PARABOLA

MYTH AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

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by Victor Turner

DIVINE LAW, HUMAN JUSTICE
by Christmas Humphreys

AN EPICYCLE: Tales Of A Demon
A Conversation with Joseph Campbell

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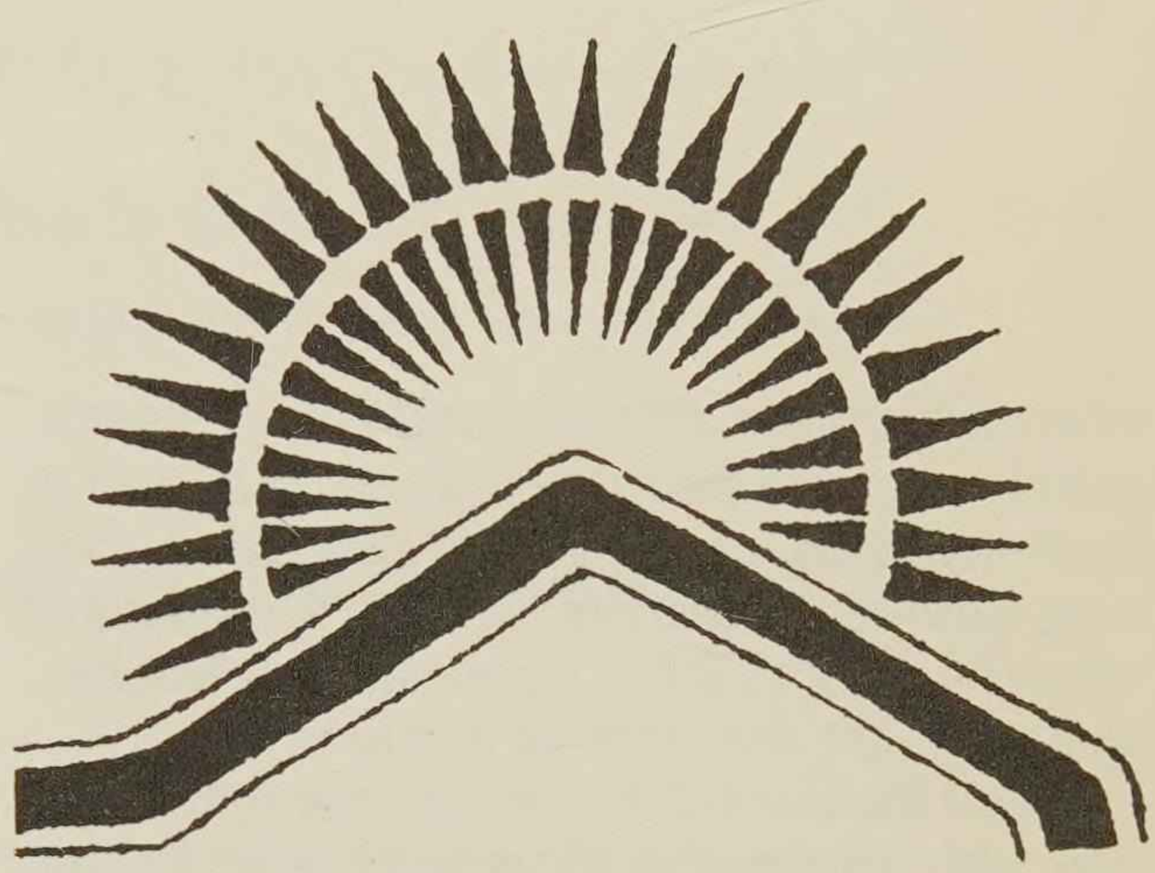

"Leave nothing to what is called luck and you will be what is called lucky," is a homely saying that says something rather important about what we refer to as chance, or accident. It tells us, in fact, that there is no such thing, and that none of the excuses it authorizes for us are valid. Accidents are simply the results of unseen, or unforeseen, causes. They break the rules of our generalized expectations, but not the inexorable laws of cause and effect.

This is what seems—but only seems—puzzling about magic, which we have a good deal to say about in this issue. Magic, when it is not just trickery, seems to play with laws, to make the magician's will the supreme agent. The word itself comes from a root meaning "to be able, to have power." The magician is the *magus,* the *mighty* one, the worker of miracles. What then is magic, what is a miracle? Where does the power come from? What laws is it above, and what laws is it under? For in the hierarchy of nature we know of nothing below the divine Absolute that does not obey the higher cause. What are the laws of magic?

The French alchemist Jollivet-Castelot says: "Magic is rational, positive, for it proclaims the constancy of natural laws; but it teaches that the field of operation of these laws is infinite and that most of them are still unknown to men." The laws we see are the results of laws we cannot see. Christmas Humphreys, both jurist and student of the traditions, refers in this issue to some of these levels of law, and others speak of some of magic's many levels, from clever trickery to that true power which has been defined simply as "doing," from changes in attitude to the miracles of revelation and transformation. Even on the level of psychological tricks there are different qualities, for they also work their spells on the psyche for good or ill; there is the benevolent and healing power of Ihembi, Victor Turner's jungle psychiatrist, as well as the damaging mischief behind Mukāla. But magic has other reaches and other aims, and magicians range from Castaneda's men of knowledge to the dark powers of Xibalba, and the process of their art from psychological reassurance or disintegration to the final marvel of death and resurrection. Christ and Moses also were magicians.

All this is contradictory and confusing, and does not at all explain why we are in general so fascinated with magic in its many different forms. We all love magic; we all (even those who scoff the loudest) believe in some aspect of it. How many people saw *Rosemary's Baby* or *The Exorcist?* How many read Castaneda? How many (many more than you think, and from all over the world) attended a sorcerers' conference last fall in Bogotá? How is it to be sorted out, and how understand our own involvement with it?

Jacob Needleman's article "Magic, Sacrifice, and Tradition: Preliminary Notes" gives an important clue, especially for those seriously searching for the central current of knowledge behind and uniting all the traditional teachings. The idea of magic as gnosis, religion's method and technique, which is heartless without religion just as religion is powerless without magic, suggests a way in which many doubts could leave their uneasy circling to take a new and developing direction, uncovering new questions. What is the difference between tradition and traditionalism? Does a teaching cease to live

when it becomes a dogma and is no longer a search to realize the master's method as well as understand his meaning? Can a teaching, then, long survive the teacher, or how is it renewed when he is gone? What is a master or a teacher, and what are the signs of a true one?

If you look at FULL CIRCLE, our letters section, you will see that some readers are beginning to ask such questions, and we wish to invite you not only to ask but to answer. FULL CIRCLE calls itself a forum for your ideas and could be a sort of seedbed for *Parabola's* lines of thought and investigation. It might well contain dialogs between readers who resonate in different ways to the same question; or between readers and contributors; or between readers and editors. We would welcome the demands of a real exchange.

We hope that the laws that govern what we call accident will allow you sufficient time between this issue and the next to react in writing to questions raised in our pages. And for the response we have had so far, both written and unwritten, we would like to say: thank you!

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Consulting Editors: Joseph Epes Brown, P.L. Travers, Minor White

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Cover illustration by Ezra Jack Keats, original artwork for *Parabola.*

A flower grows, but we don't know how or why. We can explain it according to the laws of science and say that there is this little seed and it sucks water and it grows into a flower, but we still don't know how or why it happens. We are just used to it happening. We think that we know these things because the human mind has a tendency to organize things in order to cope. We forget that life is magic.

Doug Henning, magician

PARABOLA

MYTH AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

VOLUME ONE, ISSUE TWO

FULL CIRCLE:
A READERS' FORUM

Editor:

The day before flying to Europe and the Far East one is more than just "busy." Still, I have to drop you a line to say how delighted I am with *Parabola's* first issue. I am taking it along for further reflection, but it strikes me on first sight as a sign of the times and as a sign of hope. I may seem odd, but there it is: the holy Spirit (in Man) awaits a time like ours—in which the concentration of poison nears saturation—to manifest Itself. The search for the good life, the human life, starts with the realization of how unbearable the bad life is.

Eliade comments on this specifically human life in your first issue: "Every human being tends, even unconsciously, toward the Center, and towards his own center, where he can find integral reality —sacredness." Dogen, the thirteenth-century Zen master, says: "All beings are the Buddha Nature." Combined these may serve as both motto and program for *Parabola*. The intuition of, the search for, the approach to the Center is indeed the specifically human activity, and *Parabola* appears to stand in its service.

On this first and all too hurried reading, the Eliade article as well as those on the Huichols, Navajos, and Tasaday, in their direct, experiential quality of "témoignage," give this first issue a warm and generous glow. Perhaps I was less charmed by some of the longer articles which I felt would not suffer by editing out some wordiness. Also, a cogent statement *"Du Côté de chez Schuon,"* based on a series of questions, might be more easily digestible than the interview format. The book reviews, which are an important part of the magazine, struck me as thoughtful, useful, and functional in *Parabola's* context, except where, here and there, they chilled the beneficent atmosphere by downdrafts of an academic narcissism to which this non-academic may be overly allergic.

May *Parabola* prosper and live to a memorable age!

Frederick Franck
Warwick, N.Y.

Editor:

I would like to acknowledge Paul Roche's excellent translation as the source of all my quotations from Sophocles in my article "The Tragic Hero: An Image of Individuation," published in *Parabola's* first issue.

Edward F. Edinger
Suffern, N.Y.

Editor:

Professor Huston Smith's admission that he "may have hedged a little bit," in his answer to Mr. Loudon's question about esotericism and exotericism, is nowhere near enough. If, as he says, there is such a thing as the "primordial tradition," the central point or source of all the traditions, it must be by definition that bull's-eye of truth for which all seekers aim. Those closest to the mark, according to his own diagram (or is it Schuon's), are the esoterics. How is it possible, then, to have this six-of-one-and-half-dozen-of-the-other attitude? If there is no "lower" and "higher" in a spiritual sense, his final statement about "souls whose only fault was that their aspirations were too low" is meaningless.

In fact, most people are not very clear as to what esotericism really is; and perhaps half the internecine warfare between champions of various interpretations of traditional belief could be avoided if this clarity existed. I think *Parabola* could fulfill a very useful function by providing a forum in which this question could be discussed and perhaps illuminated.

Ronald W. Brenan
New York, N.Y.

Editor:

The concluding paragraph of my review of Gerald A. Larue's *Ancient Myth and Modern Man* in *Parabola* 1:1 ought to have read as follows:

> Those for whom the explanatory approach to myth is satisfying will find *Ancient Myth and*

Modern Man an able rendering of our present perplexities as well as a care-full appraisal of the author's central theme: "Without the gods, the myths are no longer myths."

The final sentence of the published version of my review ("Those who find in myths something more profound and perdurable had best seek elsewhere") expresses a personal opinion which I neither wrote nor respect.

Barbara S. Yoshioka
Davis, Ca.

The editor regrets that in rendering the submitted manuscript into publishable form the intent of its conclusion was misconstrued.

Editor:

An irony prompts this spur-of-the-moment letter. Adele McCollum's review of my book *Beginnings Without End* (*Parabola* 1:1, Winter 1976) puzzled me and my friends who read it. If the second part was true—that I "delivered us up to becoming our own tale-bearers"—then it would seem to me the first part, detecting "a classical case of Jungian inflation," was false. The irony is that, in thumbing through the *Bulletin of the Council on the Study of Religion* just now, I find a section on Myth and History listing Dr. McCollum as an active participant and actively soliciting papers on the relation of myth and history to American theology.

My great abiding disappointment with academic theologians is their inability to consider that somebody using another language might be working in the same vineyard. Most of my books—although written in a style that bids for popular understanding—have been done with a serious eye to the question of myth and history. The mythmaking in my own life has been undertaken with critical and at times agonizing awareness of the issue of inflation, the difference between using autobiography in a philosophical way and using it in an exhibitionistic way, the problem of communication (à la Kierkegaard and his pseudonyms), and so on. I am sometimes sick at heart that my colleagues in theology have never taken seriously what I believe to be a significant mode of stating a natural theology in the twentieth century. Natural theology in an era after the death of God must be done in language that is not readily identified as theological.

I'm not certain why I am writing, as I don't usually respond to reviews—good, bad, or indifferent. But I suppose it is because the last part of the review suggests a promise of understanding. The most radical, and to church theologians, threatening, aspect of my work has been precisely that I have tried to "deliver us up to becoming our own tale-bearers." This stance is systematically anti-professional, anti-establishment, and contrary to the ideology of the closed confessional theological circle which has dominated the world of western religion for the last decades (even my hero Paul Tillich insisted on the Christological starting point and therefore the priority of Church dogmatics). I insist upon returning the power of mythmaking and storytelling to its proper locus—each individual life. If the myth is trivialized by being brought down to the level of an individual's effort to struggle with the chaotic stuff of his life, then it never meant anything worthwhile, except an official story for priests to interpret.

Sam Keen
Muir Beach, Ca.

Editor:

I would like to ask Dr. Huston Smith and the editors of *Parabola* if and how we would be able to tell the difference between a subjective eclecticism (what Dr. Smith calls an "individual synthesis")—which is no more than a patchwork of the various traditions and no stronger in its structure—and a reconstruction, if such a thing were possible, of the "primordial tradition" itself, in which, of course, all the traditions would be recognizable? Would it not also appear to be a patchwork? How could we tell which had come from which?

Jane Henningsen
Harrisburg, Pa.

Editor:

Reading of *Parabola,* I was at once delighted and affronted, the former because in your venture there seems indeed to be a possibility of communication across, over, or under the web of deceits which blind us, the latter because I see no mention of poetry. This, as a poet, I (half jokingly) resent.

Poetry is the original and oldest means of remembering, its rhythms, rhymes, alliterations, and repetitions being intended just to assist the memory of the bard. Myths, the most precious possessions of ancient peoples, were invariably recorded in this form.

Not only is poetry memorable, its words are images, necessarily ambiguous, which arouse in each person who reads a differing echo. Thus what is incommunicable can be indicated and not degraded into logical rigidity. This looks to me very like a definition of "myth," so can we say that poetry is not only the original language of myth, it is the only possible language?

Even if this goes too far (as it obviously does), can I attract your attention to this facet of your topic?

Harold Winterbotham
Keswick, England

Parabola requires the active participation of its readers; we welcome letters and comments on issues raised in our pages. Address all correspondence to the Editor, *Parabola,* 166 East 61 Street, New York, N.Y. 10021.

Balancing Between Worlds: The Shaman's Calling

Barbara G. Meyerhoff

For most, paradox is an unnatural state, a tense transitional stage between unambiguous positions; it offers no shelter. But the shaman lives in paradox as in his natural element. And his paradoxical nature reflects his function, which is to be the living circuit connecting opposing forces. His problem and his profession coincide—the maintenance of equilibrium and the achievement of mediation.

The shaman bridges several worlds on behalf of his people, traveling between this world, the underworld, and the heavens. He transforms himself into animals, talks with ghosts, the dead, the deities, the ancestors. He dies and comes back to life. He wrests knowledge from the shadow realm, thereby linking his people to the spirits and places which were once mythically accessible to all. It is his spe-

cial responsibility to return to the time of origins, *illud tempus,* for the benefit of his group and to make his ecstatic journey to other worlds with the assistance of animal tutelary spirits, bringing back news of the hidden realms to ordinary mortals. As mediator, the shaman travels back and forth with exquisite balance, tied to neither the mundane nor the supernatural. In magical flight, during his trances, he rejoins that realm which in myths was once, and is primordially, a totality—man and the animals, the living and the dead, man and the gods. In this state of primordial unity all social, sexual, and age distinctions are set aside. A cosmic oneness prevails, reconstituted by the shaman's magical journey. This is a vision so ubiquitous that Eliade exclaims: "We have the right to assume that the mystical memory of a blessedness without history haunts man from the moment he becomes aware of his situation in the cosmos."[1]

And what is man's situation in the cosmos that the shaman seeks to mend? Above all, it is the situation of barriers, separations, loss of integration. In recovering integration the shaman provides his magical cure. The shaman, as connector, bridges the primordial past, the mythical past, and historical time.

At the same time, he masters psychological transitions, passing from normality to states of possession and back, and bringing the dark world of the unconscious to the light of consciousness. He thus must be uniquely adept at psychological control, for his profession requires continual, intense voluntary attainment of abnormal psychological states, particularly the entering of trances and the obtaining of visions. Eliade is convincing in arguing against the view that shamans are usually neurotic, unstable, or epileptic.[2] In the course of rigorous training and practice, the individual who perhaps is neurotic initially learns to control his frenzy, to adapt his proclivity to visions, fits, and trances to the service of his group. The shaman can no longer be regarded as sick, dis-eased; his profession is his cure. He becomes a virtuoso in maintaining psychological balance.

And finally, in carrying out his cures, he accomplishes social equilibrium as well, establishing balance between the individual and the group, reweaving the social fabric ruptured by illness and, frequently, by some violation of group norms that causes an individual to be recognized and treated as deviant.

The shaman, then, restores equilibrium in many ways simultaneously. As a connecting figure, he is at once the recoverer of balance and the living symbol of its possibility. In his cosmic undertakings, his personal destiny mirrors his profession, and the microcosm and macrocosm are reunited by his activities.

* * * *

I first became aware of the significance of the shaman's need for exquisite balance in my contact with the Huichol Indians of North Central Mexico several years ago. For some time I had been working with a Huichol *mara'akame* or shaman priest named Ramón Medina Silva.* One afternoon, without explanation, he interrupted our sessions of taping mythology to take a party of Huichols, personal friends, and myself, to an area outside of his home. It was a region of steep barrancas, cut by a rapid waterfall, cascading perhaps a thousand feet over jagged, slippery rocks. At the edge of the fall, Ramón removed his sandals and announced that this was a special place for shamans. He proceeded to leap across the waterfall, from rock to rock, frequently pausing, his body bent

*The Huichols are a group of relatively unacculturated Indians among whom the shamanic complex is well developed. For more information, see my *Peyote Hunt: The Sacred Journey of the Huichol Indians.*

forward, his arms outspread, head thrown back, entirely birdlike, poised motionlessly on one foot. He disappeared, re-emerged, leaped about, and finally achieved the other side. I was frightened and puzzled by the performance, but none of the Huichols there seemed at all worried. The wife of one of the older Huichol men told me that her husband had started to become a *mara'akame* but had failed because he lacked balance. I assumed that she referred to his social and personal unsteadiness, for he was alcoholic and something of a deviant. I knew I had witnessed a virtuoso display of balance that afternoon, but it was not until the next

Ramón displaying his balance by leaping on the rocks. He is about to spring across the high barranca through which the waterfall courses.

day, when discussing this event with Ramón, that I began to understand more clearly what had occurred. "The *mara'akame* must have superb equilibrium," he said, and demonstrated the point by using his fingers to march up his violin bow. "Otherwise, he will not reach his destination and will fall this way or that," and his fingers plunged into an imaginary abyss. "One crosses over. It is very narrow and, without balance, one is eaten by those animals waiting below."

I could not be sure whether Ramón was rehearsing his equilibrium or giving it public ceremonial expression that day in the barrancas. In societies without writing, official statements about a person's status and skill are often made in dramatic, public, ceremonial form. Whether seen as a practice session or as a ritual, the events of the afternoon provided a demonstrative assertion that Ramón was a true *mara'akame*, and like all authentic shamans, a man of immense courage, poise, and balance. (Those familiar with Castaneda's work will recall a strikingly similar display of balance in *A Separate Reality*. The description of don Ge-

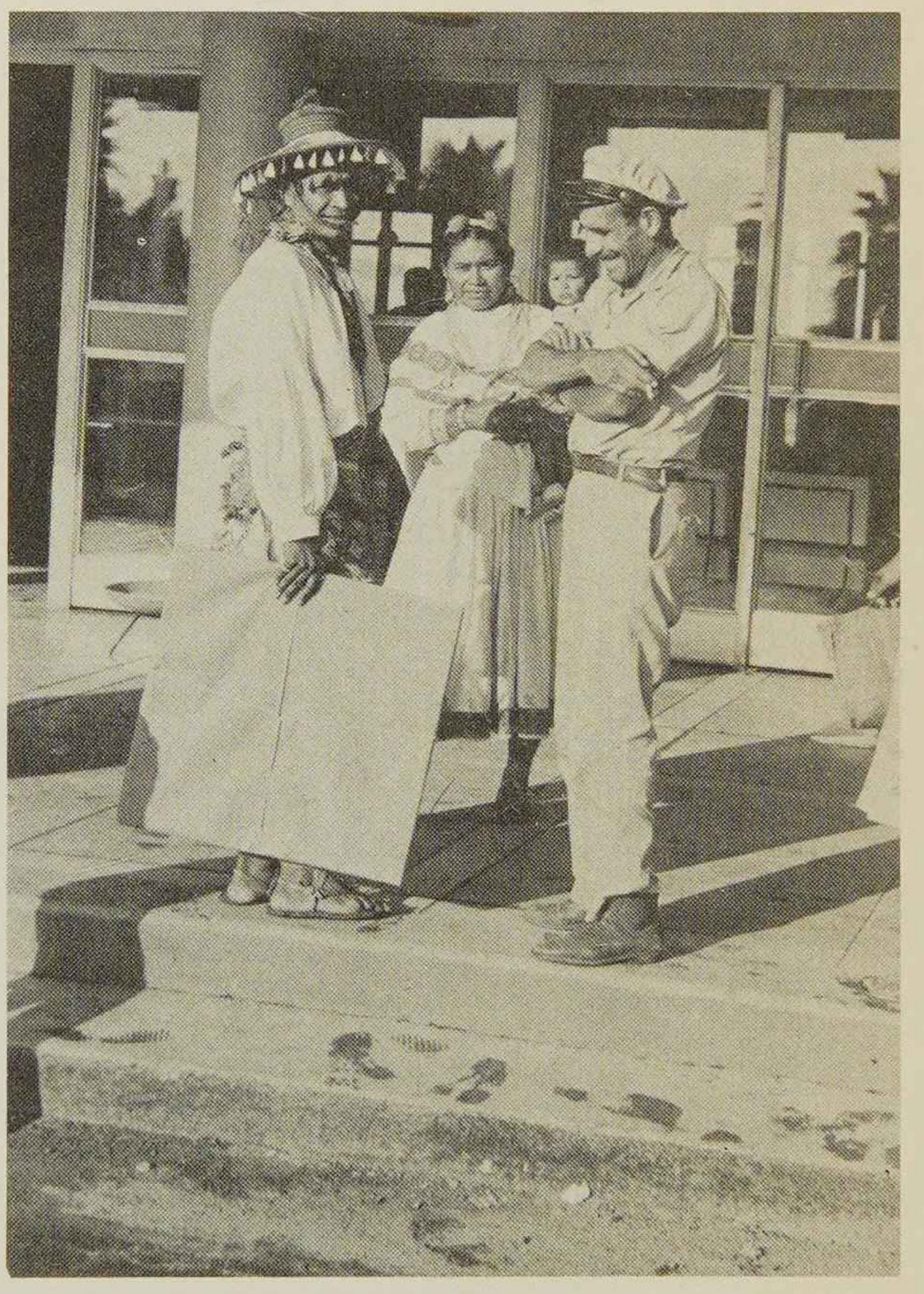
naro, leaping across rocks and cliffs, suggests the same interpretation, a shaman's presentation of his credentials as a mediator.)

Ramón's crossings into another world were always conducted fearlessly and deftly. It might be said that in addition to the everyday world and to the supernatural world typically bridged by shamans, Ramón also had access to the third realm—that of official mestizo society, a complex, urban, industrial nation-state. And here too he moved easily between this threatening, intricate domain and his own people, providing an invaluable bridge. He understood the mechanisms of the modern world very well —how to coax an official out of his rigidity, how to manage money and records, how time was kept and what scheduling meant, what contracts required and promised—and all without the aid of literacy. Ramón regarded these machinations somewhat loftily, as necessary but intrinsically foolish and wasteful. He was quick to point out the superiority and priority of indigenous Huichol culture. The mestizos, too, recognized Huichol superiority, he felt, else why would they adorn their government buildings with the double-headed eagle, an ancient indigenous American motif? This clearly indicated that the Mexicans knew that the country really belonged to the Huichols. And when a mestizo crossed himself he was not only reproducing a Catholic symbol, he was also acknowledging the importance of the four cardinal directions, a significant concern in Huichol religion.

Ramón felt it was natural that as an intermediary between his people and other worlds, he should also intervene for them with public officials, and he often won them favors, concessions, and aid. Regarded by many mestizos in the city as a kind of Indian ambassador, Ramón was called upon to describe his culture to strangers and to demonstrate publicly his arts and skills with ever-increasing frequency.

Those with a cynical turn of mind, on encountering a man like Ramón, are immediately suspicious of his "authenticity" as a spiritual specialist and a spokesman for his people, assuming, perhaps, that any man who can be at home outside his milieu cannot possibly be at one with his own world, or perhaps that a spiritual individual can never function well in mundane matters. There is no justification for this view, either in the abstract or in regard to Ramón. It must be affirmed that there are a few men of faith and experience whose worldliness deepens rather than disturbs their identity. Ramón must surely be considered such a man.

Though identified with his culture most profoundly, Ramón was far from completely absorbed by it. And he was not less questioning and independent in his thinking about Mexican national culture, despite the great power and



prestige it commanded in his life. Consider the following excerpt from a spontaneous speech he made on the plight of the Huichols and their future:

> *In San Andrés Cohamiata, what is it they say to us? When the Fathers come to those Huichols who are the pure indigenous Mexicans, what is it they tell them? Instead of telling them to follow their history, to follow their stories, to live pure lives as Huichols, to be in unity with all, they say, "Be like the Spaniards." The Father wants all of us to be the same. No, I believe that it is not right. On the contrary, he should help them. He should do these things as they should be. So that the Huichol can go on being authentic Huichol. Nowadays, there are Huichols who know how to read. Why all of these things if not to defend our customs, our history, our land, our people?*

* * * *

Many years before, I had witnessed a peculiar piece of behavior which I had not known how to account for, but which suddenly fell into place as I contemplated shamans' public demonstrations of skill in balance. I had been working with a Luiseño Indian shaman on a Southern California reservation, with a man named Domenico.[3] He was an eccentric fellow and it was, as usual, difficult to distinguish the cultural from the psychological factors in his work. He was known far and wide for his curing skills. North Americans, Mexicans, Indians from other tribes, even Europeans came to him for an assortment of treatments and advice.

Domenico consulted only on weekends. Patients would begin to gather on Friday afternoon, assembling in the dusty clearing before his little shack, bringing sleeping bags and pallets, wearing white to signal their faith in him. I was struck by the fact that early Friday afternoons, Domenico climbed to the roof of his shack and stood quietly without moving for long periods of time, one leg pulled up and curled into the crook of the other, gazing toward the road. I assumed that he was looking for his clients, though it seemed odd that he would risk life and limb by standing on the fragile, tarpaper-roofed little structure, when he could have easily walked up a little hill beyond his house for a better vantage point. Perhaps he thought it unseemly to appear over-eager. I dismissed it.

Later it occurred to me that he was balancing there. His culture and society were terribly disrupted at the time I met him. His people had been dispersed and assimilated. Their beliefs were fragmented and vague. I believe now that there was no conscious intention in his action, and that had I thought to ask, he would not have been able to explain what he was doing. In retrospect, however, it seems clear that he was demonstrating his mediating capacity by showing himself to be a specialist in balance.

Shamanic balance is a particular stance. It is not a balance achieved by synthesis, nor a static condition achieved by resolving oppositions. It is not a compromise. Rather it is a state of acute tension, the kind of tension which exists, as Rafael J. Gonzáles once put it in personal correspondence, when two unqualified forces encounter each other, meeting headlong, and are not reconciled but held teetering on the verge of chaos, not in reason but in experience. It is a position with which the Westerner, schooled in the Aristotelian tradition, is extremely uncomfortable. Unlike the view of highest good as temperance, moderation, the Golden Mean, this shamanic view gives us few guidelines for action. Unfortunately, we Westerners have come to feel that enduring this sort of tension is not really necessary, that somehow it is possible to allow one pole to exist and prevail without its opposite. We seek good without evil, pleasure without pain, God without the devil, and love without hate. But the shaman reminds us of the impossibility of such a condition, for he stands at the juncture of opposing forces, the *coincidentia oppositorum,* and his dialectical task is continually to move between these opposites without resolving them.

The shamanic journey always involves three elements. The shaman sets forth from the realm of the mundane, voyages to the supernatural, and then returns to the world of everyday. His

ultimate message is that the connection yet exists, between the world as we know it now and the world as it was before Creation marked the primordial divisions that destroyed the mythical paradisal past. Since that rupture, mortality, the human condition, is a state of division, separation, and loss, symbolically mended by the shaman when he undertakes his magical flights. He himself creates unity and at the same time stands for a continuing condition of unity between the known and the unknown world.

The shaman cannot fail to go forth to other worlds, nor can he fail to return, and still be a shaman. He must venture out and come back, and the passage is a perilous one. There is always the possibility of the loss of balance, either by not returning to this world or by being unable or unwilling to leave it. Entrances and

A yarn painting depicting the shaman setting forth on his magical journey, wearing his deer antlers and ascending to the heavens

exits are hedged with rituals and symbols, for these are points of potential disaster. The shaman travels to the edge of the social order each time he undertakes these journeys. He enters non-form, the underlying chaos of the unconceptualized domain which has not yet been made a part of the cosmos by the cultural activity of naming and defining. With each crossing over, he gains power, as do all persons who travel to the edges of order, for as Mary Douglas reminds us, such contacts with the boundaries of conceptualization are sources of power as well as danger.[4] Shamans are liminal people, at the thresholds of form, forever betwixt and between.

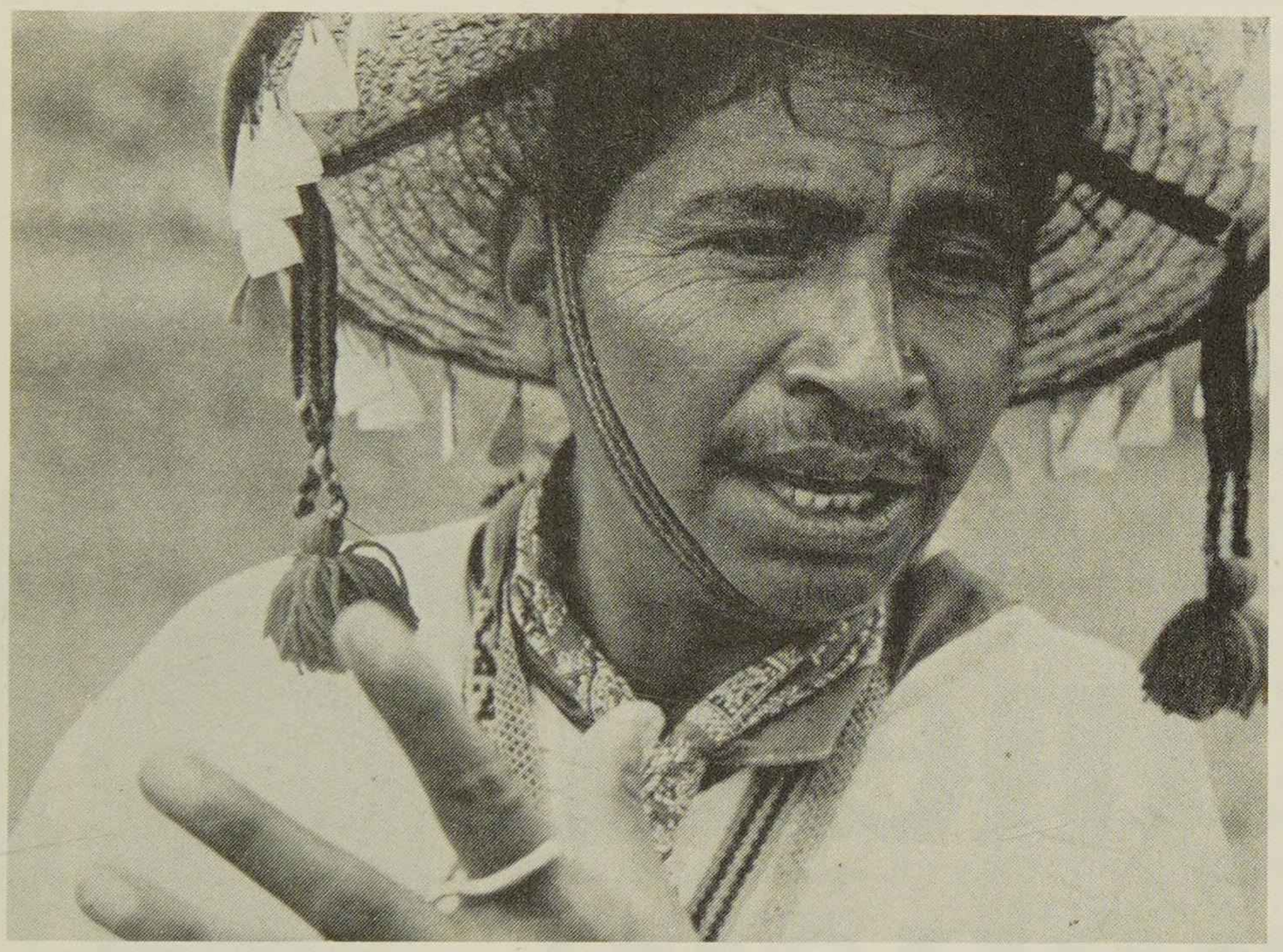
It may be assumed that the shaman is continually tempted to remain in that other realm to which he alone has ready access, for a condition of prehuman bliss and unity is an essential ingredient of all paradise myths—Valhalla, Eden, Elysium—all symbolizing the state which existed before the world began. There, there was no hunger, weariness, or appetite, and men knew no disharmony. They were innocent, sexless, without consciousness, and undifferentiated. It was a condition which had to be left behind, and since then men have been mortal as we know them now, with all the burdens of being human, reproducing by copulation, giving birth in labor, eating, working, suffering, and dying, forever tormented by the memory of what has been lost. Bliss is lost at the moment of primordial splitting, after which nothing can be the same.

Shamans must be dialecticians, agile and capable of maintaining exactly the right relations between the opposites they bridge. They may not value the rewards of one world over the other. The desire for wealth and position in the mundane realm, and for perpetual ecstasy in the supernatural, are threats to the shamanic enterprise. Imbalance is fatal, for it jeopardizes their precarious poise. This need for a sense of proportion and balance of values, comes to us in many forms, variously inflected but constant in its meaning.

Presently we find the various functions of shamans distributed among numerous specialists: priests, poets, artists, psychotherapists, doctors, teachers, and metaphysicians. Separated and fragmented in this way, the whole point of the shamanic role is lost, for the shaman's function is precisely that of integration. The retrieval of wholeness represented by the shaman's journey is impossible in these conditions, for no single specialist can attain the total vision of mankind as simultaneously part of the present and of the past; connected to his own childhood, his own unconscious, his social matrix; inseparable in body and mind.

The natural, curative power in recovering wholeness is implied in the root connection between the family of words—"whole," *"Heil,"* "heal," *"heilig,"* "holy," "hale," "healthy." They recall that the integration of individual and group, attitude and body, spirit and matter, conscious and unconscious processes, chaos and cosmos, private and public belief forms the foundation of all folk healing systems. At their root, they acknowledge a common causality for man and nature. The recent, intense interest in folk medicine and shamanism bespeaks a fresh sympathy for that vision, and we are now witnessing the rediscovery of the common basis of religion and medicine. Western medicine is becoming increasingly cognizant of its connection to religion and more and more looks to indigenous health practices as providing more than the warding off of illness. Modern medicine, a system of beliefs as well as a body of applied techniques, may yet come to incorporate precisely that world view within which shamanism originally functioned, and human integration on all levels may re-emerge as the goal and ideal of "the medicine man."

But shamanism has implications beyond



health care, and perhaps in these we find the chief explanation for the burgeoning interest in this obscure and archaic vocation. The shaman reminds us of an alternate world view, a holistic vision in which it is possible to accept, even embrace, ambiguity and paradox. The unknown no longer poses a threat to clarity and order, but gives rise to wonder and the promise of things truly new. And finally, the shaman shows that the quest for meaning, undertaken through myths, symbols, rituals, is an ineluctable human calling. The meanings attained need not be feared as withdrawing us from rational objectivity; rather they are invitations to a fuller way of being, to be used with awareness, selectivity, and attention. Without them we are left bereft in a world destitute of grace and purpose. With them we get our bearings; they are our birthright and treasure, the definitive gift.

The holiness and health in wholeness, the dynamic equilibrium of living life's paradox, and the magical quest for meaning via stories and symbols—these are the shaman's heritage, as enriching and useful now as in the Old Stone Age when he first appeared.

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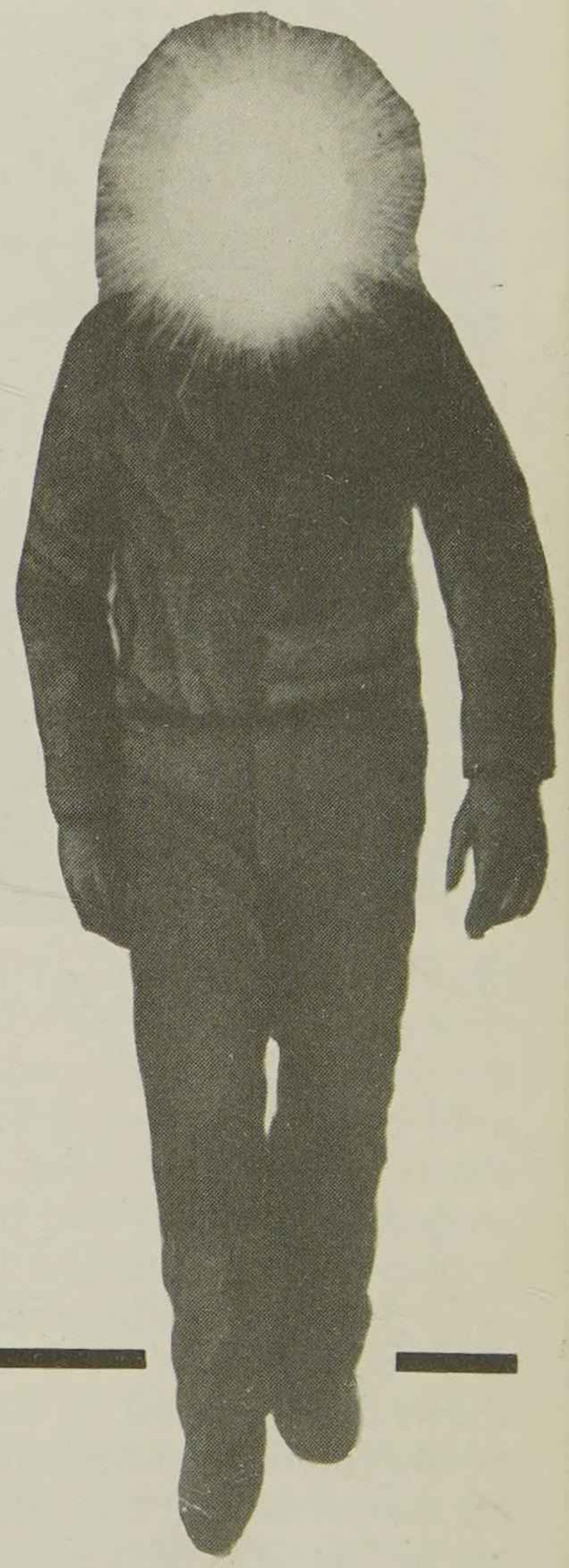
[1]*Mircea Eliade, "The Yearning for Paradise in Primitive Tradition," in* Myth and Mythmaking, *ed. H.A. Murray (New York: Braziller, 1960), pp. 61–75.*

[2]*Mircea Eliade,* Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy, *Bollingen Series LXXVI (New York: Pantheon, 1964).*

[3]*For a fuller description of this case see my article "The doctor as culture hero: The shaman of Rincon,"* Anthropological Quarterly *39 (1966): 60–72.*

[4]*See Mary Douglas,* Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo *(London: Penguin, 1966).*

Taking Castaneda Seriously



Daniel C. Noel

The late Alan Watts used to disarm those academic critics who claimed he was not to be taken seriously by calling himself "a philosophical entertainer"—someone who does not *intend* to be taken seriously. At the same time, Watts' facility for Zen sleight-of-hand seemed geared to stressing the philosophical importance of his kind of levity. The situation with regard to Carlos Castaneda and his "don Juan" writings involves some of the same factors of intention and reaction. Castaneda's tetralogy means to be seen as most serious, even though clowning and trickery pervade it and despite the confusing public persona of its author. Aside from the successive presence of the four books on the bestseller lists, most reviewers and essayists have concluded that *The Teachings of Don Juan, A Separate Reality, Journey to Ixtlan,* and *Tales of Power* do indeed *deserve* to be taken as works of profound and lasting significance. Clearly Castaneda's writing has weathered the satirical

deflation attempted by the parodies which began to appear in the periodicals after the success of the first book. By now the tetralogy itself comes to seem a kind of satire on the culture which could produce the parodies.

Castaneda has his detractors, to be sure. Sharp criticism is aimed especially at his gradual abandonment of value-free detachment in favor of what looks like sheer subjective self-expression. Counterbalancing such negative responses, however, is the extreme praise of a Joseph Chilton Pearce. He finds Carlos "the principal psychological, spiritual, and literary genius of recent generations" and don Juan "the most important paradigm since Jesus."

While most affirmations have been less lavish, some of the parodies and condemnations can also be read as indirect acknowledgments of the volumes' importance. So the reactions finally add up to an agreement with don Juan's remark about don Genaro, a fellow sorcerer in *Tales of Power*. There don Juan advises Carlos to be "very careful and serious-minded about the recommendations made by don Genaro because, although they were funny, they were not a joke."

As far as published commentary goes, then, the question is not really *whether* to be serious-minded about Castaneda's recommendations, but *how:* How do we best see what his work means? We need to explore alternative paths of explanation.

And this necessity holds notwithstanding the real danger that our pondering may become ponderous, inappropriately solemn rather than properly thoughtful. It is true that in searching out something so lofty-sounding as "interpretive options" we run the risk of forgetting to laugh at what remains a very funny series of literary escapades. Moreover, we may ourselves become fit targets for the caustic wit of don Juan if our choice of interpretations turns out to be heavy-handed. Still, this fate must be tempted; the danger of mishandling Castaneda's meanings with an anti-intellectual nervous giggle is even greater. For better or worse, most of us are *already* interpreting Castaneda in ways which unwittingly prefer one cognitive path to the exclusion of others, so a deliberate mindlessness simply will not do for us. It would be, and is, inauthentic to refuse all careful reflection on the tetralogy's words when our laughter is filled with ideological presumption.

In other words, although a truly Buddhist "no-mindedness" might qualify us to titter in lieu of proposing explanations, few of us can actually claim such a clean mental slate. Therefore, we are forced back to the intellectual imperative of taking Castaneda seriously and to the difficult questions that entails. Do we even know how to *begin* exploring alternative paths of explanation? Where are these paths? How do we find them?

Perhaps a path, or a clue to finding one, is already laid out for us by what Carlos—as a "character" *in* Castaneda's books—does to explain the bizarre phenomena he experiences, the nonordinary reality he encounters with and without chemical assistance. We note that in the tetralogy, as his apprenticeship to the aged Yaqui proceeds, Carlos sometimes calls upon particular conceptual resources to help him make sense of what happens to him. Georg Simmel, structuralism, Juan Ramon Jimenez, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* phenomenology, Cesar Vallejo—these are the specific social theorists, methodologies, poets, and spiritual visions Carlos appeals to in the four books.

On the other hand, such tools are never used in a systematic way, except conceivably in the "Structural Analysis" section of the first book (where the total absence of footnotes and the notable *failure* of the analysis suggest a system within a surrealistic dream or schizophrenic episode). The fact is, the anthropological training and philosophical perspectives Carlos employs to cope interpretively are scarcely spelled out. Furthermore, it appears that all explanatory resources, implicit and general or specific and obvious, to which Carlos has recourse in the books become the *bull* of don Juan's teachings as much as the keys to understanding those teachings.

Where does this leave us? If Carlos' attempts to explain his experience are unavailing, how can we learn from *him* how to find the most promising angles of vision on Castaneda's books? The clue Carlos' own efforts appear to offer is further complicated by the sense the writings themselves foster that the reader is

superior to Carlos. His reasoning can seem inadequate to rationalist and irrationalist alike. Indeed, we are hard pressed, at times, to see any virtue whatsoever in following Carlos' uncertain lead.

But we should challenge our feelings of superiority here. Not only are they uncomfortably similar to Carlos' smug attitude in approaching don Juan; they may also prevent us from appropriating the lesson of Carlos' failures. The clue is complex, admittedly. Nevertheless, the kinds of adventures Carlos has in Castaneda's pages provide our best beginnings for seeing how to be serious-minded about these books. That is, what goes on in Castaneda's text is our initial access to understanding what they recount.

