PARABOLA

MYTH AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION
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In this issue:

ANGELUS SILESIUS
by Frederick Franck

EAGLES FLY OVER
by Arthur Amiotte

DISENCHANTMENT
by Sam. D. Gill

OFF-SEASON by Janwillem van de Wetering

A CONVERSATION WITH MIRCEA ELIADE

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FOCUS

We are hearing a great deal these days about Kali yuga and the ending of our era. Fear is as heavy in the atmosphere we breathe as the fumes of our cars and factories; and although human beings have always lived in fear of death, in our times it seems that the race as a whole trembles for fear not only of death but of disintegration and total disappearance. Is this, then, any time to be talking about *intiation,* the mysterious rite which means *beginning*? How could we think about a new beginning when everything seems to be rushing towards dissolution?

But from *Parabola's* point of view, this is exactly the moment to be talking about it. For initiation only arrives at a beginning through an ending that makes a new growth possible. What in the non-initiatic sense seem to be two sides of a contradiction are linked stages of a whole process: dissolution and death must precede a new birth. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Dr. Gill shows us in "Disenchantment" how a child (or a man) must suffer the death of very dear illusions in order to come to another and truer relation with the divine. Inanna must lose her jewels and her robe; a discipleship as it intensifies is stripped of words and symbols. Over and over, the initiation rites show us loss, sacrifice, suffering, and death as the road leading to the door into a transformed life. The moment of revelation, the new birth, has to be won; there is a whole process of training, an education and a discipline, that must prepare the candidate for that testing. When transformation is forgotten, the need to prepare for "that monumental jolt," in the words of Don Juan, is forgotten also. In our day education has ceased to be a preparation for initiation; it has lost its true function of a training for inner maturity by a tempering of the will. Answers are given, information injected, instead of a channel opened to receive knowledge and an instrument prepared to re-express it; usually, as Dr. Franck says in his introduction to the verses of Angelus Silesius, the instrument is spoiled instead of attuned by schooling. But Dr. Eliade warns us in this issue that with the disappearance of the idea of initiation, esotericism also disappears, and with it the true meaning of tradition.

The initiatic process of transformation is a journey of return: a "return to Paradise," to the original home for which some buried memory in man has always longed. "Initiation lies at the core of any genuine human life," Eliade has told us; for it is a re-entrance into creation, a going back to the regenerative source of power from which we came. "Here is my journey's end, and here its start," sings Angelus Silesius; and all that Amiotte can tell us about his vision is that it took him to a place "four generations back." The power and the knowledge is transmitted from the forefathers: Tsóhanoai, the sun-god, gives his sons the weapons to slay the enemy gods after the journey and trials that gained their entrance into his house.

Here we have a hint of another aspect of initiation: as the process must begin long before the great moment of revelation and change, so it must continue afterward; it is the beginning *of something;* the new birth is for a new experience of living. And the next stage again is full of difficulty and trial, and perhaps eventual triumph; it leads to another ending, and so on like the ouroborus, the snake that swallows its own tail in an infinite circle—a continual going forth and a continual returning.

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Is there a road of return for us to the house of our father? Can the prodigal come home? This country has always seemed proud of being an orphan, proud of its independence of its ancestors. Yet as Stephen of Hungary said, "without a past, a nation has no future"; and perhaps our present fear and uncertainty show that a 200-year history is not long enough to make a future we can feel sure of. Perhaps we begin to find that it is not so wonderful after all to be traditionless; perhaps we begin to look a little more humbly toward what was there before our beginnings. We need the power it could still transmit. It would be a comfort if we could look back far enough to glimpse a Wiracocha to point the way, to herald the birth of a new sun.

Yet whatever our unfaithfulness to them or our lack of respect, we have all had forefathers; no more than other people do we need to date our arrival on earth. The true past of this country (if not of this nation) is in the traditions of a people whose past is far longer than the one we claim. It is to the ancestors now of all our many tribes that we need to turn—not to try vainly to turn back the clock, not to imitate the past, but to change: to change "totally," into "beings who will never be the same again," in Dr. Eliade's words, having received the power to endure, the wisdom to know, and the weapons to slay the alien gods.

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SPRING 1976

D. M. Dooling

PARABOLA

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FULL CIRCLE:
A READERS' FORUM

Christmas Humphreys' article on law and justice, in *Parabola's* second issue, was full of new insights. His detailed exploration of karma as reward/retribution led me to look again at the conditions of daily life for hidden clues about what the specific task actually is. It also opened a question about the impartial beneficence of higher law, because each difficulty one encounters is at the same time an opportunity that exactly corresponds. One is perpetually circumscribed, it seems, by outer and inner conditions, limitations. It seems also that each limit or threshold is there to be sniffed out, known, and pressed against. To the extent that one is distracted from or avoids this search, or quarrels with one's life, one is further circumscribed; to the extent that conditions are accepted and actively agreed to as a field of study, they recede, or are surpassed, or become transformed into new conditions, new openings to freedom. It is this aspect of law that is most interesting and it seems to me needs to be understood better and more practically. It's man who wears the blindfold, not Justice.

Michael Donner
New York City

May I suggest that one area of debate that *Parabola* might well seek to push forward—as it does with the Humphreys article and, in part, in the Campbell interview—is the question of whether religion and morality are necessarily and/or healthily intertwined.

It seems to my not-well-informed mind that early Western pagan practices were not much concerned with morality as we know it, but with the ritual necessary to ensure crop growth or other processes of nature. I have the distinct impression that the union of religion and ethics—the so-called "Dawn of Conscience"—marked a sharp change in the nature of both. It might be argued that this union was not necessary, was an invalid use of divine authority to fulfill secular needs, and worked to the detriment of both religious understanding and functional community behavior. Is there any authority for making such an argument?

I just have this hunch that the genuinely religious is both celebratory and amoral. Naive? That may be what a degree in theology from Harvard Divinity School does to some people. Let me put it as a good scholar should: In our quest for meaning, must we assume that the object of our quest will be good and true and beautiful in human terms?

George E. Delury
New York, N.Y.

I think that the magazine is more esoteric than I had expected or wished. Like many of your readers (I presume), I have been engaged in teaching "myth" to students, specifically in Introduction to Scripture. Myth and the history of Israel form the core around which I build my subsequent series of courses in the Bible.

I have picked up much of my grasp of myth simply from personal reading—of Eliade and Campbell; of the tangential material (studies of modern fantasy and theological fiction, such as that of C. S. Lewis) that is background for my own students, who read Tolkien and the like; and of the relatively modern myths of the Navajos. But I have come to a point where I assume certain underlying and profound myths are constantly percolating within our culture: the Horatio Alger myth of Nixon, the homespun Lincoln myth of so many politicians, the violence myth expressed so similarly in *Jaws* and the clash of Tiamat and Marduk (the story gets retold each generation).

I abhor pure "relevancy" as much as anybody with any feel for mythic depth. But there are the other shallows—of pedantry and esoteric obscurantism. I somehow get the feeling that your articles are out of contact with the "real" myths. They seem to have reached some third or fourth level of abstraction in which the author is writing in the realm of pure concepts and not for an audience of living people.

A complete diet of "relevancy" is vapid, but so is the other extreme. So I suggest that you continue the actual "myths" and the conversations with scholars, the articles on primitive religions and the esoteric, but also include serious studies of the myths embedded in American daily life, particularly among the storytellers of popular culture. Perhaps the most dramatic example of such popular mythmaking is what has happened in comic books. Stan Lee came

along a few years ago and turned stupid heroes into identifiable mythic heroes. Superman and Gilgamesh started bearing strong resemblances; Captain America and Hawk (two friends of odd emotional linkage—the white and the black) began to show us again Gilgamesh and Enkidu—the sophisticate and the outsider, the tensioned pair whose separation causes quest, whose lives are lives of struggle with horrendous enemies and mysterious discoveries, etc.

I wonder if there are others who see these patterns in popular culture and realize that our younger generation (like all those academically studied ones) is getting a diet of meaningful stories from a small "creative minority" of bards unrecognized by the "elders" of tradition.

In short, I grow exasperated that the root of your quest is (solely) analytical, so that you see "myth" as out there—parted from us. And you thus create a monstrous impossibility of questing for meaning outside oneself, suggesting that "meaning" lies in Hindu myths (or whatever) or else does not exist —which is quite true IF you continue that separation of myth and contemporary life.

Joris Heise
Cheverly, Md.

Joseph Campbell's view of "Ethnic" and "Universal" religions is interesting, as is the evident antipathy to Judaism and inclusion of it in the category of racial or ethnic religion. It is especially striking, because at the end of his *Flight of the Wild Gander*, as in various places in other writings, he is explicit in his view that Indo-European (Aryan) racial spirituality is far superior to all others, whether East or West.

However, Judaism is a universal religion, which first invented the idea of conversion, and which is today composed of adherents from all the major races of mankind. For a detailed and scientific discussion of this subject, see R. Patai and L. Wing, *The Myth of the Jewish Race*.

Evan M. Zuesse
Cleveland, Oh.

I would like to bring to your attention a note, entitled "Myths: A Brief Exploration," that appeared in *MANAS*. The author writes:

"The increasing popularity of the idea of myths as the keys to larger human meanings makes an inquiry into their function in thought of considerable importance. Hardly any general term is more loosely applied than myth, yet the word's implications are so capacious that this does not seem a serious abuse. What were once called legends, allegories, parables, complex metaphors, and symbolic personifications are now all spoken of as "myths." Myths seem always to be in some sense "explanations." They have to do with how things and people may be improved. They deal with "becoming," and with the motives behind acts of becoming. They describe the obstacles and barriers to becoming. They might be said to provide a simple, 'illustrated' psycho-dynamics. It is now often maintained that whatever conception of ends and means a man lives by can be called a myth, since almost invariably what he regards as his *knowledge* has so many gaps in it that it really does not serve as a basis for action. A man bridges the gaps in his knowledge by a synthesizing myth.

Just for the purpose of discussion, let us divide myths into two kinds—the myths of origin and the myths of transformation. The myths of origin tell about how the world came into being and how man appeared.

The other sort of myths are myths of transformation—of regeneration and change. The origin myths are usually about the gods, while the transformation myths are about godlike heroes. The hero, about whom Ortega has written so movingly in his *Meditations on Quixote,* is one who sets out to change the world; and to do this he may first have to change himself. This sort of hero is a rebel who is determined to reform the established order.

A great myth, then, or a marvelously controlled symbol, is like a scientific hypothesis—we may find it appealing or reasonable but still not *know* it. Not knowing it—although believing it, or in it—the myth or the theory may sometimes be used as a tool for our manipulation, as well as by ourselves as a platform for inquiry, or as the design of an experiment.

Myths anon save and anon damn, since they may be structures with openings allowing for innovation and growth, or they may be closed systems which forbid originality and rely on conformity and mediocrity for the maintenance of 'order.'"

For my part, while I am aware that we pretty much live by myth, I think it is imperative that we distinguish between myths that transform our life and those that confine us to a closed box of ignorance. Our contemporary intellectual tools enable us to put a dramatically different interpretation on many of what were mysteries of life that could only resort to myths for explanation. I respect the genius of the past, but do not feel impelled to worship its creations.

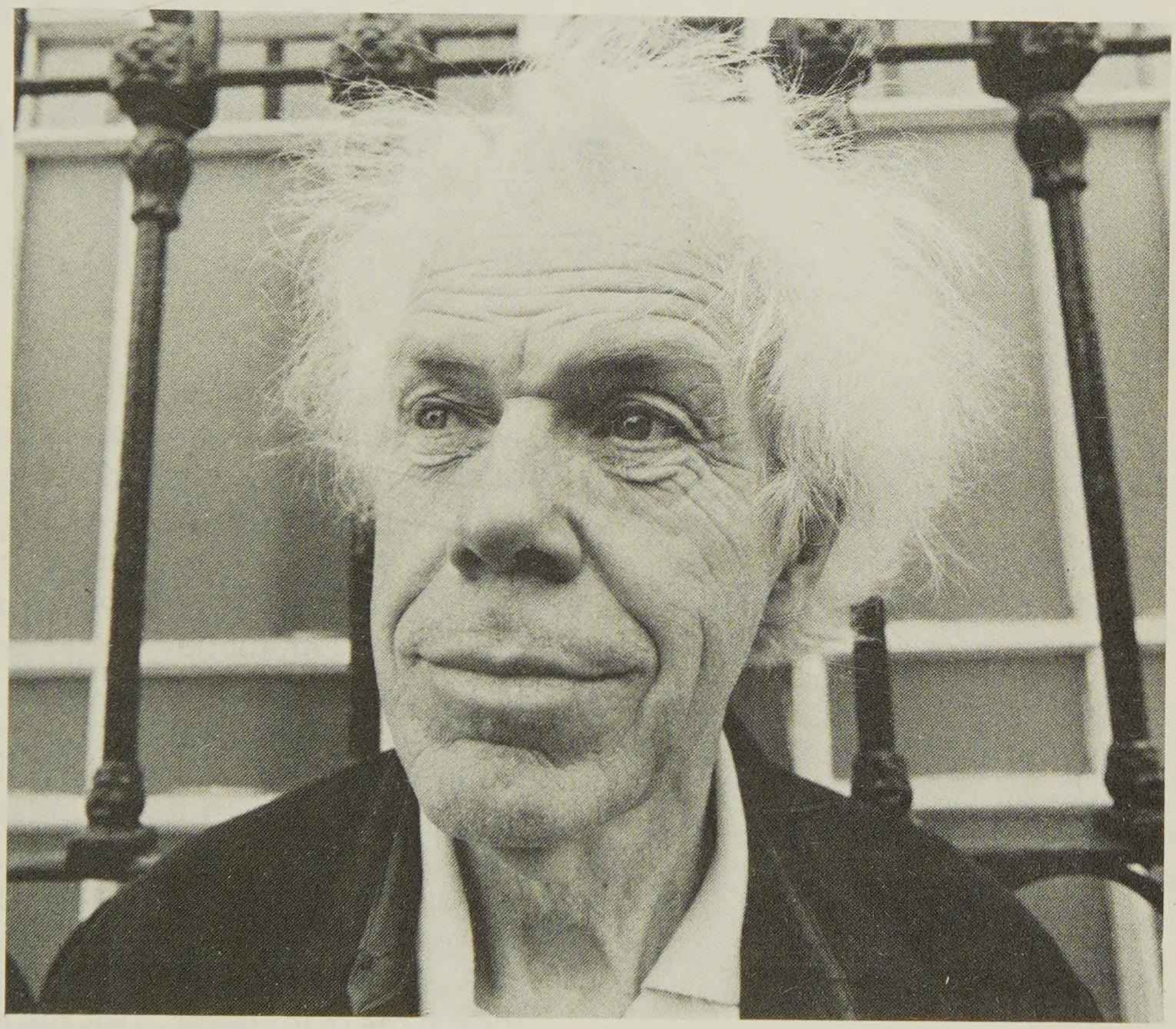
George S. Carlton
Lenoir, N.C.

In response to the riddle at the close of the first of the "Tales of a Demon" (*Parabola* 1:2, Spring 1976):

It was Prince Vajramukuta's fault. He set out for the "glory" of hunting lions, and ended up gathering the "shame" of his in-laws' neglectful and unconsidered death. (As comes the jewel in the fruit, so goes the demon in the corpse).

Reed Fellars
Skokie, Ill.

This answer, our resident storyteller advises us, is very much in the right thought line. For the traditional solution, see this issue's 'Tale.'



As this issue of Parabola goes to press, Minor White, great teacher, great photographer, great friend, and co-founder of this magazine, went away from us and our concerns via that mysterious exit door from the house of life which lies at the end of all our corridors. During his life he taught hundreds of people to look, and some to see, with more than their physical eyes, and he continued this teaching to the very moment of his death.

Besides photography, he had a genius for people; each one he knew felt that *his* relationship with Minor was important, special, and the only one of its kind; and every one was right.

His body is buried in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, but no one who knew him will believe that that is where he stopped.

As he used to end his letters: Many blessings.

Disenchantment

by Sam D. Gill

For modern man in his complex secular world, religion has faded as an integral elemen of everyday life. Removed to the fringes of life religion is allowed to play a central role only in time of crisis—a grave illness or death. But throughout history, religion has celebrated the tasks of a working day, the seasonal unfoldin of the year, and the plateaus of personal development. When it marks these day-to-day experiences, religion pervades life and gives it meaning, but when the mundane events of human existence are no longer celebrated through regular and formal ritual, much of the power of religion is lost.

A vital religious life commonly begins with a formal rite of initiation. This rite is crucial, for it awakens in the individual the special character of religious life and spurs him to involvement in activities which nurture continual religious development. Rituals of initiation generally follow a pattern of symbolic death and rebirth, as Arnold van Gennep and Mircea Eliade have shown. Childhood and all its associations die for the initiate, and he is reborn into his adulthood having to accept both the privileges and responsibilities of this new life. In these rites the initiate is transformed into a new person—from a child into an adult, from a novice into an adept. Moreover, Eliade has demonstrated that the fundamental purpose of the religious initiation—the revelation of the sacred—is accomplished through this initiatic pattern. The special knowledge of the sacred is what distin-



Hopi Kachina Dance

guishes the initiated.

But occasionally these rites, which should germinate relationships with the holy, focus upon the intentional destruction or defamation of sacred objects in the presence of the initiates. It would seem in these cases that the symbolic blow of death is dealt to the gods or the sacred rather than to the initiates. How can an initiation be meaningful if its ritual process desecrates or defames the objects that reveal the sacred? The enigma is darkened by the fact that the adepts of the society often go to great lengths to deceive the initiates, to set them up for the disillusionment they will suffer. Occasionally these acts of chicanery are carried out with such hilarity that the success of the deception is threatened. The whole business of religious initiation, when conducted in this way, takes on the appearance of little more than a cruel joke, a miserable hoax. Such patent deception seems to negate the essential task of the rite: instead of revealing to the initiate a compelling sacred reality, the revered objects are defamed in his presence. Since the dire religious implications of such a conclusion are abhorrent to me, I am faced with the task of uncovering what must be going on beneath this perplexing surface. Upon examining several examples of this process, from widely diverse regions of the world, we may be able to see something of how these rude surface phenomena play an essential and profound role in initiation.

Africa: the Killing of Kavula

A striking example of the defamation of sacred objects in the initiatory process occurs in the rites of initiation into one of the healing cults of the Ndembu of Africa. As we would expect, the revelation of the nature of *Kavula,* the spirit of the healing cult, is an essential part of the initiation. But the process by which the initiates learn of *Kavula* is startling. The adepts prepare a frame made of sticks covered with a white blanket to represent the divinity. It is called *isoli*. One of the initiated hides beneath the blanket to play the part of *Kavula*. The initiates are chased by the adepts, caught, interrogated with unanswerable questions, taunted for being unable to supply appropriate answers, and eventually led to the *isoli*. The initiates are instructed regarding the formal procedure of greeting *Kavula*. When they address the spirit in the *isoli,* its voice returns their greeting. The initiates approach the structure, and when instructed to kill *Kavula,* they beat the object with the butts of their rattles. With each blow, *"Kavula"* shakes convulsively, as if dying. The initiates are then led back to the village. When they enter it an adept takes a



The adepts view *Kavula*

firebrand, strikes it violently on the ground and cries out, "He is dead!" And after a brief closing oration the initiation is concluded.

Victor Turner, who reported these events, elicited comment on the "killing of *Kavula*" from the Ndembu people. Muchona, a very knowledgeable old man, said, "*Kavula* is killed to frighten the candidate. For he believes he is really killing *Kavula*. He has been instructed by the adepts that 'If you see the spirit of *Kavula*, you must consider this is a spirit which helps people.'. . . The adepts are just deceiving the candidates at *isoli*." One of the female initiates told Turner that it was "*Kavula*'s back that we saw in *isoli*. When *Kavula* was killed the spirit flew away into the sky, not to *Nzambi* (the High God), but 'into the wind.' It could come again."

In this initiation rite, the adepts use techniques of deception to build an illusion, a fictitious conception of reality, for the initiates. Bringing the initiates into *Kavula*'s sacred presence, they confuse them with unanswerable questions, tell them to kill the very spirit that is to be revealed to them, and assure them at the conclusion of the rite that "he is dead." Once the rites are over, the initiates are even shown the construction of the *isoli*. The illusion is disclosed; the enchantment with *isoli* broken. *Kavula,* as presented to them, is shown to be nothing but a blanket-covered framework of sticks. Remarkably, however, the initiate demonstrates in her comments on the event that she discovered in it something of the mysterious nature of *Kavula*. She has come to realize that *Kavula* is not limited to his appearance in the *isoli,* but is something more. Somehow in the process she gained the knowledge that *Kavula* is a spirit that flew "into the wind" and can come back, or perhaps as Muchona told Turner, "*Kavula* takes all powers." It is through the creation of an illusion that is subsequently shattered by a dramatic and powerful act of disenchantment that the revelation of the spiritual nature of the sacred is effected.[1]

North America: the Unmasked Kachinas

In a comparable fashion, Hopi children are initiated into the *kachina* cult which signals the start of their formal participation in religious activities. Prior to the age of initiation, the children are very carefully protected from seeing *kachina* figures without their masks or seeing the masks when not being worn. The children are led to believe that the *kachinas* visit the village at certain intervals through the year, and they come to expect gifts from them. During the

kachina cult initiation rites the children are frightened by the ogre *kachinas;* they are entertained by numerous *kachina* dances; they come into close contact with a great many *kachinas;* they may even be whipped by the *kachinas;* and they are told secret stories about the origin of the *kachinas*. But the most lasting impression comes during the last night of the ceremony. The children are taken into a *kiva* to await a *kachina* dance—a now familiar event. They hear the *kachinas* calling as they approach the *kiva*. They witness the invitation extended from within the *kiva* for the dancing gods to enter. But to the children's amazement, the *kachinas* enter without masks, and for the first time in their lives, the initiates discover that the *kachinas* are actually members of their own village impersonating the gods.

Dorothy Eggan found that this revelation distresses the children and that most Hopi recall it as a traumatic and disorienting experience. She selected the following comment as representative:

> *I cried and cried into my sheepskin that night, feeling I had been made a fool of. How could I ever watch the Kachinas dance again? I hated my parents and thought I could never believe the old folks again, wondering if Gods had ever danced for the Hopi as they said and if people really lived after death. I hated to see the other children fooled and felt mad when they said I was a big girl now and should act like one. But I was afraid to tell the others the truth for they might whip me to death. I know now it was best and the only way to teach the children, but it took me a long time to know that.*[2]

The Hopi children, unlike the Ndembu initiates, are not a party to a ritual killing of the gods, but the effect is much the same. For observing the unmasked *kachinas* produces within the children the sense that the *kachinas,* as they had so fondly known them, are dead. Once disenchanted with the masked figures, the children can never feel the same about the *kachina* figures or the things they had been taught about them. Yet it is clear there is more to the initiation than revealing to the children that "the *kachinas* are not real gods, but merely masked impersonations of them," as the rite has commonly been interpreted, for Eggan's informant indicated that she realized the value of the technique in teaching children, and surely she means more than simply disclosing the masked nature of the *kachinas*.

