold and the wheels turning continually—the couch going round and round, never stopping night or day—on the seventh morning he said, "'It is time for me now to leave this place.[1] So he came down and filled the three bottles with water from the flaming well. In the golden chamber was a table of gold, and on the table a leg of mutton with a loaf of bread; and if all the men of Erin were to eat for a twelvemonth from the table, the mutton and the bread would be in the same form after the eating as before.

"The Prince sat down, ate his fill of the loaf and the leg of mutton, and left them as he had found them. Then he rose up, took his three bottles, put them in his wallet, and was leaving the chamber, when he said to himself: 'It would be a shame to go away without leaving something by which the Queen may know who was here while she slept.' So he wrote a letter, saying that the son of the King of Erin and the Queen of the Lonesome Island had spent six days and nights in the golden chamber of Tubber Tintye, had taken away three bottles of water from the flaming well, and had eaten from the table of gold. Putting his letter under the pillow of the Queen, he went out, stood in the open window, sprang on the back of the lean and shaggy little horse, and passed the trees and the river unharmed."[136]

The ease with which the adventure is here accomplished signifies that the hero is a superior man, a born king. Such ease

two chariot wheels, thus he looks down upon day and night, thus upon good deeds and evil deeds, and upon all the pairs of opposites. This one, devoid of good deeds, devoid of evil deeds, a knower of God, unto very God he goes.[11]

[lifi] Curtin, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

distinguishes numerous fairy tales and alt legends of the deeds of incarnate gods. **Where** the usual hero would face a test, the elect encounters no delaying obstacle and makes no mistake. The well is the World Navel, its flaming water the indestructible essence of existence, the bed going **round** and round being the World Axis. The sleeping castle is that ultimate abyss to which the descending consciousness submerges in dream, where the individual life is on the point of dissolving into undifferentiated energy: and it would be death to dissolve; yet death, also, to lack the fire. The motif (derived from an infantile fantasy) of the inexhaustible dish, symbolizing the perpetual life-giving, form-building powers of the universal source, is a **fairy-tale** counterpart of the mythological image of the cornucopian banquet of the gods. While the bringing together of the two great symbols of the meeting with the goddess and the fire theft reveals with simplicity and clarity the status of the anthropomorphic powers in the realm of myth. They are not ends in themselves, but guardians, embodiments, or bestowers, of the liquor, the milk, the food, the fire, the grace, of indestructible life.

Such imagery can be readily interpreted as primarily, even though perhaps not ultimately, psychological; for it is possible to observe, in the earliest phases of the development of the infant, symptoms of a dawning "mythology" of a state beyond the vicissitudes of time. These appear as reactions to, and spontaneous defenses against, the body-destruction fantasies that assail the child when it is deprived of the mother breast.[137] "The infant reacts with a temper tantrum and the fantasy that goes with the temper tantrum is to tear everything out of the mother's bod}-. . . . The child then fears retaliation for these impulses, i.e., that everything will be scooped out of its own inside."[3]i Anxieties for the integrity of its body, fantasies of restitution, a silent, deep requirement for indestructibility and protection against the "bad" forces from within and without, begin to direct the shaping psyche; and these remain as determining factors in the later neurotic, and even normal, life activities, spiritual efforts, religious beliefs, and ritual practices of the adult.

The profession, for example, of the medicine man, this nucleus of all primitive societies, "originates . . . on the basis of the infantile body-destruction fantasies, by means of a series of defence mechanisms."[09] In Australia a basic conception is that the spirits have removed the intestines of the medicine man and substituted pebbles, quartz crystals, a quantity of rope, and sometimes also a little snake endowed with power.[140] "The first formula is abreaction in fantasy (my inside has already been destroyed) followed by reaction-formation (my inside is not something corruptible and full of faeces, but incorruptible, full of quartz crystals). The second is projection: 'It is not I who am trying to penetrate into the body but foreign sorcerers who shoot disease-substances into people.[1] The third formula is restitution: 'I am not trying to destroy people's insides, I am healing them.' At the same time, however, the original fantasy element of the valuable body-contents torn out of the mother returns in the healing technique: to suck, to pull, to rub something out of the patient."[141]

Another image of indestructibility is represented in the folk idea of the spiritual "doubte"-an external soul not afflicted by the losses and injuries of the present body, but existing safely in some place removed.[142] "My death," said a certain ogre, "is far from here and hard to find, on the wide ocean. In that sea is an island, and on the island there grows a green oak, and beneath the oak is an iron chest, and in the chest is a small basket, and in the basket is a hare, and in the hare is a duck, and in the duck is

[137] See Melanie Klein, *The Psychoanalysis of Children.* The International Psycho-Analytical Library. No. 27 (1937).

[138] Roheim, *War, Crime, and the Covenant,* pp. 137-138.

[139] Roheim, *The Origin **and** Function of Culture,* p. 50.

[140] *Ibid.,* pp. 48-50.

[141] *Ibid.,* p. 50. Compare the indestructibility of the Siberian shaman *(supra,* pp. 90-91), drawing coals out of **the** fire with **his,** bare hands and beating his legs with an ax.

[142] See **Frazer's** discussion of the external soul, *op. cit.,* pp. 667-691.

an egg; and he who finds the egg and breaks it, kills me at the same time."[143] Compare the dream of a successful modern businesswoman: "I was stranded on a desert island. There was a Catholic priest there also. He had been doing something about putting boards from one island to another so people could pass. We passed to another island and there asked a woman where I'd gone. She replied that I was diving with some divers. Then I went somewhere to the interior of the island where was a body of beautiful water full of gems and jewels and the other T was down there in a diving suit. I stood there looking down and watching myself,"[144] There is a charming Hindu tale of a king's daughter who would marry only the man that found and awakened her double, in the Land of the Lotus of the Sun, at the bottom of the sea.[14S] The initiated Australian, after his marriage, is conducted by his grandfather to a sacred cave and there shown a small slab of wood inscribed with allegorical designs: "This," he is told, "is your body; this and you are the same. Do not take it to another place or you will feel pam."[U(i] The Manicheans and the Gnostic Christians of the first centuries A.D. taught that when the soul of the blessed arrives in heaven it is met by saints and angels bearing its "vesture of light," which has been preserved for it.

The supreme boon desired for the Indestructible Body is uninterrupted residence in the Paradise of the Milk that Never

[lii] *Ibid.,p.* 671.

[144] Pierce, *Dreams and Personality* (D. Appleton and Co.), p. 298.

[145] "The Descent of the Sun," in F. W. Bain, *A Digit of the Mom* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), pp. 213-325.

[1411] Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream,* p. 237. This talisman is the so-called tjurunga (or churinga) of the young man's totem ancestor. The youth received another tjurunga at the time of his circumcision, representing his maternal totem ancestor. Still earlier, at the time of his birth, a protective tjurunga was placed in his cradle. The bull-roarer is a variety of tjurunga. "The tjurunga," writes Dr. Roheim, "is a material double, and certain supeT-natural beings most intimately connected with the tjurunga in Central Australian belief are invisible doubles of the natives. . . . Like the tjurunga, these supernatural:; are called the *arpuna mborka* (other body) of the real human beings whom they protect" *{ibid.,* p. 98).

Fails: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river . . . then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees."[147] Soul and body food, heart's ease, is the gift of "All Heal," the nipple inexhaustible. Mt. Olympus rises to the heavens; gods and heroes banquet there on ambrosia (a, not, PQOTO^, mortal), In Wotan's mountain hall, four hundred and thirty-two thousand heroes consume the unditninished flesh of Sachrimnir, the Cosmic Boar, washing it down with a milk that runs from the udders of the she-goat Heidrun: she feeds on the leaves of Yggdrasil, the World Ash. Within the fairy hills of Erin, the deathless Tuatha De Danaan consume the self-renewing pigs of Manannan, drinking copiously of Guibne's ale. In Persia, the gods in the mountain garden on Mt. Hara Berezaiti drink immortal *haoma,* distilled from the Gaokerena Tree, the tree of life. The Japanese gods drink *sake,* the Polynesian *ave,* the Aztec gods drink the blood of men and maids. And the redeemed of Yahweh,

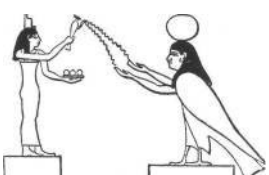


FIGURE 7. Isis Giving Bread and Water to the Soul

[147] Isaiah, fili: 10-12.

in their roof garden, are served the inexhaustible, delicious flesh of the monsters Behemoth, Leviathan, and Ziz, while drinking the liquors of the four sweet rivers of paradise.[14n]

It is obvious that the infantile fantasies which we all cherish still in the unconscious play continually into myth, fairy tale, and the teachings of the church, as symbols of indestructible being. This is helpful, for the mind feels at home with the images, and seems to be remembering something already known. But the circumstance is obstructive too, for the feelings come to rest in the symbols and resist passionately every effort to go beyond. The prodigious gulf between those childishly blissful multitudes who fill the world with piety and the truly free breaks open at the line where the symbols give way and are transcended. "O ye," writes Dante, departing from the Terrestrial Paradise, "O ye who in a little bark, desirous to listen, have followed behind my craft which singing passes on, turn to see again your shores; put not out upon the deep; for haply, losing me, ye would remain astray. The water which I take was never crossed. Minerva breathes, and Apollo guides me, and nine Muses point out to me the Bears.'[114n] Here is the line beyond which thinking does not go, beyond which all feeling is truly dead: like the last stop on a mountain railroad from which climbers step away, and to which they return, there to converse with those who love mountain air but cannot risk the heights. The ineffable teaching of the beatitude beyond imagination comes to us clothed, necessarily, in figures reminiscent of the imagined beatitude of infancy; hence the deceptive childishness of the tales. Hence, too, the inadequacy of any merely psychological reading.[150]

The sophistication of the humor of the infantile imagery, when inflected in a skillful mythological rendition of metaphysical doctrine, emerges magnificently in one of the best known of the great myths of the Oriental world: the Hindu account of the primordial battle between the titans and the gods for the liquor of immortality. An ancient earth being, Kashyapa, "The Turtie Man," had married thirteen of the daughters of a still more ancient demiurgic patriarch, Daksha, "The Lord of Virtue." Two of these daughters, Diti and Aditi by name, had given birth respectively to the titans and the gods. In an unending series of family battles, however, many of these sons of Kashyapa were being slain. But now the high priest of the titans, by great austerities and meditations, gained the favor of Shiva, Lord of the Universe. Shiva bestowed on him a charm to revive the dead. This gave to the titans an advantage which the gods, in the next battle, were quick to perceive. They retired in confusion to consult together, and addressed themselves to the high divinities Brahma and Vishnu.[151] They were advised to conclude with their brother-enemies a temporary truce, during which the titans should be induced to help them churn the Milky Ocean of immortal life for its butter—Amrita, *(a,* not, mrita, mortal) "the nectar of deathlessness." Flattered by the invitation, which they regarded as an admission of their superiority, the titans were delighted to participate; and so the epochal co-operative adventure at the beginning of the four ages of the world cycle began. Mount Mandara was selected as the churning stick. Vasuki, the King of Serpents, consented to become the churning rope with which to

[14B] **Ginsberg,** *op. cit-.* Vol. **I,** pp. 20, 26-30. See the extensive notes an **the** Messianic banquet in Ginzberg, Vol. V, pp. 43-46.

[14S] Dante, "Paradiso," **II,** *1-9.* Translation by Norton, *op. cit-,* Vol. **Ill,** p 10' by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

[150] In the published psychoanalytical literature, the dream sources of the symbols are analyzed, as well as their latent meanings for the unconscious, and the effects of their operation upon the psyche; but the farther fact that great teachers have employed them consciously as metaphors remains unregarded: the tacit assumption heing that the great teachers of the past were neurotics (except, of course, a number of the Greeks and Romans) who mistook their uncriricised fantasies for revelation. In the same spirit, the revelations of psychoanalysis rtre r;\uari.lf-d !Jv n"ffin\ laymen to \K: production-^ of the "salacious mind" of Dr. Freud.

[151] Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, respectively Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, constitute a trinity in Hinduism, as three aspects of the operation of the one creative substance. After the seventh century B.C., Brahma, declining in importance, became merely the creative agent of Vishnu. Thus Hinduism today is divided into two main camps, one devoted primarily to the creator-

to the eternal. But these two arc ultimately one. In the present myth, it is through their joint operation that the elixir of life is obtained-

twirl it. Vishnu himself, in the form of a tortoise, dove into the Milky Ocean to support with his back the base of the mountain. The gods laid hold of one end of the serpent, after it had been wrapped around the mountain, the titans the other. And the company then churned for a thousand years.

The first thing to arise from the surface of the sea was a black, poisonous smoke, called Kalakuta, "Black Summit," namely the highest concentration of the power of death. "Drink me," said Kalakuta; and the operation could not proceed until someone should be found capable of drinking it up. Shiva, sitting aloof and afar, was approached. Magnificently, he relaxed from his position of deeply indrawn meditation and proceeded to the scene of the churning of the Milky Ocean. Taking the tincture of death in a cup, he swallowed it at a gulp, and by his yoga-power held it in his throat. The throat turned blue. Hence Shiva is addressed as "Blue Neck," Niiakantha.

The churning now being resumed, presently there began coming up out of the inexhaustible depths precious forms of concentrated power. Apsarases (nymphs) appeared, Lakshmi the goddess of fortune, the milk-white horse named Uchchaihshravas, "Neighing Aloud," the pearl of gems, Kaustubha, and other objects to the number of thirteen. Last to appear was the skilled physician of the gods, Dhanvantari, holding in his hand the moon, the cup of the nectar of life.

Now began immediately a great battle for possession of the invaluable drink. One of the titans, Rahu, managed to steal a sip, but was beheaded before the liquor passed his throat; his body decayed but the head remained immortal. And this head now goes pursuing the moon forever through the skies, trying again to seize it. When it succeeds, the cup passes easily through its mouth and out again at its throat: that is why we have eclipses of the moon.

But Vishnu, concerned lest the gods should lose the advantage, transformed himself into a beautiful dancing damsel. And while the titans, who were lusty fellows, stood spellbound by the girl's charm, she took up the moon-cup of Amrita, teased them with it for a moment, and then suddenly passed it over to the

gods. Vishnu immediately again transformed himself into a mighty hero, joined the gods against the titans, and helped drive away the enemy to the crags and dark canyons of the world beneath. The gods now dine on the Amrita forever, in their beautiful palaces on the summit of the central mountain of the world, Mount Sumeru.[152]

Humor is the touchstone of the truly mythological as distinct from the more literal-minded and sentimental theological mood. The gods as icons are not ends in themselves. Their entertaining myths transport the mind and spirit, not *up to,* but *past* them, into the yonder void; from which perspective the more **heavily** freighted theological dogmas then appear to have been only pedagogical lures: their function, to cart the unadroit intellect away from its concrete clutter of facts and events to a comparatively rarefied zone, where, as a final boon, all existence — whether heavenly, earthly, or infernal—may at last be seen transmuted into the semblance of a lightly passing, recurrent, mere childhood dream of bliss and fright. "From one point of view all those divinities exist," a Tibetan lama recently replied to the question of an understanding Occidental visitor, "from another they are not real."[153] This is the orthodox teaching of the ancient Tantras: "AH of these visualized deities are but symbols representing the various things that occur on the Path";[154] as well as a doctrine of the contemporary psychoanalytical **schools,**[155] And the same

[152] *Ramayana,* I, 45, *Mahabharata,* I, 18, *Matsya Purana,* 249-251, and many other texts. See Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization,* pp. **105** ff.

[153] Marco Pallis, *Peaks and Lamas* (4th edition; London: Cassell and Co., 1946), p. 324.

[154] *Shri-Chakra-Sambhara Tantra,* translated from the Tibetan by Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup, edited by Sir John Woodroffe (pseudonym Arthur Avalon), Volume VII of "Tantric Texts" (London, 1919), p. 41. "Should doubts arise as to the divinity of these visualized deities," the text continues, "one should say, 'This Goddess is only the recollection of the body,[1] and remember that the Deities constitute the Path" *(loc. cit.).* For a word about Tantra, cf. *supra,* p. 104, note 32, and pp. 170-171 **(Tantric** Buddhism).

[155] Compare, e.g., C. G. Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious" (orig. 1934; Collected Works, vol. 'J, part i; New York and London, **1959).**

meta-theological insight seems to be what is suggested in Dante's final verses, where the illuminated voyager at last is able to lift his courageous eyes beyond the beatific vision of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to the one Kternal Light.[1mm1]

The gods and goddesses then are to be understood as embodiments and custodians of the elixir of Imperishable Being but not themselves the Ultimate in its primary state. What the hero seeks through his intercourse with them is therefore not finally themselves, but their grace, i.e., the power of their sustaining substance. This miraculous energy-substance and this alone is the Imperishable; the names and forms of the deities who everywhere embody, dispense, and represent it come and go. This is the miraculous energy of the thunderbolts of Zeus, Yahweh, and the Supreme Buddha, the fertility of the rain of Viracocha, the virtue announced by the bell rung in the Mass at the consecration,[107] and the light of the ultimate illumination of the saint and sage. Its guardians dare release it only to the duly proven.

But the gods may be oversevere, overcautious, in which case the hero must trick them of their treasure. Such was the problem of Prometheus. When in this mood even the highest gods appear as malignant, life-hoarding ogres, and the hero who deceives, slays, or appeases them is honored as the savior of the world.

Maui of Polynesia went against Mahu-ika, the guardian of fire, to wring from him his treasure and transport it back to mankind. Maui went straight up to the giant Mahu-ika and said to him: "Clear away the brush from this level field of ours so that we may contend together in friendly rivalry." Maui, it must be told, was a great hero and a master of devices.

"Mahu-ika inquired, 'What feat of mutual prowess and emulation shall it be?'

"There are perhaps many," writes Dr. J. C. Fliigel, "who would still retain the notion of a quasi-anthropomorphic Father-God as an extra-mental reality, even though tile purelv mental origin of such a God has become apparent" *(The I'.iycho-anuhjliv Study of the Fitmihj, p.* 236).

[1mm6] "Paradiso," XXXIII, 82 IT.

[v.7] *See supra, p.* **161.**

" 'The feat of tossing,' Maui replied.

"To this Mahu-ika agreed; then Maui asked, '**Who** shall begin?'

"Mahu-ika answered, 'I shall.'

"Maui signified his consent, so Mahu-ika took hold of Maui and tossed him up in the air; he rose high above and fell right down into Mahu-ika's hands; again Mahu-ika tossed Maui up, chanting: 'Tossing, tossing—up you go!'

"Up went Maui, and then Mahu-ika chanted this incantation:

'Up you go to the first level,
Up you go to the second level,
Up you go to the third level,
Up you go to the fourth level,
Up you go to the fifth level,
Up you go to the sixth level,
Up you go to the seventh level,
Up you go to the eighth level,
Up you go to the ninth level,
Up you go to the tenth level!'

"Maui turned over and over in the air and started to come down again, and he fell right beside Mahu-ika; then Maui said, 'You're having all the fun!'

'"Why indeed!" Mahu-ika exclaimed. 'Do you imagine you can send a whale flying up into the air?[1]

" 'I can try![1] Maui answered.

"So Maui took hold of Mahu-ika and tossed him up, chanting: 'Tossing, tossing—up you go!'

"Up flew Mahu-ika, and now Maui chanted this spell:

'Up you go to the first level,
Up you go to the second level,
Up you go to the third level,
Up you go to the fourth level,
Up you go to the fifth level.
Up you go to the sixth level,
Up you go to the seventh level.

FIGURE 8. The Conquest of the Monster;
David and Goliath: The Harrowing of Hell: Samson and the Lio

Up you go to the eighth level,
Up you go to the ninth level,
Up you go—way up in the air!'

"Mahu-ika turned over and over in the air and commenced to fall back; and when he had nearly reached the ground Maui called out these magic words: 'That man up there—may he fall right on his head![1]

"Mahu-ika fell down; his neck was completely telescoped together, and so Mahu-ika died." At once the hero Maui took hold of the giant Mahu-ika's head and cut it off, then he possessed himself of the treasure of the flame, which he bestowed upon the world.[158]

The greatest tale of the elixir quest in the Mesopotamian, pre-Biblica! tradition is that of Gilgamesh, a legendary king of the Sumerian city of Erech, who set forth to attain the watercress of immortality, the plant "Never Grow Old." After he had passed safely the lions that guard the foothills and the scorpion men who watch the heaven-supporting mountains, he came, amidst the mountains, to a paradise garden of flowers, fruits, and precious stones. Pressing on, he arrived at the sea that surrounds the world. In a cave beside the waters dwelt a manifestation of the Goddess Ishtar, Siduri-Sabitu, and this woman, closely veiled, closed the gates against him. But when he told her his tale, she admitted him to her presence and advised him not to pursue his quest, but to learn and be content with the mortal joys of life:

Gilgamesh, why dost thou run about this way?
The life that thou art seeking, thou wilt never find.
When the gods created man,
they put death upon mankind,
and held life in their own hands.
Fill thy belly, Gilgamesh;
day and night enjoy thyself;
prepare each day some pleasant occasion.

[158] J. F. Stimson, *The Legends of Maui and Tuhaki* {Bernice P. Bishop Museum BuDetin, No. 127; Honolulu, 1934), pp. 19-21.

Day and night be frolicsome and gay;
let thy clothes be handsome,
thy head shampooed, thy body bathed.
Regard the little one who takes thy hand.
Let thy wife be happy against thy bosom.[119]

But when Gilgamesh persisted, Siduri-Sabitu gave him permission to pass and apprised him of the dangers of the way.

The woman instructed him to seek the ferryman Ursanapi, whom he found chopping wood in the forest and guarded by a group of attendants. Gilgamesh shattered these attendants (they were called "those who rejoice to live," "those of stone") and the ferryman consented to convey him across the waters of death. It was a voyage of one and one-half months. The passenger was warned not to touch the waters.

Now the far land that they were approaching was the residence of Utnapishtim, the hero of the primordial deluge,[160] here abiding with his wife in immortal peace. From afar Utnapishtim spied the approaching little craft alone on the endless waters, and he wondered in his heart:

Why are "those of stone" of the boat shattered,
And someone who is not of my service sailing in the boat?
That one who is coming: is he not a man?

Gilgamesh, on landing, had to listen to the patriarch's long recitation of the story of the deluge. Then Utnapishtim bid his visitor sleep, and he slept for six days. Utnapishtim had his wife

[159] This passage, missing from the standard Assyrian edition of the legend, appears in a much earlier Babylonian fragmentary text (see Bruno Meissner, "Ein altbabylonisches Fragment des Gilgamo.sepo'i," *Mitleiiungt-ii tier I-'orderasiatischen Gesellsckaft,* VII, 1; Berlin, 1902, p. 9). It has been frequently remarked that the advice of the sibyl is hedonistic, but it should be noted also that the passage represents an initiatory test, not the moral philosophy of the ancient Babylonians. As in India, c.-nuiri'^ later, \vln-n Li Miirl^nt ^approaches ;i teacher to ask the secret of immortal life, he is first put off with a description of the joys of the mortal *(viz., Katha Upanishad,* 1: 21, 23-25). Only if he persists is lie admitted.

[160] Babylonian prototype of the Biblical Noah.

bake seven loaves and place them by the head of Gilgamesh as he lay asleep beside the boat. And Utnapishtim touched Gilgamesh, and he awoke, and the host ordered the ferryman Ursanapi to give the giiest a bath in a certain pool and then fresh garments. Following that, Utnapishtim announced to Gilgamesh the secret of the plant.

Gilgamesh, something secret I will disclose to thee,
and give thee thine instruction:
That plant is like a brier in the field;
its thorn, like that of the rose, will pierce thy hand.
Bat if thy hand attain to that plant,
thou wilt return to thy native land.

The plant was growing at the bottom of the cosmic sea.

Ursanapi ferried the hero out again into the waters. Gilgamesh tied stones to his feet and plunged.[161] Down he rushed, beyond every bound of endurance, while the ferryman remained in the boat. And when the diver had reached the bottom of the bottomless sea, he plucked the plant, though it mutilated his hand, cut off the stones, and made again for the surface. When he broke the surface and the ferryman had hauled him back into the boat, he announced in triumph:

Ursanapi, this plant is the one . . .
By which Man may attain to full vigor.
I will bring it back to Erech of the sheep-pens. . . .
Its name is: "In his age, Man becomes young again."
I will eat of it and return to the condition of my youth.

They proceeded across the sea. When they had landed, Gilgamesh bathed in a cool water-hole and lay down to rest. But

[161] Though the hero was warned against touching these waters on the journey out, he now can enter them with impunity. This is a measure oi the power gained through his visit with the old Lord and Lady of the Everlasting Island. Utnapishtim-Noah, the flood hero, is an archetypal father figure; his island, the World Navel, is a prefigurement of the later Greco-Roman "Islands of the Blessed."

while he slept, a serpent smelled the wonderful perfume of the plant, darted forth, and carried it away. Elating it, the snake immediately gained the power of sloughing its skin, and so renewed its youth. But Gilgamesh, when he awoke, sat down and wept, "and the tears ran down the wall of his nose."[152]

To this very day, the possibility of physical immortality charms the heart of man. The Utopian play by Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, produced in 1921, converted the theme into a modern socio-biological parable. Four hundred years earlier the more literal-minded Juan Ponce de Leon discovered Florida in a search for the land of "Bimini," where he had expected to find the fountain of youth. While centuries before and far away, the Chinese philosopher Ko Hung ,spent the latter years of a long lifetime preparing pills of immortality. "Take three pounds of genuine cinnabar," Ko Hung wrote, "and one pound of white honey. Mix them. Dry the mixture in the sun. Then roast it over a fire until it can be shaped into pills. Take ten pills the size of a hemp seed every morning. Inside of a year, white hair will turn black, decayed teeth will grow again, and the body will become sleek and glistening. If an old man takes this medicine for a long period of time, he will develop into a young man. The one who takes it constantly will enjoy eternal life, and will not die."[163] A friend one day arrived to pay a visit to the solitary experimenter and philosopher, but all he found were Ko thing's empty clothes. The old man was gone; he had passed into the realm of the immortals.[104]

The research for *physical* immortality proceeds from a misunderstanding of the traditional teaching. On the contrary, the basic problem is: to enlarge the pupil of the eye, so that the *body* with its attendant personality will no longer obstruct the view. Immortality is then experienced as a present fact: "It is here! It is here!"[1"5]

"All things are in process, rising and returning. Plants come to blossom, but only to return to the root. Returning to the root is like seeking tranquility. Seeking tranquility is like moving toward destiny. To move toward destiny is like eternity. To know eternity is enlightenment, and not to recognize eternity brings disorder and evil.

"Knowing eternity makes one comprehensive; comprehension makes one broadminded; breadth of vision brings nobility; nobility is like heaven.

"The heavenly is like Tao. Tao is the Eternal. The decay of the body is not to be feared."[166]

The Japanese have a proverb: "The gods only laugh when men pray to them for wealth." The boon bestowed on the worshiper is always scaled to his stature and to the nature of his dominant desire: the boon is simply a symbol of life energy stepped down to the requirements of a certain specific case. The irony, of course, lies in the fact that, whereas the hero who has won the favor of the god may beg for the boon of perfect illumination, what he generally seeks are longer years to live, weapons with which to slay his neighbor, or the health of his child.

The Greeks tell of King Midas, who had the luck to win from Bacchus the offer of whatsoever boon he might desire. He asked that everything he touched should be turned to gold. When he went his way, he plucked, experimentally, the twig of an oak tree

[1f63] The above rendering is based on P. Jensen, *Assyrisch-babylonische Mythen undEpen* (Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek, VI, I; Berlin, 1900), pp. 116-273. The verses quoted appear on pp. 223, 251, 251-253. Jensen's version is a line-for-line i r;]ii'hl;iun]i i •! The principal cAmilf lir\i$:m \-^vn:ir i •• i"d.3 •;] Iroui KIIIL; \'-hurb;i-nipal's library {668-626 B.C.}. Fragments of the very much older Babylonian version {see *supra,* p. 175) and still more ancient Sumerian original (third millennium B.C.) have also been discovered and deciphered.

[163] Ko Hung (also known as Pao Pu Tzu>, *Nei P'ien,* Chapter VII (translation quoted from Obed Simon Johnson, *A Study of Chinese Alchemy,* Shanghai. 1928, p. 63).

Ko Hung evolved several other very interesting receipts, one bestowing *a* body "buoyant and luxurious," another the ability to walk on water. For a discussion of the place of Ko Hung in Chinese philosophy, see Alfred Forke, "Ko Hung, der Philosoph imd Alchimist," *Archil) fur Geschichte der Philasophie.* XLI, 1-2 (Berlin, 1932), pp. 115-126.

[1fi•] Herbert A. Giles, *A Chinese Hhgra(>hkul Dictionary* (I.(melon and Shanghai. 1898), p. 372.

[1fi(1] Lao-tse, *Tao Teh King,* 16 (translation by Dwight Goddard, *Laotzu'a Tao and Wu Wei;* New York. 1919, p. 18). Compare pages 118-119, note 46, *supra.*

and it was immediately gold; he took up a stone, it had turned to **gold;** an apple was a golden nugget in his hand. Ecstatic, he ordered prepared a magnificent feast to celebrate the miracle. But when he sat down and set his fingers to the roast, it was transmuted; at his lips the wine became liquid gold. And when his little daughter, whom he loved beyond anything on earth, came to console him in his misery, she became, the moment he embraced her, a pretty golden statue.

The agony of breaking through personal limitations is the agony of spiritual growth. Art, literature, myth and cult, philosophy, and ascetic disciplines are instruments to help the individual past his limiting horizons into spheres of ever-expanding realization. As he crosses threshold after threshold, conquering dragon after dragon, the stature of the divinity that he summons to his highest wish increases, until it subsumes the cosmos. Finally, the mind breaks the bounding sphere of the cosmos to a realization transcending all experiences of form—all symbolizations, all divinities: a realization of the ineluctable void.

So it is that when Dante had taken the last step in his spiritual adventure, and came before the ultimate symbolic vision of the Triune God in the Celestial Rose, he had still one more illumination to experience, even beyond the forms of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "Bernard," he writes, "made a sign to me, and smiled, that I should look upward; but I was already, of myself, such as he wished; for my sight, becoming pure, was entering more and more, through the radiance of the lofty Light which in Itself is true. Thenceforward my vision was greater than our speech, which yields to such a sight, and the memory yields to such excess."[16,

"There goes neither the eye, nor speech, nor the mind: we know It not; nor do we see how to teach one about It. Different It is from all that are known, and It is beyond the unknown as well."[168]

"'. "Paradiso," XXXIII, 49-57 (translation by Norton, *op. cit.*, Vol. Ill, pp. 253-254, by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers).

[1M] *Kena Upanisfuut,* 1:3 (translation by Swami Sharvananda; Sri Ramakrishna Math; Mylapore, Madras, 19.12).

This is the highest and ultimate crucifixion, **not** only of the hero, but of his god as well. Here the Son and the Father alike are annihilated—as personality-masks over the unnamed. For just as the figments of a dream derive from the life energy of one dreamer, representing only fluid splittings and complications of that single force, so do all the forms of all the worlds, whether terrestrial or divine, reflect the universal force of a single inscrutable mystery: the power that constructs the atom and controls the orbits of the stars.

That font of life is the core of the individual, and within himself he will find it—if he can tear the coverings away. The pagan Germanic divinity Othin (Wotan) gave an eye to split the veil of light into the knowledge of this infinite dark, and then underwent for it the passion of a crucifixion:

/ ween that I hung on the ivindy tree,
Hung therefor nights full nine;
With the spear I was wounded, and offered I was
To Othin, myself to myself,
On the tree that none may ever know
What root beneath it runs.[169]

The Buddha's victory beneath the Bo Tree is the classic Oriental example of this deed. With the sword of his mind he pierced the bubble of the universe—and it shattered into nought. The whole world of natural experience, as well as the continents, heavens, and hells of traditional religious belief, exploded-together with their gods and demons. But the miracle of miracles was that though all exploded, all was nevertheless thereby renewed, revivified, and made glorious with the effulgence of true being. Indeed, the gods of the redeemed heavens raised their voices in harmonious acclaim of the man-hero who had penetrated beyond them to the void that was their life and source: "Flags and banners erected on the eastern rim of the world let their streamers fly to the western rim of the world; likewise

[1•2] *Poetic Edda,* "Hovamol," 139 (translation by Henry Adams Bellows; The

those erected on the western rim of the world, to the eastern rim of the world; those erected on the northern rim of the world, to the southern rim of the world; and those erected on the southern rim of the world, to the northern rim of the world; while those erected on the level of the earth let theirs fly until they beat against the Brahma-world; and those of the Brahma-world let theirs hang down to the level of the earth. Throughout the ten thousand worlds the flowering trees bloomed; the fruit trees were weighted down by the burden of their fruit; trunk-lotuses bloomed on the trunks of trees; branch-lotuses on the branches of trees; vine-lotuses on the vines; hanging-lotuses in the sky; and stalk-lotuses burst through the rocks and came up by sevens. The system of ten thousand worlds was like a bouquet of flowers sent whirling through the air, or like a thick carpet of flowers; in the intermundane spaces the eight-thousand-league-long hells, which not even the light of seven suns had formerly been able to illumine, were now flooded with radiance; the eighty-four-thousand-league-deep ocean became sweet to the taste; the rivers checked their flowing; the blind from birth received their sight; the deaf from birth their hearing; the crippled from birth the use of their limbs; and the bonds and fetters of captives broke and fell off."[170]

[170] *Jataka*, Introduction, i, 75 (reprinted by permission of the publishers from Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism in Translations* (Harvard Oriental Series, 3) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1896, pp. 82-83).