If we look, then, to the major motifs of Carlos' apprenticeship in the tetralogy, four paths of explanation or interpretive options open up. Others, less clearly marked, present themselves as a result of exploring the first four.

Psychedelic Experience

First of all, we need to examine the overwhelming influence, early in Carlos' apprenticeship, of the psychotropic power plants. It is undeniable that the initial sales appeal of the books can largely be attributed to this emphasis. Many a drug-oriented reader was "hooked" by it, only to find with Carlos that don Juan's knowledge is in no way dependent upon the ingestion of Jimson weed, mushrooms, or peyote. The retrospective revelations of *Journey to Ixtlan* would seem to have hit the reading public just as the psychedelic absolutisms of the 1960s were fading. But despite reading there that the long hallucinogenic tutelage detailed in the first two books was only undertaken grudgingly by don Juan after realizing Carlos' insensitivity, many Castaneda aficionados stubbornly see psychotropic plants as the only path to a knowledge of what the tetralogy has to teach.

Do such readers fail to register anything in Castaneda's chronicle which conflicts with their ideology? Or are they confessing that *their* insensitivity to transchemical lessons is even greater than Carlos'? It is unclear. In any case, it will probably remain true that in outright contradiction of the narrative, the four books will often be read as riddles whose solution is straightforward: Turn on, get off, and *be* (here, now) the man of knowledge Carlos could not become in almost a decade and a half of note-taking.

Don Juan's intermittent critique of intellectuality, it should be added, is too tempting a weapon to pass up in this acid-headed arsenal of rationalizations. As implied above, an inauthentic mindlessness, a *false* sense of *in*security, is a powerful lure today. Perhaps drug-tripping, once a promising avenue to honest confrontation with the powers and mysteries, has now become a part of the very cultural reality we are advised by Castaneda's writing to relativize. Such world-stopping advice, as a don Juan represents it, is never welcomed. It is much easier to presume, settled comfortably within a culture (or counterculture), that one is an impeccable warrior than to acknowledge one's apprenticeship to an apprentice.

Drawn by Dick Oden and erased by Carlos Castaneda, August, 1972.

Anthropology

But if what we are dealing with are texts, not plants, it is nonetheless the case that the texts do refer to the use of natural hallucinogens in an alien cultural context. And here we have a body of anthropological scholarship to supply

us with edifying parallels. Carlos is far from the first researcher to do field work among peyote-using native Americans. In fact, he mentions at the outset of the third book that he read reports on such research during his initial year of hunting for don Juan's supposed information on medicinal plants.

Unfortunately, in light of his patent lack of success in understanding what he viewed as don Juan's "system," Carlos' anthropological acumen poses more questions for us than it answers. Does his *mis*understanding teach us that by gathering the *right* data on, say, hallucinogens and shamanism, we can avoid the naiveté so obvious to us as we look back at Carlos' early apprenticeship? Or can we take it that no amount of mere *information,* however sophisticated, will make us warriors—or even help us see what becoming one might mean?

It seems that for Carlos, "the facts" about power substances were no more an open sesame to Juanist knowledge than was his actual ingestion of the plants themselves. Moreover, don Juan's isolation from almost everything that is identifiably Yaqui in culture hardly argues for cultural anthropology as an especially privileged vantage point for seeing the tetralogy. Certainly Carlos considers himself an ethnographer in all his endeavors, but what he encounters just as clearly pushes us all beyond an *exclusive* reliance upon anthropological patterns and precedents.

Psychology

Castaneda's books give us "participant-observation" with a vengeance, the hyphenation of the term as readily reflecting the scholar's deepening schizophrenia as his careful field methodology. Such a cleavage, induced by don Juan in Carlos' sober mindset, may suggest to the reader that a reconciling comprehension is best sought in the forces of contemporary *psychological* thought. Surely the recent insights of social psychology and psychopharmacology into the nature of human consciousness are pertinent to seeing Castaneda's point. Once again, however, the path may not lead to the understanding we need.

The problem is that the results of biofeedback experiments or research on "psychophenomena" can turn out to be cultural baggage, too—the Altered States of America: a rhetoric and a reality in which one can be trapped at least as insidiously as in the world of sorcery. Like the data of anthropology, the concepts of psychology are called into play by a reading of Castaneda only to be called into question. They are *necessary* to explain the tetralogy, but insufficient to do so alone.

In short, neither psychedelic experience nor the two academic disciplines with which we usually conceptualize it, despite their evidently close connection to the apprenticeship narrated in the four books, provides a broad enough perspective to encompass the issues which confront anyone who reflects seriously upon Castaneda's writing. These issues—they involve cultural relativity, the sociology of knowledge, the philosophy of interpretation itself—require to be dealt with in an interdisciplinary approach.

Body Awareness

The fourth path implied by Castaneda's text would appear to contradict the impressions gained by exploring the first three. For the sensitivities of the body seem primal enough to outstrip any and all purely intellectual disciplines in taking the measure of don Juan's knowledge. Carlos' experience urges upon him a "body-knowledge" which Western culture has generally repressed as part of its psychological denial of death. The tetralogy shows that, knowing its own ever-imminent end in a way the mind finds very hard to reason out, the body can also interact with its physical surroundings more variously than we can conceive.

In actuality, this body awareness is not a matter of learning unusual styles of breathing, standing, running, or even focusing one's eyes *per se*. Don Juan's teaching, as Castaneda describes it, puts such experiential techniques together with an attitude toward the processes of perception to form a thoroughly convincing picture of the metaphorical way we create our worlds. That is, the minutely coached environmental interactions of Carlos' apprenticeship add up to a physiological parable. The need to use terms like "metaphorical" and

"parable" here is owing to our pervasively intellectualized vantage point.

Aside from the fact of our dependence on language in writing and reading about the body, we have to acknowledge that for most of us our own bodies are a very intellectual affair. Like the prereflective and preverbal possibilities of psychedelic experience, body awareness is fitted out with abstract ideologies—"bioenergetics," "structural integration," "martial arts" are some of the labels—even when we try to get at it most directly. These ideological garments no doubt feature zippers and buttons which allow, even encourage, easier access to our essential nakedness. But while we still wear them we must admit that Carlos' body comes to be aware of playful dogs, drooling gnats, burned clumps of desert bush, or fluttering moths in a manner *we* could not now sustain.

To sum up: As long as we seek explanations to Castaneda's work with minds that need to do all their own knowing, body awareness (or what it presents us) cannot be taken literally. Such is our culturally trained incapacity that, for instance, "poetry" and "imagination"—the etymology here involves image-making—are the most accurate words we have for conveying to one another the *power* of Carlos' eyes actually to transform ordinary natural objects, to breathe life into them. It certainly will not do, by the way, to call what Carlos sees illusions, hallucinations, or tricks of the eye. The physical ability don Juan teaches him is meant to be exercised even *after* he realizes that Mescalito is "only" a dog, the guardian is "only" a gnat, the beaked mammal is "only" a burned bush, and knowledge is "only" a moth.

The fourth path thus proves to be no alternative to an interdisciplinary effort at interpretation, but an additional challenge to participant-observers of Castaneda's writings. Or rather, the stress on body awareness finally suggests that whether we draw upon a combination of intellectual methodologies or try to avoid them all, there is an irreducible elusiveness to don Juan's knowledge. In a simile offered by the first book, what we are seeking is like "dust particles in the eyelashes, or the blood vessels in the cornea of the eye, a worm-like shape that can be seen as long as one is not looking at it directly." Because the simile is itself based on a concrete physical experience it ought to have pointed up for us how bodily as well as mental paths of explanation must be indirect. But in case we read on through the tetralogy with the growing hope that the body is the bedrock goal of our seeking, the grounded and graspable center of Castaneda's seriousness, don Juan undeceives us in *Tales of Power* by telling Carlos that he cannot understand the teachings if he thinks he is "a solid body."

And so it seems that both the abstract vastness of emerging interdisciplinary concerns and the concrete minutiae of Carlos' "physical education" take us away from the middling literal meaning we should like to have for Castaneda's work. Indeed, they both propose as central the sort of evanescently "symbolic" possibilities we have been trained to overlook.

By the same token, the power of the tetralogy is that *in reading it* we are dramatically in-

volved in these very possibilities to such an extent that we are freed, however fleetingly, from the cultural pressure to find the plain truth, the unambiguous doctrines, of don Juan's way. What this in turn implies is that the interpretive resources which can most effectively *maintain* this sense of possibility and pluralistic openness *after we stop* reading can probably be of great help in our quest for an explanation of the books.

Fact, Fiction, Literary Reality

This raises a related point about the controversy over whether Castaneda's writing is straight documentary reportage, as he claims, or a purely fictional narrative, as certainly cannot be *dis*proven with the hard evidence at hand.

The debate should be considered salutary. It contributes to understanding the writings because it tends to replicate in the way we look back at the books from the *outside* some of the same ambiguity Carlos confronts *within* them, the wonder and terror we, too, experience as we are caught up uncritically in the act of reading. The surprising interpretive relevance of this dispute—its tendency to undermine our confident categorization of the writings as *either* fact or fiction—also means that any specifically literary expertise will give us important guidance when we come to reflect upon our reading of Castaneda.

It has already been mentioned that the books are texts, not plants, but literary-critical tools help us explore more deeply the implications of *this* elusive actuality. Words are the only psychotropic agents Castaneda gives us, and the black marks on his pages are our eyes' only path through his desert. What kind of writing does this anthropologist apprentice us to? Is Carlos' multistaged confessional narrative the next step in the history of ethnography, or do we find that his social-scientific research notes are "in fact," "in reality," a further development in the novel, an ultimate innovative fiction which suspends unto mis-shelving even the disbelief of library cataloguers?

"Illusion," says the literary theorist Northrop Frye, "is whatever is fixed and definable," and one of Wallace Stevens' poetic adages states the obverse: "Reality is not what it is. It consists of the many realities which it can be made into." These literary insights come close to specifying the relativity and open-endedness embodied in Castaneda's texts. Faced with that which refuses to be fixed and defined as either fact or fiction, we readers are edged toward the situation of the warrior as described in *Tales of Power*. The warrior does not merely believe; he "*has* to believe"—deliberately choosing to accept as true what he just as consciously knows might *not* be true at all. This again recalls one of Stevens' central insights into the relation of imagination and reality in a time bereft of naïve religious faith: We are obliged to "believe without belief, beyond belief." If Castaneda has written a sacred text, a new generation of biblical scholars may be required to unravel the appeal of its *challenge* to our credulity.

Language and the Metaphysical

In addition to the controversy about the *veracity* of Castaneda's words, there is the question don Juan repeatedly raises about the *value* of words in general. It not only recurs in regard to the intricate intimacies of body-knowledge but also becomes, as we approach the end of the tetralogy, a profound matter of mystical theology.

Don Juan does not, it must be stressed, endorse any cut-rate denunciation of language or champion a conventionally unitive mysticism. The entire apprenticeship, after all, is built upon conversations, and in the final book don Juan's explanations are invariably prefaced by phrases which suggest the necessary, even if insufficient, place of language in the way of a warrior. Likewise, there is no "true reality" behind or above the ordinary one in don Juan's teachings, no "proper abode" for man's "immortal soul" beyond the *maya* of gross matter. The intricate "sorcerers' explanation" about the *tonal* and the *nagual* is a fit topic for a metaphysician's skills, to be sure, but it issues in paradox rather than in a positive assertion of otherworldly absolutism.

"Let's say that God is the tablecloth," don Juan tells Carlos, completing a list of the components of the *tonal* which admits no language Carlos can conceive, however cosmic, as ap-

plicable to the *nagual,* "the area beyond the boundaries of the table." The late Protestant theologian Paul Tillich was forced to speak similarly of "the God beyond the God of theism" and once declared that the only nonsymbolic statement one could make about this transtheistic God is that all statements about "Him" are symbolic. This complicates, but does not deny, the positive role of religious language, and St. Augustine's remark that "God should not be said to be ineffable, for when this is said something is said" also bears repeating—especially when Lao-tse's classic *dictum* downgrading "the Tao which can be spoken" is quoted too confidently.

The silent power for which don Juan's pedagogy prepares his apprentice is never far from the narrations the two men exchange, or from the internal dialogue to which Carlos always returns in reflecting upon what has befallen him during its interruption. Clearly what happens to the *reader* is radically dependent on language. But once having emphasized the indispensable linguistic scaffolding, must we not acknowledge that the structure erected by Castaneda's words transcends those words in a manner we can call "mystical"?

Perhaps. (Which is a way of saying we cannot presume to jump off the final mountain with Carlos without having reached his precipice of learning.)

Negative Mysticism and the Postmodern

In any case, the *negative* mysticism epitomized by a Buddhism focused on "nothingness" or "openness" *(sunyata)* seems the only pertinent variety to apply, and it gives us no firmer foothold, no surer path, than don Juan's teachings themselves. At this point we perhaps recall don Juan's forthright testimony in the first book, where the old sorcerer reminisces that none of the many paths he has taken has led him anywhere.

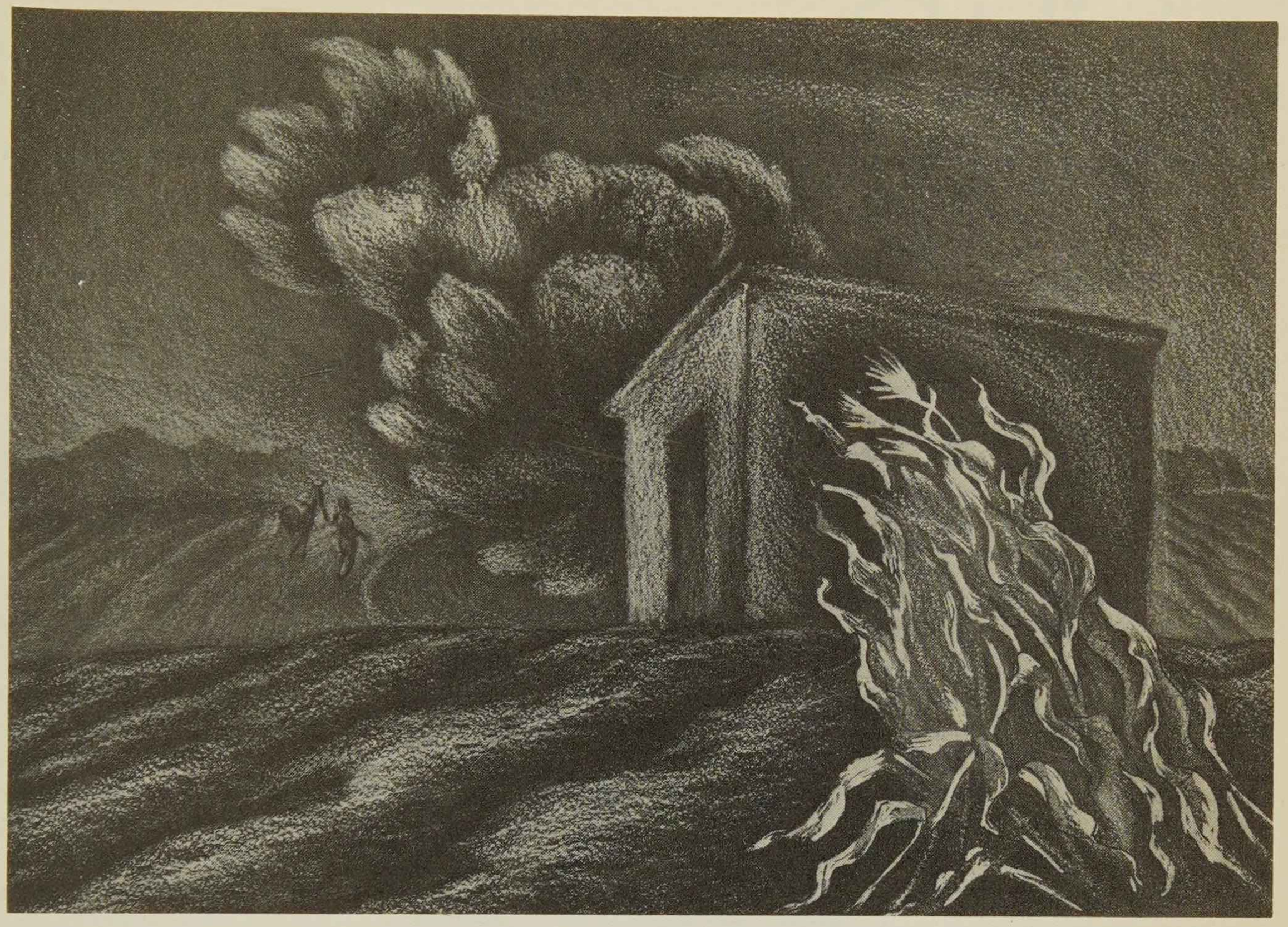
Do the paths of explanation we are exploring get us anywhere? By attending to Castaneda's texts we have determined that the appropriate manner of taking him seriously is to seek an interpretation which is interdisciplinary, sensitive to the poetry of our carnal experience in the ecosphere, indirect in approaching its object, faithful to the indeterminacy we encounter as we read. But does this not lead us *away* from all explanation, into the paradoxical, the ineffable, the unknown?

Not quite; and besides, what alternative do we have? The serious reader eventually realizes that no nonordinary occurrence anywhere in the four books is left without its *possible* ordinary, naturalistic explanation in terms of "misperception," "suggestibility," "the manipulation of cues," "hypnosis," "conditioning," "wishful thinking," "drug-induced states," and so on. Like a compressed reliving of Western modernity, every "transcendent" vision *can* be debunked, if we wish, and reduced to what are really quite prosaic secular categories. The problem—and part of what makes Castaneda's texts *post*modern—comes with the striking discovery that these perfectly accessible interpretations simply will not suffice for us. The option of a clear and distinct rational explanation of all that Carlos undergoes fails us precisely in its success. Just as Carlos had to pursue the entire apprenticeship in order to understand why his success as a social scientist in *The Teachings of Don Juan* was humanly empty, without "heart," we may need to traverse the paths of explanation long enough to learn, with Nietzsche, that a "will to *conscious* illusion" can validly follow the skeptical destruction of unconsciously held superstitions and pieties.

If Castaneda's books lead us to be disillusioned with our modern disillusionments, we may be ready to accept something akin to the sorcerers' explanation in *Tales of Power:* a mode of interpretation matching what we found to be the upshot of our explorations into explaining the tetralogy, a mode of interpretation deliberately bordering on the paradoxical, the ineffable, the unknown.

The Sorcerers' Last Trick: Self-Knowledge

Throughout the four books Carlos' assumptions about knowledge, about what comprises adequate interpretation, are under the attack of don Juan's sorcery. However, when we see in our reading that it is not exactly an *ir*rational explanation which is being proposed as the "correct" alternative, we begin actually to feel the sense of don Juan's own solitary perspective. "Rational explanation," "fact," "ordinary reality" whisper in one ear; "irrational explanation," "fiction," "nonordinary reality" whisper in the other. Our minds go out of their familiar focus, the clear distinctions disappear. We now see that surrounding these distinctions are determinants other than correctness for our relationships with everything from a gnat to the *nagual*. "Intent, "purpose," "predilection," "will"—these are some of the Juanist terms indicating a revised orientation on the path. In this process, as Carlos learned, the seeker of



F.D. Fonsch: Nostalgic Memory

explanations finds himself tricked into self-knowledge.

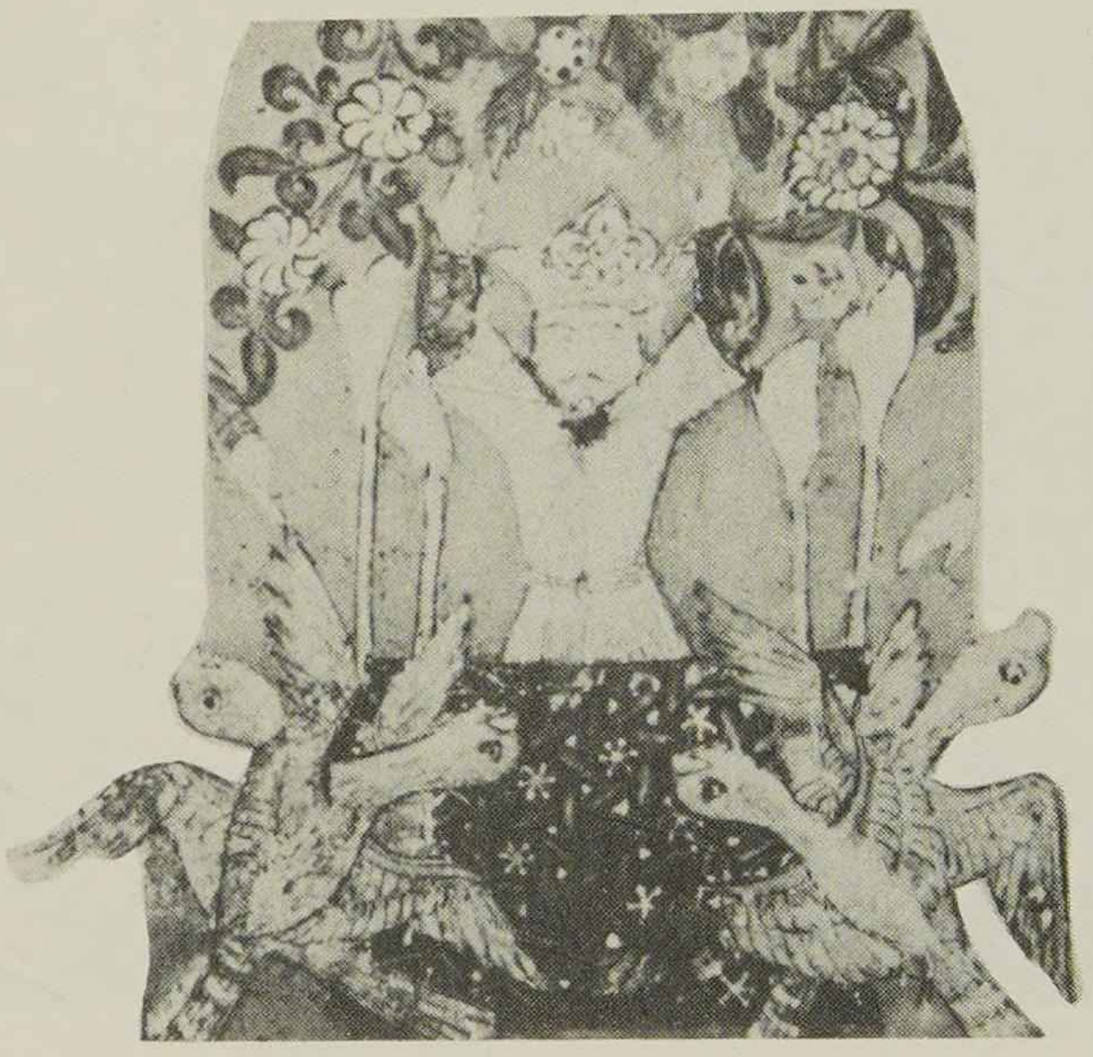
And what of the various disciplines the tetralogy suggests as applicable to itself? What of the anthropology, the psychology, the literary theory, the metaphysics, not to mention the psychedelic speculations and body awareness?

They are not to be discarded. In fact, such an absolutist reaction would reflect one of the attitudes we are to be tricked *out* of along the way. It is rather a matter of these disciplines clarifying their own foundations and contexts in the attempt to answer the puzzle posed by don Juan and his cohorts. This, too, is a kind of self-knowledge, and no doubt a part of the reflexive and personalizing direction Western fields of thought are taking in order to move beyond the characteristic dilemmas of modernity. But this is to state the situation too abstractly, as if *we* were not the ones doing the thinking, the students, in one way or the other, of these disciplines.

Don Juan says it is constantly necessary to remember that any total orientation, even sorcery, is "only a path," and that the prerequisite for keeping this clearly in mind is a "disciplined life." The meaning of discipline in one's life—including the life of the mind—may finally be what is at stake here. For with this discipline, the old sorcerer suggests, one may find among the million paths—including the paths of explanation—one's own path with a heart, the path which goes nowhere and yet makes for "a joyful journey." Even a glimpse of such a path would be a far from meager reward for a careful and serious-minded look at the writings of Carlos Castaneda. And, following the glimpse, laughter might be our next step.

EPICYCLES: STORIES, TEXTS & PARABLES

EPICYCLE I



The Sins of Shah Kavus

After his victory over the Mazandarani army, Shah Kavus enjoyed prosperity for many years. But it was prosperity itself which led the Shah into the paths of wickedness, and all that was needed was the honeyed words of Eblis (the Devil) to lead him astray.

The fall of Shah Kavus happened in this way.

One day Eblis spoke to the Divs (demons), who suffered persecutions under the reign of Shah Kavus. "What we need," he told them, "is a clever Div, one familiar with the rites and ceremonies of discourse with kings. He must lead the king from the paths of righteousness, away from the pure gods, and in this manner stain his repute and bring him to dishonor."

Few of the Divs wanted to face Shah Kavus, but at last one whose heart was blacker than the rest stepped forward and offered his services in the temptation of the Shah. Eblis took this Div and instructed him carefully, according to a plan: a poisoned barb which, should it take

hold in the mind of the Shah, would work its venom into his very soul.

One morning, the Div waited for Shah Kavus at a time when the illustrious king was accustomed to go hunting. The Div kissed the ground before the king and presented him with flowers. Then he spoke:

"Your kingly majesty knows no equal in this world. Indeed, your splendor deserves the revolving sky for a throne. The whole of the earth is subject to your rule; the mighty are as sheep, and you are their shepherd. Ah, but the fame of kings is short. Many have been the rulers of the world, but they all lacked that one achievement which would have guaranteed the eternity of their glory. The sky itself holds that secret, the sun keeps it to himself; and that secret is, by what means does the sun revolve, sinking and rising? What are day and night? How does the moon change? Who controls the setting in motion of the cycle of days? Now that the earth is submissive to your command, only add the heavens and eternal glory will be yours."

The heart of Shah Kavus was led astray by these words, and he lost the power of reason. He thought, "The Creator shows no interest in His creation, but both earth and heaven are my interest. It is true: I must learn the secrets of the heavens as well, and make my glory everlasting."

The Shah, in the foolishness of his mind, brooded long over these matters, considering how it might be possible to ascend into the heavens. He made inquiries of the distance from the earth to the moon, and the answer of the astronomers led his thought to absurdities. He struck upon the following scheme.

The Shah sent out, by cover of night and the sleep of men, a group of warriors who made their way to the nests of eagles. A large number of eaglets were carried away from the nests, and these the Shah raised for a year and a month, feeding them exclusively on whole lambs, until they were as strong as lions, and could easily bear up the full burden of a horned fighting-ram.

Then, the Shah had made for himself a throne, built of aloes-wood and fastened with gold, to the sides of which were attached long poles. On the poles he tied legs of mutton, and taking four strong eagles, he bound them to the throne in such a way that the legs of mutton were always before their eyes, and always beyond their reach. Seating himself in the throne, he waited until the eagles felt the pangs of hunger. Then, lunging forward at the mutton, they rose into the air, bearing with them the throne and Shah Kavus. Thus did the king mean to ascend into the heavens.

The time came, however, when the eagles tired, and their wings failed them. Down from the sky they came, and the dark clouds, dragging with them the Shah and his throne, coming to rest at last in a forest in the country of China. There, lost, humiliated and grief-stricken, the Shah rested for a time and devoted himself to prayers and adoration of the Creator, until Rustam rescued him. An age he spent in prayer and austerities, giving up most of his treasures, until at last the Creator granted him forgiveness.

The Way of the Wizard

Robert S. Ellwood, Jr.

Not long ago, an order headquartered in Pasadena devoted to the practice of ceremonial magic[1] performed an evocation of a spirit called Vassago. This entity is one of the seventy-two chief spirits listed, with instructions for calling them up, in the centuries-old magical handbook called the "Goetia" or "Lesser Key of Solomon."[2] Here we are told that Vassago is a Mighty Prince, but of a Good Nature, and able to declare things Past and to Come, and to discover things Hid or Lost. The leader of the order told me that he had worked with Vassago a number of times, and had indeed found him a well-disposed personality, but rather talkative: his advice had twice helped to restore children separated from their parents.

The evocation of Vassago, enacted as a demonstration for another order and described to me, followed a typical ceremonial magic format. A Magic Circle eight feet in diameter was placed on the floor. (Nine feet is the correct dimension, but was not practical on this occasion.) Outside the circle was a triangle. During a magical operation the operator, receiver, assistants, and initiated spectators stand within the circle.

The operator is the magician who summons the spirits. The receiver's job is to mediate contact with the evoked entity—he or she may be merely aware of the emotional force generated by the contact, or have some audial or visual awareness of the presence, or even communicate messages from it mediumistically. The roles of operator and receiver have sometimes been combined, and there are still magicians who work solo, evoking and then communicating with spirits themselves. In some modern magical orders, however, as in ancient neoplatonic theurgy, operator and receiver are a team.

In the demonstration, the magician, robed and bearing magic wand and sword, began his work by circumambulating the circle. He then entered the circle with his retinue, first banish-

ing any remnant entities within it. He gestured with the magic sword, which controls spirits, commanding them to depart.

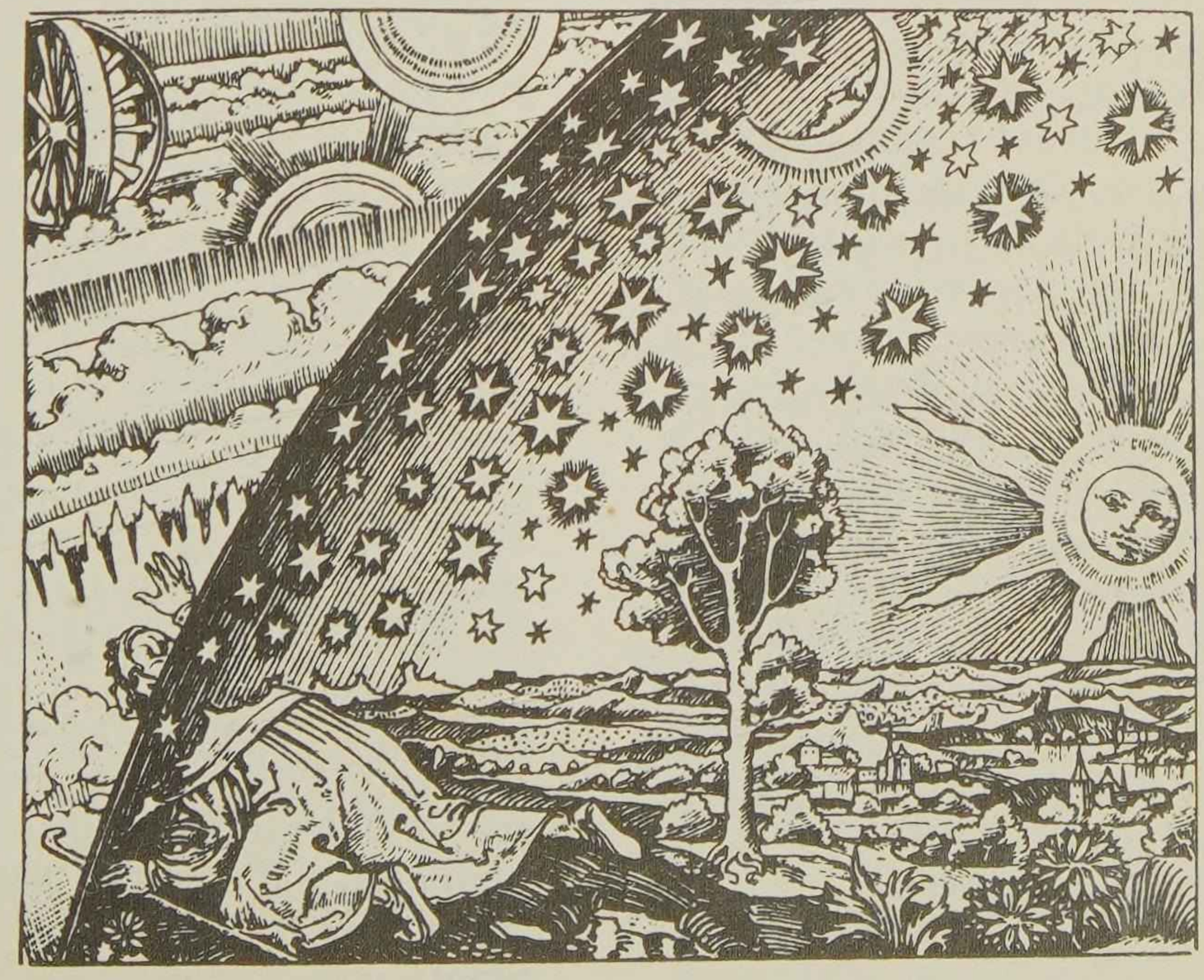
He then began the work of summoning Vassago, the Mighty Prince. The operator placed on the receiver's breast a "lamin" or inscribed thin metal plate bearing the "sigil" or symbol of Vassago. He burned incense, and candles in the spirit's color. Holding the wand with a ruling gesture, he recited in tones of authority a verbose conjuration requesting Vassago, in the names of the Most High, to appear and visit his invokers in peace.

The conjuration is repeated until a manifestation begins to make itself felt; in this case, the receiver evidenced contact on the third recitation. But he was inexperienced, and reported only a feeling of the entity's presence. Sometimes the receiver's face reportedly changes to resemble that of the visitant, and he or she utters delphic words of communication from him. There is even what is known as possession trance, when the receiver stands in the triangle rather than the circle to serve as a medium for the spirit.

After the conjuration, the visiting spirit must be dismissed in proper form. This is most important, for a conjured guest from the other side who remained around after a rite was completed could cause untold problems. Then the members of the order debrief each other and record what happened during the rite in their magical journal.

II

It should not be supposed that the importance of ceremonial magic for its practitioners rests wholly on whether or not a dramatic contact is made. Performing the ritual itself, with its atmosphere of mystery, emotional fervor, and entry into an alternative world, has for them a



cathartic effect independent of any such result.[3] One magician of another order once told me that the magical operation is like a temporary therapeutic schizophrenia. The intense stimulation of the rite lowers the ordinary threshold of awareness to permit contact with dimensions of reality which, one might say, have not yet solidified enough for ordinary perception. The same informant said that the practice of magic recalls the sense of wonder one had as a child in seeing fresh and new the splendor of sunsets, and in reading fairy tales with their hints that reality may not be quite as prosaic as it seems, and that marvelous experiences may be waiting for those who know how to open the closets where they are stored.

Perhaps, as R. D. Laing would have us believe, it is really ordinary society and ordinary ways of cognition that are schizophrenic.[4] Experiences, which from the biased vantage of a sick world look pathological, may really be ways a person is learning to cope with such a world by developing sources of strength independent of it. If he regresses to infantilism temporarily, or hears voices and sees things no one else can see, he is indeed dissociated from ordinary reality—but the process may become, under proper conditions, comparable to spiritual initiation. Out of it he may emerge reborn and at home not just in human society, but in rapport also with our widest environment and ultimate source of consciousness, the infinite universe itself.

It is easy to see that a magical rite could be a way of inducing this sort of initiatory transition. It would not matter whether the evoked entities were something really "out there" in the universe, or instead projections from one's own unconscious. As another magician put it, when commenting on a certain entity with which he had been working, "I don't know whether he is external or just a projection of my own mind, but it doesn't matter, because in either case he teaches me things I didn't know before." Most modern American ceremonial magicians are also students of Jungian psychology, and are quite comfortable with a Jungian interpretation of what they are doing. For them, intrapsychic reality is just as "real" as external entities. If the deity they perceive personifies one of the "archetypes of the unconscious"—the Wise Old Man or the Anima—this makes seeing, meeting, and controlling it no less important than if it were a visitant from outer space. Indeed, the distinctions may be meaningless.

The leader of the order which evoked Vassago said that serious applicants to his work —mostly people in their late twenties and early thirties who are married and have steady employment—had one of two primary motivations. One was curiosity about magic, the other a desire for "self-improvement." In the last analysis, these mean a desire to attain through magical practice a recovery of the sense of wonder to experience that we are after all living in a marvelous universe; and secondly to have experiences which will aid in the integration and knowledge of self, getting the fragments of one's personality—emotions, archetypes, lost childhood, desires, and so forth—put together like the pieces of a puzzle to make a single picture.

III

Magical orders are no new thing. Most modern ceremonial magic rests on the work of Eliphas Lévi (*nom de plume* of A. L. Constant, 1810–75), Aleister Crowley (1875–1947), and the famous Order of the Golden Dawn which flourished in England roughly 1888–1903.[5] The magicians of that period exceeded those of the 1970s in both numbers and intellectual calibre. Behind them lies a western magical lineage which produced books like the *Goetia*. With diverse roots perhaps more Babylonian than anything else, the tradition coalesced in the theurgy of the later neoplatonists, persisted through the Middle Ages, and flourished in the Renaissance. Even afterwards it did not fail to give some taste for wonder and intrapsychic exploration—not to mention a thirst for power—in supposedly more rationalistic and scientific centuries. Western ceremonial magic is closely paralleled by important Eastern traditions, especially Hindu and Buddhist Tantrism and esoteric Taoism, which also center on initiation, reality-transforming rites, and visualizations or evocations of supernatural entities. These traditions, generally believing that all perceived reality proceeds out of mind, are similarly ambiguous about whether magical experience is external or subjective. Behind both these lineages, Eastern and Western, lies the figure of the shaman, the wizard of so many primitive societies who characteristically experienced a divine call and initiation giving him power to summon or visit in marvelous flight bands of spirits, which he made use of to heal and above all, perhaps, to activate his

tribesmen's sense of wonder.[6]

Spiritistic magic as an aspect of the religion of cultures and societies is rapidly diminishing in the mid-twentieth century. Every year sees fewer primitive tribes with shamans, while Chinese Taoism and the Tibetan heartland of esoteric Buddhism have both mostly passed into history. In the West, the ceremonial orders remain very small compared to the major institutions of society, for all their importance in keeping the tradition alive. The acids of revolution and modernization have cut deeply into what was once a set of beliefs and practices with which virtually all men and women were familiar. Only in parts of Latin America and Africa does the tradition continue to flourish. Religions like Haitian Vodun and Brazilian Umbanda practice the evocation and control of spirits in ways similar in principle to those of the magical order described though the names may be those of African gods or Catholic saints.

IV

Yet even as the practice of traditional wizardry declines, the idea of the wizard is a force of renewed strength. As the symbol of a particular style of spiritual life, he moves through the modern world on eagle's wings. The wizard confronts contemporary consciousness in the form of figures like Carlos Casteneda's don Juan, Ged in Ursula LeGuin's *Wizard of Earthsea* books, or Gandalf in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Whether shaman, magus, or mighty adept trained in the Himalayas, the wizard personifies a pattern which, for all its antiquity, many moderns find compelling.

The wizard in these books, like the adept idealized by the magical tradition, is not just a greybeard who waves a magic wand and makes bags of gold appear. He may indeed have capacities that seem uncanny to the layman, but they are essentially side-effects of something else. That "something else" is a special way of being in the world.

The wizard is first of all an initiate. All magical orders have their initiations, as did the shamans of old, and usually the initiation represents a mystic death and rebirth. Wizardry sees all of life as a series of initiations. Birth, learning to walk and talk, education, getting a job, marriage, having one's own firstborn—all these are like deaths, often painful, to one life, and births into another which offer greatly enhanced communication with the universe and more possibilities for power. Wizardry says that besides the more or less natural initiations, others are available which one can intentionally undergo—and which, at the price of great effort and risk, offer cosmic awareness and personal fulfillment vastly beyond that of the ordinary man and woman.

Somewhere, then, every wizard has entered a ring of fire and been reforged to an immensely finer temper. But initiatory orders are supposed to be secret. Typically, the wizard does not tell where he was then or what he saw and did, save in veiled and tantalizing hints.

Instead, like Castaneda's don Juan, the wizard appears as a man who is "different." He has about him an air of mystery and "lightness." No one really knows where he came from, and some day he may simply disappear and no one will know where he has gone. In the meantime, he presents himself as one who is completely without ties on either the psychic or physical planes. He may baffle his followers by showing up in unexpected places and saying odd things. He is unpredictable, even dangerous-seeming—fascinating, yet a chancy

character to be around, like a virile god in all his numinous strength. At the same time the wizard gives out a sense of an equilibrium which goes deeper than the mixed currents on the surface. He seems in himself to be at rest in the universe in some calm spot where all its violent forces meet and balance each other off.

This spot gives the wizard a unique vantage point from which to perceive the universe, and he perceives it in a distinctive way. With clear vision goes unimpeded power.

The wizard experiences the cosmos as interconnected. Mind and matter, near and far, small and great—they are all part of a larger unity, and unbreakable bonds join them all. It is as though each entity were linked to all other entities by fine piano wires, and a cause set in motion by the thought, word, or deed of any being would send vibrations shuddering through the whole system, leaving nothing quite as it was before. Most of us are merely playthings of this web. We are buffeted here and there by the complex forces running around and through us; most we do not understand or even acknowledge, even those we ourselves set in motion.

But the wizard perceives these lines of force. He knows the less obvious as well as the more apparent ways all things interact. He is thereby able to play upon the universe as though it were a flute. He knows the laws of correspondence, under which a small operation done precisely right can have far-reaching effects by stimulating the same vibration, so to speak, in higher octaves. Above all, he has the acute wisdom which comes from seeing things as they are, in all their interrelationships.

The wizard also sees the universe as made of mind. The force-fields that comprise it are for him fundamentally mental, like ideas. The vibrations we perceive as matter are only surface phenomena, and do not reveal more than the proverbial tip of the iceberg of full reality.

The deeper, non-material dimensions of the universe are what the wizard's training and initiation open him to perceive. He learns that everything is alive, and that invisible consciousnesses, from the rich minds animating stars to the sprites of spring and glen, can become his allies and servants. The evocations of Vassago, and of the hundreds of other angels and spirits named in the old magical books, illuminate this vision of the universe as full of consciousness. If in fact the evoked entities are projections of the magician's own mind, all the more is the universe made of mind, and magic becomes a way of learning experientially that the world he sees is like a movie beaming from a projector in his head, and that if he wants he can take out one reel of film and put in another—if he wishes, one full of fabulous gods. As a modern magician put it to me, "Magic teaches you how to write your own universe."

The most important gift the wizard has as he walks through the world is a sense of wonder. Like Plato, he affirms that philosophy begins with wonder; whatever best awakens the capacity for wonder teaches most about the mysterious cosmos.

V

As an ideal type, then, the wizard may be pictured as one who strides the earth an enigmatic stranger, yet who is at home with angels and demons beyond ordinary ken. He has been through a secret initiation somewhere; like R.D. Laing's people, he is his own shaman and psychopomp. He has many friends, allies, and servants visible and invisible, but with each there is a time for meeting and a time for parting. Ultimately, he walks through this wide world of wonder alone. For his religion is not that of the temple or the village square, full of families and gossip, but is the pilgrimage of the lonely quester. He follows trails whose makers walked so lightly the track is hardly perceptible, and he walks with companions and guides not of our flesh.

What is the appeal of the image of the wizard in the 1970s? Ours is an age of high mobility and serial marriages, of future shock, of the breakup of tradition, and the breakdown of structure. In such a time the union of hearth and altar, religion sanctifying and sanctified by the customary ways of family, village, and nation, grows weak. Instead, we yearn for a spiritual model for the man or woman whose experience of life is that of a solitary journey, with many meetings and many partings, and no broad road to follow but only a maze of faint footprints.

For these, life seems a succession of different situations, each with its own implied values, and all they have in common is that each is "an experience."

There is little continuity, even in one's own self, for each successive center of value seems to give the participant a new identity. Every one of us is one person at work, another at home, another in church, another at play. Moreover, each school, each job, each marriage, each city or country we live in, in this age of serial lives, bids fair to make us feel like a different person. No wonder, then, the appeal of the initiated

one who negotiates all this with "lightness," wisdom, calm power, and a sense of knowing wonders beyond our world.

A final comment: the image of the wizard today is by no means presented only in American Indian shamans and in the magic circle. For many contemporary Christians in the "Jesus movement" and elsewhere, what is most attractive in the figure of Jesus is the ways in which he fulfills the wizard model: his enigmatic coming and going; his awesome initiations in the wilderness and on the cross; his calm aura of more than normal power and of having friendships beyond this world; his walking his own path, sometimes leaving behind even his disciples, through the "lonesome valley" of this planet. Those who find Jesus appealing today are drawn not so much by the ecclesiastical Christ or the rationalized Galilean teacher, as by the wizardly Jesus who seems reliable, yet who has that quality of "lightness" which dazzles one into wonder and suggests there is more life to the universe than appears on the surface.