This initiatory process begins with the careful nurturing of a naively realistic perspective in the children. They are encouraged to be enchanted by surface appearances. They are led to believe that the *kachinas* are nothing more or less than what they appear in material form to be. This "education" into a simplistic, one-dimensional world view sets them up for the shock of disenchantment which is experienced at the conclusion of the rites. It cultivates their childish outlook into a ripe fruit ready for plucking.

With the unmasking of the *kachinas* the naiveté of the children is shattered all at once and forever. The existence of the *kachinas,* the nature of one's own destiny, the trust in parents and elders, and the very shape of reality itself are all, in a flash, brought into radical question. The children can either accept the world as bereft of meaning, with Hopi religion a sham, or find some deeper sense in the ceremonies and objects which had come to mean so much to them. Necessarily, they begin their religious life in a state of serious reflection and in quest of an understanding of the sacred profound enough to sustain their new life. There is tremendous incentive for the children to listen even more carefully to the stories of the old people and to participate in the ceremonies with a new seriousness.

Australia: the Broken Bullroarers

Once again the process of disenchantment can be seen at work in the initiation rites of the Wiradthuri tribes of Australia. The occasion is the initiation of boys into manhood. The rites are loaded with chicanery. The boys are frequently commanded to walk with their eyes fixed on their feet so that they may not observe the staging of the trickery. A principal focus of the several rites rests upon the revelation of the



Kachina Dance

nature of the spirit *Dhuramoolan*. Frequently the boys are told that *Dhuramoolan* is coming near and are advised to listen for his approaching voice. They hear a whirring noise that grows louder and louder, but they do not know that the sound is being made by men whirling bullroarers. At a critical juncture in the rites, the boys are covered with blankets and told that *Dhuramoolan* is coming and that he may eat them. With bullroarers roaring close by, the elders reach under each blanket and with hammer and chisel they knock out an incisor tooth of each boy. The boys think the spirit is taking their teeth, while sparing their lives.

Again an illusion of the nature of the sacred is prepared, and it is fully accepted by the initiates. And once again the initiation culminates in disenchantment. On the last day the boys are covered with blankets and a crackling fire is built. The bullroarers are whirled nearby, and the boys are told that *Dhuramoolan* is going to burn them. When the boys appear sufficiently frightened, the blankets are removed from their heads, and they see for the first time the men whirling the bullroarers and learn that this artificial noisemaking is what they've taken to be the voice of *Dhuramoolan*. Pointing to these men, the head man says, "There he is! That is *Dhuramoolan,*" and he explains to the boys how the noise is made by whirling flat pieces of wood on strings. Then the boys are given the bullroarers to examine; they may even try whirling them. They are forbidden to tell the uninitiated about them or ever to make a bullroarer except during the initiation rites. Then the adepts destroy the bullroarers by splitting them into pieces and driving them into the ground, or sometimes by burning them. There is little information about how the boys respond to this revelation, but clearly they can never be terrified as they once were by the voice of the bullroarers. Nor can they retain the naive knowledge of *Dhuramoolan*'s nature engendered in them during the initiation rites. They too have learned that the sacred is more than it appears to be, that it can never be identified wholly with one mode of revelation. The medium of epiphany is shown to be something trivial and powerless in itself.[3]



Australian Bullroarer

Disenchantment: the Birth of the Religious Perspective

In these examples, the whole process of initiation builds to a climax in the shock of disenchantment. The sacred objects are destroyed in the eyes of the initiates. But despite this, the initiations evidently succeed, although the revelation of the sacred occurs more as a result of the initiatic process than as a part of it.

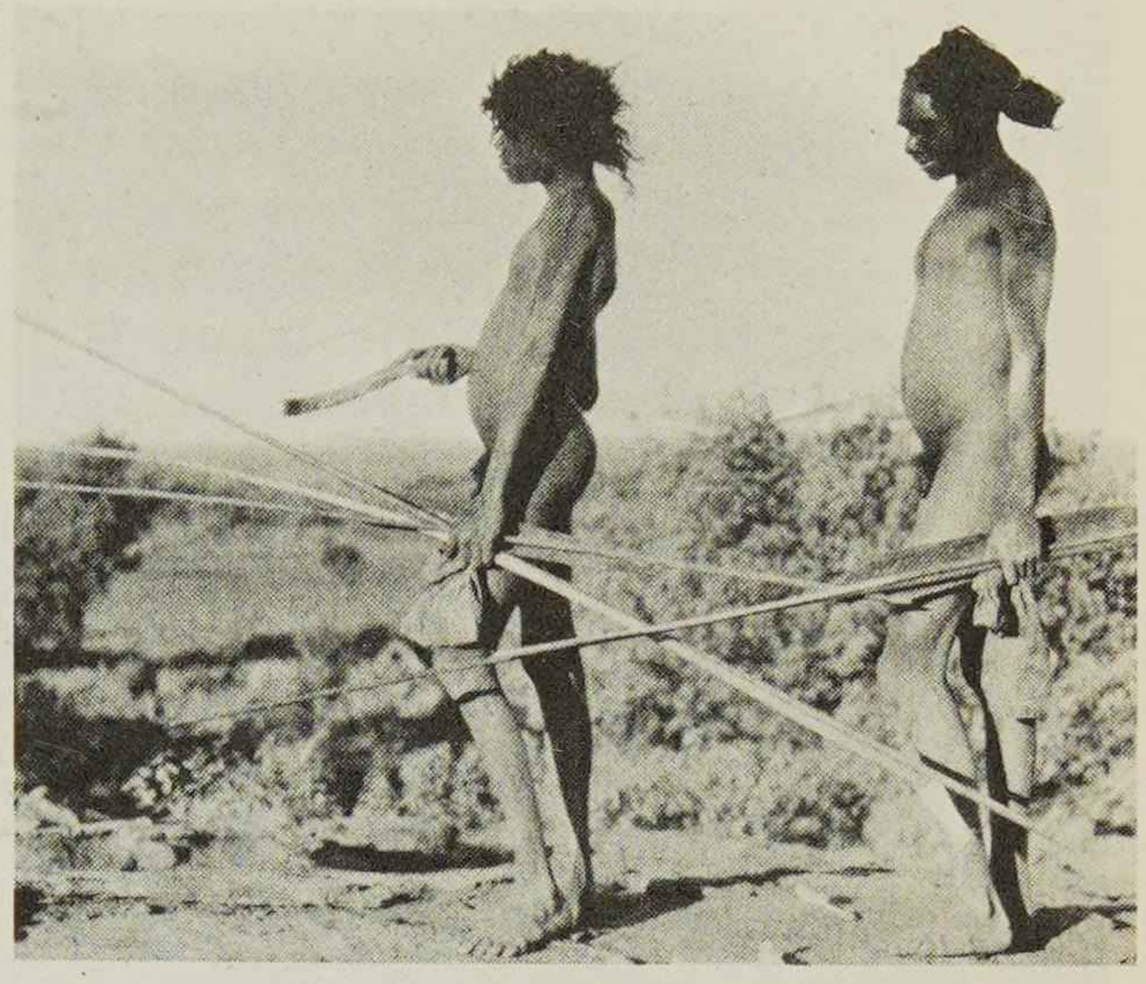
When the dynamic of disenchantment is the driving power in an initiation rite, the first and essential ingredient is encouraging identification of the sacred with the cult object. The uninitiated must come to believe that the objects and the sacred are exactly identical. The white blanket in the framework of sticks *is Kavula;* the masked dancers *are* Hopi gods; and the roar of the noisemakers *is Dhuramoolan* shouting. Ingenious techniques of secrecy and deception have been devised to nurture a perspective of naive realism, and the effectiveness of the initiation depends on how firmly this viewpoint is established.

The whole initiatic process reinforces this sense that the fullness of the sacred is invested in the cult objects. Then in the concluding moments, upon the threshold of a new life, the illusion is dissolved and the shock of disenchantment shatters all that went before. The experience makes a return to the previous state of life impossible. The naive realism of the uninitiated perspective has been exploded. The rites have demonstrated irreversibly that things are not simply what they appear to be, that one-dimensional literalism is a childish faith that one has to grow beyond or else despair of a life rich in meaning and worth. Surely, being thus forced to abandon one's ingrained notion of reality is to experience a true death of the former self. And this loss of self constitutes the concrete transformation signified by the symbolic dying experienced in the rites.

The purpose of initiation—revealing the nature of the sacred reality—is, of course, one with the nature of religion itself. For religion springs from the unique human capacity to grasp a reality which is infinite and "wholly other," to use Rudolf Otto's phrase. This is possible only because of our gift for symbolization, in which, as Goethe said, "the particular represents the general, not as a dream or a shadow, but as a living and momentous revelation of the inexplorable." It is through the dynamics of symbolization that the sacred is manifest in ordinary, mundane objects. In religion, symbols mediate the infinite through the finite, the general through the particular. The challenge of initiation is to begin with the cult object, which is finite and particular, and to reveal in it the infinite fullness of the sacred. The rites of initiation have to show that the symbols are only a form or a representation of the sacred; and at the same time, they must demonstrate that the transcendent is really embodied in them. The initiate must be simultaneously convinced that the divinity is independent of its finite manifestation and that the contingent symbols are vital to the revelation of the sacred.

Through initiation culminating in disenchantment, the novice enters religious life in a state of crisis, disappointment, or perplexity about the nature of the sacred. The only thing he knows is that he has been fooled and his sense of what is real and what is not is confounded. His options seem clear. He may see the sacred objects as meaningless—childhood toys to be put away with the onset of maturity—in which case a life centered in these symbols is likewise pointless and empty. Or he may undertake a quest for a fuller, adult understanding of the higher reality that has been revealed and regard the symbols as pointers to an encompassing mystery that is inexhaustible. The newly initiated are invited and expected to participate in the religious activities. Through such participation, they begin gradually to grasp the full scope of the higher reality revealed in the symbols. With this expanding awareness, meaning is conferred on the sacred objects in an enhanced and maturing way. For it is only when the fullness of religious meaning is grasped that the symbols genuinely mediate the sacred.

The profound wisdom of the method of initiation by disenchantment lies in its capacity to bring the initiate through succeeding stages of perception to an encounter with the full reality of the sacred. The rites necessarily must end on the threshold of revelation, for it is only through



Australia: Two boys excluded from camp during period of initiation

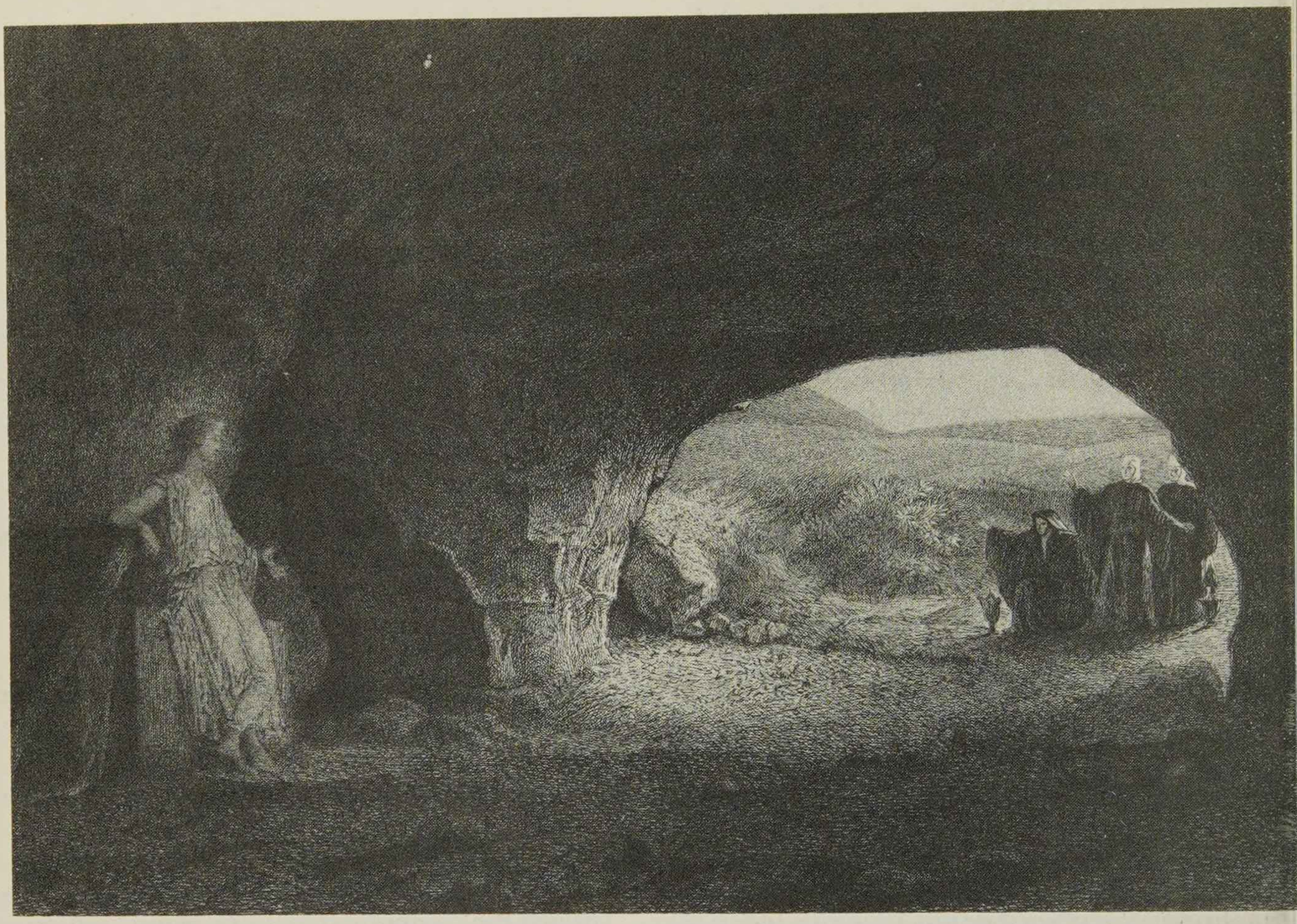
the living of the religious way that the sacred becomes fully known.

Jerusalem: the Empty Tomb

Victor Turner has discerned a similarity between the symbolic structures of the "killing of *Kavula*" and the Gospel story of the Empty Tomb. The death and resurrection motif also involves the enchantment-disenchantment process at work in the initiation of the first Christians as a religious tradition.

The Gospels recount the life and teachings of Jesus as the story of the incarnate revelation of God. The episode of the Empty Tomb concludes the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and in John only one chapter follows it. It comes directly after the account of the Crucifixion, and for those destined to be members of the first Christian community, this death caused fear, despondency, and consternation. This is especially clear in the conclusion of the last chapter in Mark:

And very early on the first day of the week; they [the two Marys] went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He was risen, he is not here;



The Empty Tomb

see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you.'' And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid.

Considering this as the concluding event in the initiation of the first Christians, several elements are remarkably similar to the rites of initiation described above. As the Ndembu experienced the death of *Kavula,* the Hopi the unmasking of the *kachina* figures, the Wiradthuri the destruction of the bullroarers, so the followers of Jesus were forced to witness his death. They had come to know him well and had accepted him as their Lord. Yet, they saw him captured, tortured, and crucified. They saw that he was a man who felt pain, suffered, and died. He, like any man, was placed in a tomb. The followers of Jesus had embraced a naive view of his reality—that Jesus the man and Jesus the Christ were simply identical. But going to the tomb, they found that he was not there. The Ndembu who examined the *isoli* found only a framework of sticks—*Kavula* was not there. The Hopi found only their own relatives under the masks—the *Kachina* gods were not there. The Wirandthuri coming from under their blankets found only old men whirling bullroarers—*Dhuramoolan* was not there.

The story of the Empty Tomb in Christianity follows a pattern akin to the process of disenchantment. Christianity as a religion begins with the Empty Tomb which is received not with joy and comfort, but with trembling, astonishment, and fear. That which had appeared to be so real, the man Jesus, had ceased to be and not even his body remained as an object to care for and reverence. It has been in the face of the fear and astonishment at the loss of Jesus, the man, that Christians throughout the Christian era have been led to grasp the reality of Jesus, the Christ, who was resurrected from the tomb, and hence the reality of God Himself. It must follow that only with that revelation could it be clearly recognized that it is the life and teachings of Jesus that are the ''living and the momentous revelation of the inexplorable'' God.

Japan: The Broken Buddha

An event occurring at the initiation of a Zen monk into his order is again comparable to what has been discussed. A statue of the Buddha is placed before the initiate, whereupon it is broken and cast aside. The initiate is told "We are throwing the Buddha to the dogs." It is, of course, the object of Zen to come to know the wisdom of the Buddha directly and not through doctrine or teachings, and this act of disenchantment with the image of the Buddha serves to shock the initiate into grasping the higher reality of the Buddha-nature. Zen methods are well known for their use of shock and illusion to lead the followers toward the experience of *satori*—the grasping of and union with the higher reality. The initiatory process of disillusionment is uniquely reflected in an ancient Zen saying, "to begin with, everyone sees mountains as mountains and trees as trees; then when one seeks to come to terms with them, mountains no longer appear as mountains, nor trees as trees; but finally when enlightenment is attained, mountains are again seen as mountains and trees as trees."

Conclusion

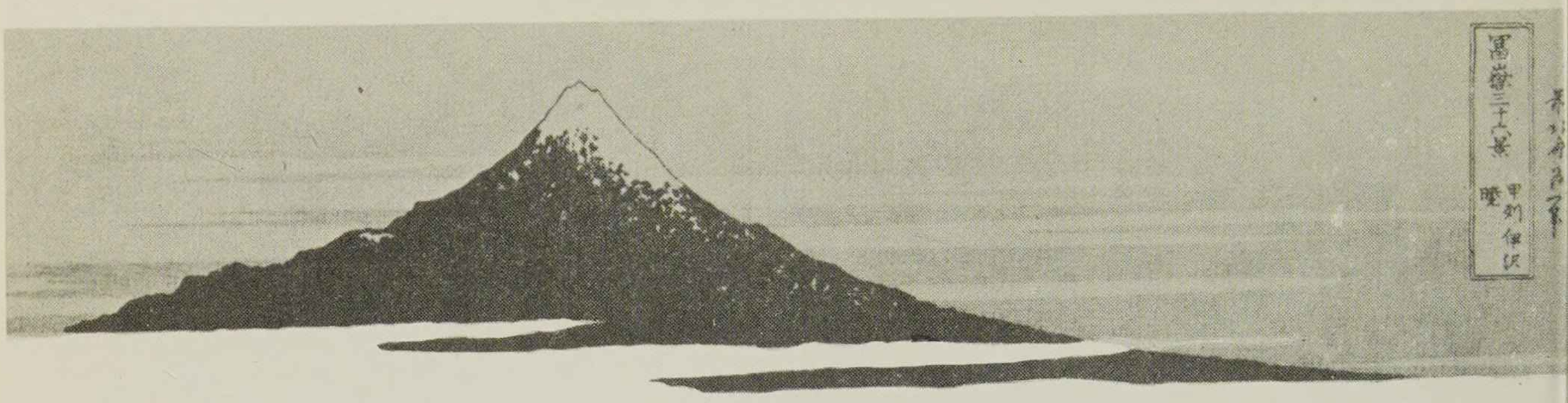
In these few examples from a broad spectrum of religious contexts, there appears the common structure of a technique of disenchantment used to initiate the mature religious perspective and to promote authentic apprehension of the sacred. The apparent effect of disenchantment is itself illusory. Acts which seem to spell the end of religion have been found to be techniques that thrust the initiate into the arena of adult religious life with incentive to plumb its full depths. They lay bare the limitations of naive views of reality so that through deepened participation in a religious community and celebration of the day-to-day events of life in religious ritual, the individual may increasingly experience the mysterious fullness of the sacred, sustaining realm. And a mature sense emerges that the sacred symbols can reveal the sacred without ever exhausting its reality.

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[1]Victor Turner, *Chihamba The White Spirit: A Ritual Drama of the Ndembu,* Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 32 (New York: Humanities Press, 1962).

[2]Dorothy Eggan, "The General Problem of Hopi Adjustment," *American Anthropologist* 45 (1943): 372.

[3]R. H. Matthews, "The Burbung of the Wiradthuri Tribes," *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* XXV (1896): 295–317 and A. W. Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia* (London: Macmillan, 1904), pp. 516–563.



Off-Season

It was off-season at the monastery where I was, as they say, studying Zen Buddhism. It seemed to me that I wasn't studying anything. My legs hurt when I sat in meditation and my meditation consisted of a blurred mixture of a lot of thoughts. They told me I had to get rid of the thoughts but there were so many of them, like ants crawling, millions of ants, most of them voracious, and they were hard to fight. I could crush a few now and then but they were always replaced. And now the training season had stopped and most of the monks had wandered off. The teacher had gone too and I asked for permission to go.

"Will you be back?" the head monk asked.

"Sure."

"When?"

"In a month."

He bowed and poured tea. I bowed. We drank tea. We bowed again. I left within an hour. I had an old American motorcycle and stuffed the saddlebags with clothes and a sleeping bag. A map was stuck on the tank, in a plastic cover. I had no idea where I was going but it is always nice to have a map. The map was Japanese and I could only read a few of the characters which indicated the place names. The trip was a dream and I was guided by mysterious hieroglyphs. I felt I was well prepared.

I planned to go west, and then north and to stick to country roads. I didn't hurry, stopping at roadside restaurants to eat noodles and fish-soup, and I slept in a small army tent next to the motorcycle. It rained for a few days and I accepted a farmer's invitation to stay in his house. We met in an eating place. He had greeted me and I said something in Japanese and we got involved in something which sounded remarkably like a conversation. I didn't have too many words and he spoke the local dialect, but we smiled and bowed too, and shared a small bottle of sake.

His house was close to a village and I went shopping the next day. The one-legged American was shopping too. We said "good morning" to each other and continued our shopping but I had had time to look at him. He must have been close to fifty years old and he had shaved his large skull which shone and had a nutbrown color. Evidently he spent a lot of time outside. He walked on crutches, managing to hold on to a satchel which contained the vegetables he had just bought. He chatted with the

shopkeeper who seemed to know him well, bent down to talk to a child and everybody around greeted him. We met again a few minutes later, I was starting my motorcycle but my vigorous kicking drew little response; the engine kept on stalling.

"Trouble?" he asked.

"She is slow," I said, "but she will come to life if I persist."

"Carburetor," he said. "These old Harleys have funny carburetors. There's a float in them, like in a flush toilet, and some dirt may stop the float. Then the engine floods. It's happening now. See?"

He pointed at a trickle of gas, oozing down the side of the carburetor.

"Yes," I said, "I don't know anything about technical things. I'll have it repaired."

"I'll do it," he said, shifting the position of his crutches and looking at the engine again. "I live over there, that small house in the field beyond the pine trees. Get her started and ride her down

by Janwillem van de Wetering

there. We can have lunch. Where are you from? England?"

"Holland," I said.

He thought for a while and then nodded gravely, acknowledging the existence of my country.

The door of the small house was open and I unzipped my boots and climbed on the veranda. I could hear him moving about the house, clattering with pots.

