

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 you 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.'¹⁵⁷

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.

¹⁵⁷ 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*, "Skaldskaparmál" 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 neighbor."¹⁵⁸

PART I

The Adventure of the Hero

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 Plover,' 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

fairly 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 *Grimms' Fairy Tales*, No. 1, "The Frog King."

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

³ 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 a hunting. "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 smit-

ten 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 embused, 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

"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 Series. Vol. V; Chicago, 1903), p. 300. Reprinted in Stith Thompson's *Tales of the North American Indians* (Cambridge, Mass., 1929), p. 128.

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



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.'⁷ In the land of sheep stands an unknown woman and points the way."⁸

⁷ C. G. Jung, *Psychology and 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 Traurtrums* (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!': 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 infinitum, 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 by 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 pp1xliijious without making the main line of the monomyth any clearer. Instead, I am giving in each section a few striking examples from a number of widely scattered, representative traditions. During the course of the work I shift (as Minn. Ts gradually, so that the reader may savor the peculiar qualities, of the various styles. By the time he comes to the end of the book he will have reviewed an immense number of mythologies. Should he wish to prove whether all might have been cited for our section of the monomyth, he need only turn to 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 series 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 annihilated at last, in God.

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

¹¹ Proverbs, 1:24-27, 32.

¹² "Spiritual books occasionally quote [this] Latin saying which has terrified more than one soul" (Ernest Dimmet, *The Art of Thinking*, New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1929, pp. 203-204).

¹³ 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,¹⁴ 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 un independence. 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."¹⁵ 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.

¹⁹ 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."²³

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.²⁴ 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

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.²⁵ 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 \|-v from hi* own person to ideological representations of that person and thus render it objective. It must be admitted that this price is paid:] 'u:;L'if. iii ii il el j j u t'bin the Individua] himself, and that not only in its constructive, but also in its destructive aspects. This explains why hardly any productive work gets through without morbid

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

²² Genesis, 19:26.

²³ Werner Zirus, *Ahasverus, di-r Ewige Jude* (Staff- und Motivges,(-hichele des deutschen Literatur 6, Berlin and Leipzig, 1930), p. 1.

²⁴ *Supra*, p. 54.

and the Princess Budur. The young and handsome prince, the only son of King Shahrیمان 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 who 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 Shahrیمان 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, he 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 grantees 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.¹⁴

When the moment came, however, and King Shahrیمان 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 unclasped 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 grantees 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 nursing 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.²ⁿ

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

ⁿ "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.²¹

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?'²² They made no answer, but descended the ladder. When they reached the floor she again spoke to them, asking: 'Whither do you two go walking together?' '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

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.'²³

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 avalest, 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."²⁴

²¹ 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.)

²³ Dante, "Paradiso," XXXIII, 12-21 (translation by Charles Eliot Norton, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 252; quoted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers).

²² Braoß Gutmann, *Volksbuch der Wadschagga* (Leipzig, 1914), p. 144.

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."³⁰

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

³⁰ See Oswald Spengler. *The Decline of the West*, translated by Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1926-28), Vol. I, p. 144. "Supposing," mks 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 harmonious physical Hilim" *i/hid.*, p. 1 [2]. I his corresponds [d'] llamas Otrivle's idea of the Hero Kniic, "is" vlenian (*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 our 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 amalgamation of Hermes and I 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" sealed 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 of 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, see par. 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 I 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/³⁵

³³ The well is symbolical of the unconscious. Compare that of the fairy story of the Frog King, *supra*, pp. 45^a17.

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 (-less 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 silver 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 likeliest 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 of 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 tail—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.

—"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 sud-drill", caught $\text{in} < \text{Lin} \text{ } \text{h}^{\text{uik}} \text{ m} < \text{ } \text{iiil} \text{ th}^{\text{h}} \text{ I woke-up. I havr dTamt about this foot several times.}^{\text{u}}$

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, "is, in 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 dance 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 whimsical 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 toils. 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-Babylonian, Buddhist, Celtic, Chinese, Christian, Coptic, IUArian, (j-r-rk, Htrbreu, Indian, Jjin, J'ejiiinse, Jewish, Moslem, Parisian, Roman, Slavic, Teutonic, and Tibetan varieties), is an excellent introduction 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 fisherfolk 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.*¹ 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

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.'"⁴⁴

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

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 be 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.