The modern wizard then is really an ideal type, a fascinating figure floating out of much popular literature and much less participation. The actual practice of magic is spiritually rewarding to a few, and has been disappointing and even destructive to others. Eliphas Lévi ended his life nearly forgotten in the new republican France which succeeded the flamboyant Empire of Napoleon III in which he had flourished. Aleister Crowley died a lonely drug addict in an English boarding house after the Second World War, his flaming days as "the wickedest man in the world" only a sheaf of yellowing tabloids from the twenties—though his writings are now enjoying something of a revival.

The quest for magical experience today is strewn with wasted time and psychic wreckage, as well as interesting happenings, and is not to be recommended to the unwary. For most who are serious about it, it is not so much a search for powers to work good or ill, as a search for spiritual transformation through intense ritual—which may or may not work as hoped, and may or may not be offered by competent mentors. Far more significant is something of which modern magical orders are only a small substratum—the general health of the age-old ideal or archetype of the shaman-wizard, the man of "lightness" who can "see" and keep his own counsel.

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[1] The Temple of Truth, Box 3125, Pasadena, CA. 91103.

[2] L. A. de Laurence, *The Lesser Key of Solomon: Goetia* (Chicago: de Laurence, Scott and Co., 1916. Reprinted).

[3] See my *Religious and Spiritual Groups in Modern America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 204–208.

[4] See R. D. Laing, *The Politics of Experience* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968). For a provocative related discussion by a writer sympathetic to the magical tradition, who emphasizes its power to get one in touch with the physiological roots of consciousness, see Kenneth Grant, *The Magical Revival* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1973).

[5] Readable introductions to these fascinating personalities and movements include Christopher McIntosh, *Eliphas Lévi and the French Occult Revival* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1974); John Symonds, *The Great Beast: The Life of Aleister Crowley* (London: Rider and Co., 1951); and Francis King, *Ritual Magic in England* (London: Neville Spearman, 1970).

[6] See Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Bollingen Series LXXVI (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964). For the transformation of this tradition in historical times, see E. M. Butler, *The Myth of the Magus* (New York: Macmillan, 1948).

Magic, Sacrifice, and Tradition: Preliminary Notes

Jacob Needleman

As a professor in the field of comparative religion, I have had frequent occasion to study the practices of magic in ancient traditions, such as existed in Pharaonic Egypt, in Tibet, among the Kabalistic Jews. . . .

No, I had better not finish that sentence. It is true that I have read books about these traditions, and many other traditions which contain rituals that we group under the label of magic. And I have studied some of the sacred texts of these teachings, their symbols, their metaphysics and cosmology. But what does that mean—to have studied a tradition? And how have I—how do *we*—in fact read their sacred books? In these questions there is contained a serious difficulty which needs to be exposed.

I recall the words of a scholar I once knew in my college days, a renowned authority on the traditions and culture of ancient China. He had published dozens of important studies and had received every award and accolade which the academic world had to offer a man in his field. He was regularly consulted by governments, map-makers, linguists and, in his later years —to his great surprise—by young people searching not only for academic guidance, but for spiritual advice. I happened to have a temporary part-time job delivering and collecting library books and had a number of *en passant* conversations with him in his office.

Every inch of his incredibly disorganized room was piled to the ceiling with stacks of books and papers which I indifferently pushed around when performing my job as delivery boy. One day I accidentally knocked over a large stack of Chinese texts, several of which fell open in front of me. My attention was caught by some illustrations of the human body drawn in a very peculiar way with strange sym-

bols surrounding it in concentric circles. Being on rather informal terms with this great scholar, before whom everyone else bowed and scraped, I was able to say something like: "What in God's name are these?"

He looked up from his tiny, dimly lit desk and craned his old neck to see what had captured me.

"That is a text of Taoist incantations," he said flatly. "That particular diagram was used to kill enemies from a distance merely through the pronouncement of certain syllables."

In those days I had a pretty cold eye toward anything that wasn't gilded with modern, scientific credentials. I shook my head and squatted over the text to look at it more carefully. Suddenly I began to feel an odd vibration in my abdomen. My scientific mind flew right out the window.

After a few minutes, he looked up from his papers again, surprised to see me still peering wide-eyed at the strange diagram. He suddenly gave out a rather loud sound of disgust which startled me so much that I fell back into a sitting posture.

"Needleman, shut that book!"

I did so.

Then he pushed away the papers that were in front of him and swiveled back in his chair, waving his hand at the hundreds of books on the walls and floor.

"Needleman, do you know what journalism is?"

"Certainly," I said, though I immediately realized that he was giving the word a special meaning.

"There are three, maybe four books in this whole room that are not journalism. But all the rest, including that one on the floor, are journalism. Even the books I have written myself are just that, journalism."

He cupped his hands together on his lap and became quite still in his chair. I stayed where I was.

"Needleman, I am practically at the end of my life. I know more about Chinese religion than maybe anyone in the world, maybe even more than the Chinese themselves. Yet the most important thing I don't know. Because I have never felt the tradition. And therefore I have never understood the real arrangement of the elements of the tradition.

"I have only just begun to realize this. In order to *know* what one 'knows,' one must feel."

At that moment a student knocking at the door interrupted him and he never spoke to me again in that way. For some reason I did not have the interest or the courage to ask him what he meant, what kind of feeling he was talking about. For he was certainly not advocating emotionalism, or sentimentality, or the destruction of the canons of objectivity. The only thing he ever said that seemed to relate to that conversation was one half-mumbled statement some months later to the effect that "tradition originates in a very high place."

All this comes back to me quite strongly now because of the extreme difficulty of saying one honest word about magic. The difficulty lies in the struggle to be sufficiently open to everything that one has heard, read, and dreamed about magic. Why has it often been condemned by the orthodoxy, even while forming an integral part of the rites and rituals in many traditions? And why this tendency in modern thought to treat magic as though it existed apart from the forms of Tradition?

For, there lies the real power—the dark power if you wish—of the figure of the magician. He stands outside the sanctioned rules and the forms; he emerges out of the shadows in contact with a force that is strangely, perhaps dangerously, greater than anything human, greater than anything in creation save the power of God.

Touched, drawn, burned by this symbol, we

begin to think of magic as the exercise of powers that have nothing to do with the central crisis of the human situation—the darkness of illusion about ourselves and the destruction within us of the energy of life. We begin to link the symbolism of magic with fragmentary psychic phenomena such as telepathy or clairvoyance.

Such phenomena are indeed inexplicable by present scientific assumptions. I myself have witnessed them several times, but under conditions which made it irrelevant and impossible to reach for explanations. But in the present general conditions of intellectual life, such things when they genuinely happen merely agitate our minds. When something inexplicable happens either outside or inside of us the new quality of attention that is generated cannot withstand our urge to build theories. In the process we hardly notice that we have lost a certain attentiveness to ourselves, a certain sensitivity of feeling that is the seed of an impartial mind.

Let us make a distinction, therefore, between magic considered as isolated, inexplicable phenomena, and magic that is part of a spiritual tradition or, at the very least, that is defined and recognized by one or another spiritual tradition.

In making this distinction, in limiting magic to its connection with spiritual tradition, we accomplish at least one thing: we make the question of magic something *serious*. We take it out of the realm of a symbol understood so literally that it degenerates into wishful thinking. Spiritual tradition is serious—at least as serious as, for example, the problem of personal unhappiness, a broken leg, a child's death, a scornful look from my neighbor. And then our question becomes: what does the fact of magic mean in terms of ourselves as we really are—beings swept away by the emotions of everyday life, even as our minds soar out of contact with our true internal situation?

The fact that, from the point of view of tradition, magic is hidden or dangerous now begins to speak to us in a new way: The miraculous cannot appear and must not be sought without first facing ourselves as what we are. There are extraordinary, miraculous possibilities in human life, but they cannot appear in place of the ordinary possibilities. And the first message of Tradition is that as we actually are we are not even ordinary men.

But what does that mean: we are not even ordinary men? Is it our failure to understand this idea that prevents us from *feeling* the purpose of tradition and which therefore makes all our perceptions and theories about religion and magic merely journalism? Take it even more directly: Is it our failure to *feel* the contradictions of the human condition, our own human condition, that bars us from genuinely experiencing the magical possibilities of life?

This idea has been forcefully expressed in the novel, *Strange Life of Ivan Osokin,* by P. D. Ouspensky.

Ivan Osokin is a young man who has watched himself stupidly take the wrong turn at every crossroads of his life until he is brought to the state of desperation. At the point of suicide, he visits a powerful old magician. In the course of talking to the magician, Osokin pleads for a chance to live his life over again, knowing in advance everything that has happened before. "It is possible," the magician says, "but it will not make things better for you . . . I can send you back as far as you like, and you will remember everything, but nothing will come of it."

Not believing the magician, Osokin asks to be transported back to his school days. But his life proceeds as the magician predicted. Osokin knows what will happen, but he cannot bring that knowledge into his emotional life, and inexorably everything takes place exactly as before, down to the last detail, until he even ignores what he knows and imagines it to be only a dream. In short, he is trapped again in the wheel of existence.

Once more he is brought to the point of despair, and once more he finds himself in the magician's house. But now one thing is different: Osokin realizes with horror what has happened. He knows and *feels* the automatism of ordinary human life. "There is the cold of the grave in this thought. He feels that this is the fear of the inevitable, fear of himself, of that self from which there is no escape. . . . He will be the same and everything will be the same."

Then, and only then, does he find it in himself to sacrifice his belief that he knows what he

Minor White

Jonathan Green

needs and ask for help without dictating the terms. And only then can the magician show him the first step toward the path of escape from the innate automatism of his existence. He tells Osokin:

". . . Nothing can be acquired without sacrifice. This is the thing you do not understand, and until you understand it, nothing can be done. Had I wanted to give you, without any sacrifice on your part, everything you might wish, I could not have done it.

"A man can be given only what he can use; and he can use only that for which he has sacrificed something. This is the law of human nature. So if a man wants to get help to acquire important knowledge or new powers, he must sacrifice other things important to him at the moment. Moreover, he can only get as much as he has given up for it. . . ."

"Are there no other ways?" asks Osokin.

The magician answers, "You mean ways in which no sacrifices are necessary? No, there are no such ways, and you do not understand what you are asking. You cannot have results without causes. By your sacrifice you create causes. . . ."

Can we hear the voice of Tradition, as well as a far more serious understanding of magic, in these words?

If we cannot, I suggest that it is because something has gone very wrong in our understanding of religion, not to mention the aspects of both religion and magic, such as the act of sacrifice and its inner significance.

I should like to explain what I mean as faithfully as possible, for in my opinion we are now at the edge of an idea that throws a clear light not only on the nature of magic, but on the specific difficulties of the modern spiritual search. The idea is not my own invention, but when I first heard of it—which was quite recently—it struck me as being so central that I could not believe it had escaped me all these years. Suddenly, everything I had ever "known" about the relationship between magic and religion seemed almost childish in comparison—or, at the very least, so subjective that no genuine search could be supported by it. I will present it the way it was told to me by an elderly Christian monk whom I came to know at a conference which I recently attended in the Far East.

This particular monk, by the way, never told me the name of his Order, only that it was located in the Middle East and had existed for many centuries. My own surmise was that he was not part of what is officially recognized as the Christian Church, but was instead a member of a still surviving "Gnostic" sect. However that may be, we had several private conversations in the course of which he said many extraordinary things about the ancient origins of the Christian tradition. I will relate these claims and try to evaluate them in a forthcoming book dealing with the contemporary search for the original Christian and Judaic tradition.

The pertinent material here, however, concerns what he said in response to a theory I put forth to him about the office of the "priest-magician" in the religious systems of archaic man. I based my theory on ideas which I had arrived at while writing about magic in my book, *A Sense of the Cosmos*. It seemed to me that the study of illusion, due to the undeveloped power of attention in "fallen man," must have been an essential element in the ancient traditions. By "illusion" I meant not only perceptual illusion, which the trickster can effect, but the deeper illusions about ourselves and our world, which we suffer under as a result of mankind's deep-seated slavery to self-suggestibility. Before I had a chance to develop my thoughts further, he interrupted me (he spoke in rather broken English, which I will not attempt to duplicate here):

"Yes, that is very true as far as it goes. But it is not the main point, or rather, it is only part of the main point. What people in the modern world do not know is that religion is something which actually works, which produces tangible changes at the deepest levels of the human organism. In all these conferences and meetings that I have been attending I have seen that even Eastern peoples are forgetting that real religion is based on precise laws of nature which, when applied correctly, produce extraordinary results that are called miraculous only because people do not understand these laws.

"Because modern religion does not produce real results, the whole question of magic is

irrelevant. But in ancient times, and among authentic traditions which still survive, the interdependence between religion and magic is so crucial that without a proper understanding of this interdependence it is absolutely impossible for man to attain to his real spiritual birthright.

"I shall put it very simply so that we do not get lost in fascinating details concerning rituals and various symbolic expressions, nor indulge ourselves criticizing what happens when these rituals become cut off from the genuine wellspring of the tradition. To put it in one word: *Religion* is the part of a tradition which shows man his helplessness apart from God; *Magic* is the part of tradition which brings about tangible results that are lawfully caused by the painful and precisely guided sacrifice of spiritual illusions.

"Religion empties a man; magic fills him with the power to act from the vital center of himself as a being made in the image of his Creator.

"As I have said, all real religion produces results, but the question of how to be toward these results is the most difficult and easily lost element in a teaching. It is the very first thing to go when a tradition begins to degenerate. But both magic and religion are necessary components of every complete tradition.

"Without magic, religion turns man against nature, the creation of God, and eventually against God himself.

"Without magic, religion abandons the inner sensations that support the forces of hope and love. Religious man may know he is nothing under God, but without magic he no longer spontaneously feels the goodness and warmth of this 'hard' truth, no longer seeks to apply it to *himself* out of the instincts of the heart. Instead, he applies this Truth to his neighbor's weaknesses, and eventually he may even kill his neighbor. Without magic, man loses the sense of wonder before the Creation that is within himself, the transformation and destruction of forms within the psyche, the constant liberation and movement of his own inner energies. Only such self-knowledge can generate real pity for my own neighbor and also real knowledge of him and a true sense of justice toward him.

"Man must have results, real results, in his inner and outer life. I do not mean the results which modern people strive after. These are not results, but only re-arrangements of psychic material, a process which the Asian peoples call *samsara* and which our Holy Bible calls 'dust.'*

"Without religion, however, magic by itself draws man fatally under the thrall of disincarnate beings who pervade the earth and feed upon the emotional energies of the human organism. These are called 'demons,' but the word has ceased to have anything but a childish meaning for modern people. I shall try to use contemporary language for you, but you must remember that contemporary language is not based on actual experience of such forces.

"What we call the world is the creation of Mind descending into form and substance. For a moment, set aside all your familiar associations with philosophical theories of the past or present. This is not philosophy.

"Have you ever seen a scientific illustration of a nerve entering a muscle in the human body? That is an exact analogy of what I am speaking about. The nerve transmits a psychic energy which is transformed by the muscle into mechanical energy. We see the external movements of living beings for what they are—patterns of material mechanism. What we do not see is that a law of descent is at work, from the psychic to the material. That is what is called biological life.

"In the human animal, as well as in all higher animate life, the fundamental psychic energy which is transmitted to the muscles is twofold: instinctual and emotional. The transmission of instinctual psychic energy into matter takes place on a very general scale through the species-structure of all living beings. It cannot vary in individual animals of the same species. But the emotional psychic energy is different; it is the central power of all relatively individuated higher animals, those whom Buddhists of certain lineages call 'sentient beings.'

"There are many factors I am not mentioning, and other gradations of energy between the mechanical and the psychic. But the point I am

*In my forthcoming book, I will analyze the details of this monk's unusual interpretations of scriptural language.

making is that the world of life is to a great extent created and maintained through the expression of emotional energy. And it is this energy through which magic operates. Results, the results which I am speaking to you about, are always the products of a certain quality of emotion.

"Modern man believes he has created his world through intellect and action. But it is not true. He is fallen man and his intellect is the servant of emotion, just as are his 'voluntary muscles.'

"What you call 'primitive man' looks at the modern technological world and sees a form of magic. You laugh at him, but he is right. The modern, non-traditional world has come into being through emotional energy that is formed into the pattern called 'egoism,' with its aspects of fear, desire, and self-protectiveness. I will not say anything more about the larger forces which this modern process is serving because you would think I am indulging in what is called 'occultism.'

"The control and manipulation of emotional energy is the secret of all magic, black or white. The black magician agitates the mind until a certain intensity of emotional force is evoked in people. From that point, depending on his skill, he can make them do or see whatever he wishes, for in the state of mental agitation the controlling power of human attention—which is the specific energy that distinguishes man from the animal—is totally absorbed by each passing thought-association and the passion to act that accompanies it; in such a state man is even more the prey of suggestion than normally. And an external manipulator, concentrating on a specific aim, can control the mind and subjectively perceived reality of another human being. However, in the ordinary conditions of modern life, external suggestions do not often follow one straight line. There is only a criss-cross of suggestions coming from countless ever-new sources.

"Tradition does not work with either mechanical or psychic energy, but with a different level of force which one could call spiritual energy. This manifests in man in the form of an extraordinary quality of emotion and, in rare cases, of an intellectual power which is completely unknown to the rest of us.

"To awaken spiritual emotion is the work of religious discipline. And this comes about through the sacrifice of attachment to results—*even as they are taking place in a man.* Religious man may become a powerful magician but through it he sees only the greatness of God and the nullity of his own being. The energies of egoistic emotion that are bound to his inner results are immediately separated from these results and are transformed upward, or rather are connected to the energy that created the world itself."

To these words I can now add nothing but the determination to ponder their meaning.

EPICYCLE II

The Games of Xibalba

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from

The Popol Vuh

(Xpiyacoc and Xmucané, "Grandfather" and "Grandmother," two of the creator gods, had twin sons called Hun-Hunahpú and Vucub-Hunahpú, "One-Hunter" and "Seven-Hunter." They were summoned to play the sacred ball game with the Lords of Xibalba, the Underworld and the region of sickness and death. But first they were submitted to certain trials, which they failed because they were deceived by the tricks played on them by the Lords of Death. So they were slain by their conquerors and their heads were hung in a calabasn tree which no one was allowed to approach. However Xquik, Daughter of one of the Lords, disobeyed and visited the tree; from drops of spittle that fell from the skulls into her hand, she conceived another pair of twin sons, Hunahpú—"Hunter"—and Xbalanqué—"Sorcerer"—whom she bore in the upper world after escaping from Xibalba and the wrath of her father and the other rulers.

When Hunahpú and Xbalanqué were grown, they in their turn were summoned by the Lords of Xibalba to visit them and play the ball game. More astute than their fathers, they saw through all the deceptions practised on them and by tricks of their own passed the preliminary tests until they were put into the House of Bats:)

it was a great house full of bats, whose king was Camazotz, a huge animal who killed with a blow like that of a stake hardened in the fire.

The brothers crept inside their blowguns, and the bats swooped but could not strike them. All night they flew back and forth, shrieking "Quilitz, quilitz!" until finally they were silent and clustered over the ends of the blowguns, pressing their bodies against the openings.

It was very dark inside the blowguns. At last Xbalanqué said to his brother,

"Has it dawned yet? Look and see."

"Perhaps it has," answered Hunahpú. "I will look," and he put his head outside the blowgun. Instantly the bats cut it off and the headless body lay still.

Xbalanqué asked again, "Has it not dawned yet?" but Hunahpú did not answer. Then Xbalanqué felt the motionless body in the darkness and cried out: "Alas! They have beaten us."

Now the bats flew off in triumph with the head of Hunapú, and bore it to Hun-Camé and Vucub-Camé (One-Death and Seven-Death), the chief lords of Xibalba.

"Hang it up in the ball court where they were going to play with us tomorrow," they ordered, "and let the people rejoice that we have overcome them."

So it was done. But meanwhile, Xbalanqué had called all the animals, great and small, to his aid.

"What food do you eat?" he asked each of them. "You may choose and take what you wish."

"Very well," said the animals, and each went in search of what he wanted to eat. Behind them all came waddling the turtle; he traversed the length of Hunahpú's body, and when he came to the place of the missing head, he took its place and became a head with eyes.

Then the Powers of Heaven came down, and Huracán himself, the Heart of Heaven, came and hovered over the House of Bats. And all worked together to restore the head of Hunahpú.

Slowly the face began to appear and to form itself into the face of Hunahpú; the Powers of Heaven exerted all their force, but the time was short, and it was beginning to grow light.

"Darken the sky!" they commanded the buzzard, and he spread his wings and darkened the sky so they could continue their work. At last it was finished and in the dawn Hunahpú began to live again. He could speak and looked as if he really had his own head and his own handsome face.

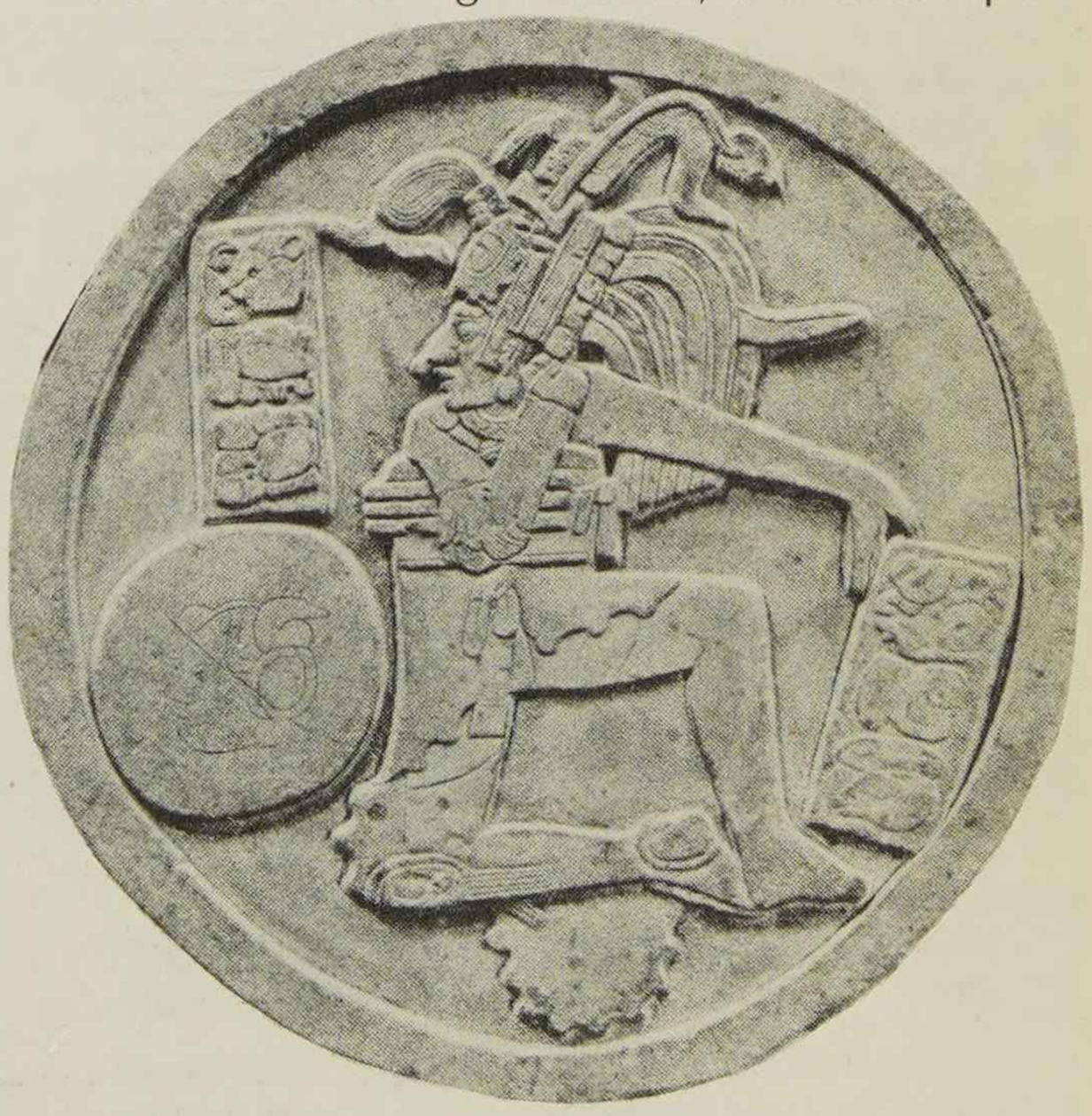
But his brother warned him: "You must not play ball, only pretend to do it and leave it all to me." Then he called a rabbit:

"Hide in the trees above the ball court," he told the rabbit, "and when the ball comes to you, run out; that is all." Then the two boys went out to play the ball game.

The Lords of Xibalba could not believe their eyes. The head of Hunahpú was there hanging over the court, but here was Hunahpú himself, apparently alive and well.

"Aim the ball at his head," they counseled each other, hurling the ball at him; but he always dodged in time.

Now they threw the ball straight for the ring, but Xbalanqué deflected it and sent it bouncing to the grove where the rabbit was waiting. The rabbit ran out and went hopping off, and the Lords of Xibalba, running to find the ball, were fooled and followed the rabbit instead. All of them went chasing the rabbit, and Xbalanqué



A Mayan ball-player

at once climbed up to get his brother's real head, which he exchanged for the turtle-head. When the Lords returned at last with the ball, all seemed the same as before; but now, Hunahpú was really himself again, and it was the turtle-head that hung over the court.

They went on playing and the score was tied. Then Xbalanqué threw a stone at the turtle-head and it fell to the ground broken in a thousand tiny pieces. And the brothers were still undefeated.

But they knew that the Lords of Xibalba would wait no longer, and would kill them by force, since they had not been able to catch them by trickery. They foresaw the way they would do it, so they called two soothsayers whose names were Xulú and Pacam.

"This is what you must do," the boys said to them. "After the Lords of Xibalba have killed us in the fire—for this is what we think they mean to do—they will ask you how to dispose of the ashes of our bones. You must warn them that the only way to get rid of us for good is to grind our bones as meal is ground, and throw the powder into the river so it may be carried away and scattered; otherwise we shall come back again to trouble them."

And in truth the Lords of Xibalba were building a great bonfire, and soon sent messengers to the brothers as if they were inviting them to a feast.

"Let us drink together, and fly over the bonfire!" they said. But now Hunahpú and Xbalanqué would not pretend.

"Do you think we do not know of our own death?" they retorted, and clasping their arms around each other, they ran together and leapt into the fire and died.

Then a great shout went up and the people of Xibalba cried out in triumph, "At last we have slain them!"

As the boys had foreseen, the Lords called the soothsayers, Xulú and Pacam.

"What shall we do with the bones of the two boys?" they asked them. "Shall we throw them over the cliff?"

"By no means," answered Xulú and Pacam. "If you do that, they will come back again."

"Shall we hang them from the trees?" asked the Lords.

"Neither should you do that," replied the soothsayers, "for they will still return."

"Then shall we throw them in the river?" asked the Lords.

"Grind them first into a powder," answered Xulú and Pacam, "and throw them in the river where the spring issues, that they may be scattered and carried away forever."

So the ashes of the bones were ground and cast into the river; but they settled at once to the bottom and turned again into two handsome, smiling boys.

But such was not their appearance when they returned to the city of the Lords. They seemed two poor old men, dressed in rags, who entertained whoever would watch them with dances and magical tricks. These they performed so well that news of them reached Hun-Camé and Vucub-Camé, and they sent for them to appear before them.

Hunahpú and Xbalanqué pretended to be very reluctant.

"We are too ugly and old and poor to perform our foolish tricks before such great lords," they said to the messengers, and held back until they were dragged with blows into the presence of the Lords of Xibalba.

The Lords welcomed them and promised them kindness and rewards.

"Dance your dances and do your tricks for us," they said, "and do not be afraid."

So the brothers danced and performed tricks. First they burned down a house and restored it again, undamaged, to its owner. Then they caught a dog and cut it up, and brought it back to life, wagging its tail with gladness to be alive again.

The Lords were delighted.

"Kill a man now!" they ordered. "Take his heart, but keep him alive!"

So the boys seized a man and sacrificed him, holding his heart aloft for all to see; and in a moment the man was whole again, trembling and rejoicing to be alive. Then they began to dance and to sacrifice each other, cutting off arms and legs and restoring them as if nothing had happened; but really it was always Xbalanqué that killed and revived Hunahpú.

Then the Lords were quite carried away.

"Do it to us! Do it to us!" they cried, and the boys said, "Very well!" and swiftly slew them both, and did not bring them back again to life.

Then the people fled screaming to a great ravine, but huge armies of ants came and drove them out and they were forced to yield to the two brothers.

Then the brothers said to them:

"Now you shall know who we are. Our names are Hunahpú and Xbalanqué; you killed our fathers and we have come to avenge them and to slay you all."

"Have mercy on us!" cried the people, "and we will tell you where your fathers are buried."

"Very well," answered the brothers, "but you shall no longer be all-powerful. You shall work and make useful things, and never again

may you play the ball game nor speak with the great and the good.''

So the power of the Underworld was limited, and Hunahpú and Xbalanqué went to the place where their fathers were buried and gave them honor. Then they were raised to the sky, and given as kingdoms the Sun and the Moon, and they dwelt in Heaven.

to other selves, in such a way as to facilitate a "flow" of thought and affect among a group of persons who repose trust in one another. I call this shared flow *communitas*. I regard it as having healing as well as bonding properties. Another way to look at things might be to see the individual member of our species as invisibly festooned with prepositions, relational signs, by the help of which he can plug into other humans to form a *communitas,* and without which he is incomplete, not even a person.

I will briefly describe a series of curative rituals performed for a single patient which I observed during my fieldwork among the

THE BITE OF THE HUNTER'S GHOST

Conscience and Community in an African Healing Rite

Victor W. Turner

What are the real ideological bases of such modern psychiatric innovations as psychodrama workshops, encounter groups, sensitivity training, therapeutic communities and such centers as Synanon and the Esalen Institute? It is an interesting question whether reports published by anthropologists in the 1950s and 60s of healing rites similar to those I am going to describe had any influence on their development.

One major difference between tribal and modern cultural contexts must be that in the former, the corporate group is the salient moral unit, while in large-scale, post-industrial societies, the individual is held to be the "master of his fate, the captain of his soul." Nevertheless, I am in agreement with those who do not picture the individual as a Leibnitzian monad, a closed self, but as capable, under auspicious circumstances, of opening up

Ndembu of Zambia. This will bring out clearly the major differences between our concept of "curing" and *ku-u ka,* the nearest Ndembu parallel—and here Ndembu represent sub-Saharan African therapy generally.

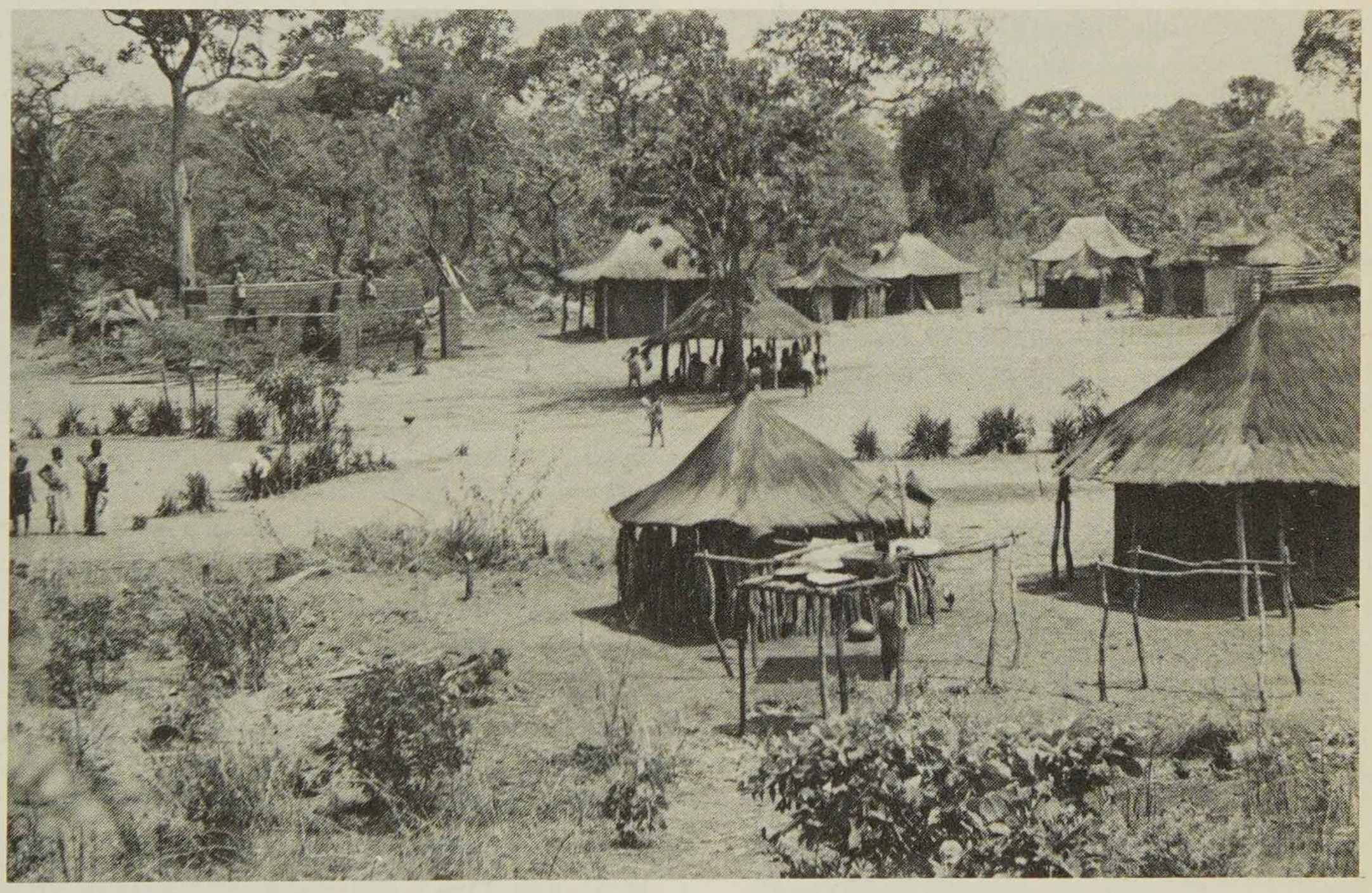
The "patient" was Kamahasanyi, a man of about forty, regarded as somewhat effeminate in physique and temperament by his fellow villagers, thrice married but with no children, and recently arrived in the village where I first encountered him. He had just come there from his father's village in the then Belgian Congo, now the Katanga region of Zaire, where his father had died not long before. He had complained for some time of "pains in the whole body," heart palpitations and dizziness, and had withdrawn from normal activities, such as gardening and snaring animals. He took to staying in his hut and giving himself "hairdos," one in the manner called *lumbwa,* in parallel

strands, normally characteristic of women. For some months he had complained about being "sick" *(wakata)*, and that his relatives had not gone to a diviner to have the cause of his illness diagnosed. When he first came from the Congo he had worked hard and made several large cassava and finger-millet gardens. But he had not been given the attention he considered his due, and had withdrawn more and more from the general social life of the village.

Ndembu are matrilineal; they trace descent through the mother's side, and though men are politically and legally important, a man succeeds his uncle to office, not his father, and is succeeded not by his own but by his sister's son. Such property as they possess passes similarly from maternal uncle to nephew. Furthermore, one's primary claim to live in a village is through one's mother. The core group in a village is a cluster of matrilineally related kin. But

to leave the village when they marry, are always trying directly or indirectly to get their sisters back with them again, especially when those sisters have children, little matrilineal recruits for the village—as naturally, the strength of a village depends largely on its size. It's not surprising, then, that my census statistics showed that Ndembu have one of the highest divorce rates in Africa, higher even than many other matrilineal societies, which nearly everywhere are notorious for frequent divorce, since in them husbands only secure rights over their wives' domestic and sexual services and not over their reproductive capacity, as in patrilineal societies.

Kamahasanyi's father, Mudigita, had been a headman and a hunter, two roles that do not usually go well together, for a hunter ranges far afield and a headman should stay at home judging cases and looking after the welfare of his



The Ndembu village of Kajima

the role of post-marital residence upsets things and introduces a permanent note of discord into Ndembu life. For women marry outside their village, and on marriage they go to stay at their husbands' villages, with his matrilineal kin. Yet a woman's children belong to their mother's clan or lineage and cannot stay in their father's village after his death. Indeed, at any time they will be welcomed home by their mother's people, and so, in fact, will their mother. Thus, every marriage is under a big strain, for a woman's brothers, who don't have

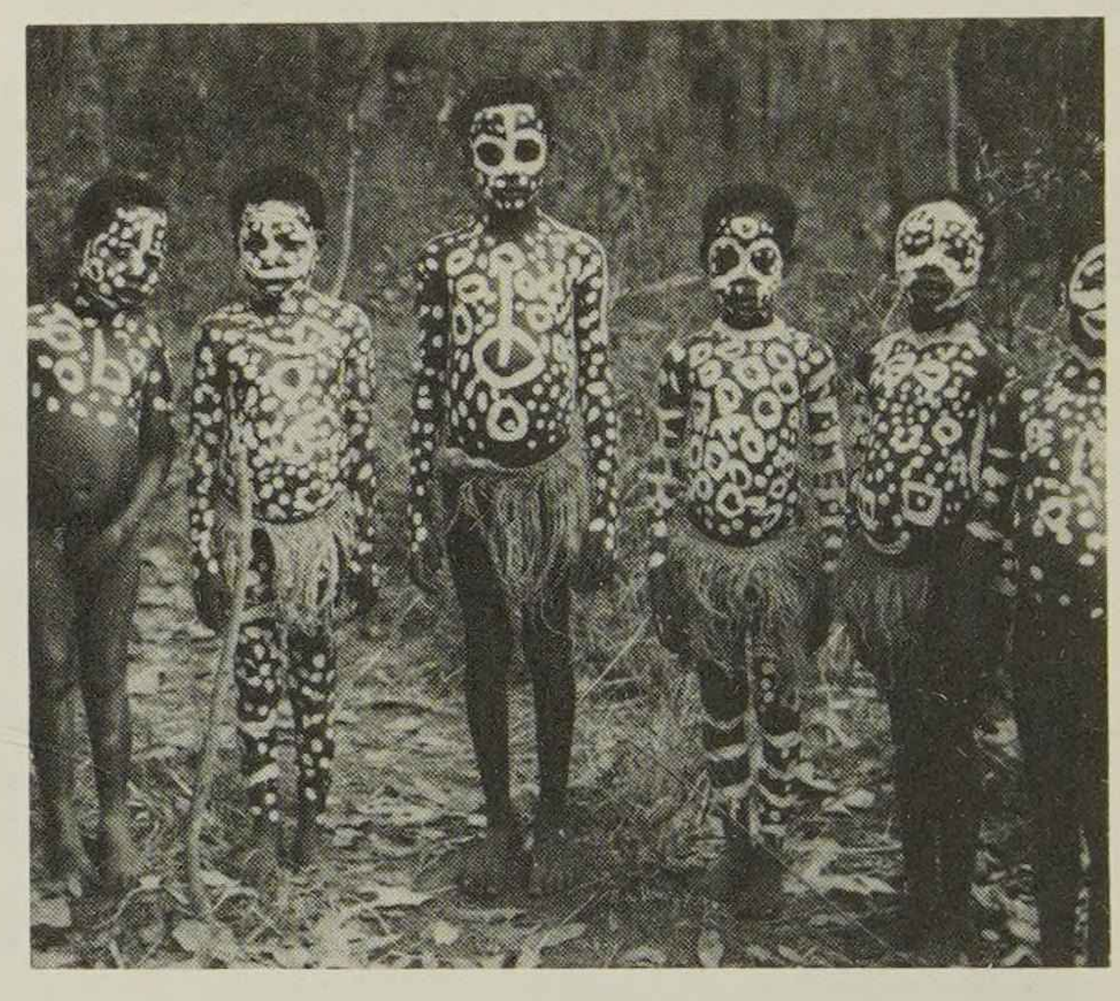
people. But he was also a man of powerful personality, and clearly Kamahasanyi had been dominated by him; most men leave their paternal homes in adolescence or early manhood and go to reside with their mother's people, where their arena of adult striving is thought to be. But Kamahasanyi had remained with his father into his forties, and after Mudigita's death he still tried to remain in his village. His first two wives were his father's sister's daughters; he had been suspected of bewitching the second of these to death, and was not greatly liked by

his paternal kin. His third wife, Maria, was his cousin on his mother's side (a preferred form of marriage), and had helped him by growing large cassava gardens and selling cassava flour to the Belgian administration to feed African miners in the copper belt of the Katanga. She had taken the initiative in bringing him back to his maternal village of Nswanamundong'u in Northern Rhodesia, as Zambia was then called. She, too, was a headman's child; and as her father was her husband's maternal uncle, Kamahasanyi was his heir to office.

One can begin to see the problems mounting for Kamahasanyi. He had been dominated by his father and had taken a passive, dependent role in relation to him. He was now among close maternal kin whom he had scarcely known, and among whom he was expected to play the active part a headman's nephew should undertake, as he would be his uncle's successor some day, according to Ndembu rules. But the very fact that he had stayed so long with his paternal kin showed that he didn't relish playing the normal role of a male Ndembu; and if his father had dominated him, now his wife Maria both dominated him and was good-naturedly scornful of him. It was widely rumored that he was impotent; he was certainly being blatantly cuckolded. Maria was a sexually aggressive, Calamity-Jane sort of person, and was rather openly carrying on an affair with another villager named Winford.

Perhaps he might have overcome all these difficulties if he had not found a number of paternally linked kin living in his maternal village of Nswanamundong'u, who in one way or another brought on the crisis in Kamahasanyi's complicated affairs. These relatives had come there some years earlier, attracted by the prospect of greater prosperity than they had known in the Belgian Congo. For Nswanamundong'u was no ordinary village; it was one of three, out of about thirty in all, from which the chief of the whole area was chosen; and at the time the Congo group came, the area chief was Mukang'ala, a member of the village, and his younger brother was village headman; so their prospects of exploiting their kinship ties and obtaining privileges and paid employment seemed bright. Unfortunately, shortly after their arrival the old chief died, the British refused to recognize his successor, Kabung'u, and the chieftainship lapsed.

So when Kamahasanyi reluctantly came home, he found the resident group of his father's kin in a state of resentment against his maternal relatives for misleading them, so they alleged, into leaving the Congo and promising them jobs in return for local political support.



Ndembu youngsters

One of them was Winford, and certainly one of his reasons for taking up with Maria was as a sign of disrespect, not so much for Kamahasanyi personally as for Kamahasanyi's maternal kin, the owners of the village and members of the deposed royal lineage.

This, then, is the picture of poor Kamahasanyi's situation: the son of a dominating father, on whom he depended, finally kicked out of his father's village, under his wife's thumb and dependent now on her, he returns to his maternal kin to find that he hardly knows any of them, and, more traumatic still, finds a group of paternal kin, reviving for him all the tensions between dependence on his father and the duty of returning to his mother's natal village, tensions that he had deviantly resolved for most of his life by remaining with his father, and one of these relatives seduces his wife! Then, on top of all this, the chieftainship has been snuffed out by the British. The whole area is in a state of low morale. Former court clerks, assessors, councillors, native authority police, schoolteachers, road maintenance *capitaos*, are out of work. Some have gone to town as

labor migrants, others have reverted to village life, a few have become drunks. The chiefdom is in what Kurt Lewin would call a process of "dedifferentiation:" its role structure, as part of the British colonial administrative system, has collapsed. A large tract of land traditionally belonging to it has been taken over by a rival chief, who has seized his opportunity to claim and obtain it from the British. Recriminations fly between people who declare that this calamity would not have happened if such-and-such a person had acted differently. And Kamahasanyi, either personally or as representative of one or another group, is in the thick of it all.

I knew Kamahasanyi's village quite well; it was one of my favorite places for stopping in, drinking millet beer, and chatting of an evening with Kachimba the headman; Jim, tapped as next incumbent of the no-longer-recognized chieftainship; Winford, the lover of Kamahasanyi's wife, and Makakayi, classificatory "father" of Kamahasanyi—that is, a remote parallel cousin of his "real" biological father. I knew that Kamahasanyi was considered to be rather a nuisance by the established villagers. Even his Francophone background as against their Anglophone one caused problems; Kamahasanyi had different expectations in regard to White behavior from theirs, having lived under Belgian rule most of his life. He could not understand why the chieftainship of Mukang'ala had been abolished, nor why the British officials did not buy cassava flour at high prices and regular intervals. His constant complaints about neglect irritated them. But since he was their kinsman, from the same *ivumu* (womb) as themselves, they felt concerned about his increasing withdrawal from village public life. He never appeared now in the open unwalled shelter in the middle of the larger ring of huts, where men discuss village and chiefdom affairs, and judge minor legal cases. The village consisted of two intersecting rings of huts, the first of nine, the second of five. Kamahasanyi's hut was, in fact, the point of intersection. The bigger ring consisted, by and large, of his kinsmen on his mother's side, the smaller of those related to his father.