"Come in," he said,"fried fish to-day. We call 'em suckers in the States. Fresh water fish with big mouths. They are good if they are fresh. And I have some fried eggplant, and pickles, and rice. Will that do?"

It sounded very good to me. At the monastery we ate boiled cabbage and a hot mixture of a lot of barley and a little rice. Plain fare. This sounded like a feast, but I had been eating well the last few days too, fried noodles and fancy pickles at the roadside restaurants and even some bread which I had baked in the farmer's oven.

The house was very clean and empty. The only objects around were for immediate use. A thin mattress, clothes, kitchen utensils, garden tools. "My workshop is outside," he said.

"I repair trucks mostly, and small tractors. The farmers bring them to me."

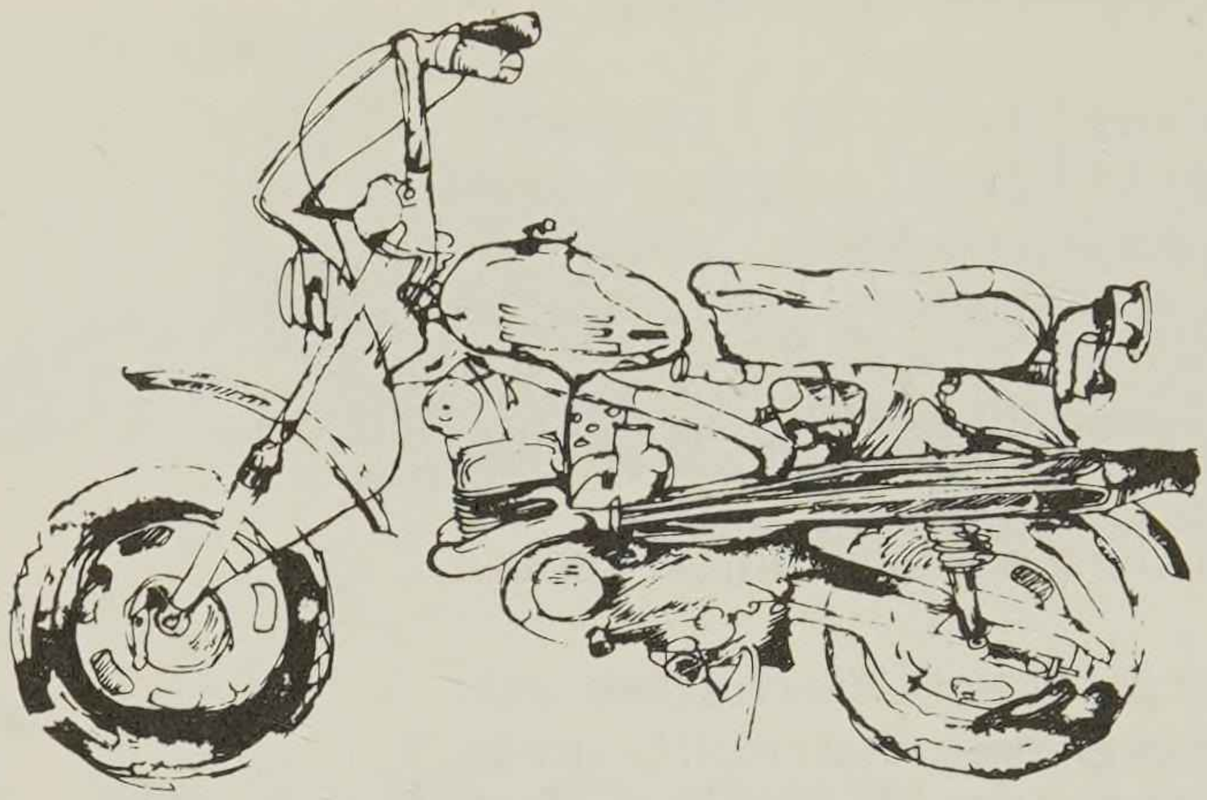
"Is that what you do for a living?" I asked.

He shook his head. "No. I don't charge. They pay for the parts. I have a pension." He pointed at the non-existent leg. "Lost it at Okinawa; they remember in the States and send me a check every month."

He had opened two big bottles of beer and we raised the glasses and drank. I thanked him for the food.

"That's all right. You can stay the night. I'll repair your motorcycle in the morning. It's too late now. Why are you in Japan?"

I told him about my stay in the monastery. I had stayed a year, I said, and would stay another year, maybe longer.



"Why are you there?" he asked.

"To become enlightened."

He laughed, slapping his thigh and wiping tears out of his eyes. He laughed for a long time. A full minute maybe. Finally he stopped.

"I am sorry," he said.

I was hurt but not too badly. I was getting used to being laughed at. The monks would come out in the garden if they saw me pissing against a tree and they would hang on to each other helplessly as I watered away. "Just like a horse," they would say and begin to laugh again. I amused them in other ways too. They couldn't understand that my legs hurt me when I had to sit in the meditation hall, and they would smile if I hobbled around, one leg lame because of bad blood circulation.

We had more beer and went out on the veranda. The house was built on a low hill and we had a good view of the countryside. I saw groves of pinetrees and the roofs of thatched farms, a four-storied pagoda enthroned on the next hill. The sound of wooden clappers and a bell drifted down to us.

"That's the old man," my host said; "he is all by himself up there. In the evening he sits for an hour and he always gives the proper signals. One clap four bells when he starts, one bell two claps when he stops."

"Like in the monastery," I said.

"Yes. The old man is of the same faith."

"Faith?" I asked.

"Whatever you like," he said slowly. "I was just giving it a name. It has no name."

"Do you know the old man up there?" I asked.

"He is my teacher."

He went in and came back with six bottles. They were big bottles and I braced myself. I would get drunk. I didn't mind getting drunk but it wouldn't hurt to be prepared.

"So how long have you been here?" I asked.

He spoke for some time. He had come with the Marines and he had been fighting for four days when he lost his leg and was taken back to a ship, and later to the States. "I killed a lot of soldiers before the leg came off. A hundred maybe. I shot them with a machine gun, they came rushing at us and I just kept on killing them. There was a heap of corpses and they

were crawling over it and I went on shooting."

I mumbled something. I was too young for the war and didn't know what he was talking about. I had killed a rat once, with a poker, and I killed her babies too. The rat was in the garage of my father's house. I had been thinking of the rat and her offspring lately, when I was supposed to meditate.

"But why did you come back?"

"I kept on dreaming about the dead Japanese soldiers," he said, "and then I was seeing them when I was awake too. I saw them crawling over their own corpses and I was shooting them. I saw a psychiatrist but it didn't help much. After a year's treatment I was still seeing them. Then I came back. I wandered around for a while and settled here. Ten years ago."

"You must like it here."

"Yes," he said, filling my glass. "I repair their machines now, it's more constructive."

"And you still see the dead soldiers?"

"Sometimes."

The sun was setting behind the pagoda. It was the time of the evening that everything suddenly becomes very exact. The branches of the trees were outlined sharply against the pale soft sky and the pagoda looked as if it had been cut out of the cloud which sat behind it, its edges lit up dark orange.

I pointed at the temple.

"And he lives there? Your teacher?"

"Yes. He is a priest."

"A master? A Zen master?"

He shrugged. "I don't know what Zen means and I have never asked him if he is a master. He is very old. Eighty I think. I met him in the village, I had been here a year or so and I was learning the language. It goes quickly if you hear nothing else. You are the first gaijin I have seen in years, the tourist buses miss this place."

"What did he say?"

"He told me to come and see him. I did, the same afternoon. He taught me to sit in meditation and told me to sit for two hours every day. I had to get up at two and stop at four. Then I had to go and see him."

"He ordered you to do that?"

He inclined his head, and his skull gleamed. "Yes. He knew why I had come. I have been going to see him most days since then. Not tomorrow, that's why I can drink now. I like to drink but I can't go to see him with a smell on my breath and a

headache."

"Have you ever tried?"

"No."

"Did he give you a koan?"

He nodded but I didn't ask him what koan. It's bad manners to discuss koans. My own teacher had told me so. In the monastery I saw him every morning and every evening. I had been given a koan too but I didn't understand it. I didn't even understand what the question was supposed to be and nobody wanted to explain it to me. I had to find out for myself.

I wanted to ask him if he had passed his koan but thought I shouldn't.

"I haven't passed my koan," he said a little while later, "but I have been going to see him nine years, most days. Usually he is asleep when I bow to him, he is old and not in the best of health. I used to shake him to wake him up and he would look at me and say 'what what?' and ring his bell. When he rings his bell I have to leave. Now I don't wake him anymore. I just go in, bow, wait a minute, and leave."

"Shit," I said.

"Pardon?"

"Shit," I said.

He laughed. "Yes, sounds pretty silly, eh? Not to me though. He is there when I go to see him, that's enough. I don't want too many things anymore. I repair machines and the farmers bring me vegetables, and rice and sometimes a little meat. I found a way of chopping my own wood and I have a motorized tricycle which will take a quarter of a cord of firewood so I can go and get it myself. Sometimes I don't even touch my check. I paid for the repair of the pagoda last year. Just the materials. The labor was supplied by the people around here."

"Does your teacher have other disciples?"

"No, just me. He is retired. There's a monastery with a younger teacher close by. He has half a dozen lay disciples; I have met him but he is not for me. I am the old man's son now."

"But he is asleep," I said, and drank a little more beer. I would have to be careful, the house was beginning to sway and I still had to get my sleeping bag off the motorcycle. He made a gesture, sweeping my protest aside.

"In San Francisco my mother had a little pagoda," he said, slurring his words somewhat. "It was made of ivory and had four stories just like the one up there. The first story had a tiny

door. I would open that door and peer inside but there was nothing inside. It used to sadden me. The pagoda was so beautiful, it had a spire pointing at the sky and small narrow verandas encircling it. It pointed somewhere but it was empty. That pagoda over there is not empty."

"But he is asleep," I said stubbornly. "He doesn't know you have come to see him. You have sat for two hours and something has happened inside you. You have come to tell him about it but he doesn't know."

"Silence is a good answer," my host said.

I put my glass down. There were still some bottles around but I had had enough. I got my sleeping bag. He had cleared up by the time I came back and gave me a hard little pillow. "How do you go there?" I asked before I fell asleep.

"I walk."

"The path is steep, it must be half a mile or more. And you only have one leg."

A hand came out from under his padded blanket and touched my shoulder.

He was chuckling.

The Return

I

A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.

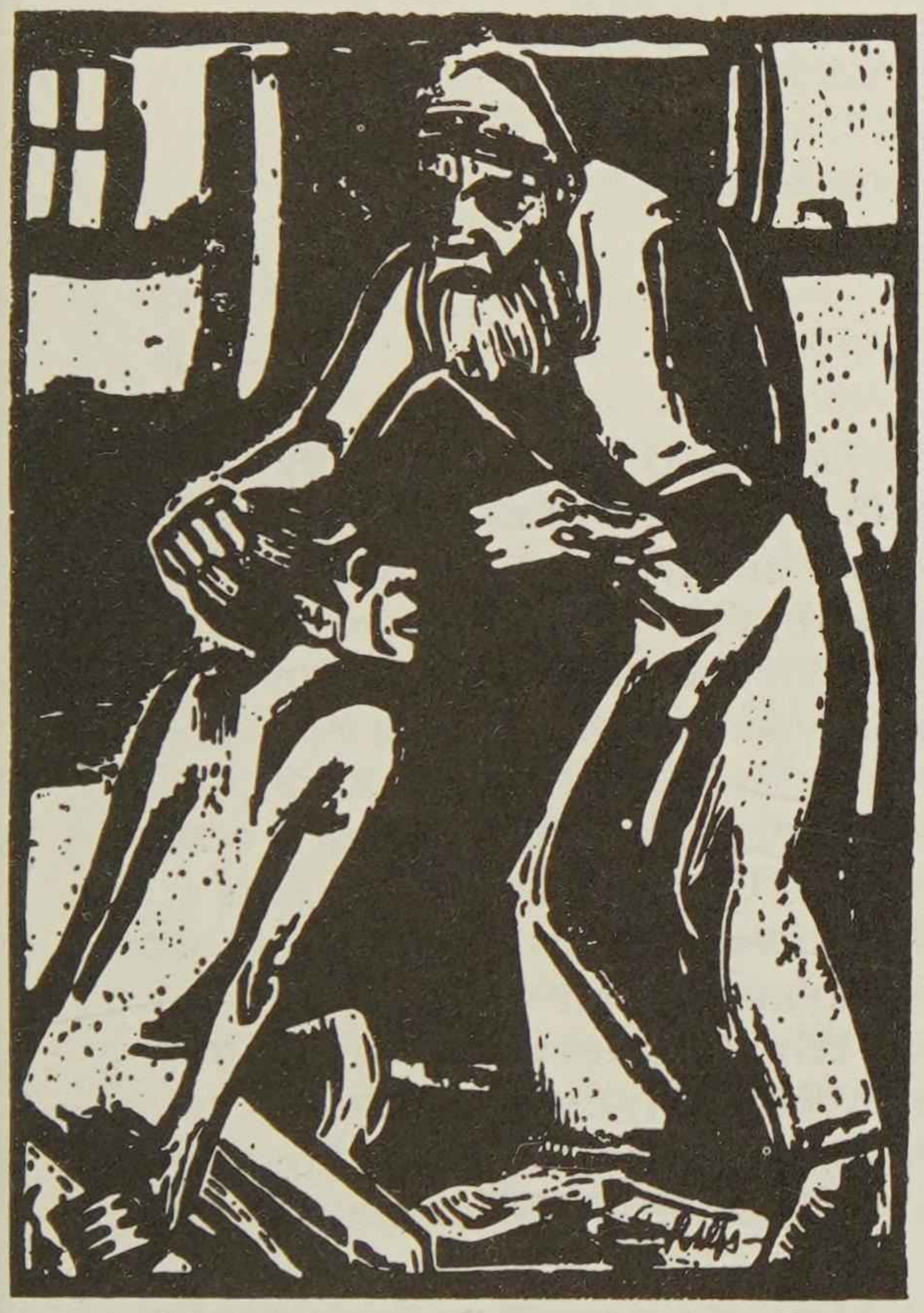
And when he came to himself, he said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.' "

And he arose, and came to his father.

But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said unto him,

"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

But the father said to his servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."



And they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, "Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound."

And he was angry, and would not go in. Therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he, answering, said to his father,

"Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf."

And he said unto him, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Luke 15, 11–32

The Return

II

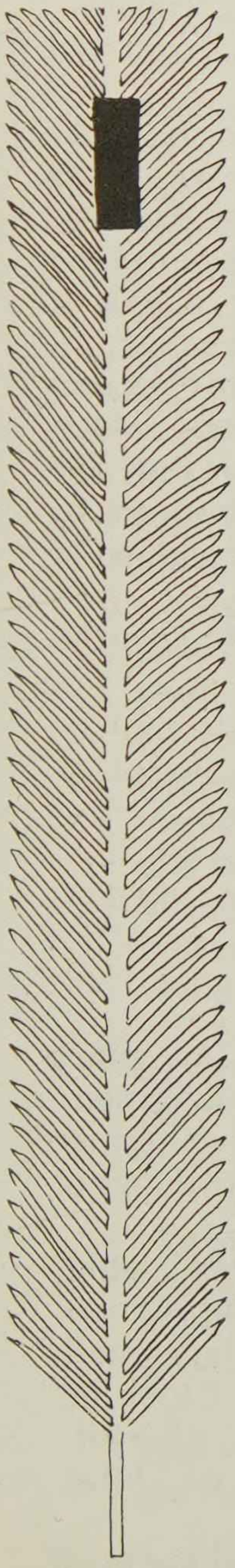
The People began in the first world, and came up through three others to emerge into this, the fifth world. But in the world before this, the fourth, the men and women were separated for a while and the women gave birth to monsters, who were the enemy gods. In the fifth world they became very numerous and powerful. When they had devoured nearly all the People, Talking God and the others made two more people out of corn, and two women, one out of turquoise and the other out of white shell. They were Woman Who Changes and White Shell Woman. The gods took the other people away and left the two sisters alone on the sacred mountain in the middle of the land.

They felt lonely. Woman Who Changes lay down on a rock in the sun, and White Shell Woman lay under a waterfall. Four days later they knew they were pregnant, and four days after that they bore sons. The son of Woman Who Changes was born first.

The boys grew very fast. At the end of four days they were the size of twelve-year-olds, and the gods came and raced with them; but the gods could run faster, and got behind them and whipped them with twigs. In four more days the boys were full grown, and when the gods came back to race with them again, it was they who won, and who chased the gods with sticks.

Their mothers told them not to go far from the lodge, but each day for four days they wandered far in each of the four directions, and each day they saw a strange bird or animal; so the women knew that the spies of all the enemy gods had seen them. The next day the giant Yéitso, the chief of the alien gods, came to the lodge. White Shell Woman saw him coming and she and her sister hid the boys. Yéitso came and sat down by the door.

Retold from Navaho Legends *by Washington Matthews, Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society, 1897. Vol. 5 of the Memoirs. Published in New York and Boston by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. for the American Folk-Lore Society.*



"What has made all the tracks around here?" he asked.

"Oh, those tracks I have made for fun," replied Woman Who Changes. "I was feeling lonely so I pretended there were many people around me, and I made the tracks with my fist, like this," and she showed him. Yéitso seemed satisfied and went away.

But White Shell Woman went out to look and saw many of the alien gods hurrying toward the lodge. She ran and told Woman Who Changes, who made a great wind blow in all directions from the lodge so that none of the enemies could advance against it.

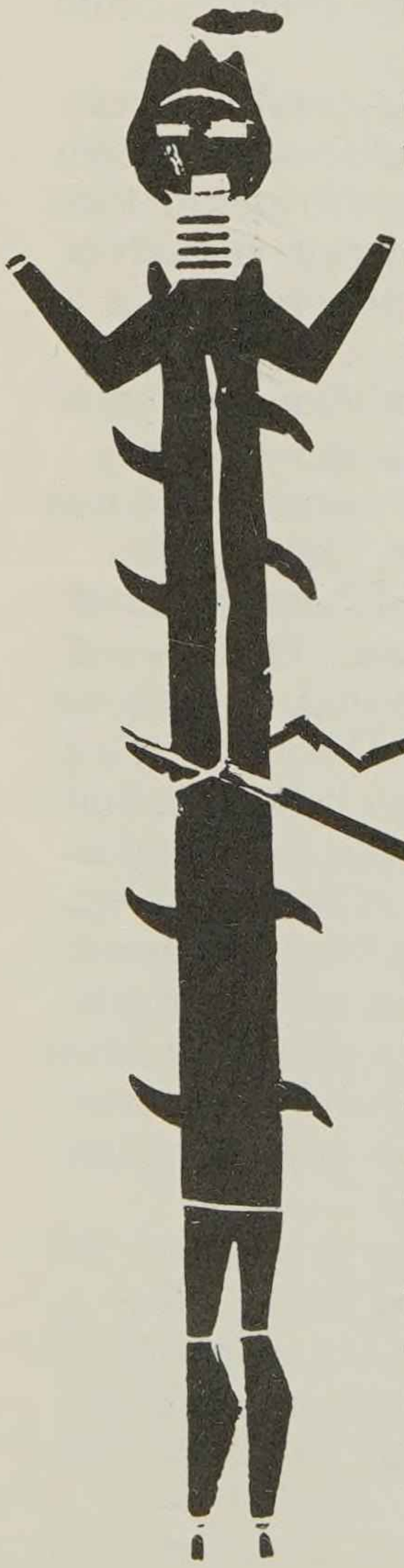
The next morning the boys got up before daybreak and stole away. Soon the women missed them but could not trace them in the dark. When it was light enough they went to look for their tracks, but all they could find was four footprints of each of them, so they knew that they had taken a holy trail, on a rainbow, and stopped looking for them.

Meanwhile the boys traveled fast on the rainbow, and soon after sunrise they saw smoke rising from the ground. They looked down the smokehole and saw an old woman, who was Spider Woman. "Welcome, children, enter," said Spider Woman. "Where are you going?" She asked them four times, but they would not answer her. Then she said, "Perhaps you would seek your father?" "Yes," they answered, "if only we knew the way to his house." "Ah," said Spider Woman," it is a long and dangerous way to the house of your father, the Sun. But I will give you something to preserve your lives, and a charm to subdue your enemies." So she gave them each life-feathers to wear to protect them, and taught them a charm to subdue the anger of their enemies: "Put your feet down with pollen. Put your hands down with pollen. Put your head down with pollen. Then your feet are pollen; your hands are pollen; your body is pollen; your mind is pollen; your voice is pollen. The trail is beautiful. Be still."

The first of the dangers that the boys came to after they left the house of Spider Woman was the Crushing Rocks. When a traveler approached, they would open wide, but as soon as he was between them they would close and crush him to death. These rocks were really people; they thought like men; they

were enemy gods. Four times the boys pretended they were going between them and drew back just in time. Then the rocks asked, "Who are you and where are you going?" and the boys answered, "We are children of the Sun, and we seek the house of our father." Then they repeated the charm that Spider Woman had taught them, and the rocks drew back and said "Pass on to the house of your father."

The second danger was the Cutting Reeds, who showed a clear passage between them and then leapt together and cut the traveler to pieces. Four times the boys deceived them; then the reeds spoke to them, as the rocks had done. They answered and repeated the sacred words. "Pass on to the house of your father," said the reeds, and the boys passed on in safety.



The third danger was the Tearing Cactuses, where the same thing happened, and the fourth was the Boiling Sands, which subsided at the words of the charm. Soon after this they approached the house of the Sun, which was guarded by bears, by serpents, by winds, and by lightnings; but all were subdued by the pollen chant.

The house of the Sun was built of turquoise, and stood on the shore of a great water. When the boys entered they saw, sitting in the west, a woman; in the south, two handsome young men; and in the north, two handsome young women. The young men rose without speaking, wrapped the boys in four coverings of the sky, and laid them on a shelf.

The boys had lain there quietly for some time when a rattle that hung over the door shook and one of the young women said: "Our father is coming." The rattle shook four times, and then Tsóhanoai, the Sun Bearer, entered his house. He took the sun off his back and hung it up on a peg on the wall, where it shook and clanged for some time, going "tla, tla, tla, tla," till at last it hung still.

Then Sun Bearer turned to the woman and asked her in an angry tone, "Who are those two who entered here today?" After he had asked four times, the woman said, "You had better

not say much! Two young men came here today, seeking their father. You always tell me that you meet no other woman but me. Whose sons are these?"

She pointed at the bundle on the shelf and Sun Bearer took it down. He first unrolled the robe of dawn, then the robe of blue sky, next the robe of yellow evening light and last the robe of darkness, and the boys fell out on the floor. He seized them and threw them first upon great, sharp spikes of white shell that stood in the east; but they bounded back unhurt, for they held their life-feathers tightly all the while. Then he threw them in turn on spikes of turquoise in the south, on spikes of haliotis in the west, and spikes of black rock in the north; and when they were not hurt, he said, "I wish it were indeed true that they were my children."