⁴⁴ 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 'interogo.' 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

and knees bend the wrong way; this reveals her true character, and he flies. If a young man can strike the temptress with a *draecna* 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 A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, 1933), pp. 175-177.

⁴⁷ An amphibious sea **naskc* marked with bands of dark and light color, always more or IPSS dreaded whenever it is seen.

¹⁵ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanians, 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. It 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

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,"¹¹ 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

⁴¹ *Jataka*, 1:1. Abridged from the translation by Eugene Watson Burlingame *Buddhist Parables* (Yale University Press, 1922), pp. 32-34. Reprinted by permission of the 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."¹³ 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.¹⁴ 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.¹⁵

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 by 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.

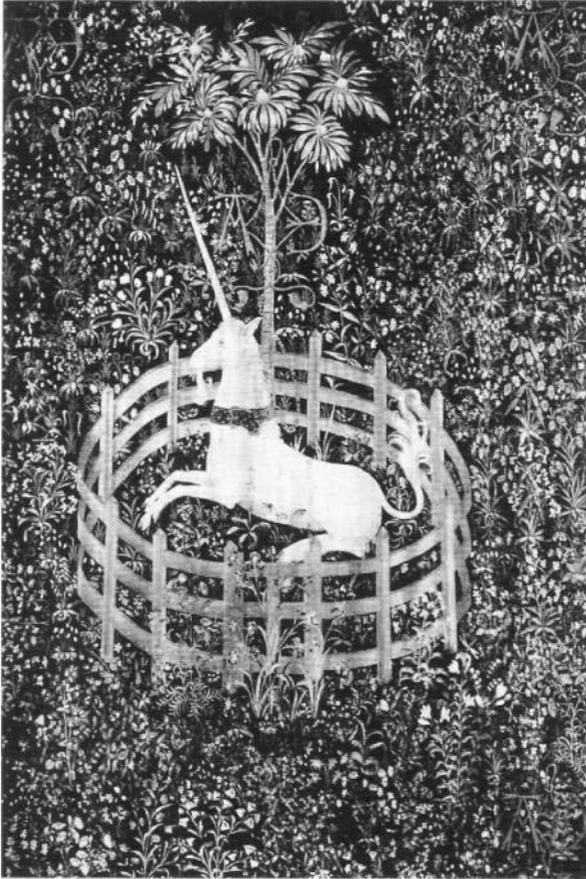
*Mishe-Nahma, King of Fishes,
In his wrath he darted upward,
Flashing leaped into the sunshine,
Opened his greatjaws and swallowed
Both canoe and Hiawatha*¹⁶

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.¹⁷

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

¹⁶ Longfellow, *The Song of Hiawatha*, VIII. The adventures ascribed by Longfellow to the Iroquois chieftain Hiawatha belong properly to the Algonquin culture hero iVlanabozho. Hiawatha u:is an actual historical pi'i'anna:¹⁶ i it the sixteenth century. See p. 274, note 1, *infra*.

¹⁷ Leo Frobenius, *Das Zeitalter des Sonnengottes* (Berlin, 1904), p. 85.



II. The Captive Unicorn (trance)



III. The Mother of the Gods (Nigeria)



IV. The Deity in War Dress (Bali)



V. Sekhmet, The Goddess (Egypt)



VI. Medusa (Ancient Rome)



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

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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

⁵⁸ Henry Callaway, *Nursery Tales and Traditions of 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."⁵⁹ 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,⁶⁰ 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 annihilated 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.¹¹

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,



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

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.

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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.

² Knud Leem, *Beskrivelse over Finnmarks Lapper* (Copenhagen, 1767), pp. 475-478. An English translation will be found in John Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All 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

³ The 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-ike 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.¹⁴

"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.¹⁵ "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.¹⁶ 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."¹⁷

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. Ijic: rcl/*Gxci \ or:ttUtuufit d'i ulmscheu 1 other ("Folklore Fellows Communications," No. 125, Helsinki, 1938), pp. 558-559; following G. N. Potanin, *Oecrcki severo-zapadnuy 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.

¹ *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";² 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."³ "I saw one beast after another," Emanuel 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."⁴ 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."⁵ 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 Underhill, *op. cit.*, Part II, Chapter III. Compare *supra*, p. 51, note 3.