Having heard so much about him, I visited Kamahasanyi in his hut, where his wife Maria, her formal role reactivated for the occasion, offered me hospitality—beer, cassava porridge, relish, etc. I found him quite intelligent and articulate, but full of self-pity. He was also exceptionally snobbish, even for the Ndembu, who are very proud of their descent from the great Lunda chiefs of the Katanga. He knew many of the praise names and songs of chiefs with whom he claimed kinship. He was having his hair dressed, to his great satisfaction, in the fashionably feminine *lumbwa* style.

Eventually, he consented to show me his cassava gardens, which were quite large; the sturdy Maria had obviously put in a good deal of work on them, while rendezvousing with Winford in the bush during work intervals, as I learned from that rustic don Juan. While we were inspecting the gardens, there occurred one of the dramatic moments of my fieldwork. We were passing a large termite hill, about fifteen feet high, near a crossing of several paths just outside the village, when Kamahasanyi urged me to speak in a whisper. "For there is Mukāla," he said. I looked at the termitary and on it were a number of forked branches, each adorned with pieces of raw meat speared through by its artificially sharpened tines. The branches were ringed and daubed with white and red clay. Kamahasanyi then explained to me that he had been "caught" by Mukāla, which was a form in which the shade of a dead hunter relative could "emerge from the grave" to persecute his living kinsman. He did this in various ways: he would ride on the leading animals of a herd of antelope or buffalo, driving the whole herd out of bow-shot or musket-shot; as a marshlight he could lead a hunter to his destruction in a swamp, like the old English Puck, Robin Goodfellow, or Will-o'-the-wisp. Or as in the case of Kamahasanyi (who was not that epitome of Ndembu *machismo,* a gun-hunter), he could cause animals to avoid traps and snares. Kamahasanyi said he had not trapped a cane-rat, porcupine, squirrel, or other small edible mammal since he arrived in the village. Mukāla also appeared in dreams, as a hunter dressed in leaves or leather, as they did in the past. He, Kamahasanyi, had so dreamed, and recourse to *mwishi,* one of the simpler, more accessible types of divination, had indicated that the dead man who had taken the form of Mukāla was his own father, Mudigita. He had had a ritual, belonging to the Bow Hunters' cult, performed for him by a local hunter-doctor to placate Mukāla, but it was clear to him, he said, that he was being afflicted by something more serious than Mukāla, for he continued to feel pains throughout his body, game continued to avoid his traps, and he sometimes had an accelerated heartbeat.

I was interested in discovering something about the traditional form of the Mukāla ritual and questioned Kamahasanyi about it. In the course of the conversation I learned that in a few days he was going to have the *Ihamba* ritual performed for him.

Now, what is an *ihamba?* This raises fas-

cinating problems for depth psychology, but it is also a wonderful tracer for a sociological analyst. *Ihamba* is the name not only of the curative ritual but also of the afflicting agency, in this case once more the shade of a dead hunter, which is thought to inhere in one of the two upper front incisor teeth of the dead man. Under the influence of the shade of the hunter, the tooth is believed to fly about invisibly and to fix itself in the body of a living relative of the deceased hunter. In this way it punishes a person who has failed to pour out a libation of blood or honey beer (the hunters' drink, made from honey gathered by hunters from wild bees' hives) to the shade of the deceased, who has "forgotten him in his heart," or has offended the shade by provoking quarrels among the co-residing kin group. As with other shade-manifestations, *ihamba* may afflict someone as representative of a kin-group that has collectively offended the deceased, even if the afflicted individual is not personally guilty. The ritual process of cure consists of washing the patient's body with a variety of vegetable substances, usually translated as "medicines" (pounded leaves, bark scraps, root scrapings, sometimes fruits and flowers of certain species, each of which has a symbolic value as well as alleged empirical effects), giving him medicines to drink, and, most importantly, applying cupping horns (male goat's horns usually) to his body to suck out the *ihamba* tooth from his body. The tooth is believed to try to avoid capture as long as possible, and to travel about beneath the patient's skin, dodging the cupping horns. How long it will so dodge about depends not only on the moral condition of the patient, but also of his group. To this end, episodes of applying four or so horns to parts of the body determined by the *Ihamba* doctor, playing drums, washing with medicine, etc., are punctuated by episodes in which members of the village kin-group are invited by the doctor to advance to the shrine of forked branches constructed for the performance, and confess their grudges against the patient, who is also expected to confess his or her grievances against other kinsfolk. This aspect of the rite makes the connection between the *ihamba* tooth and the "bite of conscience" sufficiently clear.

I mentioned that I knew the greatest *Ihamba chimbuki* or "doctor" in the area, Ihembi (who was, in fact, my honorary "grandfather," *nkaka,* making us joking partners), and Kamahasanyi asked me if I would bring Ihembi and his assistant and apprentice to the ceremony, "to give advice to the doctor" he had hired, a member of a neighboring tribal group, the Luvale. I said that I'd ask Ihembi and his team that very day. They agreed to help, and I drove them two days later to the scene of the rites. It was obviously a big score for Kamahasanyi to have enlisted my help and Ihembi's, and a first step towards bringing him out of his depression.

Ihembi and I and our group arrived late at the ceremony, in the first stage of which the Luvale doctor had divined that Kamahasanyi's father was the agent of affliction. Ihembi observed strict Ndembu medical etiquette in not intervening, but eventually the other doctor invited him to offer his opinion. Ihembi agreed with the other's diagnosis, but made a further sugges-

The one who discovers witches: a diviner in action

tion: that someone in the village also had a grudge against Kamahasanyi and was employing sorcery against him. His advice was that a ritual called *Kaneng'a,* specifically directed against the witchcraft of the living, should be performed first; otherwise the *ihamba* would not "come out of Kamahasanyi's body." The Luvale doctor, perhaps overawed by Ihembi's

eminence, agreed with his views, as did the people of the village, and it was arranged that I bring Ihembi along in a week or so to perform *Kaneng'a* and then again *Ihamba* for Kamahasanyi.

In this first performance of the ceremony, Ihembi, after he had been invited to take part, did remove an *ihamba* tooth from Kamahasanyi's body. The event is engraved in my memory, as I was one of those asked to prove Ihembi's claim that it was a human tooth and not that of a pig or monkey—thus demonstrating Ihembi's good faith. This tooth, he told me later, was the *ihamba* of Mudigita, Kamahasanyi's father. But he and I could be frank with each other, being joking partners, and he told me that he didn't think that Mudigita was the chief cause of Kamahasanyi's condition; something else was "in the body." At this point, he said, it was clear to him that the trouble was in the Mukang'ala chiefdom and specifically in the village of Nswanamundong'u; and he was sure that there was another, more powerful *ihamba* still lodged in Kamahasanyi's body.

So *Kaneng'a* was performed, and then again *Ihamba*. In the protracted process of this performance ("drum"— ng'oma —Ndembu call it) Ihembi made practically everyone in Nswanamundong'u Village take part, as assistants in the rites, as confessors of their hostility towards Kamahasanyi, and as interpreters of the past history of the village and the chiefdom. It was now clear that emphasis had shifted from Kamahasanyi's personal predicament in relation to his parents' kin, to the political and kinship problems of the Mukang'ala chiefdom—problems of which Kamahasanyi's case was merely a specific instance, and served as the occasion of a therapeutic process as much socio-political as personal and psychological.

For now Ihembi declared that the sender of the tooth that was causing Kamahasanyi the most pain was not his father, but his mother's mother's mother's sister's son—a remote matrilineal relative of Kamahasanyi's, but politically very important to all in the village. He was not only a former headman but was also Kabung'u, the deceased successor of the old chief Mukang'ala. The upsetting of this old regime by the British was regarded by everyone as the main cause of the present distressed state of the whole chiefdom.

Ihembi had reached his decision that the *ihamba* tooth came from the former chief Kabung'u partly by listening to village gossip in the day or two he had spent in residence before performing the two rituals. He learned that mysterious corposant-like fires had appeared above the present headman's hut during a thunderstorm, and that many had dreamed that they had seen the old man, Kabung'u, angry and threatening. Since he had been a hunter before becoming chief, it was clear to Ihembi that he was angry about the present state of affairs both in the village and the chiefdom, where traditional values had been breached equally. He was afflicting Kamahasanyi as scapegoat for the collective delinquencies.

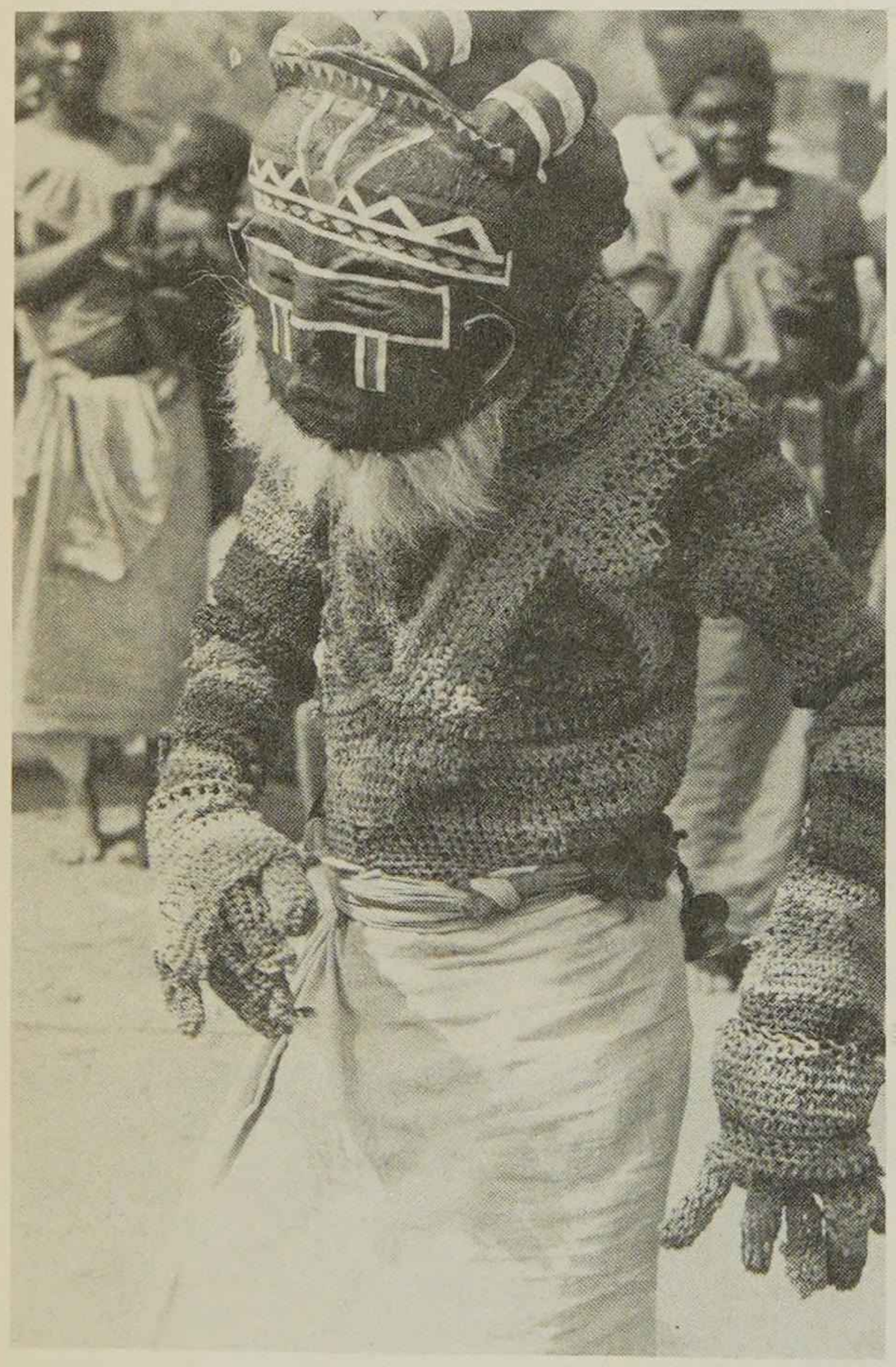
At this point the thrust of Ihembi's therapeutic strategy appears. He was trying, on the one hand, to defuse the hostility between the two groups in the village, those related to Kamahasanyi on his mother's and those on his father's side, and at the same time, to reduce stress in Kamahasanyi's personal problem of relating with his father, by directing attention to the contemporary state of the village and the chiefdom as a whole, in which Nswanamundong'u was a royal village. By being presented as someone who was being afflicted as a scapegoat for their common and corporate errors and misdeeds, Kamahasanyi could become an object of sympathy rather than of irritation. I am not saying that Ihembi was conscious of all this as a sociological problem; rather he was feeling after the points of stress and strain in the social field he had been invited to operate in.

I shall not try to describe the therapeutic process itself, its ups and downs, the symbolic substances used, the ways in which Ihembi built up and released tension, and how finally he produced the *ihamba* tooth itself from a medicine pot in which he had been washing the blood-filled cupping horns his assistants had been applying to Kamahasanyi's body to suck out the elusive biter and gnawer. I shall

The ritual therapeutic process being performed

only say that he succeeded in building up to a climax, so that when after many hours of drumming, washing, cupping, etc. he finally produced the tooth, relief in the village was so great that normally hostile individuals warmly exchanged handshakes, while everyone smiled and indicated extreme relief. This strife-torn village was, for a short time at any rate, pacified and gratified—and most importantly, prepared to be more friendly to Kamahasanyi. It was partly a rite of passage for him from his father's to his mother's kin group.

Unfortunately, Kamahasanyi himself continued to complain of weakness and dizziness. Ihembi told me that in his view the main cause of this was the combined witchcraft of his wife, Maria, and her mother, both of whom favored Winford as Maria's spouse. For this he recommended the performance of a "night



Kaneng'a," a rather awesome ritual in which the doctor often carries a human tibia and at one point spends some time in a new grave in the village graveyard. This is nearly always directed against female witchcraft (which has an "innate" quality as against the "learned" or "purchased" skills and medicines of masculine sorcery). The ritual's aim is to drive away witches' familiars, creatures of variable shape, who may appear as small human beings with inverted feet and head, or as owls, jackals, cats, or other animals, and who are kept in women's menstruation huts. Witches and their familiars form a coven which meets secretly in the bush to eat the real body of the victim, while a facsimile made of his body-dirt, nail parings, feces, etc. is left to hoodwink the living and be buried as the corpse. This sort of negative femininity is greatly feared by men particularly, who feel that there is very little defense against it. But in Kamahasanyi's case, I am happy to report that the cumulative effect of the battery of rituals was highly positive. Maria and her mother were not mentioned by name as witches but evidently got the message: be good to Kamahasanyi!

Obviously, the main source of tension could not be removed by the rituals. Factors beyond village control, such as British administrative policy and population shifts brought about by the post-cash economy and the copper mining industry, produced a sort of endemic, chronic crisis at the level of wider social relationships. But at the village level, the apparent result of the ritual series was a strengthening of matrilineal relationships at the expense of the others, and a lessening of personal tensions. Eighteen months after the events I have described, the Congo group had all left Nswanamundong'u, including Winford, Maria's lover; but Maria remained as Kamahasanyi's wife. Thus, though the village had shrunk in size, this was consistent with a general trend toward smaller residential groups.

It seems that the Ndembu doctor sees his task less as curing an individual patient (as we tend to), than as remedying the ills of a corporate group or set of linked groups. An individual's symptoms are seen as a signal that "something is rotten" in the corporate body. The patient will not recover until all the tensions and aggressions in the group's network of relationships have been brought to light and exposed to ritual manipulation: to the action of symbols many of which embody the group's deepest integrative values. Even in this brief survey I have shown how complex these interrelations can often be, and how conflicts at one level of social organization can reverberate through others. Kamahasanyi, being the "man in the middle" between opposed groups on all these levels—a situation symbolized by the position of his hut between the two village hut-circles—was the one most exposed to psychological as well as social stress. He inhabited a vortex of conflicts.

The doctor's task is to find out where the main structural weaknesses are located, then to tap the various sources of affect, and to channel them in a socially positive direction. Once the

various causes of ill-feeling against Kamahasanyi, and of his against others, had been "made visible," to use the Ndembu idiom, the doctor Ihembi was able, through the cultural mechanism of the *Ihamba* ritual, with its bloodlettings, confessions, purifications, prayers to the shades of the recently dead,

The wise Doctor addresses the rain god and begs his blessing on the people

tooth-drawings, and skillful build-up of expectations of tooth-withdrawal, to transform that accumulated ill-feeling into well-wishing. Emotion is aroused and stripped of its illicit and antisocial quality; but nothing of its intensity, its quantitative aspect, is lost in the transformation. Ndembu social norms and values, expressed in symbolic actions and objects, are saturated with this powerful, generalized emotion, which in turn becomes ennobled through contact with these higher ideals and values. The sick individual, exposed to this process, is reintegrated into his group as, step by step, its members are reconciled with one another in emotionally charged circumstances.

Yet there is room within this communal and corporate process for a doctor to take fully into account the nuances and delicate distinctions among interpersonal relationships. Ihembi, for example, dealt with the particular features of father-son, husband-wife, neighbor-neighbor, etc., relationships. His main task, however, seems to have been to see to it that individuals were made once more capable of playing their social roles successfully in a traditional structure of social positions. Illness was, for him, a symptom of deviation from the cultural norm. The shades punished such deviation, and it is perhaps not surprising that in a time of fairly rapid social change, it was the shades of old chiefs and hunters who were thought to be most sensitive to breaches of traditional norms, for both hunting and chieftainship were symbolic systems expressive of fundamental tribal values. That is why the hunters' shades were "biting" most often those who were most exposed to modern change.

Perhaps a ritual therapist like Ihembi is successful insofar as he can help to restore broken connections, disentangle fouled relational lines, etc. It strikes me that it might be a lot easier for Ihembi than for a Western psychiatric practitioner, precisely because for the *chimbuki* it is a matter of conducting repairs on an already institutionalized system, where people know what the structure is and what their roles in it are, even if they sometimes deviate from them. But in our huge, mobile, atomized, changing society, we have hardly learned how to "plug in" with a set of friends, colleagues, or neighbors, before the inherent momentum of the social process sweeps one or more of us off to another place or a different life-style. Perhaps this is why our redressive institutions and healing communities themselves have taken on a quasi-tribal village character, why people are reluctant to leave them when cured and swift at the least excuse to return to them; while in tribal societies, cure is often effected by *ad hoc* associations of non-kin coming from outside the village and having no on-going ties with one another. When the cure is completed, life returns to normal, for that is the purpose of the cure, and what is perhaps useful for healing should not become a way of life.

All this is merely to indicate that if we propose to borrow a good idea or a social blueprint for living or healing that seems workable in one cultural context, we have to be careful that it will not wilt or become a useless weed if transplanted to one that is totally different.

NARCISSUS

BY THOMAS W. MOORE

Almost everyone knows that the story of Narcissus is about self-love, but not everyone knows the story of Narcissus. We have heard from Freudians that narcissism is an infantile focusing of feeling on ourselves rather than on others, and we have been warned by moralists to avoid the doom suffered by Narcissus for excessive self-love and pride. Through pages of literature—poetic, psychological, and religious—Narcissus wanders, branded as a symbol of folly and peril.

A few months ago I took up the volume of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and read the story of Narcissus, trying to forget all I had read and heard about him and his clinical incarnations and to read his story as if for the first time. The young figure I discovered in the mysterious time and space of story was only dimly related to the figure I had previously known in propositions and theories. Instead of intricate problems of cathexis and fixation, I encountered the mysteries of self-discovery. Instead of single-minded attention to the problem of self-love, I found images touching on a variety of deeply felt human experiences: love, sexuality, transformation, and dreams.

It is not uncommon today for writers to point out the positive aspects of narcissism—the need for self-love and the beauty of finding pleasure in one's own body and spirit. But the story of Narcissus goes further than that. It brings into focus and magnifies a specific phase in the process of self-transformation. Like any authentic reflection of experience, it mixes good and evil, pleasure and pain. It doesn't moralize; it describes with sensitivity and insight the feelings and ideas which surround and constitute the human experience of change.

The only way to know something about Narcissus is to read the story carefully. The first thing we notice is that he was born to a river god and a river naiad; he has a pretty watery ancestry. In mythology beings of the water, like Thetis and Proteus, are fluid; they change shape with ease; they are flexible. This watery

heritage of Narcissus, his natural element, is something to keep in mind.

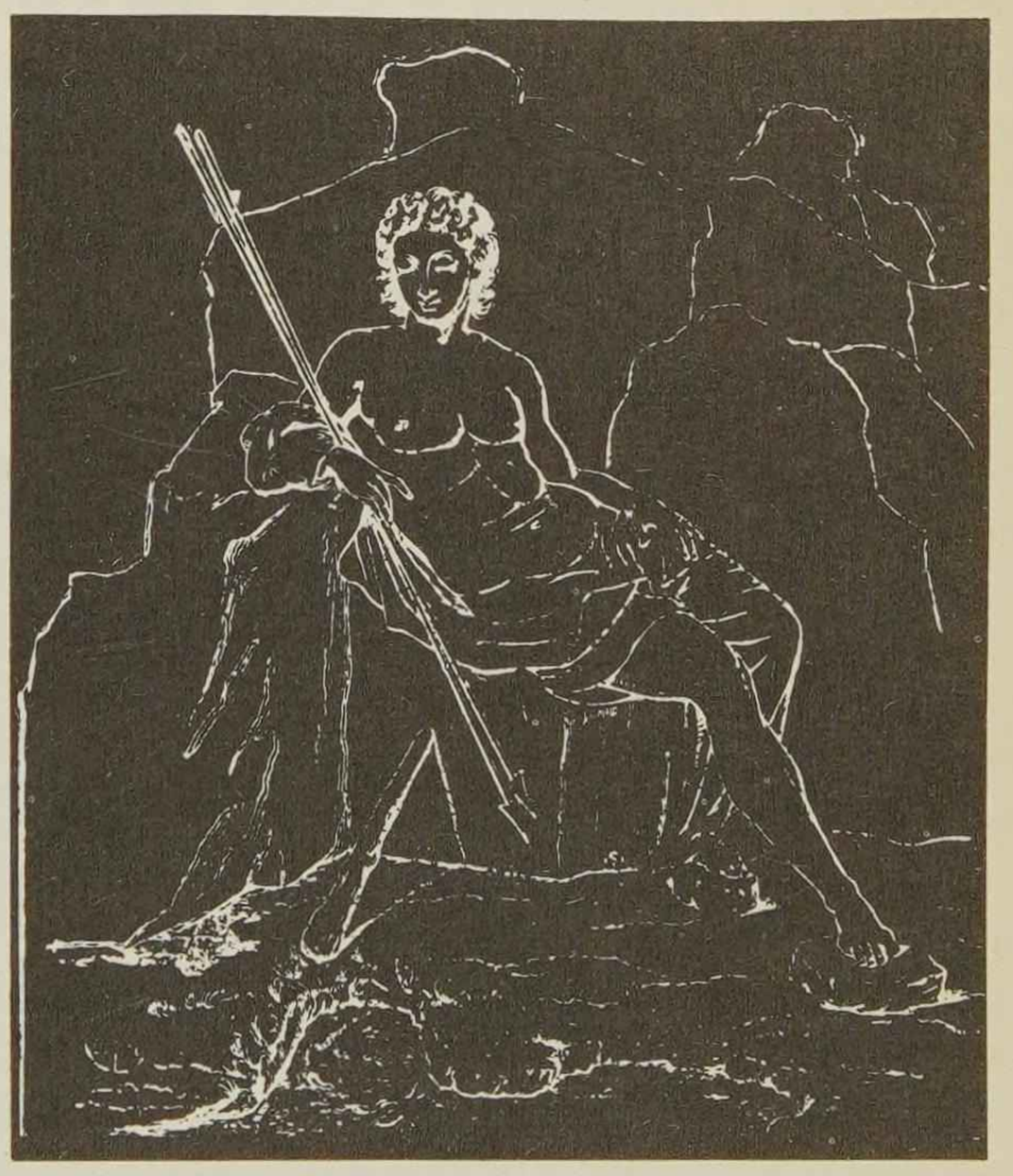
The next significant point, found at the beginning of the story, concerns the curse. Tiresias, the blind hermaphroditic seer, prophesies that Narcissus will live to a ripe old age provided he never *knows* himself. He doesn't say that Narcissus will have a tragic end if he *loves* himself. The prophecy concerns self-knowledge, not self-love. So, if we are to follow this ominous hint, we should be alerted to notice "threatening" signs of self-knowledge. It seems strange, of course, to feel suspicious about self-knowledge. That, everyone agrees, is a good thing. It is self-love that has negative connotations. To grasp the import of the story, however, we have to hold in abeyance any judgments, especially moralistic ones, until it has been told in full.

The opening lines have other revealing things to say. The one thing the storyteller says about Narcissus as an infant is that he was lovable; yet, by the time he is sixteen, and young men and women are chasing him, seeking his love, none of them can get through to him. Ovid's Latin describes Narcissus as filled with "dura superbia", a "hard haughtiness." This creature whose natural home is moist and fluid is characterized by hardness, an impenetrable hardness that makes the attentions of others glance off him without leaving any emotional trace. Like others who scorn love, Hippolytus and Artemis for example, he directs his energies toward hunting deer.

The affectionate words of the young people, including those of the unfortunate Echo, bounce off Narcissus's hardness, and the Goddess of Vengeance sanctions a curse: Narcissus will one day love, but the object of his love will be himself, and, like the companions he has spurned, he himself will feel the pain of unrequited love.

We are led then in the story to the scene at the pool, where, Ovid says, Narcissus tried to quench the thirst that was "inside him, deep within him." Like every other detail in the story, this thirst of Narcissus is more than a simple device of the plot. In his hardness he is alienated from his own nature, and his longing, however unconscious, for his own roots is properly symbolized as a thirst which he feels deep within him.

Eventually Narcissus satisfies his thirst at the pool, but only after a time of crisis. For the pool



Narcissus

of water not only serves a basic physiological need, it also has a higher capacity and purpose. In the water of the pool Narcissus sees an image, an enchanting face, like the marble statue of a god with smooth cheeks and ivory neck. And for the first time he feels the compelling power of love. He tries to kiss and embrace the image but finds that they are separated by a thin film of water. The narrator chides him for being so foolish as to seek

someone who is nowhere, to desire an image that "comes with you, stays with you, and goes away with you".

But the image in the pool has fascinated and charmed Narcissus; he lies on the grass and contemplates the face that is so attractive, so close yet impossibly far away. Finally, he recognizes the face; it is himself. He is burning with love for his own self. He discovers that what he desires is already his own, yet it is separate from him. He immediately realizes that the only outcome for this situation is his own death, and he knows that his death will be the death of the boy he loves. Then, like wax melting in the warmth around it, in the "hidden fire of his passion", Narcissus dies. And, even in the underworld, he continues to gaze into the pool, watching his image, while above ground the naiads and nymphs find, in place of his body, a flower with a yellow center.

Mythology, of course, is not to be read literally. This story is not a chronicle or a newspaper account of some strange happening. Myth is more like a dream whose symbols have to be entertained and allowed to generate associations if its meaning is to be uncovered. The death of Narcissus, like Echo, like the pool, like the enchanting face in the water, is not literal. The transition from the body to the flower is a death and resurrection; the story of Narcissus is a symbol of transformation.

Before exploring the symbols further and arriving at a more specific understanding of Narcissus' fate, perhaps it would be useful to consider a few versions of the story that followed Ovid's. The tale of Narcissus has fascinated poets and dramatists, and of course psychologists, just as Narcissus' image fascinated him—and the similarity, as we shall see, is not superficial.

In the poetry of Courtly Love, the reflecting pool of Narcissus is identified with the idealized lady who acts as a reflecting mirror for her lover, showing him his ideal nature.[1] She is an illusion, but when her blemishes and warts appear, as they inevitably do, and she can no longer function as an untarnished mirror, the lover learns the difference between the real and the illusory. He realizes that it is his own ideals that attract him. The Narcissus experience is for him an opportunity to grow in self-consciousness.

This approach to Narcissus does not explain all of the mysteries, but it does lead us in the proper direction. These poets connected the story of Narcissus to forms of love and knowledge, and they implied that the image Narcissus saw could have been something outside himself and yet at the same time part of him.

We find a further clue in the work of a later writer, the eighteenth-century poet, Edward Young. In "Night Thoughts" he praises Narcissus, the contemplative, the person who has the kind of strength which allows him to enjoy a moment of stillness with himself. Then, in *Conjectures on Original Composition,* Young clarifies his understanding of the nature of creative contemplation. He refers to Narcissus when encouraging novice writers to search themselves for their own creative forces. In one paragraph in particular Young summarizes his interpretation of the Narcissus experience. Using imagery reminiscent of Ovid's version of the myth, Young writes:

> *Therefore, dive deep into thy bosom; learn the depth, extent, bias, and full fort of thy mind; contract full intimacy with the stranger within thee; excite and cherish every spark of intellectual light and heat, however smothered under former negligence, or scattered through the dull, dark mass of common thoughts; and, collecting them into a body, let thy genius rise as the sun from chaos.*[2]

Young's advice to the would-be creative person—dive deeply into oneself and explore the depths; become intimate with the stranger within; value every spark of light and heat; gather them into a body and let that genius rise like the sun—is precisely the experience of Narcissus. He explored the depths of his own nature, the pond of water, and he saw a part of himself that was a stranger to him. He felt the unfamiliar warmth of attraction and love, capacities he had neglected and allowed to dissipate. And this new quality, this newly discovered genius did rise like the sun, in the shape of a yellow-centered flower.

In Young's view, then, to have a Narcissus

experience is to discover a new self, to bring to the surface a formerly hidden potentiality, an altogether new image of oneself. More true to the myth, "narcissism" is the encounter with a new image of oneself, which at first seems to be the portrait of a stranger. The stranger is attractive and fascinating, he elicits our love and attention, then he is revealed to be a part of self. The stranger Narcissus encounters and falls in love with is in fact a vision of his own potentiality. At the beginning of the seven-

Tiresias's prophecy, then, is tantamount to truism. If this infant Narcissus never comes to know himself in all his potentiality, this person he is now will never die, will never change. But if he should encounter some new aspect of himself, the person he now is will be threatened with extinction.

Suppose Narcissus were to be found on the apparent bright side of Tiresias's prophecy. He would never know himself, and he would live a long life. Then indeed we would see Narcissus

teenth century some students at Oxford wrote a play about Narcissus and quaintly made the point:

Nor sunne, nor moone, nor yet nimphe am I,
And though my sweete face bee sett out with rubye,
You miss your marke, I am a man as you bee.

as neurosis. He would be a hard, brittle, impenetrable, unloving, self-contained, alienated person leaving wounded hearts scattered around him. But fortunately Narcissus underwent a change. He found himself in a pool of water and there felt the many contradictory currents of love and confusion. He discovered two important

elements missing from his make-up: water and fire. Water, his own inner natural liquidity and changeability, and fire, the universal agent and symbol of transformation.

The water served Narcissus as a thin, reflecting mirror revealing the image he longed to embrace. That thin film of water was like the delicate screen on which we behold our daydreams. Both require stillness. The slightest intruding ripple erases the image. And, in a sense, both are non-existent. The image on the water cannot be grasped; the daydream cannot be contained. The only way to union for Narcissus and the image was death to them both. Likewise with a cherished self-image. If we wish to be united with an attractive concept of a potential self, the existent self, along with the new concept, has to disappear, while a new being incorporating the new understanding takes its place. This is self-transformation.

Some stories about personal change and creative expansion emphasize the contrast between the old and the new. The story of Narcissus focuses on minute aspects of the crisis of change and is content merely to symbolize the new being in the flower. But the story does include one subtle aspect of the final phase: the encounter between Narcissus and his image does not end with his transformation. It continues indefinitely in the underworld, in the unconscious. The old Narcissus continues to gaze into the underworld pool at the stranger's face, even after he has been transformed.

Narcissus was indeed transformed. In the symbolic imagery of the story he changed from youthful hunter to golden-hearted flower, but his transformation is described in less symbolic terms also. He learns how to love and how to be loved.

As mentioned before, Narcissus as an infant had one distinguishing quality: he was lovable. To translate Ovid literally, the infant Narcissus "was someone who even then could be loved". But it was sixteen years before he recognized his own lovability and the active experience of loving. He learned both aspects of love at the pool, though in sequence. First, seeing the strange face in the water, he felt the stirring of new emotions. Not recognizing the face as his own, he loved someone outside of himself. He experienced object-love. A few moments later he saw that the face was his own, and he knew from the testimony of his own feelings that he was a person who could be loved.

At the crux of the Narcissus story, these are subtle insights. The myth is saying that true personal transformation involves knowledge and love. Narcissus is transformed, recovers his deepest nature, by acquiring knowledge about love and its part in his life, about giving and receiving love. At the same time, it is the energy of love itself that provides the knowledge and is the dynamic thrust behind the transformation. Narcissus is both the subject and object of the one love he experiences at the pool, and he is both knower and known. This is neither pure object-love nor is it pure love of self. It is more transformative than either.

At the pool it is true that Narcissus is not actually giving his love to others, but the implication of the story is that after this preliminary experience of self-knowledge he will be capable of that other kind of love. At the water Narcissus experiences something quite different from classical narcissism. He is, in fact, the least likely candidate to receive such a label.

Once he has felt the intense emotions of loving and has seen a new image of himself, as someone to be loved, he knows that he is a dying person. That is, he is undergoing radical change. Change involves an end and a beginning, and Ovid skillfully describes the change that comes over Narcissus. As morning frost gradually disappears in the warmth of sunshine, the old Narcissus fades away. As yellow wax dissolves in heat, Narcissus slowly disappears. Imitating Narcissus—experiencing true narcissism—a person undergoes a striking moment of self-discovery, then gradually feels the old self fade.

The Narcissus story supports the adage that one has to love himself before he can love others, but it is more precise. The story implies that before a person can love others, he or she has to have a deeply felt image of self as lovable. Until one finds that unfamiliar image, love may be all around but it cannot penetrate. Until the fire of authentic self-love melts the hard armor of wax that shields all affections, the person remains remote and alienated.

When Narcissus discovers that the stranger is himself, he says: "I am he! I felt it. Now I have my own image. I am burning with love for myself." It is a felt experience, not just intellectual knowledge. What he sees in the pool is a picture of himself he had forgotten or simply never recognized before. It is a true re-cognition, a remembering, since Narcissus from the very beginning of his life was lovable. The Narcissus experience, then, has the aspect of remembering, of recovering a lost self-concept, of seeing again, even though the vision may never have been a conscious one, one's own true nature. Like Narcissus we are all born lovable; it is a prerogative of our human heritage. But we have forgotten. Our memories are sparked only by the flame of the felt experience of loving our own image.

The symbol of the flower contains images of fire and water. Looking for Narcissus the young people find instead this golden-centered narcissus flower, the daffodil. In the Oxford students' play the actor playing the part of Narcissus appears holding a flower and says:

If you take me for Narcissus y'are very sille,
I desire you to take me for a daffa downe dillye.

While the element of water has softened the hardness and brought nourishing life to the roots of his being, fire has consumed the old Narcissus and appears in the new as a sun-like golden center. In his essay on the Chinese image of the golden flower, C. G. Jung points out that the combination of fire, water, and flowers figures frequently in dreams and mythology. A seed, he says, is often shown floating in water, while from the depths below, fire penetrates the seed and causes the formation of a golden flower.[3] For Jung this is a symbol of the union of consciousness and life—giving form to the fundamental elements of transformation. Narcissus burns with love for the image in the water, and the fire of his love causes the seed-image to grow into a flower.

The contemplation of some images of self, like the face in the pool, leads to a new depth of experience. Other images are like the empty reflections of Echo; they are fading and unpromising. The story of Narcissus tells of the transforming power of compelling visions of authentic but neglected potentialities. As Narcissus needed a pool of water to reveal to him a new image of self, we too need sources for our own creative contemplation. This myth itself is like a pool of water reflecting a portrait of the reader. It offers an opportunity not only to become acquainted with Narcissus' story, but also to share his experience.

[1]As in Guillaume de Lorris's part of the *Roman de la Rose*. See: Frederick Goldin, *The Mirror of Narcissus in the Courtly Love Lyric* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 52–59.

[2]Quoted in: Louise Vinge, *The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature Up to the Early Nineteenth Century*, trans. by Robert Dewsnap (Lund: Skanska Centraltryckeriet, 1967), p. 286.

[3]C. G. Jung and Richard Wilhelm, *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962), p. 102.

EPICYCLE III

Tales of a Demon *is adapted from the* Vetalapanchavimshati, *or* Twenty-five Tales of a Vetala, *a cycle of stories embedded in the eleventh-century Indian epic known as the* Ocean of Stories, *by Somadeva. The "Tales of a Demon," actually twenty-four in number, are all riddle stories which were used for religious instruction by the Buddhists and others; their antiquity antedates the* Ocean of Stories *by several centuries.* Subsequent issues of* Parabola *will each carry a Tale together with King Trivikramasena's answer to the previous riddle. Readers are invited to try their wits at an answer and to send in proposed solutions.*

Tales of a Demon

By the banks of the Godavari river, in the place called Pratishthana, lived a famous king, Trivikramasena by name. Every day, for ten years, a mendicant named Kshantisila came to the king, to pay his respects, giving him a piece of fruit, and every day for ten years, the king would give the fruit to his treasurer, who then threw it through a window into the treasury. One day, however, when he received the fruit, the king instead gave it to a pet monkey, who bit into the fruit and revealed in its center a magnificent and priceless jewel.

King Trivikramasena summoned his treasurer and inquired after the fruit he had received each day for the ten preceding years, and was told that the fruit had rotted away, leaving in its place a huge mound of resplendent and radiant gems. The following day, therefore, when Kshantisila came before him, King Trivikramasena asked him why each day, for ten years, the mendicant courted his favor at such great expense. Kshantisila replied that he had an incantation to perform which required the aid of a brave man. He had hoped to achieve his purpose by persuading the king to assist him. The king consented to assist in the incantation, and on the appointed day dressed himself in black and, sword in hand, made his way to his meeting with the mendicant.

The site chosen for the incantation indeed required a brave man, for it was in a burial ground, amid the horrors of the funeral pyres and the skulls and bones of men scattered on the ground. The demons called Vetalas were there too, delighting in their horrible activities, and the air was alive with the barking of jackals. King Trivikramasena announced his arrival, and the mendicant replied:

"If indeed I have found favor in your eyes, O King, I would ask you to journey south from here, among the pyres and the tombs, until you find a *simsapa* tree. Among its branches you will find a dead man hanging. Cut him down and bring him here. It is a hero's task, O King: please assist me in this manner."

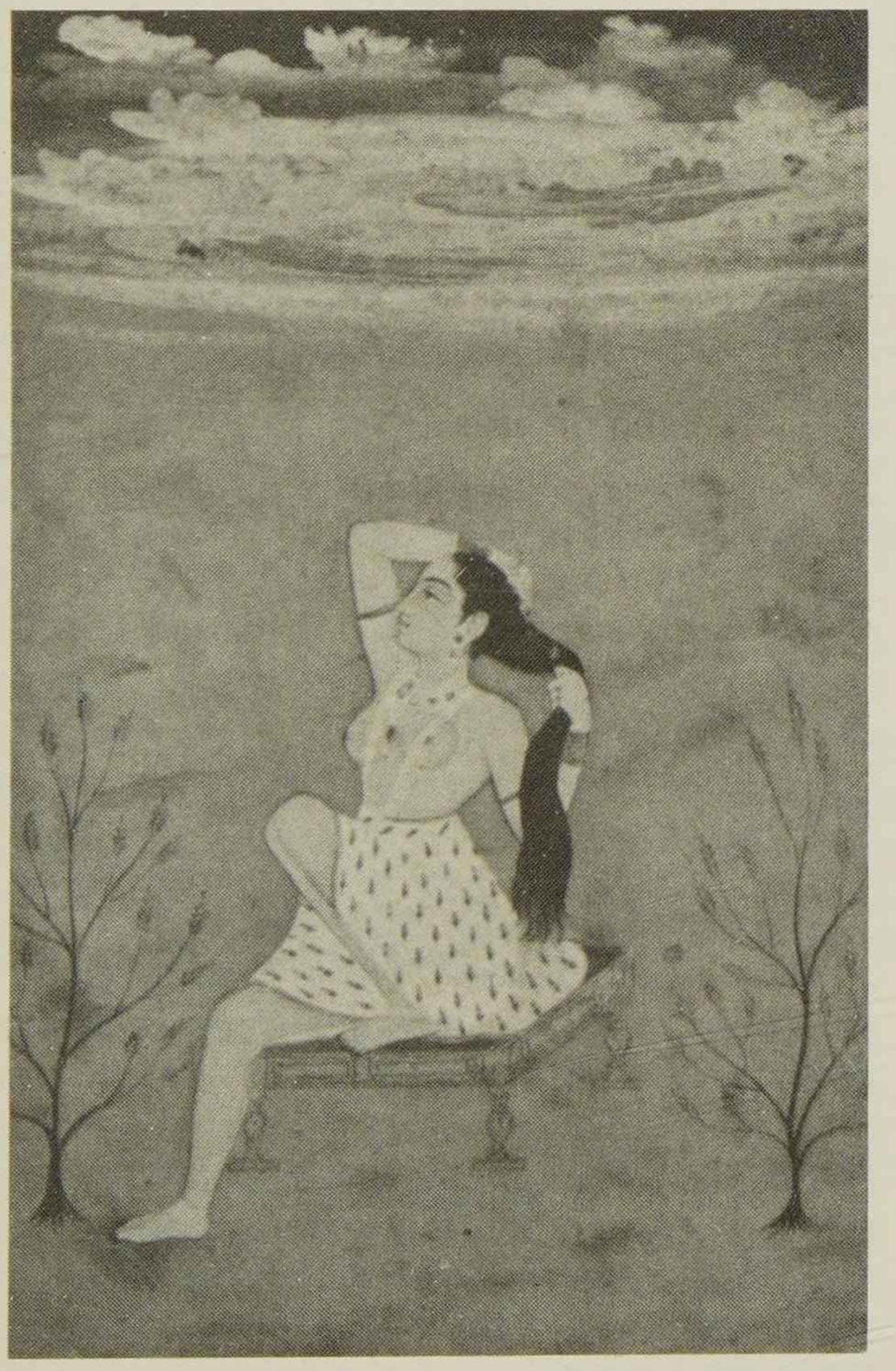
Faithful to his word, King Trivikramasena made the journey south, among the pyres, his way lit by their flames. He found the *simsapa* tree, and there among its branches was a corpse hanging up. The king climbed up and cut it down, but when it fell to the ground, it cried out as if in pain. Quickly, the brave king climbed down and began rubbing the limbs out of compassion. At this, the Vetala that was in the corpse cackled hideously. "Oho," said King Trivikramasena, "and why are you laughing? Come, let us be off."

With that, the corpse flew back into the *simsapa* tree, and King Trivikramasena had to climb the tree again and cut the corpse down. This time, he shut his lips tightly and putting the corpse across his shoulders, he set off down the road.

As they went along the road, however, the Vetala in the corpse spoke up, saying, "King, the road is long and gloomy; let me tell you a story to charm your going."

**A few of the Tales appeared in Heinrich Zimmer's classic collection of essays* The King and the Corpse *(New York: Bollingen Series, 1948).*

The Language of Signs



This tale, O King, concerns a certain Prince Vajramukuta, who lived in the city of Benares, by the side of the Holy Ganges. This Prince, together with his dearest friend, the minister's son, Buddhisarira, was once upon a time whiling away pleasant hours cutting off the long-maned heads of lions with his arrows, and as he did so, moving deeper and deeper into the forest. What a forest was that to behold! It seemed a very bower of love, alive with birds and aglow with bright blossoms. In that forest was a lake, the birthplace of lotuses of every hue, and by that lake sat a maiden the like of which Prince Vajramukuta had not seen in all his life. To say she was beautiful would be to sin by not telling all the truth; indeed, the beauty of the lake, of the lotuses, of the forest-bower itself seemed to flow from her presence, and her face surpassed the moon in loveliness. Alas for the glory of hunting lions! For as soon as Prince Vajramukuta set his eyes upon her, his heart was lost for love.