Then he said to the four young people, his children who lived in his house, "Go prepare the sweat-house and heat for it a white, a blue, a yellow, and a black boulder." Wind heard him and dug a hole in the bank behind the sweat-house, and whispered to the boys, "Do not hide in the hole until you have answered your father's questions." The boys went into the sweat-house, the hot boulders were put in and the opening of the lodge was covered with the four sky-blankets. Then Sun Bearer called out to the boys: "Are you hot?" and they answered, "Yes, very hot." Then they crept into the hiding place and lay there. After a while Sun Bearer came and poured water through the top of the sweat-house on the stones, making them burst with a loud noise and a great heat and steam. But in a little while the stones cooled and the boys crept out of their hiding place. Sun Bearer came and asked again: "Are you hot?" expecting to get no reply, but the boys answered, "Yes, very hot," and he took the coverings off the sweat-lodge and let them out, saying, "Yes, I think these are my children."

Then Sun Bearer told his daughters to make the boys look like his other sons; and the young women pulled their hair out long and moulded their faces and bodies to look like the other two. Then Sun Bearer told them all to enter the house. As they went in, Wind whispered to them to look down, and they saw a caterpillar who spat out two blue spits. "Each of you take one," said Wind, "and hold it in your mouth so that you can endure the next trial."

Sun Bearer now took a pipe of turquoise and filled it with tobacco, lit it from the sun hanging on the wall, and gave it to the boys to smoke. They smoked it, passing it from one to the other until it was finished. They said it tasted sweet; and it did

them no harm. When the pipe was smoked out and Sun Bearer saw it had not killed them, he was satisfied, and said: "Now, my children, what do you want from me?"

The boys answered: "Father, the land where we dwell is filled with alien gods who devour the People. Give us weapons to destroy our enemies."

Sun Bearer said: "Yéitso, chief of your enemies, is also my son. Yet I will help you to kill him, and I shall hurl the first bolt. Here are weapons to help you in war." He gave to each of them a shirt, leggings, and moccasins of flint, arrows of lightning and a great stone knife.

"These are what we want," said the boys, and put on the armor, and streaks of lightning shot from every joint.

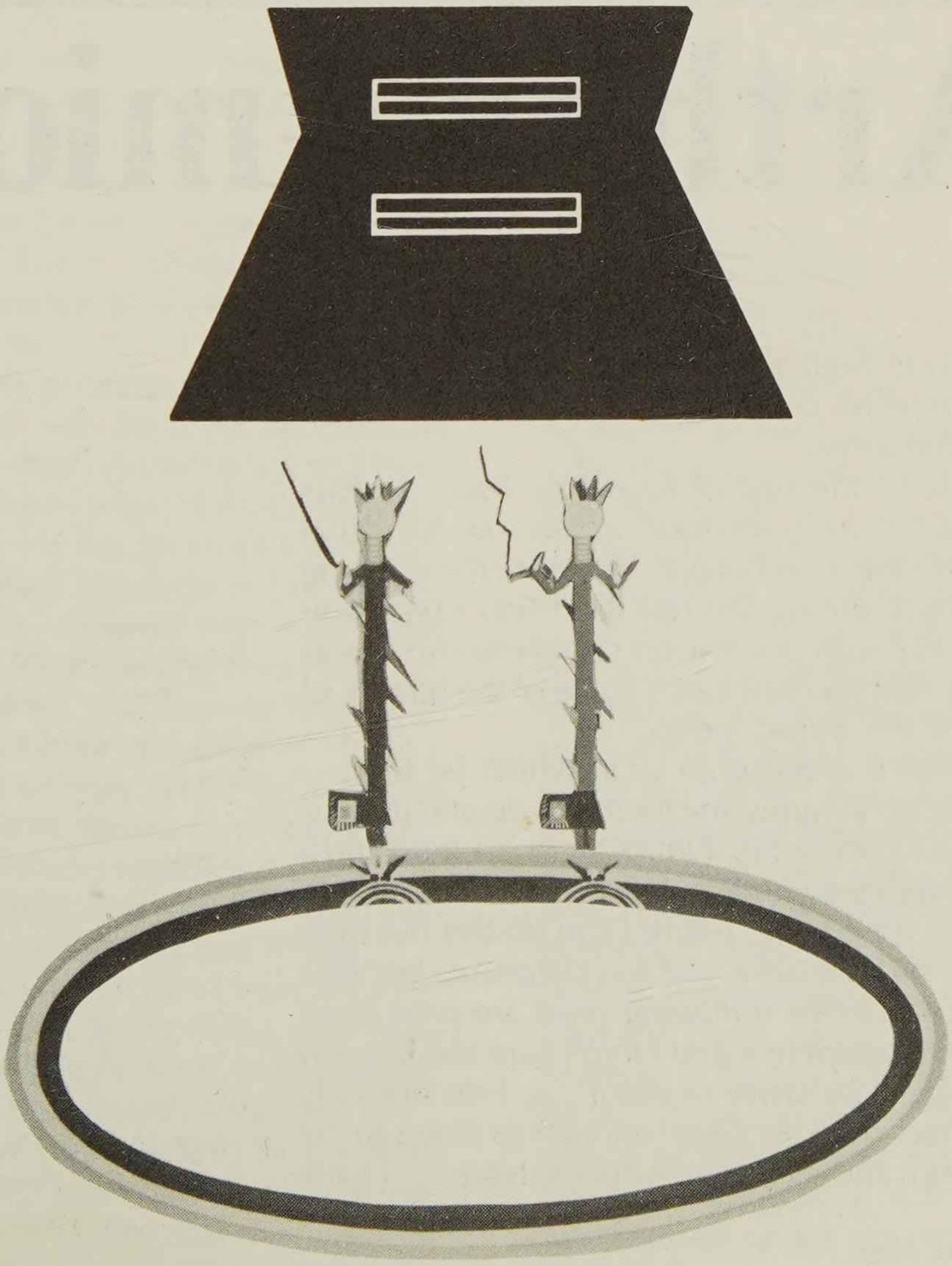
The next day Sun Bearer led them out to the edge of the world, and there were sixteen wands leaning from the earth to the sky: four were of white shell, four of turquoise, four of haliotis and four of red stone. Wind whispered to the boys, "The red wands are for war, the others for peace," and when Sun Bearer asked them on which they wished to ascend, they said, "On the wands of red stone."

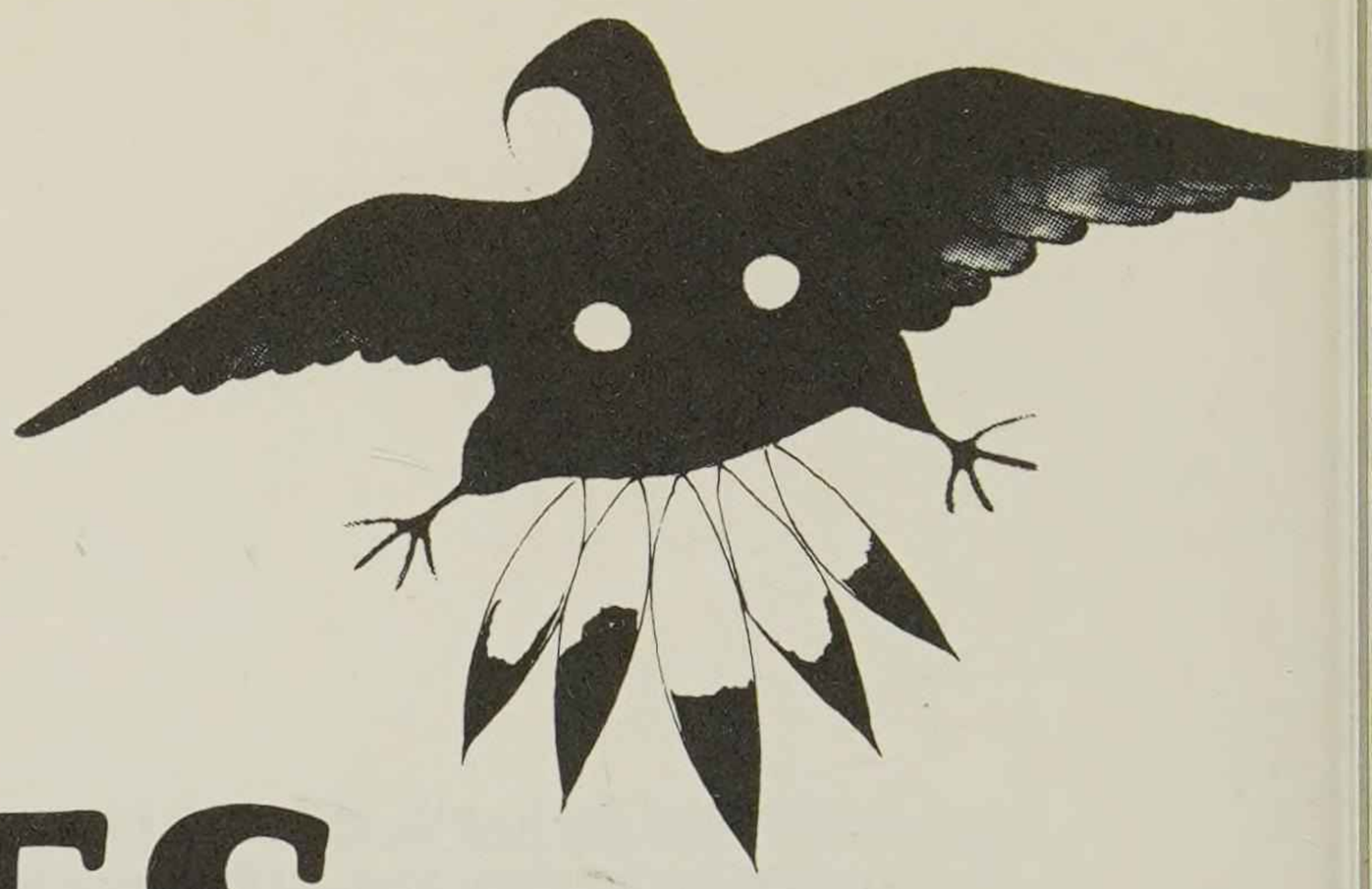
They climbed up to the sky-hole in the center of the sky with their father, on the wands of red stone. From there, Sun Bearer asked them to show him where they lived. The older brother could not tell, but the younger was able to point out the sacred mountains that marked the boundaries of the land of the People. Then Sun Bearer spread out a streak of lightning, and the boys stood on it and shot down to the top of Tsótsil, the mountain of the South, which the gods had fastened to the earth with a great stone knife and adorned with turquoise, dark mist, she-rain and all kinds of wild animals.

The next day they went on, and decided to try out one of the weapons their father had given them; so they shot one of the lightning arrows, and made a great cleft in Tsótsil, which remains to this day. Soon they heard the sound of thunderous footsteps and saw the head of Yéitso peering over a high hill in the east. He disappeared and appeared again in the south, then in the west, then in the north over Tsótsil, each time for a little longer and showing more of his body. Then he came down to the lake to drink, and saw the reflection of the boys in the water. They were standing on a rainbow, and when Yéitso hurled four lightning bolts one after the other, they straightened the rainbow so that the first bolt passed over their heads, then bent it so the second went under their feet, the third again over their

heads, and the fourth, although he threw the bolt very high, also passed under their feet. At this moment the lightning promised by Sun Bearer descended from the sky on the giant's head; he reeled but did not fall. Then the brothers loosed four lightning arrows; with the first, he bent to the east, with the second to the south, with the third to the west, and the fourth to the north. Then he fell to his knees and on his face, stretched out his limbs and moved no more. His blood flowed out and turned to stone, and it can be seen to this day in the valley below Tsótsil.

And the younger brother was called Child of the Water, and the older brother, Slayer of the Alien Gods.





EAGLES FLY OVER

by Arthur Amiotte

Arthur Amiotte (Good Eagle Center) is an artist and teacher who lives and works with his people, the Teton Sioux, in South Dakota near Wounded Knee.

This is his account of the first of four Pipe Fasts, in four successive years, which he undertook as part of his ritual training with the medicine man Petaġa. He wrote the opening part, but the experience during the fast itself was communicated orally on tape. We wish our readers could hear his words "live" as we did, but trust you will catch some of the quality of his voice as you read this transcription.

The tape ended with a message to us in which he said:

"This has been a terribly hard thing for me to do and there is an apprehension about continuing. I think there is a time and a place for this, and it appears to me that this is perhaps not the time. Perhaps another time in the future I can do this but right now these things are still too fresh, still too poignant; because the things that happened in the following years are even more powerful than this first experience and I think I am too close to them right now to speak or write of them . . . I do not fully understand these things but I do know enough to listen to my heart, listen to my head, and right now is not the time . . . Thank you."

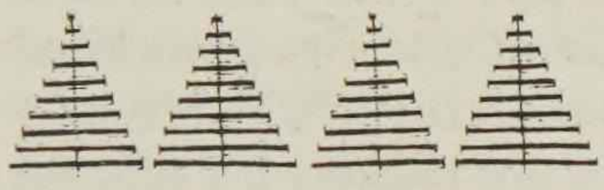
It is we who thank him.

Petaga is a medicine man of the Sioux people. He lives in a little hut of logs and mud near the white sandstone buttes of Payaba Community on the Pine Ridge Reservation. His face is noble, deep-lined with age and bold with wisdom tempered by hard work, weather and uncompromising devotion to living out his vision.

His large rough hands tell the story of a man whose youth was spent in labor yet who in his time has touched and guided saint and sinner to enlightenment with gentle and self-sacrificing effacement.

Petaga Yuha Mani—He Walks with Coals of Fire.

I sought him out and he spoke to me like this:



. . . Life is like a huge design. Each part of the design is made up of the happenings, acts and interactions of people with each other and the world. You must know that this design is completed by the intervention of Wakan Tanka. People and this world and all that is in it are only a part of Wakan Tanka, the lesser part when you consider the limitlessness of eternity and the universe, and the limits and relative insignificance of matter as we know ourselves and this world to be.

Yet from the holy goodness of Wakan Tanka a way was given us—for he loves his children and this creation—that we may pray, and have a glimpse, a little knowledge, of the Great Mystery that is this life. He has given us a way that we may be reminded regularly of our obligations as *ikće wicasa*—original man—and what we must do in this life to be good people, men, women, and children, and how to remember our origins and to honor our creator. He has given us a way that we may ask his help in times of need and also give thanks in times of joy. Wakan Tanka is all that is wondrous, awesome, powerful, and infinite, and yet he is also personal, compassionate, loving and tender. Perhaps this is why we call him Great Mystery.

Look at the tiny ants going about their business on the ground in front of us. In this world, everything has its purpose, its time and its place, from the smallest particle to the powerful storms as they sweep and wash the face of the land. Men also come and go, but man is different from the ants for he must learn where his place is and what his life means. That we may do this, our people were given a way of prayer that is called the Buffalo Calf Pipe. We were given ceremonies in which we pray with the pipe, ways that we may stand before Wakan Tanka so that he will instruct us about our place in his design.

You must know that a medicine man among our people is in possession of a special office. He is a servant of the people and of the gods. He enters upon a way that is sometimes not of his choosing, sometimes because he chose. I have known people who have bought their office. Some are good and some use it to their own advantage.

I did not ask for my office. My work was made for me and given to me by the other world, by the Thunder Beings. I am compelled to live this way that is not of my own choosing, because they chose me. I am a poor man; see how I dress and the house I live in. My whole life is to do the bidding of the Thunder Beings and of my people and to pay heed to what the Grandfathers tell me. You have come to see me, but did you know how to come?

To enter into any ceremony is a most sacred act. It begins in the mind of a person either by himself or because other beings chose him for their purposes. When it is clear that a man has an intention, he must prepare himself by being honest within himself about what it is he desires and intends to do. If after he has examined himself well he feels confident that he wants and needs the help of a counsellor, an intercessor, he must fill a good pipe with red willow bark tobacco and seek out the medicine man he wishes to see and whose help he wants. When he approaches the home of the medicine man he should rid himself of all undesirable thoughts so that his mind might be clear to utter his request as a petition prayer.

As a man with a filled pipe approaches a medicine man, he should realize that this man, depending on his predilections and his ability to read the intent of his visitor, has the right to refuse the offered pipe. A petitioner should be prepared to offer the filled pipe four times, each time stepping back and extending the pipe at arm's length. It is important also to hold the pipe bowl in the left hand when offering the pipe as this signifies that the intent is coming from the heart, and is a sign of sincerity and honesty. If the medicine man accepts the pipe on the first or any other offering, it means he is willing to listen to your request, but it does not mean he will grant it. He will either light the pipe himself or ask you to light it. While he smokes the pipe, you must make your request.

Since the pipe is being smoked in a sacred manner, you must make your petition as simply and as honestly as you can, for depending on what you say and how you say it, the medicine man will deliberate and make his decision. When the smoking is finished and after the bowl has been emptied of its ashes, a less formal conversation will follow.

This filled pipe is called an *opaġi*. Long ago, smoking materials were not always available, and the host who wished to show his high regard for a guest and to express his hospitality offered him smoke from a pipe. Since we medicine men are servants of the Powers and the people, we own little or nothing and sacrifice our whole lives that our people may live; so tradition has granted us this one pleasure that as old men we may smoke and pray while preparing to do our work. But what is more important than this is that what is said while the pipe is smoked is included in the prayers, and that while the medicine man smokes he unites his words and yours with the smoke as it rises through the air to the always-listening ears of Wakan Tanka.

This is the beginning and how it should be done. Go now, prepare yourself, think things through in your mind. In a month you may come back prepared to do things in the proper way . . .

A storm was coming and there were still a lot of things to do. It had been a very unsettling day, full of anticipation and dread. It had begun with a dream in the early hours: I was sitting against a white chalk cliff—a place that I have seen before, perhaps in my early childhood while exploring near my grandparents' home here on the reservation. In the dream, as I sat, two eagles were soaring in the distance and then began to approach me. As they came closer and swooped down I saw they had huge beaks and large eyes that seemed to penetrate my mind. Diving down in front of me they said, "We have come for you now." Then they swerved and flew upward and away and the dream ended.

When I woke I pondered the meaning of this dream and decided the ceremony had begun and the eagle nation was already waiting for me.

I had to go in to Pine Ridge and set up an account at a local store so my relatives would be able to buy meat and other food for the ceremonial meals that would take place while I was gone. I also had to find a wooden bowl, twine, colored cloth, and tobacco to take to the medicine man so his wife could make the rosary-like strings of tobacco offerings wrapped in tiny cloth squares, to enclose the sacred area where I would stand for the Pipe Fast. The day seemed to pass too quickly; I couldn't find a decent wooden bowl, and kept mentally telling the eagles, "I'm coming, I'm coming." Finally I had to settle for an old bowl that I sanded down to the unused wood. Somehow I collected the other things I needed: a quilt and a blanket that had never been used, a large knife, a pail and dipper, yard squares of red, yellow, green, and white cloth, Bull Durham tobacco, an eagle feather attached to a conch shell disc, and of course my pipe, sage, and a braid of sweet grass. One thing that was hard to find was wild chokecherry juice; fortunately one of my neighbors found a jar of canned chokecherries and I could use the juice from that.

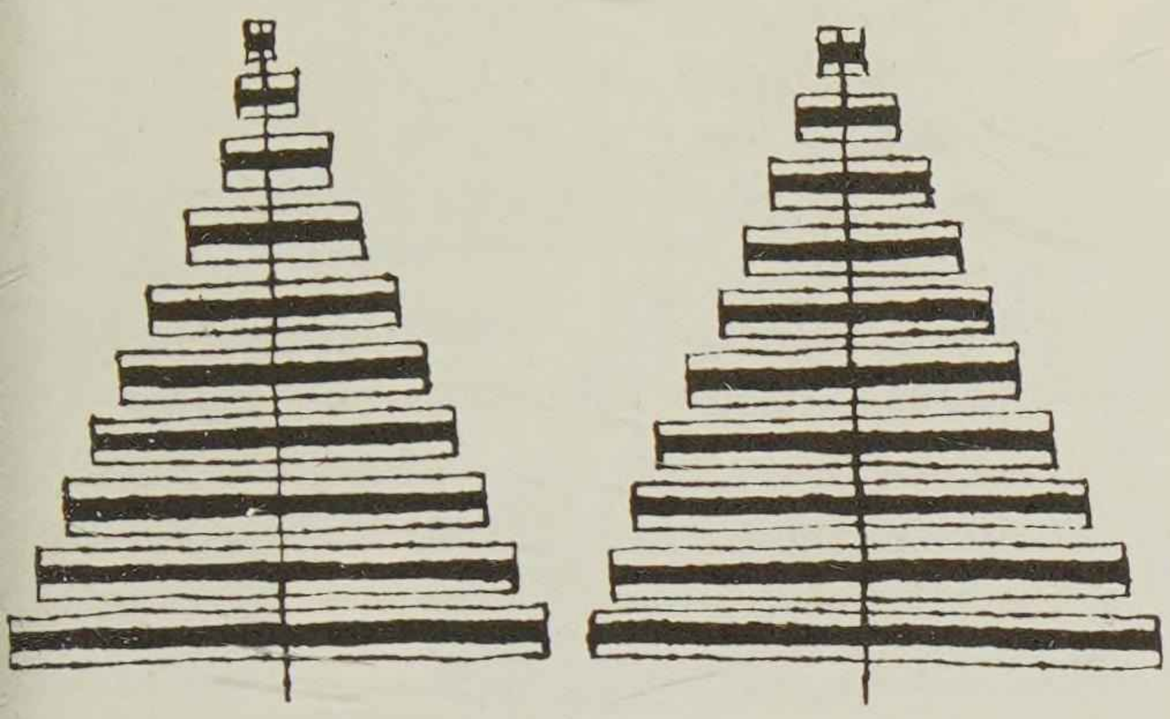
The storm was getting closer and there was more sage to gather and four chokecherry trees to cut. My aunt and my grandmother drove with me to my cousin's place and we picked sage. Before we picked it I offered pinches of tobacco and addressed the gray grass, our oldest plant relative, asking it to help me in the task I was going to undertake. I asked it to forgive me for uprooting it and I asked the creation to accept the tobacco as an offering:

Peji hota, my relative,
from time immemorial you have helped us.
It is said you are one of our first and oldest medicines.
Peji hota, I have come to get you now
for I wish you to help me and protect me.
You were here first and know many things.
I am only a man seeking a way and a place.

Peji hota, forgive me for taking you away
from this place.
You will be put in another
one in which you will be recognized
by those who already know you.
You will become a ceremony.

Peji hota, accept this offering and help me
in the way that is your way
that my relatives and I may know and live.

I had yet to cut the four cherry trees. I wanted them to be fresh, so I would have to cut them the next morning, but I wanted to find them now. I drove towards Wounded Knee, and along the road by Jumping Eagle's place there was a nice stand of bushes. I crawled into them



and chose four straight trees and marked them with yellow ribbon so I could find them easily at dawn when I went to cut them. As I tied each ribbon I addressed the trees asking them to forgive me for doing this: I was going to sacrifice them, but they would be serving the order of things in a different way, and helping to bring life to a person, and to the people, otherwise than by giving their fruit to eat.

I had just gotten back to the house when the rain started. Some relatives came to visit and stayed very late. I had wanted to sit down at the sewing machine and hem a piece of cloth for my ceremonial breech cloth, but the electricity went off and we spent most of the night by candle light. Finally I began to fix the cloth by hand and my aunt finished it when the power came back on again about one o'clock in the morning.