CHAPTER

Return

Refusal of the Return

WHEN the hero-quest has been accomplished, through penetration to the source, or through the grace of some male or female, human or animal, personification, the adventurer still must return with his life-transmuting trophy. The full round, the norm of the monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom, the Golden Fleece, or his sleeping princess, back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the renewing of the community, the nation, the planet, or the ten thousand worlds.

But the responsibility has been frequently refused. Even the Buddha, after his triumph, doubted whether the message of realization could be communicated, and saints are reported to have passed away while in the supernal ecstasy. Numerous indeed are the heroes fabled to have taken up residence forever in the blessed isle of the unaging Goddess of Immortal Being.

A moving tale is told of an ancient Hindu warrior-king named Muchukunda. He was born from his father's left side, the father having swallowed by mistake a fertility potion that the Brahmins had prepared for his wife;[1] and in keeping with the promising symbolism of this miracle, the motherless marvel, fruit of the

male womb, grew to be such a king among kings that when the gods, at one period, were suffering defeat in their perpetual contest with the demons, they called upon him for help. He assisted them to a mighty victory, and they, in their divine pleasure, granted him the realization of his highest wish. But what should such a king, himself almost omnipotent, desire? What greatest boon of boons could be conceived of by such a master among men? King Muchukunda, so runs the story, was very tired after his battle: all he asked was that he might be granted a sleep without end, and that any person chancing to arouse him should be burned to a crisp by the first glance of his eye.

The boon was bestowed. In a cavern chamber, deep within the womb of a mountain, King Muchukunda retired to sleep, and there slumbered through the revolving eons. Individuals, peoples, civilizations, world ages, came into being out of the void and dropped back into it again, while the old king, in his state of subconscious bliss, endured. Timeless as the Freudian unconscious beneath the dramatic time world of our fluctuating ego-experience, that old mountain man, the drinker of deep sleep, lived on and on.

His awakening came—but with a surprising turn that throws into new perspective the whole problem of the hero-circuit, as well as the mystery of a mighty king's request for sleep as the highest conceivable boon.

Vishnu, the Lord of the World, had become incarnate in the person of a beautiful youth named Krishna, who, having saved the land of India from a tyrannical race of demons, had assumed the throne. And he had been ruling in Utopian peace, when a horde of barbarians suddenly invaded from the northwest. Krishna the king went against them, but, in keeping with his divine nature, won the victory playfully, by a simple ruse. Unarmed and garlanded with lotuses, he came out of his stronghold and tempted the enemy king to pursue and catch him, then dodged into a cave. When the barbarian followed, he discovered someone lying there in the chamber, asleep.

"Oh!" thought he. "So he has lured me here and now feigns to be a harmless sleeper."

IX. Shiva, Lord of the Cosmic Dance (South India)

X. Androgynous Ancestor
(Sudan)

XI. Bodhisattva (China)

XII. **Bodhisattva** (Tibet)

XIII. The Branch of Immortal Life (Assyria)

XIV. Bodhisattva (Cambodia)

XV. The Return (Ancient Rome)

XVI. The Cosmic Lion Goddess, Holding the Sun (North India)

He kicked the figure lying on the ground before him, and it stirred. It was King Muchukunda. The figure rose, and the eyes that had been closed for unnumbered cycles of creation, world history, and dissolution, opened slowly to the light. The first glance that went forth struck the enemy king, who burst into a torch of flame and was reduced immediately to a smoking heap of ash. Muchukunda turned, and the second glance struck the garlanded, beautiful youth, whom the awakened old king straightway recognized by his radiance as an incarnation of God. And Muchukunda bowed before his Savior with the following prayer:

"My Lord God! When I lived and wrought as a man, I lived and wrought—straying restlessly; through many lives, birth after birth, I sought and suffered, nowhere knowing cease or rest. Distress I mistook for joy. Mirages appearing over the desert I mistook for refreshing waters. Delights I grasped, and what I obtained was miser}[7]. Kingly power and earthly possession, riches and might, friends and sons, wife and followers, everything that lures the senses: I wanted them all, because I believed that these would bring me beatitude. But the moment anything was mine it changed its nature, and became as a burning fire.

"Then I found my way into the company of the gods, and they welcomed me as a companion. But where, still, surcease? Where rest? The creatures of this world, gods included, all are tricked, my Lord God, by your playful ruses; that is why they continue in their futile round of birth, life agony, old age, and death. Between lives, they confront the lord of the dead and are forced to endure hells of every degree of pitiless pain. And it all comes from you!

"My Lord God, deluded by your playful ruses, I too was a prey of the world, wandering in a labyrinth of error, netted in the meshes of ego-consciousness. Now, therefore, I take refuge in your Presence—the boundless, the adorable—desiring only freedom from it all."

When Muchukunda stepped from his cave, he saw that men, since his departure, had become reduced in stature. He was as a giant among them. And so he departed from them again, retreated to the highest mountains, and there dedicated himself to the

ascetic practices that should finally release him from his last attachment to the forms of being.[2]

Muchukunda, in other words, instead of returning, decided to retreat one degree still further from the world. And who shall say that his decision was altogether without reason?

• 2 •

The Magic Flight

If the hero in his triumph wins the blessing of the goddess or the god and is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with some elixir for the restoration of society, the final stage of his adventure is supported by all the powers of his supernatural patron. On the other hand, if the trophy has been attained against the opposition of its guardian, or if the hero's wish to return to the world has been resented by the gods or demons, then the last stage of the mythological round becames a lively, often comical, pursuit. This flight may be complicated by marvels of magical obstruction and evasion.

The Welsh tell, for instance, of a hero, Gwion Bach, who found himself in the Land Under Waves. Specifically, he was at the bottom of Lake Bala, in Merionethshire, in the north of Wales. And there lived at the bottom of this lake an ancient giant, Tegid the Bald, together with his wife, Caridwen. The latter, in one of her aspects, was a patroness of grain and fertile crops, and in another, a goddess of poetry and letters. She was

[2] *Vishnu Purana,* 23; *Bhagavata Parana,* 10:51; *Har'rcansha,* 114. The above is based on the rendering by Heinrich Zimmer, *Maya, der indixche Mythos* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1936), pp. 89-99.

Compare with Krishna, as the World Magician, the African Edshu (pp. 41-12, *supra).* Compare, also, the Polynesian trickster, Maui.

the owner of an immense kettle and desired to prepare therein a brew of science and inspiration. With the aid of necromantic books she contrived a black concoction which she then set over a fire to brew for a year, at the end of which period three blessed drops should be obtained of the grace of inspiration.

And she put our hero, Gwion Bach, to stir the cauldron, and a blind man named Morda to keep the fire kindled beneath it, "and she charged them that they should not suffer it to cease boiling for the space of a year and a day. And she herself, according to the books of the astronomers, and in planetary hours, gathered every day of all charm-bearing herbs. And one day, towards the end of the year, as Caridwen was culling plants and making incantations, it chanced that three drops of the charmed liquor flew out of the cauldron and fell upon the finger of Gwion Bach. And by reason of their great heat he put his finger in his mouth, and the instant he put those marvel-working drops into his mouth he foresaw everything that was to come, and perceived that his chief care must be to guard against the wiles of Caridwen, for vast was her skill. And in very great fear he fled towards his own land. And the cauldron burst in two, because all the liquor within it except the three charm-bearing drops was poisonous, so that the horses of Gwyddno Garanhir were poisoned by the water of the stream into which the liquor of the cauldron ran, and the confluence of that stream was called the Poison of the Horses of Gwyddno from that time forth.

"Thereupon came in Caridwen and saw all the toil of the whole year lost. And she seized a billet of wood and struck the blind Morda on the head until one of his eyes fell out upon his cheek. And he said, 'Wrongfully hast thou disfigured me, for I am innocent. Thy loss was not because of me.[1] 'Thou speakest truth,' said Caridwen, 'it was Gwion Bach who robbed me.'

"And she went forth after him, running. And he saw her, and changed himself into a hare and fled. But she changed herself into a greyhound and turned him. And he ran towards a river, and became a fish. And she in the form of an otter-bitch chased him under the water, until he was fain to turn himself into a bird

of the air. She, as a hawk, followed him and gave him no rest in the sky. And just as she was about to stoop upon him, and he was in fear of death, he espied a heap of winnowed wheat on the floor of a barn, and he dropped among the wheat, and turned himself into one of the grains. Then she transformed herself into a high-crested black hen, and went to the wheat and scratched it with her feet, and found him out and swallowed him. And, as the story says, she bore him nine months, and when she was delivered of him, she could not find it in her heart to kill him, by reason of his beauty. So she wrapped him in a leathern bag, and cast him into the sea to the mercy of God, on the twenty-ninth day of April."[3]

The flight is a favorite episode of the folk tale, where it is developed under many lively forms.

The Buriat of Irkutsk (Siberia), for example, declare that Morgon-Kara, their first shaman, was so competent that he could bring back souls from the dead. And so the Lord of the **Dead** complained to the High God of Heaven, and God decided to pose the shaman a test. He got possession of the soul of a certain man and slipped it into a bottle, covering the opening with the ball of his thumb. The man grew **ill,** and his relatives sent for Morgon-Kara. The shaman looked everywhere for the missing soul. He searched the forest, the waters, the mountain gorges, the land of the dead, and at last mounted, "sitting on his drum," to the world above, where again he was forced to search for a long time. Presently he observed that the High God of Heaven was keeping a bottle covered with the ball of his thumb, and, studying the circumstance, perceived that inside the bottle was the very soul he had come to find. The wily shaman changed himself into a wasp. He flew at God and gave him such a hot sting on the forehead that the thumb jerked from the opening and the captive got away. Then the next thing God knew, there was this shaman, Morgon-Kara, sitting on his drum again, and going down to earth with the recovered soul. The flight in this case, however, was not entirely successful. Becoming terribly angry, God immediately diminished the power of the shaman forever by splitting his drum in two. And so that is why shaman drums, which originally (according to this story of the Buriat) were fitted with two heads of skin, from that day to this have had only one.[4]

A popular variety of the magic flight is that in which objects are left behind to speak for the fugitive and thus delay pursuit. The New Zealand Maori tell of a fisherman who one day came home to find that his wife had swallowed their two sons. She was lying groaning on the floor. He asked her what the trouble was, and she declared that she was ill. He demanded to know where the two boys were, and she told him they had gone away. But he knew that she was lying. With his magic, he caused her

• "Taliesin,"[1] translated by Lady Charlotte Guest in *The Mabinogion* (Everman's Library, No. 97. pp. 263-264).

Taliesin, "Chief of the Bards of the West," may have been an actual histoi Cll persnnagr of the si\th (vnuiry \.]J.. I'dntr-mporarv with the chieftain wl became the "King Arthur" of later romance. The bard's legend and poems su vive in a thirteenth-century manuscript, "The Book of Taliesin," which is 01 of the "Four Ancient Book's of Wales." A *mabinog* (Welsh) is a bard's appre tice. The term *mubinogi,* "juvenile instruction," denotes the traditional mat rial (myths, legends, poems, etc.) taught to a *mabinog,* and which it was h duty to acquire by heart. *Mabinogion,* the plural of *mabinogi,* was the nan given by **Lady** Charlotte Guest to her translation **(1838-49)** of eleven r mances from the "Ancient Books."

The bardic lore of Wales, like that of Scotland and Ireland, descends from **very** old and abundant pagan-Celtic fund of myth. This was transformed ai revivified by the Christian missionaries and chroniclers (fifth century and fc lowing), who recorded the old stories and sought pain-takingly to co-ordina them with the Bible. During the tenth century, a brilliant period of Toman production, cenU-nri\"' prntiLinh !i: Iretaiid, converted the inheritance into ; important contemporary lorce. Celtic hards went out to the courts ot Christu Europe; Celtic themes were rehearsed by the pagan Scandinavian scalds, great part of our European fairy lore, as well as the foundation of tl Arthurian tradition, traces back to this first great creative period of Occideni romance. (See Gertrude Schoepperle, *Tristan and liolt, A Study of the Sourt of the Romance,* London and Frankfort a. M., 1913.)

[4] Harva, *op. cit,* pp. 543-544; quoting "Pervyi buryatskii saman Morgon-Kara," *Isvestiya Vo/itoC-iio Sibd-skaga Otdeln RUSMII-JO fleogrujice^kago Obsce.itva* XI, 1-2 (Irkutsk, 1880), pp. 87 ff.

to disgorge them: they came out alive and whole. Then that man was afraid of his wife, and he determined to escape from her as soon as he could, together with the boys.

When the ogress went to fetch water, the man, by his magic, caused the water to decrease and retreat ahead of her, so that she had to go a considerable way. Then by gestures he instructed the huts, the clumps of trees growing near the village, the filth dump, and the temple on top of the hill to answer for him when his wife should return and call. He made away with the boys to his canoe, and they hoisted sail. The woman came back, and, not finding anyone about, began to call. First the filth pit replied. She moved in that direction and called again. The houses answered; then the trees. One after another, the various objects in the neighborhood responded to her, and she ran, increasingly bewildered, in every direction. She became weak and began to pant and sob and then, at last, realized what had been done to her. She hastened to the temple on the hilltop and peered out to sea, where the canoe was a mere speck on the horizon.[3]

Another well-known variety of the magic flight is one in which a number of delaying obstacles are tossed behind by the wildly fleeing hero. "A little brother and sister were playing by a spring, and as they did so suddenly tumbled in. There was a waterhag down there, and this waterhag said, 'Now I have you! Now you shall work your heads off for me!'[1] And she carried them away with her. She gave to the little girl a tangle of filthy flax to spin and made her fetch water in a bottomless tub; the boy had to chop a tree with a blunt ax; and all they ever had to eat were stone-hard lumps of dough. So at last the children became so impatient that they waited until one Sunday, when the hag had gone to church, and escaped. When church let out, the hag discovered that her birds had flown, and so made after them with mighty bounds.

"But the children espied her from afar, and the little girl threw back a hairbrush, which immediately turned into a big brush-mountain with thousands and thousands of bristles over which the hag found it very difficult to climb; nevertheless, she finally appeared. As soon as the children saw her, the boy threw back a comb, which immediately turned into a big comb-mountain with a thousand times a thousand spikes; but the hag knew how to catch hold of these, and at last she made her way through. Then the little girl threw back a mirror, and this turned into a mirror-mountain, which was so smooth that the hag was unable to get over. Thought she: 'I shall hurry back home and get my ax and chop the mirror-mountain in two.'[1] But by the time she got back and demolished the glass, the children were long since far away, and the waterhag had to trudge back again to her spring."[6]

FIGURE 9a. Gorgon-Sister Pursuing Perseus, Who is Fleeing with the Head of Medusa

[5] John **White,** *The Ancient History of the Maori, his Mythology and Traditions* (Wellington, 1886-89), Vol. II, pp. 167-171.

FIGURE 9b. Perseus Fleeing with the Head of .Medusa in His Wallet

The powers of the abyss are not to be challenged lightly. In the Orient, a great point is made of the danger of undertaking the psychologically disturbing practices of yoga without competent supervision. The meditations of the postulant have to be adjusted to his progress, so that the imagination may be defended at every step by *devatas* (envisioned, adequate deities) until the moment comes for the prepared spirit to step alone beyond. As Dr. Jung has very wisely observed: "The incomparably useful function of the dogmatic symbol [is that] it protects a person from a direct experience of God as long as he does not mischievously expose himself. But if... he leaves home and family, lives too long alone, and gazes too deeply into the dark mirror, then the awful event of the meeting may befall him. Yet even then the traditional symbol, come to full flower through the

centuries, may operate like a healing draught and divert the fatal incursion of the living godhead into the hallowed spaces of the church."[7] The magic objects tossed behind by the panic-ridden hero—protective interpretations, principles, symbols, rationalizations, anything—delay and absorb the power of the started Hound of Heaven, permitting the adventurer to come back into his fold safe and with perhaps a boon. But the toll required is not always slight.

One of the most shocking of the obstacle flights is that of the Greek hero, Jason. He had set forth to win the Golden Fleece. Putting to sea in the magnificent Argo with a great company of warriors, he had sailed in the direction of the Black Sea, and, though delayed by many fabulous dangers, arrived, at last, miles beyond the Bosporus, at the city and palace of King Aeetes. Behind the palace was the grove and tree of the dragon-guarded prize.

Now the daughter of the king, Medea, conceived an overpowering passion for the illustrious foreign visitor and, when her father imposed an impossible task as the price of the Golden Fleece, compounded charms that enabled him to succeed. The task was to plough a certain field, employing bulls of flaming breath and brazen feet, then to sow the field with dragon's teeth and slay the armed men who should immediately spring into being. But with his body and armor anointed with Medea's charm, Jason mastered the bulls; and when the army sprang from the dragon seed, he tossed a stone into their midst, which turned them face to face, and they slew each other to the man.

The infatuated young woman conducted Jason to the oak from which hung the Fleece. The guarding dragon was distinguished by a crest, a three-forked tongue, and nastily hooked fangs; but with the juice of a certain herb the couple put the formidable monster to sleep. Then Jason snatched the prize, Medea ran with him, and the Argo put to sea. But the king was soon in swift pursuit. And when Medea perceived that his sails were cutting down their lead, she persuaded Jason to kill Apsyrtos,

• C. G. Juns. *The Integration of the Personality* (New York, *VJ39),* p. 59.

her younger brother whom she had carried **off,** and toss the pieces of the dismembered body into the sea. This forced King Aeetes, her father, to put about, rescue the fragments, and go ashore to give them decent burial. Meanwhile the Argo ran with the wind and passed from his ken."

In the Japanese "Records of Ancient Matters" appears another harrowing tale, but of **very** different import: that of the descent to the underworld of the primeval all-father Izanagi, to recover from the land of the Yellow Stream his deceased sister-spouse Izanami. She met him at the door to the lower world, and he said to her: "Thine Augustness, my lovely younger sister! The lands that I and thou made are not yet finished making; so come back!" She replied: "Lamentable indeed that thou earnest not sooner! I have eaten of the food of the Land of the Yellow Stream. Nevertheless, as I am overpowered by the honor of the entry here of Thine Augustness, my lovely elder brother, I wish to return. Moreover, **I will** discuss the matter particularly with the deities of the Yellow Stream. Be careful, do not look at me!"

She retired into the palace; but as she tarried there very long, he could not wait. He broke off one of the end-teeth of the comb that was stuck in the august left bunch of his hair, and, lighting it as a little torch, he went in and looked. What he saw were maggots swarming, and Izanami rotting.

Aghast at the sight, Izanagi fled back. Izanami said: "Thou hast put me to shame."

Izanami sent the Ugly Female of the nether world in pursuit. Izanagi in full flight took the black headdress from his head and cast it down. Instantly it turned into grapes, and, while his pursuer paused to eat them, he continued on his rapid way. But she resumed the pursuit and gained on him. He took and broke the multitudinous and close-toothed comb in the right bunch of his hair and cast it down. Instantly it turned into bamboo sprouts, and, while she pulled them up and ate them, he fled.

Then his younger sister sent in pursuit of him the eight thunder deities with a thousand and five hundred warriors of the Yellow Stream. Drawing the ten-grasp saber that was augustly girded on him, he fled, brandishing this behind him. But the warriors still pursued. Reaching the frontier pass between the world of the living and the land of the Yellow Stream, he took three peaches that were growing there, waited, and when the army came against him, hurled them. The peaches from the world of the living smote the warriors of the land of the Yellow Stream, who turned and fled.

Her Augustness Izanami, last of all, came out herself. So he drew up a rock which it would take a thousand men to lift, and with it blocked up the pass. And with the rock between them, they stood opposite to one another and exchanged leave-takings. Izanami said: "My lovely elder brother, Thine Augustness! If thou dost behave like this, henceforth I shall cause to die every day one thousand of thy people in thy realm." Izanagi answered: "My lovely younger sister, Thine Augustness! If thou dost so, then I will cause every day one thousand and five hundred women to give birth."[9]

Having moved a step beyond the creative sphere of all-father Izanagi into the field of dissolution, Izanami had sought to protect her brother-husband. When he had seen more than he could bear, he lost his innocence of death but, with his august will to live, drew up as a mighty rock that protecting veil which we all have held, ever since, between our eyes and the grave.

The Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, and hundreds of analogous tales throughout the world, suggest, as does this ancient legend of the farthest East, that in spite of the failure recorded, a possibility exists of a return of the lover with his lost love from beyond the terrible threshold. It is always some little fault, some slight yet critical symptom of human frailty, that makes impossible the open interrelationship between the worlds; so that one is tempted to believe, almost, that if the small, marring accident could be avoided, all would be well. In the Polynesian versions

[8] See Apollonios of Rhodes, *Argonautika:* the flight is recounted in Book IV.

[9] *Ko-ji~ki,* -Records of Ancient Matters" (,\.D. 712), adapted from the translation by C. H. Chamberlain, *Transactions of The Asiatic Society of Japan,* Vol. X, Svipplement (Yokohama, 1882), pp. 24-28.

of the romance, however, where the fleeing couple usually escape, and in the Greek satyr-play of *Alcestis,* where we also have a happy return, the effect is not reassuring, but only superhuman. The myths of failure touch us with the tragedy of life, but those of success only with their own incredibility. And yet, it' the mono-myth is to **fulfill** its promise, not human failure or superhuman success but human success is what we shall have to be shown. That is the problem of the crisis of the threshold of the return. We shall first consider it in the superhuman symbols and then seek the practical teaching for historic man.

Rescue from Without

The hero may have to be brought back from his supernatural adventure by assistance from without. That is to say, the world may have to come and get him. For the bliss of the deep abode is not lightly abandoned in favor of the self-scattering of the wakened state. "Who having cast off the world," we read, "would desire to return again? He would be only *there.*"" And yet, in so far as one is alive, life **will** call. Society is jealous of those who remain away from it, and will come knocking at the door. If the hero—like Muchukunda—is unwilling, the disturber suffers an ugly shock; but on the other hand, if the summoned one is only delayed—sealed in by the beatitude of the state of perfect being (which resembles death}—an apparent rescue is effected, and the adventurer returns.

When Raven of the Eskimo tale had darted with bis fire sticks into the belly of the whale-cow, he discovered himself at the entrance of a handsome room, at the farther end of which

" *Jaimuniya Cpanhkad Brahmana,* 3. 28. *5.*

burned a lamp. He was surprised to see sitting there a beautiful girl. The room was dry and clean, the whale's spine supporting the ceiling and the ribs forming the walls. From a tube that ran along the backbone, oil dripped slowly into the lamp.

When Raven entered the room, the woman looked up and cried: "How did you get here? You are the first man to enter this place." Raven told what he had done, and she bade him take a seat on the opposite side of the room. This woman was the soul *(inua)* of the whale. She spread a meal before the visitor, gave him berries and oil, and told him, meanwhile, how she had gathered the berries the year before. Raven remained four days as guest of the *inua* in the belly of the whale, and during the entire period was trying to ascertain what kind of tube that could be, running along the ceiling. Every time the woman left the room, she forbade him to touch it. But now, when she again went out, he walked over to the lamp, stretched out his claw and catight on it a big drop, which he licked off with his tongue. It was so sweet that he repeated the act, and then proceeded to catch drop after drop, as fast as they fell. Presently, however, his greed found this too slow, and so he reached up, broke off a piece of the tube, and ate it. Hardly had he done so, when a great gush of oil poured into the room, extinguished the light, and the chamber itself began to roll heavily back and forth. This rolling went on for four days. Raven was almost dead with fatigue and with the terrible noise that stormed around him all the while. But then everything quieted down and the room lay still; for Raven had broken one of the heart-arteries, and the whale-cow had died. The *inua* never returned. The body of the whale was washed ashore.

But now Raven was a prisoner. While he pondered what he should do, he heard two men talking, up on the back of the animal, and they decided to summon all the people from the village to help with the whale. Very soon they had cut a hole in the upper part of the great body.[11] When it was large enough, and all the people had gone off with pieces of meat to earn- them high

[11] In many myths of the hero ii the whale's beilv he sfu«l bv birds that peck open the side of bis prison.

up on the shore, Raven stepped out unnoticed. But no sooner had he reached the ground than he remembered he had left his fire sticks within. He took off his coat and mask, and pretty soon the people saw a small, black man, wrapped up in a queer animal skin approaching them. They looked at him curiously. The man offered to help, rolled up his sleeves, and set to work.

In a little while, one of the people working in the interior of the whale shouted, "Look what I have found! Fire sticks in the belly of the whale!" Raven said, "My, but this is bad! My daughter once told me that when fire sticks are found inside a whale that people have cut open, many of these people **will** die! I'm for running!" He rolled down his sleeves again and made away. The people hurried to follow his example. And so that was how Raven, who then doubled back, had, for a time, the whole feast to himself.[12]

FIGURE 10. The Resurrection of Osiris

[12] Frobenius, *Das Zeitalter des Sonnetlgottes*, pp. 85-87.

One of the most important and delightful of the myths of the Shinto tradition of Japan—already old when chronicled in the eighth century A.D. in the "Records of Ancient Matters"—is that of the drawing forth of the beautiful sun-goddess Amaterasu from a heavenly rock-dweiling during the critical first period of the world. This is an example in which the rescued one is somewhat reluctant. The storm-god Susanowo, the brother of Amaterasu, had been misbehaving inexcusably. And though she had tried every means to appease him and had stretched forgiveness far beyond the limit, he continued to destroy her rice fields and to pollute her institutions. As a final insult, he broke a hole in the top of her weaving-hall and let fall through it a "heavenly piebald horse which he had flayed with a backward flaying," at sight of which all the ladies of the goddess, who were busily weaving the august garments of the deities, were so much alarmed that they died of fear.

Amaterasu, terrified at the sight, retired into a heavenly cave, closed the door behind her, and made it fast. This was a terrible thing for her to do; for the permanent disappearance of the sun would have meant as much as the end of the universe—the end, before it had even properly begun. With her disappearance the whole plain of high heaven and all the central land of reed plains became dark. Evil spirits ran riot through the world; numerous portents of woe arose, and the voices of the myriad of deities were like unto the flies in the fifth moon as they swarmed.

Therefore the eight millions of gods assembled in a divine assembly in the bed of the tranquil river of heaven and bid one of their number, the deity named Thought-Includer, to devise a plan. As the result of their consultation, many things of divine efficacy were produced, among them a mirror, a sword, and cloth offerings. A great tree was set up and decorated with jewels; cocks were brought that they might keep up a perpetual crowing; bonfires were lit; grand liturgies were recited. The mirror, eight feet long, was tied to the middle branches of the tree. And a merry, noisy dance was performed by a young goddess called Uzume. The eight millions of divinities were so

amused that their laughter rilled the air, and the plain of high heaven shook.

The sun-goddess in the cave heard the lively uproar and was amazed. She was curious to know what was going on. Slightly opening the door of the heavenly rock-dwelling, she spoke thus from within: "I thought that owing to my retirement the plain of heaven would be dark, and likewise the central land of reed plains would all be dark: how then is it that Uzume makes merry, and that likewise the eight millions of gods all laugh?" Then Uzume spoke, saying: "We rejoice and are glad because there is a deity more illustrious than Thine Augustness." While she was thus speaking, two of the divinities pushed forward the mirror and respectfully showed it to the sun-goddess, Amaterasu; whereupon she, more and more astonished, gradually came forth from the door and gazed upon it. A powerful god took her august hand and drew her out; whereupon another stretched a rope of straw (called the *shimenawa)* behind her, across the entrance, saying: "Thou must not go back further in than this!" Thereupon both the plain of high heaven and the central land of reed plains again were light.[13] The sun may now retreat, for a time, every night—as does life itself, in refreshing sleep; but by the august *shimenawa* she is prevented from disappearing permanently.

The motif of the sun as a goddess, instead of as a god, is a rare and precious survival from an archaic, apparently once widely diffused, mythological context. The great maternal divinity of South Arabia is the feminine sun, Hat. The word in German for the sun *(die Sonne)* is feminine. Throughout Siberia, as well as in North America, scattered stories survive of a female sun. And in the fairy tale of Red Ridinghood, who was eaten by the wolf but rescued from its belly by the hunter, we may have a remote echo of the same adventure as that of Amaterasu. Traces remain in many lands; but only in Japan do we find the once great mythology still effective in civilization; for the Mikado is a direct

[13] *Ko-ji-ki,* after Chamberlain, *op. cit.,* pp. 52—59.

descendant of the grandson of Amaterasu, and as ancestress of the royal house she is honored as one of the supreme divinities of the national tradition of Shinto.[11] In her adventures may be sensed a different world-feeling from that of the now better-known mythologies of the solar *god:* a certain tenderness toward the lovely gift of light, a gentle gratitude for things made visible—such as must once have distinguished the religious mood of many peoples.

[11] Shinto, "The Way of the Gods," the tradition native to the Japanese as distinguished from the imported Butsudo, or "Way of the Buddha," is a way of devotion to the guardians of life and custom (local spirits, ancestral powers, heroes, the divine king, one's living parents, and one's **living** children) as distinguished from the powers that yield release from the round (Bodhisattvas and Buddhas). The way of worship is primarily that of preserving and cultivating purity of heart: "What is ablution"? It is not merely cleansing the body with holy water, but following the Right and Moral Way" (Tomobe-no-Yasutaka, *Shinto-Shoden-Kuju).* "What pleases the Deity is virtue and sincerity, not any number of material offerings" *(Shinto-Gobusho).*

Amaterasu, ancestress of the Royal House, is the chief divinity of the numerous folk pantheon, yet herself only the highest manifestation of the unseen, transcendent yet immanent, Universal God: "The Eight Hundred Myriads of Gods are but differing manifestations of one unique Deity, Kunitokotachi-no-Kami, The Eternally Standing Divine Being of the Earth, The Great Unity of All Things in the Universe, The Primordial Being of Heaven and Earth, eternally existing from the beginning to the end of the world" (Izawa-Nagahide, *Shinto-Ameno-Nuboko-no-Ki).* "What deity does Amaterasu worship in abstinence in the Plain of High Heaven? She worships her own Self within as a Deity, endeavoring to cultivate divine virtue in her own person by means of inner purity and thus becoming one with the Deity" (Ichijo-Kaneyoshi, *Nihonshoki-Sanso).*

Since the Deity is immanent in all things, all things are to be regarded as divine, from the pots and pans of the kitchen to the Mikado: this is Shinto, "The Way of the Gods." The Mikado being in the highest position receives the greatest reverence, but not reverence different in kind from that bestowed upon all things. "The awe-inspiring Deity manifests Itself, even in the single leaf of a tree or a delicate blade of grass" (Urabe-no-Kanekuni). The function of reverence in Shinto is to honor that Deity in all things; the function of purity to sustain Its manifestation in oneself—following the august model of the divine self-worship of the goddess Amaterasu. "With the unseen God who seeth all secret things in the silence, the heart of the man sincere communes from the earth below" (from a poem by the Emperor Meiji). — All of the quotations above will be found in Genchi Kato, *What is Shinto?* (Tokyo: Maruzen Company **Ltd.,** 1935): see also Lafcadio Hearn, *Japan, An Interpretation* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1904).