How could he approach her, though, surrounded as she was by her attendants? And yet, as he watched, the maiden began to make certain signs, speaking to him silently across the waters. First she took a lotus, and put it behind her ear. Then she spent some several minutes notching a lotus petal so that it resembled the tooth-leaf ornament. She placed yet another lotus blossom upon her head, and finally laid her hand significantly upon her heart. All this the prince and his companion saw, but the prince understood nothing.

At last the maiden departed with her attendants, leaving behind only the memory of her beauty in the heart of Prince Vajramukuta, and the memory of her signs in the mind of Buddhisarira, the minister's son.

As soon as they were alone, how Prince Vajramukuta wrung his hands in anguish! "Alas," he cried, "my heart is lost! How shall I ever see her again except by the merest chance?"

"Do not weep, my friend," said Buddhisarira. "Did you not see how clearly she indicated how you were to come to her? By placing the lotus behind her ear, she said 'I live in the realm of King Karnotpala,' whose name as you know means Lotus-ear. When she trimmed the leaf into the tooth-leaf ornament, she said 'My father is an ivory-carver,' for as you know, the tooth-leaf ornament is made by ivory-carvers. By placing the lotus on her head, she declared her name to be Padmavati, she of the lotus. And of course, when she placed her hand upon her heart, she very clearly told you that it was yours. Now all we must do is journey to the country of Kalinga, whose king is named Karnotpala, and there find the house of his favorite courtier, Sangramavardhana, by profession a carver of ivory. It is his daughter we seek, the pearl of the three worlds, whose name is Padmavati."

With that, Prince Vajramukuta rejoiced indeed, and after some deliberation, set out with his friend to the country of Kalinga, riding on the swiftest of horses, so that none might follow. Once there, they immediately sought out the house of the ivory-carver, and found themselves lodgings in the house of an old woman who lived nearby.

"Old mother," said Prince Vajramukuta to the woman who kept the house, "do you know the ivory-carver Sangramavardhana, and has he a daughter named Padmavati?" Courteously the old woman replied, "Indeed I do know that worthy man: was I not his nurse when he was but a child, and am I not now his daughter's duenna? But alas, I never go there these days, for my wicked son, who is a gambler, has sold all my clothes to feed his sinful habits."

When he heard this, the Prince was delighted, and immediately gave the old woman all such clothes as she needed, and then took counsel with her. "Old mother," he said, "I beg of you to do me a great favor: but it must be done in secret." The old woman replied, "Of that have no fear." "Well then," said the Prince, "I beg you to go to the maiden Padmavati, and tell her this: 'The prince whom you saw at the lake has come here, and out of love wishes to see you.' Then come away here again, bringing any such message as she might tell you."

Straightaway the old woman put on her new clothes and went to Padmavati. She returned shortly, her eyes streaming with tears, and upon being questioned by the prince and his comrade, said, "I went to Padmavati, and I told her the message exactly as you gave it to me. But no sooner were the words out than she scolded me sharply and struck me on both cheeks, with her hands smeared with camphor. See, the marks are still here on my face."

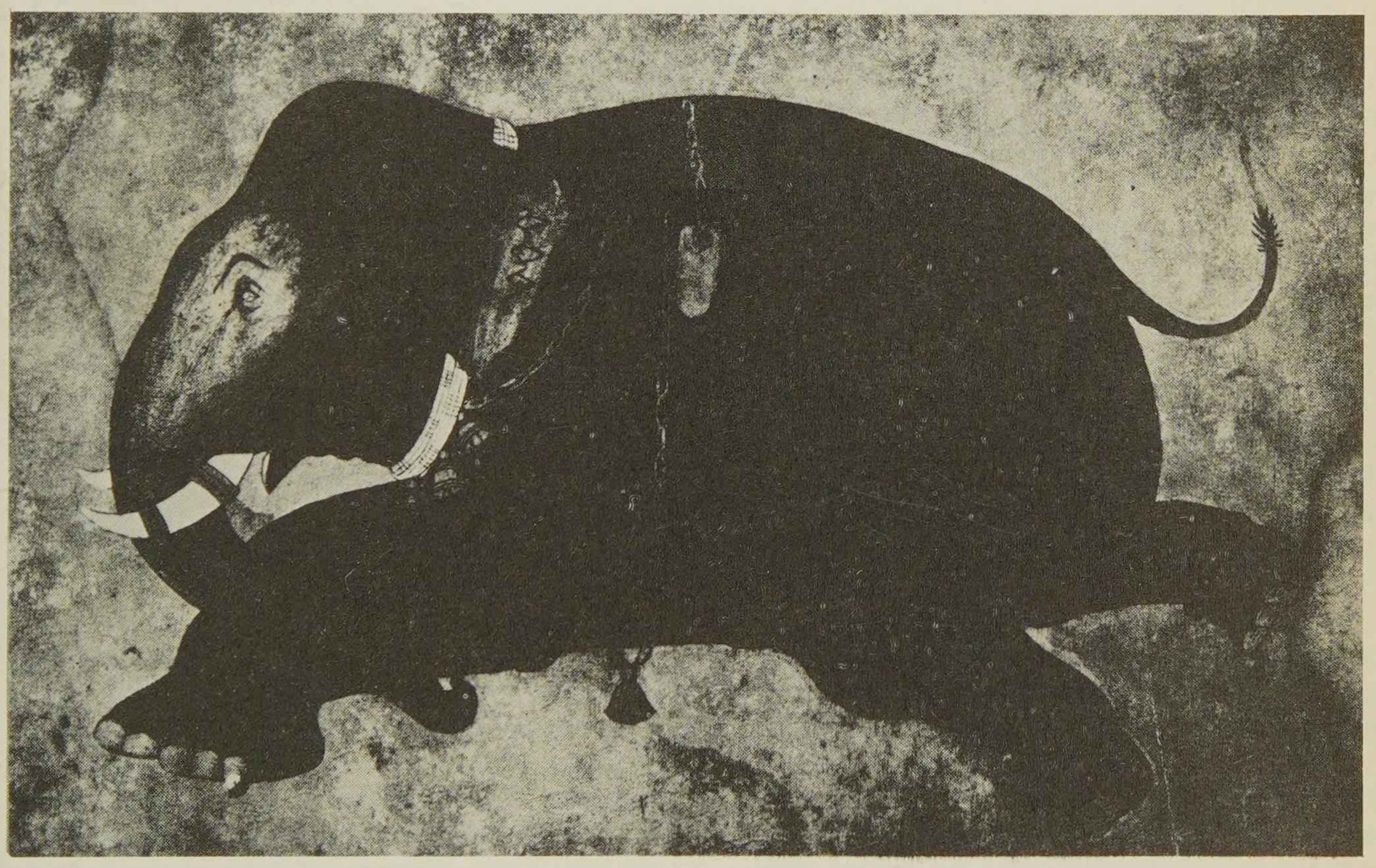
At this the prince was despondent, despairing now of ever seeing his beloved again. But the minister's son smiled and took him aside, saying "Do not be downcast, for your beloved was wise in keeping her counsel and sending her message as she did. For know that the marks of ten fingers smeared with camphor are to tell you that the next ten nights will be bright with moonlight, and unfavorable for a secret visit."

When his friend had spoken, the Prince cheered up, and sending his friend to the market place to sell gold and buy food, he prepared a magnificent meal, which they shared with the old woman. Thereafter, for ten days, they kept to the house and talked with the old woman, and fed her well. When ten days had passed, the moon was no longer a bright enemy, and again the old woman went to Padmavati to arrange a meeting. Once again she returned with tears in her eyes, and said, "When I went there tonight, I said not a word, and yet as soon as she saw me, Padmavati taunted me with the crime of having brought your message, and again struck me, after dipping her fingers in red dye. See, here are the marks of three fingers upon my breast."

As soon as he saw the marks, the minister's son said to his friend the Prince, "Once again we see the wisdom of this maiden who has told you that she cannot receive you for three nights." Then he again took gold and went to the market place and bought food, and the

three of them feasted.

When the three days had passed, the old woman again went to Padmavati, who this time received her with honor, and gave her clothing and food, and entertained her with wine and other enjoyments. When the old woman was about to return however, a cry was heard in the streets: "Beware! Beware! A mad elephant is loose in the streets and is trampling every one he sees!" Then Padmavati said to the old woman, "You must not go back by the public road, for it is unsafe. Instead, we will lower you in a seat into the garden. Cross the garden and get up into the tree at the far end, go over the wall and into another tree in your own garden, and so come to your house." Then she prepared a seat for the old woman and lowered her into the garden.



The Escaping Elephant

As soon as she had returned, the old woman told the prince of her adventure, and how she had been lowered into the garden and crossed over the wall through the trees. When she had finished her account, the minister's son said, "It is by this means that Padmavati intends you to come to her tonight. As soon as evening has come, climb into the tree, cross the wall, and so get into the garden of your beloved." And when evening fell, the Prince did exactly as his friend had told him, and coming to the house of the ivory-carver, was hauled up by the female servants of the house to the room where his beloved awaited him.

Ah, what a meeting was that! For though the moon had set, yet the night was bright with the radiance of Padmavati, and she welcomed the embrace of her lover, Prince Vajramukuta, for whom she had waited so long. Then were they wed by the *gandharva* form of marriage, and all their desires and wishes were fulfilled in each other's embrace.

For three delightful days, the lovers kept to the rooms of Padmavati in the house of the ivory-carver. At last, remembering his friend, Prince Vajramukuta said, "Dear one, I have left a good friend at the house of the old woman, your duenna. I should go and pay him a visit; after that, I shall return to you."

Then Padmavati answered, and said, "Come now, dear husband, tell me the truth. Was it you who guessed the language of signs and thus came to me, or was it that friend of yours, the minister's son?" Then the Prince smiled and confessed, "Of a truth, I could not guess a sign of that secret language, but all of it was apparent to my friend, who told me everything." Padmavati grew pensive at this, and at length replied, "You have acted wrongly in not telling me these things. Since your friend has served us both so well in bringing us together, I must treat him as my brother, and honor him with gifts." Then she prepared a special sweet which she

wrapped in leaves. Placing the gift in her husband's hand, she begged him to bring it to his friend as a token of her regard for his deeds.

The Prince then took the gift and left the house of the ivory-carver, making his way back to the house of the old woman by the same means that he had come. He told his friend the words of his wife, and gave him the sweet that she had prepared. Then the minister's son said to the Prince, "Behold a marvel, my friend," and unwrapping the gift, he gave the sweet to a dog to eat. As soon as the dog took the food in his mouth, it fell dead. Starting back in surprise, Prince Vajramukuta said, "What is the meaning of this marvel?" Thereupon his friend replied, "The truth of the matter is this: your beloved, knowing that it was I who guessed the language of her signs, has sent me this poisoned food in order to kill me. She is deeply in love with you, and thinks that so long as I am alive, you will never be devoted to her exclusively, and may perhaps one day leave her and return to your own land. Do not be angry with this high-spirited creature, but persuade her to leave her relations. I will meanwhile invent a way for you to carry her off."

At that moment, word came to them that the city was in mourning for the death of the king's infant son. This news pleased the minister's son, who immediately said to the Prince, "Our plot is well-made. Go tonight to the side of your beloved, and make her drink much wine, so that she is intoxicated and senseless. Make a mark on her hip with a red-hot spike while she is asleep. Then take off all her ornaments, her necklace, bracelets and earrings, and return here immediately. Then I will tell you further what you must do."

Trusting the words of his friend, Prince Vajramukuta took a three-pronged spike, with points as small as a boar's bristles, and when night fell, he went to the house of the ivory-carver and to his beloved. Carefully following the advice of his good friend, he made his beloved helpless with drink, so that she fell into a deep and senseless slumber. Then he took his trident and heated it red-hot and marked her on the hip with the points, as his friend had advised him. He took off all her ornaments, her necklace, bracelets, and earrings, and carried them away, returning through the gardens to the house where his friend was waiting.

When morning came, the minister's son disguised himself as an ascetic, and the prince as his disciple. Then the minister's son went to the cemetery while Prince Vajramukuta, acting on his friend's instructions, went to the marketplace to pretend to sell the pearl necklace he had taken from Padmavati the night before, taking care to put a steep price on it so that none might wish to buy it. In this way, the prince attracted attention to himself, and he was soon arrested and brought before the magistrate.

"Reverend sir, where did you obtain this necklace?" asked the magistrate, who recognized it immediately as the one reported stolen by the ivory-carver's daughter. Prince Vajramukuta answered, "My spiritual master gave it to me: come and ask him where he got it, for I know that not." Then the magistrate went to the cemetery and sought out the minister's son who was wandering about among the pyres disguised as an ascetic.

When the minister's son heard the questions of the magistrate, he answered thus: "I am an ascetic, and accustomed to wandering where I will and sleeping wherever chance has led me. Late last night, as I was sleeping among the pyres, I awoke to see that a band of witches had convened and that the prince, your son, was among them, the lotus of his heart laid open. They offered him to Bhairava there before me, and one of them, possessed no doubt with the devil and drink, tried to steal the charm I wear from around my neck. I was too quick for her, however, and heating my trident red-hot, I burned her on the hip, at the same time snatching from around her neck the necklace of pearls which you now hold in your hands. As such jewels do not become an ascetic, I bade my disciple to sell them, and thus has he, blameless, fallen into your grasp."

When the magistrate heard this explanation he released the prince and went straightaway to King Karnotpala and told him the whole story. Now that king, curious to know if the ivory-carver's daughter were really a witch, sent a trustworthy old dame to Padmavati to discover the truth. Upon hearing the report that that faultless pearl, the secret wife of Prince Vajramukuta, bore the burn-marks of a trident upon her hip, King Karnotpala immediately

concluded that she was indeed a witch and had contrived the death of his son. Eager to punish her, and avenge his son's death, he begged the minister's son, disguised as an ascetic, to devise a punishment.

Thus it befell that, at the advice of the pretended ascetic, Padmavati was stripped naked and left in the forest, banished forever, by the will of King Karnotpala.

With burning tears of shame did the parents of that lovely lotus-blossom mourn the banishment of their daughter Padmavati, yet she herself, though naked and left for lost in the forest, did not despair, guessing that all that had

happened was by an artifice of the minister's son, the faithful companion of her princely husband. Therefore she was not surprised when, late at night, the prince and Buddhisarira, having abandoned their ascetic guise, came to the forest mounted on swift horses. They gave her clothes and consoled her, and mounting her upon a horse, the three of them rode off to the prince's own kingdom. There Prince Vajramukuta and Padmavati lived long and happily, and the minister's son was their faithful servant for the rest of their days. But the ivory-carver, supposing that his daughter had been devoured by tigers, died of grief, and his wife as well.

"Now, brave King," said the Vetala, when he had finished his tale, "I have some doubts and questions concerning this story, which I beg of you to resolve for me: tell me whose fault it was that the ivory-carver and his wife should have died so unhappy a death? Was it the minister's son, or Prince Vajramukuta, or their daughter Padmavati? If you know the answer to this, great King, and utter it not, your head will fly into a thousand pieces."

DIVINE LAW, HUMAN JUSTICE

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS

There is a close relation between on the one hand human law, morality and crime, and what I find to be the basic Law of the manifested universe, however that universe came into being and to whatever end. Not that they do not overlap, and sometimes alarmingly. I have been told that when the Zulu kingdom was at its zenith the penalty for adultery was death. Applied in the West today this law would not only strengthen morality but considerably reduce the population! On the other hand I have been told that in Afghanistan, at least in living memory if not today, it was not only the right of the male head of a family involved in some blood feud to seek out and murder in cold blood the killer of his father, but his solemn duty. The relevant terms, however, admit of some definition and distinction. Let us briefly consider them before making a comparison.

We may describe our own law as a series of man-made rules of conduct, created by some law-giving authority, with a defined maximum sanction for breach of them. All citizens are *prima facie* responsible to these laws, and must

pay the penalty for any breach. Mercy is an indeterminate human factor applied by the particular tribunal to the individual concerned to mitigate the rigors and imperfections of the law.

Morality consists of rules of right and proper conduct, tacitly agreed by members of the community, whether or not given the sanction of law. They are far more changeable than laws, varying widely from period to period, place to place and between the various strata of society. The sanction for breach is the disapproval of the community at large and of neighbors in particular. Most moral laws are within the ambit of the criminal law, but the border line, as in sexual habits, is debatable; likewise all grave crimes are offenses against the moral law, though a wide range of petty crime, as in parking offenses, carries no moral stigma.

Where the two systems of crime and morality overlap there is a general sense of "rightness" in them, and of "wrongness" in their breach, which can be traced to a deep-rooted though ill-defined sense of superior origin, that is, of a source superior to the inventions of men. This sense of rightness may be felt as transcendent (the "will of God") or immanent ("the voice of conscience"), or as both, an experience which belongs, perhaps, to the realm of metaphysics. The penalty for breach is the feeling, vague or acute, that in some way the character, or inner self, or "soul", is damaged, worsened or stained, and in this sense punished by the very breach itself. In the Christian field this punishment is felt to emanate from the God who is the creator of this divine, as distinct from human, law. In any event it is felt that there is a higher system of jurisprudence, so to speak, with universal laws, a universal procedure of attaching guilt, and a non-human source of punishment or effect for any breach.

The East views things differently, and does not use the concept of a personal God-creator. In Indian wisdom we find the term *Brahman* or *Parabrahman* for the ultimate Be-ness (as H.P. Blavatsky called it, to distinguish it from Being) which "breathes out" every universe and at the end of almost inconceivable periods of time "breathes in" again. Buddhism speaks of "an Unborn, Unoriginated, Unformed" and of the later "unrolling and rolling up" of the worlds, without, at least in its oldest surviving schools, going further into ultimate metaphysics. These two vast fields of religion, using that term at its widest, meet in the concept of Dharma which, as any encyclopedia shows, has a hundred meanings: Law, as the basic Law of the universe in manifestation; Doctrine, as the ultimate Teaching (and what we call Buddhism is known in the East as Buddha-Dharma); Right, Rightness as beyond our comparative values of right and wrong, or Duty, in the sense of what every unit of the one life owes to the Whole, that which is in every sense "due". This inner duty is to obey the spiritual-moral-natural Law of the universe, however discovered, and in the ideal all man-made laws and moral codes should reflect this cosmic Law. Dharma, in other words, should be made visible in the unwritten rules of conduct, and thence reflected in those of them which it is made a crime to disobey.

A conscious breach of any of these laws produces a conflict in the mind. A split is experienced between what ought to be and what is, between ideal and practice. The part feels severed from the whole, the son has offended the Father, a new veil is erected between the pilgrim and the Light which beckons him on. But here there is a big distinction between human and "divine" law. Breach of a man-made law is punished by the state; of a moral law by the neighbors' disapproval. But breach of the natural Law, whether inherent in the structure of the Universe or created by some God, produces its own immediate results. For violations of *these* laws, whether viewed as sins, faults or errors in ignorance, we are punished *by* our sins, not *for* them. An evil deed imports its own results, automatically, invariably. The effect of wrong action is inseverable from its cause; the two are as the two sides of a coin. This is the Law by which the universe is run, or, more accurately, runs itself, and in the East it is known as Karma. It was long known in Hindu philosophy, and adopted with new meaning by the Buddha in formulating his Middle Way to the end of suffering. The word means action, with the connotation of action/reaction. It is at once cause, effect, and the law which equilibrates the two. It is Newton's third law of motion, that action and reaction are equal and opposite, applied to the moral and other realms of sentient life. For two

thousand years Christians have heard it proclaimed from their pulpits; "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," and Christ is reported to have said upon the Mount: "Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." The law is invariable, but as there is no one cause for any action, and each effect is the father of new causes, any potential effect may be altered by the deliberate introduction of new causes, including a controlled reaction to the effect. The law is therefore in no way comparable with Kismet or other forms of unalterable "fate," save where the net result of action is too late to be modified, as of a trigger pulled before the bullet kills six feet away. True, the law being exceptionless seems "cold" and merciless, but cases of human mercy, even to taking the blame or suffering unmerited consequence by deeds of vicarious sacrifice, are themselves illustrations of the law of Karma. When the traveller, robbed and injured, lay by the roadside, it was his Karma, in the sense of the consequences of his own past causing, which brought him to that condition, but also his "good" Karma that the Good Samaritan should pass that way when he did.

True, there are other relations between events than causal, and even science is coming to prefer the phraseology of the Buddhist scriptures of two thousand years ago, that there is "dependent origination" rather than causation. "This being so, that arises: that ceasing to be so, this will pass." There is an infinite network of cosmic interrelation, and Carl Jung has invented the term "synchronicity" to describe what none can otherwise explain. But these niceties need not detain us. It is enough for us that cause/effect is a working description of the law of the universe, and it is enough for the man in the dock who sees a sentence of five years awaiting him as the consequences of his crime.

But, say the Buddhists, we are far more bound in Karma than the need to obey it. Even as we shall reap as we sow, so are we now reaping what we have sown, and to such an extent that in our smallest parts we *are* our Karma; we are, in fact, the present embodiment of lives of previous causation by thought and desire and deed. We are what we have done; we shall be what we do.

Now all law assumes a source, an expression and a sanction. In man-made law it is easy to see all three. The source of English law is Parliament; its presentation, the Statute book, and its sanction as prescribed by Parliament and applied by men. It is harder to see this trinity with Dharma and its machinery of Karma. For there is no law-giver. The universe is seen as the periodic expression in time of an absolute Unmanifest, and the nature of the First Cause is necessarily beyond the grasp of the intellect. The nearest to an extra-cosmic God is the Dharma personified, and in parts of the East it is so deified. But this is still law personified and not a law-giver. Then where do we find the expression of the law? First, in nature, using that term to include all aspects of it from astronomy to geology ("sermons in stones"). Yet "the fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves that we are underlings," and therefore, secondly, we find the law in the visions and discoveries of the world's great men who, language apart, speak with one voice: and finally we find it in the deeps of our own minds, when we care to look and listen. And the sanction for disobedience? Injury to the self and thereby to the Whole of which each self is part. "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is the substance of our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts." Thus the Buddhist scriptures. None can escape. "Not in the sky, not in the sea, not in a cave in the mountains can a man escape from his evil deeds." And all are affected. "It is an occult law that no man can rise superior to his individual failings without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone" (H.P. Blavatsky).

Karma, then, is the law of cosmic harmony, of natural justice. It eliminates chance, luck, and coincidence, enables a man to build his character patiently as he would have it be, and puts into each man's hands the means for his own fulfillment.

We are now faced with two parallel systems of law and its administration, one in existence before man was born and the other devised by him to the best of his ability. What is their relationship? Let us take a concrete example.

to police, lawyers, and the cost to the country of the trial.

In all this complex integration of cause/effect, what is the position of the law of Karma? Let us repeat that it is (a) invariable in its operation, (b) that all events, things, persons, and situations, everything in manifestation, are not only subject to its sway but are, as it were, its creation, and (c) that none can "interfere" with it. By emptying a watering can from a balcony on to the head of a passer-by I am using the law of gravity. If a neighbor holds his umbrella over the potential victim's head the water will still fall but it will not wet him. Here there is the operation of "natural" laws but no interference with them. One cannot interfere with natural law, but by the interpolation of new causes the total effect may be thereby modified. Returning, then, to the bad-tempered neighbor, he has disturbed the harmony or equilibrium of the universe by his action, and even as the ripples on a garden pond disturbed by a stone flow back from the circular edge to the point of entry, so the effects of the disturbance, having had some effect, however small, on every atom of the universe, flow back to the doer of the deed and—present the bill for the disturbance. The adjustment, to use a term relevant alike to physics and psychology, is impartial because impersonal, and presumably accurate, though what the net effects of any cause may be is a matter of speculation. At least there is no call for mercy, for this factor is only needed in human justice to temper a clumsy man-made law to the particular offender. We do not ask a brick for mercy if we throw it straight into the air and it lands, by the law of gravity, upon our head. And we certainly do not invite the intervention of any extra-cosmic personified Force to withhold the law from operation on our behalf. We catch the brick or get out of the way.

Turning our attention to crime, all concerned with a crime and its results are individually the creation of their own past Karma, in their environment, character and reaction to circumstance, and all react in connection with the crime in their several ways. The whole system of justice, therefore, is the collective Karma of the nation applying it, its creation and its responsibility. So there is a man-made administration of the Karmic law to the individual through the machinery of our best attempts at natural justice. As such it is the complex effect of a thousand years of cumulative causes, and the accused was born into it. That the crime was committed in England is his Karma, likewise that he was caught, that the victim died or was remarkably saved by the fact of a passing doctor. That the witnesses at his trial

Assume that a man is charged with causing grave injury to a neighbor in a fit of temper, which is *prima facie* an offense against universal, moral, and criminal law. The police step in and the impersonal machinery of criminal procedure is set in motion. Evidence is collected, an arrest made, committal proceedings are followed by bail or no bail, there is a trial according to legal procedure, and justice is done to the best of our fallible and well-meaning human ability. On conviction there are consequences, some inevitable, such as moral obloquy or loss of job, some in the hands of the judge, such as imprisonment or fine. The sentence of imprisonment, if passed, would be for the mixed purpose of punishment, deterrence to others, and reform for the offender. The effects of the whole transaction from offense to sentence will be complex, on the physical plane involving his physical liberty, his pocket, his social standing, and the like; on the psychic and emotional planes causing much ferment and distress, and on the mental plane, where fear, remorse, defiance, relief, etc., will in turn affect his concept of the world and his sense of values. And the results will not only be considerable on the doer of the deed, but will affect in varying degree all who were brought into the ambit of the incident, from victim, friends and neighbors

should be able to say this or that, or be unable to be present; that he should have the means to employ for his defense Mr. X, or be left with Mr. Y, that the lawyer prosecuting was brilliant or obtuse, that the judge was lenient, ferocious or asleep during the vital evidence, and that his sentence was (a) what he deserved, (b) what he expected, or (c) very lenient, all these were strictly within the ambit of the Karmic law, using the criminal law to effect its own invariable justice.

For the more interior workings of the law of cause and effect, let us turn to morality which, whether or not it overlaps with crime, is enfolded in, though not coterminous with religion. All great Teachers have enjoined some code of self-control, of right behavior in thought, word, and deed. In the West we know of the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. These can be equated with the equally old "Five Precepts" of the Buddhist bhikkhu, being vows to undertake (self) training against killing, stealing, sensuality, slander, and drugs. All concerned feel these rules to be "right," and the Buddha's Eightfold Path to Enlightenment provides perhaps the finest moral philosophy extant. So strong is the inner respect for these rules that many of us, while resenting some new minor national law, such as car-parking restrictions, will feel a slight prick of inner disapproval at each breach of them. At the other end of the scale the concept of the Rule of Law, divine Law, has a hold upon our actions, political, social and personal, based on a subconscious mental attitude which is compounded of "conscience" and a dim awareness of the divine Law, with its sense of responsibility to the community and the "right" action from oneself.

The two great systems, therefore, of divine Law in the sense of cosmic Harmony expressed in the living Law of Karma, and man-made rules with varying degrees of sanction, are not so much parallel as concentric circles, the whole of one functioning within the ambit of the other. Perhaps morality covers the largest field in the mind of the average citizen, if there be such a person. The most developed, those aware of the inner monitor of Cosmic Law, will always be a minority, and one hopes that the same will ever be true with the least developed, to whom divine Law means nothing, morality little, and the law a matter whose breach entails uncomfortable consequences. Meanwhile the whole of our moral code and system of law are alike an expression of Karma as the executive agent of Dharma, itself the "voice of Heaven." This must include all human errors in the administration of justice, for man's injustice to man is itself the product of past causing and even a wrong acquittal was in one sense earned. But here we find a fascinating problem in the field of psychology. We in England know of the case where a woman, acquitted of murder, committed suicide at the execution of the youth she had seduced into murdering her husband. And the late Mr. Justice Macnaghten described to me at length his belief in the criminal's "right to be punished." All of us engaged in criminal trials know of the vast relief expressed by many a criminal on being caught. Any punishment seemed better than the burden of guilt upon his shoulders. To be punished by one's fellow men is (in theory) the end of the human aspect of the error; to admit the fault and to make one's inward peace with the higher Law gives deeper satisfaction, and this is sound psychology, sound philosophy, and sound religion. For by any system of thought the universe is an integral whole, and the offense by the part is grievous to the part until by some system of reintegration the prodigal son is welcomed home.

But whereas responsibility to human law is hedged with exceptions and argument as to their scope, responsibility to the Karmic law is absolute. Any imperfection in its justice can be adjusted in time, and the doctrine of rebirth is implicit, or so it seems to me, in acceptance of Karma. And the adjustment of cause and effect needs no intervening mercy. This does not mean, as some allege, that Karma is "cold," and therefore revolting to the mind. It is cold in the sense that it is dispassionate, but the human quality of mercy, which springs from compassion and love, is in its use and application all part of the Karmic field. For the Karmic law, let it be stressed, rules each and all, and the relations between each and all. All parts should help one another and the whole, but the extent to which they do so is within the law of cause/effect. Wrong environment and educa-

tion, housing conditions and social atmosphere affect the young and make them decent citizens or criminals, but the effects suffered by the children are of their creation, and they are themselves partly responsible for the conditions which have made them what they are. If these causes must stem from a previous life then they were so caused; the law of cause/effect cannot make sense without that addendum. Meanwhile the interaction of all units of the group is itself Karma, ranging from "vicarious atonement" to the Buddhist doctrine of the "transference of merit."

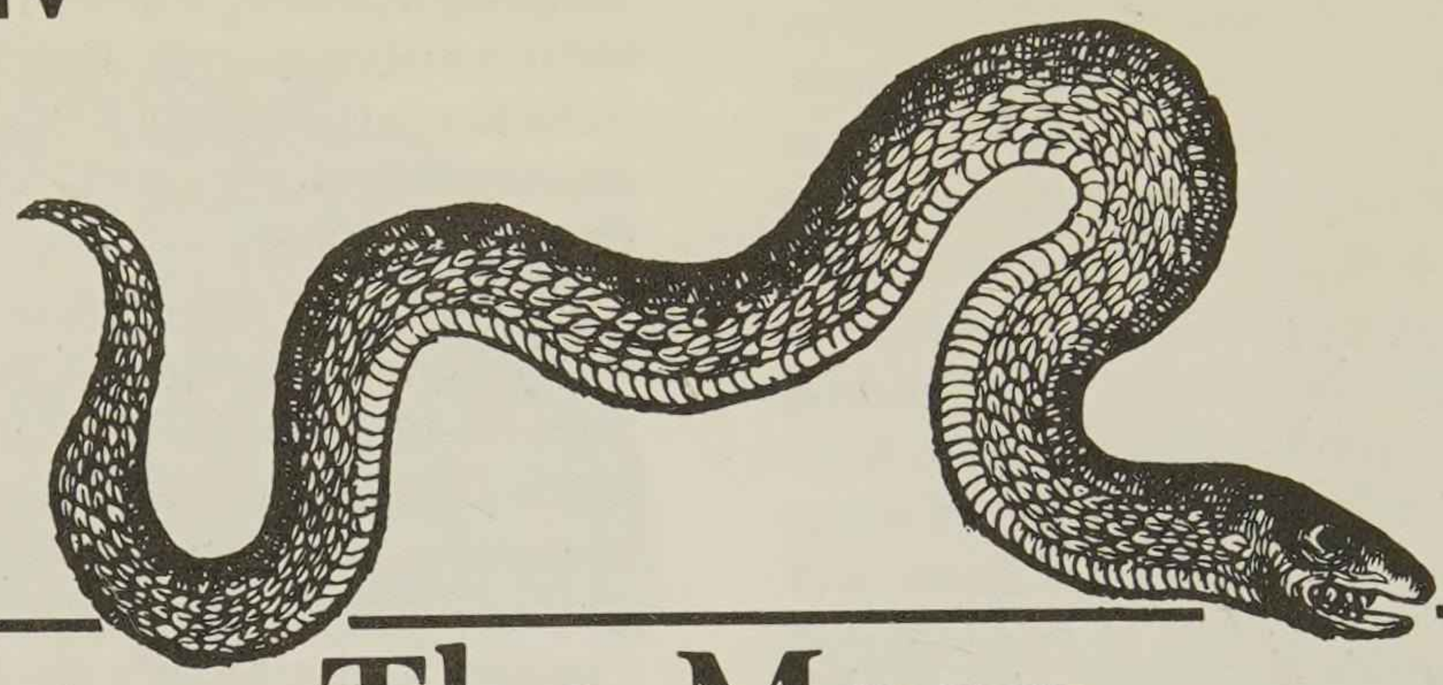
Karmic responsibility seems to work on each plane of action separately, however we classify them, as physical, mental, psychological, volitional, and so on. In these, as in English law, motive is paramount in the creation of an offense. As we think, so we act and so we become, and between the careless push which may cause death, and the fierce thought of hate which does not (then) have any visible result, the law of Karma would "punish" more the thinking. All mental action of hate or lust or selfish striving inflates the false ego that craves for self, and stains the character, and incidentally all else that lives. The criminal law attempts to model itself upon this subtle and just ideal. There are grades of responsibility according to degrees of negligence, though hate and lust and evil thoughts are not in themselves made crimes, for we cannot prove them. But motive and its cousin, intent, are very important and in some crimes necessary ingredients, although only in the law of conspiracy is an expressed thought itself criminal. But in our efforts to translate what we know of psychology into criminal terms we argue much about presumptions of intent, the attempt in which the mind is changed too late, the retention or abolition of the subtleties of constructive malice; generally speaking, we strive to equate the formulation of crime with the evil ways of the human mind. To collate the unwritten cosmic Law with the written criminal law must ever be impossible, if only for the need of proof, but such is, I assume, the religious ideal; and here, in the law of Karma, is a non-religious yet spiritual science, a system of meta-mechanics which collates with meta-physics to show how the universe runs its course from the Unmanifest through manifestation and back into the Unmanifest.

The moral of the comparison, presumably, is that one should regard Dharma as the expression of a Law which it is wise to discover and obey ("Ignorance of the law is no defense"). It is wise to study, accept and deliberately use the law of Karma to mold or remold character "nearer to the heart's desire." Once error is alleged it is presumably wise for the offender to confess and attempt restitution, and once error is proved in another it is wiser to seek the causes and to remove them rather than merely to punish the effects. It is best of all to prevent these causes arising.

And the application of all this? It largely depends on the individual's view of his total self. Is there in every form, at least in every human form, a spark of the one Light or Life, a flame of THAT of which the universe is a temporary embodiment? Such is the deep-rooted belief, amounting to intuitive conviction, of every religion, and is there any intelligent purpose in life without it? Here at least, in terms of law as distinct from senseless chaos, is a vision of the Law of universal Becoming.

We live in lawless times, and it may be that the lack of respect for man-made law reflects a profound indifference to the existence of the higher Law. The historic religion of the West is dying, and has little influence today in the home or the office or public life. No comparable spiritual force has yet appeared to take its place, and the vacuum is ominous for the days to come. But surely until some awareness of what Sir Edwin Arnold in *The Light of Asia* called "the Law divine which moves to good" is once more present in the Western mind, it is useless to talk of "the reign of law" in our streets or of the bonds of a common morality. Western man, with all his boasted power of mass destruction, will utterly destroy himself for want of self-control, and in the absence of awareness of the spiritual Law, and indifference to man-made law and morality, crime will reign supreme. And its dimensions will be not only of man versus man but of nations and groups of nations against each other, to the confounding of all mankind. Let us look, then, to the Law which rules, however secretly, in each of us, and learning its total will, be humbly obedient.

EPICYCLE IV



The Moon and the King's Son

The sun had set, and the moon had just risen, great and round and golden, over the hills. In the branches of a baobab tree sat a bird, who was just dozing off when the moon rose. The beauty of the moon touched the bird's heart, and she began singing for love of the moon. Her song woke a monkey, who was asleep a few branches away. Up he jumped, startled, and his arm broke a branch next to him, which fell down and struck a snake asleep at the foot of the tree. Battered and bruised, the snake crept into a nearby hole, and so frightened the mouse that lived there that the mouse began to run for dear life, over the fields and through the long grass, ever more terrified as she went, and swelling with fear at every bound. By morning, when she reached the village, she was as big as a cow. Now, when the women who were washing clothes at the river looked up, they saw an enormous mouse, the size of a cow, surely come to gobble up their children. They all took up their beating-sticks and began to chase the mouse over the fields. In the excitement, one woman ran far ahead of the others, swinging her stick so frantically that she soon lost all control and with a single blow killed the king's son.

"You have killed my son!" cried the king, when the woman was brought to him. "For this you must be punished. Take her away until I decide what her death shall be," he told his warriors.

"Please, your majesty," said the woman, "It is not my fault."

"And whose fault could it be?" asked the king.

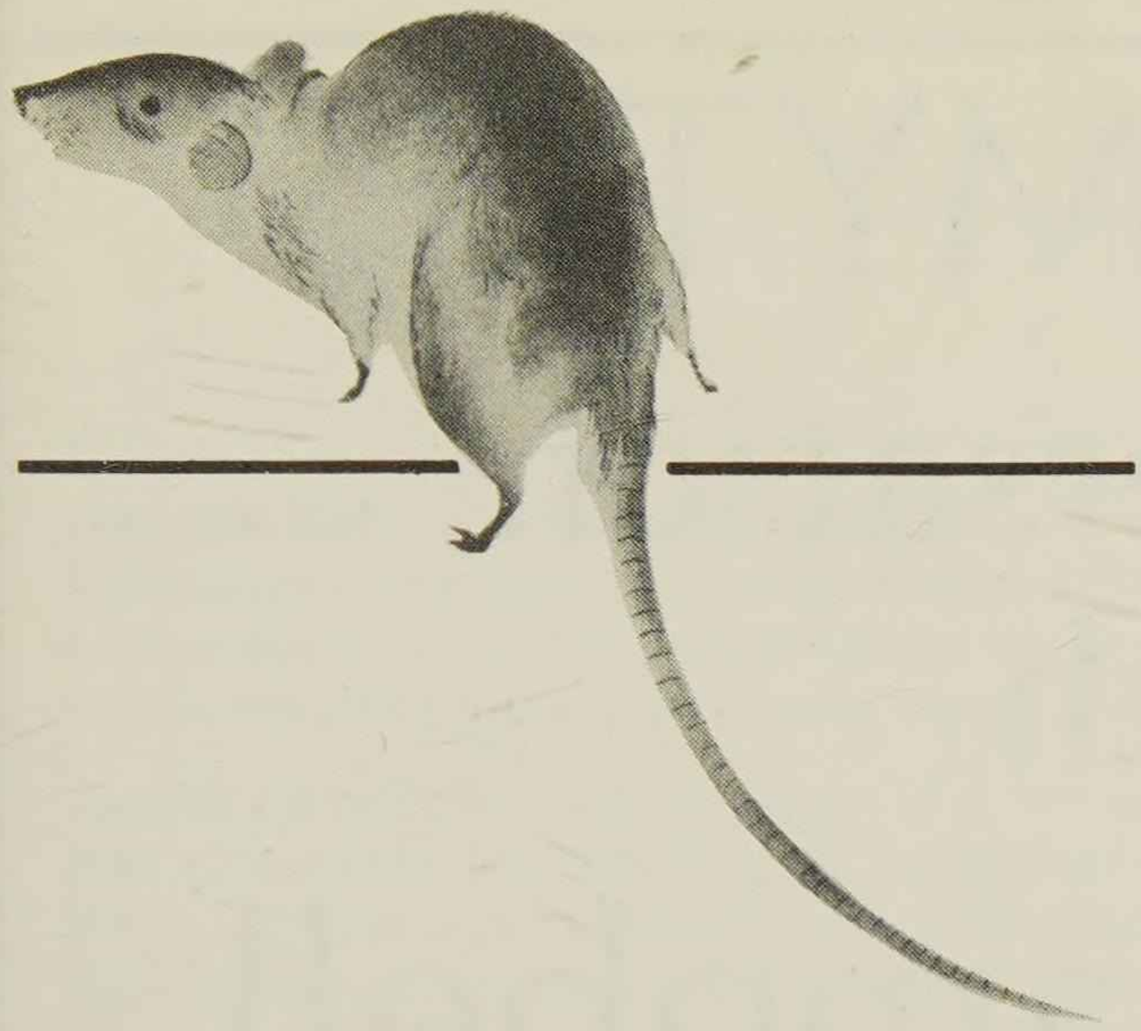
"Why, the mouse's fault, your majesty; for if she had not run through the fields, as big as a cow, and threatened to gobble up all our children, we should never have become so frightened and lost all reason in our zeal to defend the village. Surely you can see that, your majesty: it is the mouse's fault."

The king thought this over for a time, and then decided to hear the mouse's story. "Bring me the mouse," he told his warriors, and they went forth. All day and all night they hunted for the mouse, through the long grass—*tu-whish, tu-whish*. By and by they found the mouse and brought her before the king.

"You have caused the death of my son," the king told the mouse. "For you ran up to our village as big as a cow, and threatened to gobble up our children. Thus the women were justly frightened. But in their excitement, my son was killed, so you must be punished." And the king signalled the warriors to take the mouse away.

"But your majesty," replied the mouse, "it is not my fault. For if the snake had not crept into my burrow and threatened to eat me alive, I would not in fear have run, and in fear have swollen to the size of a cow. It is not my fault that your son has been killed, but the snake's." The king pondered the mouse's words, and decided to hear the snake's story. "Bring me the snake!" he commanded his warriors, and they went forth. All day and all night they hunted for the snake, through the long grass—*tu-whish, tu-whish*. By and by they found the snake and brought him before the king.

"You have caused the death of my son," said the king, "for if you had not crept into the



mouse's burrow and threatened to eat her alive, she would not in righteous fear have run and swollen to the size of a cow, frightening our women, who in their frenzy killed my son. For this you must be punished."

"Your majesty," said the snake, "it is not my fault. At night, while I slept at the foot of the baobab, the monkey began pelting me with sticks and stones. My life in danger, I crept into the mouse's burrow only to heal my wounds. It is not my fault, O king, but the monkey's."

After much thought, the king sent forth his warriors: "Find the monkey," he told them, "and bring him to me."

All day and all night they hunted through the long grass—*tu-whish, tu-whish* —looking for the monkey. By and by they found him, and brought him before the king.

"You have caused the death of my son," the king told the monkey, "in this wise: had you not pelted the snake with sticks and stones in the dead of night, he would not have crept for safety's sake into the mouse's burrow, frightening that poor beast until she swelled up as big as a cow and so frightened our women when she came up to our village. In the excitement which you caused, my son was killed. You must be punished."

"O king, hear me!" said the monkey. "It was not my fault that your son was killed, but the bird's. For in the dead of night he began singing and making such a noise that I awoke with a start from a deep sleep. My arm struck a branch which fell on the snake, that is all: thus you see that it is all the bird's fault, not mine."

"Bring me the bird," said the king to his warriors, after thinking matters over. All day and all night they hunted—*tu-whish, tu-whish* —looking for the bird. By and by they found her, and brought her before the king.

"You have caused the death of my son," the king said to the bird. "For in the dead of night you sang and made such noise that you woke the monkey as he slept in the baobab. In his understandable fright, he broke a branch which fell and bruised the snake, who crept into the mouse's burrow and frightened her so that she ran and swelled to the size of a cow. Her appearance so terrified our women that in their anxiety, they killed my son. You must be punished."

"Great king," began the bird. "It was not my fault that the monkey woke. For when the moon rose over the hills, so great and round and golden, what else could a bird do but sing for love of it? Thus, I cannot be held at fault for singing of love."

A long time the king mused over the words of the bird. At last he told his warriors, "Bring me the moon," and they went forth. All day and all night they hunted—*tu-whish, tu-whish*— looking for the moon. When the sun set, the moon rose, great and round and golden, and the king's warriors brought the moon before the king.

"You have caused the death of my son," the king told the moon, "and for this you must be punished: had you not imprudently risen, great and round and golden, your beauty would not have prompted the bird to sing for love. Then the monkey would not have awakened and broken a branch which bruised the snake. Then the snake would not have crept into the mouse's burrow and frightened her. Then that mouse would not have swollen to the size of a cow and so alarmed our women as she ran through the fields to our village. In the commotion that followed, my son was killed, and it was your fault."

"King of all kingdoms," answered the moon. "Hear me: it was not my fault that your son was killed. I obey God's laws, which govern my coming and going. I rise by His laws, and by His laws I set. By His laws am I great and round and golden. I can do nought else but obey the laws of God. Thus, it is not my fault."

The king pondered the moon's words for a time and then he spoke. "Bring me God," he said. "I will hear His story." His warriors went forth, and all day and all night through the long grass—*tu-whish, tu-whish*—they hunted for God.

They are hunting still.