I had gotten a puppy from my grandmother's sister for the sacrifice that had to take place on the evening of the first day of my fast. After we had kept it for about three weeks, my little son Andrew had become as fond of it as I had, but I told him that I would have to take it home later on and that we couldn't keep it or name it. This night the puppy slept soundly; but in the distance, yet seemingly close at hand, another puppy was crying. It reminded us of the one that was sacrificed at the first Eagle Ceremony at Pete Catches'* place, at which the time and day of my fast was designated for me. That puppy had not been cooked for the feast following the ceremony proper, but was put in an old car until the next day. During the ceremony it yelped and cried; we were told that it wanted to be inside where we were, but since it could not it was crying and praying that I would have good weather when the time of my fast arrived. The voice of that pup was just like the one we were hearing tonight, nearby yet far-off; and now we felt confident that the weather would be good in the following days, since my first puppy was still crying and praying for me from wherever it is that sacrificed puppies go.

We slept for an hour or two and were up again a little after three. Andrew was sound asleep; he had been told that his father was going away to a meeting. I felt that it was indeed to be the meeting of myself with the richest traditions of our people, a meeting that would begin my spiritual journey through a timeless place; for here were to be joined the ritual and wisdom of the ancients and a contemporary soul adrift in a chaotic world. I hoped I would be worthy and would recognize and understand the truth in the newness and strangeness of what was to come.

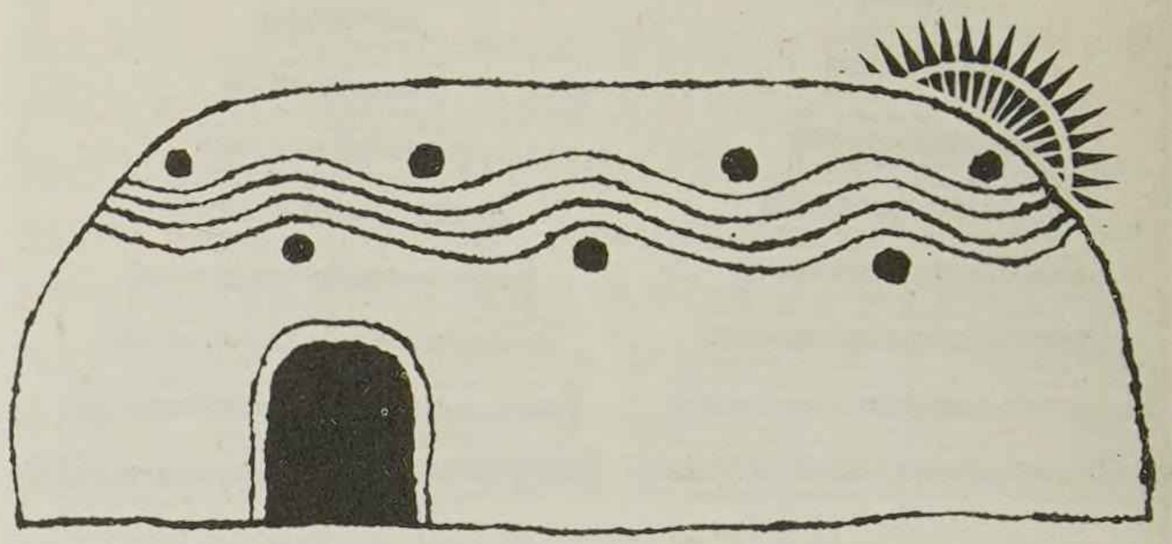
My grandmother cooked breakfast and we were on our way before four. We stopped along the road and I chopped down the four cherry trees and put them in the car. At one point a porcupine crossed the highway in front of us, and a little later, three deer.

The ceremony was to take place at Pete Catches' (Petaga's) country place at Payaba Mission. We found the road passable, even though it had rained very hard the night before. Shortly after we arrived, Catches' brother drove up and began to get the fire ready to heat the stones for the sweat bath. The men all went up to the sweat lodge on the hillside, and the women stayed down by the house.

By this time the fire was burning hard and Catches was now ritually filling his pipe and mine and offering them to the four quarters, the sky and the earth. I was to take mine with me to the hilltop. His would be left filled inside the sweat lodge for the duration of the fast. His brother tore pieces of the red cloth I had brought and prepared four little tobacco offerings—flags attached to short sticks, which were placed on the earth altar in front of the door which faced west and towards the fire where the rocks were heating. Sage had already been spread on the floor of the lodge. The four colored cloths I brought were also tied on sticks and stuck in the ground outside the door near

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**Pete Catches is Petaġa's everyday name. He is called Petaġa only when ritually addressed.*



the earth altar, after they had been purified inside the sweat lodge over the first steam, before the door was closed.

I had already attached the feather to the shell disc, and now Catches tied it to my hair on the back of my head. We stripped and entered the lodge. I hadn't brought a towel so I used my shirt to wipe myself during and after the bath.

Inside I was seated facing the door with the fire pit between me and the door. Catches sat to my left, or on the right as one entered the lodge. Catches' brother placed the rocks in the pit in the center of the lodge with a pitchfork, after which he entered and sat on my other side. A pail of water, the wooden bowl, dipper, knife, and pipes were now arranged in their proper places, my pipe being set before me on the sage. Before the door was closed some prayers were said and the bowl, the knife, and the bowls of the pipes were touched to the heated stones.

After the door was closed, Catches prayed and told of his power, and then told from the beginning the story of my coming there. He repeated my prayer of supplication from the first time I offered him the pipe, before and during the Eagle ceremony. Then the singing began and the Eagle's wings touched me.

Water was poured on the hot stones and steam arose with the praying.

I think it was then that the little bird sound was in the lodge; and now Catches' brother repeated my prayer to Red Hawk, Petaga's intercessor; then the wings touched me again.

Four times, water was poured on the stones and steam filled the lodge and sweat poured from me as I have never known it to do before.

At the end of some prayers the door was opened and a dipper of water was passed out of the door to someone—I think it was Catches' wife—and when it was handed back, water was offered to me and then to the others, and we drank.

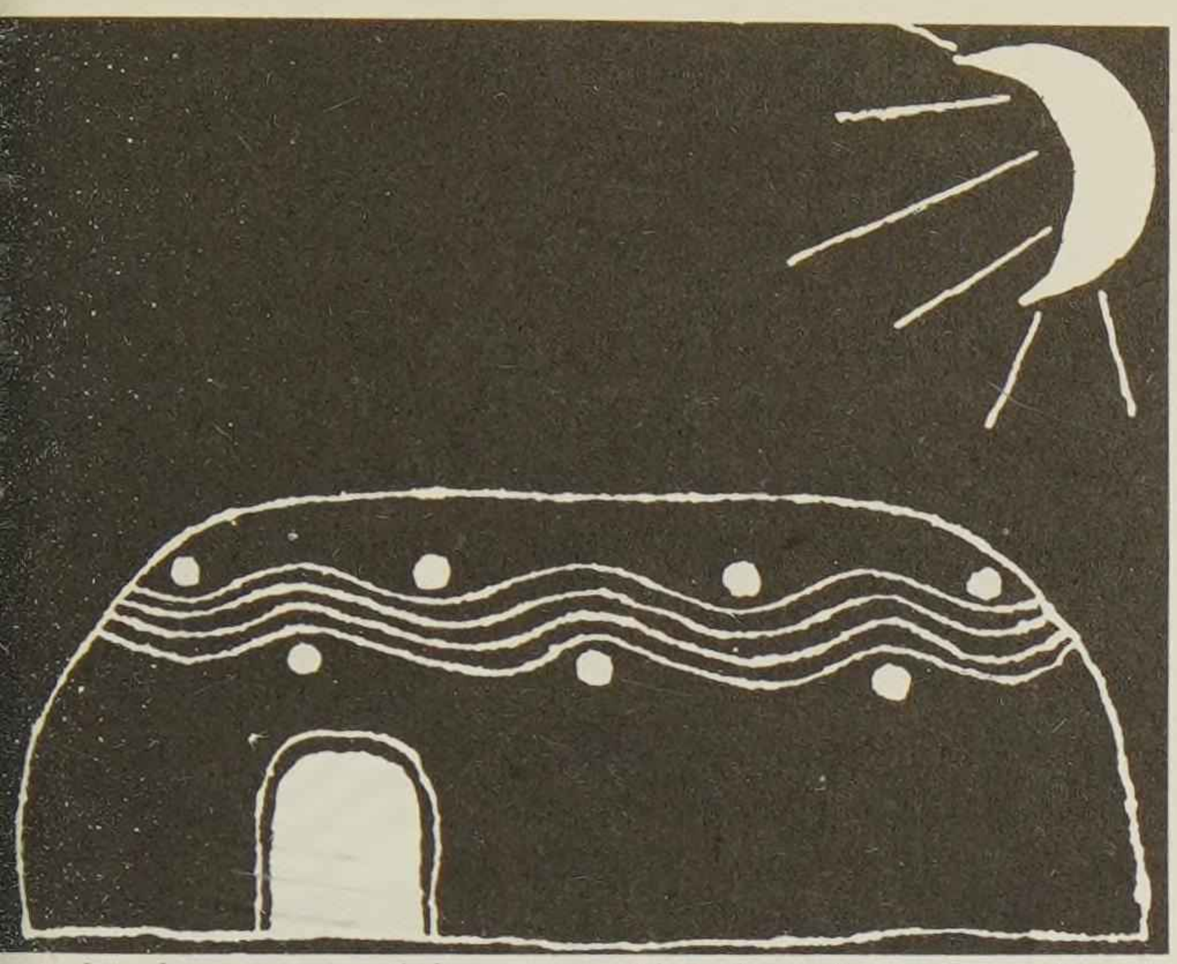
The door was closed again and there were more prayers and again water was poured on the rocks.

When this time was over, before the door was opened again, I was asked if I had anything to say. I was overwhelmed by everything that had happened and had been said and could only ask the Grandfather Great Spirit to have mercy on me, as I was now coming before all that is, that I might know and understand better as a humble man. Then the door was opened and the dipper passed out and back in. I was offered a drink of water from the wooden bowl; this was to be my last until the fast was over. What I didn't drink from the bowl was poured on the rocks.

Catches said that the door was opened only twice as the number two lies between one and three, which was the number of days I would be on the hill. I did not understand this as I was actually there three days and two nights.

We then all came out of the lodge and wiped ourselves. I put on my dark blue breech cloth and moccasins and trousers, and was handed my pipe. I felt that a new kind of existence had begun and that an invisible wall had come between me and the people around me. All I wanted was to be alone.

The cars were now parked by the lodge. My grandmother and aunt were in my car, my aunt driving. I got in and Catches and his group got in their car and led the way to the place. We drove until we came to a windmill near the base of the little range of hills where I was to go. Before we started up the hill I wrapped my pipe in the sage where the bowl and stem come together. Then I wrapped it with two strips of red flannel. The rest of the party each took some of the other things, the blanket, quilt, sage, bowl, and knife. Catches led the way, carrying his suitcase of paraphernalia; I followed him and the rest walked behind us. We stopped four times climbing the hill. About halfway up were four large cherry trees that Catches had cut earlier; we didn't use the ones I had taken. He



picked up two of them and his brother the other two, and they dragged them the rest of the way up the hill.

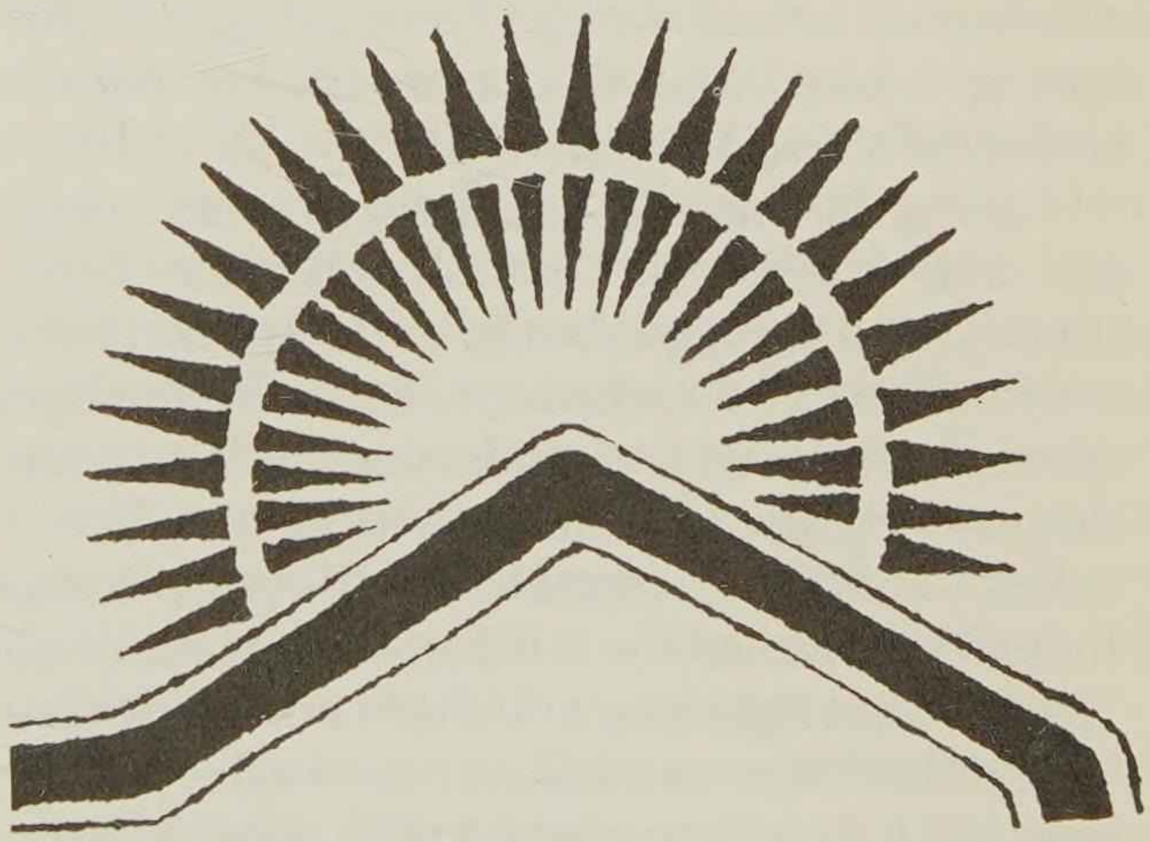
The sky was now light with scattered clouds from behind which the sunshine was occasionally reaching past to touch the earth. A slight wind was blowing and changing directions every now and then. As we reached the place I was rather surprised to see an elongated willow structure about the length of a man and three feet high, made of little arches tied with strings of yellow cloth.

We stopped and stood while Catches and his brother prepared the place. With a crowbar apparently brought up the day before, Catches' brother made four holes about ten feet apart, forming a square. Into these holes the cut ends of the cherry trees were placed so they stood erect but not firm. A bed of sage was then laid out in a little circle where I was to stand. In front of the sage, an altar was erected, made of two forked sticks about a foot high with a crosspiece of fourteen inches. The bowl and the knife were set to the left of the altar.

I took off my trousers and moccasins and was led counterclockwise around to the front of the square, which faced west. I was stationed holding my pipe and standing facing the west on the bed of sage. Catches then took a rosary of tobacco bags which his wife had prepared the previous day, and wound on a piece of cardboard. He began unwinding it, first tying it to the cherry tree on the west on which the yard of red cloth had also been tied, then to the tree on the north which had the yard of white cloth on it, to the tree on the east with the yellow cloth, and the one on the south with green. The little red tobacco flags that had been used on the altar before the sweat lodge were stuck in the ground on either side of the stick altar. The tobacco rosary, stretching from tree to tree, reached back to the west tree and surrounded the square defined by the trees standing at each of its corners.

Catches then laid a row of single sage stems in front of the altar. He paid great attention to this and laid them very exactly. When he had finished he lit a braid of sweet grass and sent the smoke over the entire area and the rosary surrounding the space where I was standing. He then backed out of the space and tied the loose end of the rosary to the west tree, thus closing the space. Then he smoked the entire rosary from the outside, going clockwise until he came to the west. When he had done this, the people started to leave, going over the hill and down out of sight. Catches walked clockwise around the square, and as he approached the top of the knoll, a short distance from where I was standing, he sang a short song in an imploring, mournful tone and then disappeared down the hill.

I stood alone with the cool breeze gently blowing, I could not tell from what direction. A warm sense of well-being came over me, and a comfort in my solitude welled up from within. At last what I had longed for since leaving the sweat lodge was a reality. I was alone and quiet, naked before the creation. Catches' words spoken in the sweat lodge floated through my consciousness: "He comes to you young and innocent. Have mercy on him and give him what he seeks." Indeed I felt as though I were newly born. Yet there was a foreboding, a strong feeling of the presence of some other being, as I stared in one direction over the hills



and into the sky. I was not sure if all that I was sensing was real.

The sun breaking through the clouds for a moment and warming my back brought me back to what I must now do. Holding my pipe, the bowl in my right hand and my left hand on the stem, I first asked that my prayer be heard, and because I had never prayed in this way I asked that my inexperience and possible mistakes be overlooked and my heart read, for I was there to learn and for that I was offering my prayers in these days of my fast.

Standing facing the west, I first addressed those powers, praying that the forces of the west, of thunder, lightning and the storm, hear me and lend me their strength to have courage in the face of what opposed me; should they wish to come to test me I would accept the challenge, but if not, I asked to be spared suffering from the storms while I was in this place.I asked them for courage and wisdom to face the trials of living and contending with my own ignorance. I asked for clarity of mind and good judgment so that the difference between right and wrong, good and evil, should be as plain to me as the difference between day and night. I asked all this also for all our people, so that they might see their way out of all their difficulties. I asked that the children especially be given strength to grow and become good people who will preserve our ways and take care of the land. To my amazement a wind began blowing from the west and made the red flag and all the others flutter as I completed that prayer.

Facing the north, I addressed those powers and asked them also to hear me and grant me strength to face all storms, and to receive with thankfulness the cleansing winds and snows that purge and wash away the old, preparing a way for the new. I asked that their harshness brace my weakness and make me strong and persevering, just as after the winter has come wrapping the world in cold our old selves are washed away and we can be new again in the spring. I asked that all our people be made strong to stand against what is harsh in life.

Facing the east, I asked these powers to hear me, and that the light which is the day that comes from the east should enter me and light my mind to its fullest power. I asked for the light of wisdom to see and understand what I must do and become so that my people may live. I asked for enlightenment for all the people, that they may discover the wisdom and peace of our religion as a light to guide them and bring day where there is so much darkness. I asked for the new life of spring to come to the people so that they may meet life with hope, as the earth greets spring in regeneration.

To the south I prayed that those powers of everlasting spring and summer grant me health to reach my life's harvest and full potential. I asked them to enter me and bring my life's tasks to fruition just as the summer matures the production of the earth. I asked for this power of accomplishment so that my people may live, and I asked for the people that they also may reach their highest and bear their fruit and accomplish what must be done in their time.

Pointing my pipe to the sky, I asked that the mystery of creation, reaching into infinity, bring together all of life in peace. I asked for wisdom to know and understand my part and place on this earth with other people. I asked to know humility and to become a better man so that my people may live better through my efforts and my work as a teacher. I asked for mercy and to be worthy to know the Spirit as it makes itself known to man.

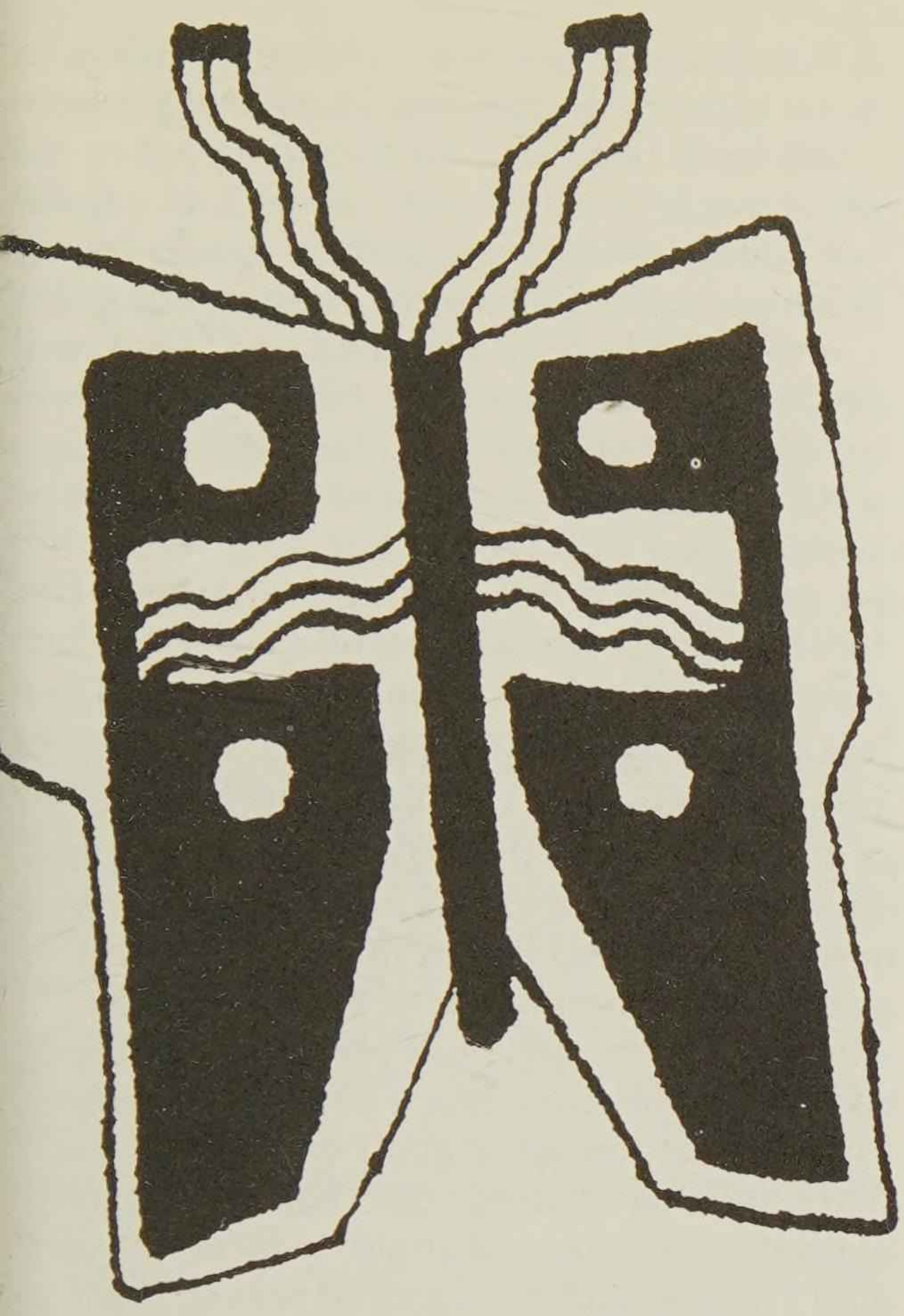
Pointing my pipe to the earth I prayed the earth to give bodily health to all her children. I asked that the powers that live there manifest themselves in me so that I may be healthy and not be hungry. I asked for health for our people and that the babies and children reach old age, that life be long and good for all the people. I asked earth to be generous to her children and I repented that we have not cared for her nor her creation as we should.