The mirror, the sword, and the tree, we recognize. The mirror, reflecting the goddess and drawing her forth from the august repose of her divine nonmanifestation, is symbolic of the world, the field of the reflected image. Therein divinity is pleased to regard its own glory, and this pleasure is itself inducement to the act of manifestation or "creation." The sword is the counterpart of the thunderbolt. The tree is the World Axis in its wish-fulfilling, fruitful aspect—the same as that displayed in Christian homes at the season of the winter solstice, which is the moment of the rebirth or return of the sun, a joyous custom inherited from the Germanic paganism that has given to the modern German language its feminine *Sonne.* The dance of Uzume and the uproar of the gods belong to carnival: the world left topsy-turvy by the withdrawal of the supreme divinity, but joyous for the coming renewal. And the *shimenawa,* the august rope of straw that was stretched behind the goddess when she reappeared, symbolizes the graciousness of the miracle of the light's return. This *shimenawa* is one of the most conspicuous, important, and silently eloquent, of the traditional symbols of the folk religion of Japan. Hung above the entrances of the temples, festooned along the streets at the New Year festival, it denotes the renovation of the world at the threshold of the return. If the Christian cross is the most telling symbol of the mythological passage into the abyss of death, the *shimenawa* is the simplest sign of the resurrection. The two represent the mystery of the boundary between the worlds—the existent nonexistent line.

Amaterasu is an Oriental sister of the great Inanna, the supreme goddess of the ancient Sumerian cuneiform temple-tablets, whose descent we have already followed into the lower world. Inanna, Ishtar, Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus: those were the names she bore in the successive culture periods of the Occidental development—associated, not with the sun, but with the planet that carries her name, and at the same time with the moon, the heavens, and the fruitful earth. In Egypt she became the goddess of the Dog Star, Sirius, whose annual reappearance in the sky announced the earth-fructifying flood season of the river Nile.

Inanna, it will be remembered, descended from the heavens into the hell region of her sister-opposite, the Queen of Death, Ereshkigal. And she left behind Ninshubur, her messenger, with instructions to rescue her should she not return. She arrived naked before the seven judges; they fastened their eyes upon her, she was turned into a corpse, and the corpse—as we have seen—was hung upon a stake.

After three days and three nights had passed,[1']
Inanna's messenger Ninshubur,
Her messenger of favorable words,
Her carrier of supporting words,
Filled the heaven with complaints for her,
Cried for her in the assembly shrine,
Rushed about for her in the house of the gods. . . .
Like a pauper in a single garment he dressed for her,
To the Ekur, the house of Enlil, all alone he directed his step.

This is the beginning of the rescue of the goddess, and illustrates the case of one who so knew the power of the zone into which she was entering that she took the precaution to have herself aroused. Ninshubur went first to the god Enlil; but the god said that, Inanna having gone from the great above to the great below, in the nether world the decrees of the nether world should prevail. Ninshubur next went to the god Nanna; but the god said that she had gone from the great above to the great below, and that in the nether world the decrees of the nether world should prevail. Ninshubur went to the god Enki; and the god Enki devised a plan.[16] He fashioned two sexless creatures and

[1'] Compare the Christian Credo: "He descended into Hell, the third day He rose again from the dead. . . ."

[16] Enlil was the Sumerian air-god, Nanna the moon-god, Enki the water-god and god of wisdom. At the time of the composition of our document (third millennium B.C.) Enlil was the chief divinity of the Sumerian pantheon. He was quick to anger. He was the sender of the Flood. Nanna was one of his sons. In the myths the benign god Enki appears typically in the role of the helper. He is the patron and adviser both of Gilgamesh and of the flood hero, Atarhasis-Utnapishtim-Noah. The motif of Enki its. Enlil is carried on by Classical mythology in the counterplay of Poseidon *vs.* Zeus (Neptune *vs.* Jove).

entrusted to them the "food of life" and "water of **life"** with instructions to proceed to the nether world and sprinkle this food and water sixty times on Inanna's suspended corpse.

Upon the corpse hung from a stake they directed the fear
of the rays of fire,
Sixty times the food of life, sixty times the water of life,
they sprinkled upon it,
Inanna arose.

Inanna ascends from the nether world,
The Anunnaki fled,
And whoever of the nether world may have descended
peacefully to the nether world;
When Inanna ascends from the nether world,
Verily the dead hasten ahead of her.

Inanna ascends from the nether world,
The small demons like reeds,
The large demons like tablet styluses,
Walked at her side.
Who walked in front of her, held a staff in the hand,
Who walked at her side, carried a weapon on the loin.
They who preceded her,
They who preceded Inanna,
Were beings who know not food, who know not water,
Who eat not sprinkled flour,
Who drink not libated wine,
Who take away the wife from the loins of man,
Who take away the child from the breast of the nursing mother.

Surrounded by this ghostly, ghastly crowd, Inanna wandered through the land of Sumer, from city to city.[17]

These three examples from widely separated culture areas—Raven, Amaterasu, and Inanna—sufficiently illustrate the rescue

Kramer, *op. cit.,* pp. 87, 95. The conclusion of the poem, this valuable document of the sources of the myths and symbols of our civilization, is forever lost.

from without. They show in **the final** sttagcs of the adventure **the** continued operation of the supernatural assisting force **that** has been attending the elect through the **w/hole** course of his ordeal. His consciousness having succumbed, Ithe unconscious nevertheless supplies its own balances, and he is born back into the world from which he came. Instead of holding to and saving his ego, as in the pattern of the magic flight, he Hoses it, and yet, through grace, it is returned.

This brings us to the final crisis of the round, to which the whole miraculous excursion has been but a prelude—that, namely, of the paradoxical, supremely difficult threshold-crossing of the hero's return from the mystic realm iinto the land of common day. Whether rescued from without, driven from within, or gently carried along by the guiding divinities, he has yet to re-enter with his boon the long-forgotten atniiosphere where men who are fractions imagine themselves to be complete. He has yet to confront society with his ego-shatteriing, life-redeeming elixir, and take the return blow of reasonable queries, hard resentment, and good people at a loss to comprehend.

The Crossing of the Retn rn Threshold

The two worlds, the divine and the human, can be pictured only as distinct from each other—different as life and death, as day and night. The hero adventures out of the land we know into darkness; there he accomplishes his adventure, or again is simply-lost to us, imprisoned, or in danger; and his return is described as a coming back out of that yonder zone. Nevertheless—and here is a great key to the understanding of **myth** and symbol—the two kingdoms are actually one. The realm of the gods is a forgotten dimension of the world we know. And the exploration of that dimension, either willingly or unwillingly, is the whole

sense of the deed of the hero. The values and distinctions that in normal life seem important disappear with the terrifying assimilation of the self into what formerly was only otherness. As in the stories of the cannibal ogresses, the fearfulness of this loss of personal individuation can be the whole burden of the transcendental experience for unqualified souls. But the hero-soul goes boldly in—and discovers the hags converted into goddesses and the dragons into the watchdogs of the gods.

There must always remain, however, from the standpoint of normal waking consciousness, a certain baffling inconsistency between the wisdom brought forth from the deep, and the prudence usually found to be effective in the light world. Hence the common divorce of opportunism from virtue and the resultant degeneration of human existence. Martyrdom is for saints, but the common people have their institutions, and these cannot be left to grow like lilies of the field; Peter keeps drawing his sword, as in the garden, to defend the creator and sustainer of the world.[18] The boon brought from the transcendent deep becomes quickly rationalized into nonentity, and the need becomes great for another hero to refresh the word.

How teach again, however, what has been taught correctly and incorrectly learned a thousand thousand times, throughout the millenniums of mankind's prudent folly? That is the hero's ultimate difficult task. How render back into light-world language the speech-defying pronouncements of the dark? How represent on a two-dimensional surface a three-dimensional form, or in a three-dimensional image a multi-dimensional meaning? How translate into terms of "yes" and "no" revelations that shatter into meaninglessness every attempt to define the pairs of opposites? How communicate to people who insist on the exclusive evidence of their senses the message of the all-generating void?

Many failures attest to the difficulties of this life-affirmative threshold. The first problem of the returning hero is to accept as real, after an experience of the soul-satisfying vision of fulfillment, the passing joys and sorrows, banalities and noisy obscenities of

[18] Matthew, 26:51; Mark, 14:47; John, 18:10.

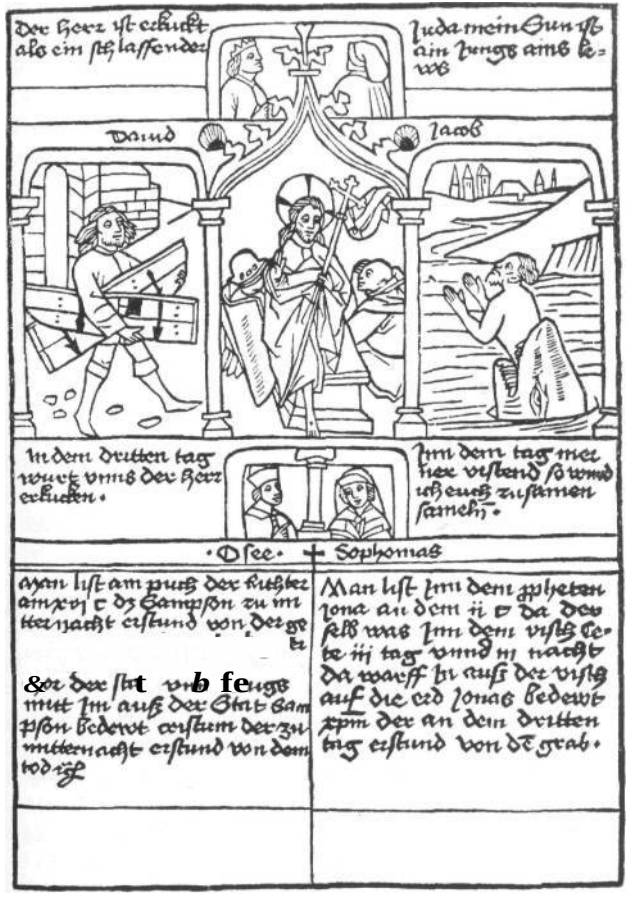


FIGURE 11. The Reappearance of the Hero
Samson with the Temple-Doors: Christ Arisen: Jonah

life. Why re-enter such a world? Why attempt to make plausible, or even interesting, to men and women consumed with passion, the experience of transcendental bliss"? As dreams that were momentous by night may seem simply silly in the light of day, so the poet and the prophet can discover themselves playing the idiot before a jury of sober eyes. The easy thing is to commit the whole community to the devil and retire again into the heavenly rock-dwelling, close the door, and make it fast. But if some spiritual obstetrician has meanwhile drawn the *shimenawa* across the retreat, then the work of representing eternity in time, and perceiving in time eternity, cannot be avoided.

The story of Rip van Winkle is an example of the delicate case of the returning hero. Rip moved into the adventurous realm unconsciously, as we all do every night when we go to sleep. In deep sleep, declare the Hindus, the self is unified and blissful; therefore deep sleep is called the cognitional state.[IS] But though we are refreshed and sustained by these nightly visits to the source-darkness, our lives are not reformed by them; we return, like Rip, with nothing to show for the experience but our whiskers.

"He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. . . . As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting his usual activity. . . . As he approached the village, he met a number of people, but none whom he knew; which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and, whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip involuntarily to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long. . . . He began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. . . .

[19] *Mandukya Upanishad,* 5.

"The appearance of Rip, **with** his long, grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and the army of women and children that had gathered at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired on which side he voted. Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear whether he was a Federal or a Democrat. Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question, when a knowing, self-important old gentleman in a sharp cocked hat made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and, planting himself before van Winkle—with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane; his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul—demanded in an austere tone what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village. 'Alas! gentlemen,' cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, 'I am a poor, quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject to the King, God bless him!'

"Here a general shout burst from the bystanders: 'A Tory, a Tory! A spy! A refugee! Hustle him! Away with him!' It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order."[20]

More dispiriting than the fate of Rip is the account of what happened to the Irish hero Oisin when he returned from a long sojourn with the daughter of the King of the Land of Youth. Oisin had done better than poor Rip; he had kept his eyes open in the adventurous realm. He had descended consciously (awake) into the kingdom of the unconscious (deep sleep) and had incorporated the values of the subliminal experience into his waking personality. A transmutation had been effected. But precisely because of this highly desirable circumstance, the dangers of his return were the greater. Since his entire personality had been

[20] Washington Irving, *'Che Sketch Book,* **"Rip** van **Winkle."**

brought into accord with the powers and forms of timelessness, all of him stood to be refuted, blasted, by the impact of the forms and powers of time.

Oisin, the son of Finn MacCool, one day was out hunting with his men in the woods of Erin, when he was approached by the daughter of the King of the Land of Youth. Oisin's men had gone ahead with the day's kill, leaving their master with his three dogs to shift for himself. And the mysterious being had appeared to him with the beautiful body of a woman, but the head of a pig. She declared that the head was due to a Druidic spell, promising that it would vanish the very minute he would marry her. "Well, if that is the state you are in," said he, "and if marriage with me will free you from the spell, I'll not leave the pig's head on you long."

Without delay the pig's head was dispatched and they set out together for Tir na n-Og, the Land of Youth. Oisin dwelt there as a king many happy years. But one day he turned and declared to his supernatural bride: "'I wish I could be in Erin to-day to see my father and his men.'

"'If you go,' said his wife, 'and set foot on the land of Erin, you'll never come back here to me, and you'll become a blind old man. How long do you think it is since you came here?'

" 'About three years,' said Oisin.

" 'It is three hundred years,' said she, 'since you came to this kingdom with me. If you must go to Erin, I'll give you this white steed to carry you; but if you come down from the steed or touch the soil of Erin with your foot, the steed will come back that minute, and you'll be where he left you, a poor old man.'

" 'I'll come back, never fear,' said Oisin. 'Have I not good reason to come back? But I must see my father and my son and my friends in Erin once more; I must have even one look at them.'

"She prepared the steed for Oisin and said, 'This steed will carry you wherever you wish to go.'

"Oisin never stopped till the steed touched the soil of Erin; and he went on till he came to Knock Patrick in Munster, where he saw a man herding cows. In the field where the cows were grazing there was a broad flat stone.

" 'Will you come here,' said Oisin to the herdsman, 'and turn over this stone?'

"'Indeed, then, I will not,' said the herdsman; 'for I could not lift it, nor twenty men more like me.'

"Oisin rode up to the stone, and, reaching down, caught it with his hand and turned it over. Underneath the stone was the great horn of the Fenians *(borabu)*, which circled round like a sea-shell, and it was the rule that when any of the Fenians of Erin blew the borabu, the others would assemble at once from whatever part of the country they might be in at the time.[21]

" 'Will you bring this horn to me?' asked Oisin of the herdsman.

"'I will not,' said the herdsman; 'for neither I nor many more like me could raise it from the ground.'

"With that Oisin moved near the horn, and reaching down took it in his hand; but so eager was he to blow it, that he forgot everything, and slipped in reaching till one foot touched the earth. In an instant the steed was gone, and Oisin lay on the ground a blind old man."[22]

The equating of a single year in Paradise to one hundred of earthly existence is a motif well known to myth. The full round of one hundred signifies totality. Similarly, the three hundred and sixty degrees of the circle signify totality; accordingly the Hindu Puranas represent one year of the gods as equal to three hundred and sixty of men. From the standpoint of the Olympians, eon after eon of earthly history rolls by, revealing ever the harmonious form of the total round, so that where men see only change and death, the blessed behold immutable form, world without end. But now the problem is to maintain this cosmic

[81] The Fenians were the men of Finn MacCool, giants all. Oisin, who was the son of Finn MacCool, had been one of their number. But their day now had long passed, and the inhabitants of the land were no longer the great ones of old. Such legends of archaic giants are common to folk traditions everywhere; see, for instance, the myth recounted above (pp. 179-180) of King Muchukunda. Comparable are the protracted lives of the Hebrew patriarchs: Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, Seth nine hundred and twelve, Enos nine hundred and five, etc., etc. (Genesis, 5).

-- Curtin, *op. cit.*, pp. 332-333.

standpoint in the face of an immediate earthly pain or joy. The taste of the fruits of temporal knowledge draws the concentration of the spirit away from the center of the eon to the peripheral crisis of the moment. The balance of perfection is lost, the spirit falters, and the hero falls.

The idea of the insulating horse, to keep the hero out of immediate touch with the earth and yet permit him to promenade among the peoples of the world, is a vivid example of a basic precaution taken generally by the carriers of supernormal power. Montezuma, Emperor of Mexico, never set foot on the ground; he was always carried on the shoulders of noblemen, and if he lighted anywhere they laid a rich tapestry for him to walk upon. Within his palace, the king of Persia walked on carpets on which no one else might tread; outside of it he was never seen on foot but only in a chariot or on horseback. Formerly neither the kings of Uganda, nor their mothers, nor their queens might walk on foot outside of the spacious enclosures in which they lived. Whenever they went forth they were carried on the shoulders of men of the Buffalo clan, several of whom accompanied any of these royal personages on a journey and took it in turn to bear the burden. The king sat astride the bearer's neck with a leg over each shoulder and his feet tucked under the bearer's arms. When one of these royal carriers grew tired, he shot the king onto the shoulders of a second man without allowing the royal feet to touch the ground.[23]

Sir James George Frazer explains in the following graphic way the fact that over the whole earth the divine personage may not touch the ground with his foot. "Apparently holiness, magical virtue, taboo, or whatever we may call that mysterious quality which is supposed to pervade sacred or tabooed persons, is conceived by the primitive philosopher as a physical substance or fluid, with which the sacred man is charged just as a Leyden jar is charged with electricity; and exactly as the electricity in the jar can be discharged by contact with a good conductor, so

[23] From Sir James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, one-volume edition, pp. 593—594. Copyright, 1922 by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

the holiness or magical virtue in the man can be discharged and drained away by contact with the earth, which on this theory serves as an excellent conductor for the magical fluid. Hence in order to preserve the charge from running to waste, the sacred or tabooed personage must be carefully prevented from touching the ground; in electrical language he must be insulated, if he is not to be emptied of the precious substance or fluid with which he, as a vial, is filled to the brim. And in many cases apparently the insulation of the tabooed person is recommended as a precaution not merely for his own sake but for the sake of others; for since the virtue of holiness is, so to say, a powerful explosive which the smallest touch may detonate, it is necessary in the interest of the general safety to keep it within narrow bounds, lest breaking out it should blast, blight, and destroy whatever it comes into contact with."[24]

There is, no doubt, a psychological justification for the precaution. The Englishman dressing for dinner in the jungles of Nigeria feels that there is reason in his act. The young artist wearing his whiskers into the lobby of the Ritz will be glad to explain his idiosyncrasy. The Roman collar sets apart the man of the pulpit. A twentieth-century nun floats by in a costume from the Middle Ages. The wife is insulated, more or less, by her ring.

The tales of W. Somerset Maugham describe the metamorphoses that overcome the bearers of the white man's burden who neglect the taboo of the dinner jacket. Many folksongs give testimony to the dangers of the broken ring. And the myths—for example, the myths assembled by Ovid in his great compendium, the *Metamorphoses*—recount again and again the shocking transformations that take place when the insulation between a highly concentrated power center and the lower power field of the surrounding world is, without proper precautions, suddenly taken away. According to the fairy lore of the Celts and Germans, a gnome or elf caught abroad by the sunrise is turned immediately into a stick or a stone.

The returning hero, to complete his adventure, must survive the impact of the world. Rip van Winkle never knew what he

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 594-595. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

had experienced; his return was a joke. Oisin knew, but he lost his centering in it and so collapsed. Kamar al-Zaman had the best luck of all. He experienced awake the bliss of deep sleep, and returned to the light of day with such a convincing talisman of his unbelievable adventure that he was able to retain his self-assurance in the face of every sobering disillusionment.

While he was sleeping in his tower, the two Jinn, Dahnash and Maymunah, transported from distant China the daughter of the Lord of the Islands and the Seas and the Seven Palaces. Her name was the Princess Budur. And they placed this young woman asleep beside the Persian prince, in the very bed. The Jinn uncovered the two faces, and perceived that the couple were as like as twins. "By Allah," declared Dahnash, "O my lady, my beloved is the fairer." But Maymunah, the female spirit, who loved Kamar al-Zaman, retorted: "Not so, the fairer one is mine." Whereupon they wrangled, challenging and counterchallenging, until Dahnash at last suggested they should seek an impartial judge.

Maymunah smote the ground with her foot, and there came out of it an Ifrit blind in one eye, humpbacked, scurvy-skinned, with eye-orbits slit up and down his face; and on his head were seven horns; four locks of hair fell to his heels; his hands were like pitchforks and his legs like masts; and he had nails like the claws of a lion, feet like the hoofs of the wild ass. The monster respectfully kissed the ground before Maymunah and inquired what she would have him do. Instructed that he was to judge between the two young persons lying on the bed, each with an arm under the other's neck, he gazed long upon them, marveling at their loveliness, then turned to Maymunah and Dahnash, and declared his verdict.

"By Allah, if you will have the truth," he said, "the two are of equal beauty. Nor can I make any choice between them, on account of their being a man and a woman. But I have another thought, which is that we wake each of them in turn, without the knowledge of the other, and whichever is the more enamored shall be judged inferior in comeliness."

It was agreed. Dahnash changed himself to the form of a flea and bit Kamar al-Zaman on the neck. Starting from sleep, the

youth rubbed the bitten part, scratching it hard because of the smart, and meanwhile turned a little to the side. He found lying beside him something whose breath was sweeter than musk and whose skin softer than cream. He marveled. He sat up. He looked better at what was beside him and discerned that it was a young woman like a pearl or shining sun, like a dome seen from afar on a well-built wall.

Kamar al-Zaman attempted to wake her, but Dahnash had deepened her slumber. The youth shook her. "O my beloved, awake and look at me," he said. But she never stirred. Kamar al-Zaman imagined Budur to be the woman whom his father wished him to marry, and he was filled with eagerness. But he feared that his sire might be hiding somewhere in the room, watching, so he restrained himself, and contented himself with taking the seal-ring from her little finger and slipping it on his own. The Ifrits then returned him to his sleep.

In contrast with the performance of Kamar al-Zaman was that of Budur. She had no thought or fear of anyone watching. Furthermore, Maymunah, who had awakened her, with female malice had gone high up her leg and bitten hard in a place that burned. The beautiful, noble, glorious Budur, discovering her male affinity beside her, and perceiving that he had already-taken her ring, unable either to rouse him or to imagine what he had done to her, and ravaged with love, assailed by the open presence of his flesh, lost all control, and attained to a climax of helpless passion. "Lust was sore upon her, for that the desire of women is fiercer than the desire of men, and she was ashamed of her own shamelessness. Then she plucked his seal-ring from his finger, and put it on her own instead of the ring he had taken, and bussed his inner lips and hands, nor did she leave any part of him unkissed; after which she took him to her breast and embraced him, and, laying one of her hands under his neck and the other under his armpit, nestled close to him and fell asleep at his side."

Dahnash therefore lost the argument. Budur was returned to China. Next morning when the two young people awoke with the whole of Asia now between them, they turned to right and to left, but discovered no one at their side. They cried out to their

respective households, belabored and slew people round about, and went entirely mad. Kamar al-Zaman lay down to languish; his father, the king, sat down at his head, weeping and mourning over him, and never leaving him, night or day. But the Princess Budur had to be manacled; with a chain of iron about her neck, she was made fast to one of her palace windows.[23]

The encounter and separation, for all its wildness, is typical of the sufferings of love. For when a heart insists on its destiny, resisting the general blandishment, then the agony is great; so too the danger. Forces, however, will have been set in motion beyond the reckoning of the senses. Sequences of events from the corners of the world **will** draw gradually together, and miracles of coincidence bring the inevitable to pass. The talismanic ring from the soul's encounter with its other portion in the place of recoUectedness betokens that the heart was there aware of what Rip van Winkle missed; it betokens too a conviction of the waking mind that the reality of the deep is not belied by that of common day. This is the sign of the hero's requirement, now, to knit together his two worlds.

The remainder of the long story of Kamar al-Zaman is a history of the slow yet wonderful operation of a destiny that has been summoned into life. Not everyone has a destiny: only the hero who has plunged to touch it, and has come up again—with a ring.

Master of the Two Worlds

Freedom to pass back and forth across the world division, from the perspective of the apparitions of time to that of the causal deep and back—not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other, yet permitting the mind to know the one

[25] Adapted from Burton, *op. cit.,* Ill, pp. 231-256.

by virtue of the other—is the talent of the master. The Cosmic Dancer, declares Nietzsche, does not rest heavily in a single spot, but gaily, lightly, turns and leaps from one position to another. It is possible to speak from only one point at a time, but that does not invalidate the insights of the rest.

The myths do not often display in a single image the mystery of the ready transit. Where they do, the moment is a precious symbol, full of import, to be treasured and contemplated. Such a moment was that of the Transfiguration of the Christ.

"Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.[26] While he yet spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead."[27]

Here is the whole myth in a moment: Jesus the guide, the way, the vision, and the companion of the return. The disciples are his initiates, not themselves masters of the mystery, yet introduced to the full experience of the paradox of the two worlds in one. Peter was so frightened he babbled.[28] Flesh had dissolved

[26] "For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid" (Mark, 9:6).

[27] Matthew, 17:1-9.

[28] A certain element of comic relief can be felt in Peter's immediate project (announced even while the vision was before his eyes) to convert the ineffable into a stone foundation. Only six days before, Jesus had said to him: "thou art Peter; and upon this rock 1 will build my church,[11] then a moment later: "thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (Matthew, 16:18, 23).

before their eyes to reveal the Word. They fell upon their faces, and when they arose the door again had closed.

It should be observed that this eternal moment soars beyond Kamar al-Zaman's romantic realization of his individual destiny. Not only do we have here a masterly passage, back and forth, across the world threshold, but we observe a profounder, very much profounder, penetration of the depths. Individual destiny is not the motive and theme of this vision; for the revelation was beheld by three witnesses, not one: it cannot be satisfactorily elucidated simply in psychological terms. Of course, it may be dismissed. We may doubt whether such a scene ever actually took place. But that would not help us any; for we are concerned, at present, with problems of symbolism, not of historicity- We do not particularly care whether Rip van Winkle, Kamar al-Zaman, or Jesus Christ ever actually lived. Their *stories* are what concern us: and these stories are so widely distributed over the world—attached to various heroes in various lands—that the question of whether this or that local carrier of the universal theme may or may not have been a historical, living man can be of only secondary moment. The stressing of this historical element will lead to confusion; it will simply obfuscate the picture message.

What, then, is the tenor of the image of the transfiguration? That is the question we have to ask. But in order that it may be confronted on universal grounds, rather than sectarian, we had better review one further example, equally celebrated, of the archetypal event.

The following is taken from the Hindu "Song of the Lord," the *Bhagavad Gita.*[29] The Lord, the beautiful youth Krishna, is an incarnation of Vishnu, the Universal God; Prince Arjuna is his disciple and friend.

Arjuna said: "O Lord, if you think me able to behold it, then, O master of yogis, reveal to me your Immutable Self." The Lord

~' The principal text of modern Hindu devotional religiosity: an ethical dialogue of eighteen chapters, appearing in Book VI of the *Mahabharata,* which is the Indian counterpart of the *Iliad.*

said: "Behold my forms by the hundreds and the thousands-manifold and divine, various in shape and hue. Behold all the gods and angels; behold many wonders that no one has ever seen before. Behold here today the whole universe, the moving and the unmoving, and whatever else you may desire to see, all concentrated in my body.—But with these eyes of yours you cannot see me. I give you a divine eye; behold, now, my sovereign yoga-power."

Having spoken thus, the great Lord of yoga revealed to Arjuna his supreme form as Vishnu, Lord of the Universe: with many faces and eyes, presenting many wondrous sights, bedecked with many celestial ornaments, armed with many divine uplifted weapons; wearing celestial garlands and vestments, anointed with divine perfumes, all-wonderful, resplendent, boundless, and with faces on all sides. If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst forth at once in the sky, that would be like the splendor of the Mighty One. There in the person of the God of gods, Arjuna beheld the whole universe, with its manifold divisions, all gathered together in one. Then, overcome with wonder, his hair standing on end, Arjuna bowed his head to the Lord, joined his palms in salutation, and addressed Him:

"In Thy body, O Lord, I behold all the gods and all the diverse hosts of beings—the Lord Brahma, seated on the lotus, all the patriarchs and the celestial serpents. I behold Thee with myriads of arms and bellies, with myriads of faces and eyes; I behold Thee, infinite in form, on every side, but I see not Thy end nor Thy middle nor Thy beginning, O Lord of the Universe, O Universal Form! On all sides glowing like a mass of radiance I behold Thee, with Thy diadem, mace, and discus, blazing everywhere like burning fire and the burning sun, passing all measure and difficult to behold. Thou art the Supreme Support of the Universe; Thou art the undying Guardian of the Eternal Law; Thou art, in my belief, the Primal Being."

This vision was opened to Arjuna on a battlefield, the moment just before the blast of the first trumpet calling to combat. With the god as his charioteer, the great prince had driven out into the field between the two battle-ready peoples. His own armies

had been assembled against those of a usurping cousin, but now in the enemy ranks he beheld a multitude of men whom he knew and loved. His spirit failed him. "Alas," he said to the divine charioteer, "we are resolved to commit a great sin, in that we are ready to slay our kinsmen to satisfy our greed for the pleasure of a kingdom! Far better would it be for me if the sons of Dhritarashtra, weapons in hand, should slay me in battle, unarmed and unresisting. I will not fight." But thereupon the comely god had summoned him to courage, pouring out to him the wisdom of the Lord, and in the end had opened to him this vision. The prince beholds, dumbfounded, not only his friend transformed into the living personification of the Support of the Universe, but the heroes of the two armies rushing on a wind into the deity's innumerable, terrible mouths. He exclaims in horror:

"When I look upon Thy blazing form reaching to the skies and shining with many colors, when I see Thee with Thy mouth opened wide and Thy great eyes glowing bright, my inmost soul trembles in fear, and I find neither courage nor peace, O Vishnu! When I behold Thy mouths, striking terror with their tusks, like Time's all-consuming fire, I am disoriented and find no peace. Be gracious, O Lord of the Gods, O Abode of the Universe! All these sons of Dhritarashtra, together with the hosts of monarchs, and Bhishma, Drona, and Kama, and the warrior chiefs of our side as well, enter precipitately thy tusked and terrible mouths, frightful to behold. Some are seen caught between Thy teeth, their heads crushed to powder. As the torrents of many rivers rush toward the ocean, so do the heroes of the mortal world rush into Thy fiercely flaming mouths. As moths rush swiftly into a blazing fire to perish there, even so do these creatures swiftly rush into Thy mouths to their own destruction. Thou lickest Thy lips, devouring all the worlds on every side with Thy flaming mouths. Thy fiery rays fill the whole universe with their radiance and scorch it, O Vishnu! Tell me who Thou art, that wearest this frightful form. Salutations to Thee, O God Supreme! Have mercy. I desire to know Thee, who art the Primal One; for I do not understand Thy purpose."

The Lord said: "I am mighty, world-destroying Time, now engaged here in slaying these men. Even without you, all these warriors standing arrayed in the opposing armies shall not live. Therefore stand up and win glory; conquer your enemies and enjoy an opulent kingdom. By Me and none other have they already been slain; be an instrument only, O Arjuna. Kill Drona and Bhishma and Jayadratha and Kama, and the other great warriors as well, who have already been killed by Me. Be not distressed by fear. Fight, and you shall conquer your foes in the battle."

Having heard these words of Krishna, Arjuna trembled, folded his hands in adoration, and bowed down. Overwhelmed with fear, he saluted Krishna and then addressed Him again, with faltering voice.

". . . Thou art the first of gods, the ancient Soul; Thou art the supreme Resting-place of the universe; Thou art the Knower and That which is to be known and the Ultimate Goal. And by Thee is the world pervaded, O Thou of infinite form. Thou art Wind and Death and Fire and Moon and the Lord of Water. Thou art the First Man and the Great-grandsire. Salutations, salutations to Thee! . . . I rejoice that I have seen what was never seen before; but my mind is also troubled with fear. Show me that other form of Thine. Be gracious, O Lord of Gods, O Abode of the Universe. I would see Thee as before, with Thy crown and Thy mace and the discus in Thy hand. Assume again Thy four-armed shape, O Thou of a thousand arms and of endless shapes."

The Lord said: "By My grace, through My own yoga-power, O Arjuna, I have shown you this supreme form, resplendent, universal, infinite, and primeval, which none but you has ever seen. . . . Be not afraid, be not bewildered, on seeing this terrific form of Mine. Free from fear and glad at heart, behold again My other form."