LIVING MYTHS:

A Conversation with Joseph Campbell

In his seventy-two years, Joseph Campbell has been a teacher, author, lecturer, and editor. But most of all he has been an explorer, searching the great myths and legends of all cultures and times and finding in each a source of delight, illumination, and instruction. Even in his scholarly four-volume work, The Masks of God, *Campbell resisted the temptation of simply cataloguing and describing the riches of world mythology. For him the vitality of the great traditions springs from their immediate and perennial relevance to the human condition. They are maps leading to the treasure of man's deepest spiritual potential–and in his search he has discovered for us ways in which we are all characters in the mythic play.*

To the dismay of some, Campbell's tack invariably hews toward the psychological interpretation of myths, symbols, and religious traditions. Others are troubled by his tendency to restrict the contemporary role of myth to either an ideological or therapeutic function. But we are all in his debt for making this material available in the engaging formats of his books and talks.

Tall and thin, graced with an Irish gift for story-telling, Campbell's quiet geniality is animated by an unquenchable wonder at the richness of our mythological inheritance. Moving easily among sources as diverse as James Joyce and Buddhist Sutras, native American traditions and C.G. Jung, he is

exhilarated by finding fresh parallels of theme and meaning. Through his teaching and writing, he has brought the richness of man's spiritual history to our contemporary world. He invites all of us, individually, to strike out on our own inward journeys, guided by the wisdom of those who have travelled to the heart of things and returned to tell the tale.

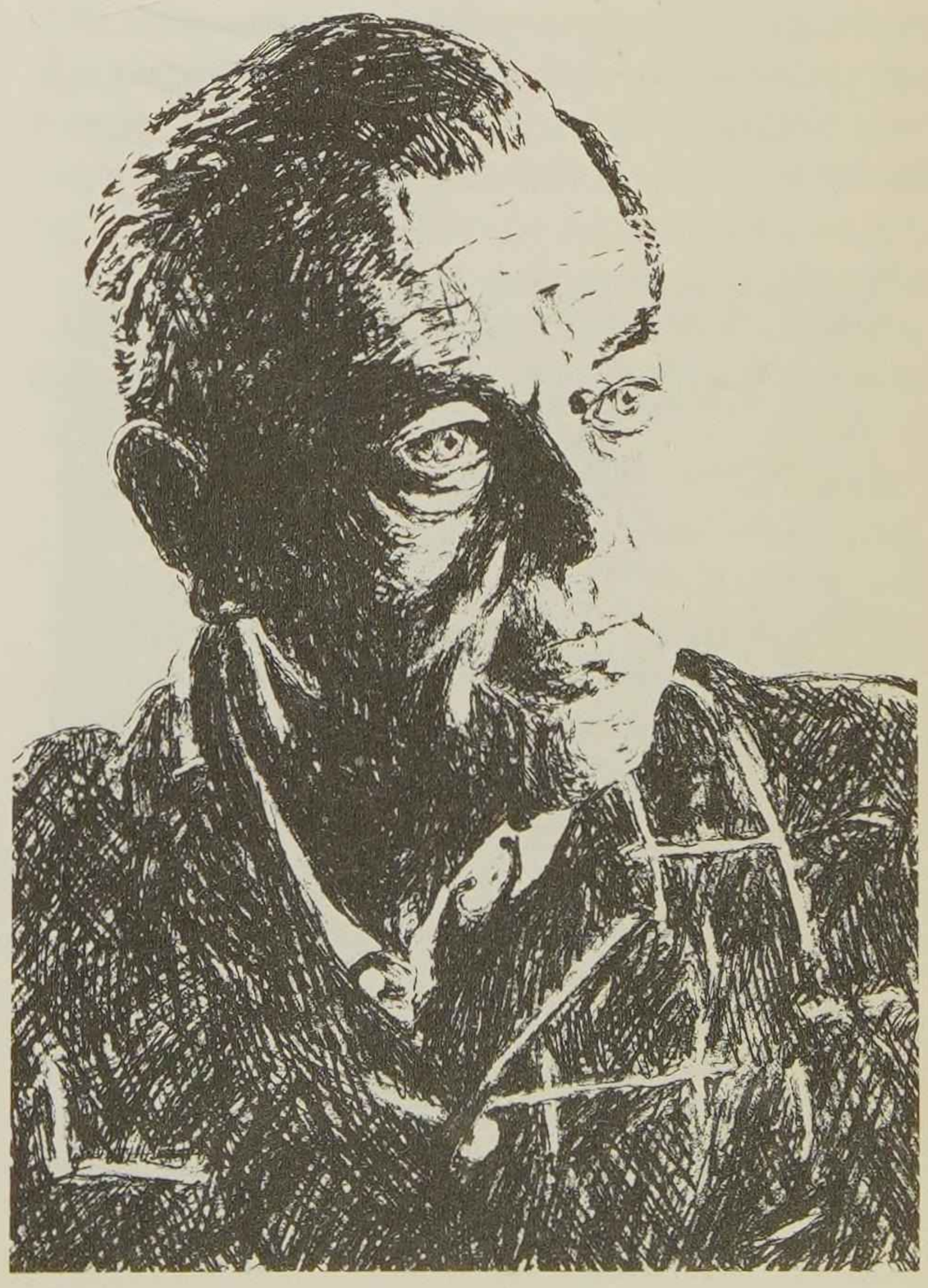
Lorraine Kisly

Lorraine Kisly: In trying to assess the role of mythology in our lives now, would you say that mythology is as much a part of human life as it was in the past? Are we simply not aware of it?

Joseph Campbell: We're aware of it but we don't interpret it as mythological. Just consider the trouble spots in the world today and what's behind them. First, there's the conflict in India between Hinduism and Islam that goes on and on. These are two great mythological structures—the mythology of Islamic monotheism and Hinduism, which is perhaps the oldest high culture tradition still functioning in the world. Moving further west to Israel you find another terrible conflict because one people has a mythology of the chosen race and a land which has been chosen for them by God's grace, a land which they say is a gift from God. The state of Israel is a mythological institution. You can't explain a people's feeling of having a right to a land in purely political or social terms. You hear of people moving in, saying "This is my homeland"—people who have never been there before, whose grandfathers had never been there, who actually don't know anything about the place. And these people are coming into collision with the people who were there and are there, and who simply belong to another tradition, the Islamic. And then right here in the Christian sphere, you find Catholic and Protestant readings of a single mythological tradition causing seemingly unending difficulties in Northern Ireland. So in terms of its activity in the contemporary world, mythological collisions are crucial and immensely important. But in this modern world, these contending mythologies are playing an outworn game. They have very little relevance to the real problem of contemporary life, which is to recognize that we're all passengers on the same "spaceship earth," as Buckminster Fuller called it. These in-group out-group attitudes of retaining love and admiration for your own group and projecting disdain and aggression outward are archaic attitudes.

Kisly: But still very much alive.

Campbell: They are alive. I see more and more all around me a proliferation of these in-group definitions where people find a group to align themselves with and, in that relationship, hold themselves against others. Social problems are not very comfortably solved in that way. Black power is one example. The notion of Aryan supremacy in Hitler's time is the only one we seem to realize was dangerous, but they are all dangerous. There's also the distinction on the social class level in the idea



of the proletariat and the command that the workers of the world should unite—unite *against*.

Kisly: Would you define these kinds of things as myth?

Campbell: They are definitions of the social field, within which the emotional system is then shaped to an in-group out-group mythology. Now that is a mythological theme. I've described in my books what I call the four main functions of myth. One is the mystical one of opening the mystical dimension. The second is the cosmological function of relating us to the cosmos as now known in such a way that its mystery can be experienced, that we can relate to it with gratitude. After all, myth has to do with attitudes. Third is the sociological function of validating and maintaining the moral or ethical system of the specific social group to which one belongs; so that when you define your social group you define the margin of your mythological identification. It's an identification that one makes with a group, which is a mythological act. One person identifies with this group, and another person with that, and each acts in these contexts in ways that are not always rationally supportable. And finally there is the pedagogical function of mythology, of carrying the individual through the crises of life from dependency in childhood to maturity and the realization that one is a self-responsible individual, and then on to disengagement from society, which comes in the later years of life and forward, to the ultimate threshold of death. So there are those services which myth supplies.

Kisly: I suppose you've answered the question of how mythology is alive in our own times in terms of the third or social category. Is it as much a part of our lives in the first two, the mystical and cosmological functions that you've described?

Campbell: Go to any church or synagogue and you'll find the clergy there trying to support an archaic concept of the universe against the findings of science. Religion has been kicking against the findings of science ever since Hellenistic times. Just think, the first chapter of Genesis was composed at a time when the Greeks had already measured the circumference of the earth to within a couple of hundred miles. It presents a deliberately archaic notion of the shape of the cosmos and the way in which the cosmos came into being, and then the religious system is hung onto that belief. Look what happened when Copernicus published in 1543 his formula for the heliocentric universe and the geocentric system seemed damaged. Since the religions had tied their faith to that system, a persecution of scientists set in. Now, the individual has to feel comfortable in his universe, religiously comfortable as well as physically, and if the religion does not relate one to the universe as it is, but is fighting against it—what does the individual do? The old system had the notion of special-species creation so that the emergence of evolutionary thinking in the late 18th and early 19th centuries seemed a destruction of religion. That we should be related to the animals was something that in our tradition wasn't acceptable, though in India, for example, it has long been taken for granted. So these relationships to the findings of science do get into the mythological world. And it does make a difference to your concept of your role in life, whether you think of man as a special creation superior to the animals or think of him as in accord with not only the

animal world, but also the plant world, the whole of the natural world. So that's the cosmological aspect of it.

Kisly: Is there a way in which evolution can be seen as a myth itself?

Campbell: Well, evolution is a scientific finding to which the mythology must adjust itself. And if it isn't adjusted to it there is a stress between the mythological or religious and the actual experience of the world which people are having to take account of these days.

Kisly: Can you see a scientific finding—like evolution, for example—somehow being turned into a myth, having values put onto them of an almost mythological kind? As you said, it restructures the way we think about ourselves, the kind of values we have.

Campbell: Yes, it does.

Kisly: And it may not be the ultimate "objective truth," if anything can be said about that.

Campbell: Well, it is the current working hypothesis to interpret the phenomenology of nature, and it seems to be pretty well documented. I don't think we can say that it's likely to be a discarded theory very soon. Also, the findings that are coming through now about the antiquity of the early hominid type, putting the date back nearly four million years—this gives a different notion about the place of man in nature from the one that would have us all created together with the world 4004 B.C. It makes the problem of deity, which most people think they like to relate to, a very different one from the problem of the deity who created a small world six thousand years ago. Now look at these galaxies beyond counting that the scientists are showing us—literally millions of galaxies and every galaxy a milky way of stars and every star with a possible solar system around it and some of these solar systems probably inhabited. Well, what does that do to the whole history of creation and the fall that we have in our inherited tradition? It just breaks it up.

Kisly: In showing ways that mythology is alive in us, you seem to have shown that it is alive in a different way, a less connected way than it was in the past. Mythology before, in certain cultures and traditions, instead of dividing all the time, causing conflict, wars, and fragmentation as in the social examples you gave, seemed to feed people and support them and fill their lives. And in that sense we don't really have a mythology.

Campbell: That's right. I'd say the basic mythology of the high literate civilizations from the time of the first emergence of such civilization in Sumer, in Mesopotamia, during the fourth millenium B.C., was concerned to coordinate into a single organically conceived social unit the disparate types of men who were functioning in that developed world. In the earlier period of foraging, little tribes, all of the adults were in control of the whole cultural heritage. When the cities began to evolve with specialized vocations (specialized priests, governing people, trading people, peasants, and so forth) the problem arose of coordinating these disparate types of human life. This was done with the mythology of the social unit as an organism, and it was put in accord with the cycles of the seasons, as our ritual festivals still do—Christmas and the Festival of Lights at the time of the dawn of light in the winter solstice, spring festivals, fall festivals. All of the basic mythology revolved around that which put the society in accord with the world of nature, and then the individual, who was also a product of nature, was put in accord with nature—his own nature—through participation in those rites. Well, now that's blown apart. We don't have the idea of micro-macrocosm—the little cosmos of man, the big cosmos of nature, and then the middle cosmos of society which shows the laws that govern them all. We don't have that same unity anymore. Physics and psychology really are not the same science anymore, although in their outermost reaches they're beginning to bump into the same mysteries. Still, you wouldn't take Einstein's formula as a guide to marriage. So the two spheres have broken apart and this is part of the problem of modern man. Furthermore, the roles that people play in the world now are far more various than they ever were in the traditional society and the individual has to find his own way. He isn't forced into a specific social pattern of life as, for instance, in the traditional society of India even today when you inherit your *dharma,* you inherit your morality and law of existence from the society. We in our world are much more freely choosing and evaluating, self-responsible individuals. That brings a whole new problem.

Kisly: I remember once reading that at one point you had studied Eastern tradition and culture for so long that you felt "almost like a Hindu."

Campbell: Until I went to India.

Kisly: And returned recognizing the strength of your own need for the Western value of respect for the individual.

Campbell: That's right.

Kisly: There are many people in America today who feel themselves to be Hindus or Buddhists. Do you think it is possible for them really to be a Hindu or a Buddhist?

Campbell: No. Absolutely not.

Kisly: Why not?

Campbell: In the first place Westerners do not usually have much contact with these traditions until they are already at least adolescents—sixteen, seventeen, nineteen years old. And so they've had at least fifteen years of the building of an occidental psyche. What's the difference between an occidental and a traditional oriental psyche? In the Orient, as I've said, one's duties are put upon one. One is not a freely choosing individual and the whole accent is on ego-suppression, ego-dissolution. The East has never distinguished between what Freud called the id and what he called the ego. The id is the "I want" function—I want, I want, I want. And in the Orient this is mastered by the superego function—you must, you must, you must. So one goes from "I want" to "you must" and one does not go to what Freud calls the reality function of the ego—that function of the psyche that puts you in touch with the actual circumstances of *your* life *now,* the life of *your* society *now,*

the world situation *now*, and gives you the charge of judging and evaluating, and then acting upon your own evaluations. So the ego, you see, is not the "I want", but it's the "I judge" and "I accept" and "I take the responsibility" principle. And that is just what you do not have in the East. Consequently the development of the ego principle, as it is understood in the West, is the creative principle that takes hold of and moves into new circumstances and situations. The Westerner has a function operative in his psyche that is not so strongly operative in the East. One goes, then, to a guru. If one were an Oriental one would have, one might say, a very fragile ego—like a hollow glass sphere. The guru has a little tack hammer and he hits that glass sphere and it cracks. Voilà! The ego never was much developed, and now you see it go with pleasure in the sense of release from a burden. But the Westerner goes with this hard rock of an ego, a sort of living organism of an ego, and it does *not* crack when hit with the little hammer.

Kisly: So that Westerners who identify themselves as Hindu, for example, are in danger of getting themselves further into confusion and division when they try to put the tradition on whole, as it were.

Campbell: I would define the great value of the Oriental instruction for us as this: the translation of mythological symbols into psychological references. We have read our own mythological symbols as historical references. Moses *did* go up the mountain and get the tables of the Law from God, came down, broke them, went up, got a second edition, came back again. This is taken to be literally true. The Jews *did* go through the waters of the Red Sea and after that they *did* go through the waters of the Jordan. Jesus was born of a Virgin, *did* rise from the dead, *did* ascend to heaven. So here are these symbols, important symbols of revelation, of spiritual birth, of exaltation, all read as historical facts. The same symbols come to us from the Orient, read however as having psychological reference, representing powers within the human spirit, within your spirit, my spirit, which are to be developed and which can be evoked by contemplation and meditation on appropriate symbolic forms. The symbols then point to things that are in ourselves. This is what the Orient is telling us. But then you go and take over, also, all their old archaic sociological problems. Doesn't fit. You dress like a Japanese or like a Hindu. So you are deracinating yourself—you are not reading the message in terms of your own condition, but are trying to change your condition and it just doesn't work. Or rather very, very seldom does it work, and it works only in the most sophisticated people—those who have absorbed the oriental material thoroughly and know where it meets them, where it doesn't meet them, know how to move into it. If they want to continue practices in Buddhist monasteries and that sort of thing they know precisely its value to them. But this is extremely rare.

Kisly: It seems to me that many people who are attracted to the study of myth and tradition see and sense a meaning and truth in them and are then faced with the problem of trying to relate the truth of what they see to their own life in a practical way. Do you think that this can be done without a guide of some sort, outside of a tradition?

Campbell: I never had a guide! the material in itself, if one gets into it, is guidance enough. Now an important point to realize is that all the old, basic, historically-grounded traditions were rendered effective through rituals. Rites are the enactments of myths, and by participating in the rite one is participating in the myth and consequently activating the accordant structures and principles within one's own psyche. Without some kind of ritual enactment the whole thing fails to get inside the active aspect of one's system unless one happens to be working through actual life problems in terms suggested by mythological considerations.

Kisly: I think it is an interesting point that participation in rites and ritual is participation in myth and tradition—that they enable an active response in the individual. Without that participation you are saying that Western man outside of a tradition must try for himself to apply the content of myth to the process of his own psyche.

Campbell: You see, for instance, I was brought up a Catholic, and I was a good practicing Catholic until I was twenty-four or twenty-five years old—which is almost fifty years ago now. Every week I would go to confession, and before going to confession I'd examine my conscience. I would think of all the negative things I had been guilty of doing. Why in heaven's name not think of all the great things one has done, and the good things and the lovely things and *forget* the others? But dragging those up and meditating on them—it turns one into a worm. You're always on your knees, beating your chest—through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous

fault. Sure, get it off your chest when you've done something, but these little peccadillos, these little tiny things—what in heaven's name! If you do something ghastly you don't have to go to confession about it—you know what it is and it's hitting you in the face all the time.

Kisly: I was also brought up in the Catholic tradition and in spite of negative aspects like the one you just mentioned, I've always felt grateful to have been exposed to the rituals and sacraments as a child. It seems to give one a sense at least, of a part of oneself that isn't touched by ordinary life and to open one to mystery and paradox.

Campbell: I would say that also. The problem is, though, to lose it without losing it. When you find that you have lost your faith, let's say, then you've lost the imagery that really connected your conscious life with the deepest spiritual potentials within you. And so my belief is that one shouldn't throw these things out, but reread them so that they do have valid spiritual rather than impossible historical references. And then it all comes to life again. The Catholic myth, after all, is indeed a rich and beautiful one.

Kisly: Do you think that each tradition has within it, at least potentially, all the dimensions of truth that are contained in the other great traditions, or are there significant esoteric differences?

Campbell: Well, there are significant differences. Take, for instance, Judaism and Hinduism. These are ethnic religions—one is born a Jew, one is born a Hindu. Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam, on the other hand, are credal religions—*credo,* "I believe,"—and one's birth has nothing to do with it. It's one's confession or belief, and so they are not race-bound in the same way that ethnic religions are. That's a difference and an important one. It's an important difference psychologically and it's an important difference, you might say, historically. Yet each of these world religions—Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam—is exclusive in its own way too: there are adherents of the faith and there are those who are outside. So I would say that in a contemporary world, too, they are a bit outdated. The most recent big thing that has come along in our contemporary world has been communism. It has all the signs for me except one of a functioning mythology, and that one is the most important of all, namely, a sense of the mystery dimension of the world and of all things. Communism is impudent with respect to mystery. It is a sterilized variety, I would say, of biblical mythology. It foresees only one society and the triumph of that society over the whole face of the earth. People outside aren't even considered to be people—they're liquidated with perfect impunity and nobody feels any guilt for it. What happened in the Vietnam war when the Communists massacred people? We didn't even get detailed reports of those massacres in our papers. But when a Western individual went berserk it was in streamer headlines. Another interesting thing is that they have a book that is venerated as a kind of revealed bible. The big ideological quarrel between Russia and Red China, for example, is over who is interpreting this scripture correctly. It is a kind of scholastic quibble with reference to an unassailable book. Then you have those saints of the tradition who are embalmed, and are its true interpreters. Instead of icons of Jesus in his mother's arms, you have images of Mao and Stalin everywhere, so that the individual is related to the society by way of mythologized human figures. Next, there's the notion of the good guys and the bad guys. We're the good ones, the others are the bad ones, and that's it. There's a conflict between the forces of good and evil which is in the process of being resolved and will culminate in the day of the revolution—or in the day of Yahweh, or in the day of the Second Coming when evil will be eliminated and there will be nothing but the good world. This is a perfectly mythological structure—and it is a completely dogmatic one. There's no room for deviation. The way in which those purging trials were conducted in Russia—people were brutalized very much as Galileo had been when up before the Inquisitor. Here again are inquisitors, and there is torture applied. Also, there is campaigning against all other religions: a kind of Holy War. It is an anti-God campaign that is being waged absolutely against Buddhism, Christianity, and even shamanism in Siberia. So it has everything except the mystery dimension—it tells you

what to do and what to believe in every detail. I see it as a completely reactionary system totally eliminating the individual experience. Consider what went on and *is* going on in Tibet *right now!* It is one of the most appalling stories, including genocide and everything else, but do you read about that in our papers? We keep hearing, rather, about Hitler, who's been dead for these forty years.

Kisly: I remember something you wrote in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. You said, as I remember it, that it is only those who know neither an inner call nor an outer doctrine whose plight is truly desperate. Today, that includes most of us, and you see communism coming along as an outer doctrine.

Campbell: That's exactly right.

Kisly: Twenty years ago you had a question about Spengler's view that our culture was in its declining phase. How do you feel about him today?

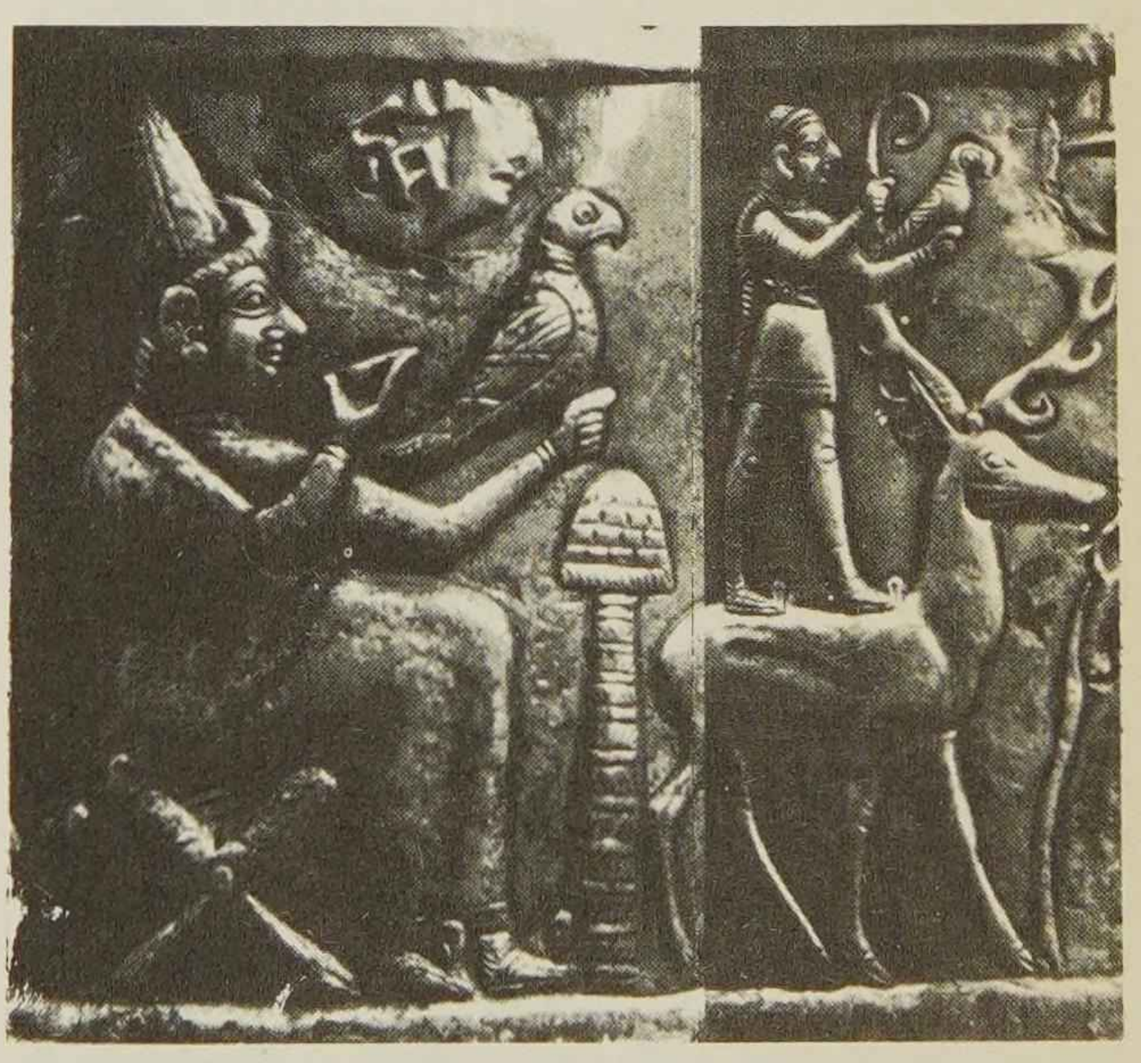
Campbell: He's working out almost on schedule! It's fantastic. I used to have a question about it, but not anymore. The only question, and this is a big one, is whether the industrial revolution is a world phenomenon or an occidental phenomenon. That is to say, is it the Western mind, the Western psyche that supports it? With the gang-up against the West now and also the West moving into its terminal phase—according to Spengler—will this great new heritage of man finally dissolve away as the building of the pyramids did when Egypt lost its power? Or on the other hand is this something which can be and has been fundamentally assimilated to the consciousness of the global man, if we can call it such, that it will continue and we shall move into a new world phase? Are we entering the phase of no more horizons that I've spoken about, the true post-agricultural phase of human society? This "airport civilization" that's, as it were, putting down its centers all over the world—is that something that's going to fade as the gifts of the British Empire faded? Or is it something that will be carried on? Can these other culture worlds take it in? Do they want to? Are they using it, as Spengler says, simply to smash the West that gave it to them, or is there something there that they truly want for themselves?

Kisly: On completing *The Masks of God*, you noted that its result was for you a confirmation of the unity of man spiritually as well as biologically. You referred to the "next great movement" as on its way and probably containing within it the same perennial themes, the same recurrent motifs that have appeared again and again in the history of man.

Campbell: But how long that next movement will endure is the question that arises out of what we've just been talking about. Is it going to be a phase that will disappear and will all these separate cultures go back into their own little boxes again, or is it something that actually represents the beginning of a totally new age of man on the planet? You realize that if we don't destroy this planet in the next couple of hundred years, it's good for millions of years—with man on it. That's a long, long prospect, and it may well be the beginning of a great long history.

Kisly: You are not, obviously, looking at the future in terms of an either/or—a great new age or the destruction of the planet. You see the possibility of simply breaking up into small groups again.

Campbell: Yes, and I think that's more likely than total destruction. I think there's a possibility of the first, but I don't think many people really want it. I see so much reaction. I see communism as a reaction. People are afraid of the unknown and the "whole-world" step is a kind of free-fall into the future.



Kisly: How would you describe the difference between your approach to the study of mythology and the approach of Lévi-Strauss?

Campbell: Lévi-Strauss is a man of great knowledge with respect particularly to the mythologies of non-literate peoples and more specifically those of South America. One comes to a rather different point of view with respect to mythological principles through a

study of non-literate mythologies from the one that one arrives at through a study of the great literate systems. The great literate systems are magnificent poetic images and they're more or less consistent within themselves, whereas within a non-literate community the sort of material that an anthropologist who hardly knows how to speak their language can collect gives an impression of fragmentation and little parcels of strange myths that you don't know how to relate to larger images. Now on the basis of a whole multitude of examples of these fragmentary mythic moments, Lévi-Strauss goes to work, and the way he works is by breaking them up into still smaller pieces and then reassembling these to accord with what I take to be an already fixed theory. The discovery of pairs of opposites as being implicit in all mythological systems, furthermore, is not Lévi-Strauss's discovery. It is something that has been known for a long time. What Jung has called the coincidence of opposites, for example, is exactly that. The other thing about Strauss, where I really put myself on the other side of the fence, is his idea of mythology as a kind of proto-science. My idea is that the basic thing about myth is that it is visionary. A mythology is a system of affect-symbols, signs evoking and directing psychic energies. It is more like an affective art work than like a scientific proposition. Lévi-Strauss is saying that something like verbal grammar is the structuring form of myth, and this seems to me just wrong, that's all. The logics of image thinking and of verbal thinking are two very different logics.

Kisly: It seems that if myth is looked at in a completely analytic way, the heart of it is likely to be missed. It seems to require an emotional as well as an intellectual response. Do you think that the faculty that is required to understand myth can be trained and developed?

Campbell: Just as one can be trained to experience art. Many people come to art verbally trained, and as they look at pictures and visit galleries they gradually open to it and learn how to experience the art work. So also I think with these matters of the spiritual traditions of myth. There's a mystery dimension in myth —there always is, and you can't put a ring around it. It's the difference between drawing a circle on the ground and dropping a pebble into a pond from which circles go out. The myth drops a pebble into a pond, it tells you of a certain center, it puts you on a certain center—what the Navajo call the pollen path of beauty—but it doesn't give you a definition. What happens in dogmatic religions, however, is that definitions are contrived to circumscribe the myth and the ritual. I think that what is going on in the Catholic church now is something of a disaster. There you have the inheritance of one of the greatest ritual structures ever, anywhere, and what are they doing to it? It's really incredible. Instead of simply presenting the mythic ritual beautifully, that rich mythologically-based heritage of beautiful, powerful ritual, for the individual to experience in his own way, they are destroying the clean lines of the rites and insisting, instead, on the dogmas, which are to tell us how we have to interpret our experience. Dogma simply cuts the individual off from his own potential of response.

Kisly: You've said recently that you see an inward turning and the need for an inward turning among all the great traditions today.

Campbell: Yes. There's always an inward reference when mythology is alive: that is to say, when contemplating iconographic structures, one is really, by way of a mirror-reflection, contemplating own's own spirit, one's own inward truth. But when those pictures fall away, when they're no longer speaking because they have become archaic and we are no longer in the field of experience out of which those pictures came, there then comes a need for an inward search directly on the part of the individual. Now I take as a rather vivid representation of this situation what happened on the American Plains to the buffalo-hunting Indians when the buffalo were slaughtered and taken away from them in the 1870s and 80s. The basic pivot of their ritual life had been in relationship to the buffalo. It's a normal thing among hunting peoples that the animal on whom their living depends should become

their spiritual messenger. He is their "willing victim" and the center of the ritual has to do with the relationship to that animal. Well, that animal was taken away. Immediately the peyote cult came up from Mexico and became the rage among the Plains Indian tribes. What does peyote do? It gives you visions from inside. So the outside social structure is no longer sanctified through rites. The rite has been taken away, the object of the ritual no longer exists, nor does the manner of life that made it relevant. An inward turn, then, is the only resort for the individual—he find his religion inside —and that's what's happening to ourselves right now. The authority of the inherited religions is now in question. Christianity and Judaism are on the rocks, at least for many of the young people in our culture. So along comes the peyote and LSD fad of the 60s—inward turning. And today it's no longer LSD so much, but meditation.

Kisly: You were speaking about the way images and symbols can lose their life and obviously this has happened to us now. It seems to me you are saying that they can have meaning for us, but that the meaning is not given automatically anymore. If we want it we have to make some sort of active movement towards it.

Campbell: I would say, for instance, that a Catholic who loses his faith has nevertheless had these images built into him, and it's worthwhile reactivating them in a spiritually cogent rather than historically ridiculous way. I notice that a lot of young Jews now are talking about Kabbalah and Hasidism. These represent the experiential side of their tradition. Good, I would say. But there has to be something also to help the individual make modern sense of these traditions for his modern, individual search. And there, I think, the writings of C.G. Jung on individuation are about as sound and helpful as anything we've got. They don't represent a tradition, but they do represent the insights of a very, very deeply grounded psyche—C.G. Jung's. I don't know of anybody else whom I could give that much credit to as a guide.

Kisly: You've noted that "something happened" in the 60s, when suddenly interest in your work shot up along with your lecture fees.

Campbell: That was the era of inward discovery in its LSD phase. Suddenly, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* became a kind of triptych for the inward journey, and people were finding something in that book that could help them interpret their own experience. The book is a presentation of the one great mythic theme—that of the journey, the inward journey of the quest, and the finding and the return. Anybody going on a journey, inward or outward, to find values, will be on a journey that has been described many times in the myths of mankind, and I simply put them all together in that book. The archetypology of the heroic quest is what I have put forward there; that is the quest that people are embarking on now and for which society no longer gives us instructions.

Kisly: Do you see any other historical parallels to what you say happened in the 60s and is happening now, besides the Plains Indians?

Campbell: Yes, another parallel is what happened in the period of the Hellenistic mystery cults. The mythology of the *polis,* the earlier city, had broken up, and people were living in a *cosmopolis,* a world city—not in the vast dimensions of today's world city, yet very much the same, relatively, for those times. And there again, as today, there was this inward turning. There was also a coming on of Caesarism: the regulation by a Caesar of a mob instead of a folk—for there is a great difference. A mob is a conglomeration of people of quite heterogeneous origins and heterogeneous beliefs, all thrown together with no common ethos. They have to be held together by force—otherwise the society goes to pieces. And it was at the time of the rise of the Caesars that the inward turning of the individuals, to find within the structuring forms that were lacking in the world without, came along.

Kisly: I want to ask you about the number of books that are appearing that say they are discussing the kinds of myths we are creating now, for example, books about the American Dream as a kind of myth. Would you call that myth and how far is it really possible to see the kinds of myths we are creating right now?

Campbell: That has to do with that aspect of the social side of myth that provides life models to live by. The pattern of the rancher, the pattern of the frontiersman, all grew out of actual life situations that don't exist anymore. What's happening is that the life models for life styles are changing very, very fast—as fast as women's fashions actually: a new dress-length every year. And you can't have the building of a substantial mythos on such a basis. The frontier

is all finished now. We have another environment, and what are the models for it? Today, when you move into a life career it isn't going to turn out to be the one you thought you were entering. The pattern of the teacher, the pattern of the writer—patterns that I experienced—are not at all what I thought they were going to be in the good old days when I was first thinking about them. And so I just don't think we are going to have in the experience of our careers the sense of depth and spiritual dignity that the old mythologies used to give to the lives they supported and informed. We have to build our own experience of the deeper dimension of our lives—with the guidance of art. I think great art is as useful a guide to mythological dimensions as anything we have; it's much better today than our churches. Many of our artists today, however, just aren't interested in those dimensions, so that even they are at sea.

Kisly: One of the articles in the first issue of *Parabola* was "Psychotherapy and the Sacred," an adapted chapter from a new book by Jacob Needleman. He's saying in that chapter that psychoanalysis does not really speak to or recognize the whole man. He speaks of two paths—one of earthly happiness and another of self-transformation—and says that psychotherapy, in its emphasis on adjustment and acceptance and a feeling of well-being, is blind to the most vital and critical potential in man.

Campbell: Well, briefly I would say that this is true of Freudian psychoanalysis but not of Jungian. Now whether the actual practising Jungian affects any significant transformation in his patients, I don't know, but that's what Jung's speaking about. The transformation comes out of the allowance of the neglected or unrecognized aspects of one's own potential spiritual life to become evident to one's consciousness and manifest in one's life ways.

Kisly: What Needleman is saying applies to Jung as well. He points out that the great traditions speak about and affirm an objective higher consciousness, a higher intelligence, universal laws, and that the sacred potential in man is that in him which can relate to this objective higher consciousness. How would you define the sacred?

Campbell: Well, the sacred from a social standpoint is the object or system of objects that have been set up by the society to integrate the individual spiritual life into the functioning of the social system. What is sacred for the individual is that which of itself has come to mean depth to him. The problem of the religious life is to open the ego system to the grace, you might say, of transpersonal energies and influences. Then the question is, where do those transpersonal influences and energies come from? They come, from the psychological standpoint, from the depths of the psyche, which is deeper than the ego system. If one has faith in nature then one can let come whatever springs from the depths of the psyche and see what is coming as one's own nature's communication to one's own limited ego-consciousness. That message can be seen as something to be regarded, to be responded to, to be open to, and to accept as a guide to enlarged spiritual horizons. The word spiritual is a kind of fuzzy word, it can get to be even silly: but I would say what gives it its majesty is the recognition of really potent powers within us which speak through the signs and symbols of our dreams, our visions, and if we are in a fortunate mythological context, through the myths of our people, to our functioning ego system. Living with these things all the time, I can see how there are certain universal patterns for these manifestations. A shaman among the Navajo or in the Congo will be saying things which sound so much like, say, Nicolas Cusanas, or Thomas Aquinas, or C.G. Jung, that one just has to realize that these ranges of experience are common to the human race. There are some people who close themselves away from them, some people who open themselves to them. There are also some people who are gifted in the direction of opening themselves, just as there are people who are gifted in playing a piano. But I think the potential for at least clumsy piano playing is available to all of us.

Kisly: The step beyond that, when one can perhaps feel these forces and these energies in oneself is a step that traditions take as opposed to psychology. The traditions all affirm that these forces are continually being created by a higher consciousness, according to laws.

Campbell: Well, that's a theological way of interpreting them—as though the source were outside somewhere. The psychological way is to recognize that the source is inside, and this psychological way opens into the way of Hinduism and Buddhism, which says that all the gods are within us. We find this same message in certain modes of Christianity. The enigmatic saying of Jesus that the kingdom of heaven is within you intended this same sort of idea. When you have that view, you rest, so to say, in yourself—in your deepest part within the bounds, to use theological terms, of God. And

he speaks to you from within yourself. If you throw the God image away, as one does in Buddhism and ultimately in Hinduism, you will immediately recognize that whatever the power is that we speak of as divine operates from within as the source, and you can have faith in your own nature. On the other hand, since we are living for the most part off-balance, we're living as it were in a cock-eyed way, not on our center, the pollen path of beauty, but off-center; and what nature is telling us is that before we can get on center we have to honor the other side. So there's a swing over to demonic ways, to dangerous paths. That's the thing that a guru has to watch out for in a student, or that any pedagogue has to watch for. If you're leaning too far to the right, then there's going to be a swing to the left. There must be a tendency to pendulation before the inner center can be found, and over on that other side are possibilities of damage, shipwreck, and terrible disaster. That's why people are afraid. But you've got to dare it, that's all, if you're going to come to center at all on your own. It's a dangerous path. In the words of the Upanishads: "the narrow edge of a razor is this," this path, and not everyone is able to negotiate it. One can go crazy—or one can go through craziness and come out the other side. That's another point: the Freudian psychoanalysts generally try to abort the psychosis, knock it out, which can prevent one from going through the whole path, the whole trip, and coming out the other side. So, let's suppose that the urge to go on a trip is still operating within you, and you still are defending yourself against this urge. A good thing to remember is that what looks like devils from an angelic point of view are actually angels that have not been properly regarded. If you have seen the play *Equus*, you'll remember the problem of the psychologist. He realized that what he was doing was removing his patient's worship and he asked himself, "What is a man without his worship?" Nietzsche makes the same point when he warns us to be careful lest in casting out our devils we cast out the best that's in us. A person can be filleted, gutted by a psychoanalytic cure, a cure to cure energy, you might say.

Kisly: I asked before whether you thought that every tradition had the same esoteric potential. Can you say for yourself which tradition is the richest, deepest and most meaningful?

Campbell: I would say, given my prejudice, namely, that the energy comes from within, that the religion that puts God outside and keeps Him out there is not as strong as the one that allows the divine to be inside—and really inside. This is one of the main problems of our biblical tradition—God is out there, not in my heart. My heart is corrupt until I am converted, and then it is still corrupt. I can't say "*tat tvam asi*," "Thou art That," "I and That are one." I have to ask instead, am I in the proper relationship to That? Judaism, Christianity and Islam are religions of relationship. The way to get into relationship is by participating in the historical cult, and if you are not participating in that, then you are not in a proper relationship to God. That I call, to put it bluntly, the way of an inferior sort of religion. What religions best open the inward way? Hinduism and Buddhism, I would say, and of the two, I put Buddhism on top because, as I've said, it's a credal religion, a religion of belief and consciousness, not a religion of birth and caste. So for me, of the traditions that have been inherited from the past, Buddhism, and Mahayana Buddhism in particular, is tops. It really is. But I find beautiful echoes in very simple religions like those of the Navajo and Hopi. I think one can receive very important instruction from these tribal religions which recognize the power as within the field of nature and the world, and of ourselves. They don't set man apart. I recall the amusing opening of a lecture that Daisetz T. Suzuki delivered at Eranos some years ago. He stood there before the audience with his hands on his hips leaning forward, and announced very slowly, and as though solemnly: "God against man. Man against God. God against Nature. Nature against God. Man against Nature. Nature against Man. Very funny religion." He summed it up just like that. Where you have absolute final duality, you don't have the ultimate message.

EPICYCLE V

Spells for the Man of Slack Water Farm

—from The Kalevala*—

(In turn, each of the three great heroes, Vainamoinen, "the man of Slack Water Farm" who created heaven and earth from an eggshell, Ilmarinen, the eternal blacksmith, and Lemminkainen, "the man with the far-roving mind," a great lover and wanderer, have courted the maiden of North Farm. Vainamoinen accomplishes two of three tasks given him: he has tied an egg into an indiscernible knot and has split a horsehair with a dull knife. While building a boat from bits of a distaff without touching stone with his axe, however, he is wounded badly when the axe slips and bites into his knee. Ilmarinen has tried his turn, and successfully forged a Sampo, *a magical mill that grinds a limitless supply of grain, salt or gold, yet he has failed to win over the maiden of North Farm. Lemminkainen likewise accomplishes two of his three tasks: he captures an elk by skiing on the Demon's pastures, and he bridles the Demon's horse. While attempting to shoot down with one shot a swan on the river of Death's Domain, he is killed and cut into five pieces, though he is later revived in better condition than before. Vainamoinen now wishes to try a second time for the maiden of North Farm, and so has set about building a boat.)*

**The Kalevala is a collection of a large number of songs, stories, and magical formulas sung by the traditional folk-singers of Finland.*

See with what skill steadfast old Vainamoinen is shaping his boat: by the singing of songs, by weaving the magical charms, plank goes against plank, seamless. One day he sang and made fast the hull, with magic for pitch and pegged tight with charms. A second day's songs have joined the planks, laid gunwales and decks, while a third day's singing saw him cutting the tholepins and laying the rower's benches. All then was built but for the lack of three charms: for the joints of the stern, for the joints of the bow, and for the mounts of the bow and stern posts.

Now long does he ponder, steadfast old Vainamoinen, where he will find the charms, discover the magical words to fashion the rest of the boat. These he sought in a flock of swallows, from a skein of geese, from the line of flight of swans, but from them not a charm came, nor even half a charm. He ponders again: "Might there not be a thousand songs under the tongue of a reindeer in summer or in the mouth of a white squirrel?" But a pastureful of reindeer render no charms, nor yet a branchful of squirrels. And now he reflects, old Vainamoinen, on the secrets of Death's Domain, the songs of the cottages in the Abode of the Dead.

Quickly he rises up, quickly he goes out, briskly he steps along now, seeking the songs of Death's Domain: for three days he walks, seeking the river of the Abode of the Dead, the Grave Kingdom. There on its banks he cries out loudly, raises his voice to the daughters of Death:

"Bring me a boat, O daughter of Death, a raft of planks, child of Death's Domain, for me to cross the river of the Grave Kingdom, for me to cross over to the cottages of the Abode of the Dead."

Then shrilly Death's daughters raise their tongues, crying "A boat will be brought to the teller of truth! Say then, rash wanderer, how one comes to the river of Death's Domain untouched by disease or natural death or some other disaster. Tell, and a boat will be sent!"

Then steadfast old Vainamoinen answers and says, "Death has brought me to Death's Domain,Death has brought me to the Abode of the Dead."

From afar the daughters of Death bicker and scold: "Now we can know the speaker of truth, and now we can know the liar. If Death has brought you to Death's Domain, if Death has brought you to the Abode of the Dead, where is the fathom of earth that should have accompanied you, from out of the pit dug for your body by hand? Tell now the truth, singer of lies and fancies, tell how you come to the Abode of the Dead."

Then cries old Vainamoinen from the near side of the river, "Iron has brought me to Death's Domain, iron has brought me to the Abode of the Dead."