At the end of this prayer I faced the west once again and asked that my prayer be heard.

Shortly after I had finished, a yellow butterfly came from behind the square area where I was standing and flew counter-clockwise to the tree on the west. It circled the tree and then fluttered back and forth in front of it, inside the square. I had been told to offer my pipe to any creature that might come to me while I was in that place; so addressing it, I pointed my pipe toward it and said, "My friend, I offer you this pipe in respect for your presence. If you come with good will, to help me, accept this offering; if you are here for other reasons, you should know that this is a sacred place and I beg you to leave it."

I said this while the butterfly circled the tree. When it fluttered to and fro in front of the tree, I somehow knew it had heard me, for it then flew to the tree on the north and circled it and then did the same with the other two trees. Then it came and circled me and almost lit on my pipe but instead left the place, fluttering clockwise around the square and leaving over the hill.

Soon after this I had to leave the enclosure to relieve myself. Catches had told me that when



this was necessary I was to open the rosary attached to the tree on the west, as though it were a little gate, and to go a distance away from the sacred place. I did this and then returned and closed the gate again. Being out of the square for a few minutes was an experience of difference; I knew that I had left a place that was sanctified and was treading on ground that was ordinary and common. I was glad to come back in to the security of the enclosure.

Catches had said that during the days of the fast, the sacred power of all holy places, the sites of other Pipe Fasts and of the Sundance of times past, would be brought together and centered in this place which would henceforth always be sacred. No one who believed this could be harmed or touched by anyone while he was there; it is said that even the rain and the hail sometimes do not touch such a spot, while falling all around it. As I stood thinking about this and other things, a little brown bird flew close and sat in a pine tree about ten feet from the square. I addressed it as I had the butterfly; there were other birds in the trees to the north, east and south, and they chirped as though in response. A feeling of communication and of being a natural part of that place made me feel that I wanted to stay there forever. One of the birds, a blue one, remained long after the others flew away, and returned daily for the next two days, always coming by itself to the same tree where it sat for hours regarding me. I offered it the pipe each time. I did not know then that it would return for the next three years to sit in a tree to the east of me and, in the third year, sing me a song of encouragement, the words of which I would understand on my third pipe fast and sing on my fourth.

As the sun travelled across the sky that day, the wonder of the creation entered my awareness, the relation of microcosm and macrocosm; and I felt the connectedness of everything, as Catches had said, like a massive design woven by a sacred power, constantly breathed into by the breath of the Great Spirit.

I stood for what seemed a long time, yet in a way time no longer existed as there was nothing with which to compare the length or breadth of my experience, other than the changing appearances of things as they were touched by the changing light of the sun.

For a long time I had had the strange feeling that somebody was approaching me or looking at me, but I was startled to hear from behind me the sound of a man walking. Not quite knowing if it was someone of this world or another, I waited. Presently a man approached on my right side; it was Catches. He had brought up the buffalo skull to be placed on the altar. Very slowly he lit the sweet grass he had brought and going clockwise, smoked the entire rosary again. When he finished he untied the end of the rosary that was fastened to the cherry tree, opened it and came in and asked me how I was. I told him I was fine. He said that the buffalo skull should have been brought up when we first came but no one was available to carry it to the sacred place, as only those who had fasted before were qualified. So he had brought it now because the day was approaching its end and it would remain with me for the duration of the ceremony. He then placed the skull in front of the little rack facing me and proceeded to smoke the interior of it and then to smoke me, with the sweet grass. Then he smoked the tiny flags and the rack and the inside of the rosary, and backed out of the opening, tying it shut. Then he went to the back, standing in approximately the same place where he had stood before he left for the first time, and sang the same song he had sung earlier.

Shortly after he had gone, I began my second round of prayers to each of the quarters of the earth, beginning at the west, as I had been instructed. I went through the entire round as I had done before, and at the end of that prayer it sounded as if a gun had been shot off in the valley below; it reverberated and echoed through the valleys below me. A little later a

host of hawks came flying up from the south, near where I was, and hovered there and then headed west. Once again I had the awesome feeling that Nature or the great powers had responded in an unusual way to what I had said, and I knew that my prayers were being answered.

As the sun began to set I heard a strange noise coming from beneath the earth, approaching from the south. At first I thought perhaps it was something digging under the ground, but I didn't know, so I offered it my pipe, as I had been told; and shortly thereafter it stopped. When the sun had sunk a little lower, there was a clopping sound that came nearer; once again, not knowing what it was, I waited, and it was a line of cows going by. Two of them, very curious, stopped and looked at me, so I offered them the pipe also. No sooner had I finished the first prayer, the offering to them, than one turned its head and mooed and went the other way; but the other, a black one, a little bit more curious, stood and looked at me for a long time before it turned finally and left.

I sat and waited until the sun was just touching the horizon and I began my third round of prayers, once again beginning at the west and continuing around. By the time I had finished, the day had almost disappeared and the moon was beginning to rise, so I began my fourth round while the blueness of the day was still there on the horizon. When I had finished the fourth round the moon was quite high. I put my pipe on the pipe rack as I had been told to do, and gathered my blanket around me, and sat, again thinking about all that had happened. It was then that an owl began hooting and a woman's voice, rather mournful, began to come from the hill across the valley that began on my right. I didn't know the meaning of this; I wouldn't know till three years later when things I had seen and heard were finally clarified and their meaning revealed.

As the moon rose higher I sat with my blanket gathered around me and imagined what was happening back at Catches' little mud and log house. I could picture in my mind my relatives and Catches' relatives gathered there, the preparations that had been made for the feast that evening, the sacrifice and cooking of my second pup that would be offered that night as a companion to the first one, in order that there might be good weather and a successful vision quest.

When the moon was quite high I decided it was time to make my first round of the night, as I had been instructed also to make four rounds of prayers also during the night. The night is considered one day in Indian tradition: that is, two nights and two days would actually be thought of as four days. In this case I was fasting five days; three days and two nights. I got my pipe from the rack and began my round. Once again, upon completion of the round, the woman's voice, this time very plainly crying, came from the same place where it had come from before. Knowing that I was in a sacred place and that nothing could harm me as long as I was there, I was not afraid; in fact I was very glad I had received a sign that was so clear to my understanding, so that I knew the fulfillment of my quest was beginning.

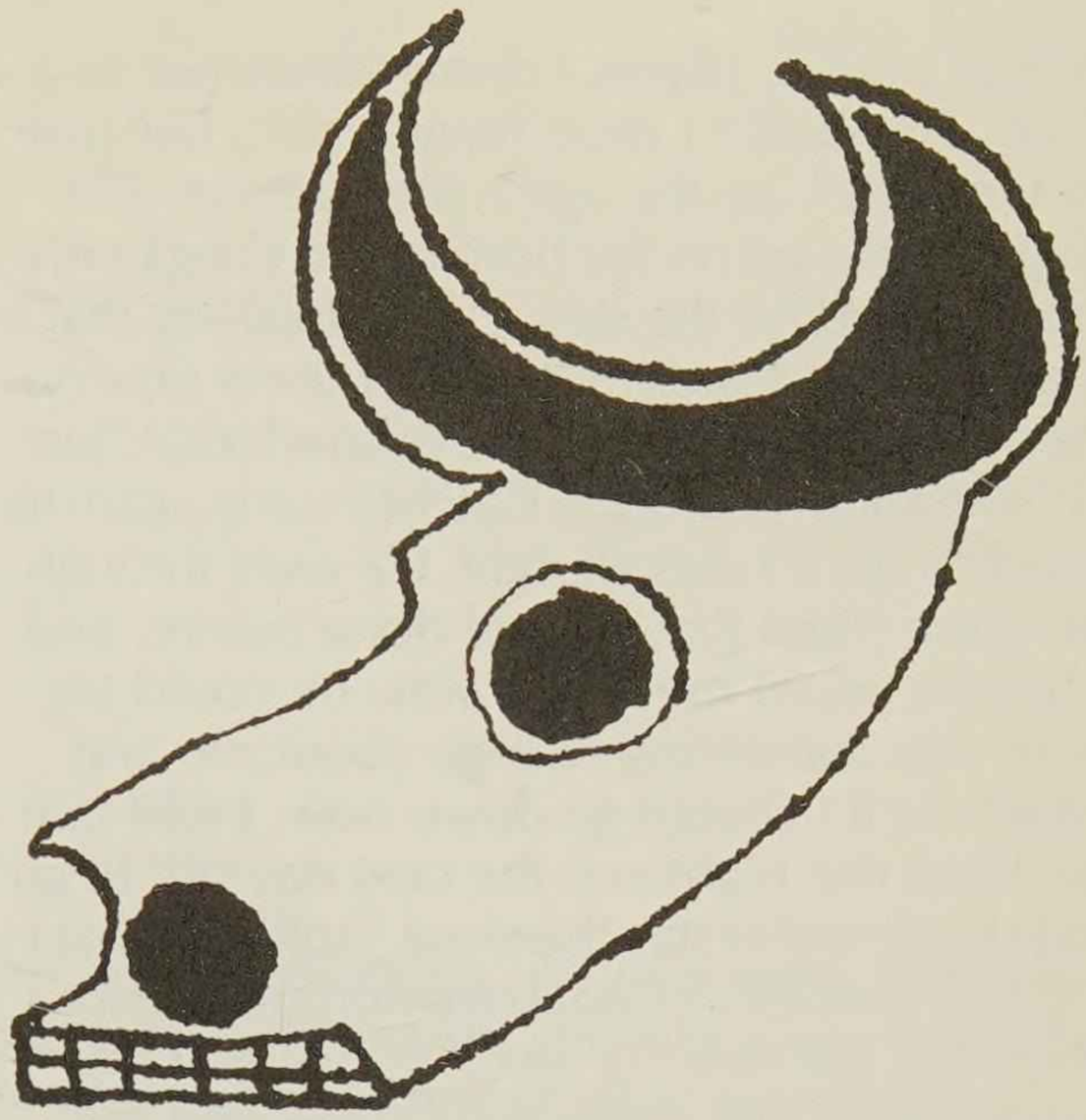
I then placed the pipe on the rack and crawled into the little willow lodge to stretch out and rest. My back was a little warm from the day's exposure to the sun, and oddly enough the insteps of my feet were also quite burned. My face felt hot. I hardly knew whether I was asleep or awake, and I had no mysterious dreams that night, except that the eagles that I had dreamed about the night before I began the fast came again soaring, but this time turned abruptly and flew over me. I don't know how long I had been there in either a dreaming or waking state when I decided it was time to make my round again. This I did three more times that night, and by dawn I was surprisingly very relaxed and prepared to meet the sun.

Shortly before I climbed out of the willow structure to get my pipe and begin my morning round and the greeting to the sun, I had the feeling that I was being watched; but I continued anyway and when I finished I stood facing the west, holding my pipe. The sun was now above the horizon and at my back. I decided to sit for a while, and when I placed my pipe on the rack I saw out of the corner of my eye what looked like a hunched-over eagle form. Turning and looking at it closely I saw that it was Catches sitting on the hill behind me, hunched over, with his eagle-bone whistle in his mouth. When I had put my pipe on the rack,

he stood and faced the sun and sang a song that morning to the sun, and waved his eagle wing fan in the air above his head and blew the whistle four times. Then he came down to the sacred place, smoked the outside, untied the string and came in, smoked the whole area and then me. Then he asked if I had to relieve myself, which I did, so he walked in front of me, making a little path and waving the smoking sweet grass. He took me some distance from the sacred area and waited till I was finished and then returned me to the place. When we had gotten back he stood on the sage pallet that had been prepared and checked the tiny sage stems that he had arranged the day before, and examined the flags and the tobacco rosary that enclosed the place like a fence, and then asked me again if I was all right, and I told him once again that I was fine. He backed out then, tied the rosary shut and smoked it, and then returned to the hill where he had sung the last two songs; but this time he faced the west as he had done the first day, and sang the same song that he had sung the day before. Then he went away over the hill.

I began my second round of prayers, but this time I took off my blanket as the morning sun was bright enough now to warm me. I went on through that day; and upon the beginning of my third round, I noticed a strange appearance in the sky to the south. It was like two parallel rolling clouds that stretched far into the south and far above me. They were not jet streams; they were much larger, and rolling within themselves. It was at this time then that my vision began. I had thought it would be a very mystical experience, one that would be perhaps more of a dream than a vision, and my first reaction was: "How strange! This is not at all what I thought a vision was like." I felt I was perfectly clearheaded; I had not been deprived of food nor of water for that great a length of time. It lasted for what seemed the greater part of that day, gradually revealing a changing series of distinct forms and figures, like a panorama of shifting scenes, whose meaning once again would be revealed to me only upon the completion of my fourth pipe fast.

I cannot tell this vision here, for there is a time and a place reserved for the telling of visions: a sacred setting, the proper songs, the proper preparations. It lasted, as I said, quite a long time; and by the time it was finished I was thoroughly exhausted. I lay down to rest and covered my head because the day was now very hot; and I knew that something had happened to me, because I was alternately sweating and very cold. I wanted to protect myself



from the hot sun, for every ray that touched my body burned almost as if it were focussed on my skin with a magnifying glass; yet when I covered myself, I became so hot I had to take off the blanket, and yet after I had it off for a while I got very cold alternately with being burned by the sun. It was a very strange sensation.

It was then I noticed the wind blowing. I don't understand or know how it blew that way, but all the flags would be blowing inward at one moment and then outward at another moment. I covered my head again and prayed that what was happening to me was a sacred and good thing and I asked for help that I could endure this.

Gradually I fell asleep and when I awoke it was late in the day and everything was very peaceful. What awakened me was the little blue bird that had returned to the tree and was singing the song that I spoke of before. Once again I picked up my pipe, only this time I added to my prayers thanks for that vision that had been given to me, and I prayed at the same time that through it and from it good and understanding would come to me and my people, and that the purpose of my fast would be fulfilled.

When I had finished that round, I was doubly exhausted and very weak. I placed my pipe on the pipe rack and sat once again, slipping in and out of sleep. When I drifted into sleep it was not total unconsciousness but was more like dreaming; it was as though there were multitudes of children playing around me and making a lot of noise, and I would wake up to find I was alone still in the sacred place. Then I would doze again and a phase of my childhood would return: myself as a child speaking with my grandmother and my grandfather. There were also times when in the dreams I walked in very

strange places, places I don't remember as a child. Eventually I must have rested, because by the time I awoke again the sun was just beginning to set on the horizon, so I began my fourth round for the day. Upon finishing that I was exhausted once more and I put my pipe on the rack and returned to the willow lodge. Just as I was about to enter it, Catches came again to check to see if I was all right. He went through the same ritual that he had done before, and when he asked me how I was, he could see there was something strange about me and asked me if I should go down now. I told him no, I had this night and the next day still to go and I preferred to stay them out. I told him that I had had visitors and that something mysterious occurred. He saw my swollen feet and my burned back and my burned chest and my burned face; the skin was beginning to peel. That evening when he sang the departing song, the man cried with such compassion that I cried also, not knowing whether it was for him, the song or myself.

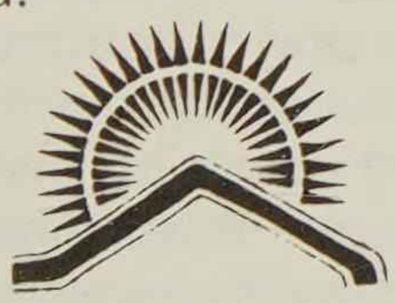
That night was a very restless one. I prayed four times. Catches did not come the next morning which was the beginning of my final day. I began the day greeting the sun, before and at the moment of its climbing over the horizon. I was very weak and my lips were very dry and felt swollen. As I returned my pipe to the rack and stood, I noticed there were two cloud banks, one to the east and one to the west, like huge cliffs, and they were moving towards each other, so that in my reckoning they would collide right above me. I prayed to each of them and told them that if this was the test that was being given me, I was ready to endure it, for I knew these things were necessary and a part of nature; for just as there is sunlight and good weather, there is also the wind and the rain which are also needed for life on this earth. Besides, I was very hot and dehydrated; I thought if it rained I would thankfully get some moisture. But these cloud signs were so forceful they made me fearful also, because only two or three weeks before the torrential rains in the Black Hills had caused floods and the loss of many lives. In our part of the country we frequently have tornadoes and strong wind storms. So I prayed and asked that I would be strong enough to endure what was to happen.

It was then that a nausea and a tremendous weakness came over me, and with that I heard the sound of wind in the pine trees and the sound of wind at a great distance and also the sound of the two approaching storms above. I put my pipe on the rack and lay down on the ground and covered my head, and I must have fainted. I don't know how long I was lying there; but on awakening I was lying on my side with my head in the dirt, and directly opposite my eyes, the tobacco rosary had been broken in one place. I staggered to my feet and picked up my pipe, and pointing it toward that place where the rosary was broken I offered it to whatever force it was that had broken through, and reminded it that this was a sacred place. I said that if the intentions it had here were good, it should accept this pipe and all it represents, but if they were evil it must depart. On completing that pipe offering, a certain strength and well-being returned to me, but I was becoming very apprehensive about that place.

It was then I began another round of prayers and while I was making it I saw that the cloud banks, which had subsided somewhat from the time I first saw them, now were beginning to build power again and to move toward each other. I thought that certainly this time I was going to be in the eye of a tornado. Upon completion of that round of prayers I became again very weak and nauseated. I returned my pipe to the rack and lay down and covered my head. That time there was a rushing sensation, almost as if I were in the middle of a whirlwind. I didn't know what caused me to cover my head—I would not know that until later—but for some reason I did and lay there praying all the while that I would be strong enough to endure whatever it was that was happening. I lost consciousness again and as I awoke I saw directly in my line of vision that the tobacco rosary had been broken in two more places. I felt very much afraid and I knew that something extraordinary had happened. Then I thought, "Now it is over. The Pipe Fast is finished." Suddenly I had a surge of energy and a strong sense of well-being. I rose and took my pipe and made my round, that time in a kind of joyous thanksgiving for all that had taken place. Indeed a part of what I had seen during the

vision prompted me on this final round to make at each quarter, in gratitude, the dance steps up and down of the Sundance, for I felt a great sense of joy but also one of responsibility and of awe, almost as if an obligation had been laid upon me.

As I returned from that round to face the west, the eagles flew above, one from each quarter; not all at once, but beginning from the west an eagle flew over me, then one from the north, one from the east, and one from the south. Soon afterward the butterfly that I had seen on the first day returned, and danced about the trees as it had done before, and disappeared. It was after all that that I noticed that the cherry trees had bent over and that the flags were now touching the ground; and it was a verification that the ceremony had indeed come to an end.



I stood then for the remainder of the day until later afternoon with my pipe and as I examined the area around me and myself, it seemed I was in a pitiful condition. Finally I heard steps approaching from the rear, and there was a procession of people coming to take me down. Catches and his brother came around in front of me. I didn't look back to see who was in the group, but stood and held my pipe.

First Catches untied the rosary and went around rolling it up. When he came to the broken parts he stood and pondered for a while and then went on rolling them into a ball. He pulled out the cherry trees and took them and the tobacco pouches and laid them over in the little gully to my right, where the valley began. He took down the willow frame and put that over there also, as well as the rack and the little flags. He smoked me with the sweet grass and then took his eagle wing fan and beating it on his leg several times, very carefully began to wipe me with the fan, making quick brushing motions as if to dust or wipe something off. Then he stood and addressed the west and prayed and gave thanks that this process had gone this far. He gave instructions to his brother to hand the things that I had used to the people that had come with him. Then he told my grandmother to come and put on my feet the moccasins she had brought. She could hardly get them on because my feet were so swollen with sunburn, and the poor little bent-over woman cried very hard. Then out of the corner of my eye I could see that my mother had arrived also. She lived 120 miles from there, and they had called her once I had been placed upon the hill. I am sure she would have objected at first, which is why I had told them not to tell her until after I had been put on the hill. We went then in a procession: Catches first, then a man with the buffalo skull, and after him I walked carrying my pipe. We went down the hill stopping four times, and each time Catches sang a song of thanksgiving.

When we reached the bottom of the hill cars were there waiting, but I told him that I preferred to walk the rest of the way. He asked me if I could, and I said yes. So the rest got in the cars and he walked ahead of me leading the way, and we went back to the sweat lodge.

When we arrived, the rest had already gotten there, and all the ceremonial paraphernalia was gathered by the sweat lodge, because it had to be purified once again. By that time the fire was roaring and the rocks were heating, and I was placed in the lodge to wait. After the rocks had been put in the men entered, once again sitting in the places they had sat in before. I was at the very back facing the door which opened to the west, Catches at my left and his brother at my right.

First of all the bowl and blanket and knife I had used were held above the hot rocks as water was poured on them, so that the spiritual

residue could be washed away and they too could return to the world of men. Those things were passed out the door and then the door was closed and the ritual began. This time Catches took sage and wiped my eyes, my nose, my mouth and my ears. Then he blew in my eyes, he blew on my nose, my mouth and my ears, so that they too would be made ready for the common world again. During the ritual the cherry juice was poured into the wooden bowl, and taking the sweet grass Catches painted the parting in my hair with cherry juice; this is symbolically my red road. Then he painted four times down the back of my hair, somehow setting the pattern that I would do this three more times to complete the cycle that had begun there.

Then he began his telling of visions—that is, the story of his power as a man and his qualifications to conduct such rites; and the little bird sound came, his intercessor, Red Hawk, arrived; and it was time for me to tell now of the things I had seen and heard and experienced on the hill. Starting from the beginning and not leaving out anything that might have meaning, I began to tell of all that had happened. The intercessor heard this and left for a while; the door was opened, and I had my first drink, which was cherry juice. Catches first dipped a braid of sweet grass in the cherry juice and I sucked the juice from the end of the sweet grass. This he did four times. After that I took four sips of the cherry juice. Next I was given four drinks of water. Then the intercessor returned, the door was closed and the singing began: translated from the sacred language into one I could understand, it was said that indeed a legitimate spiritual event had taken place, and that I was now committed for the next four years to fasting and participation in the rituals so that my vision might be fulfilled and made efficacious.

The responsibility weighing on me made me



very sad but also very happy, for I had gone there seeking something and had come away with something very wonderful, very powerful yet also very hard to live by. I had something difficult to do in the years to come.

The door was opened once more, then Catches explained that the sweat lodge is a true part of the whole rite. He explained that it was only opened four times in all, twice the first time and twice the second, and it is the beginning and ending of the ceremony. As before, at the ending the water was passed out first to the helper and then back in and then to me. Then it was time to come out and wipe ourselves and prepare ourselves for the breaking-of-the-fast meal which had been prepared and was waiting.