Having thus addressed Arjuna, Krishna assumed a graceful shape again and comforted the terrified Pandava.[30]

[30] *Bhagavad Gita,* **11;** 1:45-46; 2:9. **From the translation by Swami Nikhilananda (New York, 1944).**

The disciple has been blessed with a vision transcending the scope of normal human destiny, and amounting to a glimpse of the essential nature of the cosmos. Not his personal fate, but the fate of mankind, of life as a whole, the atom and all the solar systems, has been opened to him; and this in terms befitting his human understanding, that is to say, in terms of an anthropomorphic vision: the Cosmic Man. An identical initiation might have been effected by means of the equally valid image of the Cosmic Horse, the Cosmic Eagle, the Cosmic Tree, or the Cosmic Praying-Mantis.[31] Furthermore, the revelation recorded in "The Song of the Lord" was made in terms befitting Arjuna's caste and race: The Cosmic Man whom he beheld was an aristocrat, like himself, and a Hindu. Correspondingly, in Palestine the Cosmic Man appeared as a Jew, in ancient Germany as a

[11] "Om. The head of the sacrificial horse is the dawn, its eye the sun, its vital force the air, its open mouth the fire called Vaishvanara, and the body of the sacrificial horse is the year. Its back is heaven, its belly the sky, its hoof the earth, its sides the four quarters, its ribs the intermediate quarters, its members the seasons, its joints the months and fortnights, its feet the days and nights, its bones the stars and its flesh the clouds. Its half-digested food is the sand, its blood-vessels the rivers, its liver and spleen the mountains, its hairs the herbs and trees. Its forepart is the ascending sun, its hind part the descending sun, its yawning is lightning, its shaking the body is thundering, its urinating is raining, and its neighing is voice." *(Brihadaranyaka Upaniskad,* 1. 1. 1; translated by Swami Madhavananda, Mayavati, 1934.)

> . . . . . *the archetype*
> *Body of life a beaked* ***carnivorous*** *desire*
> *Self-upheld on storm-broad wings: but the eyes*
> *Were spouts of blood; the eyes were gashed out; dark blood*
> *Ran from the ruiiwus eye-pits to the hook of the beak*
> *And rained on the waste spaces of empty heaven.*
> *Yet the great Life continued; yet the great Life*
> *Was beautiful, and she drank her defeat, and devoured*
> *Her famine for food.*

(Robinson Jeffers, *Cawdor,* p. 116. Copyright, 1928, by Robinson Jeffers. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.)

The Cosmic Tree is a well known mythological figure (viz., Yggdrasil, the World Ash, of the Eddas). The Mantis plays a major role in the mythology of the Bushmen of South Africa. (See also Plate XVI.)

German; among the Basuto he is a Negro, in Japan Japanese. The race and stature of the figure symbolizing the immanent and transcendent Universal is of historical, not semantic, moment; so also the sex: the Cosmic Woman, who appears in the iconography of the Jains,[32] is as eloquent a symbol as the Cosmic Man.

Symbols are only the *vehicles* of communication; they must not be mistaken for the final term, the *tenor,* of their reference. Xo matter how attractive or impressive they may seem, they remain but convenient means, accommodated to the understanding. Hence the personality or personalities of God—whether represented in trinitarian, dualistic, or Unitarian terms, in polytheistic, monotheistic, or henotheistic terms, pictorially or verbally, as documented fact or as apocalyptic vision—no one should attempt to read or interpret as the final thing. The problem of the theologian is to keep his symbol translucent, so that it may not block out the very light it is supposed to convey. "For then alone do we know God truly," writes Saint Thomas Aquinas, "when we believe that He is far above all that man can possibly think of God."[33] And in the Kena Upanishad, in the same spirit: "To know is not to know; not to know is to know."[34] Mistaking a vehicle for its tenor may lead to the spilling not only of valueless ink, but of valuable blood.

The next thing to observe is that the transfiguration of Jesus was witnessed by devotees who had extinguished their personal wills, men who had long since liquidated "life," "personal fate," "destiny," by complete self-abnegation in the Master. "Neither by the Vedas, nor by penances, nor by alms-giving, nor yet by sacrifice, am I to be seen in the form in which you have just now beheld Me," Krishna declared, after he had resumed his familiar shape; "but only by devotion to Me may I be known in this form, realized truly, and entered into. He who does My work

[%2] Jainism is a heterodox Hindu religion (i.e., rejecting the authority of the Vedas) which in its iconography reveals certain extraordinarily archaic traits. (See pp. 262 ff., *infra.)*

[33] *Summa contra Gentiles,* I, 5, par. 3.

[34] *Kena Upanishad,* 2:3.

and regards Me as the Supreme Goal, who is devoted to Me and without hatred for any creature—he comes to Me."[35] A corresponding formulation by Jesus makes the point more succinctly: "Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."[36]

The meaning is very clear; it is the meaning of all religious practice. The individual, through prolonged psychological disciplines, gives up completely all attachment to his personal limitations, idiosyncrasies, hopes and fears, no longer resists the self-annihilation that is prerequisite to rebirth in the realization of truth, and so becomes ripe, at last, for the great at-one-ment. His personal ambitions being totally dissolved, he no longer tries to live but willingly relaxes to whatever may come to pass in him; he becomes, that is to say, an anonymity. The Law lives in him with his unreserved consent.

Many are the figures, particularly in the social and mythological contexts of the Orient, who represent this ultimate state of anonymous presence. The sages of the hermit groves and the wandering mendicants who play a conspicuous role in the life and legends of the East; in myth such figures as the Wandering Jew (despised, unknown, yet with the pearl of great price in his pocket); the tatterdemalion beggar, set upon by dogs; the miraculous mendicant bard whose music stills the heart; or the masquerading god, Wotan, Viracocha, Edshu: these are examples. "Sometimes a fool, sometimes a sage, sometimes possessed of regal splendor; sometimes wandering, sometimes as motionless as a python, sometimes wearing a benignant expression; sometimes honored, sometimes insulted, sometimes unknown—thus lives the man of realisation, ever happy with supreme bliss. Just as an actor is always a man, whether he puts on the costume of his role or lays it aside, so is the perfect knower of the Imperishable always the Imperishable, and nothing else."[37]

[35] *Bhagavad Gita,* II: 53-55.
[x] Matthew, 16:25.
[37] Shankaracharya, *Vivekachudamayri,* 542 and 555.

Freedom to Live

What, now, is the result of the miraculous passage and return"?

The battlefield is symbolic of the field of life, where every creature lives on the death of another. A realization of the inevitable guilt of life may so sicken the heart that, like Hamlet or like Arjuna, one may refuse to go on with it. On the other hand, like most of the rest of us, one may invent a false, finally unjustified, image of oneself as an exceptional phenomenon in the world, not guilty as others are, but justified in one's inevitable sinning because one represents the good. Such self-righteousness leads to a misunderstanding, not only of oneself but of the nature of both man and the cosmos. The goal of the myth is to dispel the need for such life ignorance by effecting a reconciliation of the individual consciousness with the universal will. And this is effected through a realization of the true relationship of the passing phenomena of time to the imperishable life that lives and dies in all.

"Even as a person casts off worn-out clothes and puts on others that are new, so the embodied Self casts off worn-out bodies and enters into others that are new. Weapons cut It not; fire burns It not; water wets It not; the wind does not wither It. This Self cannot be cut nor burnt nor wetted nor withered. Eternal, all-pervading, unchanging, immovable, the Self is the same for ever."[38]

Man in the world of action loses his centering in the principle of eternity if he is anxious for the outcome of his deeds, but resting them and their fruits on the knees of the Living God he is released by them, as by a sacrifice, from the bondages of the sea of death. "Do without attachment the work you have to do. . . . Surrendering all action to Me, with mind intent on the Self,

[37] *Bhagavad Gita,* 2:22-24.

freeing yourself from longing and selfishness, fight—unperturbed by grief."[39]

Powerful in this insight, calm and free in action, elated that through his hand should flow the grace of Viracocha, the hero is the conscious vehicle of the terrible, wonderful Law, whether his work be that of butcher, jockey, or king.

Gwion Bach, who, having tasted three drops from the poison kettle of inspiration, was eaten by the hag Caridwen, reborn as an infant, and committed to the sea, was found next morning in a fishtrap by a hapless and sorely disappointed young man named Elphin, son of the wealthy landholder Gwyddno, whose horses had been killed by the flood of the burst kettle's poison. When the men took up the leathern bag out of the trap and opened it and saw the forehead of the baby boy, they said to Elphin, "Behold a radiant brow *(taliesin)V*' "Taliesin be he called," said Elphin. And he lifted the boy in his arms, and, lamenting his mischance, he placed him sorrowfully behind him. And he made his horse amble gently that before had been trotting, and he carried him as softly as if he had been sitting on the easiest chair in the world. And presently the boy recited aloud a poem in consolation and praise of Elphin, and foretold to him honor and glory.

Fair Elphin, cease to lament!
Let no one be dissatisfied with his own.
To despair will bring no advantage.
No man sees what supports him. . . .
Weak and small as I am,
On the foaming beach of the ocean,
In the day of trouble I shall be
Of more service to thee than three hundred salmon. . . .

When Elphin returned to his father's castle, Gwyddno asked him if he had had a good haul at the weir, and he told him that he had got that which was better than fish. "What was that?" said Gwyddno. "A bard," answered Elphin. Then said Gwyddno, "Alas, what will he profit thee?" And the infant himself replied

[39] *Ibid.*, 3:19 and 3:30.

and said, "He will profit him more than the weir ever profited thee." Asked Gwyddno, "Art thou able to speak, and thou so little?" And the infant answered him, "I am better able to speak than thou to question me." "Let me hear what thou canst say," quoth Gwyddno. Then Taliesin sang a philosophical song.

Now the king one day held court, and Taliesin placed himself in a quiet corner. "And so when the bards and the heralds came to cry largess, and to proclaim the power of the king and his strength, at the moment that they passed by the corner wherein he was crouching, Taliesin pouted out his lips after them, and played 'Blerwm, blerwm,' with his finger upon his lips. Neither took they much notice of him as they went by, but proceeded forward till they came before the king, unto whom they made their obeisance with their bodies, as they were wont, without speaking a single word, but pouting out their lips, and making mouths at the king, playing 'Blerwm, blerwm,' upon their lips with their fingers, as they had seen the boy do elsewhere. This sight caused the king to wonder and to deem within himself that they were drunk with many liquors. Wherefore he commanded one of his lords, who served at the board, to go to them and desire them to collect their wits, and to consider where they stood, and what it was fitting for them to do. And the lord did so gladly. But they ceased not from their folly any more than before. Whereupon he sent to them a second time, and a third, desiring them to go forth from the hall. At the last the king ordered one of his squires to give a blow to the chief of them named Heinin Vardd; and the squire took a broom and struck him on the head, so that he fell back in his seat. Then he arose and went on his knees, and besought leave of the king's grace to show that this their fault was not through want of knowledge, neither through drunkenness, but by the influence of some spirit that was in the hall. And after this Heinin spoke on this wise. 'Oh honorable king, be it known to your grace, that not from the strength of drink, or of too much liquor, are we dumb, without power of speech like drunken men, but through the influence of a spirit that sits in the corner yonder in the form of a child.' Forthwith the king commanded the squire to fetch him; and he

went to the nook where Taliesin sat, and brought him before the king, who asked him what he was, and whence he came. And he answered the king in verse.

"Primary chief bard am I to Elphin,
And my original country is the region of the summer stars;
Idno and Heinin called me Merddin,
At length every king will call me Taliesin.

"I was with my Lord in the highest sphere,
On the fall of Lucifer into the depth of hell.
I have borne a banner before Alexander;
I know the names of the stars from north to south;
I have been on the galaxy at the throne of the Distributer;
I was in Canaan when Absalom was slain;
I conveyed the Divine Spirit to the level of the vale of Hebron;
I was in the court of Don before the birth of Gwdion.
I was instructor to Eli and Enoc;
I have been winged by the genius of the splendid crosier;
I have been loquacious prior to being gifted with speech;
I was at the place of the crucifixion of the merciful Son of God;
I have been three periods in the prison of Arianrod;
I have been the chief director of the work of the tower of Nimrod;
I am a wonder whose origin is not known.
I have been in Asia with Noah in the ark,
I have seen the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra;
I have been in India when Roma was built,
I am now come here to the ***Remnant*** *of Troia.*
1 have been with my Lord in the manger of the ass;
I strengthened Moses through the water of Jordan;
I have been in the firmament with Mary Magdalene;
I have obtained the muse from the cauldron of Caridwen;
I have been bard of the harp to Lleon of Lochlin.
I have been on the White Hill, in the court of Cynvelyn,
For a day and a year in stocks and fetters,
1 have suffered hunger for the Son of the Virgin,
I have been fostered in the land of the Deity,
I have been teacher to all intelligences,

/ am able to instruct the whole universe.
I shall be until the day of doom on the face of the earth;
And it is not known whether my body is flesh or fish.

"Then I was for nine months
In the womb of the hag Caridwen;
I was originally little Gwion,
And at length I am Taliesin.

"And when the king and his nobles had heard the song, they wondered much, for they had never heard the like from a boy as young as he."[40]

The larger portion of the bard's song is devoted to the Imperishable, which lives in him, only a brief stanza to the details of his personal biography. Those listening are oriented to the Imperishable in themselves, and then supplied incidentally with an item of information. Though he had feared the terrible hag, he had been swallowed and reborn. Having died to his personal ego, he arose again established in the Self.

The hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because he *is.* "Before Abraham was, I AM." He does not mistake apparent changelessness in time for the permanence of Being, nor is he fearful of the next moment (or of the "other thing"), as destroying the permanent with its change. "Nothing retains its own form; but Nature, the greater renewer, ever makes up forms from forms. Be sure there's nothing perishes in the whole universe; it does but vary and renew its form."[41] Thus the next moment is permitted to come to pass.—When the Prince of Eternity kissed the Princess of the World, her resistance was allayed. "She opened her eyes, awoke, and looked at him in friendship. Together they came down the stairs, and the king awoke and the queen and the entire courtly estate, and all looked at each other with big eyes. And the horses in the court stood up and shook themselves: the hunting dogs jumped and wagged their tails: the pigeons on the roof drew their little

[1] "Taliesin," *op. cit.,* pp. 264—274.
[1] Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* XV, 252-255.

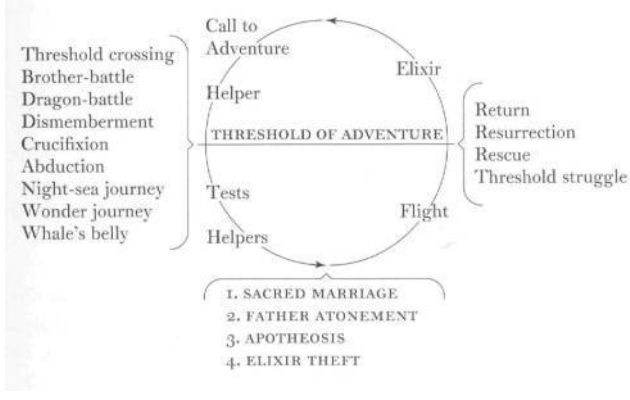
heads out from under their wings, looked around, and flew across the field: the flies on the wall walked again: the fire in the kitchen brightened, flickered, and cooked the dinner: the roast began again to sizzle: and the cook gave the scullery boy a box in the ear that made him yell: and the maid finished plucking the chicken."[42]

'- Grimm, No. 50; conclusion.

C i) A r T *E* R

The Keys

THE adventure can be summarized in the following diagram:



The mythological hero, setting forth from his common-day hut or castle, is lured, carried away, or else voluntarily proceeds, to the threshold of adventure. There he encounters a shadow presence that guards the passage. The hero may defeat or conciliate this power and go alive into the kingdom of the dark (brother-battle, dragon-battle; offering, charm), or be slain by the opponent and descend in death (dismemberment, crucifixion). Beyond the threshold, then, the hero journeys through a world of unfamiliar yet strangely intimate forces, some of which severely threaten him (tests), some of which give magical aid (helpers). When he arrives at the nadir of the mythological round, he undergoes a supreme ordeal and gains his reward. The triumph may be represented as the hero's sexual

union with the goddess-mother of the world (sacred marriage), his recognition by the father-creator (father atonement), his own divinization (apotheosis), or again—if the powers have remained unfriendly to him—his theft of the boon he came to gain (bride-theft, fire-theft); intrinsically it is an expansion of consciousness and therewith of being (illumination, transfiguration, freedom). The final work is that of the return. If the powers have blessed the hero, he now sets forth under their protection (emissary); if not, he flees and is pursued (transformation flight, obstacle flight). At the return threshold the transcendental powers must remain behind; the hero re-emerges from the kingdom of dread (return, resurrection). The boon that he brings restores the world (elixir).

The changes rung on the simple scale of the monomyth defy description. Many tales isolate and greatly enlarge upon one or two of the typical elements of the full cycle (test motif, flight motif, abduction of the bride), others string a number of independent cycles into a single series (as in the Odyssey). Differing characters or episodes can become fused, or a single element can reduplicate itself and reappear under many changes.

The outlines of myths and tales are subject to damage and obscuration. Archaic traits are generally eliminated or subdued. Imported materials are revised to fit local landscape, custom, or belief, and always suffer in the process. Furthermore, in the innumerable retellings of a traditional story, accidental or intentional dislocations are inevitable. To account for elements that have become, for one reason or another, meaningless, secondary interpretations are invented, often with considerable skill.[2]

In the Eskimo story of Raven in the belly of the whale, the motif of the fire sticks has suffered a dislocation and subsequent rationalization. The archetype of the hero in the belly of the whale is widely known. The principal deed of the adventurer is

[1] The view (page 229) of the Return of Jason (from a vase in the Vatican Etruscan Collection) illustrates a reading of the legend not represented in any literary document. See comment in Table of Illustrations, *supra*, p. xiii.

[2] For a discussion of this matter, see my Commentary to the Pantheon Books edition of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (New York 1944), pp. 846-856.

FIGURE 12. The Return of Jason

usually to make fire with his fire sticks in the interior of the monster, thus bringing about the whale's death and his own release. Fire making in this manner is symbolic of the sex act. The two sticks—socket-stick and spindle—are known respectively as the female and the male; the flame is the newly generated life. The hero making fire in the whale is a variant of the sacred marriage.

But in our Eskimo story this fire-making image underwent a modification. The female principle was personified in the beautiful girl whom Raven encountered in the great room within the animal; meanwhile the conjunction of male and female was symbolized separately in the flow of the oil from the pipe into the burning lamp. Raven's tasting of this oil was his participation in the act. The resultant cataclysm represented the typical crisis of

the nadir, the termination of the old eon and initiation of the new. Raven's emergence then symbolized the miracle of rebirth. Thus, the original fire sticks having become superfluous, a clever and amusing epilogue was invented to give them a function in the plot. Having left the fire sticks in the belly of the whale, Raven was able to interpret their rediscovery as an ill-luck omen, frighten the people away, and enjoy the blubber feast alone. This epilogue is an excellent example of secondary elaboration. It plays on the trickster character of the hero but is not an element of the basic story.

In the later stages of many mythologies, the key images hide like needles in great haystacks of secondary anecdote and rationalization; for when a civilization has passed from a mythological to a secular point of view, the older images are no longer felt or quite approved. In Hellenistic Greece and in Imperial Rome, the ancient gods were reduced to mere civic patrons, household pets, and literary favorites. Uncomprehended inherited themes, such as that of the Minotaur—the dark and terrible night aspect of an old Egypto-Cretan representation of the incarnate sun god and divine king—were rationalized and reinterpreted to suit contemporary ends. Mt. Olympus became a Riviera of trite scandals and affairs, and the mother-goddesses hysterical nymphs. The myths were read as superhuman romances. In China, comparably, where the humanistic, moralizing force of Confucianism has fairly emptied the old myth forms of their primal grandeur, the official mythology is today a clutter of anecdotes about the sons and daughters of provincial officials, who, for serving their community one way or another, were elevated by their grateful beneficiaries to the dignity of local gods. And in modern progressive Christianity the Christ—Incarnation of the Logos and Redeemer of the World—is primarily a historical personage, a harmless country wise man of the semi-oriental past who preached a benign doctrine of "do as you would be done by," yet was executed as a criminal. His death is read as a splendid lesson in integrity and fortitude.

Wherever the poetry of myth is interpreted as biography, history, or science, it is killed. The living images become only remote

facts of a distant time or sky. Furthermore, it is never difficult to demonstrate that as science and history mythology is absurd. When a civilization begins to reinterpret its mythology in this way, the life goes out of it, temples become museums, and the link between the two perspectives is dissolved. Such a blight has certainly descended on the Bible and on a great part of the Christian cult.

To bring the images back to life, one has to seek, not interesting applications to modern affairs, but illuminating hints from the inspired past. When these are found, vast areas of half-dead iconography disclose again their permanently human meaning.

On Holy Saturday in the Catholic Church, for example, after the blessing of the new fire,[3] the blessing of the paschal candle, and the reading of the prophecies, the priest puts on a purple cope and, preceded by the processional cross, the candelabra, and the lighted blessed candle, goes to the baptismal font with his ministers and the clergy, while the following tract is sung: "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God! when shall I come and appear before the face of God? My tears have been my bread day and night, while they say to me daily: Where is thy God?" (Psalm xli, *2-4;* Douay).

On arriving at the threshold of the baptistry, the priest pauses to offer up a prayer, then enters and blesses the water of the font, "to the end that a heavenly offspring, conceived by sanctification, may emerge from the immaculate womb of the divine font, reborn new creatures: and that all, however distinguished either by sex in body, or by age in time, may be brought forth to the same infancy by grace, their spiritual mother." He touches the water with his hand, and prays that it may be cleansed of the malice of Satan; makes the sign of the cross over the water; divides the water with his hand and throws some towards the four quarters of the world; breathes thrice upon the water in the form of a cross; then dips the paschal candle in the water and intones:

[3] Holy Saturday, the day between the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, who is in the belly of Hell. The moment of the renewal of the eon. Compare the motif of the fire sticks discussed above.

"May the virtue of the Holy Ghost descend into all the water of this font." He withdraws the candle, sinks it back again to a greater depth, and repeats in a higher tone: "May the virtue of the Holy Ghost descend into all the water of this font." Again he withdraws the candle, and for the third time sinks it, to the bottom, repeating in a higher tone still: "May the virtue of the Holy Ghost descend into all the water of this font." Then breathing thrice upon the water he goes on: "And make the whole substance of this water fruitful for regeneration." He then withdraws the candle from the water, and, after a few concluding prayers, the assistant priests sprinkle the people with this blessed water.[4]

The female water spiritually fructified with the male fire of the Holy Ghost is the Christian counterpart of the water of transformation known to all systems of mythological imagery. This rite is a variant of the sacred marriage, which is the source-moment that generates and regenerates the world and man, precisely the mystery symbolized by the Hindu lingam. To enter into this font is to plunge into the mythological realm; to break the surface is to cross the threshold into the night-sea. Symbolically, the infant makes the journey when the water is poured on its head; its guide and helpers are the priest and godparents. Its goal is a visit with the parents of its Eternal Self, the Spirit of God and the Womb of Grace.[5] Then it is returned to the parents of the physical body.

Few of us have any inkling of the sense of the rite of baptism, which was our initiation into our Church. Nevertheless, it clearly appears in the words of Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter **into** the kingdom of God.'"[1]

The popular interpretation of baptism is that it "washes away original sin," with emphasis rather on the cleansing than on the rebirth idea. This is a secondary interpretation. Or if the traditional birth image is remembered, nothing is said of an antecedent marriage. Mythological symbols, however, have to be followed through all their implications before they open out the full system of correspondences through which they represent, by analogy, the millennial adventure of the soul.

[4] See the Catholic Daily Missal under "Holy Saturday." The above is abridged from the English translation by Dom Caspar Lefebvre, O.S.B., published in this country by the E. M. Lohmann Co., Saint Paul, Minnesota.

[1] In India the power *(shakti)* of a god is personified in female form and represented as his consort; in the present ritual, grace is similarly symbolized.

[fi] John, 3:3-5.

PART II

The Cosmogonic Cycle

C H A P T K K

Emanations

• 1 •

From Psychology to Metaphysics

IT is not difficult for the modern intellectual to concede that the symbolism of mythology has a psychological significance. Particularly after the work of the psychoanalysts, there can be little doubt, either that myths are of the nature of dream, or that dreams are symptomatic of the dynamics of the psyche. Sigmund Freud, Carl G. Jung, Wilhelm Stekel, Otto Rank, Karl Abraham, Geza Roheim, and many others have within the past few decades developed a vastly documented modern lore of dream and myth interpretation; and though the doctors differ among themselves, they are united into one great modern movement by a considerable body of common principles. With their discovery that the patterns and logic of fairy tale and myth correspond to those of dream, the long discredited chimeras of archaic man have returned dramatically to the foreground of modern consciousness.

According to this view it appears that through the wonder tales—which pretend to describe the lives of the legendary heroes, the powers of the divinities of nature, the spirits of the dead, and the totem ancestors of the group—symbolic expression is given to the unconscious desires, fears, and tensions that underlie the conscious patterns of human behavior. Mythology, in other words, is psychology misread as biography; history, and cosmology. The modern psychologist can translate it back to its proper denotations and thus rescue for the contemporary world a rich

and eloquent document of the profoundest depths of human character. Exhibited here, as in a fluoroscope, stand revealed the hidden processes of the enigma *Homo sapiens*—Occidental and Oriental, primitive and civilized, contemporary and archaic. The entire spectacle is before us. We have only to read it, study its constant patterns, analyze its variations, and therewith come to an understanding of the deep forces that have shaped man's destiny and must continue to determine both our private and our public lives.

But if we are to grasp the full value of the materials, we must note that myths are not exactly comparable to dream. Their figures originate from the same sources—the unconscious wells of fantasy—and their grammar is the same, but they are not the spontaneous products of sleep. On the contrary, their patterns are consciously controlled. And their understood function is to serve as a powerful picture language for the communication of traditional wisdom. This is true already of the so-called primitive folk mythologies. The trance-susceptible shaman and the initiated antelope-priest are not unsophisticated in the wisdom of the world, nor unskilled in the principles of communication by analogy. The metaphors by which they live, and through which they operate, have been brooded upon, searched, and discussed for centuries—even millenniums; they have served whole societies, furthermore, as the mainstays of thought and life. The culture patterns have been shaped to them. The youth have been educated, and the aged rendered wise, through the study, experience, and understanding of their effective initiatory forms. For they actually touch and bring into play the vital energies of the whole human psyche. They link the unconscious to the fields of practical action, not irrationally, in the manner of a neurotic projection, but in such fashion as to permit a mature and sobering, practical comprehension of the fact-world to play back, as a stern control, into the realms of infantile wish and fear. And if this be true of the comparatively simple folk mythologies (the systems of myth and ritual by which the primitive hunting and fishing tribes support themselves), what may we say of such magnificent cosmic metaphors as those reflected in the great Homeric epics,

the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the Book of Genesis, and the timeless temples of the Orient? Until the most recent decades, these were the support of all human life and the inspiration of philosophy, poetry, and the arts. Where the inherited symbols have been touched by a Lao-tse, Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ, or Mohammed—employed by a consummate master of the spirit as a vehicle of the profoundest moral and metaphysical instruction—obviously we are in the presence rather of immense consciousness than of darkness.

And so, to grasp the full value of the mythological figures that have come down to us, we must understand that they are not only symptoms of the unconscious (as indeed are all human thoughts and acts) but also controlled and intended statements of certain spiritual principles, which have remained as constant throughout the course of human history as the form and nervous structure of the human physique itself. Briefly formulated, the universal doctrine teaches that all the visible structures of the world—all things and beings—are the effects of a ubiquitous power out of which they rise, which supports and fills them during the period of their manifestation, and back into which they must ultimately dissolve. This is the power known to science as energy, to the Melanesians as *mana,* to the Sioux Indians as *ivakonda,* the Hindus as *sliakti,* and the Christians as the power of God. Its manifestation in the psyche is termed, by the psychoanalysts, *libido)* And its manifestation in the cosmos is the structure and flux of the universe itself.

The apprehension of the *source* of this undifferentiated yet everywhere particularized substratum of being is rendered frustrate by the very organs through which the apprehension must be accomplished. The forms of sensibility and the categories of human thought,[2] which are themselves manifestations of this power,[3] so confine the mind that it is normally impossible not

[1] Cf. C. G. Jung, "On Psychic Energy" (orig. 1928; Collected Works, vol. 8), entitled in its earliest draft "The Theory of the Libido."

- See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason.*

[3] Sanskrit: *mdya-sakti.*

only to see, but even to conceive, beyond the colorful, fluid, infinitely various and bewildering phenomenal spectacle. The function of ritual and myth is to make possible, and then to facilitate, the jump—by analogy. Forms and conceptions that the mind and its senses can comprehend are presented and arranged in such a way as to suggest a truth or openness beyond. And then, the conditions for meditation having been provided, the individual is left alone. Myth is but the penultimate; the ultimate is openness—that void, or being, beyond the categories[4]—into which the mind must plunge alone and be dissolved. Therefore, God and the gods are only convenient means—themselves of the nature of the world of names and forms, though eloquent of, and ultimately conducive to, the ineffable. They are mere symbols to move and awaken the mind, and to call it past themselves.[5]

Heaven, hell, the mythological age, Olympus and all the other habitations of the gods, are interpreted by psychoanalysis as symbols of the unconscious. The key to the modern systems of psychological interpretation therefore is this: the metaphysical realm = the unconscious. Correspondingly, the key to open the door the other way is the same equation in reverse: the unconscious = the metaphysical realm. "For," as Jesus states it, "behold, the kingdom of God is within you."[6] Indeed, the lapse of superconsciousness into the state of unconsciousness is precisely the meaning of the Biblical image of the Fall. The constriction of consciousness, to which we owe the fact that we see not the

* Beyond the categories, and therefore not denned by either of the pair of opposites called "void" and "being."[1] Such terms are only clues to the transcendency.

This recognition of the secondary nature of the personality of whatever deity is worshiped is characteristic of most of the traditions of the world (see, for example, *supra,* p. 164, note 154). In Christianity, Mohammedanism, and Judaism, however, the personality of the divinity is taught to be final—which makes it comparatively difficult for the members of these communions to understand how one may go beyond the limitations of their own anthropomorphic divinity. The result has been, on the one hand, a general obfuscation of the symbols, and on the other, a god-ridden bigotry such as is unmatched elsewhere in the history of religion. For a discussion of the possible origin of this aberration, see Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism* (translated by James Strachey; Standard Edn., XXIII, 1964). (Orig. 1939.)

[i] Luke, 17:21.

source of the universal power but only the phenomenal forms reflected from that power, turns superconsciousness into unconsciousness and, at the same instant and by the same token, creates the world. Redemption consists in the return to superconsciousness and therewith the dissolution of the world. This is the great theme and formula of the cosmogonic cycle, the mythical image of the world's coming to manifestation and subsequent return into the nonmanifest condition. Equally, the birth, life, and death of the individual may be regarded as a descent into unconsciousness and return. The hero is the one who, while still alive, knows and represents the claims of the superconsciousness which throughout creation is more or less unconscious. The adventure of the hero represents the moment in his life when he achieved illumination—the nuclear moment when, while still alive, he found and opened the road to the light beyond the dark walls of our living death.

And so it is that the cosmic symbols are presented in a spirit of thought-bewildering sublime paradox. The kingdom of God is within, yet without, also; God, however, is but a convenient means to wake the sleeping princess, the soul. Life is her sleep, death the awakening. The hero, the waker of his own soul, is himself but the convenient means of his own dissolution. God, the waker of the soul, is therewith his own immediate death.

Perhaps the most eloquent possible symbol of this mystery is that of the god crucified, the god offered, "himself to himself."' Read in one direction, the meaning is the passage of the phenomenal hero into superconsciousness: the body with its five senses—like that of Prince Five-weapons stuck to Sticky-hair—is left hanging to the cross of the knowledge of life and death, pinned in five places (the two hands, the two feet, and the head crowned with thorns).[8] But also, God has descended voluntarily and taken upon himself this phenomenal agony. God assumes the life of man and man releases the God within himself at the mid-point of the cross-arms of the same "coincidence of

' *Supra,* p. 176.

[8] *Supra,* pp. 79-80.

opposites,"[1] the same sun door through which God descends and Man ascends—each as the other's food.[1]"

The modern student may, of course, study these symbols as he will, either as a symptom of others[1] ignorance, or as a sign to him of his own, either in terms of a reduction of metaphysics to psychology, or vice versa. The traditional way was to meditate on the symbols in both senses. In any case, they are telling metaphors of the destiny of man, man's hope, man's faith, and man's dark **mystery.**

The Universal Round

As the consciousness of the individual rests on a sea of night into which it descends in slumber and out of which it mysteriously wakes, so, in the imagery of myth, the universe is precipitated out of, and reposes upon, a timelessness back into which it again dissolves. And as the mental and physical health of the individual depends on an orderly flow of vital forces into the field of waking day from the unconscious dark, so again in myth, the continuance of the cosmic order is assured only by a controlled flow of power from the source. The gods are symbolic personifications of the laws governing this flow. The gods come into existence with the dawn of the world and dissolve with the twilight. They are not eternal in the sense that the night is eternal. Only from the shorter span of human existence does the round of a cosmogonic eon seem to endure.