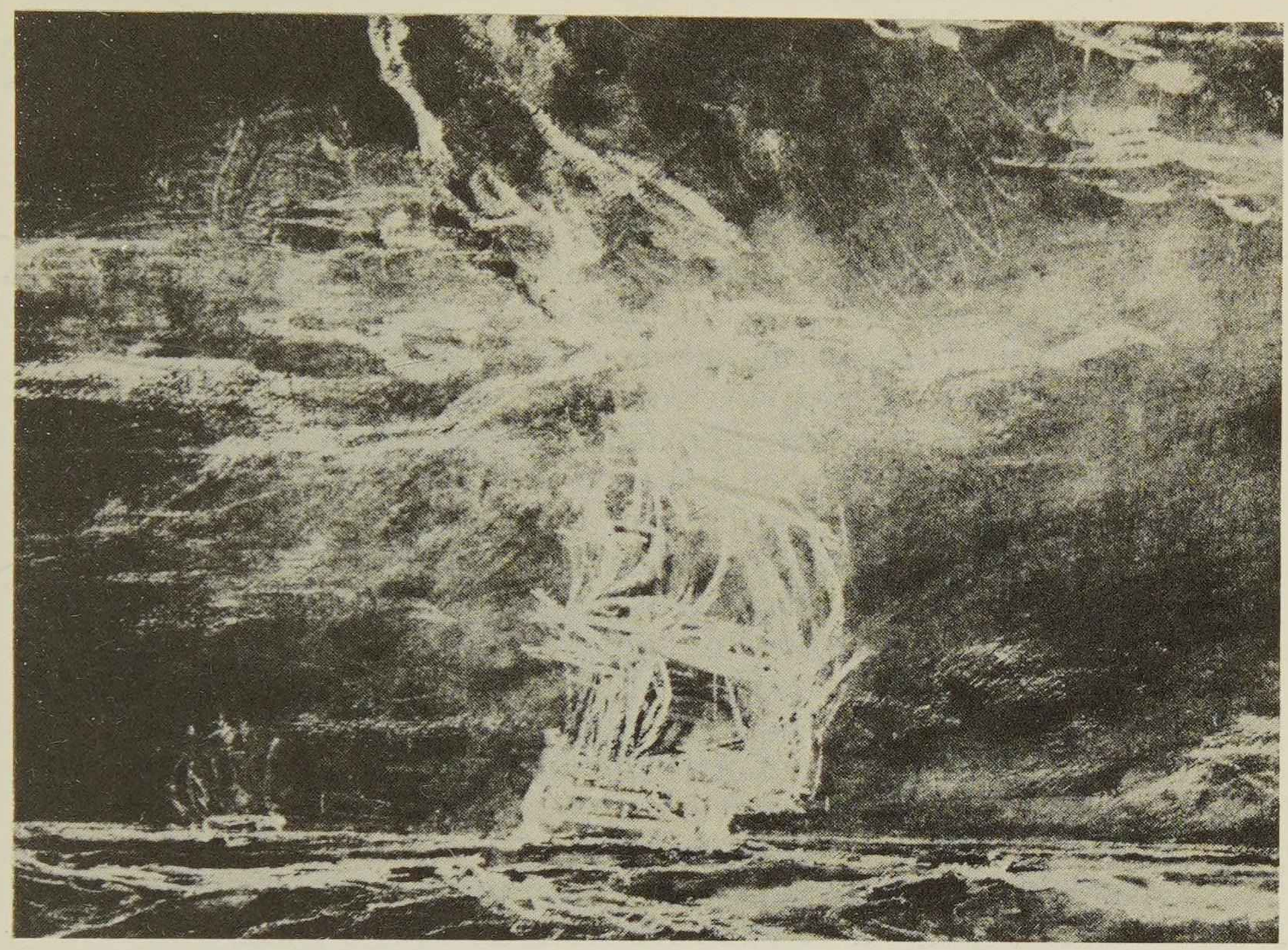
Sharply and shrill the virgins of the Grave Spirit scold and accuse, calling across the water: "We know by his words the teller of truths, we know by his utterance the speaker of falsehoods. If iron has brought you to Death's Domain, if iron has brought you to the Abode of the Dead, why are your clothes not dripping with blood, why is your cloak not streaming with gore? Tell now the truth, teller of falsehoods, why you come to the Abode of the Dead."

Now from this side of the river of Death the hero of Slack Water Farm raises his voice: "Fire has brought me to Death's Domain, fire has brought me to the Abode of the Dead." And from the nether side comes the rebuke of the daughters of Death: "Slowly do we come to know the true from the false, bit by bit do we begin to see how one man is honest and another tells nothing but lies. If fire has brought you to Death's Domain, if fire has brought you to the Abode of the Dead, why is your body not smoking and scorched, why is your shirt not flashing with flame? Tell now the truth, o weaver of deceit, what has brought you to the Abode of the Dead?"

Again the steadfast one, old Vainamoinen, calls across the sundering seas, "Water has brought me to Death's Domain, water has brought me to the Abode of the Dead."

Now the wind carries the shrieks of the virgins, "By this do we know who is speaking the truth, by the words of the mouth do we see clearly the liar. If water has brought you to Death's Domain, if water has brought you to the Abode of the Dead, why then are your cheeks ruddy and fresh, why are your clothes not soggy and wet? No boat will be sent for the teller of tales in whose mouth no truth is; no more lies will you call to us and expect kindness and the means to cross over. Tell what has brought you to Death's Domain, tell what has brought you to the Abode of the Dead."

At last old Vainamoinen tells them the truth, one last time lifts his voice to the wind: "Now will I tell you the truth, O children of Death, even if I lied somewhat before. I was making a boat, magically weaving the spells and the charms, joining plank to plank, mounting the rower's benches, cutting the tholepins. All was shaped in this boat of mine but for the want of three spells: for the joining of stern planks, for the joining of bow planks, for mounting of bow and stern posts. Long I sought



spells from the land of the living ere I came searching in Death's Domain. Bring me a boat, daughters of Death, that I may get me across the river, hear the words of the spells which I seek in the cottages of the Grave Kingdom."

Now one of Death's daughters puts a boat into the water, a skiff to guide him over the sound, the man of Slack Water Farm. By the hand she takes him, leads him to the cottages, feeds him and gives him drink. By this means she lulls him asleep, the boat-builder, steadfast old Vainamoinen. By the fire in the house of Death's daughter the man sleeps soundly, but his clothes stay awake, watching the night long over his body.

When Vainamoinen was sound asleep, the daughter of Death got up, woke up her brother. Together they with gnarled fingers, with iron fingertips, weavers both of iron and copper, sit on a rock in the midst of the river, spinning a seine a hundred fathoms in length, winding a thousand such seines across the river, lengthwise and crosswise and even aslant, to catch and haul in the man of Slack Water Farm. But they do not succeed: sensing his failure, old Vainamoinen dared to become something else, dropping into the water as a black stone, creeping as an iron reptile, a poisonous snake, through the nets of the children of Death. He got no charms there: not even half a charm.

* * *

"There might be a thousand spells yonder," old Vainamoinen said to himself, "in old Kaleva's belly, the mouth of Antero Vipunen." Long under the hill had lain that giant, who knew in his day all the charms and spells to work whatever

magic he wished. But where else would he look, the man of Slack Water Farm? Now he takes himself to Ilmarinen, to the craftsman's anvil, saying these words: "Heat up your furnace, Ilmarinen, make red the embers! Heat the iron white hot, and work it well with tongs and the hammer. Forge me of iron shoes for my feet, a byrnie and gauntlets for me to wear. Last of all make me a cowlstaff of iron, one with a core of hard steel, with tough iron drawn over it. These I need to seek the charms to finish the boat. With these I will seek out the charms from Antero Vipunen, where he sleeps."

Then Ilmarinen, the eternal smith, answers, saying, "I will forge all these things for you, the shoes, the byrnie and the gauntlets of iron, and the iron cowlstaff with a core of steel. But Vipunen is long dead: for a long time has he lain under the hill. You will get no charms from him, for his mouth is filled with earth: no, not even half a charm will he sing to you."

He paid no attention, the man of Slack Water Farm. Clad in iron and carrying an iron cowlstaff with a core of steel, happily he walks along, treading lightly the first day over the points of women's needles: never did they scratch his feet. A second day he walked lightheartedly, over the points of men's swords: never did they prick his soles. Yet a third day he ran with long strides, over the blades of battle axes: never did they scar his heels. At last he reached the grove on the hill where old Vipunen, song-rich giant, lay sleeping. An aspen grew from his shoulders, a birch rose from his brows; an alder sprang from the tip of his jaw, a willow from his beard; from his forehead a fir rose high in the air, the haunt of squirrels, while a tall evergreen came from his teeth; above his feet grew a great pine.

Now Vainamoinen comes with his axe and his cowlstaff. Mightily he hews at the aspen, toppling it from the shoulders of Antero Vipunen; he brings down the birch from the brows, the alder from the giant's jaws; down comes the willow from under the beard, the evergreen from the teeth; last of all he cuts down the bushy pine. Into the grinning maw of Antero Vipunen he drives now his cowlstaff, into his mouth, between his old teeth. At once the giant wakes up from his sleep, feeling that someone is treating him roughly. He bites into the cowlstaff, chews at the tough iron hide, but his teeth are no match for the hard steel core. He opens his mouth wider, tries to swallow Vainamoinen, cowlstaff and all. All at once the man of Slack Water Farm leaps forward, into the giant's jaws, into the mouth of the man with great knowledge. A long time he strides over the tongue, twists round and about in the throat, then suddenly slips into the belly.

Down in the belly of the man of spells, Vainamoinen strips off his shirt, makes of it a smithy. He takes his shirtsleeves to make a bellows, his breeches the bellows tube, his stocking the mouthpiece. He makes his knee the anvil, his elbow the hammer, his steel-sinewed fingers the tongs. Now he begins his smithying, tapping away in the giant's belly, in the heart of the man of magical songs. Above him Vipunen mutters and growls, feeling the slag come into his throat, the hot coals blowing. He remembers the charms against illness, the spells for casting out demons, the songs for summoning help, and he sings them. But none of these are the songs that the hero wants. With greater vigor steadfast old Vainamoinen hammers away.

As he works at his forge, the man of Slack Water Farm lifts his

voice too, calling to Antero Vipunen with these words: "How nice it is to be hammering away here, how good to be working! See all around me, a harvest of good food when I grow hungry: liver and lungs for a rich stew, and plenty of fat. I need never leave here, all my days, with such a rich harvest! I will hammer away, work at the iron and coals forever here; unless, of course, I hear such spells to slake my thirst, learn songs of building and joining, fortunate charms, thousands of magical songs."

So now Vipunen, his belly in agony, the hot coals blowing into his mouth, the giant under the hill, great man of knowledge, the man with a thousand of thousands of spells in his bosom, opens his chest of songs, unlatches his casket of words, and sings now the good things, hums the best lays, the ones the hero wishes to hear. No charms were lacking in that singing: Vainamoinen learned there far more than he came for, bathed in the stream of words, revelled in an ocean of magical verse. Day after day old Vipunen sang, and day after day the man of Slack Water Farm listened and learned. Even as the songs went out, the sun stopped to listen, the moon stopped to look, the Great Bear stopped to pay some attention. Even the waves stood still in the bay, the foam of the sea paused, and the streams stopped running a while to learn.

At last the singing was ended, the last song sung. Then Antero Vipunen, the song-rich giant, coughed up old Vainamoinen, noisily spat up the man of Slack Water Farm. Then the hero went homeward, shouldering his cowlstaff, remembering the songs as he walked back to the craftsman's smith. "And did you learn charms to finish the boat?" asked Ilmarinen when the hero returned. "I learned them," answered Vainamoinen. Then he went to his boat, got it ready, joined the stern planks, joined the bow planks, mounted the bow and stern posts, and eased the ship onto the rollers.

C. C. JUNG: HIS MYTH IN OUR TIME. By Marie-Louise von Franz. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1975. Pp. 287 + portrait, Bibliography and Index. $15.

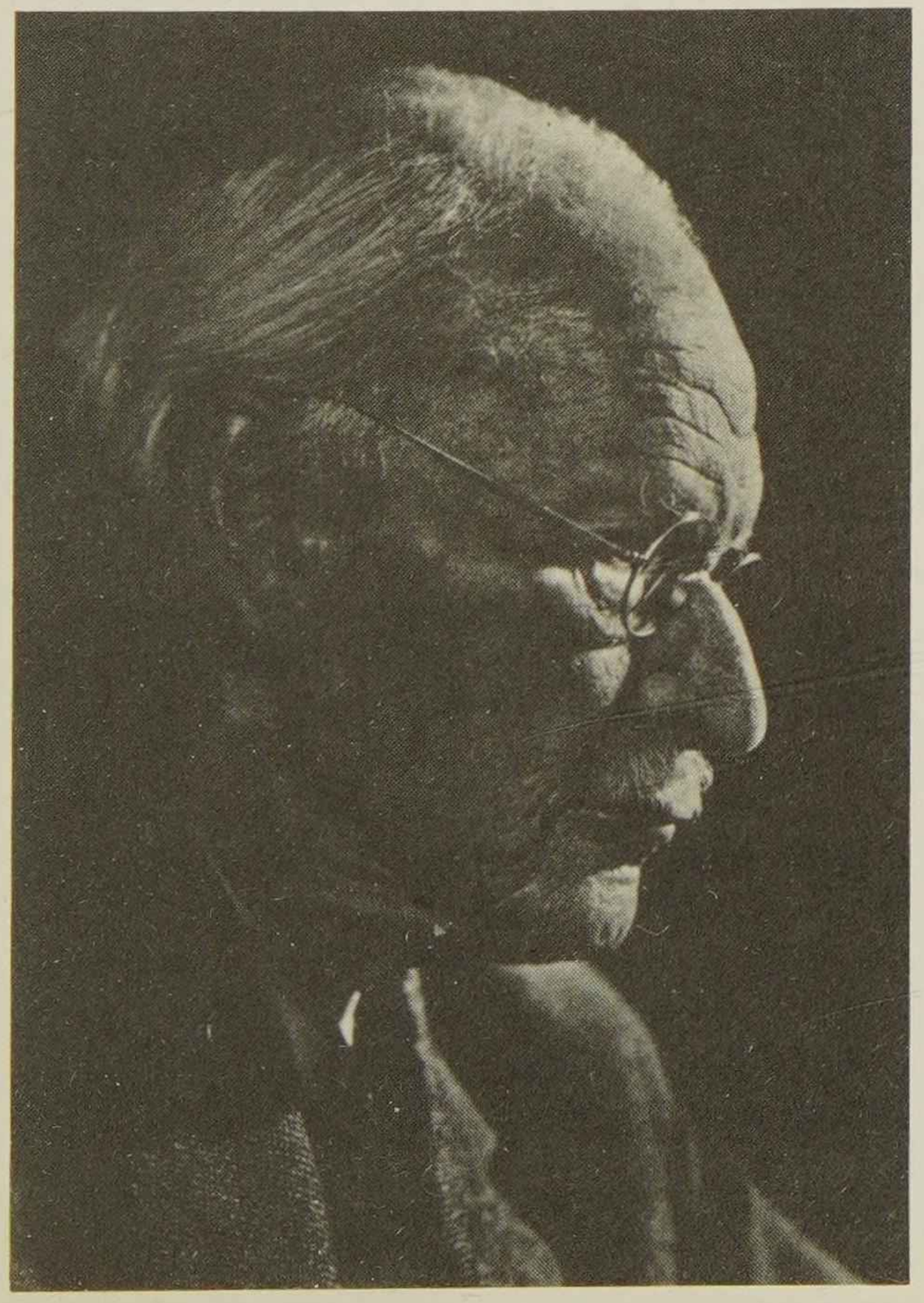
JUNG AND THE STORY OF OUR TIME. By Laurens Van Der Post. New York: Pantheon, 1975. Pp. 276. $11.

Jung, in Thought and Feeling

Robertson Davies

Jung's theory of types offers an irresistible temptation to us when we read studies that have been written about him: what sort of person is writing, we ask ourselves, and what springboard have they used to launch themselves into their subject? It would be overbold to dogmatize on this point, but it looks as if the two books under review were written by an introverted-feeling-type, and an introverted-thinking-type, Colonel Van Der Post being the feeler, and Dr. von Franz the thinker. To read the two books in succession offers much quiet amusement, because so often they discuss the same material from different points of view, never wholly agreeing yet never positively contradicting; taken together they provide a fine portrait of Jung. Van Der Post offers a rarity, because he was a friend of Jung's and thus avoids the pitfalls of the pupil or the patient, which have sometimes evinced themselves in

slavish acceptance, and sometimes in rebellion and a desire to diminish the master. Von Franz, on the contrary, was a pupil, and a great one; Van Der Post writes of her, with characteristic generosity, that she is "a great natural scholar by instinct as well as by training . . . unsurpassed by any co-worker of her sex." It is pleasant to note that von Franz writes of him with equal grace. What is most significant about them, I think, is that they both have the indispensable qualification of a good commentator on a great man: they possess in themselves qualities which, if not of comparable dimension to those of their subject, are nevertheless of the same kind. They have, in brief, the weight and the perception for the work in hand.



They are very different creatures, all the same. Where Van Der Post evokes Jung, von Franz describes him. What he does by the poetic sensibility that has given his other writings their distinction and deserved popularity, she achieves by scholarly synthesis. Where he becomes a little blurred in focus, she is brilliantly exact, and where he is a west wind (passing at times over some rather damp terrain) she is an east wind. Her great power lies in her ability to condense and explain complicated concepts: what she writes about typology, for instance, and her description of the strengths and limitations of active imagination, is not likely to be bettered. What is more, she provides us with a fine bibliography and an index that is in itself a critique of her book; if anything is missing, we know that the omission is intentional; with Van Der Post's book we are occasionally tempted to wonder if he has not unconsciously left something out because it did not fit into his essentially poetic approach to his friend.

Dr. von Franz is not afraid of delicate matters. Inevitably she tackles the problem of the frequent charges of anti-Semitism that were brought against Jung, and she disposes of them without once falling into the trap that lurks here, and into which several writers have fallen—the suggestion that Jung felt any special tenderness toward Jews. To him they were people, but never a Chosen People. Where she meets this problem by history and argument, Van Der Post deals with it by describing a head-on confrontation between Jung and Goebbels. But Van Der Post has his own directness; he is, in my experience, the only writer about Jung to come to terms with the master's relationship with Toni Wolff, about which there has been a silence that provokes more questions than are probably justified. Too much impertinent probing is out of order, but with a man of Jung's extraordinary temperament and importance in the world, the public has a right to know whatever throws light on his

character and completes a picture.

Here Dr. von Franz offers us material that is deeply interesting, but its relevance to the question of Jung's marriage is achieved by indirection. Emma Jung spent many years in preparing a study of the Grail Legend, but the book which appeared after her death (completed by M.-L. von Franz) is in one important respect unsatisfactory; the problem of Merlin is not explored with the completeness that marks the rest of the book. One may surmise that living with Merlin demanded some blindness on the part of his wife if she were not to lose necessary elements in her own nature. Vivian doubtless could have told us a great deal but Vivian chose not to speak, and we must respect her silence. In the last, very fine chapter of her book, "Le Cri de Merlin," Dr. von Franz explores the Merlin element in Jung's character with a brilliance, a tact and a completeness that put us all greatly in her debt. Van Der Post has spoken finely of the woman; von Franz has told us much that is essential about the man. Colonel Van Der Post is a writer and a fine one; both Freud and Jung had a special, respectful regard for writers and the ability which the best of the breed have for seeing through a brick wall. Dr. von Franz too can see through a brick wall, but her point of view is not that of a writer, but of one deeply versed in myth, legend, and symbol. Both Jung's most recent biographers explore, in their different ways, the uncanny and, in the end, inexplicable elements in Jung's character, and we need them both if we are to advance in our own understanding.

Inevitably both books refer to Jung's long dispute with Christian theologians, and once again the reader must be amazed by the want of charity with which his opinions were treated by some of his correspondents. A careful reading of his *Letters* throws more light on this subject. As time wears on the pertinence of Jung's opinions appears more clearly; the necessity to come to grips with evil as something more than a *privatio boni* (a lack of good) is as demanding in our time as it has ever been, and the need to recognize the relevance of feminine values and feminine thought to religion is perhaps more pressing now than it has been in the past two thousand years. It is something that goes far beyond the current wrangle as to whether women may be ordained as priests, to do priestly things as men do them. Only a revolution in religious thinking can meet the problem, and whether the revolution is to build upon the past, or to fling it aside, is the question. In the light of what we know of revolutions generally, we may tremble as we await the answer.

We may be grateful to both authors for the emphasis they have laid on Jung's artistic interests and sensitivity. Many of those who are most occupied with Jungian thought are themselves engaged in the arts or in the academic world. The kind of thinking that finds firm expression in Graham Hough's article, "Poetry and the Anima" (*Spring* 1973), is everywhere gaining ground, and it is encouraging to feel that Jung would have recognized it for what it is, and felt some kinship with it, even though he had not the inclination to work in that realm himself.

Both writers are just and discreet in their treatment of Sigmund Freud, and once again we may wish that Freudians were equally even-handed in their treatment of Jung. Both writers emphasize Jung's warning to the Western world against adopting the patterns of thought and psychological technique that belong to the Eastern world. Intellectual fancy-dress can yield nothing of ultimate worth; the problem of Western man is the problem of his Western heritage and environment, and shaving his head and donning the yellow gown can avail him little. Not nothing, but little. Only by starting from the point where he stands can he hope to go as far as his capabilities permit. Linked with this theme, Van Der Post's book contains a gently charitable, but warning

comment about Schweitzer. The task of the West is to be Western, and the signal to the innumerable young people who think that their finest destiny is to be worked out by espousing the problems of far-off lands is unmistakable. *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!*

To say flatly that one of these books is superior to the other would be foolish; they are complementary. The Van Der Post book is irritating in some respects; either the author or his publishers should have taken care that the word "extravert" was spelled in the way common in the *Collected Works,* that Sir Thomas Browne should not be described as an Elizabethan (he was a Caroline), and that a very familiar quotation from Shakespeare should not be blurred by a word that Shakespeare did not write. It is not pedantry to complain of these things; a book aimed at cultivated people should be edited according to the standards of cultivated people. Dr. von Franz's book, in contrast, is exemplary in its tactful but sufficient scholarly apparatus. But we would not be without Van Der Post's special insights, personal reminiscences, and the interplay of Jung's personality and his own. Nor would we wish to be without Dr. von Franz's tough-mindedness, which is mitigated by an essentially feminine sensibility.

The reviewer's advice, therefore, is to read both books; they are too good to be missed and are the better for being taken together.

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*Robertson Davies, a prominent Canadian playwright and novelist, is Master of Massey College in the University of Toronto and a Professor of the Drama of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His recent trilogy of fiction–*Fifth Business, The Manticore, *and* World of Wonders*–has roots in Jungian thought.*

SOMETHING HAPPENED. By Joseph Heller. New York: Aflred A. Knopf, 1974. Pp. 570. $10.00; New York: Ballantine, 1975. $2.25.

The Ordeal of Mythlessness

Ted L. Estess

In a disturbing and, in many ways, a brilliant novel, Joseph Heller compels us to take another look at a neglected figure of the American scene: the white male, middle class executive. To these fellows, or at least to the one Heller gives us, "something has happened."

We know Heller's protagonist even before we meet him in the novel; for Bob Slocum—not Robert, but plain, affable "Bob"—is indeed a stereotype in a world populated with stereotypes. This, however, is not faulty characterization on Heller's part, but actually a symptom of a society in which "identity" is contingent precisely on the capacity of the individual to abstract himself into a stereotype. Bob Slocum is eminently skillful in this process of self-fabrication: "I've had a talent . . . this footman's talent, for being able to decipher what . . . my betters . . . expect of me and the subtle theatrical instinct for letting them observe they are getting it . . . " This fabricated person, however, is troubled: "I often wonder what my own true nature is. Do I have one?"

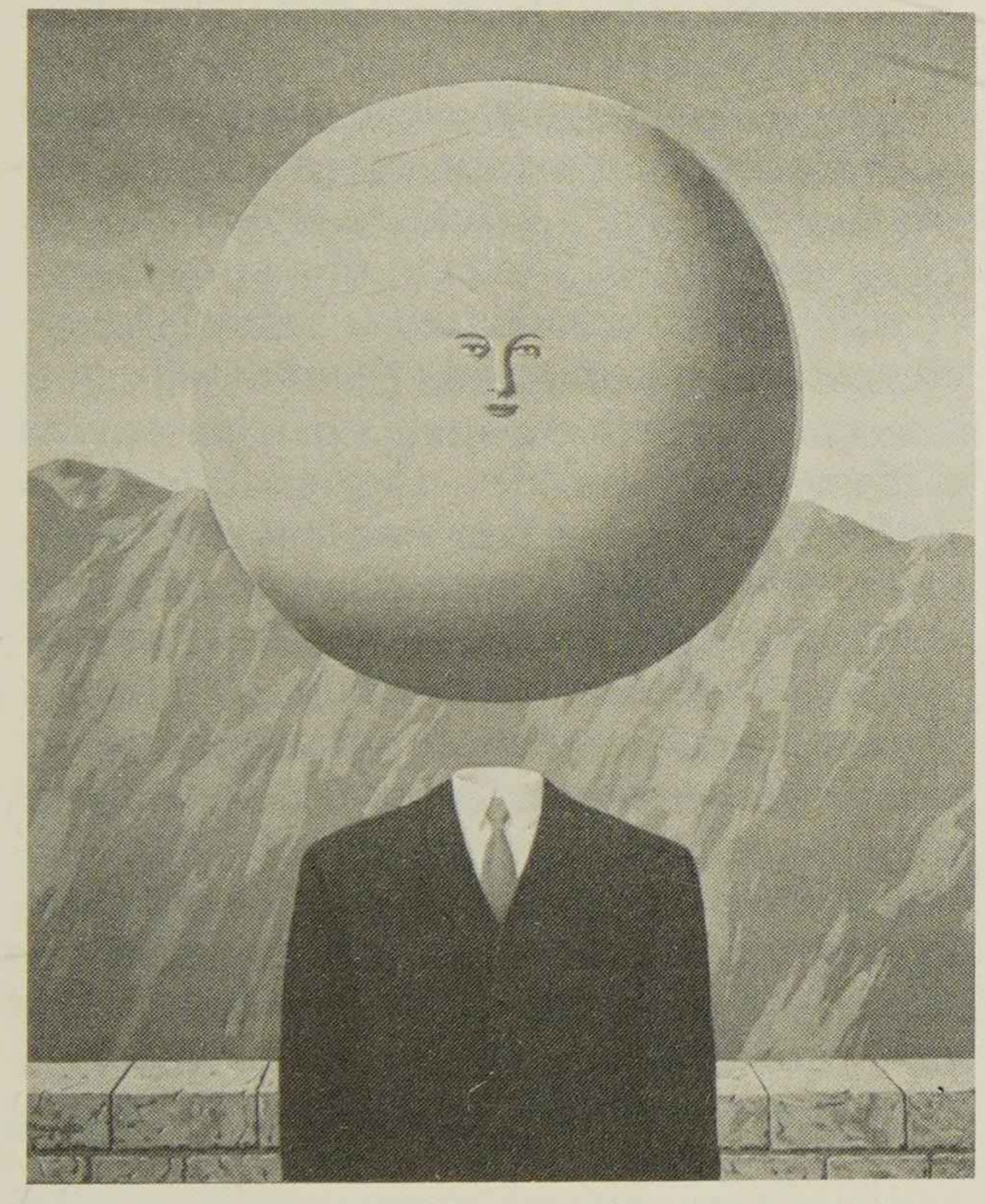
Something Happened records the confession of Slocum that, though he has in all respects won in appearances, he has lost in reality; it is the confession that, after a lifetime of confusing the one with the other, he can no longer distinguish the two. Narrated by Slocum and told entirely from his point of view (indeed, the novel suggests that the Slocums of our society can take no point of view other than their own), the novel chronicles three worlds: the company, the family, and Slocum's inner psychic life. A fourth world, that of a fast-deteriorating American civilization, is apocalyptically sketched with a few telling comments, but it remains less a subject than the backdrop for consideration of tribulations in the other three realms.

In the world of the company, style, not substance, is the key to success; fear, not trust or even cooperation, is the executive principle of human relationships. With a keenness of observation and an undertow of laconic humor, Slocum details the intrigues of office politics, the intricacies of organized lying and fraudulence, the obsessive sexual exploits. Yet, all this decadence takes place under an appearance of conviviality, where friction is held to a minimum and where people "make money and have fun." But, as Slocum in characteristic self-pity complains, "If I did not have girls to play around with and such serious problems at home to contend with, I think, sweet, bleeding Jesus, I would go out of my mind from this fucking job of mine."

The family situation is equally a disaster: there is a complaining, slightly alcoholic, aging and lonely wife; a depressing, self-pitying, lying teenage daughter; a delightful nine-year old boy who, while the only source of hope in Slocum's dreary world, grows steadily away from his father; a brain-damaged boy whom the other family members basically resent, even hate. Mutual destruction, emotional warfare, and continual distress, only periodically relieved with moments of goodness and hints of affection, mark the family atmosphere. Slocum cannot repress a deep sense of the futility of it all: "And when she [his daughter] came to me, even that first time, to say she wasn't happy, I told her that I wasn't either and that nobody ought to expect to be."

Something Happened provides unsettling commentary on American business and family life, but finally the focal interest of the novel lies in its exploration of the inner life of Bob Slocum. Psychic situation is Heller's major concern. Slocum's mind is filled with all sorts of demons and "crawling animals": an unresolved Oedipal conflict; a sense of abandonment by the father; childhood fears of castration and homosexual rape; the terror of death; a feeling of being inhabited by a "1000 me's." But the

primary resident in this psyche is the little boy "that once was and will always remain as it always has been, suspended lonesomely inside its own past, waiting hopefully, vainly, to resume, longing insatiably for company, pining desolately for that time to come when it will be safe and sane and possible to burst outside exuberantly, stretch its arms, fill its lungs with invigorating air, without fear at last and call: 'Hey! Here I am. Couldn't you find me? Can't we be together now?'" Ultimately, the novel is about that little boy, the one who cowers in places of safety, the one who might come out and play—if only that "something" had not



R. Magritte: *The Art of Living*

happened.

The title image of the book itself indicates the extent to which the world of the child is Slocum's world. "Something happened"—not *I* did thus and so, but something external to me took place which was not really of my own doing. Hence, in some fundamental way, I am not responsible, nor can I be expected to effect changes. Yet, in fairness to Slocum, we must acknowledge that something catastrophic (which is best not revealed in a review) does occur toward the end of the narrative. But that catastrophe is not the primary cause of Slocum's distress; for Heller is not dealing with a specific "something" for which any one person could possibly take responsibility. He rather is diagnosing a more general state of being for which Slocum is not really at fault, though he takes part in it. Slocum recognizes that the problem is implicit in the culture in which he is inextricably involved: "I cannot fight and nullify a whole culture, an environment, an epoch, a past . . . "

Trying to locate more precisely the nature of the "something" that happened, we might ponder what has happened to language. The extent to which the capacity of *homo loquens* for authentic speech has been corrupted is understood and portrayed by Heller in a way that goes far to establish his considerable stature as a contemporary writer. The exploits of poor Yossarian to negotiate the labyrinthine intricacies of military double-talk supplies the sustaining interest of *Catch-22*. Guffaws arise from the black humor of his peregrinations in search of a straight answer; yet we cannot, even in the midst of our laughter, suppress a kind of horror, for Heller's portrayal of rampant lie-speaking is an instance of truth-speaking. While *Catch-22* portrays a person caught in the web of language spun by others, *Something Happened* adds the dimension of the person who is the victim of his own lies. Heller is suggesting that the managers of our society—in business, government, education, and religion—do not expect "to change reality but merely to find it if they can and suggest ingenious ways of disguising it."

The language-world which Slocum inhabits is one in which the distinction between speaking the truth and speaking what you want others to hear is all but totally obscured. This, again, is the condition of the child or of the childish. A parent says, "Say 'Daddy,' " and the child mimetically replies, "Daddy." This primal situation is the model for Slocum's existence: Say and do what the Daddies of life want and, if not happiness, at least approval will result. The relationship of the child to speech could be explored at great length in the novel, for one of Slocum's persistent fears is of being reduced to infantile speechlessness, one of his deepest disappointments is being refused the opportunity to speak at the company convention. Access to power, as Heller perceptively portrays it, is precisely the access to speech. The pattern of manipulation in the company and the family, indeed, in the entire culture, is always the same: one speaker reduces another to the status of the infant (Latin *infans,* "unable to speak").

But as deceitful and cowardly and childish as Slocum is, we finally are rather sympathetic toward him, for at least he has reached the point of not always being able any more to deceive himself. Unfortunately, the recognition of his own thorough-going mendacity

merely puts him in double jeopardy: he feels guilty because he lies; he must continue *knowingly* to lie in order to survive.

Faulkner might have commented, about the incorrigible rednecks who populated his locale, that "the poor sons-of-bitches are doing the best they can." While Bob Slocum is a poor s.o.b., he is not doing his best, and he knows it. Yet the pitiable state that he reflects, and the condition Heller suggests as generalizable in our present time, is that it is doubtful whether he could do better, much less his best. The language is too fraudulent, the soul has been bartered away too many times, the societal structure has too many demons on its side, the spirit of the person is too sated with compromise, the individual is too far removed from the sources of forgiveness and renewal for Slocum, and the society of which he is a representative, to do otherwise. For one thing, the desperate situation is not without its rewards: money, and plenty of that, even if the things which it buys are most often nothing but worthless trinkets of the mercantile *gehenna;* sex, and plenty of it, even if it is no longer much fun; order, even if that is shot through with fear, mistrust, and bad faith.

Yet, the novel compels us to wonder whether Bob Slocum and the society itself could do better. Could the bonds of self-enclosure be loosened and the world renewed with the healing of self- and other-acceptance? Could the sources of authentic speaking be re-cognized? Perhaps not, but even if these questions were answered affirmatively, we cannot but feel at the end of this lengthy recital of Bob Slocum's miseries that he, even if given that second chance he longs for, would live it all over again in much the same way. A world where duplicity appears compulsory, where fear is the ruling emotion, where a split between inner reality and outer appearances seems mandatory, does not hold out much hope that Slocum can even want to do much better.

The sad truth of the matter is that there is no available means of Slocum's finding a better basis for his life. God is, of course, gone; and though Slocum wishes he believed in God, he does not and cannot; indeed, he realizes that the man who handles his dry cleaning is more important to him than God. Yet, even if God is unavailable, one still might find in love, or friendship, or high principles, or the deep Self, some opening in the self-enclosed narcissism in which Slocum moves. But his cynicism is too deep for him to know friendship, his egoism too dominant for him to experience love, his will too impoverished for him to sustain high principles, his psyche too crowded with demons for him to know the quietude and promptings of the center within the self.

The form of the novel, perhaps, suggests some grounds for hoping that Slocum may do better, for confession can often be the initiation of renewal. It is possible, for instance, that the paroxysms of confession which daily reach us from high—or once high—places in our society may signal better times ahead; I, however, tend to see the present penchant for making and hearing confession not as a sign of recovery but as further indication of the sickness. That sickness, in part, is precisely the narcissistic confinement of the child who undertakes such a confession in the first place. Gossiping about oneself is not the same as coming to self-insight, even though it might masquerade as such. Bob Slocum has not arrived at some deep discernment which would be preliminary to a changed life. The truth of the matter is that despite the candor of his self-revelation, Slocum has precious little genuine self-understanding which would open the way for a renovation of his life.

The power, but at the same time, the insidiousness of a confession lies in its capacity to generate instant identification. The reader tends to be drawn into the inner life of the confessor and thereby can actually become another dupe of the confessor's self-indulgent manipulation of the world. As engaging as Slocum's rehearsal of human frailty may be, I cannot escape the sensation that the confession itself is the culminating act of self-justification and self-exoneration by a moral dwarf. Slocum the little boy attempts to win again by gaining the sympathy and approval of his audience.

My point in these considerations is that the medium which Heller employs (the confessional narrative) is symptomatic of the condition which he is exploring. Confession often, though not necessarily, obliterates genuine Otherness, for all things and all persons become mere reflections of the confessor's consciousness. This is the case with Heller's protagonist. As Slocum puts it, "Everyone around me now reminds me of me. . . . " Lacking genuine Otherness in his comportment toward reality, Slocum has no way of achieving self-definition and self-limitation. He can only whirl around in his own internal consternation, ever the spectator of his own life. Instead of offering a way out of the vicious circle, the confession merely portrays and intensifies the problem of being encysted within narcissistic self-consciousness.

Though Slocum feels abandoned in the world of the child, he is also trapped in adoles-

cence as well. As child, he approximates his little boy; as adolescent, he resembles his teen-age daughter. As the child, he never feels really safe in the world, never having achieved what Erik Erikson calls "basic trust"; hence he retreats to various cocoons or foxholes or wombs to hide from the reality which threatens his fragile existence. As adolescent, he continues to struggle with securing a meaningful sense of identity which would link him with a significant past and a hopeful future.

In considering the problems of Slocum as an adolescent, we encounter the staggering proportions of the current crisis besetting the mythological infrastructure in our culture. The adolescent wishes and, in most cultural situations, *can expect* to draw from the shared collection of cultural myths a "fiction" with which to orient himself in time, with which to shape a coherent pattern of identity, with which to understand and channel emerging sexual powers, with which to walk courageously into the unknown future. Bob Slocum has drawn from his culture such a fiction, the motifs of which are competition and the will to succeed, self-control and generally amiability, sexual conquest and invulnerable potency. As husband, father, executive, and citizen, he has successfully met the conditions for life established by these motifs. Yet, in the hard, middle years of the journey through time, he sadly recognizes that this fiction excludes much too much of what is going on within. While he maintains the facade of these cultural expectations of the surface (he assiduously avoids losing "self-control"), he is distressed from underneath by the churning of vast reservoirs of felt experience unassimilable by the cultural myth.

In appearance, Slocum is the consummate embodiment of an enduring American myth, that of the white male who gets what he wants through proper deference, shrewd initiative, and polished style. The reality of Slocum's inner world is otherwise; for there, where it really counts, Slocum is the mythless man. Reflecting on the situation of his daughter and her adolescent friends, he helps us to understand his own mythlessness: "They manifest defiance, displeasure, lassitude, and indifference. They generally have nothing they want to do. There is nothing they want to be when they grow up; they have no idols. (Neither have I. There is now no one else I would rather be than me—even though I don't really like me and am not even sure who it is I am.)"

Slocum is bereft of all those things we anticipate of a person who is inhabiting a sustaining myth: a strategy for relating disparate dimensions of the self; some means of comporting oneself toward evil and suffering; some models of the "good" and "bad"; identifiable values, models, and symbols which can be bequeathed to posterity. To make matters worse, Slocum is self-conscious of his own mythic poverty: "Where is a frame of reference now for any of us that extends even the distance to the horizon, only eighteen miles away?" *Something Happened* is a *dies irae* for the myth by which a significant number of American males have interpreted themselves, and Heller leaves his protagonist exactly where a mythless person must be left: suspended in the middle, after the old myths have died and before new ones have emerged.

Now, it is a serious matter that Slocum is guilty and ashamed because he remains a frightened child and a mythless adolescent; but it is equally serious that his culture still imagines him to be an adult. In fact, he must bear recrimination for being *the* adult, that is, for being the one who is controlling and ordering the reality of our social situation. Are not the Slocums of America held ultimately responsible for the oppression of Blacks, the repression of women, and the exploitation of the poor? To Slocum, it is ludicrous, almost criminal, that anyone would think he is in control. Overwhelmed by his reveries, depressed with the family, bored with his job, and worried about his society, Slocum suffers his own mythic fragmentation in the depths precisely at the time when his society exacts payment for his success in the appearances.

Certainly we must acknowledge the ways in which managers such as Slocum do control the lines of power in our society, and we must be deeply dubious of the oppressor who cries to the oppressed, "You think *you've* got problems!" Yet, it is extraordinarily important to listen with care to what Heller is saying about the American businessman, the middle class husband and father. For one thing, careful listening might contribute to our overcoming the destructive divisions which plague contemporary life and might assist with reawakening an appreciation of the vulnerability of every person, regardless of the particular group to which he or she belongs. And certainly, Heller has captured much about persons in our opulent society, many of whom might lament with Bob Slocum, "I never became what I wanted to be, even though I got all the things I ever wanted. . . ."

Ted L. Estess teaches religion and literature at Le Moyne University. He is currently exploring literary responses to our seeming lack of a sustaining contemporary mythology, with emphasis on the work of Samuel Beckett and Elie Wiesel.

REVIEWS

About the Sleeping Beauty

By P. L. Travers. Illustrated by Charles Keeping. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975. Pp. x + 111. $7.95.

By Roger Lipsey

P. L. Travers' *About the Sleeping Beauty* appears at a time of increasing depth in our understanding of traditional story, a depth owed in part to this author herself, who has lectured often and published some concerning fairy tales. A varied literature is available, the best of it reprints in many cases, published as if in answer to a need to turn from the frequently superficial inventions of commercial literature back to the awe-inspiring substance of traditional tales. Pantheon Books has reprinted *The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales* (New York, 1944, 1972), with its excellent commentary by Joseph Campbell; the adequate translations in this edition can be supplemented by the better Lore Segal/Randall Jarrell translations in *The Juniper Tree and Other Tales from Grimm* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1973), a selection accompanied by Maurice Sendak's most extraordinary illustrations to date. Pantheon has also reprinted *Russian Fairy Tales* (New York, 1973), representing a generous portion of Afanas'ev's collection in a colorless but decent English translation (Afanas'ev was the Russian Grimm); and Iona and Peter Opie's *The Classic Fairy Tales* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1974) presents the original, often matchless versions of favorite tales, with accounts of their literary history and a fine general introduction. Remembering also Dover Books' multivolume reprinting of Andrew Lang's fairy tale collections, we can take the measure of a genuine revival within which P. L. Travers' new book finds its place.

The book subdivides into three: a retelling of "The Sleeping Beauty" by the author, an "Afterword" which is really an essay on fairy tales, and a collection of five versions of "The Sleeping Beauty" culled from various story traditions (German, French, Italian, Irish, and Bengali). Illustrations in color by Charles Keeping are rather lovely but only faintly interpretive of the tales—they tend to emphasize the erotic, but there is more to the tales than that—and generally fail to improve what the mind's eye can see, although in fairness it must be said that several illustrations are strong.

The notion of "story variants" has been central to the scholarly study of folktales for more than a generation, but, as far as I am aware, there has never before been presented to the general reader a series of variants such as Travers gathers. Clearly not intended for children's reading but quite absorbing for adults, the series gives a sense of the movement of motifs into and out of the larger context of tales: there is no lasting stability, but a vital drift of motifs throughout a repertoire. The only rule that seems to apply is that motifs reused must fit snugly in their new context and be narrated as freshly as if they were new mint. Among the unfamiliar versions, the Irish one is outstanding, with moments that send the mind questing for the analogues in experience and metaphysics that seem to be implied. The tale, like all good ones, is simultaneously a pleasure and a test of one's resources.

I am not certain that I am responding to the author's intentions when I note that the "Afterword" seems to me far more important than the retelling of the tale which it follows. The "Afterword" is a gem: bright with insight into the essence of fairy tales, lightened by autobiographical reminiscences concerning a child's growing love of stories and her certainty that positively mythic events were taking place daily around the home, and consistently interesting in its exposition of "The Sleeping

> *The Wise Women, for people who believe in them, are never far to seek. Wherever a cradle is set rocking, the hand of some Wise Woman lies over the mortal hand. Wherever mother and daughter are, talking the age-old talk of women, a Wise Woman makes a third. They mix with the matrons at the market, the fishwives by the harbour's edge, and ladies in elegant mansions . . . There is no corner of existence that has not felt the Wise Women's prodding fingers. . . .*

Roger Lipsey is chairman of the Fine Arts Department at State University College at Potsdam, N.Y., where he teaches a course on the interpretation and illustration of the traditional story. He is the author of Signature and Significance: The Life and Writings of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy *and editor of Coomaraswamy's* Collected Papers, *both to be published in early 1977 by Princeton University Press in the Bollingen Series.*

Beauty," this essay seems to me the real achievement of the book.

> *As for the Three Fates, I recognized them immediately as my great-aunts, huge cloudly presences—with power, it seemed, to loose and to bind—perched watchfully, like crows on a fence, at the edge of our family circle. One of them, it was said—or rather, it was whispered, the rumour being so hideous —one of them lived on her capital. What was capital, I wondered, wild with conjecture, full of concern. And the dreadful answer came bubbling up—it was herself, her substance!*

I have chosen a light passage, but its sparkle is like that of the essay as a whole, which delves with considerable gravity into the nature of traditional tales. There begins to be enough material scattered by Travers in recent years in a variety of publications to form the nucleus of a *Collected Essays* on the theme of traditional story (see especially her essays in *Sacred Tradition and Present Need,* ed. Jacob Needleman and Dennis Lewis, New York, 1974, and *Parabola,* Vol. 1, No. 1).