² Willhelm Stekel, *Fortschritte urid Technik der Traumdeutung*, p. 124.

¹⁰ *Swedenborgs Drommar, 1774*, "Jemte andra hans anteckningar efter original-handskrifter meddelade af G. E. Klemming" (Stockholm 1859), quoted in Ignaz Jezower, *Das Buck der Träume* (Berlin: Ernst Roivohlt Verlag, 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.

¹² Plutarch, *Themistocles*, 2(1; Jezower, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

INITIATION

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 splashed¹⁴; 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.¹⁵

"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 fiancée received me with great joy." The man was impotent, but had found an instructor in the psychoanalyst."¹⁶

"A stone had broken my windshield. I was now open to the storm and rain. 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

THE ROAD OF TRIALS

"I was bitten by an infant." The dreamer was suffering from a psychosexual infantilism.^{14,1}

"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,' 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.¹⁶⁰

"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

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²¹ 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 of 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).

¹⁶⁰ Stekel, *Die Sprache des Traumes*, p. 287.

¹³ Stekel, *Fortschritte und Technik der Traumdeutung*, p. 150.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4E.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

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."*

TM *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
netherworld been perfected,
O 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, O Inanna, have the decrees of
the netherworld 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 this?"*

*"Extraordinarily, O Inanna, have the decrees of
the netherworld been perfected,
O 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 netherworld been perfected,
O 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, O Inanna, have the decrees of
the netherworld 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 netherworld 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, O Inanna, have the decrees of
the netherworld been perfected,
O 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 Inanna—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.²¹

²⁶ M. N. Kramer, *Sumerian 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 as an important influence in the religions of the pagan Celts, Greeks, Romans, Slavs, and Germans.

²⁷ Or, as James Joyce has phrased it: "equals of opposites, evolved by a one-same power of nature or of spirit, as lit: sole condition and means of its himundher manifestation and polarised for reunion by the symphysis of their antipathies" (*I-megans 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's 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, unattainable 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 62 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 all 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"

²⁹ 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 siii and xiii.

"There exists," Professor Flugel observes, "a very general association on the one hand between the notion of mind, *ʿpint* or *soʿl*; *uH lln' id'i* of the father or of masculinity; and on the other 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, COI 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 pronouncedly idealistic tendwii'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 SLP¹A, caKikKLJ instructions Ior domestic ceiviii:!:].!., and crtuuri 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 Universal¹ God Shiva and his Goddess Parvati. (They are termed, therefore, "The Fifth Veda.") These support a mystical tradition known specifically as "The Tantra. which has exercised ï pLIV3-1<- inRueice on 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 Ramakrishna*, translated into English with an introduction 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 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.

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 a hunting, 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-beared 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.' 'Not so,' said he. 'Then water shall not be conceded by me.' 'My word I give,' he went on, 'that sooner than give thee a kiss I would perish of thirst!' 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!" 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

^{vi} *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

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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 thou?' he pursued. "'Royal Rule' am I," she answered, and uttered this:

"King of Tara! 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 Bath"; in (Sower's *Tale of Florent*; in the mid-fifteenth-century poem, *The Weddyng 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).

THE MEETING WITH THE GODDESS

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

*And Love hath his effect in gentleness
Of veryself; 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

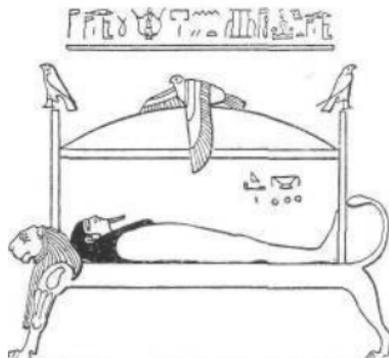


FIGURE 6. Isis in the Form of a Hawk Joins Osiris in the Underworld

³⁶ Guido Guinicelli di Magnano (1-230-75?), *Of the Gentle 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."

" Antiphons for the Feast of the Assumption of (the) Blessed \ in the Mass (August 15), at Vespers: from the Roman Missal.

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

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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! O God! God!*

So exclaims the great spokesman of this moment, Hamlet:

*How weary, stale, flat, 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,*

TM Hamlet, I, ii, 129-137.