The cosmogonic cycle is normally represented as repeating itself, world without end. During each great round, lesser dissolutions are commonly included, as the cycle of sleep and waking

[9] *Supra,* p. 81.
[1] *Supra,* pp. 38-39.

revolves throughout a lifetime. According to an Aztec version, each of the four elements—water, earth, air, and fire—terminates a period of the world: the eon of the waters ended in deluge, that of the earth with an earthquake, that of air with a wind, and the present eon will be destroyed by flame."

According to the Stoic doctrine of the cyclic conflagration, all souls are resolved into the world soul or primal fire. When this universal dissolution is concluded, the formation of a new universe begins (Cicero's *renovatio),* and all things repeat themselves, every divinity, every person, playing again his former part. Seneca gave a description of this destruction in his "De Consolatione ad Marciam," and appears to have looked forward to living again in the cycle to come.[1],[2]

A magnificent vision of the cosmogonic round is presented in the mythology of the Jains. The most recent prophet and savior of this very ancient Indian sect was Mahavira, a contemporary of the Buddha (sixth century B.C.). His parents were already followers of a much earlier Jaina savior-prophet, Parshvanatha, who is represented with snakes springing from his shoulders and is reputed to have flourished 872-772 B.C. Centuries before Parshvanatha, there lived and died the Jaina savior Neminatha, declared to have been a cousin of the beloved Hindu incarnation, Krishna. And before him, again, were exactly twenty-one others, going all the way back to Rishabhanatha, who existed in an earlier age of the world, when men and women were always born in wedded couples, were two miles tall, and lived for a period of countless years. Rishabhanatha instructed the people in the seventy-two sciences (writing, arithmetic, reading of omens, etc.), the sixty-four accomplishments of women (cooking, sewing, etc.), and the one hundred arts (pottery, weaving, painting, smithing, barbering, etc.); also, he introduced them to politics and established a kingdom.

[1] Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Historia de la Nation Chichimeca* (1608), Capitulo I (published in Lord Kingsborough's *Antiquities of Mexico;* London, 1830-48, Vol. IX, p. 205; also by Alfredo Chavero, *Obras Historicas de Alva Ixtlilxochitl;* Mexico, 1891-92, Vol. II, pp. 21-22).
[13] Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* Vol. V, p. 375.

Before his day, such innovations would have been superfluous; for the people of the preceding period—who were four miles tall, with one hundred and twenty-eight ribs, enjoying a life span of two periods of countless years—were supplied in all their needs by ten "wish-fulfilling trees" *(kalpa vriksha),* which gave sweet fruits, leaves that were shaped like pots and pans, leaves that sweetly sang, leaves that gave forth light at night, flowers delightful to see and to smell, food perfect both to sight and to taste, leaves that might serve as jewelry, and bark providing beautiful clothes. One of the trees was like a many-storied palace in which to live; another shed a gentle radiance, like that of many little lamps. The earth was sweet as sugar; the ocean as delicious as wine. And then again, before this happy age, there had been a period happier still—precisely twice as happy—when men and women had been eight miles tall, possessing each two hundred and fifty-six ribs. When those superlative people died, they passed directly to the world of the gods, without ever having heard of religion, for their natural virtue was as perfect as their beauty.

The Jains conceive of time as an endless round. Time is pictured as a wheel with twelve spokes, or ages, classified in two sets of six. The first set is called the "descending" series *(avasarpini),* and begins with the age of the superlative giant-couples. That paradisiac period endures for ten millions of ten millions of one hundred millions of one hundred million periods of countless years, and then yields slowly to the only half as blissful period when men and women are only four miles tall. In the third period—that of Rishabhanatha, first of the twenty-four world saviors—happiness is mixed with a little sorrow, and virtue with a little vice. At the conclusion of this period, men and women are no longer born together in couples to live together as man and wife.

During the fourth period, the gradual deterioration of the world and its inhabitants steadily continues. The life span and stature of man slowly diminish. Twenty-three world saviors are born; each restating the eternal doctrine of the Jains in terms appropriate to the conditions of his time. Three years, eight and

one-half months after the death of the last of the saviors and prophets, Mahavira, this period comes to an end.

Our own age, the fifth of the descending series, began in 522 B.C. and will last for twenty-one thousand years. No Jaina savior will be born during this time, and the eternal religion of the Jains will gradually disappear. It is a period of unmitigated and gradually intensifying evil. The tallest human beings are only seven cubits tall, and the longest life span no more than one hundred and twenty-five years. People have only sixteen ribs. They are selfish, unjust, violent, lustful, proud, and avaricious.

But in the sixth of the descending ages, the state of man and his world will be still more horrible. The longest life will be only twenty years; one cubit will be the greatest stature and eight ribs the meagre allotment. The days will be hot, the nights cold, disease will be rampant and chastity nonexistent. Tempests will sweep over the earth, and toward the conclusion of the period these will increase. In the end all life, human and animal, and all the vegetable seeds, will be forced to seek shelter in the Ganges, in miserable caves, and in the sea.

The descending series will terminate and the "ascending" series *(utsarpini)* begin, when the tempest and desolation will have reached the point of the unendurable. For seven days then it will rain, and seven different kinds of rain will fall; the soil will be refreshed, and the seeds will begin to grow. Out of their caves the horrible dwarf-creatures of the arid, bitter earth will venture; and very gradually there will be perceptible a slight improvement in their morals, health, beauty, and stature; until presently they will be living in a world such as the one we know today. And then a savior will be born, named Padmanatha, to announce again the eternal religion of the Jains; the stature of mankind will approach again the superlative, the beauty of man will surpass the splendor of the sun. At last, the earth will sweeten and the waters turn to wine, the wish-fulfilling trees will yield their bounty of delights to a blissful population of perfectly wedded twins; and the happiness of this community again will be doubled, and the wheel, through ten millions of ten millions of one hundred millions of one hundred million periods of

countless years, will approach the point of beginning the downward revolution, which again will lead to the extinction of the eternal religion and the gradually increasing noise of unwholesome merrymaking, warfare, and pestilential **winds.**[13]

This ever-revolving, twelve-spoked wheel of time of the Jains is a counterpart of the cycle of four ages of the Hindus: the first age a long period of perfect bliss, beauty, and perfection, lasting 4800 divine years;[14] the second of somewhat lesser virtue, lasting 3600 divine years; the third of equally intermingled virtue and vice, lasting 2400 divine years; and the last, our own, of steadily increasing evil, lasting 1200 divine years, or 432,000 years according to human calculation. But at the termination of the present period, instead of beginning again immediately to improve (as in the cycle described by the Jains), all is first to be annihilated in a cataclysm of lire and Hood, and thereby reduced to the primordial state of the original, timeless ocean, to remain for a period equal to that of the whole length of the four ages. The world's great ages then begin anew.

A basic conception of Oriental philosophy is understood to be rendered in this picture-form. Whether the myth was originally an illustration of the philosophical formula, or the latter a distillation out of the myth, it is today impossible to say. Certainly the myth goes back to remote ages, but so too does philosophy. Who is to know what thoughts lay in the minds of the old sages who developed and treasured the myth and handed it on? Very often, during the analysis and penetration of the secrets of archaic symbol, one can only feel that our generally accepted notion of the history of philosophy is founded on a completely false assumption, namely that abstract and metaphysical thought begins where it first appears in our extant records.

The philosophical formula illustrated by the cosmogonic cycle is that of the circulation of consciousness through the three planes of being. The first plane is that of waking experience: cognitive of

[15] See Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism* (Oxford University Press. 1915), pp. 272-278.

[11] A divine year is equal to 360 human years. Cf. *supra*, p. 207.

the hard, gross, facts of an outer universe, illuminated by the light of the sun, and common to all. The second plane is that of dream experience: cognitive of the fluid, subtle, forms of a private interior world, self-luminous and of one substance with the dreamer. The third plane is that of deep sleep: dreamless, profoundly blissful. In the first are encountered the instructive experiences of life; in the second these are digested, assimilated to the inner forces of the dreamer; while in the third all is enjoyed and known unconsciously, in the "space within the heart,[11] the room of the inner controller, the source and end of all.[1n]

The cosmogonic cycle is to be understood as the passage of universal consciousness from the deep sleep zone of the unmanifest, through dream, to the full day of waking; then back again through dream to the timeless dark. As in the actual experience of every living being, so in the grandiose figure of the living cosmos: in the abyss of sleep the energies are refreshed, in the work of the day they are exhausted; the life of the universe runs down and must be renewed.

The cosmogonic cycle pulses forth into manifestation and back into nonmanifestation amidst a silence of the unknown. The Hindus represent this mystery in the holy syllable AUM. Here the sound *A* represents waking consciousness, *U* dream consciousness, *M* deep sleep. The silence surrounding the syllable is the unknown: it is called simply "**The** Fourth."[111] The syllable itself is God as creator-preserver-destroyer, but the silence is God

[a] See *Mandukya Upanishad*, 3-6.

[1n] *Mandukya Upanishad*, 8-12.

Since in Sanskrit *a* and *u* coalesce in o, the sacred syllable is pronounced and written "nm." See the prayers, pp. 141 and 218, note 31, *supra.*

Eternal, absolutely uninvolved in all the opening-and-closings of the round.

It is unseen, unrelated, inconceivable,
uninferable, unimaginable, indescribable.
It is the essence of the one self-cognition
common to all states of consciousness.
All phenomena cease in it.
It is peace, it is bliss, it is nonduality}'

Myth remains, necessarily, within the cycle, but represents this cycle as surrounded and permeated by the silence. Myth is the revelation of a plenum of silence within and around every atom of existence. Myth is a directing of the mind and heart, by means of profoundly informed figurations, to that ultimate mystery which fills and surrounds all existences. Even in the most comical and apparently frivolous of its moments, mythology is directing the mind to this unmanifest which is just beyond the eye.

"The Aged of the Aged, the Unknown of the Unknown, has a form and yet has no form," we read in a cabalistic text of the medieval Hebrews. "He has a form whereby the universe is preserved, and yet has no form, because he cannot be comprehended."[18] This Aged of the Aged is represented as a face in

" *Mandukya Uparuskad,* 7.

[15] *Ha idra zuta, Zohar,* iii. 288a. Compare *supra,* p. 164.

The *Zokar* (*zohar,* "light, splendor") is a collection of esoteric Hebrew writing, given to the world about 1305 by a learned Spanish Jew, Moses de Leon. It was claimed that the material had been drawn from secret original[1]:, going back to the teachings of Simeon ben Yohai, a rabbi of Galilee in the second century A.D. ?I"hreatened with death by the Romans, Simeon had hidden for twelve years in a cave; ten centuries later his writings had been found there, and these were the sources of the books of the *Zohar.*

Simeon's teachings were supposed to have been drawn from the *hokmah nistarah* or hidden wisdom of Moses, i.e., a body of esoteric lore first studied by Moses in Egypt, the land of his birth, then pondered by him during his forty years in the wilderness (where he receh ed special instruction from an angel),

profile: always in profile, because the hidden side can never be known. This is called "The Great Face," Makroprosopos; from the strands of its white beard the entire world proceeds. "That beard, the truth of all truths, proceedeth from the place of the ears, and descendeth around the mouth of the Holy One; and descendeth and ascendeth, covering the cheeks which are called the places of copious fragrance; it is white with ornament: and it descendeth in the equilibrium of balanced power, and furnisheth a covering even unto the midst of the breast. That is the beard of adornment, true and perfect, from **which** flow down thirteen fountains, scattering the most precious balm of splendor. This is disposed in thirteen forms. . . . And certain dispositions are found in the universe, according to those thirteen dispositions which depend from that venerable beard, and they are opened out into the thirteen gates of mercies."[19]

The white beard of Makroprosopos descends over another head, "The Little Face," Mikroprosopos, represented full face and with a beard of black. And whereas the eye of The Great Face is without lid and never shuts, the eyes of The Little Face open and close in a slow rhythm of universal destiny. This is the opening and closing of the cosmogonic round. The Little Face is named "GOD," the Great Face "I AM."

and finally incorporated cryptically in the first four books of the Pentateuch, from which it can be extracted by a proper understanding and manipulation of the mystical number-values of the Hebrew alphabet. This lore and the techniques for rediscovering and utilizing it constitute the cabala.

It is said that the teachings of the cabala (*qabbalah,* "received or traditional lore") were first entrusted by God himself to a special group of angels in Paradise. After Man had been expelled from the Garden, some of these angels communicated the lessons to Adam, thinking to help him back to felicity thereby. From Adam the teaching passed to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham. Abraham let some of it slip from him while he was in Egypt, and that is why this sublime wisdom can now be found in reduced form in the myiihs and philosophies of the gentiles. Moses first studied it with the priests of Egypt, but the tradition was refreshed in him by the special instructions of his angels.

[19] *Ha idra rabba </adisha,* xi, 212-14 and 233, translation by S. L. MacGregor Mathers, *The Kabbalah Unveiled* (London: Regan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, Ltd., 1887), pp. 134-135 and 137.

Makroprosopos is the Uncreated Uncreating and Mikroprosopos the Uncreated Creating: respectively, the silence and the syllable AUM, the unmanifest and the presence immanent in the cosmogonic round.

Out of the Void—Space

Saint Thomas Aquinas declares: "The name of being wise is reserved to him alone whose consideration is about the end of the universe, which end is also the beginning of the universe."[90] The basic principle of all mythology is this of the beginning in the end. Creation myths are pervaded with a sense of the doom that is continually recalling all created shapes to the imperishable out of which they first emerged. The forms go forth powerfully, but inevitably reach their apogee, break, and return. Mythology, in this sense, is tragic in its view. But in the sense that it places our true being not in the forms that shatter but in the imperishable out of which they again immediately bubble forth, mythology is eminently untragical.[21] Indeed, wherever the mythological mood prevails, tragedy is impossible. A quality rather of dream prevails. True being, meanwhile, is not in the shapes but in the dreamer.

As in dream, the images range from the sublime to the ridiculous. The mind is not permitted to rest with its normal evaluations, but is continually insulted and shocked out of the assurance that now, at last, it has understood. Mythology is defeated when the mind rests solemnly with its favorite or traditional images, defending them as though they themselves were the message that they communicate. These images are to be regarded as no more

-" *Summa contra Gentiles*, I, i.
[sl] See *supra*, pp. 19—25.

than shadows from the unfathomable reach beyond, where the eye goeth not, speech goeth not, nor the mind, nor even piety. Like the trivialities of dream, those of myth are big with meaning.

The first phase of the cosmogonic cycle describes the breaking of formlessness into form, as in the following creation chant of the Maoris of New Zealand:

Te Rare (The Void)
Te Kore-tua-tahi (The First Void)
Te Kore-tua-rua (The Second Void)
Te Kore-nui (The Vast Void)
Te Kore-roa (The Far-Extending Void)
Te Kore-para (The Sere Void)
Te Kore-zvhiwhia (The Unpossessing Void)
Te Kore-rawea (The Delightful Void)
Te Kore-te-tamaua (The Void Fast Bound)
Te Po (The Night)
Te Po-teki (The Hanging Night)
Te Po-terea (The Drifting Night)
Te Pu-whazuha (The Moaning Night)
Hine-make-moe (The Daughter of Troubled Sleep)
TcAta (The Dawn)
Te Au-tu-roa (The Abiding Day)
Te Ao-marama (The Bright Day)
Whai-tua (Space).

In space were evolved two existences without shape:

Maku (Moisture [a male])
Mahora-mri-a-rangi (Great Expanse of Heaven [a female]).

From these sprang:

Rangi-potiki (The Heavens [a male])
Papa (Earth [a female]).

Rangi-potiki and Papa were the parents of the gods.[22]

[22] Johannes C, Anderson, *Maori Life in Ao-tea* (Christchurch, [New Zealand,] no date [1907?]), p. 127.

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From the void beyond all voids unfold the world-sustaining **emanations,** plantlike, mysterious. The tenth of the above series is night; the eighteenth, space or ether, the frame of the visible world; the nineteenth is the male-female polarity; the twentieth is the universe we see. Such a series suggests the depth beyond depth of the mystery of being. The levels correspond to the profundities sounded by the hero in his world-fathoming adventure; they number the spiritual strata known to the mind introverted in meditation. They represent the bottomlessness of the dark night of the soul.[23] "

The Hebrew cabaia represents the process of creation as a series of emanations out of the I AM of The Great Face. The first is the head itself, in profile, and from this proceed "nine splendid lights." The emanations are represented also as the branches of a cosmic tree, which is upside down, rooted in "the inscrutable height." l"he world that we see is the reverse image of that tree.

According to the Indian Samkhya philosophers of the eighth century B.C., the void condenses into the element ether or space. From this air is precipitated. From air comes fire, from fire water, and **from** water the element earth. With each element evolves a sense-function capable of perceiving it: hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell respectively.[34]

An amusing Chinese myth personifies these emanating elements as five venerable sages, who come stepping out of a ball of chaos, suspended in the void:

"Before heaven and earth had become separated from each other, everything was a great ball of mist, called chaos. At that time, the spirits of the five elements took shape, and then developed into five ancients. The first was called the Yellow Ancient, and he was the master of earth. The second was called the Red Ancient, and he was the master of fire. The third was called the Dark Ancient, and he was the master of water. The fourth was called the Wood Prince, and he was the master of wood. The fifth was called the Metal Mother, and she was the mistress of metals.[25]

"Now each of these five ancients set in motion the primordial spirit from which he had proceeded, so that water and earth sank downward; the heavens soared aloft and the earth became fast in the depths. Then the water gathered into rivers and lakes, and the mountains and plains appeared. The heavens cleared and the earth divided; then there were sun, moon, and all the stars, sand, clouds, rain, and dew. The Yellow Ancient gave play to the purest power of the earth, and to this were added the operations of fire and water. Then there sprang into being the grasses and trees, birds and animals, and the generations of the snakes and insects, and fishes and turtles. The Wood Prince and the Metal Mother brought light and darkness together and thereby created the human race, as man and woman. Thus gradually appeared the world. . . ."[26]

Within Space—Life

The first effect of the cosmogonic emanations is the framing of the world stage of space; the second is the production of life within the frame: life polarized for self-reproduction under the dual form of the male and female. It is possible to represent the entire process in sexual terms, as a pregnancy and birth. This

In the sn'^/cl 'A riim^'"-. uf MihiJyiMi BtiildhiMii, nubre-en "voicln^ise^ * or degrees of the void are enumerated and described. These arc experienced by the yogi and by the soul as it passes into death. See Evan&-Wentz, *Tibetan 1o!^a and Secret Dortnnr*, pp. i?Oli, 239 f.

-[1] See *The Vedan'a-or.t ofS,ul,munda,* translated with Introduction, Sanskrit Text, and Comments, bj S«ami Nikhilanandii (Mayavati, 1931).

wood, and gold.

'[3] Translated from Richard Willielm, *Ckinesische Miirchen* (Jena: Eu6en **Diederichs** Verlag, 1921), pp. 29-31.

idea is superbly rendered in another metaphysical genealogy of the Maoris:

From the conception the increase.
From the increase the thought,
From the thought the remembrance,
From the remembrance the consciousness,
From the consciousness the desire.

The word became fruitful;
It dwelt with the feeble glimmering;
It brought forth night:
The great night, the long night,
The lowest night, the loftiest night,
The thick night, to be felt,
The night to be touched,
The night not to be seen,
The night ending in death.

From the nothing the begetting,
From the nothing the increase,
From the nothing the abundance,
The power of increasing,
The living breath.
It dwelt with the empty space, and produced
the atmosphere which is above us.

The atmosphere which floats above the earth,
The great firmament above us,
dwelt with the early dawn,
And the moon sprang forth;
The atmosphere above us,
dwelt with the glowing sky,
And thence proceeded the sun;
Moon and sun were thrown up above,
as the chief eyes of heaven:
Then the Heavens became light:
the early dawn, the early day,
The mid-day: the blaze of day from the sky.

The sky above dwelt with Hawaiki,
and produced land.-'

About the middle of the nineteenth century, Paiore, a high chieftain of the Polynesian island of Anaa, drew a picture of the beginnings of creation. The first detail of this illustration was a little circle containing two elements, Te Tumu, "The Foundation" (a male), and Te Papa, "The Stratum Rock" (a female).[38]

"The universe," said Paiore, "was like an egg, which contained Te Tumu and Te Papa. It at last burst and produced three layers superposed—one layer below supporting two above. On the lowest layer remained Te Tumu and Te Papa, who created man, animals, and plants.

"The first man was Matata, produced without arms; he died shortly after he had come into being. The second man was Aitu, who came with one arm but without legs; and he died like his elder brother. Finally, the third man was Hoatea (Sky-space), and he was perfectly formed. After this came a woman named Hoatu (Fruitfulness of Earth). She became the wife of Hoatea and from them descended the human race.

"When the lowest layer of earth became filled with creation, the people made an opening in the middle of the layer above, so that they could get upon it also, and there they established themselves, taking with them plants and animals from below. Then they raised the third layer (so that it should form a ceiling to the second) . . . and ultimately established themselves up there also, so that human beings had three abodes.

"Above the earth were the skies, also superposed, reaching down and supported by their respective horizons, some being attached to those of the earth; and the people continued to work, expanding one sky above another in the same manner, until all were set in order."[29]

[37] Rev. Richard Taylor, *Te ika a Mam, or New Zealand and its Inhabitants* (London, 1855), pp. 14-15.

** The little circle underneath the main portion of Figure 13. Compare the Chinese Tao', footnote, p. 140, *supra.*

[38] Kenneth P. Emory, "The Tuamotuan Creation Charts by Paiore" *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (March, 1939), pp. 1-29.

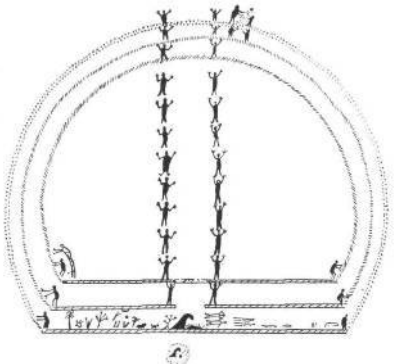

FIGURE 13. Tuamotuan Creation Chart. Below: The Cosmic Egg. Above: **The** People Appear, and Shape the Universe

The main portion of Paiore's illustration shows the people spreading out the world, standing on each other's shoulders to elevate the skies. On the lowest stratum of this world appear the two original elements, Te Tumu and Te Papa. To the left of them are the plants and animals of their begetting. Over to the right are to be seen the first man, malformed, and the first successful men and women. In the upper sky appears a fire surrounded by four figures, representing an early event in the history of the world: "The creation of the universe was scarcely terminated when Tangaroa, who delighted in doing evil, set fire to the highest heaven, seeking thus to destroy everything. But fortunately the fire was seen spreading by Tamatua, Oru, and Ruanuku, who quickly ascended from the earth and extinguished the flames."[30]

[30] *Ibid., p.* 12.

The image of the cosmic egg is known to many mythologies; it appears in the Greek Orphic, Egyptian, Finnish, Buddhistic, and Japanese. "In the beginning this world was merely non-being," we read in a sacred work of the Hindus; "It was existent. It developed. It turned into an egg. It lay for the period of a year. It was split asunder. One of the two eggshell parts became silver, one gold. That which was of silver is the earth. That which was of gold is the sky- What was the outer membrane is the mountains. What was the inner membrane is cloud and mist. **What** were the veins are the rivers. What was the fluid within is the ocean. Now, what was born therefrom is yonder sun."[31] The shell of the cosmic egg is the world frame of space, while the fertile seed-power within typifies the inexhaustible **life** dynamism of nature.

"Space is boundless by re-entrant form not by great extension. *That which is* is a shell floating in the infinitude of *that which is not.'"* This succinct formulation by a modern physicist, illustrating the world picture as he saw it in 1928,[32] gives precisely the sense of the mythological cosmic egg. Furthermore, the evolution of life, described by our modern science of biology, is the theme of the early stages of the cosmogonic cycle. Finally, the world destruction, which the physicists tell us must come with the exhaustion of our sun and ultimate running down of the whole cosmos,[33] stands presaged in the scar left by the fire of Tangaroa: the world-destructive effects of the creator-destroyer will increase gradually until, at last, in the second course of the cosmogonic cycle, all will devolve into the sea of bliss.

Not uncommonly the cosmic egg bursts to disclose, swelling from within, an awesome figure in human form. This is the anthropomorphic personification of the power of generation, the Mighty Living One, as it is called in the cabala. "Mighty Ta'aroa whose curse was death, he is the creator of the world." Thus we

[31] *Chundogya Upanishad,* 3. 19. 1-3.

[32] A. S. Eddington, *The Nature of the Pkijsical World, p.* 83. Copyright, 1928 by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

[33] "Entropy always inLTeases.[41] (See a^ain Eddington, pp. 63 ff.)

hear from Tahiti, another of the South Sea Isles.[34] "He was alone. He had no father nor indeed a mother. Ta'aroa simply lived in the void. There was no land, nor sky, nor sea. Land was nebulous: there was no foundation. Ta'aroa then said:

> *0 space for land, 0 space for sky,*
> *Useless world below existing in nebulous state,*
> *Continuing and continuing from time immemorial.*
> *Useless world below, extend!*

The face of Ta'aroa appeared outside. The shell of Ta'aroa fell away and became land. 'IVaroa looked: Land had come into existence, sea had come into existence, sky had come into existence. IVaroa lived god-like contemplating his work."[35]

An Egyptian myth reveals the demiurge creating the world by an act of masturbation.[36] A Hindu myth displays him in yogic meditation, with the forms of his inner vision breaking forth from him (to his own astonishment) and standing then around him as a pantheon of brilliant gods.[3v] And in another account from India the all-father is represented as first splitting into male and female, then procreating all the creatures according to kind:

"In the beginning, this universe was only the Self, in human form. He looked around and saw nothing but himself. Then, at the beginning, he cried out, 'I am he.' Whence came the name, I. That is why, even today, when a person is addressed, he first declares, 'It is I,' and then announces the other name that he goes by.

"He was afraid. That is why people are afraid to be alone. He

[34] Ta'aroa (Tahitian dialect) is Tangaroa. See Plate XX.

[35] Kenneth P. Emory, "The Tahitian Account of Creation by Mare" *Journal of the Polynesian Society,* Vol. 47, No. 2 (June, 1938), pp. 53-54.

[36] F,. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians* (London, 1904), Vol. I, pp. 282-292.

[37] *Kalika Purana,* I (translated in Heinrich Zimmer, *The King and the Corpse,* The Bollingen Series XI, Pantheon Books, 1948, pp. 239 ff.).

thought, 'But what am I afraid of? There is nothing but myself.' Whereupon his fear was gone. . . .

"He was unhappy. That is why people are not happy when they are alone. He wanted a mate. He became as big as a woman and man embracing. He divided this body, which was himself, in two parts. From that there came husband and wife. . . . Therefore this human body (before one marries a wife) is like one of the halves of a split pea. . . . He united with her; and from that were born men.

"She considered: 'How can he unite with me after producing me from himself? Well then, let me hide myself." She became a cow; but he became a bull and united with her; from that were born cattle. She became a mare, he a stallion; she became a she-ass, he a he-ass and united with her; from that were born the one-hoofed animals. She became a she-goat, he a he-goat; she became a ewe, he a ram and united with her; from that were born goats and sheep. Thus did he project everything that exists in pairs, down to the ants.

"Then he knew: 'Indeed I am myself the creation, for I have projected the entire world.[1] Whence he was called Creation. . . ,"[38]

The enduring substratum of the individual and of the progenitor of the universe are one and the same, according to these mythologies; that is why the demiurge in this myth is called the Self. The Oriental mystic discovers this deep-reposing, enduring presence in its original androgynous state when he plunges in meditation into his own interior.

> *Him on whom the sky, the earth, and the atmosphere*
> *Are woven, and the mind, together with all the life-breaths,*

[38] *Brihadaranyaka L'panishad,* 1. 4. 1-5. Translated by Swami Madhavananda (Mayavati, 1934). Compare the foik lore motif of the transformation flight, *supra,* pp. 183-184. See also *Cypria* 8, where Nemesis "dislikes to lie in love uitli Her hither Zeus rind fhe^ from him, ;ts*iuimn^ forms of nsli and am-IIILIIS fcued I/\ AiKitida *K. (. ^omamsw* rnii\. *Spt> dual* /➥WV *and Ienipimd Authority in the Indian Theory of Government,* American Oriental Society, 1942, p. 361).

Him alone know as the one Soul. Other
Words dismiss. He is the bridge to immortality.[w]

Thus it appears that though these myths of creation narrate of the remotest past, they speak at the same time of the present origin of the individual. **"Each** soul and spirit," we read in the Hebrew *Zohar,* "prior to its entering into this world, consists of a male and female united into one being. When it descends on this earth the two parts separate and animate two different bodies. At the time of marriage, the Holy One, blessed be He, who knows all souls and spirits, unites them again as they were before, and they again constitute one body and one soul, forming as it were the right and left of one individual. . . . **This** union, however, is influenced by the deeds of the man and by the ways in which he walks. If the man is pure and his conduct is pleasing in the sight of God, he is united with that female part of his soul which was his component part prior to his birth."[40]

This cabalistic text is a commentary to the scene in Genesis where Adam gives forth Eve. A similar conception appears in Plato's *Symposium.* According to this mysticism of sexual love, the ultimate experience of love is a realization that beneath the illusion of two-ness dwells identity: "each is both." This realization can expand into a discovery that beneath the multitudinous individualities of the whole surrounding universe—human, animal, vegetable, even mineral—dwells identity; whereupon the love experience becomes cosmic, and the beloved who first opened the vision is magnified as the mirror of creation. The man or woman knowing this experience is possessed of what Schopenhauer called "the science of beauty everywhere." He "goes up and down these worlds, eating what he desires, assuming what forms he desires," and he sits singing the song of universal unity, which begins: "Oh, wonderful! Oh, wonderful! Oh, wonderful!"[41]

[3w] *Mundaka Upani&had, 2. 2. 5.*

[40] Zohar, i, <Jl b. Quoted by C. G. Ginsburg, *The Kabbalah, its Doctrines, Development, and Literature* (London, 1920), p. 116.

[41] *Taittiriya Upanishad,* 3. 10. 5.

The Breaking of the One into the Manifold

The forward roll of the cosmogonic round precipitates the One into the many. Herewith a great crisis, a rift, splits the created world into two apparently contradictor}' planes of being. In Paiore's chart the people emerge from the lower darknesses and immediately go to work to elevate the sky.[42] They are revealed as moving with an apparent independence. They hold councils, they decide, they plan; they take over the work of arranging the world. Yet we know that behind the scenes the Unmoved Mover is at work, like a puppetmaster.

In mythology', wherever the Unmoved Mover, the Mighty Living One, holds the center of attention, there is a miraculous spontaneity about the shaping of the universe. The elements condense and move into play of their own accord, or at the **Creator's** slightest word; the portions of the self-shattering cosmic egg go to their stations without aid. But when the perspective shifts, to focus on living beings, when the panorama of space and nature is faced from the standpoint of the personages ordained to inhabit it, then a sudden transformation overshadows the cosmic scene. No longer do the forms of the world appear to move in the patterns of a living, growing, harmonious thing, but stand recalcitrant, or at best inert. The props of the universal stage have to be adjusted, even beaten into shape. The earth brings forth thorns and thistles; man eats bread in the sweat of his brow.