The retelling of "The Sleeping Beauty," set in the Middle East, is intended to be "a series of reflections on the theme of the Sleeping Beauty," ". . . a meditation, for it broods and ponders upon the theme. . . ." I do not believe that it works very well as *story,* although it has fine narrative patches, because its tone is neither fully naive and direct, as in anonymous folktale, nor richly meditative. Attempting a story that includes, however obliquely, its own commentary, the author has not given the story new wings. There are nonetheless brilliant moments such as the following which, while drawn from the story, is similar to the Afterword in its familiarity with wonder and its humanity:

Sacred Tradition and Present Need

Edited by Jacob Needleman and Dennis Lewis. An Esalen Book. New York: Viking, 1975. Pp. xiv + 146. $10.00

By John Loudon

There is no missing the spiritual ferment in America today, but whether it's a fair wind or foul that stirs across the land is less clear. Is the fascination—especially among the young—with new religions, meditation techniques, and intense self-exploration truly a revival of the sense of the sacred or merely materialism's dance of death, a terminal tango on the last frontier? Is it a genuine quest for meaning that can put the parts of life together again or just a fresh variant on the crazed search for the ultimate high?

These questions emerge spontaneously in California, our principal way-station between East and West, where experimentation and impermanence seem the only enduring traditions. And it's fitting that Esalen—a West Coast center synonymous with innovative approaches to personal growth—should have sponsored the series of lectures on sacred tradition and present need collected here. Stepping back from

the bewildering profusion of current religious options, they address the pivotal question: what is there of enduring meaning that the ancient traditions can say to modern man in his desperate search for a holistic vision? In our zeal to junk the excess baggage in the old religions, have we discarded vital truths whose relevance is perennial?

Needleman and Lewis chose speakers they regarded as authoritative representatives of various streams of traditional spirituality, people in touch with the mystical core of the ancient teachings yet willing to communicate their message to those who have lived outside the realms of the traditional. Typical of such collections, this one is a bag of mixed quality. But the median grade is high, and each talk has something to recommend it.

Needleman's own lecture, "The Used Religions," obviously designed to set the issues for the series and get the discussion rolling, succeeds in elaborating the excellent line of questioning opened up by his preface. Despite the plethora of books and gurus now available, offering a drugstore variety of approaches and each promising an integral relationship to our own being and the cosmos, are the ancient teachings truly accessible by modern Americans? Or, to reach us, must their truth be parodied, exploited by the same forces that define the whole modern era? Needleman recounts how his recent encounter with an Orthodox abbot on Mt. Athos brought home the necessity of receiving traditional teaching under conditions that awaken an attitude of believing expectancy and catch up the whole person in the act of listening.

The talk that confronts Needleman's challenge most forcefully is Seyyed Hossein Nasr's "Sufism and the Spiritual Needs of Contemporary Man." He distinguishes between the permanent needs of man and the forms they take in different cultures. Tradition, "a sacred science . . . rooted in the nature of Reality, and . . . the only integral means of access to this Reality, which at once surrounds man and shines at the innermost center of his being," speaks to man's unchanging nature. We need to listen to teachers who not only know the traditions intellectually but live by them and can apply their wisdom to the particular problems and conditions of modern man without distorting truth. Nasr concludes by indicating the ways in which Sufism in particular can address contemporary needs.

P.L. Travers' "Myth, Symbol, and Tradition" handles the issue in the most appealing way. Speaking as a "mere storyteller," she shows that the superstitions and old wives' tales behind common customs and childrens' stories are not just trivial, but harbor the residue of great traditions of meaning. Exploring them can carry us back to stores of profound and perennial wisdom. Any strong and deep experience can awaken the myths and symbols and align us to a tradition.

By far the most provocative piece is Philippe Lavastine's "Two Vedantas: The Best and Worst of India." A powerful polemic, it argues that there are two opposed paths leading out of the Vedas. The ennobling Brahmanic tradition aims at the collective liberation of mankind and identifies true *moksha* with the non-suffering of the entire society, resulting from the sacred ritualization of the whole of life and the voluntary suffering of individuals. The corrupt way is that of the yogis: anarchical, individualistic, caring only for ecstasy and personal liberation, they force grace by ascesis and forsake every collective discipline in pursuit of orgasmic illumination.

Four other talks round out the volume. William Johnston, S.J., suggests that the organic growth of the great religions now entails learning from one another, as in the fruitful interchange between Zen and Christianity he's involved in. For Lobsang Lhalungpa, the real question is whether people are willing to undergo the rigors of esoteric training; for those that are, he lays out a careful overview of Tibetan Buddhism. Lizelle Reymond gives an elegant, rather enigmatic account of her training in the tradition of Samkhya, an ancient nonreligious approach, she thinks, to the heart of all traditions. And Dom Aelred Graham considers the contemporary meaning of Christian contemplation.

Surprisingly, a common conviction emerges: great care must be taken to communicate the authentic teaching of the traditions in a way that engages the whole person. The traditions can speak to present needs, and we can hear—but only if *all* of us listens.

John Loudon is the Editor of this magazine.

Views from the Real World:

Early Talks of Gurdjieff as Recollected by his Pupils

New York: E.P. Dutton, 1973, 1975. $10.95; paper $3.95.

By Robert Shawfield

Gurdjieff's testament to the world when he died in 1949 was his lengthy allegory *All and Everything*. After that appeared the crypto-factual *Meetings with Remarkable Men*. These books were accompanied by a spate of reminiscences by Gurdjieff's pupils, chief among them Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous* which clarified for the ordinary reader the parabolic writings of the master. But we had to wait for the present work, *Views from the Real World,* a series of talks recollected by his pupils, for a glimpse of Gurdjieff the teacher, at home among disciples. It has to be supposed that these disciples either had remarkable memories or were surreptitiously taking notes, for the book speaks with an authentic voice and seems to put us in touch with the man himself. This voice is as uncompromising as Marpa the Translator's, but like Marpa's, it has an undertone of humanity. It sternly admonishes but at the same time it clearly wishes its hearers well.

The talks enhance the impression which even the layman receives, however dimly, from his writings that the Work, as Gurdjieff called it, or the Fourth Way, is fundamentally a traditional discipline and not, as has often been charged, an invention of Gurdjieff himself. He speaks of "this teaching," "the teaching that is being expounded," not at all as if it were something he were making up as he went along, but

as if in fact "the Fourth Way" referred to the wholeness of all the other ways and was something central to them all.

"The theory of esotericism," he writes, "is that mankind consists of two circles: a large, outer circle, embracing all human beings, and a small circle of instructed and understanding people at the center. Real instruction, which alone can change us, can only come from this circle . . . Every religion points to the existence of a common center of knowledge. In every sacred book knowledge is there, but people do not wish to know it." "All religions, all teachings come from God and speak in the name of God. This does not mean that God actually gave them, but they are connected with one whole and with what we call God."

From such statements, for all his radical approach and the deliberate shocks he provides for listener or reader, it is clear that Gurdjieff was concerned not so much to bring something new to the world as to rediscover that which is old. The Socratic injunction "Know thyself" appears to be the corner-stone of his teaching and these talks, spontaneous, simple and profound, establish, in the Gurdjieffian canon, a way towards this end. In highly idiosyncratic but nevertheless precise terms—"For an exact study an exact language is needed"—the speaker ranges over a wide variety of subjects: the states of human consciousness and the constantly reiterated assumption that man in his present condition is asleep; the centers in man, for which he uses the old metaphor first formulated in the Upanishads of horse, carriage, driver, and passenger; the education of children; objective and subjective art.

The talks are short but each is like a seed and the scope of the mind behind it appears tremendous. Humanists will find it difficult to accept Gurdjieff's fundamental maxim that man is a machine and for the religious his assertion that man is not born with a soul and can only acquire one by prolonged inner work will certainly not be welcome. But it is no good confronting anything issuing from Gurdjieff —book, lecture or sacred dance—with preconceived ideas. One must go to him with an open mind, as his pupils must have done. Such an attitude has its rewards for it opens up perspectives in every direction, from cosmos to microcosmos. Gurdjieff's thought could stretch itself to observe the universe, and since his motto was the old hermetic "as above, so below," he never lost an opportunity of relating the universe to man. He returned constantly to two fundamental laws which, under unpronounceable names, played a large part in *All and Everything*, and which appear again in this book of talks as the Law of Three and the Law of Seven.

These and other aspects of Gurdjieff's thought have been skilfully elaborated by Ouspensky but here they are more simply stated. One catches the human intonation; one hears the teacher addressing the pupil. A talk on what he calls the "formatory apparatus" ends with the simple, homely, helpless phrase "I am tired." Clearly, a man, not a book, is speaking.

Yet there are some passages that contrast oddly with the human tone, and a few that are completely obscure, as if mistranslated, or perhaps more probably mistranscribed; for it must be remembered that this book does not come directly from Gurdjieff himself but through the memory, good as it may have been, of his pupils.

Gurdjieff's universal laws are not known —or it may be one should say not yet known —to modern science, nor does modern psychology take into account his assertion that "every man has two completely separate parts in him—Essence and Personality"; modern behaviorism leaves no room for his exercises of "self-observation" and "self-remembering"; the average man in the midst of his loving-and-hating knows nothing of Gurdjieff's pronouncements on love; the average priest would never accept his statement that "there were Christians long before the advent of Christianity." Nevertheless, the ideas of Gurdjieff are to be found nowadays in every religious manual. Though dead, he is, for an ever-increasing number of people, a living guru.

Views from the Real World, at once rigorous and compassionate, with all its prescriptions for making men into Man, is an excellent introduction to an important teaching.

Robert Shawfield is a philosopher and free-lance writer.

Teachings from the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy

Edited by Dennis Tedlock and Barbara Tedlock. New York: Liveright, 1975. Pp. xxiv + 229. $9.95.

By Sam D. Gill

Given the hundreds of American Indian tribes and the thousands upon thousands of documents which describe and interpret their cultures, it is no easy task to present the religion and philosophy of *the* American Indian. That must presuppose some commonness among widely diverse peoples and that this commonness can be understood and presented to Indian and non-Indian alike. Dennis and Barbara Tedlock have approached this difficult task by presenting two groups of essays collected largely from classic ethnographic and linguistic monographs.

The first group of essays, which is entitled "Seeing and Curing," demonstrates the common occurrence among Indian religions of the vision experience and describes several of the contexts in which it can be found. A prominent example shows that in the shamanic techniques of ecstasy, through which an individual can experience a vision, the power to cure is obtained. The selections are primarily aimed at describing the observable or recorded phenomena. Some are presented in the words of Indians describing their experiences or practices to the outsider. All are descriptions of a particular phenomenon in a particular tribe, except the article by Barbara Tedlock which is published for the first time in this book. It is a compilation and comparison of the appearances of clowns in widely diverse Indian cultures. It breaks with the style of the other articles, but presents a meaningful interpretation of the religious or sacred clowns.

The second half of the book, entitled "Thinking About the World," presents selections which attempt to reveal the structure of the native mind, to make explicit the ideologies and systems of thought which underlie Indian religion. The selections reveal native thought through an examination of language, mythology, ritual, and statements of explanation intended for the non-Indian world. This section

clearly demonstrates a number of ways in which certain Indian tribes think and how these differ from the ways of thinking common to people of European descent. Dennis Tedlock, in an article first appearing in this book, writes of the Zuni beliefs related to death, based on a careful and reflective analysis of the thoughts and actions which he observed surrounding the death of a member of a Zuni family he knew. Radin's patent effort to find monotheism among native American religions is perhaps out of place in this book, for it not only reflects a long dismissed era in the study of religion, but is inconsistent with the general criteria of selection by the editors.

As a sampler of the rich materials available on selected themes in native American religion and philosophy, the book is an important contribution to the general reader or to the classroom. Certainly many other themes could be treated in like fashion to make more complete the sampling. The broad range of materials selected produces an unevenness which could have been smoothed by a brief introduction to each article so that the reader could further benefit from knowing the position of the author and the critical history of the article.

The editors' introduction serves to summarize thematically the contents of the book and concludes with a discussion of how to obtain an understanding of the religion and philosophy of the American Indians. They argue that native Americans have a kind of "double vision" which allows them to see in dimensions now lost from the perceptive mechanisms of non-Indian Americans. The editors write, "The way to his [the American Indian's] understanding is not found with the road maps of the measurable world." They follow this by a poetic (in Indian style?) attempt to demonstrate how one must penetrate seemingly impossible passages to gain this understanding. The publisher advertises the book by quoting this poetic expression on the book jacket, but this is really quite far from reflecting the contents of the book they have put together. Certainly many of the non-Indian authors of selected articles were persistent in obtaining an understanding of Indians in the face of difficult situations, but, in the end, the understanding is not a result of some effort at empathy or mystical technique of "seeing." American Indian religion is presented in this book as seen through the eyes and methods of the scholar trained in the techniques of measuring and interpreting the rituals, the language, and the oral literature of the native Americans.

Since half of the book is about visions in which Indians gain knowledge during journeys to the sky (or into the sea) and the other half is about the shape of the Indian mind, it appears that a more accurate title would be "Teachings from the American *Indian*," for it is from these first Americans that we have so much to learn. In that task, this book may serve as a chapter in a respectable primer.

Sam D. Gill, a specialist in Native American traditions, teaches in the Religious Studies Program at Arizona State University.

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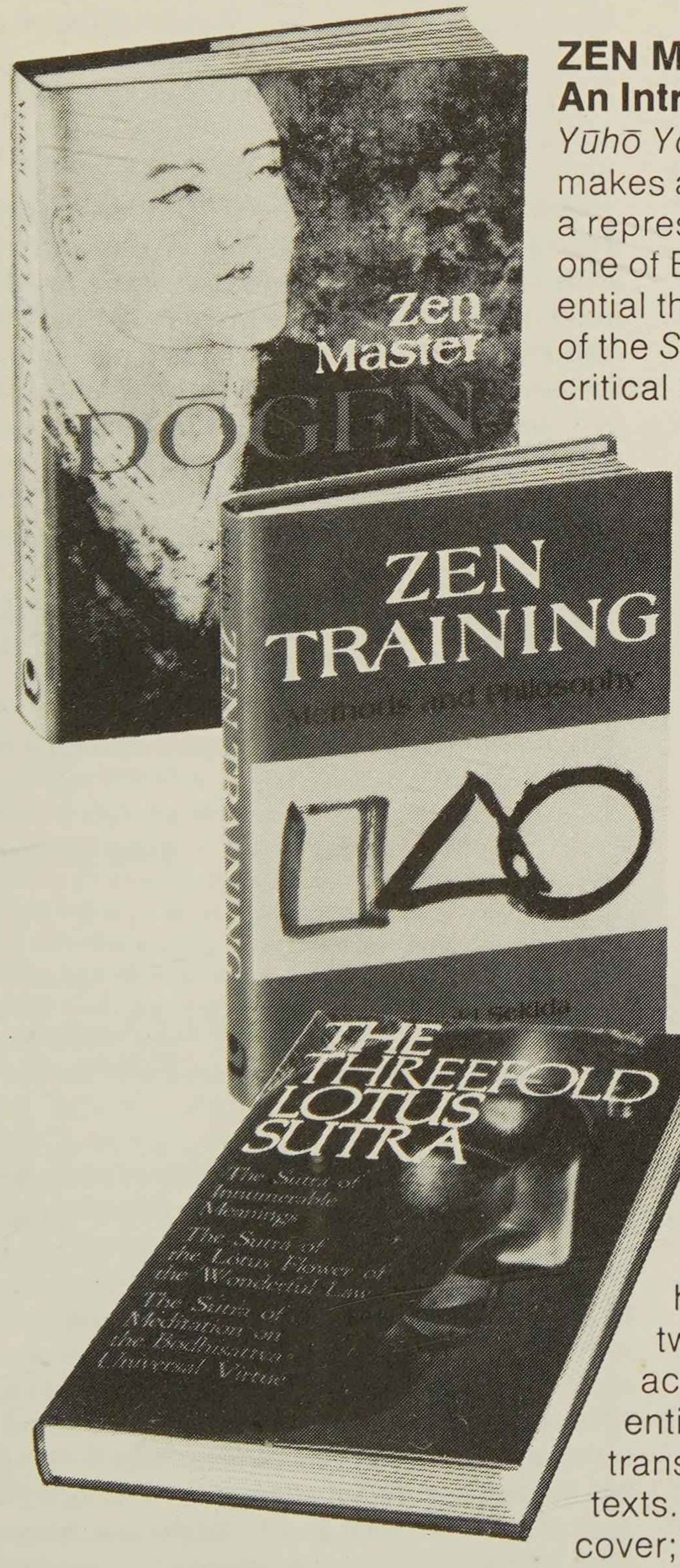

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NOTICES

The Sound of the One Hand: Two Hundred Eighty-One Zen Koans and Answers

Translated, with a Commentary by Yoel Hoffmann. Foreword by Zen Master Hirano Sōjō. Introduction by Ben-Ami Scharfstein. New York: Basic Books, 1975. Pp. xii + 322. $10.00; paper $4.95.

The translation of this remarkable book may well be a momentous occasion in the study of Zen and could arouse considerable controversy. In any case, there's an element of devilish delight in discovering an underground book condemned by masters in a religious tradition as antinomian as Zen. Virtually unknown since its quick and readily understandable suppression sixty years ago (though photocopies of the 1916 text have recently surfaced in Japan to the alarm of many Zen masters), it contains a disaffected monk's revelation of the koans and their answers as secretly transmitted from master to pupil in the Rinzai sect since the origination of the koan-teaching system in the eighteenth century. It provides a unique access to the meaning of the koans and their function in Zen training. The koans' true import, of course, is disclosed only through the discipline of the training itself, and as esoteric knowledge, the text remains, even in English, a fascinating foreign language to be pondered with reverence, wonder, and a good measure of rational despair.

Certainly, divulging the official answers to the classic questions does not give the game away, but it does give outsiders some insight into how it is played. The mystery of how the responses meet the master's challenge, and thereby bring enlightenment, abides and may even be enhanced for those discerning enough to find here more than back-of-the-book answers to famous puzzles. Still one can't help wondering what benefit—and perhaps more to the point, what detriment—this book could be to the serious aspirant to Zen practice. Curiously enough, what makes fascinating reading for the casual student and professional scholar may hinder the progress of the Zen novice. At least *nirvana—the* answer—can't be captured in printer's ink.

John Loudon

What is Sufism?

By Martin Lings. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975. Pp. 131. $8.95; paper $2.95.

Having been engaged for some years in the task of introducing students to the complexities of the Islamic tradition, I have frequently lamented the seeming dearth of sensitive interpretive works in English. It has been the case especially in regard to Sufism, the mystical movement in Islam, that one has had little to choose aside from reasonably arid historical surveys and translations of texts. Martin Lings has made a significant attempt to introduce the area of Sufism in such a way that the uninitiated (into either the particularities of Muslim tradition or the higher circles of mysticism) can appreciate—perhaps even begin to understand—what have been and are the distinguishing characteristics of Sufism.

Lings is thorough and clear in his consistent

effort to place Sufism in the context of the whole of Islam; rather than a particular movement, one among many, Sufism is viewed as the understanding and expression of the deeper, esoteric dimension of Islam as a whole. Ahistorical in approach, the book takes the reader through an examination of the basic doctrines of orthodox Islam, illustrating the mystical interpretation of these articles of faith as the truly animating principle of understanding.

The response to the question posed by the title, *What is Sufism?*, stresses the universality of Islamic mysticism at the expense of much examination of its particularities. To the extent that the reader recognizes it as *an* interpretation, albeit an articulate, emotive, and deeply sensitive one, the book is a significant contribution to the store of introductory materials on Islam.

Jane I. Smith

Modern Fantasy: Five Studies

By C. N. Manlove. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1975. Pp. viii + 308. $18.95.

Manlove's five central chapters deal with Charles Kingsley *(The Water-Babies)*, George MacDonald, C.S. Lewis *(Perelandra)*, J.R.R. Tolkien *(The Lord of the Rings)*, and Mervyn Peake (The "Titus" Trilogy). Each chapter provides a brief biographical sketch of the author, a discussion of his aesthetic and/or theological ideals, and a literary analysis. The analysis derives from a careful reading of the text and considers such things as consistency of motive, point of view, and relationship of theme to plot. Occasionally Manlove appears to contradict himself, but most of the time he is quite illuminating. He is perhaps best in discussing the power and presence of evil and unsatisfactorily realized good in Tolkien's trilogy. Manlove expects perfection from the writers he discusses, and at times his skillful dissection and reasoning lead him to more negative judgments of their works than the imperfections he correctly

points out warrant.

He is less successful in his second purpose, "an assessment of the genre," but even here he is helpful in defining it. A fantasy, he says, is a "fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of the supernatural with which the mortal characters in the story or the readers become . . . at least partly familiar. . . ." His introduction distinguishes fantasy from science fiction, Gothic tales, Arthurian romance, classical epics, and ghost and horror stories. He fails, however, to discuss the relationship of fantasy to fairy tale, and his four-page conclusion needs more detailed analysis of what he deems the failure of modern fantasy (due to authorial distance and disbelief in the possibility of the fantasy world) and the success of classical fantasies. Manlove ought to consider more carefully too how his definition applies to pre-Romantic fantasy. Still he is to be congratulated for attempting to say in a lucid way just what fantasy is and should be.

Carolyn M. Craft

Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual.

By Victor Turner. Symbol, Myth and Ritual Series. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975. Pp. 354. $17.50; paper $4.95.

Confronted with the mute fullness of a ritual gesture, most of us would hardly know where to start our effort at understanding. But when a brilliant anthropologist of religion like Victor Turner attempts to explicate ritual action, amazing depths of meaning are disclosed. In fact, his pathfinding researches among the Ndembu of Zambia not only revealed to him surprising richness of symbolic structure in the simplest cultic rites, but led this previously agnostic social scientist to a recognition of transcendental realities in Western and Asian religions.

This volume brings together with a new introduction two of Turner's earliest short monographs on Ndembu religion, which contain the first formulations of the methods and insights that have made him a leader in the contemporary understanding of religion. Origi-

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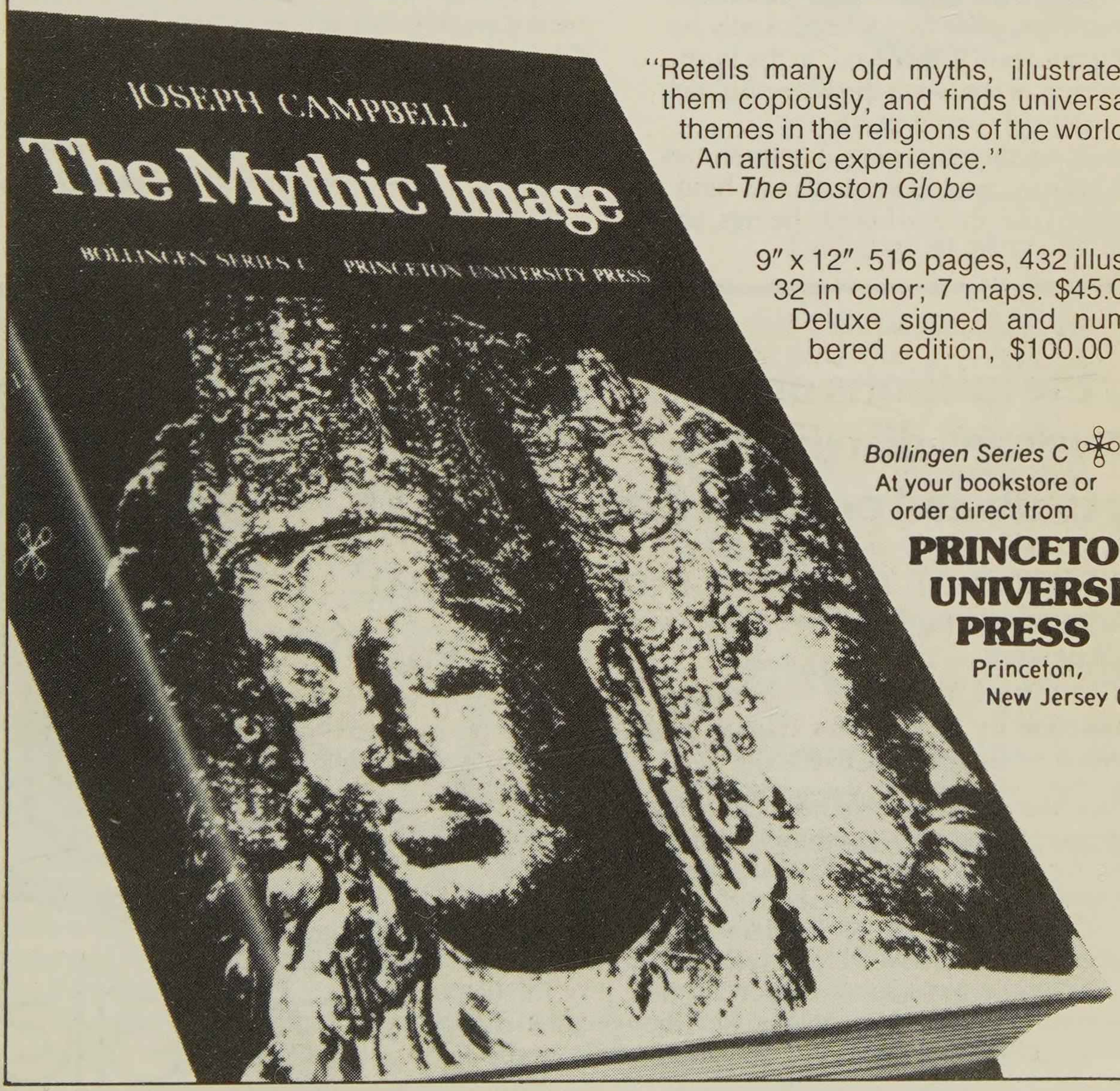

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nally for specialists, the essays abound in tedious detail. But they deal with one of the most crushing questions of human existence: how are we to find meaning in suffering and evil? The Ndembu, Turner insists, find the full resolution of this problem in rituals of transcendence, and in a radical cultic opposition to ordinary structured life that is reminiscent of (though not indebted to) Christianity. Kavula, patron of the Chihamba cult and form of the Supreme Being, suffers death and mystical resurrection in the process of the flow of his "white spirit" into cult participants: the sick are healed and all are united in the undifferentiated, equalizing divine "liminality" that underlies structure but is outside of it. This undifferentiated cultic "communitas" Turner contrasts to the non-philosophical divinatory identification of witches at funeral inquests. Such divination serves only to bring to light the hidden strains in the social system, the hatreds and jealousies that fester in the human heart. Supposedly no deeper religious level is involved; in the burning or expulsion of the witch the Ndembu seek a merely structural, social purity.

In the course of the discussion, Turner shows in a really brilliant way how ritual acts bind together natural objects and human beings, social ideas, religious insights, sensory perception and desires into integral experiences.

However, questions remain. The "liminal" as the formless divine power at the source of things may transcend structure, but as soon as it enters cultic enactment surely it takes on form and purpose? Witches, for example, are everywhere in Africa viewed as embodiments of negative liminality, creatures of anti-structure though not without perverted forms of their own, while diviners are liminal defenders of structure. Similarly, Turner's detailed discussion permits us to observe that the Chihamba cult is obviously structured hierarchically despite the feeling of common spirit and "communitas" in it. Communitas and social structure are not opposites, nor are liminality and form, especially in such earthy spiritualities as Africa's. Western spirit-flesh polarities in their various versions hardly apply even to Western religions, let alone others, as Turner's more recent work is beginning to point out (e.g., *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors,* 1974). As Turner shows, there is a great deal on this fundamental issue we can learn from the Ndembu.

Evan M. Zuesse

The Meddling Gods: Four Essays on Classical Themes

By Hazel Barnes. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974. Pp. 141. $8.50.

Greek mythology, literature, and religion were closely interrelated. Ancient beliefs in an interplay between the natural and supernatural worlds were the legacy of Hesiod and Homer as well as of the great Classical dramatists. In his own works, each poet, like each dramatist, reshaped the great mythos of the oral traditions that told of the influence of gods and demons on the lives of men. The literary forms of four such mythological themes and their multiple meanings to us in the Western world are the twin links between Professor Barnes' provocative, critical essays. In the first, she sees the Gorgon, a deadly monster whose glance turned victims to stone, as having originated in long-lost primitive rites of aversion to frighten off the powers of evil. Over centuries of transmission, the Gorgon's evil eye evolved into a symbol of the potential menace to one's very being that is always posed by "Other," Sartre's term to differentiate the self in its uniqueness from the world of persons beyond the self. Professor Barnes, well known as a Sartean existentialist as well as a Classicist, is predictably unconvinced by psychoanalytical interpretations of myth, and points to weaknesses in Freud's idea that Gorgons are castrating Mother Goddesses. So too, in the title essay, "Homer and the Meddling Gods," Barnes rejects readings of Zeus in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as an evocation of tyrannical fathers and/or puppeteers controlling men's destinies. Choice, freedom, and individual responsibility for ideas and action are characteristics of Homeric Olympians and Homeric heroes alike. Nor are the gods mere physical configurations of psychological motive—divine prompters, as it were, of human behavior. More often their interventions in the human affairs of love and war are occasions for poetic expressions of changeless human questions: Who am I? To whom am I related? What is my purpose? And sometimes, as Barnes shows in "Death and Cocktails," demi-gods like Heracles in Euripides *Alcestis,* or like Sir Harcourt-Reilly, his double in T. S. Eliot's *Cocktail Party,* are divine intermediaries between mundane and spiritual universes. The text synthesizes a burden of scholarship that heretofore has obscured the ways in which man's quests for self identity, for a true commitment to others, are fundamental to the values of Eliot's and Euripides' plays no less than to Plautus' *Amphitryon,* the subject of the final essay in this exceedingly rich and readable book.

Marianne Nichols

The American Search for Soul

By Robert S. Michaelsen. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1975. Pp. xiv + 131. $7.95.

America's Bicentennial has encouraged the publication of a number of books that have tried to take measure of the spiritual pulse of the nation. I can only hope that this small volume by Prof. Michaelsen will not go unnoticed. It is a gem and deserves the attention of a wide public. The work began as the Rockwell Lectures at Rice University, struggling with the idea that the living unity and wholeness (soul) of America must be understood as the result of religious experience.

Many readers will discover for the first time the manner in which the American experience began as a new birth, a twice-born world beyond the edge of the despairing frontiers of Europe. Our history documents the emergence of a consensus of what is essential to believe and right to do. We have always emphasized the need for the experience of an inner conviction as the basis for right living. And so we have all been Puritans, revivalists, and moralists. The soul of the nation is guaranteed so long as experience is sustained.

But how is this experience to be understood? Prof. Michaelsen offers an important distinction between civil righteousness and saving righteousness. He maintains that America has a tradition of recognizing that the *moral* experience that serves as foundation for the soul of the nation (our social faith) is not the same as the *saving* experience that changes and renews human nature in some ultimate sense. We cannot have a civil order without the former, but we invite disorder if we insist on requiring saving conviction as the basis for society. A crisis in soul for our nation is addressed most effectively by those who are able to make this distinction and are constantly open to new opportunities for its application to self-understanding.

Richard E. Wentz

The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial

By Robert N. Bellah. New York: Seabury, 1975. Pp. xvi + 172. $7.95.

America, Bellah contends, has lost her way. Called by Puritan John Winthrop to "abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of our necessities" by establishing a new civil and ecclesiastical commonwealth, we Americans all too soon abandoned virtue and conscience for individualistic self-interest. We abrogated the original covenant with God to worship the bitch-goddess Success, to sanction the expansionist drives of the dominant Anglo-Saxon population, and to damn any move toward socialism in the name of inviolable free enterprise.

Although America's originating covenant is broken today, Bellah finds much of value in America's "civil religion," the interpretation of its historical experience in the light of transcendent reality. We need to recover the puritan consciousness that censures greed, the revolutionary spirit that seeks public happiness, and the millenialist fervor that fuels social reform. But even more than a surge of spirit embodied in the founding myths, there is a need for the birth of new myths out of the recent resurgence of ecstatic reason, myths that strike a new balance between spontaneity and order. Just as church covenant, U.S. constitution, and constitutional amendments have consolidated conversion, revolution, and the lessons of the Civil War, so the authentic gains of the countercultural renewal of religious imagination need to be incorporated into our governing vision, and perhaps give that vision a more socialistic character.

The Broken Covenant is a book of inspiration, written in the "plain style" of the speeches on which it is based and laced with apt quotations from such luminaries as Winthrop, Jefferson, Lincoln, Whitman, and Baldwin. Although Bellah may overemphasize the role of religion in American life and is rather uncritical of the more benign American myths (e.g., that surrounding Lincoln), his book promotes a serious encounter with America's political and religious heritage.

James S. Wolfe

Foresights: Self-Evolution and Survival.

By Gerald Sykes. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975. Pp. xiii & 258. $9.95.

Foresights is conceived as a new design in the literature of philosophy—a "patchwork quilt" weaving together wisdom from men and traditions to comfort us, give us hope, and provide a modicum of personal safety from the dehumanization of technology. The concept deserves applause. Certainly we are in need of efforts to counteract the compartmentalizing of knowledge so that we may live in it, with it—and on more intimate terms. Sykes therefore has won my respect for both his ideal and his goodwill. Unfortunately, I can not commend his style, his tone, or his depth of thought, for *Foresights* has been done too hurriedly.

Sykes's weaving of psychology, philosophy, poetry, and theories of psychosomatic medicine is not an impressive tapestry. He treats ideas as tangents, as disconnected threads too flimsy to compose real fabric. His returns to themes read like forgot-to-mentions rather than effective refrains. Stylistic haste aside, however, it is the armchair tone that most deserves criticism. One has the idea that the author is carrying on a monologue, lecturing us from a position of complacent comfort, sherry glass in hand. This tone has a way of trivializing too much—the Hindu belief in Atman becomes "another patch for our quilt," along with a smug view of "despair" as well as a cursory and patronizing glance at "Women's Lib—Phase Two." We are left with very little idea of where the author is "quarreling with himself" and where he is attempting the serious inquiry he prescribes for all the rest of us. (I remind Mr. Sykes that Athene, his patron goddess for the book, carries a spear as well as a spindle. She demands penetration as well as the broad view attempted in easygoing piecework.)

I therefore recommend *Foresights* to beginners who will mind neither lightness nor pedagogic preachiness, but who are looking for a pleasant, rapid tour through the panoply of humanism and want not much more than bibliography to bring home with them.

Naomi R. Goldenberg

those concerned about the constricted perspective within which much of what passes for the "human sciences" is conducted.

Luther H. Martin

The Unconscious God: Psychotherapy and Theology

By Viktor E. Frankl. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1975. Pp. 161. $6.95.

At a time when American psychology is dominated by clinical and behavioral approaches, Viktor Frankl's "logotherapy" continues to offer a striking alternative. This book, first published in German in 1948, is now offered to an English readership for the first time, together with a relatively long "Postscript 1975: New Research in Logotherapy" and an English bibliography on logotherapy. This volume might function, then, as a brief introduction to Frankl's thought.

His thesis is that there is "a religious sense deeply rooted in each and every man's unconscious depths," which he names "the spiritual unconscious." Following the existential-phenomenological tack charted by Heidegger and Binswanger, he concludes that, given the fluidity between conscious and unconscious, a more meaningful distinction can be drawn between *instinctual* existence, in which an individual is physically and psychically determined, and *spiritual* existence, in which an individual takes responsibility for his own life in an act of decision. Although spiritual phenomena may be either conscious or unconscious, the spiritual basis of human existence, "a latent relation to transcendence inherent in man," remains ultimately unconscious. Frankl does not hesitate to call this "unreflectable" aspect of our being "God."

Throughout Frankl blurs the needed distinction between transcultural phenomenological categories (e.g., "man's religiousness") and tradition-bound theological categories. Thus, this promising dialogue between psychotherapy and religion is marred by the tendency to reduce the religious dimension of human existence to its Western theological expression. Still it is a most provocative little book, and its expansive approach should cheer

The Courage to Create

By Rollo May. New York: W. W. Norton, 1975. Pp. 143. $7.95.

The age-old Western theme of the lone hero is taken up again by Rollo May in this small volume of essays. The contemporary artist works in a chaotic period of transition, and his creativity consists in bringing "something new into being" out of this chaos, in re-forming his world. This courage to bring Being itself to expression is the essence of the creative process; deriving from unrealized potentialities of awareness resident in the unconscious, it issues in a "breakthrough."

But creative potential is limited by a person's encounter with his world. This notion of encounter and limitation seems the book's strongest contribution. Countering claims by the human potential movement about human beings' infinite possibilities, May suggests that limitations such as death, sickness, etc. are a healthy presence in the creative process, indeed that the process itself depends on one's struggle with such limitations. This wrestling with finitude wholly absorbs the creative person and results in a consciousness of form or of fundamental modes of being. Throughout May describes the creative act as the relationship of subject (artist) to object (world): the artist commits himself to the object and it gives itself to him and engages his whole being. It is through this engagement with the limits of one's world that the beauty of form arises. Creativity is thus neither a projection of the artist nor a completely passive receptivity, but a reciprocal process in which subject and object give themselves to each other within set limits.

This powerful sense of the world's intractable otherness and its defining limits is among the new discoveries of our generation, and May sets it forth in a sensitive and readable style which is at times moving.

Walter L. Brenneman, Jr.

Plains Indian Mythology

By Alice Marriott and Carol K. Rachlin. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975. Pp. xii + 194 $7.95.

The title of this book may mislead since the stories it contains range from true myths to personal anecdotes illustrating folklore and Indian culture. The book is, in fact, a very personal collection of oral traditions gathered by the authors themselves, who have published a number of books on Indian mythology.

The thirty stories (plus one group of songs) constitute a sampler drawn from eleven tribes, with a third of the material of Kiowa origin, and the bulk of it, apparently, from female informants. The texts seem to be in the authors' words, although we are told the informants narrated in English; in any case, the frequent snatches of fractured Spanish raise doubts about the care with which the book was composed. An informative introduction prefaces each story (though information is sometimes repeated). The authors could have been more specific about when each story was delivered (some seem to have been told quite recently, others in the 1950s) and provided more details about the informants.

The Foreword furnishes simple definitions of the four categories of narratives into which the book's contents are divided: "mythology," "legendry"—of two types: explanatory and historically-based—and "folklore." The historian of religions and serious student of myth will not be impressed by these definitions. But it would be unfair to judge this book by specialists' standards: it is expressly intended for a popular audience, to be read for "pleasure" and for gaining a "feeling and understanding" for Plains Indian oral literature. Still, one is startled to read that "Plains Indian religion was, generally speaking, pantheistic" and that the first immigration to this hemisphere occurred only 10,000 years ago.

Students of Indian mythology will find nothing new here, but for a novice seeking a brief introduction to this vast field, Marriott and Rachlin's book may be recommended for its sympathetic and delicate re-presentation of a living oral tradition.

Mac Linscott Ricketts

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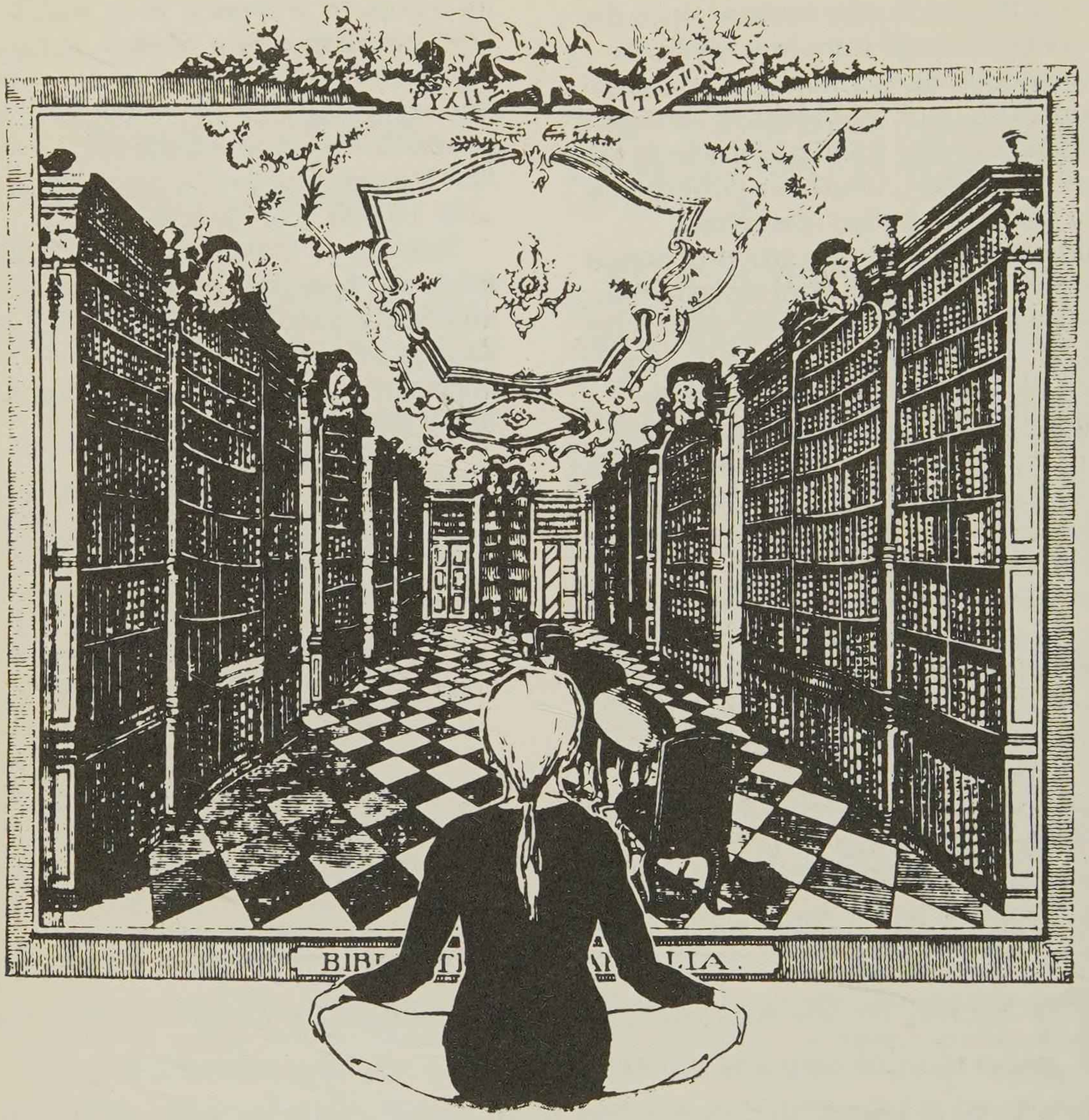

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PROFILES

Robert S. Ellwood, Jr., professor in the School of Religion at the University of Southern California, is an historian of religion, interested especially in the religions of Japan and the new religions in the U.S. His books include: *Religious and Spiritual Groups in America* and *Many People, Many Faiths: An Introduction to the Religious Life of Mankind.*

Christmas Humphreys has written many books on Buddhism, among them *A Western Approach to Zen, Buddhism,* and *Concentration and Meditation.* He lives in London where he is both a judge of the Central Criminal Court and President of the Buddhist Society.

Thomas W. Moore, a recent Ph.D. in religion from Syracuse University, teaches humanistic psychology and does counseling at Glassboro State University. He is particularly interested in the interdisciplinary study of religion, mythology, and psychology.

Barbara G. Myerhoff teaches anthropology at the University of Southern California. A consultant at the Center for the Healing Arts in Los Angeles, she is now working primarily in the area of medical anthropology, especially symbolic healing. She has a new book on ethnicity and aging underway, in connection with Andrus Gerontology Center's project funded by a National Science Foundation grant.

Jacob Needleman is hard at work on a major new book dealing with the contemporary search for the original Christian and Judaic tradition. He is also the editor with Dennis Lewis of the forthcoming book, *On the Way to Self-Knowledge: Sacred Tradition and Psychotherapy,* based—as is the volume reviewed in this issue—on lectures sponsored by the Esalen Institute.

Daniel C. Noel teaches religion, literature, and mythology on the Core Faculty of the Adult Degree Program at Goddard College. The bulk of his articles and reviews deal with the relation of literary language and the interpretation of religion. He is the editor of *Echoes of the Wordless Word* (a tribute to Stanley Hopper) and of *Seeing Castaneda.*

Victor W. Turner, a renowned anthropologist in the realms of ritual and religion, is a member of the University of Chicago's Committee on Social Thought and editor of Cornell's Symbol, Myth, and Ritual Series. This year, as a fellow at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study, he is completing two new books. *The Forest of Symbols* and *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors* are among his earlier publications.