WOMAN AS THE TEMPI'KES S

*Thou Oedipus, why are we tarrying?
It is full long that thou art stayed for; come!*TM

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,"¹ 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."¹⁴⁰

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.' 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

^M Oedipus Coloneus, 1615-17.

⁴⁰ Shankaracharya, *Vhikachudumani*, 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 sleep. Having stroked and caressed him for some time, the unhappy creature 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

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 joie plus ve'he'mente que la conquete d'un empire. Avance tes l'eurs.* . . ." ⁴³

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*

⁴¹ Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, LXXVI, "Saint Petronilla, Virgin." (Compare the tale of Daphne, p. 56 *supra*.) The later Church, unwilling to think of St. Peter as having begotten a child, speaks of Petronilla as his ward.

⁴² *Ibid.*, CXVII.

⁴³ Gustave Flaubert, *La tentation de 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

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. . . ."

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 loathsome 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)

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

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."⁴¹

"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

⁴¹ 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" (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 *Ē* 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.) The God is thus within the worshiper as we! as without.

Such a figure illustrates the function and value of a graven image, and shows why long sermons are unnecessary among idol-worshippers. 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 nicest of 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 that 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)⁴⁸ 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.⁴⁹ 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."⁵⁰ 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

⁴⁸ 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, respectively, east, south, west, and north. These correspond to the red, white, Ejeven, 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.

⁴⁹ The Twin Heroes are tested against the symbols of the four directions, to discover whether they partake of the faults and limitations of any one of the quarters.

⁴⁸ Or "interego" (see *supra*, p. 75, note 45).

⁴⁹ Compare the numerous thresholds crossed by Inanna, *supra*, pp. 96–95

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.

"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 filled 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

¹, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-113.

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 Fortune 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 as smoke 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,

⁵¹ 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."¹²

"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."¹³

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.¹⁴ This places the women in the role of protectresses.

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.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ 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

¹² W. Lloyd Warner, *A Black Civilization* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1937), pp. 260-285.

¹³ "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).

¹⁴ 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 fm'ivrt' noi lin MM nt l'mij' oti-i s'ick with Him," we read in the Kin'an. "The Pagans, leaving Allah, call but upon female deities" (Koran, 4:116, 117).

¹¹ Wood, *op. cit.* pp. 218-219.

¹⁴ *Supra*, p. 8.

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 that all the young men were killed.⁵⁸ The ritual is thus 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 the 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

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

⁵⁸ Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*, pp. 49 ff.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, >.75.

⁵⁰ *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 must 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.⁶² "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

⁶⁴ Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*, pp. 227-228, citing D. Bates, *The Passing of the Aborigines* (1939), pp. 41-43.

⁶¹ Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*, p. 231.

⁶² R. H. Mathews, "The Walloongura Ceremony," *Queensland (ieomphical Journal*, N. S., XV (1899-1900), p. 70; cited by Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*, p. 232.

⁶³ In one recorded case, two of the boys looked up when they were not supposed to. "Then the old men went forward, each with a stone knife 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 unilluminated 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 *wirreemuns* (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, *In the Euahlayi Tribe*, 1905, pp. 72-73; cited by Roheim, *The Eternal Ones of the Dream*, p. 232).

⁶⁵ For an astounding revelation of the survival in contemporary Melanesia of a symbolic system essentially identical with that of the Egypto-Babylonian, Trojan-CreUm "Indjyrmth cim'plex 'A the MITPC! niiliriLis] Rr.. LL Jr.bn Layard, *Stone Men of Malekula* (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 few (if any) of the so-called "primitive cultures" studied by our anthropologist¹ 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.

*Come, O DithyrambTM,
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.¹¹⁷ 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;⁶⁸ 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

⁶⁶ Euripides. *The Iliacdae*, 526 f.

⁶⁷ Aeschylus, *Frsg. 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!* \j'ith I2IKI n-Kri' i-cliuon; I Guido: L<zi' LJjis (in L-n, and Co., 1885), pp. 29-44.

⁶⁸ 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 offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"^{61*}

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."

^{61*} Hebrews, 9:13-14.

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.⁷⁰

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;⁷² 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 fountain-head 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."⁷⁴

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 VAfrique Orientale," *Zeitschrift für afrikanische und ozeanische Sprachen*, Vol. III (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 (tale of Edshu) inhabit the West Coast colony of Nigeria.