Two modes of myth therefore confront us. According to one, the demiurgic forces continue to operate of themselves; according to the other, they give up the initiative and even set themselves

[42] The mythologies of the American Southwest describe such an emergence in great detail, so also the creation stories of the Kabyl Berbers of Algiers. See Morris Edward Opler, *Myths and Tales of the Jicarilla Apache Indians* (Memoirs of the American Folklore Society. No. 31, 1938); and Leo Frobenius and Douglas C. Fox, *African Genesis* (New York, 1927), pp. 4-9-50.

against the further progress of the cosmogonic round. The difficulties represented in this latter form of myth begin even as early as during the long darkness of the original, creature-begetting embrace of the cosmic parents. Let the Maoris introduce us to this terrible theme:

Rangi (the Sky) lay so close on the belly of Papa (Mother Earth) that the children could not break free from the womb. "They were in an unstable condition, floating about the world of darkness, and this was their appearance: some were crawling . . . some were upright with arms held up . . . some lying on their sides . . . some on their backs, some were stooping, some with their heads bent down, some with legs drawn up . . . some kneeling . . . some feeling about in the dark. . . . They were all within the embrace of Rangi and Papa——

"At last the beings who had been begotten by Heaven and Earth, worn out by the continued darkness, consulted among themselves, saying, 'Let us now determine what we should do with Rangi and Papa, whether it would be better to slay them or to rend them apart.' Then spake Tu-matauenga, the fiercest of the children of Heaven and Earth, 'It is well, let us slay them.[1]

"Then spake Tane-mahuta, the father of the forests and of all things that inhabit them, or that are constructed from trees, 'Nay, not so. It is better to rend them apart, and to let the heaven stand far above us, and the earth lie under our feet. Let the sky become a stranger to us, but the earth remain close to us as our nursing mother.[1]"

Several of the brother gods vainly tried to rend apart the heavens and the earth. At last it was Tane-mahuta himself, the father of the forests and of all things that inhabit them, or that are constructed from trees, who succeeded in the titanic project. "His head is now firmly planted on his mother the earth, his feet he raises up and rests against his father the skies, he strains his back and limbs with mighty effort. Now are rent apart Rangi and Papa, and with cries and groans of woe they shriek aloud. "Wherefore slay you thus your parents'? Why commit you so dreadful a crime as to slay us, as to rend your parents apart?'

But Tane-mahuta pauses not, he regards not their shrieks and cries; far, far beneath him he presses down the earth; far, far above him, he thrusts up the sky. . . .'"[43]

As known to the Greeks, this story is rendered by Hesiod in his account of the separation of Ouranos (Father Heaven) from Gaia (Mother Earth). According to this variant, the Titan Kronos castrated his father with a sickle and pushed him up out of the way.*[44] In Egyptian iconography the position of the cosmic couple is inverted: the sky is the mother, the father is the vitality of the earth;[45] but the pattern of the myth remains: the two were pushed asunder by their child, the air god Shu. Again the image comes to us from the ancient cuneiform texts of the Sumerians, dating from the third and fourth millenniums B.C. First was the primeval ocean; the primeval ocean generated the cosmic mountain, which consisted of heaven and earth united; An (the Heaven Father) and Ki (the Earth Mother) produced Enlil (the

FIGURE 14. The Separation of Sky and Earth

[43] George Grey. *Polynesian Mythology and Ancient Traditional History of the New Zealand Race, as furnished by their Priests and Chiefs* (London, 1855). pp. 1-3.

[44] *Theogony,* 116 ff. In the Greek version, the mother is not reluctant; she herself supplies the sickle.

[45] Compare the Maori polarity of Mahora-mii-a-rangi and Maki, p. 271,

Air God), who presently separated An from Ki and then himself united with his mother to beget **mankind.**[48]

But if these deeds of the desperate children seem violent, they are as nothing compared with the total carving up of the parent power which we discover recorded in the Icelandic *Eddas,* and in the Babylonian *Tablets of Creation.* The final insult here is given in the characterization of the demiurgic presence of the abyss as "evil," "dark," "obscene." The bright young warrior- sons, now disdaining the generative source, the personage of the seed-state of deep sleep, summarily slay it, hack it, slice it into lengths, and carpenter it into the structure of the world. This is the pattern for victory of all our later slayings of the dragon, the beginning of the age-long history of the deeds of the hero.

According to the Eddie account, after the "yawning gap"[47] had given forth in the north a mist-world of cold and in the south a region of fire, and after the heat from the south had played on the rivers of ice that crowded down from the north, a yeasty venom began to be exuded. From this a drizzle arose, which in turn congealed to rime. The rime melted and dripped; life was quickened from the drippings in the form of a torpid, gigantic, hermaphroditic, horizontal figure named Ymir. The giant slept, and as it slept it sweated; one of its feet begat with the other a son, while under its left hand germinated a man and wife.

The rime continually melted and dripped, and there condensed from it the cow, Audumla. From her udder flowed four streams of milk, which were drunk for nourishment by Ymir. But the cow, for her own nourishment, licked the iceblocks, which were salty. The evening of the first day she licked, a man's hair came forth from the blocks; the second day a man's head; the third, the entire man was there, and his name was Buri. Now Buri had a son (the mother is not known) named Borr, who married one of the giant daughters of the creatures

[46] S. N. Kramer, *op. cit.,* pp. 40-41.

that had sprung from Ymir. She gave birth to the trinity of Othin, Vili, and Ve, and these then slaughtered sleepful Ymir and carved the body into chunks.

Of Ymir's flesh the earth was fashioned,
And of his sweat the sea;
Crags of his bones, trees of his hair,
And of his skull the sky.
Then of his bones the blithe gods made
Midgard for sons of men;
And of his brain the bitter-mooded
Clouds were all created.[^]

In the Babylonian version the hero is Marduk, the sun-god; the victim is Tiamat—terrifying, dragon-like, attended by swarms of demons—a female personification of the original abyss itself: chaos as the mother of the gods, but now the menace of the world. With bow and trident, club and net, and a convoy of battle-winds, the god mounted his chariot. The four horses, trained to trample underfoot, were flecked with foam-

. . . But Tiamat turned not her neek,
With lips that failed not she uttered rebellious words. . . .

[48] *Prose Edda,* "Gylfaginning," **IV-VIII** (from the translation by Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur, The American-Scandinavian Foundation, New York, 1916; by permission of the publishers). See also, *Poetic Edda,* "Vokispa."

The *Poetic Edda* is a collection of thirty-four Old Norse poems treating of tlie pagan Germanic gods and heroes. The poems were composed by a number of singers and poets (scalds) in various parts of the Viking world (one, at least, in Greenland) during the period A.D. 900-1050. The collection was completed, apparently, in Iceland.

The *Prose Edda* is a handbook for young poets, written in Iceland by the Christian master-poet and chieftain, Snorri Sturluson (1178-1241). It summarizes the pagan Germanic myths and reviews the rules of scaldic rhetoric.

The mythology documented in these texts reveals an earlier, peasant stratum (associated with the thunderer, Thor), a later, aristocratic stratum (that of Wotan-Othin), and a third, distinctly phallic complex (Nyorth, Freya, and Frey). Bardic influences from Ireland mingle with Classical and Oriental themes in this profoundly broodod yd jrrolesquely humorous world of symbolic forms.

Then the lord raised the thunderbolt, his mighty weapon.
And against Tiamat, who was raging, thus he sent the word:
"Thou art become great, thou hast exalted thyself on high,
And thy heart hath prompted thee to call to battle. . . .
***And** against the gods my fathers thou hast contrived thy wicked plan.*
Let then thy host be equipped, let thy weapons be girded on!
Stand! I and thou, let us join battle!"

When Tiamat heard these words,
She was like one possessed, she lost her reason.
Tiamat uttered wild, piercing cries,
She trembled and shook to her very foundations.
She recited an incantation, she pronounced her spell.
And the gods of the battle cried out for their weapons.

*'Then advanced Tiamat and Marduk, the counselor of **the gods;***
To the fight they came on, to the battle they drew nigh.
The lord spread out his net and caught her.
And the evil wind that was behind him he let loose in her face.
The terrible winds filled her belly,
And her courage was taken from her, and her mouth she opened wide.
He seized the trident and burst her belly,
He severed her inward parts, he pierced her heart.
He overcame her and cut off her life;
He cast down her body and stood upon it.

Having then subdued the remainder of her swarming host, the god of Babylon returned to the mother of the world:

And the lord stood upon Tiamat's hinder parts,
And with his merciless club he smashed her skull.
He cut through the channels of her blood,
And he made the north wind bear it away into secret places. . . .
Then the lord rested, gazing upon her dead body, . . . and devised a cunning plan.

He split her up like a fiat fish into two halves;
One half of her he stablished as a covering for heaven.
He fixed a bolt, he stationed a watchman,
And bade them not to let her waters come forth.
He passed through the heavens, he surveyed the regions thereof,
And over against tin Deep he set the dwelling of 'Niidimmud.
And the Lord measured the structure of the Deep. . . .[4Q]

Marduk in this heroic manner pushed back with a ceiling the waters above, and with a floor the waters beneath. Then in the world between he created man.

The myths never tire of illustrating the point that conflict in the created world is not what it seems. Tiamat, though slain and dismembered, was not thereby undone. Had the battle been viewed from another angle, the chaos-monster would have been seen to shatter of her own accord, and her fragments move to their respective stations. Marduk and his whole generation of divinities were but particles of her substance. From the standpoint of those created forms all seemed accomplished as by a mighty arm, amid danger and pain. But from the center of the emanating presence, the flesh was yielded willingly, and the hand that carved it was ultimately no more than an agent of the will of the victim herself.

Herein lies the basic paradox of myth: the paradox of the dual focus. Just as at the opening of the cosmogonic cycle it was possible to say "God is not involved,[11] but at the same time "God is creator-preserver-destroyer," so now at this critical juncture, where the One breaks into the many, destiny "happens,[11] but at the same time "is brought about." From the perspective of the source, the world is a majestic harmony of forms pouring into being, exploding, and dissolving. But what the swiftly passing creatures experience is a terrible cacaphony of battle cries and pain. The myths do not deny this agony (the crucifixion); they

*[a] "The Epic of Creation," Tablet IV, lines 35-143, adapted from the translation **by L. W. King.** *Babylonian Religion and Mythology* **(London and New** York: Regan Paul, Trench, Triibner and Co. Ltd., 1899), pp. 72-78.

reveal within, behind, and around it essential peace (the heavenly rose)."[50]

The shift of perspective from the repose of the central Cause to the turbulation of the peripheral effects is represented in the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. They ate of the forbidden fruit, "And the eyes of them both were opened.[51] The bliss of Paradise was closed to them and they beheld the created field from the other side of a transforming veil. Henceforth they should experience the inevitable as the hard to gain.

· 6 ·

Folk Stories of Creation

The simplicity of the origin stories of the undeveloped folk mythologies stands in contrast to the profoundly suggestive myths of the cosmogonic cycled No long-sustained attempt to fathom the mysteries behind the veil of space makes itself apparent in these. Through the blank wall of timelessness there breaks and enters a shadowy creator-figure to shape the world of forms. His day is dreamlike in its duration, fluidity, and ambient

[50] See Dante, Tarudiso." XXX-XXXII. This is the rose opened to mankind by the cross.

[51] Genesis, 3:7.

[52] A broad distinction can be made between the mythologies of the **truly** primitive (fishing, hunting, root-digging, and berry-picking) peoples and those of the civilizations that came into being following the development of the arts of agriculture, **dairying,** and herding, *ca.* 6000 B.C. Most of what we call primitive, however, is actually colonial, i.e., diffused from some high culture center and adapted to the needs of a simpler society. It is in order to avoid the misleading term, "primitive," that I am calling the undeveloped or degenerate traditions "folk mydKilogies." The term is adequate for the purposes of the present elementary comparative study of the universal forms, though it would certainly not serve for a strict historical analysis.

power. The earth has not yet hardened; much remains to be done to make it habitable for the future people.

Old Man was traveling about, declare the Blackfeet of Montana; he was making people and arranging things. "He came from the south, traveling north, making animals and birds as he passed along. He made the mountains, prairies, timber, and brush first. So he went along, traveling northward, making things as he went, putting rivers here and there, and falls on them, putting red paint here and there in the ground—fixing up the world as we see it to-day. He made the Milk River (the Teton) and crossed it, and, being tired, went up on a hill and lay down to rest. As he lay on his back, stretched out on the ground, with arms extended, he marked himself out with stones—the shape of his body, head, legs, arms, and everything. There you can see those rocks to-day. After he had rested, he went on northward, and stumbled over a knoll and fell down on his knees. Then he said, 'You are a bad thing to be stumbling against'; so he raised up two large buttes there, and named them the Knees, and they are called so to this day. He went further north, and with some of the rocks he carried with him he built the Sweet Grass Hills. . . .

"One day Old Man determined that he would make a woman and a child; so he formed them both—the woman and the child, her son—of clay. After he had moulded the clay in human shape, he said to the clay, 'You must be people,[1] and then he covered it up and left it, and went away- The next morning he went to the place and took the covering off, and saw that the clay shapes had changed a little. The second morning there was still more change, and the third still more. The fourth morning he went to the place, took the covering off, looked at the images, and told them to rise and walk; and they did so. They walked to the river with their Maker, and then he told them that his name was *Na'pi,* Old Man.

"As they were standing by the river, the woman said to him, 'How is it? will we always live, will there be no end to it?[1] He said: 'I have never thought of that. We will have to decide it.

I will take this buffalo chip and throw it in the river. If it floats, when people die, in four days they will become alive again; they will die for only four days. But if it sinks, there will be an end to them.' He threw the chip in the river, and it floated. The woman turned and picked up a stone, and said: 'No, I will throw this stone in the river; if it floats, we will always live, if it sinks people must die, that they may always be sorry for each other.' The woman threw the stone into the water, and it sank. 'There,' said Old Man, 'you have chosen. There will be an end to them.'"[53]

The arranging of the world, the creation of man, and the decision about death are typical themes from the tales of the primitive creator. It is difficult to know how seriously or in what sense these

FIGURE 15. Khnemu Shapes Pharaoh's Son on the Potter's Whei While Thoth Marks **His** Span of Life

[53] George Bird Grinnell, *Blackfoot Lodge Tales* (New York: Charles Sci Sons, 1892, 1916), pp. 137-138.

stories were believed. The mythological mode is one not so much of direct as of oblique reference: it is as *if* Old Man had done so-and-so. Many of the tales that appear in the collections under the category of origin stories were certainly regarded more as popular fairy tales than as a book of genesis. Such playful mythologizing is common in all civilizations, higher as well as lower. The simpler members of the populations may regard the resultant images with undue seriousness, but in the main they cannot be said to represent doctrine, or the local "myth." The Maoris, for example, from whom we have some of our finest cosmogonies, have the story of an egg dropped by a bird into the primeval sea; it burst, and out came a man, a woman, a boy, a girl, a pig, a dog, and a canoe. All got into the canoe and drifted to New Zealand.[54] This clearly is a burlesque of the cosmic egg. On the other hand, the Kamchatkans declare, apparently in all seriousness, that God inhabited heaven originally, but then descended to earth. When he traveled about on his snowshoes, the new ground yielded under him like thin and pliant ice. The land has been uneven ever since.™ Or again, according to the Central Asiatic Kirghiz, when two early people tending a great ox had been without drink for a very long time and were nearly dead of thirst, the animal got water for them by ripping open the ground with its big horns. That is how the lakes in the country of the Kirghiz were made.[56]

A clown figure working in continuous opposition to the well-wishing creator very often appears in myth and folk tale, as accounting for the ills and difficulties of existence this side of the veil. The Melanesians of New Britain tell of an obscure being, "the one who was first there," who drew two male figures on the ground, scratched open his own skin, and sprinkled the drawings with his blood. He plucked two large leaves and covered

[54] J. S. Polack, *Manners and Customs of the New Ze.alanders* (London, 1840), Vol. I, p. 17. To regard such a tale as a cosmogonic myth would be as inept as to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity with a paragraph from the nursery ston "M;i\"i"-]ikiiK! i (n'livim* Xo. 3).

[55] Harva, *op. cit.*, p. 109, citing S. Kraseninnikov, *Opisanie Zemli Kamcatki* (St. Petersburg, 1819), Vol. **II,** p. 101.

[56] **Harva,** *op. cit.*, p. 109, citing Potanin, *op. cit.*, **Vol.** II, p. 153.

the figures, which became, after a while, two men. The names of the men were To Kabinana and To Karvuvu.

To Kabinana went oft' alone, climbed a coconut tree that had light yellow nuts, picked two that were still unripe, and threw them to the ground; they broke and became two handsome women. To Karvuvu admired the women and asked how his brother had come by them. "Climb a coconut tree," To Kabinana said, "pick two unripe nuts, and throw them to the ground." But To Karvuvu threw the nuts point downward, and the women who came from them had flat ugly noses.[57]

One day To Kabinana carved a Thum-fish out of wood and let it swim off into the ocean, so that it should be a living fish forever after. Now this Thum-fish drove the Malivaran-fish to the shore, where To Kabinana simply gathered them up from the beach. To Karvuvu admired the Thum-fish and wanted to make one, but when he was taught how, he carved a shark instead. This shark ate the Malivaran-fish instead of **driving** them ashore. To **Karvuvu,** crying, went to his brother and said: "I wish I had not made that fish; he does nothing but eat up all the others." "What sort of fish is it?" he was asked. "Well," he answered, "I made a shark." "You really are a disgusting fellow," his brother said. "Now you have fixed it so that our mortal descendants shall suffer. That fish of yours will eat up all the others, and people too."[58]

Behind this foolishness, it is possible to see that the one cause (the obscure being who cut himself) yields within the frame of the world dual effects—good and evil. The story is not as naive as it appears.[59] Furthermore, the metaphysical pre-existence of the Platonic archetype of the shark is implied in the curious logic

[57] P. J. Meier, *Mift.hen und Erzahhmgen der kihtenbrn'ohner der Gazelle-Halbinsel (Neu-Pommern)* (Anthropos Bibliothek, Band I, Heft 1, Miinster i. W., 1909), pp. 15-16.

[58] *Ibid.,* pp. 59-61.

[59] "The universe does not on the whole act as though it were under efficient personal supervision and control. When I hear some hymns, sermons, and prayers taking for granted or asserting with naive simplicity that this vast, ruthless cosmos, with all the monstrous accidents which it involves, is a neatly planned and

of the final dialogue. This is a conception inherent in every myth. Universal too is the casting of the antagonist, the representative of evil, in the role of the clown. Devils—both the lusty thickheads and the sharp, clever deceivers—are always clowns. Though they may triumph in the world of space and time, both they and their work simply disappear when the perspective shifts to the transcendental. They are the mistakers of shadow for substance: they symbolize the inevitable imperfections of the realm of shadow, and so long as we remain this side the veil cannot be done away.

The Black Tatars of Siberia say that when the demiurge Pajana fashioned the first human beings, he found that he was unable to produce a life-giving spirit for them. So he had to go up to heaven and procure souls from Kudai, the High God, leaving meanwhile a naked dog to guard the figures of his manufacture. The devil, Krlik, arrived while he was away. And Erlik said to the dog: "Thou hast no hair. I will give thee golden hair if thou wilt give into my hands these soulless people." The proposal pleased the dog, and he gave the people he was guarding to the tempter. Erlik defiled them with his spittle, but took flight the moment he saw God approaching to give them life. God saw what had been done, and so he turned the human bodies inside out. That is why we have spittle and impurity in our intestines.[60]

pervmalK conducted tour, I recall the more reasonable hypothesis of an East African tribe. "They say,' reports an observer, 'that although God is good and wishes good for everybody, unfortunately he has a half-witted brother who is always interfering with what he does.' That, at least, bears some resemblance to the facts. God's half-witted brother might explain some of life's sickening and insane tragedies which the idea of an omnipotent individual of boundless good will toward every soul most certainly does not explain.[1] (Harry- Emerson Fosdkk, *As I See Religion,* New York: Harper and Brothers, publisher, 1932, pp. 53-54.)

[60] Harva, *op. cit.,* pp. 114-115, quoting W. RadloffT, *Proben der Volkditeratur der turkischen Stiimms- Sud-Siberiens* (St. Petersburg, 1866-70), Vol. I, p. 285.- Breaking free from cosmogonie associations, the negative, clown-devil aspect of the demiurgic [lower has become a great favorite in the tales told for amusement. A vivid example is Coyote of the American plains. Reynard the Fox is a European incarnation of this fii^ure.

The folk mythologies take up the story of creation only at the moment where the transcendental emanations break into spatial forms. Nevertheless, they do not differ from the great mythologies on any essential point in their evaluations of human circumstance. Their symbolic personages correspond in import—frequently also in trait and deed—to those of the higher iconographies, and the wonder world in which they move is precisely that of the greater revelations: the world and the age between deep sleep and waking consciousness, the zone where the One breaks into the manifold and the many are reconciled in the One.

CHAPTER II

The Virgin Birth

Mother Universe

THE world-generating spirit of the father passes into the manifold of earthly experience through a transforming medium—the mother of the world. She is a personification of the primal element named in the second verse of Genesis, where we read that "the spirit of God moved upon *the face of the waters.*"" In the Hindu myth, she is the female figure through whom the Self begot all creatures. More abstractly understood, she is the world-bounding **frame:** "space, time, and causality"—the shell of the cosmic egg. More abstractly still, she is the lure that moved the Self-brooding Absolute to the act of creation.

In mythologies emphasizing the maternal rather than the paternal aspect of the creator, this original female fills the world stage in the beginning, playing the roles that are elsewhere assigned to males. And she is virgin, because her spouse is the Invisible Unknown.

A strange representation of this figure is to be found in the mythology of the Finns. In Runo I of the *Kalevala*[1] it is told how

[1] The *Kak-vala* ("The Land of Heroes") in its present form is the work of Elias Lonnrot (1802-1884), a country physician and student of Finnish philology. Having collected a considerable body of folk poetry around the legcndary heroes, Vainamoinen, Ilmarinen, Lemminkainen, and Kullervo, he composed

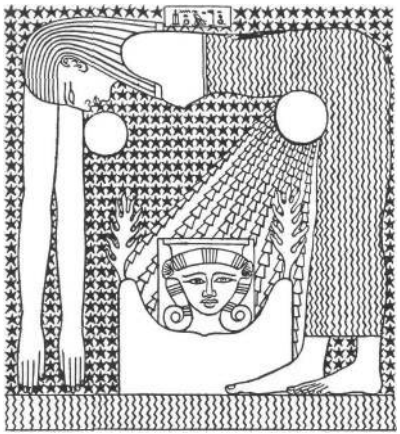

FIGURE 16. Nut (the Sky) Gives Birth to the Sun;
Its Rays Fall on Hathor in the Horizon (Love and Life)

the virgin daughter of the air descended from the sky mansions into the primeval sea, and there for centuries floated on the everlasting waters.

these in co-ordinated sequence and cast them in a uniform verse (1835,1849). The work comes to some 23,000 lines.

A German translation of Lonnrot's *Kalevala* came under the eyes of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who thereupon both conceived the plan and chose the meter of his *Song of Hiawatha.*

The following version is from the translation by W. F. Kirby (Everyman's Library, Kos. 259-260).

***Then** a storm arose injury,*
From the East a mighty tempest,
And the sea was wildly foaming,
And the waves dashed ever higher.
Thus the tempest rocked the virgin,
And the billows drove the maiden,
O'er the ocean's azure surface,
On the crest of foaming billows,
Till the wind that blew around her,
And the sea woke life within her.[2]

For seven centuries the Water-Mother floated **with** the child in her womb, unable to give it birth. She prayed to Ukko, the highest god, and he sent a teal to build its nest on her knee. The teal's eggs fell from the knee and broke; the fragments formed the earth, sky, sun, moon, and clouds. Then the Water-Mother, floating still, herself began the work of the World-Shaper.

When the ninth year had passed over,
And the summer tenth was passing,[3]
From the sea her head she lifted,
And her forehead she uplifted,
And she then began Creation,
And she brought the world to order,
On the open ocean's surface.
On the far extending waters.
Wheresoe'er her hand she pointed,
There she formed the jutting headlands;
Wheresoe'er her feet she rested,
There she formed the caves for fishes;
When she dived beneath the water,
There she formed the depths of ocean;
When towards the land she turned her,
There the level shores extended;

[2] I, 127-136.
[5] I.e., the tenth summer after the breaking of the eggs of the teal.

Where her feet to land extended,
Spots were formed for salmon netting;
Where her head the land touched lightly,
There the curving bays extended.
Further from the land she floated,
And abode in open water,
And created rocks in ocean,
And the reefs that eyes behold not,
Where the ships are often shattered,
And the sailors' lives are ended.[4]

But the babe remained in her body, growing towards *i* mental middle age:

Still unborn was Vdinamoinen;
Still unborn the bard immortal.
Vdinamoinen, old and steadfast,
Rested in his mother's body
For the space of thirty summers,
And the sum of thirty winters,
Ever on the placid waters,
And upon the foaming billows.
So he pondered and reflected
How he could continue living
In a resting place so gloomy,
In a dwelling far too narrow,
Where he could not see the moonlight,
Neither could behold the sunlight.
Then he spake the words which follow,
And expressed his thoughts in this wise:
"Aid me Moon, and Sun release me,
And the Great Bear lend his counsel,
Through the portal that I know not,
Through the unaccustomed passage.
From the little nest that holds me,

From a dwelling-place so narrow,
To the land conduct the roamer,
To the open air conduct me,
To behold the moon in heaven,
And the splendor of the sunlight;
See the Great Bear's stars above me,
And the shining stars in heaven."
When the moon no freedom gave him,
Neither did the sun release him,
Then he wearied of existence,
And his life became a burden.
Thereupon he moved the portal,
With his finger, fourth in number,
Opened quick the bony gateway,
With the toes upon his left foot,
With his knees beyond the gateway.
Headlong in the water falling,
With his hands the waves repelling,
Thus the man remained in ocean,
And the hero on the billows.[5]

Before Va'inamoinen—hero already in his birth—could make his way ashore, the ordeal of a second mother-womb remained to him, that of the elemental cosmic ocean. Unprotected now, he had to undergo the initiation of nature's fundamentally inhuman forces. On the level of water and wind he had to experience again what he already so well knew.

In the sea five years he sojourned,
Waited five years, waited six years,
Seven years also, even eight years,
On the surface of the ocean.
By a nameless promontory,
Near a barren, treeless country.

On the land his knees he planted,
And upon his arms he rested,
Rose that he might view the moonbeams,
And enjoy the pleasant sunlight,
See the Great Bear's stars above him,
And the shining stars in heaven.
Thus was ancient Vainamdinen,
He, the ever famous minstrel,
Born of the divine Creatrix,
Born of Ilmatar, his mother.[6]

Matrix of Destiny

The universal goddess makes her appearance to men under a multitude of guises; for the effects of creation are multitudinous, complex, and of mutually contradictory kind when experienced from the viewpoint of the created world. The mother of life is at the same time the mother of death; she is masked in the ugly demonesses of famine and disease.

The Sumero-Babylonian astral mythology identified the aspects of the cosmic female with the phases of the planet Venus. As morning star she was the virgin, as evening star the harlot, as lady of the night sky the consort of the moon; and when extinguished under the blaze of the sun she was the hag of hell. Wherever the Mesopotamian influence extended, the traits of the goddess were touched by the light of this fluctuating star.

A myth from southeast Africa, collected from the Wahungwe Makoni tribe of South Rhodesia, displays the aspects of the Venus-mother in co-ordination with the first stages of the cosmogonic

[6] I, 329-344.

cycle. Here the original man is the moon; the morning star his first wife, the evening star his second. Just as Vainamoinen emerged from the womb by his own act, so this moon man emerges from the abyssal waters. He and his wives are to be the parents of the creatures of the earth. The story comes to us as follows:

"Maori (God) made the first man and called him **Mwuetsi** (moon). He put him on the bottom of a Dsivoa (lake) and gave him a ngona horn filled with ngona oil.' Mwuetsi lived in Dsivoa.

"Mwuetsi said to Maori: 'I want to go on the earth.' Maori said: 'You will rue it.[1] Mwuetsi said: 'None the less, I want to go on the earth.' Maori said: 'Then go on the earth.' Mwuetsi went out of Dsivoa and on to the earth.

"The earth was cold and empty. There were no grasses, no bushes, no trees. There were no animals. Mwuetsi wept and said to Maori: 'How shall I live here.' Maori said: 'I warned you. You have started on the path at the end of which you shall die. 1 will, however, give you one of your kind.' Maori gave Mwuetsi a maiden who was called Massassi, the morning star. Maori said: 'Massassi shall be your wife for two years.' Maori gave Massassi a fire maker.

"In the evening Mwuetsi went into a cave with Massassi. Massassi said: 'Help me. We will make a fire. I **will** gather *chimandra* (kindling) and you can twirl the *rusika* (revolving part of the fire maker).' Massassi gathered kindling. **Mwuetsi** twirled the *rusika.* When the fire was lighted Mwuetsi lay down on one side of it, Massassi on the other. The fire burned between them.

"Mwuetsi thought to himself, 'Why has Maori given me this maiden"? What shall I do with this maiden, Massassi"?[1] When it was night Mwuetsi took his ngona horn. He moistened his index finger with a drop of ngona oil. Mwuetsi said, *[1]Ndini chaambuka mhiri ne mhirir* (I am going to jump over the fire).[M] Mwuetsi jumped over the fire. Mwuetsi approached the maiden, Massassi.

[1] This horn and oil play a conspicuous role in the folk lore of South Rhodesia. The ngona horn is *a* wonder-working instrument, with the power to create fire and lightning, to impregnate the li\ ing, and to resurrect the dead.

[Note by the translators.1

Mwuetsi touched Massassi's body with the ointment on his finger. Then Mwuetsi went back to his bed and slept.

"When Mwuetsi wakened in the morning he looked over **to Massassi.** Mwuetsi saw that Massassi's body was swollen. When day broke **Massassi** began to bear. Massassi bore grasses. Massassi bore bushes. Massassi bore trees. Massassi did not stop bearing till the earth was covered with grasses, bushes and trees.

"The trees grew. They grew till their tops reached the sky. When the tops of the trees reached the sky it began to rain.

"Mwuetsi and Massassi lived in plenty. They had fruits and grain. Mwuetsi built a house. **Mwuetsi** made an iron shovel. Mwuetsi made a hoe and planted crops. Massassi plaited fish traps and caught fish. Massassi fetched wood and water. Massassi cooked. Thus Mwuetsi and Massassi lived for two years.

"After two years Maori said to Massassi, 'The time is up.' Maori took Massassi from the earth and put her back in Dsivoa. Mwuetsi wailed. He wailed and wept and said to Maori: 'What shall 1 do without Massassi? Who will fetch wood and water for me? Who will cook for me'?' Eight days long Mwuetsi wept.

"Eight days long Mwuetsi wept. Then Maori said: 'I have warned you that you are going to your death. But I will give you another woman. I will give you Morongo, the evening star. Morongo will stay with you for two years. Then I shall take her back again.' Maori gave Mwuetsi Morongo.

"Morongo came to Mwuetsi in the hut. In the evening Mwuetsi wanted to lie down on his side of the fire. Morongo said: 'Do not lie down over there. Lie with me.[1] Mwuetsi lay down beside Morongo. Mwuetsi took the ngona horn, put some ointment on his index finger. But Morongo said: 'Don't be like that. I am not like Massassi. Now smear your loins with ngona oil. Smear my loins with ngona oil.' Mwuetsi did as he was told. Morongo said: 'Now couple with me.' Mwuetsi coupled with Morongo. Mwuetsi went to sleep.

"Towards morning Mwuetsi woke. As he looked over to Morongo he saw that her body was swollen. As day broke Morongo began to give birth. The first day Morongo gave birth to chickens, sheep, goats.

"The second night Mwuetsi slept with Morongo again. The next morning she bore eland and cattle.

"The third night Mwuetsi slept with Morongo again. The next morning Morongo bore first boys and then girls. The boys who were born in the morning were grown up by nightfall.

"On the fourth night Mwuetsi wanted to sleep with Morongo again. But there came a thunderstorm and Maori spoke: 'Let be. You are going quickly to your death.' Mwuetsi was afraid. The thunderstorm passed over. When it had gone Morongo said to Mwuetsi: 'Make a door and then use it to close the entrance to the hut. Then Maori will not be able to see what we are doing. Then you can sleep with me.[1] Mwuetsi made a door. With it he closed the entrance to the hut. Then he slept with Morongo. Mwuetsi slept.

"Towards morning Mwuetsi woke. Mwuetsi saw that Morongo's body was swollen. As day broke Morongo began to give birth. Morongo bore lions, leopards, snakes, and scorpions. Maori saw it. Maori said to Mwuetsi: 'I warned you.'

"On the fifth night Mwuetsi wanted to sleep with Morongo again. But Morongo said: 'Look, your daughters are grown. Couple with your daughters.' Mwuetsi looked at his daughters. He saw that they were beautiful and that they were grown up. So he slept with them. They bore children. The children which were born in the morning were full grown by night. And so Mwuetsi became the Mambo (king) of a great people.

"But Morongo slept with the snake. Morongo no longer gave birth. She lived with the snake. One day Mwuetsi returned to Morongo and wanted to sleep with her. Morongo said: 'Let be.[1] Mwuetsi said: 'But I want to.' He lay with Morongo. Under Morongo's bed lay the snake. The snake bit Mwuetsi. Mwuetsi sickened.