As we emerged from the sweat lodge, gliding in and hovering over us came the hugest eagle I have ever seen, and the people down by the house below the sweat lodge had seen it also. It circled and hovered and slowly, slowly passed over the pine trees, and the blessing rain came. There were some broken clouds in the sky, but it was sunlight; and yet a slight little rain came at that moment and a very tiny little rainbow opened up on the hillside across the valley from where we were; and we knew again that it was good and that our prayers had been heard.

We went down to the house then where I went among my relatives and shook their hands and embraced the womenfolk; it was such a happy reunion, coming back from a journey so very far away in time, since where I had gone was actually four generations back. We assembled inside the little house and a very traditional meal was served. The first dish that was brought around was the *wasna,* the dried and pounded pemmican mixed with chokecher-

ries. I gave my first handful to the spirits that they might be fed, and it was taken out and offered to them.

I had thought of food occasionally when I was on the hill, but not very much; and now when the time came that I could eat again, I was hardly hungry, and all I could take was a small amount of soup and a little bit of *wasna.*

Later the people began to leave, to return that night for the final ceremony, the one that was to be held in the dark. And I went out and sat on a stump by the woodpile and thought, and thought, and thought: how wonderful it was to be alive in this century yet also able to experience the sacred traditions from the past and to know that the Great Spirit still responds to his twentieth-century children by giving them visions and signs, and a sense of peace, and the knowledge of an all-enduring faith.

Towards Initiation



by Evelyn Eaton

Initiation, from the Latin "in ire," to go within, and "initium," a new beginning, was the name given to the age-old, traditional way of hastening evolutionary processes in the universe, through transmutation of lower, slower vibrations into higher, faster ones, changing the heavy and gross into the ethereal and subtle.

Like their predecessors, the Alchemists, modern scientists are discovering the patterns and interactions of transmutation to be the universal way of evolution, traversing the mineral, vegetable, animal and human worlds.

Alchemy was the predecessor and parent of medicine and chemistry. The Alchemists based their science of regeneration upon the transmutation of base metals into gold, or on another level, knowledge into wisdom. The wisest among them knew that there are vast hidden reserves of power within each atom of each molecule of each cell, and that man, the aggregate of his cells, is built upon a pole of positive and negative electricity.

They taught that through understanding the transmutation taking place in minerals—for they were chiefly concerned with the mineral world as the starting place for planetary evolution—man could better understand and develop the same purifying processes within

imself. They veiled their teaching in the symolism of the crucible, of fluxes and alloys, and he discovery of the Philosopher's Stone. The nner meaning of the symbols was revealed nly to initiates of a high order, after long trainng and testing, since only those instructed by God and guided by an adept should be admited to the secrets of the Grand Arcanum. It eems more and more apparent that the Alchemists understood the nature of atomic nergy and its release, and the dangers of such wesome power in the hands of the unfit. They vorked in harmony with the laws of nature, nd tried to speed up natural processes, not hrough the use of violence and explosives, roducing dangerous radiations and deadly oisons, but through the controlling power of he spiritually developed mind.

Other scientists and sages of the mystery chools symbolized the truths of transmutation nd evolution by a Ladder, of infinite gradaons or initiations, stretching upwards from the owest, grosser atoms, molecules of solid matter, to the subtlest, most high-powered atomic ibrations, nearest to the original or causative nfluence, "That About Which Nothing Can Be nown."

Other systems of initiation taught the same uths under the symbolism of a quest, or pilrimage, the search for the Holy Grail, the ourney towards Osiris, the Hopi Road of Life, nd so on. Both the Ladder and the Quest are idespread symbols among Amerindian naons. The Ladder is depicted on rock drawings nd petroglyphs thousands of years old, also n modern baskets and beaded ornaments. he Quest toward the Causative Influence, Vakan-Tanka, Manitou, Wacondah, Yasinane, Great Spirit, Great Imagination, Great Mystery, is still the road of initiation for merindians.

Among the Algonquins of the Northeast, for nstance, there is the journey to Glooscap, or uluskap, who dwells on the top of a high cliff (Cape Blomidon). The dangers, tests and trials of the quest were graphically described in the Micmac and Passamaquoddy sacred book inscribed on birchbark leaves.[1] They were enough to daunt the bravest, but reassurance was given that those who properly prepared themselves to undertake the journey and persevered to the end would succeed in their quest.

He greatly loved mankind
and wherever He might be,
Though afar in the wilderness
He was never far away,
Away from his Indian children.
He dwelt in a lonely land,
But whoever went to seek him
The Master ever found.

Proper preparation began with purification in the Sweat Lodge, followed by fasting, further purification, then the setting out on the vision trail. This is still the method of preparation, not only among Algonquins, but in all the tribes, though the description of the Goal and the Journey differs from tribe to tribe. In each of them similarities can be found to the ancient mystery schools of Egypt and earlier, and to later reflections of those schools.

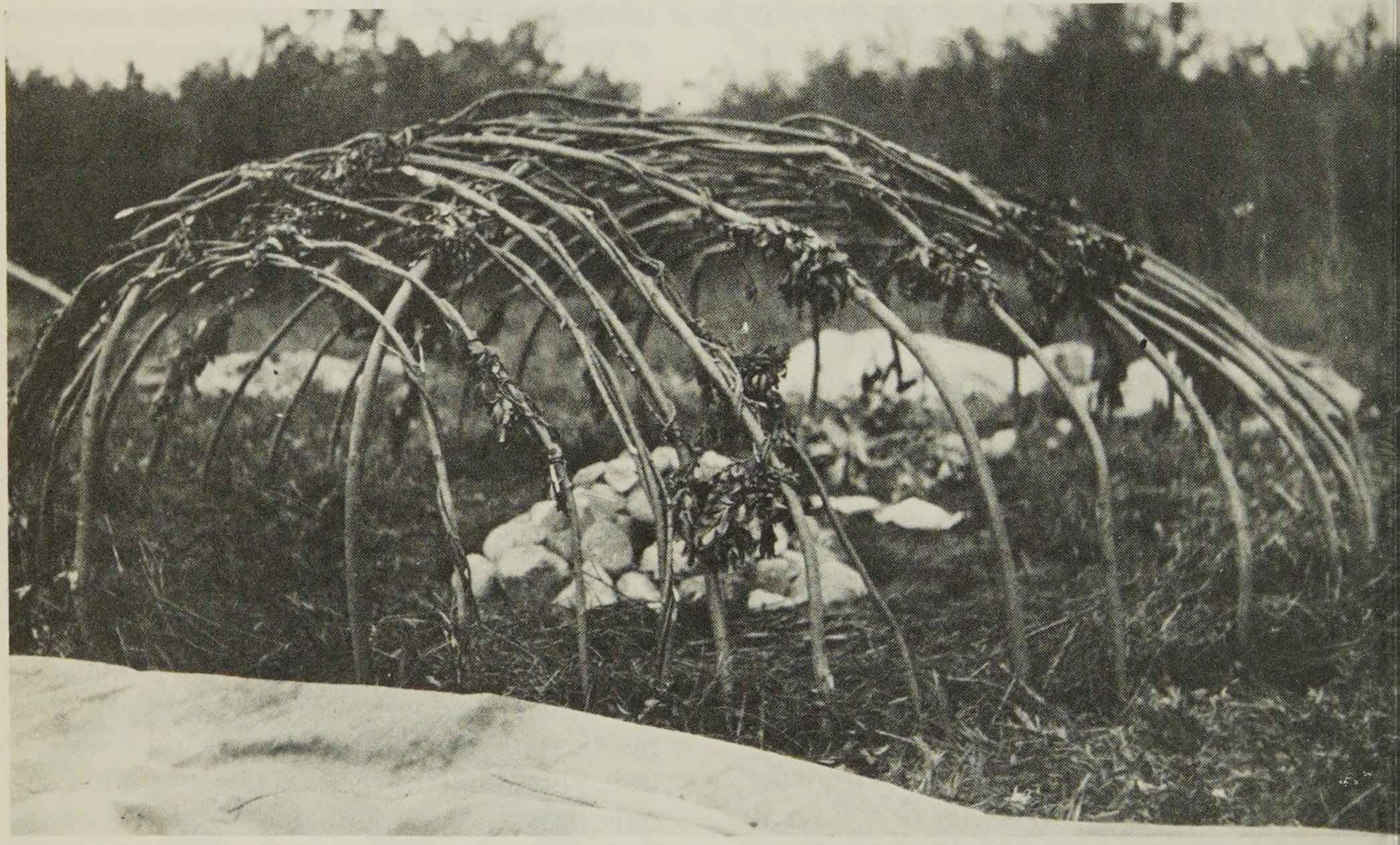
Now, as in ancient times, the candidate for enlightenment who comes properly prepared, comes in a state of darkness and uncertainty, a temporary withdrawal of vision, and comes unarmed, deprived of all those assets, tangible and intangible, which men set store by and rely on for protection and power.

First, in the darkness of the Sweat Lodge, the candidate sits in his place in the circle round the fire of burning rocks. He and the men and women with him in the Sweat Lodge are thus symbolically placed on the circumference of the Great Medicine Wheel, each in front of his or her radius to the Center. The Great Medicine Wheel is the blueprint of the universe, containing all creation, each vibrating atom in its

place.

The round hole of the fireplace is the hub of the universe, the center of the Wheel, toward which the radii converge. "Many roads has He fashioned, All of them lead to the Light."[2] The burning stones contain the elementals of fire, the water thrown on them the elementals of water, the rising steam the elementals of the air, the earth beneath all the elementals of the earth. These four elements will test and purify the neophyte and those in the Sweat Lodge with him.

Testing by the four elements is found in all initiatory systems. We find descriptions of these



Sweat Lodge

tests in literature, art and music in all civilisations. For example, the whole of Act Two in Mozart's Masonic opera, *The Magic Flute,* deals with the necessity for silence and discretion, followed by four ritual trials, by Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

After the rounds of the Sweat Lodge, usually four, though sometimes five or seven, with the special songs, and "talking" (prayer) by the Medicine Man, the entrance flap is raised, light returns to the lodge, and the sacred pipe is handed in by the doorman or outer guard who has been protecting and caring for the Sweat Lodge.

Another set of symbols now comes into use. The Pipe also represents the universe of all created things and their relationship to the Creator. "With this sacred pipe you will walk upon the Earth, for the Earth is sacred. Every step taken upon her should be a prayer. The bowl of this pipe is of red stone. It is of the Earth. The stem of this pipe is of wood, and this represents all that grows upon the Earth. The feathers which hang where the stem fits into the bowl represent the Eagle and all the wingeds of the air. All things of the universe are joined to you who smoke the pipe, all send their voices to the Great Spirit. When you pray with this pipe, you pray for and with everything created."[3]

The stem is sometimes used alone, in sacred dances, to bless objects and in other ways, like the magician's baton or rod, which also must be fashioned of certain woods, gathered in a certain way. The rod is used in Alchemy, as the first of four essential tools of magic. In many

other initiatory systems the rod is used as a channel of universal power. *The Grand Grimoire* devotes a whole chapter to the composition of a mysterious wand, which could also be misused as a destroying or blasting rod. So also the pipestem can be misused as everything created for right use and enjoyment can be, and often is. We need only think of the modern misuse of atomic energy to understand the symbol of the Blasting Rod. That is why the Pipe is only given by a Medicine Man to those who have earned the right to be trusted with it.

The pipehead is carved from red catlinite (pipestone) quarried chiefly at the Pipestone National Monument in Minnesota, where for centuries representatives of all the tribes journeyed to obtain the stone for their pipes. There was once a seashore there, where a deposit of muddy clay was buried in sand. Pressure, heat and chemical action transmuted the sand into quartzite and the clay into pipestone.

The color of the stone is significant. Red is the color of the earth, the color of blood, the color of the redskinned peoples. "The Morning Star is like a man; he is painted red all over; that is the color of life." Red is one of the four elements, (fire), one of the four corners of the earth (south). The Alchemists' Sophic Sulphur, or gold, was frequently called the Red King. Red, the vigorous color of health, was the most interesting and frequently used color in magic healing. Scriabin gave the color red to the note C. Newton also gave the color red to the note C and the sound Do. Before Newton, astronomers writing of the Music of the Spheres gave red to the planet Mars and the sound C-Do.

There are many more aspects and analogies to be found in the color of the sacred pipestone: for example, the symbolism of crossing the Red Sea, the most dangerous part of an undertaking, or of a stage in life. To leave Egypt for the Promised Land implied the crossing of this Red Sea, a symbol of spiritual evolution, purification by fire and also of death seen as the threshold between worlds of matter and of spirit.

Whenever the pipehead is joined to the pipestem, for the purpose of sacred smoking, all these elements are present. The tobacco stands for the vegetable world, and the ascending smoke, combining the elements of air and fire (as the clay pipehead combines those of earth and water) is the symbol of the relationship between earth and heaven, the path through fire to transmutation.

Now the Pipe passes clockwise round the Sweat Lodge, each person smoking it in turn, touching the point to Mother Earth, then raising it and puffing once to Father Sky, once to Mother Earth, once to each of the Four Directions, and after that as many puffs as needed or desired, not exceeding seven. Then it is handed to the next on the left, and finally it reaches the Medicine Man, who finishes it, and hands it to the doorman to be placed on the altar outside the lodge. Then the Sweat is over and it is time to leave.

After eating together in the ritual way, later in the evening, when darkness has fallen, but before midnight, there comes the putting-into-fast of the candidates for initiation. A procession sets out to the place of the fasting-lodges, built by those who are to fast, in as private a place as can be found. Here, with nothing but his blanket and his pipe, the candidate is closed into the shelter, the doorway sealed with special boughs and flags of colored cloth, while songs are sung, and the people walk in a circle around each hut. For three days and four nights he (or she) must stay in the fasting lodge, with no food, no water, and no sleep. Every morning at dawn the flap is unsealed and the candidate emerges to worship the Great Spirit in the form of the rising sun, attends to physical needs, and then re-enters the lodge, where, during the day, the flap remains open, and dozing is permitted. At nightfall the flap is sealed again and the vigil resumed.

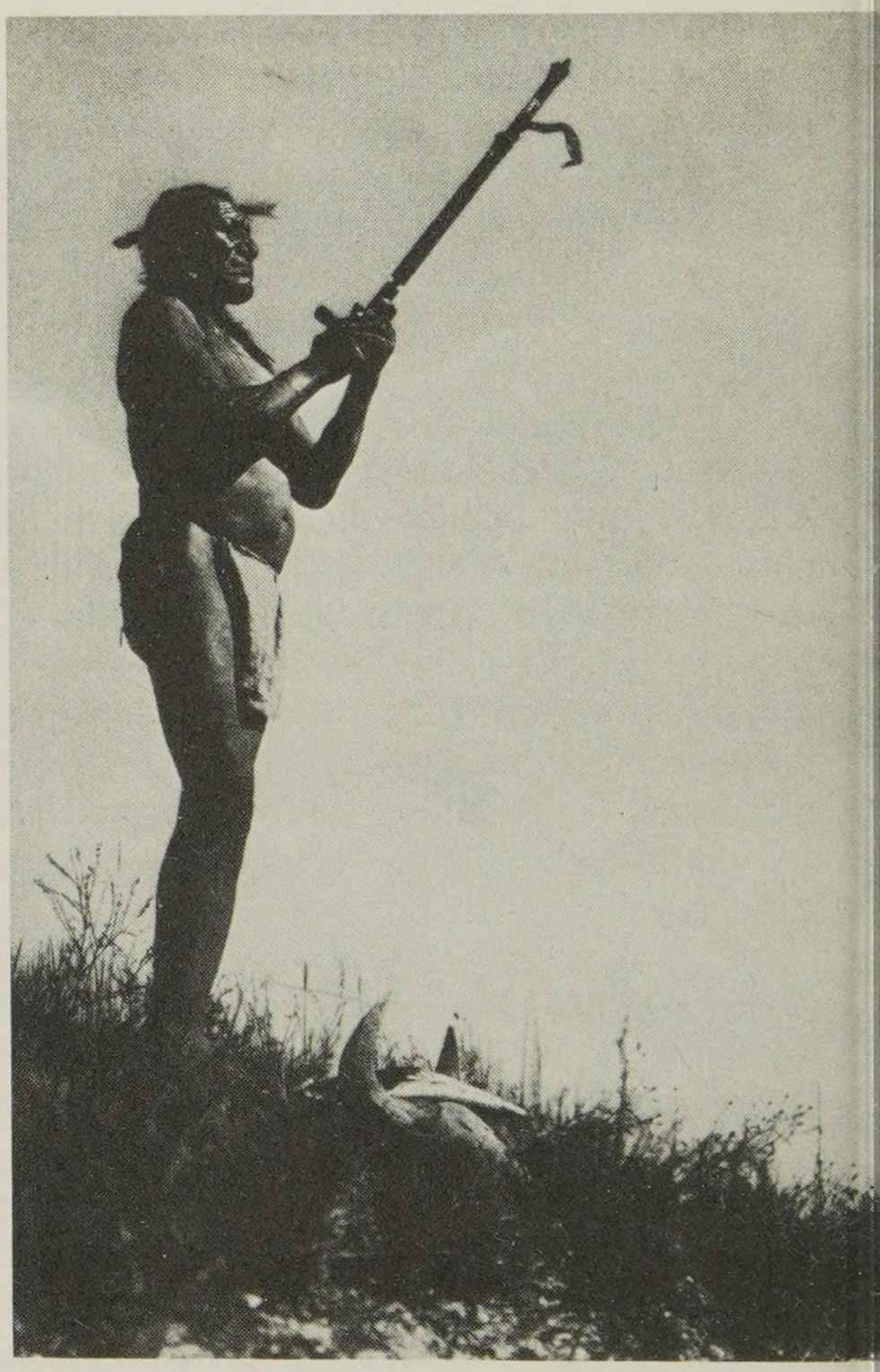
It is during these four nights of hunger, thirst, song and supplication that initiation may take place, as the candidate jouneys on the Spirit Road of the Milky Way, to the Great Lodge of the Grandfathers Above, where he will receive his Vision, and perhaps a new name.

At dawn on the fourth day, the procession re-forms, and in silence he is conducted back from his fasting lodge to the Sweat Lodge, wrapped in his fasting blanket, and carrying his pipe. After he has changed to a Sweat Lodge loincloth, and left his blanket as a gift to the Medicine Man, he enters the Sweat with his pipe, and the coming-out ceremony begins.

During the four rounds he may be asked to speak about the experiences of his fast and his vision, as much or as little as he cares to. He is offered water, in a dipper, but he pours it on the fire without drinking. The Medicine Man's pipe is passed, and smoked, and the fast is over. Presently, when he has washed and put on clean clothes, he will drink his first water and eat his first food, with those who have stood watch for him, through the long nights, and have prayed for him and his vision-quest.

Later he may fast again, but nothing will be as strong or as deep as his first four-night fast, for the transmutation of atoms—his and the atoms of all concerned, all who can be reached through him and through his pipe—to receive the blessing of Those Above. Nor will those who participate forget the silent procession beneath the moon to the fasting lodge, the sound of the sacred songs, the silhouette of the seekers in their fasting blankets on the way to initiation.

They will not speak of these things, except to say "It is good to know that the way to the Spirit land is open to all who will sweat and fast as the Grandfathers showed our people, long ago."



Oglala Sioux, *Prayer to the Mystery*

[1]*Kuluskap the Master and Other Algonkian Poems*. Collected by Louis Mitchell; trans. by Charles Godfrey Leland and John D. Prince. (Ne York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1902.)

[2]Rudyard Kipling, "A Song to Mithras."

[3]Sacred White Buffalo Woman, when she broug the Pipe to the Sioux. Legend preserved at Pipeston National Monument.



Observations on Initiation

We are in the Kali yuga, that is, in a period of time where spiritual knowledge has become hidden and where only a few can still reach it, provided they put themselves in the conditions required for obtaining it.

* * *

Initiation implies three conditions which present themselves as though in sequence and might be said to correspond respectively to the three terms: "potentiality," "virtuality," and "actuality." (1) *"Qualification"* constituted by various possibilities inherent in the individual's own nature and which are the *materia prima* on which the initiatic work will have to operate; (2) *transmission,* by means of attachment to a traditional organization, of a spiritual influence conferring the "enlightenment" which will allow the being in question to make order in his inherent possibilities and develop them; (3) the *inner work* by which, with the help of "auxiliary" elements or "supports" from the outside, according to need and particularly in the first stages, this development will gradually be realized, so that the being may pass, step by step, through the different degrees of the initiatic hierarchy that will lead him toward the final aim of "Deliverance" or "Supreme Identity."

René Guénon
Aperçus sur l'Initiation
(Paris: Etudes Traditionelles, 1953)

Epicycle II

The Seven Gates of the Great Below

Inanna, the queen of heaven, goddess of heaven and earth, has set her mind on the Great Below: from the Great Above, she has set her heart, the sister of Shamash, on the dark kingdom, the realm of her sister Ereshkigal. Heaven and earth she abandons, directs her step towards the underworld; seven cities the queen of heaven abandons, to descend to the nether world.

To her side she fastens the seven divine decrees, on her head places the holy *shugurra,* the crown of the plain. Radiance she places upon her countenance, a sweet ointment upon her face. The rod of lapis lazuli she grips in her hand, small lapis lazuli stones she fastens about her neck. Sparkling and bright are the stones at her breast, a ring of red gold she puts on her hand. About her breast she fastens a breastplate, and all the garments of her ladyship she arranges around her body. Now fully bedecked with the seven decrees at her side, with the seven bright ornaments of her royalty adorning her body, the queen of heaven walks toward the nether world, her faithful messenger at her side, the loyal Ninshubur.

To Ninshubur she gave her instructions, she warned him of her peril:

"O Ninshubur, my constant support! Faithful one, bearer of supporting words, listen to me, hearken to my need. Now I descend to the nether world, to the realm of my sister Ereshkigal I now direct my steps. When I shall have come there, when I shall have been there three days, fill heaven with supplications for me, in the house of the gods pray for me. Lower thine eyes for me, bow thy head for me. In a single garment, dressed as a pauper, go to the house of Enlil at Nippur. Bow low before Enlil, weep before him, with the words I shall give thee, pray for me.

**This is a retelling of material traditionally referred to as "Inanna's Descent into the Netherworld" (Sumerian), or "Ishtar's Descent" (Acadian); both sources were used.*



"If Enlil will not stand by me, go to Ur.

"In the house of Nanna at Ur, bow low before Nanna, weep before him, with the words I shall give thee, pray for me.

"If Nanna will not stand by me, go to Eridu.

"At Eridu, in the house of Enki, bow low before Enki, weep before him, with the words I shall give thee, pray for me. Surely will Enki, the father, the lord of wisdom, who knows the secrets of the food and water of life, come to my aid."

To Ninshubur she has given her instructions; the queen of heaven walks toward the dark kingdom, sending her messenger from her to bear her words against her return.

At the gate of blue stone, the door of the underworld, Inanna asked entry; she demanded to be let in, she threatened the gatekeeper:

"Open the house, gatekeeper, open the house. Throw open the gate, allow me to enter. I, Inanna, queen of heaven, would enter the underworld: open the house! If thou dost not, darker than night will be my wrath, like a storm it will fall upon thee. I will smash the door down, shatter the bolt. I will crush the doorposts, tear down the lintel. I will raise up the dead, eating the living, so that the dead will outnumber the living, will abandon their kingdom and come up to the earth."