⁷⁴ 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."⁷⁸ "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

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

⁷⁵ Luke, 2:7.

⁷⁶ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VIII, 618-724.

⁷⁷ Koran, 2:115.

⁷⁸ *Katha Upanishad*, 3:12.

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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."⁸⁰

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

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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' 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 I pass—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.

Thou fillest the high regions,

And Thou fillest the low regions.

Wheresoever I turn, Thou, oh Thou, art there?²

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 42:5-6.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 4-2:16-17.

² Leon Stein, "Hassidic Music," *The Chicago Jewish Forum*, Vol. II, No. 1 (Fall, 1943), 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, and 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 the Hinayana view, an adept who will become a Buddha in a subsequent "reincarnation"; according to the Mahayana view (as the following paragraphs will show), a type of world savior, representing particularly the universal principle of compassion. The word *bodhisattva* (Sanskrit) means: "whose being is

Mahayana Buddhism has developed a pantheon of many Bodhisattvas as many past and future Buddhas. These all reflect the manifested powers of the transcendent, one and only Adi-Buddha ("Primal Buddha") (compare note 5 p. 81, *supra*), who is the highest conceivable source and ultimate boundary of 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."¹⁰⁰ This is the release potential within us all, and which anyone can attain—through heroism; 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."¹

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

¹⁰¹ *Prajna-Paramita-Hridaya Sutra*; "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. XLIX, Part II, p. 148; also, p. 154.

¹⁰² *Vajracchedika* ("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."⁸⁵

In China and Japan this sublimely gentle Bodhisattva is represented not 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 regarnder 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

⁸⁵ *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 nature. cl-sun), cosmic "rlrf: 'luf' Absolutes made manifest, 'lao' is therliir also "truth." "llylil conduct.") *mr' Lrd*) *ti* together *IS 1 no* are depleted thus: ^ *Tao* underlies the cosmos. *Tao* inhabits 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),⁸⁸ 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."⁹⁰ 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."⁹¹ 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,"⁹² by which Man (now man and woman) is cut off 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 devolvement 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 rejunction of the two. This image

⁸⁸ "To men I am Hermes; to women I appear as Aphrodite: I bear the emblems of both my parents" (*Anthoioigia 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, Impriiuphrudilism, and Related Adrenal Diseases* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1937), Chapter I, "Hermaphroditism in Literature and Art."

⁸⁹ *Symposium*.

⁹⁰ Genesis, 1:27.

⁹¹ *Midrash*, commentary on Genesis, Rabbah 8:1.

⁹² *Supra*, p. H6.

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.¹⁰⁵

The world is full of the resultant mutually contending bands: totem-, flag-, and party-worshippers. 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.

¹⁰⁶ "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 Müller).

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."¹⁰⁶

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 of Our Lord 182

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 of this iew country." ill] ihir Ik-alb'li \) or ship at > hi M' people. Much spoil can be made of selling the whole lot to Barbadoes, where slaves fetch good pnces in num in-ç 'i;iiir tsd u i- 'i;lll] not only k- the Lord i'ri-ut good h) punishing the wicked, but we shall make great good for His Minister and people.

Yours in the bowels of Christ.

COTTON MATHEC

(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.)

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, myriad-fold, 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'ūnyatā*, "voidness") refers, on 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,
 I m'v' ENI[2-0] 2.2 2.1. 11. 1. rlv (j jOHVp).
 Yet I pervadeth nil objects of knowledge;
 Obiscaneto 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 [Within]" (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 us.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.¹¹⁷

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" have been surpassed. We no longer desire and fear; we are what was

¹¹⁵ 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" (*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. I say that I am my own mirror: or 'u' Cod that speaks uuh m| u-nūr| 'nd 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 I looked. I saw that lover, beloved, and love are one, lor in the world of unity all can be 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";¹¹⁹ 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.

¹¹⁹ *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, 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-mhnd, \vb<-n 'hr in mi has be'r. 𑀧𑀺𑀢𑀺: il. our aITE:in< lo \\\|r'p<:UT + il Xin ULL' 'despiration in God.' . . . 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, outward, out of, out from, a(SI^A aiva) Iroin"; *VCLTUI* = "blown"; *nt-^wita* = "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,"¹ 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: *vidya*). 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 Strachey; Standard Edition, XVIII; London: The Hogarth Press, 1955). See 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.*¹²²

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

¹²² *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,

¹²³ The smaller *Prajna-Paramita-Hridaya Sutra*; *ibid.*, p. 153.
¹²⁴ Nagarjuna. *Madhijujinik'i Skastra*.