"After the snake had bitten Mwuetsi, Mwuetsi sickened. The next day it did not rain. The plants withered. The rivers and lakes dried. The animals died. The people began to die. Many people died. Mwuetsi's children asked: 'What can we do?' Mwuetsi's children said: 'We will consult the hakata (sacred dice).' The children consulted the hakata. The hakata said: 'Mwuetsi

the Mambo is sick and pining. Send Mwuetsi back to the Dsivoa.'

"Thereupon **Mwuetsi's** children strangled **Mwuetsi** and buried him. They buried Morongo with Mwuetsi. Then they chose another man to be Mambo. Morongo, too, had lived for two years in **Mwuetsi's** Zimbabwe."[9]

It is clear that each of the three stages of procreation represents an epoch in the development of the world. The pattern for the procession was foreknown, almost as something already observed; this is indicated by the warning of the All-Highest. But the Moon Man, the Mighty Living One, would not be denied the realization of his destiny. The conversation at the bottom of the lake is the dialogue of eternity and time, the "Colloquy of the Quick[1]: "To be, or not to be." Unquenchable desire is **finally** given its rope: movement begins.

The wives and daughters of the Moon Man are the personifications and precipitators of his destiny. With the evolution of his world-creative will the virtues and features of the goddess-mother were metamorphosed. After the birth from the elemental womb, the first two wives were prehuman, suprahuman. But as the cosmogonic round proceeded and the growing moment passed from its primordial to its human-historical forms, the mistresses of the cosmic births withdrew, and the field remained to the women of men. Thereupon the old demiurgic sire in the midst of his community became a metaphysical anachronism. When at last he grew tired of the merely human and yearned back again to the wife of his abundance, the world sickened a moment under the pull of his reaction, but then released itself and ran free. The initiative passed to the community of the children. The symbolic, dream-heavy parental figures

[v] Leo Frobenius and Douglas C. Fox, *African Genesis* (New York, 1937), pp. 215-220. Compare Plate XVI11.

Zimbabwe means roughly "the royal court." The enormous prehistoric ruins near Fort Victoria are called "The Great Zimbabwe"; other stone ruins throughout Southern Rhodesia are called "Little Zimbabwe." [Note bv Frobenius and Fox.]

subsided into the original abyss. Only man remained on the furnished earth. The **cycle** had moved on.

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Womb of Redemption

The world of human **life is** now the problem. Guided by the practical judgment of the kings and the instruction of the priests of the dice of divine revelation,[111] the field of consciousness so contracts that the grand lines of the human comedy are lost in a welter of cross-purposes. Men's perspectives become flat, comprehending only the light-reflecting, tangible surfaces of existence. The vista into depth closes over. The significant form of the human agony is lost to view. Society lapses into mistake and disaster. The Little Ego has usurped the judgment seat of the Self.

This is in myth a perpetual theme, in the voices of the prophets a familiar cry. The people yearn for some personality who, in a world of twisted bodies and souls, will represent again the lines of the incarnate image. We are familiar with the myth from our own tradition. It occurs everywhere, under a variety of guises. When the Herod figure {the extreme symbol of the misgoverning, tenacious ego) has brought mankind to the nadir of spiritual abasement, the occult forces of the cycle begin of themselves to move. In an inconspicuous village the maid is born who will maintain herself undefiled of the fashionable errors of her generation: a miniature in the midst of men of the cosmic woman who was the bride of the wind. Her womb, remaining fallow as the primordial abyss, summons to itself by its very readiness the original power that fertili/.ed the void.

[111] The "hakata" of Mwuetsi's children; *supra,* p. 281.

"Now on a certain day, while Mary stood near the fountain to fill her pitcher, the angel of the Lord appeared unto her, saying, Blessed art thou, Mary, for in thy womb thou hast prepared a habitation for the Lord. Behold, light from heaven shall come and dwell in thee, and through thee shall shine in all the world."[11]

The story is recounted everywhere; and with such striking uniformity of the main contours, that the early Christian missionaries were forced to think that the devil himself must be throwing up mockeries of their teaching wherever they set their hand. Fray Pedro Simon reports, in his *Noticias historiales de las conquistes de Tierra Firme en las Indias Occidentales* (Cuenca, 1627), that after work had been begun amongst the peoples of Tunja and Sogamozzo in Colombia, South America, "the demon of that place began giving contrary doctrines. And among other things, he sought to discredit what the priest had been teaching concerning the Incarnation, declaring that it had not yet come to pass; but that presently the Sun would bring it to pass by taking flesh in the womb of a virgin of the village of Guacheta, causing her to conceive by the rays of the sun while she yet remained a virgin. These tidings were proclaimed throughout the region. And it so happened that the head man of the village named had two virgin daughters, each desirous that the miracle should become accomplished in her. These then began going out from their father's dwellings and garden-en closure every morning at the first peep of dawn; and mounting one of the numerous hills about the village, in the direction of the sunrise, they disposed themselves in such a way that the first rays of the sun would be free to shine upon them. This going on for a number of days, it was granted the demon by divine permission (whose judgments are incomprehensible) that things should come to pass as he had planned, and in such fashion that one of the daughters became pregnant, as she declared, by the sun. Nine months and she brought into the world a large and valuable *hacuata,* which in their language is an emerald. The woman took this, and, wrapping

[11] *The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew,* Chapter ix.

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it in cotton, placed it between her breasts, where she kept it a number of days, at the end of which time it was transformed into a living creature: all by order of the demon. The child was named Goranchacho, and he was reared in the household of the head man, his grandfather, until he was some twenty-four years of age." Then he proceeded in triumphant procession to the capital of the nation, and was celebrated throughout the provinces as the "Child of the Sun/"[12]

Hindu mythology tells of the maiden Parvati, daughter of the mountain king, Himalaya, who retreated into the high hills to practice very severe austerities. A tyrant-titan named Taraka had usurped the mastery of the world, and, according to the prophecy, only a son of the High God Shiva could overthrow him. Shiva, however, was the pattern god of yoga—aloof, alone, indrawn in meditation. It was impossible that Shiva should ever be moved to beget a son.

Parvati determined to change the world situation by matching Shiva in meditation. Aloof, alone, indrawn into her soul, she too fasted naked beneath the blazing sun, even adding to the heat by building four additional great fires, to each of the four quarters. Hie handsome body shriveled to a brittle construction of bones, the skin became leathery and hard. Her hair stood matted and wild. The soft liquid eyes burned.

One day a Brahmin youth arrived and asked why anyone so beautiful should be destroying herself with such torture.

"My desire," she replied, "is Shiva, the Highest Object. Shiva is a god of solitude and unshakable concentration. I therefore am practicing these austerities to move him from his state of balance and bring him to me in love.[1»"

"Shiva," the youth said, "is a god of destruction. Shiva is the World Annihilator. Shiva's delight is to meditate in burial grounds amidst the reek of corpses; there he beholds the rot of death, and that is congenial to his devastating heart. Shiva's garlands are of living serpents. Shiva is a pauper, furthermore, and no one knows anything of his birth."

[12] Kingsborough, *op. cit.*. Vol. VIII, pp. 26:3-264.

The virgin said: "He is beyond the mind of such as you. A pauper, but the fountainhcad of wealth; **terrifying,** but the source of grace; snake-garlands or jewel-garlands he can assume or put off at will. How should he have been born, when he is the creator of the uncreated! Shiva is my love."

The youth thereupon put away his disguise—and was Shiva.[15]

Folk Stories of Virgin Motherhood

The Buddha descended from heaven to his mother's womb in the shape of a milk-white elephant. The Aztec Coatlicue, "She of the Serpent-woven Skirt," was approached by a god in the form of a ball of feathers. The chapters of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* swarm with nymphs beset by gods in sundry masquerades: Jove as a bull, a swan, a shower of gold. Any leaf accidentally swallowed, any nut, or even the breath of a breeze, may be enough to fertilize the ready womb- The procreating power is even-where. And according to the whim or destiny of the hour, either a hero-savior or a world-annihilating demon may be conceived—one can never know.

Images of virgin birth abound in the popular tales as well as in myth. One example **will** suffice: a queer folk tale from Tonga, belonging to a little cycle of stories told of the "handsome man,'[1] Sinilau. This tale is of particular interest, not because of its extreme absurdity, but because it clearly announces, in unconscious burlesque, every one of the major motifs of the typical life of the hero: virgin birth, quest for the father, ordeal, atonement with

[15] Kalidasa, *Kumarasambhavam* ("The Birth of the War God Kumara"). ~*l* lien' is :ui fjit^lisli tmi"lksfinu)n by R, (jriffith (2iir! ^dition, Lcntd^m: I ["il^ner and Company, 1897).

the father, the assumption and coronation of the virgin mother, and finally, the heavenly triumph of the true sons while the pretenders are heated hot.

"There was once a certain man and his wife, and the woman was pregnant. When her time came to be delivered of her child she called her husband to come and lift her, that she might give birth. But she bore a clam, and her husband threw her down in anger. She, however, bade him take the clam, and leave it in Sinilau's bathing-pool. Now Sinilau came to bathe, and flung the coconut-husk that he had used to wash himself with on the water. The clam slid along and sucked the coconut-husk, and became pregnant.

"One day the woman, the mother of the clam, saw the clam rolling along toward her. She angrily asked the clam why she had come, but the shellfish replied that it was no time for anger, and asked her to curtain off a place in which she could give birth. So a screen was placed, and the clam gave birth to a fine big baby boy. Then she rolled off back to her pool, and the woman cared for the child, who was named Fatai-going-underneath-sandal-wood. Time went on, and lo, the clam was again with child, and once more came rolling along to the house that she might give birth there to her child. The performance was repeated and again the clam bore a fine boy, who was named Myrtle-twined-at-random-in-the-/ato. He, too, was left with the woman and her husband to be cared for.

"When the two children had grown up to manhood the woman heard that Sinilau was going to hold a festival, and she determined that her two grandsons should be present. So she called the youths, and bade them prepare, adding that the man to whose festival they were going was their father. When they came to where the festival was being held they were gazed at by all the people. There was not a woman but had her eyes fixed on them. As they went along a group of women called to them to turn aside to them, but the two youths refused, and went on, until they came to where the kava was being drunk. There they served the kava.

"But Sinilau, angry at their disturbing his festival, ordered two bowls to be brought. Then he bade his men seize one of the youths and cut him up. So the bamboo knife was sharpened to cut him, but when its point was placed on his body it just slipped over his skin, and he cried out:

The knife is placed and slips,
Do thou but sit and gaze at us
Whether we are like thee or not.

"Then Sinilau asked what the youth had said, and they repeated the lines to him. So he ordered the two young men to be brought, and asked them who their father was. They replied that he himself was their father. After Sinilau had kissed his newfound sons he told them to go and bring their mother. So they went to the pool and got the clam, and took her to their grandmother, who broke it open, and there stood a lovely woman, named Hina-at-home-in-the-river.

"Then they set out on their return to Sinilau. Each of the youths wore a fringed mat, of the sort called *taufohua;* but their mother had on one of the very fine mats called *tuoua.* The two sons went ahead, and Hina followed. When they came to Sinilati they found him sitting with his wives. The youths sat one at each thigh of Sinilau, and Hina sat at his side. Then Sinilau bade the people go and prepare an oven, and heat it hot; and they took the wives and their children, and killed and baked them; but Sinilau was wedded to Hina-at-home-in-the-river."[1]*

[14] E. E. V. Collocott, *Tales and Poems of Tonga* (Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin, No. 46, Honolulu; 1928), pp. 32-33.

Transformations of the Hero

The Primordial Hero and the Human

WE HAVE come two stages: first, from the immediate emanations of the Uncreated Creating to the fluid yet timeless personages of the mythological age; second, from these Created Creating Ones to the sphere of human history. The emanations have condensed, the field of consciousness constricted. Where formerly causal bodies were visible, now only their secondary effects come to focus in the little hard-fact pupil of the human eye. The cosmogonic cycle is now to be carried forward, therefore, not by the gods, who have become invisible, but by the heroes, more or less human in character, through whom the world destiny is realized. This is the line where creation myths begin to give place to legend—as in the Book of Genesis, following the expulsion from the garden. Metaphysics yields to prehistory, which is dim and vague at first, but becomes gradually precise in detail. The heroes become less and less fabulous, until at last, in the final stages of the various local traditions, legend opens into the common daylight of recorded time.

Mwuetsi, the Moon Man, was cut loose, like a fouled anchor; the community of the children floated free into the day-world of waking consciousness. But we are told that there existed among them direct sons of the now submarine father, who, like the children of his first begetting, had grown from infancy to manhood in a single day. These special carriers of cosmic power constituted

a spiritual and social aristocracy. Filled with a double charge of the creative energy, they were themselves sources of revelation. Such figures appear on the dawn stage of every legendary past. They are the culture heroes, the city founders.

The Chinese chronicles record that when the earth had solidified and the peoples were settling in the riverlands, Fu Hsi, the "Heavenly Emperor" (2953-2838 B.C.), governed among them. He taught **his** tribes how to fish with nets, to hunt and to rear domestic animals, divided the people into clans, and instituted matrimony. From a supernatural tablet entrusted to him by a horse-shaped scaly monster out of the waters of the river Meng, he deduced the Eight Diagrams, which remain to this day the fundamental symbols of traditional Chinese thought. He had been born of a miraculous conception, after a gestation of twelve years; his body being that of a serpent, with human arms and the head of an ox.[1]

Shen Nung, his successor, the "Earthly Emperor" (2838-2698 B.C.), was eight feet seven inches tall, with a human body but the head of a bull. He had been miraculously conceived through the influence of a dragon. The embarrassed mother had exposed her infant on a mountainside, but the wild beasts protected and nourished it, and when she learned of this she fetched him home. Shen Nung discovered in one day seventy poisonous plants and their antidotes: through a glass covering to his stomach he could observe the digestion of each herb. Then he composed a pharmacopoeia that is still in use. He was the inventor of the plough and a system of barter; he is worshiped by the Chinese peasant as the "prince of cereals." At the age of one hundred and sixty-eight he was joined to the immortals.[2]

Such serpent kings and minotaurs tell of a past when the emperor was the carrier of a special world-creating, world-sustaining power, very much greater than that represented in the normal

[1] Giles, *op. cit.,* pp. 233-234; Rev. J. MacGowan, *The Imperial History of China* (Shanghai, 1906), pp. 4-5; Friedrich Hirth, *The Ancient History of China* (Columbia University Press, 1908), pp. 8-9.

- Giles, *Op. cit,,* p. 656; MacGowtm, *op. cit.,* pp. 5-6; Hirth. *op. cit.,* pp. 10-12.

human physique. In those times was accomplished the **heavy** titan-work, the massive establishment of the foundations of our human civilization. But with the progress of the cycle, a period came when the work to be done was no longer proto- or superhuman; it was the labor specifically of man—control of the passions, exploration of the arts, elaboration of the economic and cultural institutions of the state. Now is required no incarnation of the Moon Bull, no Serpent Wisdom of the Eight Diagrams of Destiny, but a perfect human spirit alert to the needs and hopes of the heart. Accordingly, the cosmogonic cycle yields an emperor in human form who shall stand for all generations to come as the model of man the king.

Huang Ti, the "Yellow Emperor" (2697-2597 B.C.), was the third of the august Three. His mother, a concubine of the prince of the province of Chao-tien, conceived him when she one night beheld a golden dazzling light around the constellation of the Great Bear. The child could talk when he was seventy days old and at the age of eleven years suceeded to the throne. His distinguishing endowment was his power to dream: in sleep he could visit the remotest regions and consort with immortals in the supernatural realm. Shortly following his elevation to the throne, Huang Ti fell into a dream that lasted three entire months, during which time he learned the lesson of the control of the heart. After a second dream of comparable length, he returned with the power to teach the people. He instructed them in the control of the forces of nature in their own hearts.

This wonderful man governed China for one hundred years, and during his reign the people enjoyed a veritable golden age. He gathered six great ministers around him, with whose help he composed a calendar, inaugurated mathematical calculations, and taught the making of utensils of wood, pottery, and metal, the building of boats and carriages, the use of money, and the construction of musical instruments of bamboo. He appointed public places for the worship of God. He instituted the bounds and laws of private property. His queen discovered the art of weaving silk. He planted one hundred varieties of grain, vegetables, and trees; favored the development of birds, quadrupeds,

reptiles, and insects; taught the uses of water, fire, wood, and earth; and regulated the movements of the tides. Before his death at the age of one hundred and eleven, the phoenix and the unicorn appeared in the gardens **of** the **Empire,** in attestation to the perfection of his reign.[3]

Childhood of the Human Hero

The earlier culture hero of the snake body and bull head carried within him from birth the spontaneous creative power of the natural world. That was the meaning of his form. The man hero, on the other hand, must "descend" to re-establish connection with the infrahuman. This is the sense, as we have seen, of the adventure of the hero.

But the makers of legend have seldom rested content to regard the world's great heroes as mere human beings who broke past the horizons that limited their fellows and returned with such boons as any man with equal faith and courage might have found. On the contrary, the tendency has always been to endow the hero with extraordinary powers from the moment of birth, or even the moment of conception. The whole hero-life is shown to have been a pageant of marvels with the great central adventure as its culmination.

This accords with the view that herohood is predestined, rather than simply achieved, and opens the problem of the relationship of biography to character. Jesus, for example, can be regarded as a man who by dint of austerities and meditation

[3] Giles, *op. cit.,* p. 338; MacGowan, *op. cit.,* pp. 6-8; Edouard Chavannes, *Les memoires historiques de Se-ma Ts'icn* (Paris, 1895-1905), Vol. I. pp. 25-36. See also John C. Ferguson, *Chinese Mythology* ("The Mythology of AN Races," Vol. VIII, Boston, 1928), pp. 27-28, 29-31.

attained wisdom; or on the other hand, one may believe that a god descended and took upon himself the enactment of a human career. The first view would lead one to imitate the master literally, in order to break through, in the same way as he, to the transcendent, redemptive experience. But the second states that the hero is rather a symbol to be contemplated than an example to be literally followed. The divine being is a revelation of the omnipotent Self, which dwells within us all. The contemplation of the life thus should be undertaken as a meditation on one's own immanent divinity, not as a prelude to precise imitation, the lesson being, not "Do thus and be good," but "Know this and be God."[1]

In Part I, "The Adventure of the Hero," we regarded the redemptive deed from the first standpoint, which may be called the psychological. We now must describe it from the second, where it becomes a symbol of the same metaphysical mystery

[*] This formula is, of course, not precisely that of the common Christian teaching, where, though Jesus is reported to have declared that "the kingdom of God is within you," the churches maintain that, since man is created only "in the image" of God, the distinction between the soul and its creator is absolute-thus retaining, as the final reach of their wisdom, the dualistic distinction between man's "eternal soul" and the **divinity. The** transcending of this pair of opposites is not encouraged (indeed, is rejected as "pantheism"[1] and has sometimes been rewarded with the stake); nevertheless, the prayers and diaries of the Christian mystics abound in ecstatic descriptions of the unitive, soul-shattering experience'(via. *supra,* pp. 35-38), while Dante's vision at the conclusion of the Divine Comedy *(supra,* p. 176) certainly goes beyond the orthodox, dualistic, concretistic dogma of the finality of the personalities of the Trinity. Where this dogma is not transcended the myth of Going to the Father is taken literally, as describing man's final goal. (See *supra,* p. 240, footnote 5.)

As for the problem of imitating Jesus as a human model, or meditating upon Him as a s'nd, [he liisuir\ <i ihi' Christum nnirsule UlLA \)f niu-ihly sumnutrized, as follows: (1) a period of literally following the master, Jesus, by renouncing the world as he did (Primitive Christianity); (2) a period of meditating on Christ Crucified as the divinity within the heart, meanwhile leading one's lite in the world as the servant of this god (Early and Medieval Christianity); (3) a rejection of most of the instruments supporting meditation, meanwhile,

tempt to interpret Jesus as a model human being, but without accepting his ascetic path (Liberal Christianity). Compare *supra,* p. 138, footnote 83.

that it was the deed of the hero himself to rediscover and bring to view. In the present chapter, therefore, we shall consider first the miraculous childhood, by which it is shown that a special manifestation of the immanent divine principle has become incarnate in the world, and then, in succession, the various life roles through which the hero may enact his work of destiny. These vary in magnitude, according to the needs of the time.

Stated in the terms already formulated, the hero's first task is to experience consciously the antecedent stages of the cosmogonic cycle; to break back through the epochs of emanation. His second, then, is to return from that abyss to the plane of contemporary life, there to serve as a human transformer of demiurgic potentials. Huang Ti had the power to dream: this was his road of descent and return. Vainamoinen's second or water birth threw him back to an experience of the elemental. In the Tonga tale of the clam wife, the retreat began with the birth of the mother: the brother heroes sprang from an infrahuman womb.

The deeds of the hero in the second part of his personal cycle will be proportionate to the depth of his descent during the first. The sons of the clam wife came up from the animal level; their physical beauty was superlative. Vainamoinen was reborn from the elemental waters and winds; his endowment was to rouse or quell with bardic song the elements of nature and of the human body. Huang Ti sojourned in the kingdom of the spirit; he taught the harmony of the heart. The Buddha broke past even the zone of the creative gods and came back from the void; he announced salvation from the cosmogonic round.

If the deeds of an actual historical figure proclaim him to have been a hero, the builders of his legend will invent for him appropriate adventures in depth. These will be pictured as journeys into miraculous realms, and are to be interpreted as symbolic, on the one hand, of descents into the night-sea of the psyche, and on the other, of the realms or aspects of man's destiny that are made manifest in the respective lives.

King Sargon of Agade (c. 2550 B.C.) was born of a lowly mother. His father was unknown. Set adrift in a basket of bulrushes on the waters of the Euphrates, he was discovered by Akki the husbandman, whom he was brought up to serve as gardener. The goddess Ishtar favored the youth. Thus he became, at last, king and emperor, renowned as the living god.

Chandragupta (fourth century B.C.), the founder of the Hindu Maurya dynasty, was abandoned in an earthen jar at the threshold of a cowshed. A herdsman discovered and fostered the infant. One day when he was playing with his companions a game of High King in the Judgment Seat, little Chandragupta commanded that the worst of the offenders should have their hands and feet cut off; then, at his word, the amputated members immediately returned to place. A passing prince, beholding the miraculous game, bought the child for a thousand harshapanas and at home discovered by physical signs that he was a Maurya.

Pope Gregory the Great (A.D. 540?-604) was born of noble twins who at the instigation of the devil had committed incest. His penitent mother set him to sea in a little casket. He was found and fostered by fishermen, and at the age of six was sent to a cloister to be educated as a priest. But he desired the life of a knightly warrior. Entering a boat, he was borne miraculously to the country of his parents, where he won the hand of the queen—who presently proved to be his mother. After discovery of this second incest, Gregory remained seventeen years in penance, chained to a rock in the middle of the sea. The keys to the chains were tossed to the waters, but when at the end of the long period they were discovered in the belly of a fish, this was taken to be a providential sign: the penitent was conducted to Rome, where in due course he was elected Pope.[1]

Charlemagne (742—814) was persecuted as a child by his elder brothers, and took flight to Saracen Spain. There, under the name of Mainet, he rendered signal services to the king. He converted the king's daughter to the Christian faith, and the two secretly arranged to marry. After further deeds, the royal youth returned to France, where he overthrew his former persecutors

[1] These three legends appear in the excellent psychological study by Dr. Otto Rank, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (Nervous and Mental Disease Monographs; New York, 1910). A variant of the third appears in the *Gesta Romanorum*, Tale LXXX1.

and triumphantly assumed the crown. Then he ruled a hundred years, surrounded by a zodiac of twelve peers. According to all reports, his beard and hair were very long and white." One day, sitting under his judgment tree, he rendered justice to a snake, and in gratitude the reptile bestowed on him a charm that involved him in a love affair with a woman already dead. This amulet fell into a well at Aix: that is why Aix became the emperor's favorite residence. After his long wars against the Saracens, Saxons, Slavs, and Northmen, the ageless emperor died; but he sleeps only, to awake in the hour of his country's need. During the later Middle Ages, he once arose from the dead to participate in a crusade.'

Kach of these biographies exhibits the variously rationalized theme of the infant exile and return. This is a prominent feature in all legend, folk tale, and myth. Usually an effort is made to give it some semblance of physical plausibility. However, when the hero in question is a great patriarch, wizard, prophet, or incarnation, the wonders are permitted to develop beyond all bounds.

The popular Hebrew legend of the birth of father Abraham supplies an example of the frankly supernatural infant exile. The event of the birth had been read by Nimrod in the stars, "for this impious king was a cunning astrologer, and it was manifest to him that a man would be born in his day who would rise up against him and triumphantly give the lie to his religion. In his terror at the fate foretold him in the stars, he sent for his princes and governors, and asked them to advise him in the matter. They answered, and said: 'Our unanimous advice is that thou shouldst build a great house, station a guard at the entrance thereof, and make known in the whole of thy realm that all pregnant women shall repair thither together with their midwives, who are to remain with them when they are delivered. When the days of a woman to be delivered are fulfilled, and the child is born, it shall be the duty of the midwife to kill it, if it be a boy.

[6] Actually Charles the Great was beardless and bald.

[1] The Charlemagne cycles are exhaustively discussed by Joseph Bedier, *I,e. legendes epiques* (3rd edition; Paris, 1926).

But if the child be a girl, it shall be kept alive, and the mother shall receive gifts and costly garments, and a herald shall proclaim, "Thus is done unto the woman who bears a daughter!'"

"The king was pleased with this counsel, and he had a proclamation published throughout his whole kingdom, summoning all the architects to build a great house for him, sixty ells high and eighty wide. After it was completed, he issued a second proclamation, summoning all pregnant women thither, and there they were to remain until their confinement. Officers were appointed to take the women to the house, and guards were stationed in it and about it, to prevent the women from escaping thence. He furthermore sent midwives to the house, and commanded them to slay the men children at their mothers' breasts. But if a woman bore a girl, she was to be arrayed in byssus, silk, and embroidered garments, and led forth from the house of detention amid great honors. No less than seventy thousand children were slaughtered thus. Then the angels appeared before God, and spoke, 'Seest Thou not what he doth, yon sinner and blasphemer, Nimrod son of Canaan, who slays so many innocent babes that have done no harm?' God answered, and said: 'Ye holy angels, I know it and I see it, for I neither slumber nor sleep. I behold and I know the secret things and the things that are revealed, and ye shall witness what I will do unto this sinner and blasphemer, for I will turn My hand against him to chastise him.'

"It was about this time that Terah espoused the mother of Abraham and she was with child. . . . When her time approached, she left the city in great terror and wandered toward the desert, walking along the edge of a valley, until she happened across a cave. She entered this refuge, and on the next day she was seized with the throes, and she gave birth to a son. The whole cave was filled with the light of the child's countenance as with the splendor of the sun, and the mother rejoiced exceedingly. The babe she bore was our father Abraham.

"His mother lamented, and said to her son: 'Alas that I bore thee at a time when Nimrod is king. For thy sake seventy thousand men-children were slaughtered, and I am seized with terror on account of thee, that he hear of thy existence, and slay

thee. Better **thou** shouldst perish here in this cave than my eye should behold thee dead at my breast.[1] She took the garment in which she was clothed, and wrapped it about the boy. Then she abandoned him in the cave, saying, 'May the Lord be with thee, may He not fail thee nor forsake thee.'

"**Thus** Abraham was deserted in the cave, without a nurse, and he began to wail. God sent Gabriel down to give him milk to drink, and the angel made it to flow from the little finger of the baby's right hand, and he sucked it until he was ten days old. Then he arose and walked about, and he left the cave and went along the edge of the valley. When the sun sank, and the stars came forth, he said, 'These are the gods!' But the dawn came, and the stars could be seen no longer, and then he said, 'I will not pay worship to these, for they are no gods.' Thereupon the sun came forth, and he spoke, 'This is my god, him **will I** extol.' But again the sun set and he said, 'He is no god,[1] and beholding the moon, he called him his god to whom he would pay divine homage. Then the moon was obscured, and he cried out: 'This, too, is no god! There is One who sets them all in motion.'"[8]

The Blackfeet of Montana tell of a young monster-slayer, Kuto-yis, who was discovered by his foster parents when the old man and woman put a clot of buffalo blood to boil in a pot. "Immediately there came from the pot a noise as of a child crying, as if it were being hurt, burnt, or scalded. They looked in the kettle, and saw there a little boy, and they quickly took it out of the water. They were very much surprised. . . . Now on the fourth day the child spoke, and said, 'Lash me in turn to each of these lodge poles, and when I get to the last one, I shall fall out of my lashing and be grown up.' The old woman did so, and as she lashed him to each lodge pole he could be seen to grow, and finally when they lashed him to the last pole, he was a man."[9]

" Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends ofthe Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publi:ation Society of America, 1911), Vol. Ill, pp. 90-94.

* George Bird Grinnell, *Blackfuot Lodge Tales* (New York; Charles Scribler's Sons, 1892, 1916), pp. 31-32.

The folk tales commonly support or supplant this theme of the exile with that of the despised one, or the handicapped: the abused youngest son or daughter, the orphan, stepchild, ugly duckling, or the squire of low degree.

A young Pueblo woman, who was helping her mother mix clay for pottery with her foot, felt a splash of mud on her leg but thought no more of it. "After some days the girl felt something was moving in her belly, but she did not think anything about going to have a baby. She did not tell her mother. But it was growing and growing. One day in the morning she was very sick. In the afternoon she got the baby. Then her mother knew (for the first time) that her daughter was going to have a baby. The mother was very angry about it; but after she looked at the baby, she saw it was not like a baby, she saw it was a round thing with two things sticking out, it was a little jar. 'Where did you get this?[1] said her mother. The girl was just crying. About that time the father came in. 'Never mind, I am very glad she had a baby,[1] he said. 'But it is not a baby,[1] said her mother. Then the father went to look at it and saw it was a little water jar. After that he was very fond of that little jar. 'It is moving," he said. Pretty soon that little water jar was growing. In twenty days it was big. It was able **to** go around with the children, and it could talk. 'Grandfather, take me outdoors, so I can look around,' he said. So every morning the grandfather would take him out and he would look at the children, and they were very fond of him and they found out he was a boy, Water Jar boy. They found out from his talking."[10]

In sum: the child of destiny has to face a long period of obscurity. This is a time of extreme danger, impediment, or disgrace. He is thrown inward to his own depths or outward to the unknown; either way, what he touches is a darkness unexplored. And this is a zone of unsuspected presences, benign as well as malignant: an angel appears, a helpful animal, a fisherman, a hunter, crone, or peasant. Fostered in the animal school, or, like

Elsie Clt^vs Parsons, *li:t.i:<< tide** {Memoirs "\ th^ Am^Horm I'olklore Society, XIX, 1926), p. 193.

Siegfried, below ground among the gnomes that nourish the roots of the tree of life, or again, alone in some little room (the story has been told a thousand ways), the young world-apprentice learns the lesson of the seed powers, which reside just beyond the sphere of the measured and the named.

The **myths** agree that an extraordinary capacity is required to face and survive such experience. The infancies abound in anecdotes of precocious strength, cleverness, and wisdom. Herakles strangled a serpent sent against his cradle by the goddess Hera. **Maui** of Polynesia snared and slowed the sun—to give his mother time to cook her meals. Abraham, as we have seen, arrived at the knowledge of the One God. Jesus confounded the wise men. The baby Buddha had been left one day beneath the shade of a tree; his nurses suddenly noted that the shadow had not moved all afternoon and that the child was sitting fixed in a yogic trance.

The feats of the beloved Hindu savior, Krishna, during his infant exile among the cowherds of Gokula and Brindaban, constitute a lively cycle. A certain goblin named Putana came in the shape of a beautiful woman, but with poison in her breasts. She entered the house of Yasoda, the foster mother of the child, and made herself very friendly, presently taking the baby in her lap to give it suck. But Krishna drew so hard that he sucked away her life, and she fell dead, reassuming her huge and hideous form. When the foul corpse was cremated, however, it emitted a sweet fragrance; for the divine infant had given the demoness salvation when he had drunk her milk.

Krishna was a mischievous little boy. He liked to spirit away the pots of curds when the milkmaids were asleep. He was forever climbing to eat and spill things placed out of his reach on the high shelves. The girls would call him Butter-thief and complain to Yasoda; but he could always invent a story. One afternoon when he was playing in the yard, his foster parent was warned that he was eating clay. She arrived with a switch, but he had wiped his lips, and denied all knowledge of the matter. She opened the dirty mouth to see, but when she peered inside beheld the whole universe, the "Three Worlds.[11] She thought: "How silly

I am to imagine that my son could be the Lord of the Three Worlds." Then all was veiled from her again, and the moment passed immediately from her mind. She fondled the little boy and took him home.

The herding folk were accustomed to pay worship to the god Indra, the Hindu counterpart of Zeus, king of heaven and lord of rain. One day when they had made their offering, the lad Krishna said to them: "Indra is no supreme deity, though he be king in heaven; he is afraid of the titans. Furthermore, the rain and prosperity for which you are praying depend on the sun, which draws up the waters and makes them fall again. What can Indra do? Whatever comes to pass is determined by the laws of nature and the spirit." Then he turned their attention to the nearby-woods, streams, and hills, and especially to Mount Govardhan, as more worthy of their honor than the remote master of the air. And so they offered flowers and fruits and sweetmeats to the moiintain.

Krishna himself assumed a second form: he took the form of a mountain god and received the offerings of the people, meanwhile remaining in his earlier shape among them, paying worship to the mountain king. The god received the offerings and ate them up."

Indra was enraged, and sent for the king of the clouds, whom he commanded to pour rain over the people until all should be swept away. A flight of storm clouds drew over the district and began to discharge a deluge; it seemed the end of the world was at hand. But the lad Krishna filled Mount Govardhan with the heat of his inexhaustible energy-, lifted it with his little finger, and bid the people take shelter beneath. The rain struck the

[11] The sense of this advice, which to the Western reader may seem strange, is that the Way of Devotion *(bhakti marga)* must begin with things known

the Godhead'is immanent in all, He will make Himself known through any object profoundly regarded. .Furthermore, it is the Godhead within the devotee that makes it possible for him to discover Godhead in the world without. This mystery is illustrated in Krishna's double presence during the act of ihip.

mountain, hissed, and evaporated. **The** torrent fell seven days, but not a drop touched the community of herdsmen.

Then the god realized that the opponent must be an incarnation of the Primal Being. When Krishna went out next day to graze the cows, playing music on his flute, the King of Heaven came down on his great white elephant, Airavata, fell on his face at the feet of the smiling lad, and made submission.[13]

The conclusion of the childhood cycle is the return or recognition of the hero, when, after the long period of obscurity, his true character is revealed. This event may precipitate a considerable crisis; for it amounts to an emergence of powers hitherto excluded from human life. Earlier patterns break to fragments or dissolve; disaster greets the eye. Yet after a moment of apparent havoc, the creative value of the new factor comes to view, and the world takes shape again in unsuspected glory. This theme of crucifixion-resurrection can be illustrated either on the body of the hero himself, or in his effects upon his world. The first alternative we find in the Pueblo story of the water jar.

"The men were going out to hunt rabbits, and Water Jar boy wanted to go. 'Grandfather, could you take me down to the foot of the mesa, I want to hunt rabbits.' 'Poor grandson, you can't hunt rabbits, you have no legs or arms,' said the grandfather. But Water Jar boy was very anxious to go. 'Take me anyway. You are too old and you **can't** do anything.' His mother was crying because her boy had no legs or arms or eyes. But they used to feed him, in his mouth, in the mouth of the jar. So next morning his grandfather took him down to the south on the flat. Then he rolled along, and pretty soon he saw a rabbit track and he followed the track. Pretty soon the rabbit ran out, and he began to chase it. Just before he got to the marsh there was a rock, and he hit himself against it and broke, and a boy jumped up. He was very glad his skin had been broken and that he was a boy, a big boy. He was wearing lots of beads around his neck and turquoise

[12] Adapted from Sister Nivedita and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Myths of the, Hindus and Buddhists* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1914), pp. 221-232.

earrings, and a dance kilt and moccasins, and a buckskin shirt." Catching a number of rabbits, he returned and presented them to his grandfather, who brought him triumphantly home.[13]

The cosmic energies burning within the vivid Irish warrior Cuchulainn—chief hero of the medieval Ulster Cycle, the so-called "Cycle of the Knights of the Red Branch"[14]—would suddenly burst like an eruption, both overwhelming himself and smashing everything around. When he was four years old—so the story goes—he set out to test the "boy corps" of his uncle, King Conchobar, at their own sports. Carrying his hurly of brass, ball of silver, throwing javelin, and toy spear, he proceeded to the court city of Kmania, where, without so much as a word of permission, he dived right in among the boys—"thrice fifty in number, who were hurling on the green and practicing martial exercises with Conchobar's son, Follamain, at their head." The whole field let fly at him. With his fists, forearms, palms, and little shield, he parried the hurlies, balls, and spears that came simultaneously from all directions. Then for the first time

"Parsons, *op. cit., p.* 193.

[14] The legendary cycles of medieval Ireland include: (1) *The Mythological Cycle,* which describes the migrations to the island of prehistoric peoples, their battles, and in particular the deeds of the race of gods known as the Tuatha De Danaan, "Children of the Great Mother, Dana"; (2) *The Annals of the Milesians,* or semi-historical chronicles of the last arriving race, the sons of

Anglo-Normans under Henry II in the twelfth century; (3) *The Ulster Cycle of theKvights of the Red Brunch",* which treats primarily of the deeds of Cuchulainn (pronounced **coohoolinn)** at the court of his **uncle** Conchobar (pronounced conohoor): this cycle **greatly** influenced the development of the Arthurian tradition, in Wales,'Brittany, and England—the court of Conchobar serving as model for that of King Arthur and the deeds of Cuehulainn for those of Arthur's nephew, Sir Gawain (Gawain was the original hero of many of the adventures later assigned to Lancelot, Perceval, and Galahad); (4) *The Cycle of the Fianna:* the Fianna were a company of heroic fighters under the captaincy of Finn MacCool (cf. p. 207, note 21, *supra);* the greatest tale of this cycle hrint: that ui Ilir lo\<- tn:inE>lr of l[1] inn. dnanni his bride. Lind Diarmaid his nephew, ninny episodes ni which come down to us in the celebrated tale of Tristan and Iseult; (5) *Legends of the Irish Saints.*

tions of the earlier pagan divinities, the Tuatha De Danaan.

in his life he was seized with his battle-frenzy (a bizarre, characteristic transformation later to be known as his "paroxysm" or "distortion") and before anyone could grasp what was coming to pass, he had laid low fifty of the best. Five more of the boy corps went scuttling past the king, where he sat playing chess with **Fergus** the Eloquent. Conchobar arose and took a hand in the confusion. But Cuchulainn would not lighten his hand until all the youngsters had been placed under his protection and guarantee.[11]*

Cuchulainn's first day under arms was the occasion of his full self-manifestation. There was nothing serenely controlled about this performance, nothing of the playful irony that we feel in the deeds of the Hindu Krishna. Rather, the abundance of Cuchulainn's power was becoming known for the first time to himself, as well as to everybody else. It broke out of the depths of his being, and then had to be dealt with, impromptu and fast.

The happening was again at the court of King Conchobar, the day Cathbad the Druid declared in prophecy of any stripling who that day should assume arms and armature that "the name of such an one would transcend those of all Ireland's youths besides: his life however would be fleeting short." Cuchulainn forthwith demanded fighting equipment. Seventeen sets of weapons given him he shattered with his strength, until Conchobar invested him with his own outfit. Then he reduced the chariots to fragments. Only that of the king was strong enough to support his trial.

Cuchulainn commanded Conchobar's charioteer to drive him past the distant "Look-out Ford," and they came presently to a remote fortress, the Dun of the Sons of Nechtan, where he cut off the heads of the defenders. He fastened the heads to the sides of the car. On the road back he jumped to the ground and "by sheer-running and mere speed" captured two stags of the grandest bulk. With two stones he knocked out of the air two dozen

" "Tain bo Cuailgne" (from the version in the *Book of Leinstcr,* 62 a-b): edited by Wh. Stokes and E. Windisch, *Iriscke Texte* (Extraband zu Serie I bis IV; Leipzig, 1905), pp. 106-117; English translation in Eleanor Hull's *The Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature* (London, 1898), pp. 135-137.

flying swans. And **with** thongs and other gear he tethered all, both the beasts and the birds, to the chariot.

Levarchan the Prophetess beheld the pageant with alarm as it approached the city and castle of Emania. "The chariot is graced with bleeding heads of his enemies," she declared, "beautiful white birds he has which in the chariot bear him company, and wild unbroken stags bound and tethered to the same." "I know that chariot-fighter," the king said: "even the little boy, my sister's son, who this very day went to the marches. Surely he will have reddened his hand; and should his fury not be timely met, all Emania's young men will perish by him." Very quickly, a method had to be contrived to abate his heat; and one was found. One hundred and fifty women of the castle, and Scandlach their leader at the head of them, "reduced themselves critically to nature's garb, and without subterfuge of any kind trooped **out** to meet him." The little warrior, embarrassed or perhaps overwhelmed by such a display of womanhood, averted his eyes, at which moment he was seized by the men and soused into a vat of cold water. The staves and hoops of the vessel flew asunder. A second vat boiled. The third became only very hot. Thus Cuchulainn was subdued, and the city saved."'

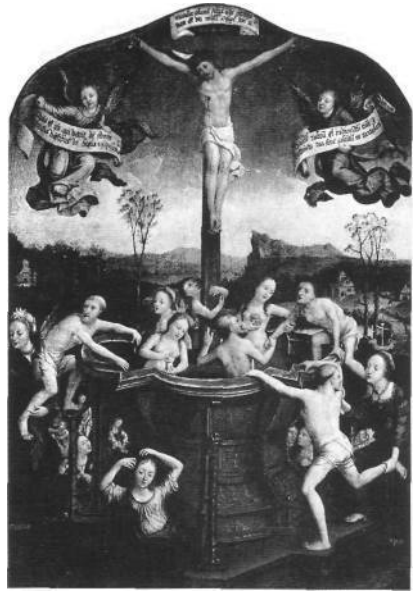
"A beautiful boy indeed was that: seven toes to each foot Cuchulainn had, and to either hand as many fingers; his eyes were bright with seven pupils apiece, each one of which glittered with seven gemlike sparkles. On either cheek he had four moles: a blue, a crimson, a green, and a yellow. Between one ear and the other he had fifty clear-yellow long tresses that were as the yellow wax of bees, or like unto a brooch of the white gold as it glints to the sun unobscured. He wore a green mantle silver-clasped upon his breast and a gold-thread shirt."[1] But when he was taken by his paroxysm or distortion "he became a fearsome and multiform and wondrous and hitherto unknown being." All

[la] *Book ofLcinstcr,* 64B-67B (Stokes and Windisch, *op. cit.,* pp. 130-169); Hull, *op- cit.,* pp. 142-154.

[:I] From Eleanor Hull, *op. cit.,* p. 154; translated from the *Book of Leimter,* 68A (Stokes and Windisch, *op. cit.,* pp. 168-171).

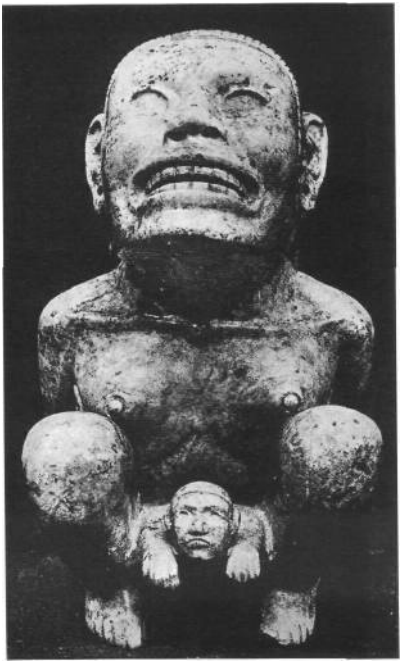
over him, from his crown to the ground, his flesh and every limb and joint and point and articulation of him quivered. His feet, shins, and knees shifted themselves and were behind him. The frontal sinews of his head were dragged to the back of his neck, where they showed in lumps bigger than the head of a man-child aged one month. "One eye became engulfed in his head so far that' 'tis a question whether a wild heron could have got at it where it lay against his occiput, to drag it out upon the surface of his cheek; the other eye on the contrary protruded suddenly, and of itself so rested upon the cheek. His mouth was twisted awry till it met his ears . . . flakes of fire streamed from it. The sounding blows of the heart that pounded within him were as the how! of a ban-dog doing his office, or of a lion in the act of charging bears. Among the aerial clouds over his head were visible the virulent pouring showers and sparks of ruddy fire which the seething of his savage wrath caused to mount up above him. His hair became tangled about his head . .. over the which though a prime apple-tree had been shaken, yet may we surmise that never an apple of them would have reached the ground, but rather that all would have been held impaled each on an individual hair as it bristled on him for fury. His 'hero's paroxysm' projected itself out of his forehead, and showed longer as well as thicker than the whetstone of a first-rate man-at-arms. [And finally:] taller, thicker, more rigid, longer than the mast of a great ship was the perpendicular jet of dusky blood which out of his scalp's very central point shot upwards and then was scattered to the four cardinal points; whereby was formed a magic mist of gloom resembling the smoky pall that drapes a regal dwelling, what time a king at night fall of a winter's day draws near to it."[1fi]

[1H] Hull, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-176; from the *Book of Leinster*, 77 (Stokes and Windisch, *op. cit.,* pp. 368-377). Compare the transfiguration of Krishna, *supra*, pp. 231-234 and Plate IV; see also Plates II and XII.



XVII. The Fountain of Life (Flanders)

XV1U. The Moon King and His I'eople (South Rhodesia)

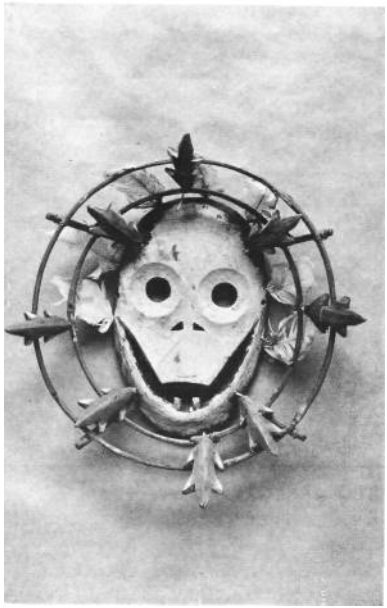


XIX. The Mother of the Gods (Mexico)

XX. Tangaroa, Producing Gods and Men (Rurutu Island)

XXII. The Young Corn God (Honduras)

XXIII. The Chariot of the Moon (Cambodia)



XXIV. Autumn (Alaska)

• 3 •

The Hero as Warrior

The place of the hero's birth, or the remote land of exile from which he returns to perform his adult deeds among men, is the mid-point or navel of the world. Just as ripples go out from an underwater spring, so the forms of the universe expand in circles from this source.

"Above the broad, unmoving depths, beneath the nine spheres and the seven floors of heaven, at the central point, the World Navel, the quietest place on the earth, where the moon does not wane, nor the sun go down, where eternal summer rules and the cuckoo everlastingly calls, there the White Youth came to consciousness." So begins a hero myth of the Yakuts of Siberia. The White Youth went forth to learn where he was and what his dwelling place was like. Eastward of him lay stretching a broad, fallow field, in the middle of which arose a mighty hill, and on the summit of the hill a gigantic tree. The resin of that tree was transparent and sweet scented, the bark never dried or cracked, the sap shone silver, the luxuriant leaves never wilted, and the catkins resembled a cluster of reversed cups. The summit of the tree rose over the seven heaven-floors and served as a tethering post for the High God, Yryn-ai-tojon; while the roots penetrated into subterranean abysses, where they formed the pillars of the dwellings of the mythical creatures proper to that zone. The tree held conversation, through its foliage, with the beings of the sky.

When the **White** Youth turned to face south, he perceived in the midst of a green grassy plain the quiet Lake of Milk that no breath of wind ever stirs; and around the shores of the lake were swamps of curdle. To the north of him a somber forest stood with trees that rustled day and night; and therein was moving every kind of beast. Tall mountains were lifting beyond it, and appeared to be wearing caps of white rabbit fur; they leaned

against the sky and protected this middle place from the northern wind. A thicket of scrub stretched out to the west, and beyond it stood a forest of tall firs; behind the forest gleamed a number of blunt-headed solitary peaks.

This was the manner, then, of the world in which the White Youth beheld the light of day. Presently tired, however, of being alone, he went over to the gigantic tree of life. "Honored High Mistress, Mother of my Tree and my Dwelling Place," he prayed; "everything that lives exists in pairs and propagates descendants, but I am alone. I want now to travel and to seek a wife of my own kind; I wish to measure my strength against my kind; I want to become acquainted with men—to live according to the manner of men. Do not deny me thy blessing; I do humbly pray. I bow my head and bend my knee."

Then the leaves of the tree began murmuring, and a fine, milk-white rain descended from them upon the White Youth. A warm breath of wind could be felt. The tree began to groan, and out of its roots a female figure emerged to the waist: a woman of middle age, with earnest regard, hair flowing free, and bosom bare. The goddess offered her milk to the youth from a sumptuous breast, and after partaking of it he felt his strength increase a hundredfold. At the same time the goddess promised the youth

FIGURE 17. Paleolithic Petroglyph (Algiers)

every happiness and blessed him in such a way that neither water, nor fire, iron, nor anything else should ever do him **harm.**[18]

From the umbilical spot the hero departs to realize his destiny. His adiilt deeds pour creative power into the world.

Sang the aged Vaindmoinen;
Lakes swelled up, and earth was shaken,
And the coppery mountains trembled,
And the mighty rocks resounded.
And the mountains clove asunder;
On the shore the stones were shattered."[20]

The stanza of the hero-bard resounds with the magic of the word of power; similarly, the sword edge of the hero-warrior flashes with the energy of the creative Source: before it fall the shells of the Outworn.

For the mythological hero is the champion not of things become but of things becoming; the dragon to be slain by him is precisely the monster of the status quo: Holdfast, the keeper of the past. From obscurity the hero emerges, but the enemy is great and conspicuous in the seat of power; he is enemy, dragon, tyrant, because he turns to his own advantage the authority of his position. He is Holdfast not because he keeps the *past* but because he *keeps.*

The tyrant is proud, and therein resides his doom. He is proud because he thinks of his strength as his own; thus he is in the clown role, as a mistaker of shadow for substance; it is his destiny to be tricked. The mythological hero, reappearing from the darkness that is the source of the shapes of the day, brings a **knowledge** of the secret of the tyrant's doom. With a gesture as simple as the pressing of a button, he annihilates the impressive configuration. The hero-deed is a continuous shattering of the crystallizations of the moment. **The** cycle rolls: mythology focuses

[18] **Uno Holmberg (Uno Harva),** ***Dcr Baum des Lebenx*** **(Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae, Ser. B, Tom. XVI, No. 3; Helsinki, 1923), pp. 57-59; from N. Gorochov, "Yryn Uolan"** *(Ixee&tia Voitncnn-Siberskago Otdela I. Russketgo Grograftceakaify Obsri'stua,* **XV), pp.** 43 **ff.**

[20] ***Kalevala,*** **111,295-300.**

on the growing-point. Transformation, fluidity, not stubborn ponderosity, is the characteristic of the living God. The great figure of the moment exists only to be broken, cut into chunks, and scattered abroad. Briefly: the ogre-tyrant is the champion of the prodigious fact, the hero the champion of creative life.

The world period of the hero in *human* form begins only when villages and cities have expanded over the land. Many monsters remaining from primeval times still lurk in the outlying regions, and through malice or desperation these set themselves against the human community. They have to be cleared away. Furthermore, tyrants of human breed, usurping to themselves the goods of their neighbors, arise, and are the cause of widespread misery. These have to be suppressed. The elementary deeds of the hero are those of the clearing of the field.[21]

Kut-o-yis, or "Blood Ciot Boy," when he had been taken from the pot and had grown to manhood in a day, slew the murderous son-in-law of his foster parents, then proceeded against the ogres of the countryside. He exterminated a tribe of cruel bears, with the exception of one female who was about to become a mother. "She pleaded so pitifully for her life, that he spared her. If he had not done this, there would have been no bears in the world." Then he slaughtered a tribe of snakes, but again with the exception of one "who was about to become a mother.[11] Next he deliberately walked along a road which he had been told was dangerous. "As he was going along, a great windstorm struck him and at last carried him into the mouth of a great fish. This was a sucker-fish and the wind was its sucking. When he got into the stomach of the fish, he saw a great many people. Many of

[J1] I am here keeping the distinction between the earlier semi-animal titan-hero (city founder, culture giver) and the later, fully human type. (See pp. **309-S11, *supra.)*** The deeds of the latter frequently include the "slaying of the former, the Pythons and Minotaurs who were the boon-givers of the past. (A god outgrown becomes immediately a life-destroying demon. The form has to be broken and the energies released.) Not infrequently deeds that belong to the earlier stages of the cycle are assigned to the human hero, or one of the earlier heroes may be humanized and carried on into a later day; but such contam-[nation*, and winaiions do not alter the genera] formula.

them were dead, but some were still alive. He said to the people, 'Ah, there must be a heart somewhere here. We will have a dance.' So he painted his face white, his eyes and mouth with black circles, and tied a white rock knife on his head, so that the point stuck up. Some rattles made of hoofs were also brought. Then the people started in to dance. For a while Blood Clot sat making wing-motions with his hands, and singing songs. Then he stood up and danced, jumping up and down until the knife on his head struck the heart. Then he cut the heart down. Next he cut through between the ribs of the fish, and let all the people out.

"Again Blood Clot said he must go on his travels. Before starting, the people warned him, saying that after a while he would see a woman who was always challenging people to wrestle with her, but that he must not speak to her. He gave no heed to what they said, and, after he had gone a little way, he saw a woman who called him to come over. 'No,' said Blood Clot. 'I am in a hurry.' However, at the fourth time the woman asked him to come over, he said, "Yes, but you must wait a little while, for I am tired. I wish to rest. When I have rested, I will come over and wrestle with you.' Now, while he was resting, he saw many large knives sticking up from the ground almost hidden by straw. Then he knew that the woman killed the people she wrestled with by throwing them down on the knives. When he was rested, he went on. The woman asked him to stand up in the place where he had seen the knives; but he said, 'No, I am not quite ready. Let us play a little, before we begin.' So he began to play with the woman, but quickly caught hold of her, threw her upon the knives, and cut her in two.

"Blood Clot took up his travels again, and after a while came to a camp where there were some old women. The old women told him that a little farther on he would come to a woman with a swing, but on no account must he ride with her. After a time he came to a place where he saw a swing on the bank of a swift stream. There was a woman swinging on it. He watched her a while, and saw that she killed people by swinging them out and

dropping them into the water. When he found this out, he came up to the woman. 'You have a swing here; let me see you swing,' he said. 'No,[1] said the woman, 'I want to see you swing.' 'Well,' said Blood Clot, 'but you must swing first.[1] 'Well,' said the woman, 'now I shall swing. Watch me. Then I shall see you do it.' So the woman swung out over the stream. As she did this, he saw how it worked. Then he said to the woman, 'You swing again while I am getting ready'; but as the woman swung out this time, he cut the vine and let her drop into the water. This happened on Cut Bank Creek."[22]

We are familiar with such deeds from our Jack-the-Giant-Killer nursery tales and the classical accounts of the labors of such heroes as Hcrakles and Theseus. They abound also in the legends of the Christian saints, as in the following charming French tale of Saint Martha.

"There was at that time on the banks of the Rhone, in a forest situated between Avignon and Aries, a dragon, half animal, half fish, larger than an ox, longer than a horse, with teeth as sharp as horns, and great wings at either side of its body; and this monster slew all the travelers and sank all the boats. It had arrived by sea from Galatia. Its parents were the Leviathan—a monster in the form of a serpent that dwelt in the sea—and the Onager—a terrible beast bred in Galatia, which burns with fire everything it touches.

"Now Saint Martha, at the earnest request of the people, went against the dragon. Having found it in the forest, in the act of devouring a man, she sprinkled holy water on it and exhibited a crucifix. Immediately, the monster, vanquished, came like a lamb to the side of the saint, who passed her belt around its neck and conducted it to the neighboring village. There the populace slew it with stones and staffs.

"And since the dragon had been known to the people under the name of Tarasque, the town took the name of Tarascon, in

[22] Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall, *Mythology of the Blackfeet Indians* (Anthropological papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. II, Part I; New York, 1909), pp. 55-57. Quoted by **Thompson,** *op. cit.,* pp. **Ill—113.**

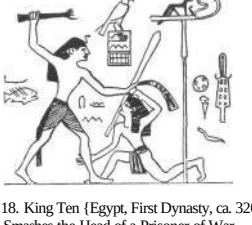


FIGURE 18. King Ten {Egypt, First Dynasty, ca. 3200 B.C.) Smashes the Head of a Prisoner of War

remembrance. Up to then it had been called Nerluc, which is to say, Black Lake, on account of the somber forests which there bordered the stream.[23]

The warrior-kings of antiquity regarded their work in the spirit of the monster-slayer. This formula, indeed, of the shining hero ^oing against the dragon has been the great device of self-justification for all crusades. Numberless memorial tablets have been composed with the grandiose complacency of the following cuneiform of Sargon of Agade, destroyer of the ancient cities of the Sumerians, from whom his own people had derived their civilization.

"Sargon, king of Agade, viceregent of the goddess Ishtar, king of Kish, *pashishu*[24] of the god Anu, King of the Land, great *ishakku*[25]* of the god F.nlil: the city of Uruk he smote and its wall he destroyed. With the people of Uruk, he battled and he captured him and in fetters led him through the gate of Knlil. Sargon, king of Agade, battled with the man of Ur and vanquished him; his city he smote and its wall he destroyed. E-Ninmar he smote and its wall he destroyed, and its entire territory, from Lagash to the sea, he smote. His weapons he washed in the sea. .. ."

[23] J&cobus de \ <">niimiX <>*p- cil.*. C I\ . "Saint Murl.hu, \ irgin."

[24] One of *a* class of priests entrusted with the preparation and application of the sacred ointments.

[25] Chief priest, governing as viceregent of the god.

• 4 •

The Hero as Lover

The hegemony wrested from the enemy, the freedom won from the malice of the monster, the life energy released from the toils of the tyrant Holdfast—is symbolized as a woman. She is the maiden of the innumerable dragon slayings, the bride abducted from the jealous father, the virgin rescued from the unholy lover. She is the "other portion" of the hero himself—for "each is both[11]: if his stature is that of world monarch she is the world, and if he is a warrior she is fame. She is the image of his destiny which he is to release from the prison of enveloping circumstance. But where he is ignorant of his destiny, or deluded by false considerations, no effort on his part will overcome the obstacles.[26]

The magnificent youth, Cuchulainn, at the court of his uncle, Conchobar the king, aroused the anxiety of the barons for the virtue of their wives. They suggested that he should be found a wife of his own. Messengers of the king went out to every province of Ireland, but could find no one he would woo. Then Cuchulainn himself went to a maiden that he knew in Luglochta Loga, "the Gardens of Lugh." And he found her on her playing field, with her foster-sisters around her, teaching them needlework and fine handiwork. Emer lifted up her lovely face and recognized Cuchulainn, and she said: "May you be safe from every harm!"

When the girl's father, Forgall the Wily, was told that the couple had talked together, he contrived to send Cuchulainn off to learn battle skills from Donall the Soldierly in Alba, supposing the youth would never return. And Donall set him a further task, namely, to make the impossible journey to a certain warrior-woman,

[2n] An amusing and instructive example of a great hero's abject failure will be found in the Finnish *Kaievala,* Runos IV-VIII, where Vainamolnen fails in his wooing, first of Aino, and then of the "maid of Pohjola." The story is much too long for the present context.

Scathach, and then compel her to give him instruction in her arts of supernatural valor. Cuchulainn's hero-journey exhibits with extraordinary simplicity and clarity all the essential elements of the classic accomplishment of the impossible task.

The way was across a plain of ill luck: on the hither half of it the feet of men would stick fast; on the farther **half** the grass would rise and hold them fast on the points of its blades. But a fair youth appeared who presented to Cuchulainn a wheel and an apple. Across the first part of the plain the wheel would roll just ahead, and across the second the apple. Cuchulainn had only to keep to their thin guiding line, without a step to either side, and he would come across to the narrow and dangerous glen beyond.

The residence of Scathach was on an island, and this island was approached by a difficult bridge only: it had two low ends and the midspace high, and whenever anybody leaped on one end of it, the other head would lift itself up and throw him on his back. Cuchulainn was thrown three times. Then his distortion came upon him, and, gathering himself, he jumped on the head of the bridge, and made the hero's salmon-leap, so that he landed on the middle of it; and the other head of the bridge had not fully raised itself up when he reached it, and threw himself from it, and was on the ground of the island.

The warrior-woman Scathach had a daughter—as the monster so often has—and this young maid in her isolation had never beheld anything approaching the beauty of the young man who came down from the mid-air into her mother's fortress. When she had heard from the youth what his project was, she described to him the best manner of approach to persuade her mother to teach him the secrets of supernatural valor. He should go through his hero's salmon-leap to the great yew tree where Scathach was giving instruction to her sons, set his sword between her breasts, and state his demand.

Cuchulainn, following instructions, won from the warrior-sorceress acquaintance with her feats, marriage to her daughter without payment of a bride-price, knowledge of his future, and

sexual intercourse with herself. He remained a year, during which he assisted in a great battle against the Amazon, Aife, on whom he begot a son. Finally, slaying a hag who disputed with him a narrow path along the edge of a cliff, he started home for Ireland.

One further adventure of battle and love, and Cuchulainn returned to find Forgall the **Wily** still against him. He simply carried the daughter off this time, and they were married at the court of the king. The adventure itself had given him the capacity to annihilate all opposition. **The** only annoyance was that uncle Conchobar, the king, exercised on the bride his royal prerogative before she passed officially to the groom.[2]

The motif of the difficult task as prerequisite to the bridal bed has spun the hero-deeds of all time and all the world. In stories of this pattern the parent is in the role of Holdfast; the hero's artful solution of the task amounts to a slaying of the dragon. The tests imposed are difficult beyond measure. They seem to represent an absolute refusal, on the part of the parent ogre, to permit life to go its way; nevertheless, when a fit candidate appears, no task in the world is beyond his skill. Unpredicted helpers, miracles of time and space, further his project; destiny itself (the maiden) lends a hand and betrays a weak spot in the parental system. Barriers, fetters, chasms, fronts of every kind dissolve before the authoritative presence of the hero. The eye of the ordained victor immediately perceives the chink in every fortress of circumstance, and his blow can cleave it wide.

The most eloquent and deep-driving of the traits in this colorful adventure of Cuchulainn is that of the unique, invisible path, which was opened to the hero with the rolling of the wheel and the apple. This is to be read as symbolic and instructive of the miracle of destiny. To a man not led astray from himself by sentiments stemming from the surfaces of what he sees, but courageously responding to the dynamics of his own nature—to a man who is, as Nietzsche phrases it, "a wheel rolling of itself'—difficulties melt and the unpredictable highway opens as he goes.

[37] *The Wooing of* **Enter,** abstracted from the translation by Kuno Meyer in E. **Hull,** *op.* ***cit.,*** pp. 57-84.

The Hero as Emperor and as Tyrant

The hero of action is the agent of the cycle, continuing into the living moment the impulse that first moved the world. Because our eyes are closed to the paradox of the double focus, we regard the deed as accomplished amid danger and great pain by a vigorous arm, whereas from the other perspective it is, like the archetypal dragon-slaying of Tiamat by Marduk, only a bringing to pass of the inevitable.

The supreme hero, however, is not the one who merely continues the dynamics of the cosmogonic round, but he who reopens the eye—so that through all the comings and goings, delights and agonies of the world panorama, the One Presence will be seen again. This requires a deeper wisdom than the other, and results in a pattern not of action but of significant representation. The symbol of the first is the virtuous sword, of the second, the scepter of dominion, or the book of the law. The characteristic adventure of the first is the winning of the bride—the bride is life. The adventure of the second is the going to the father—the father is the invisible unknown.

Adventures of the second type fit directly into the patterns of religious iconography. Even in a simple folk tale a depth is suddenly sounded when the son of the virgin one day asks of his mother: "Who is my father?" The question touches the problem of man and the invisible. The familiar myth-motifs of the atonement inevitably follow.

The Pueblo hero, Water Jar boy, asked the question of his mother. " 'Who is my father'?' he said. 'I don't know,' she said. He asked her again, 'Who is my father?' but she just kept on crying and did not answer. 'Where is my father's home?' he asked. She could not tell him. 'Tomorrow I am going to find my father.[1]—'You cannot find your father,' she said. 'I never go with any boy, so there is no place where you can look for your father.'