"What is immortal and what is mortal arc harmoniously blended, for the; arc not one, nor arc they separate" (Ashvaghosha).

"This view," writes Dr. Coomaraswamy, citing these texts, "is expressed with dramatic force in the aphorism, *Yas klesas so bodhi, yas samsaras tat nirvnam*. "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, [1916, p. 24-5).

also, to Hinduism: the one freed in life (*jivan mukta*), disireless, 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.¹²⁶

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."¹¹ She dwells in a palace on the K'un-lun Mountain, which is surrounded by fragrant flowers, battlements of jewels,

¹²⁵ *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; "that Occidental judgment has been falsified, up to the present, by the need for self-assertion" (Alfred Salmony, "Die Rassenfrage in der Indienst-mng," *Sozialistische Xfozialistische*, 8, Berlin, 1926, p. 534).

Coomaraswamy, *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 six 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

¹²⁷ 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).

¹²⁸ Cf. E. T. C. Werner, *A Dictionary of Chinese Mythology* (Shanghai, 1932), p. 163.

into the nation.^{124,1} 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 formalization 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 Americas, 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 Jirarilla Apache India*²¹⁸ (Memoirs of the American Folklore Society, Vol. XXXI, 1938), p. 110.

¹³¹ 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}

¹²² 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 blood-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, and 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 actually 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 abscondita*, the divine essence in and by itself, beyond event and change, inactive, dormant, void, beyond 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 "illuminated mind"¹³¹; 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*,¹³⁴ i.e., "The Jewel is in the Lotus": *Om manipadme hum*.¹³⁵

¹³¹ 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

¹³³ In this chapter the following have been equated:

The Void	The World
Eternity	Time
Nirvana	Sam
Truth	IUsSLs
Enlightenment	Compassion
The God	The Goddess
The Enemy	The Friend
Heath	Birth
The Thunderbolt	The Bell
The Jewel	The Lotus
Subject	Object
Yab	Yum
Yang	Yin

Tao
Supreme Buddha
Bodhisattva
Jim Mukta
The Word Made Flesh

Compare the *Kaushhaki Upanishad*, 14, describing the hero who has reached

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

¹¹⁶ 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 body. . . . The child then fears retaliation for these impulses, i.e., that everything will be scooped out of its own inside."¹³⁸ 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."¹³⁹ 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

^m Roheim, *The Origin and Function of Culture*, p. 50.

¹¹⁰ *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.

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.

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.¹⁴⁵ 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."¹⁴⁶ 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

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, POTO', mortal), In Wotan's mountain hall, four hundred and thirty-two thousand heroes consume the undiminished flesh of Sachrinnir, 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 Mananan, 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,

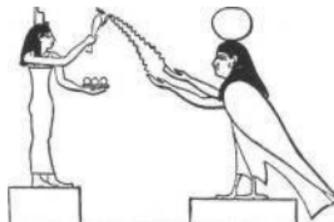


FIGURE 7. Isis Giving Bread and Water to the Soul

¹⁴³ *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.

¹⁴⁶ 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 super-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).

¹⁴⁷ Isaiah, *filii*: 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.¹⁴⁴

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 childish 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."¹⁴⁵ 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

¹⁴⁴ Ginzberg, *op. cit.*. Vol. I, pp. 20, 26-30. See the extensive notes on the Messianic banquet in Ginzberg, Vol. V, pp. 43-46.

¹⁴⁵ Dante, "Paradiso," II, 1-9. Translation by Norton, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 107 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 being that the great teachers of the past were neurotics (except, of course, a number of the Greeks and Romans) who mistook their

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 Turtle 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

unricised fantasies for revelation. In the same spirit, the revelations of psychoanalysis *ritē r̄uānīf-d ʔn n̄īnī*, laymen to *ʔK*: 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 are 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 as 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 Uchchaisravas, "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." 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-Samdub, 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,' 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 Kernal Light.¹⁰⁰¹

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?'

¹⁰⁰¹There are perhaps many," writes Dr. J. C. Fligel, "who would still retain the notion of a quasi-anthropomorphic Father-God as an extra-mental reality, even though the purely mental origin of such a God has become apparent" (*The I. ycho-anuhjiv Study of the Fitmihj*, p. 236).

¹⁰⁶"Paradiso," XXXIII, 82 II.

¹⁰⁷See *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 •othefirstlevel,
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?'

"I can try!" 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!'

"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-Biblical 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

¹¹⁹ 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 Gilgamesepos," *Mitteilungen-der-orientalistischen-Gesellschaft*, 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.-nuri¹ later, /vln-n Li Muir¹nt ^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*, I: 21, 23-25). Only if he persists

is he admitted to the secret.

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 guest 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.
 But 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 of 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 prefiguration of the later Greco-Roman "Islands of the Blessed."

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."¹⁶⁷

"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

¹⁶⁷ "Paradiso," XXXIII, 49-57 (translation by Norton, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 253-254, by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers).

¹⁶⁸ *Kena Upanisufuut*, 1:3 (translation by Swami Sharvananda; Sri Ramakrishna Math; Mysapore, 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, revived, 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

¹⁶⁹ *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).

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."



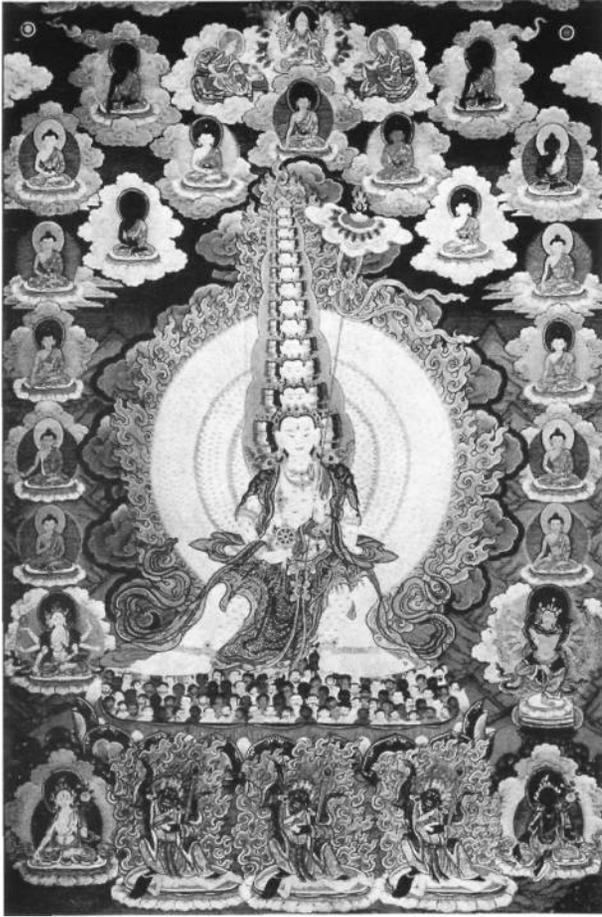
IX. Shiva, Lord of the Cosmic Dance (South India)



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 miser⁷. 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 becomes 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

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.' '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

² *Vishnu Purana*, 23; *Bhagavata Parana*, 10:51; *Har'rcansha*, 114. The above is based on the rendering by Heinrich Zimmer, *Maya, der indische 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.

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

* "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 historical personage of the sixth century. Idris-mporav with the chieftain Idris became the "King Arthur" of later romance. The bard's legend and poems survive in a thirteenth-century manuscript, "The Book of Taliesin," which is one of the "Four Ancient Books of Wales." A *mabinog* (Welsh) is a bard's apprentice. The term *mabinogi*, "juvenile instruction," denotes the traditional material (myths, legends, poems, etc.) taught to a *mabinog*, and which it was his duty to acquire by heart. *Mabinogion*, the plural of *mabinogi*, was the name given by Lady Charlotte Guest to her translation (1838-49) of eleven romances 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 and revived by the Christian missionaries and chroniclers (fifth century and following), who recorded the old stories and sought pain-takingly to co-ordinate them with the Bible. During the tenth century, a brilliant period of Toman production, Celtic legends were reworked into important contemporary literature. Celtic legends went out to the courts of Christian Europe; Celtic themes were rehearsed by the pagan Scandinavian scalds, great part of our European fairy lore, as well as the foundation of the Arthurian tradition, traces back to this first great creative period of Occidental romance. (See Gertrude Schoepperle, *Tristan and Iolai, A Study of the Source of the Romance*, London and Frankfurt a. M., 1913.)

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

⁴ Harva, *op. cit.*, pp. 543-544; quoting "Pervyi buryatskii saman Morgon-Kara," *Izvestiya Volto-C-lio Sibd-skaga Otdeln RUSMI-IO fleogruike* kago Obsce.tiva 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!' 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

³ 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 Bosphorus, at the city and palace of King Aetes. 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 Aetes, 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

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, Supplement (Yokohama, 1882), pp. 24-28.

⁸ See Apollonios of Rhodes, *Argonautika*: the flight is recounted in Book IV.

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, if 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 his 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

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 *Jaimuniya Cpanhkaḍ Brahmana*, 3. 28. 5.

¹¹ In many myths of the hero ii the whale's beily he sfu<l by birds that peck open the side of his 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

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-dwelling 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

¹² Frobenius, *Das Zeitalter des Sonnenlottes*, pp. 85-87.

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

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, *Nihon-shoki-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).

¹³ *Ko-ji-ki*, after Chamberlain, *op. cit.*, pp. 52—59.

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 offavorable 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

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's. 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** stages of the adventure **the** continued operation of the supernatural assisting force **that** has been attending the elect through the **w/whole** course of his ordeal. His consciousness having succumbed, the 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 loses 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 into 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 atmosphere where men who are fractions imagine themselves to be complete. He has yet to confront society with his ego-shattering, 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 Return 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



FIGURE 11. The Reappearance of the Hero
Samson with the Temple-Doors: Christ Arisen: Jonas

¹⁸ Matthew, 26:51; Mark, 14:47; John, 18:10.

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.¹⁵ 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 incrustated 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. . . .

"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 Oisín when he returned from a long sojourn with the daughter of the King of the Land of Youth. Oisín 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

¹⁹ *Mandukya Upanishad*, 5.

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.

Oisín, 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. Oisín'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. Oisín 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 Oisín.

"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 Oisín. "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 Oisín and said, 'This steed will carry you wherever you wish to go.'

"Oisín 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 Oisín 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.'

"Oisín 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 Oisín 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 Oisín 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 Oisín 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

²¹ The Fenians were the men of Finn MacCool, giants all. Oisín, 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 kissed his inner lips and hands, nor did she leave any part of him unknissed; 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

²³ Adapted from Burton, *op. cit.*, III, 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 I 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

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

²⁹ 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*.

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-grand sire. 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.¹⁰

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. No 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

³² 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."³¹

³⁵ *Bhagavad Gita*, II: 53-55.

^x Matthew, 16:25.

["] 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,

³¹ *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*)!" "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

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

•*Ibid.*, 3:19 and 3:30.

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 chiefbard 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.
I 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 Leon of Lochlin.
I have been on the White Hill, in the court of Cynvelyn,
For a day and a year in stocks and fetters,
I 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

⁴⁰ "Taliesin," *op. cit.*, pp. 264—274.

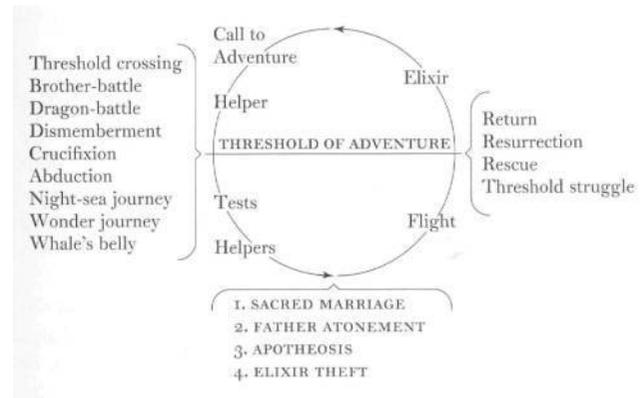
⁴¹ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XV, 252-255.

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

The Keys

⁴² Grimm, No. 50; conclusion.

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

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.

⁵ 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.

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.

¹ John, 3:3-5.