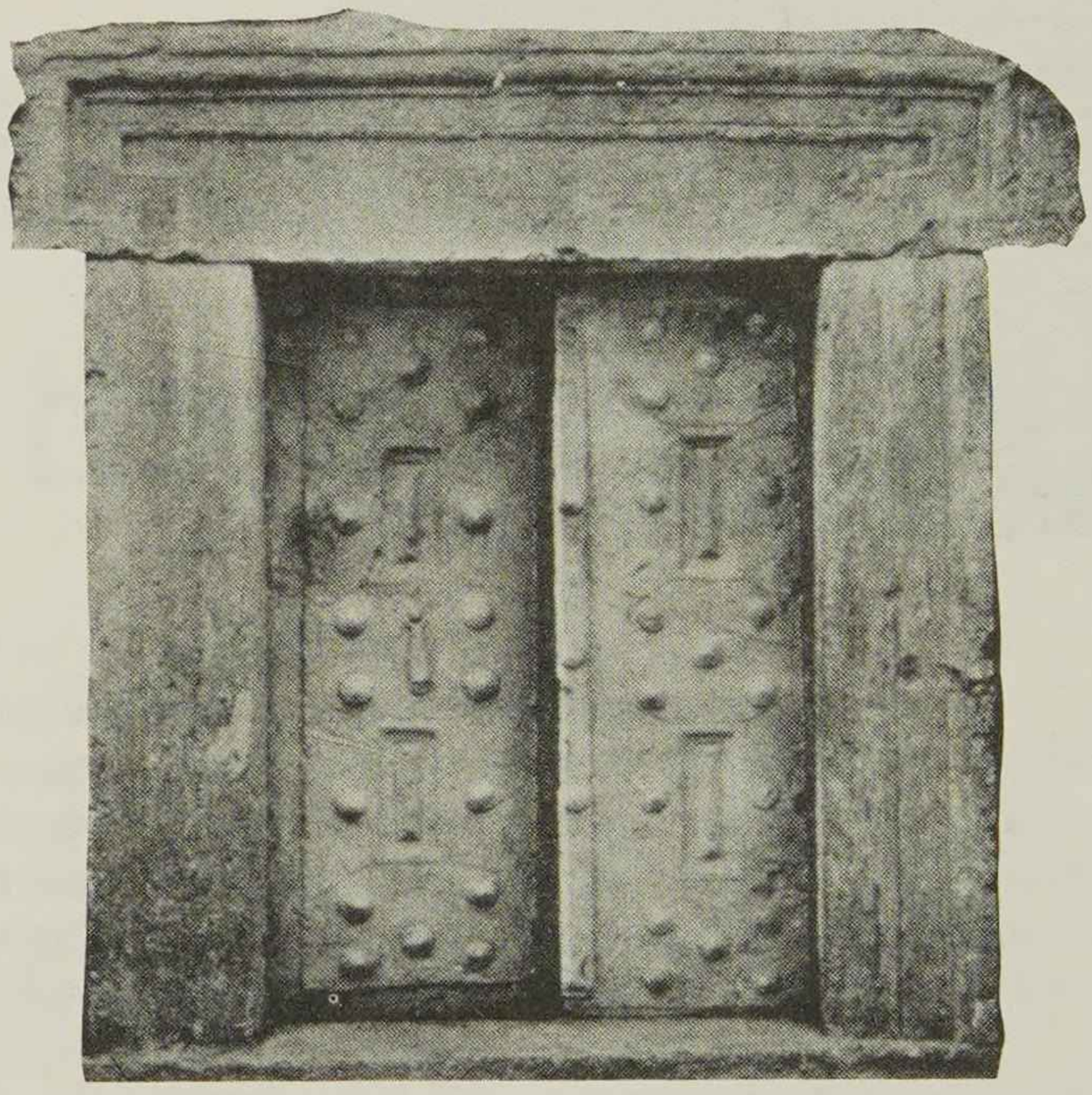
To lofty Inanna, the gatekeeper Neti bowed down, begging her patience, appeasing her anger. "I will go," he said to her, "I will go to my queen, to the lady Ereshkigal I will go. To her I will bear thy words, awesome and terrible. I will tell her that her sister Inanna stands before the blue gate and demands admittance." Neti bowed low before the goddess, he bowed low and departed.

When Ereshkigal had heard the words of Inanna which the gatekeeper Neti had brought to her, her face turned pale as tamarisk wood, her lips became dark as a bruised reed. "Why does she come here?" asks Ereshkigal. "What has brought the queen of heaven, my

sister, to my empire, the land of the dead? Shall we give up our empire? Shall I be made to drink water with the Anunnaki? Shall we eat clay instead of bread, drink pond water for beer? Shall the queen of the dead be made to mourn for her subjects? Go, gatekeeper, return to the blue gate. Admit my sister according to the ancient rules. Let her be brought low before me, abiding by the rules of the gates of the empire of eternal night."

Then Neti returns to the gate, and comes again before the queen of heaven. He unlocks the gate and allows her to enter by the rules of the gate. By the rules of each gate Inanna enters the underworld.

At the first gate, as he enters, the crown of the plain, the fair *shugurra,* is taken from her.



"O gatekeeper, why have you taken the crown from my head?"

"Extraordinarily have the rules of the Nether World been perfected, O Inanna! O Inanna, do not question the rites of the Nether World!"

And at each of the gates, by the rules of the Nether World, another of her royal ornaments is taken from her—the rod of lapis lazuli, the necklace, the sparkling stones, the ring of red gold, and the breastplate. Finally, at the seventh gate, as she enters, the garments of her ladyship are taken from her. Now, naked and bowed low, the Lady of Battles is taken before her sister, the dreadful Ereshkigal, queen of the Nether World. In the palace of dust she reigns, the dread queen, she oversees the realm of the dead. In that place is no light, they are blind who reside there. Clothed as birds, with drooping wings for raiment, the inhabitants of that world go about mournfully. Over all that is there lies dust: dust is upon the latchbolt and lintel, upon hearthstone and floor. In all the chambers of the dead there is darkness and dust. To that place now has come the queen of heaven, before the throne of the seven deadly judges, where Ereshkigal rules among the Anunnaki.

Upon Inanna they fasten their eyes, the Anunnaki, the eyes of death. Misery of the eyes they unleash against her eyes, misery of the sides against her sides, misery of the heart against her heart, misery of the feet against her feet, misery of the head against her head. The sixty miseries they unleash against her, those whose words torture the spirit. In misery is Inanna bound, hand and foot. The healthy queen is turned into a sick woman; the sick woman is turned into a corpse. The corpse is hung upon a stake.

Three days and three nights have passed since Inanna went down to the Great Below. On the morning after the third night Ninshubur the faithful raises himself up. Like a pauper, he puts on a single garment. He anoints his head with dust, with ashes he adorns his face. Tears streak the ashes. With supplications and prayers he goes before the gods, all heaven he fills with complaints for Inanna. He lowers his eyes for Inanna, he bows low his head. Dressed as a pauper he journeys to Nippur, to the house of Enlil. He bows low before Enlil, he weeps before him. With the words of Inanna he prays for her:

"O Father Enlil, let not thy daughter be put to death!
Let not thy good gold be ground into the dust of the
Nether World;
Let not thy daughter be put to death.
Let not thy good stone, the fair lapis lazuli, be crushed
into powder in the Nether World;
Let not thy daughter be put to death.
Let not thy sparkling stones become dull pebbles in the
Nether World;
Let not thy daughter be put to death.
Let not thy good boxwood be cut up for kindling in
the Nether World;
Let not thy daughter be put to death.
O Father Enlil, let not thy daughter, the fair Inanna,
be put to death;
Let not thy daughter be put to death!"

To Ninshubur he answers, Father Enlil:

"My daughter Inanna, queen of the Great Above, directed her mind to the Great Below, to the realm of her sister she turned her heart. The seven decrees she fastened at her side, the seven adornments she put about herself. With threats and curses she came to the gates of the Nether World, but by the rules of the gates was she made to enter. What, shall I gainsay the rites of the Nether World? Shall I turn back the judgment of the Anunnaki? For what shall the rules of the Nether World have been perfected if they may be turned aside?"

Father Enlil stood not by his daughter Inanna; Ninshubur went to Ur.

Dressed as a pauper, he journeys to Ur, to the house of Nanna. He bows low before Nanna, weeps before him, and makes the selfsame prayer. But again his supplication is cast aside.

Father Nanna stood not by his daughter Inanna; Ninshubur went to Eridu.

To the First City, Eridu, dressed as a pauper, comes Nishubur, to the house of Enki, the Lord of Wisdom. He bows low before Enki, weeps before him, and prays once more with the words of Inanna.

"Let not thy daughter be put to death!" he pleads once more.

And to Ninshubur he answers, the Lord Of Wisdom, Father Enki:

"What has my daughter done!
What has the queen of heaven done!
My heart is troubled for her.

From the Great Above she is absent!
To the Great Below she has descended!
My heart is troubled for her.

Stripped of her adornments, she has been brought low!
With the sixty miseries she has been bound!
My heart is troubled for her.

Her corpse hangs upon a stake!
My heart is troubled for her.
My heart is troubled for my daughter Inanna."

Then Father Enki brought forth earth and water and fashioned the *kurgarru,* and with earth and water he made the *kalaturru*. Two creatures did he make, neither man nor woman did he make them. To them he entrusted the food of life. To them he entrusted the water of life. And into their ears he poured his instructions.

"To the Great Below direct your steps, bow not before Neti. To the gate of blue stone bear your trust, bow not down before it. Without life and without death have I made you, the gates of the Nether World will open before you. Neither man nor woman have I made you, you will not be brought low. To the center of the Nether World direct your steps, there find the stake on which a corpse hangs. Upon the corpse hung from the stake, direct the fear of the rays of fire. Sixty times sprinkle the food of life upon it, sixty times sprinkle the water of life. Truly, when you have done this, Inanna will arise."

To the Great Below they journey, the two creatures. The *kurgarru* bears the food of life, the *kalaturru* bears the water of life. Before Neti they do not bow low, neither do they brush him aside. To the great gate of blue stone they bear their trust. They bow not down before it, neither do they show it disrespect. Through the seven gates of the Nether World they go, the two creatures, to the center of the dark kingdom they go. Before Ereshkigal they have come, before the eyes of the Anunnaki. They do not fear the eyes of death, for neither living nor dead has Enki made them. Miseries of the eyes have no power over them, miseries of the sides have no power. Miseries of the heart have no power over them, miseries of the feet have no power. Miseries of the head have no power over them, the sixty miseries have no power. Upon the corpse hanging from a stake they direct the fear of the rays of fire. Sixty times they sprinkle upon the corpse of Inanna the food of life, sixty times they sprinkle the water of life.

Inanna arises.



To the world above she directs her step, the queen of heaven. From the Great Below, she turns her heart again to the Great Above. Through the seven gates of the Nether World she goes back:

At the first gate she is given her garments of ladyship,
At the second gate she is given her breastplate.
How beautifully they adorn her!

At the third gate she is given her ring of red gold,
At the fourth gate she is given her sparkling stones.
How beautifully they adorn her!

At the fifth gate she is given her necklace of lapis lazuli,
At the sixth gate she is given her rod of lapis lazuli.
How beautifully they adorn her!

At the seventh gate she is given the *shugurra,* the crown of the plain. How beautifully it adorns her!
Beautifully adorned with the seven treasures, Inanna goes forth.

The Anunnaki flee before her, the souls of the peaceful hide themselves. Before her and after her hasten the dead, clamoring around her in procession: the small demons like reeds, the large demons like tablet styluses walk at her side. With the company of the dead, Inanna comes forth from the Nether World, the Star of Lamentation ascends to the Great Above.

From Stone to a New Heaven

An interpretation of an ancient Peruvian temple

by Fernando Llosa Porras

In ancient times, when Niu-kua undertook the ordering of the Universe, the Four Poles were overturned, the Nine Provinces divided, Heaven did not cover everywhere, Earth did not support the whole horizon, Fire burned without ever dying out, Water flooded everything without ever subsiding, ferocious Beasts devoured the true men and Birds of Prey carried away the weak ones. It was then that Niu-kua melted stones of five colors to repair the azure Heaven; cut the feet of the Turtle to harden the Four Poles; killed the Black Dragon to bring order to the land of Ki; piled up cane ash to hold back the licentious waters. Heaven was repaired, the Four Poles lifted, the licentious waters were dried up, and the land of Ki brought to equilibrium, the ferocious animals perished, the true men survived, the square Earth carries on its back the round Heaven which embraces it, and Union between the Yin and the Yang was accomplished.

Marcel Granet, *La Pensée Chinoise*

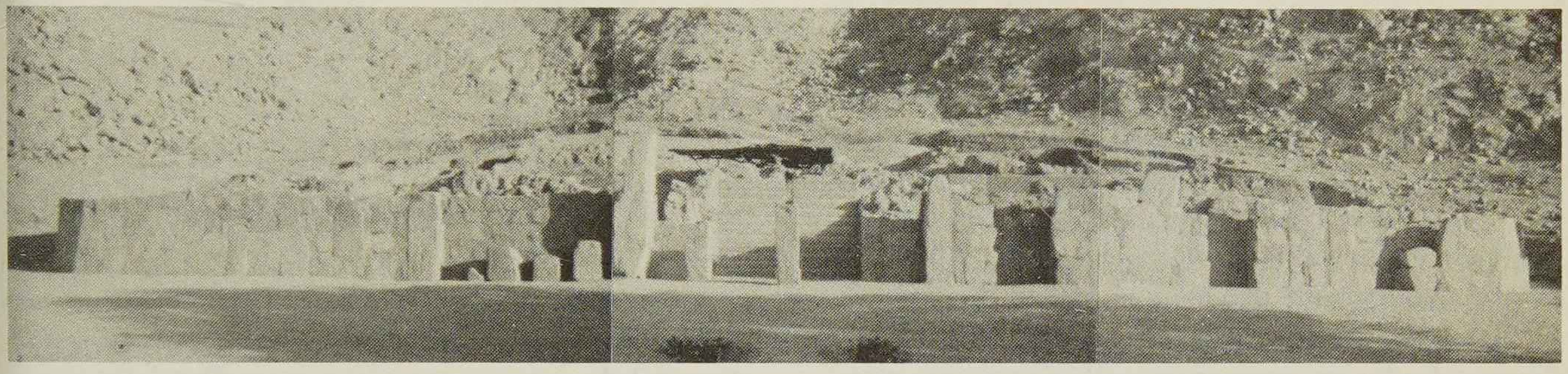


Plate 1: The Central Compound at Sechín

Niu-kua, said to have lived in the fourth millennium B.C., was the legendary wife and sister of Fo Hi, first of the mythical Emperors. She was responsible for insuring the stability and solidity of the world, or the substantial side of manifestation—in this instance, to repair a tear in the sky made by a giant. This text from ancient Chinese tradition relates in symbolic terms the coming of a new age, or what ancient American tradition refers to as the birth of a new sun.

The essence of this legend is at the heart of mythology in the Andes and Meso-America, where we discover the same basic elements: the passage from a state of chaos or barbarism, represented by the four Mayan giants or the Chorti Black Giant, to a new cultural age; the search for the re-establishment of a lost equilibrium by a mythical, solar-lunar, masculine-feminine couple; the return to a primordial state through a process of transformation; and finally, the founding of a mythical city or sacred center, axis of the new world, where the connection with the spiritual influence (Heaven) is rediscovered.

For the Chortis of Honduras this city is Tamoanchan, land of eagle and serpent, paradise of flowers, where the God of Maize is born. For the Quichés, it is Paxil and Cayala, where there was great plenty of delicious foods; for the Toltecs, Tula, which means the place of abundance, and for the Aztecs, Aztlan, or Place of the Dawn. In South America, it is in Sechín that the transformation process leading to the birth of a new sun is expressed, and in an iconography that links primordial Eastern tradition with the American past.

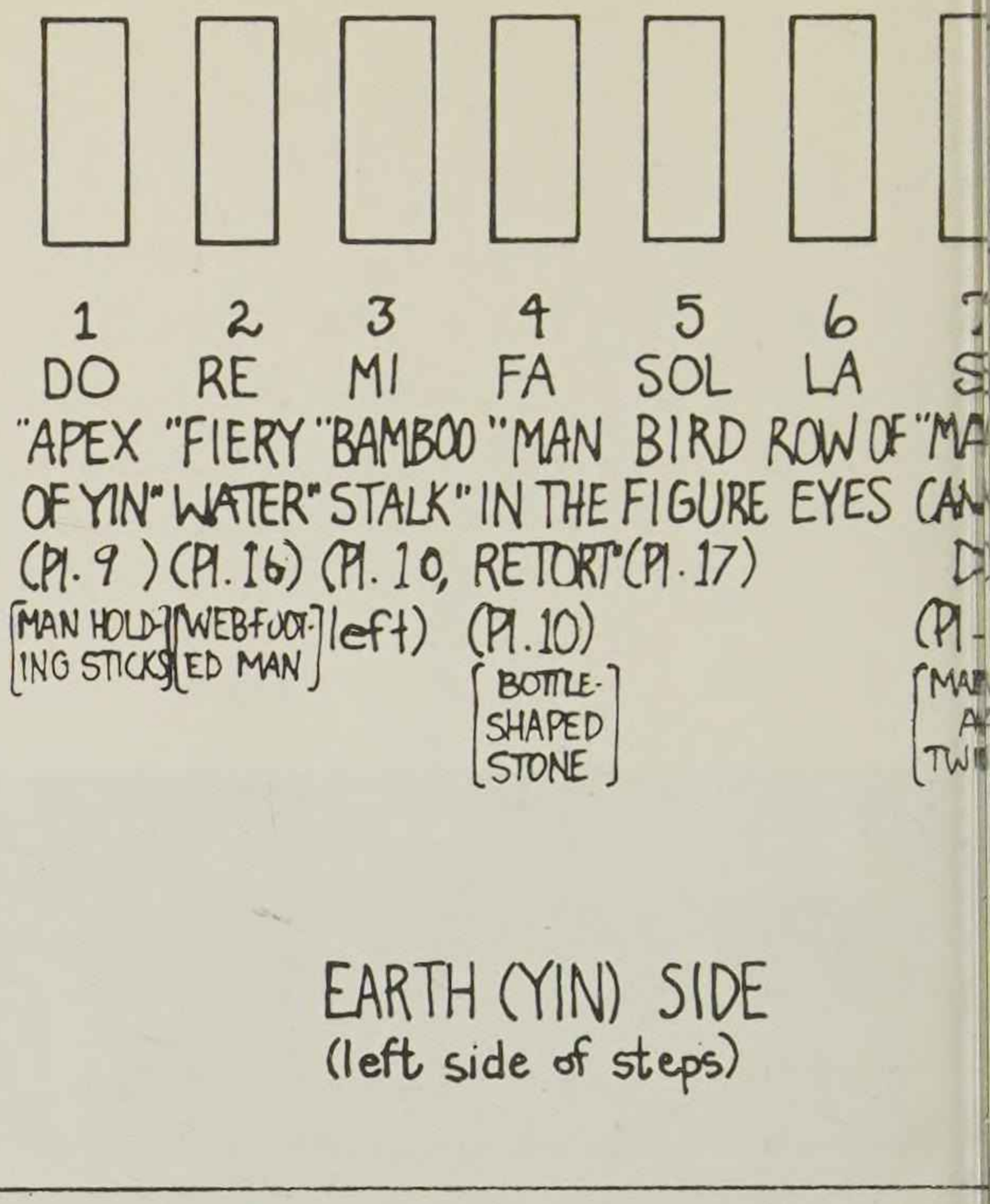
So little is known of that past that all theories as to the identity of the founders of its original civilizations remain as speculations, which they irresistibly invite. Who can look at the ruins in the Andes or the Peruvian coast without questioning the sources of that art? Behind the complex mythological and symbolic language expressed in Chavin de Huantar and in Sechín, there is a source of metaphysical concepts, a way of looking at man and his meaning, which is the patrimony of some great tradition. The parallels suggested by the rich imagery of the stone bas-reliefs of ancient Peru with the traditional wisdom of the East, especially Taoist and Vedantic, raise fascinating and probing questions, whether or not they represent historical facts. We know that at a later date adepts were sent abroad by the early Oriental masters "in search of the mountains of immortality," carrying their teaching with them on their journey; it is not impossible that some of these pilgrims arrived on the shores of South America, and that their knowledge influenced the founding of religious schools. Whether or not it happened in this way, there can be no doubt that the ruins of Chavín and Sechín are the products of a deep metaphysical teaching.

Sechín, 360 kilometers north of Lima and hardly more than a stone's throw from the Pan American Highway, is a ceremonial sanctuary that is one of a series of what appear to be sacred initiatic centers in the northern and central coastal zone of Peru. Dated at 1500 B.C., it was discovered by the Peruvian archeologist J. C. Tello in 1937. It comprises five temples or enclosures, of which we shall consider chiefly the central one and its remarkable façade. [Plate 1]

The central compound contains, among other decorations, a bas-relief of a man, head downwards, right arm towards the floor and left hand up, palm forward. His face and features are birdlike, and a turban springs from his head in an enormous double spiral [Plate 2]. Another fresco is notable, of a bird-feline figure, painted in white, black, blue, and red—colors which correspond in Far Eastern tradition to four of the five elements and the four cardinal directions.

This central enclosure is surrounded on three sides by an imposing wall of huge granite stelae, ranging from two to more than fourteen feet in height. Twenty-two large figures engraved on the stones form the main façade, alternating with forty-five smaller stones, and the diversity of designs and variations in size and shape give an immediate impression of apparent disorder, heightened by the simplicity and seeming ingenuousness of the broad linear engraving. Heads seem to float among marching men, torsos, and bamboo stalks, and the closed eyes of most of the faces suggest sleep or a trance state. Almost all the designs on the smaller stones are of human heads, whose most unusual feature is three flowing bands which spring from skull, eyes, or mouth, suggesting emanations or vibrations. These inexplicable lines, free-floating heads, and amputated parts of bodies have given rise to a local interpretation that the façade at Sechín illustrates a bloody battle between two warrior bands, the victors and the dismembered victims. This point of view cannot survive serious analysis of the iconography, or a second look at the expression of the faces, which suggest not the agonies of killing and mutilation, but concentrated listening to an inner rhythm which guides the steps of the march. [Plates 3, 4 and 5]

In my opinion, the façade represents a great initiatic procession, a cosmology engraved in stone, a high expression of an ancient school of thought that goes back to primordial tradition. Sechín expresses an axial, polar symbolism which seems essentially concerned with the search for the center of the human condition,



and indicates a path toward transcendence, toward the restoration of what all traditions refer to as the original state.

However, Sechín must be studied not only in relation to its possible roots in ancient tradition, but also in connection with the sanctuary to which it is hierarchically linked, and which represented for the Indians, according to 16th century chroniclers, "Rome or Jerusalem to the Christians." I refer to the temple of Chavín de Huantar, on the eastern slope of the Andes, recognized as the principal source of the first high Andean culture, and whose name was recorded by Bernabé Cobo in the 16th century

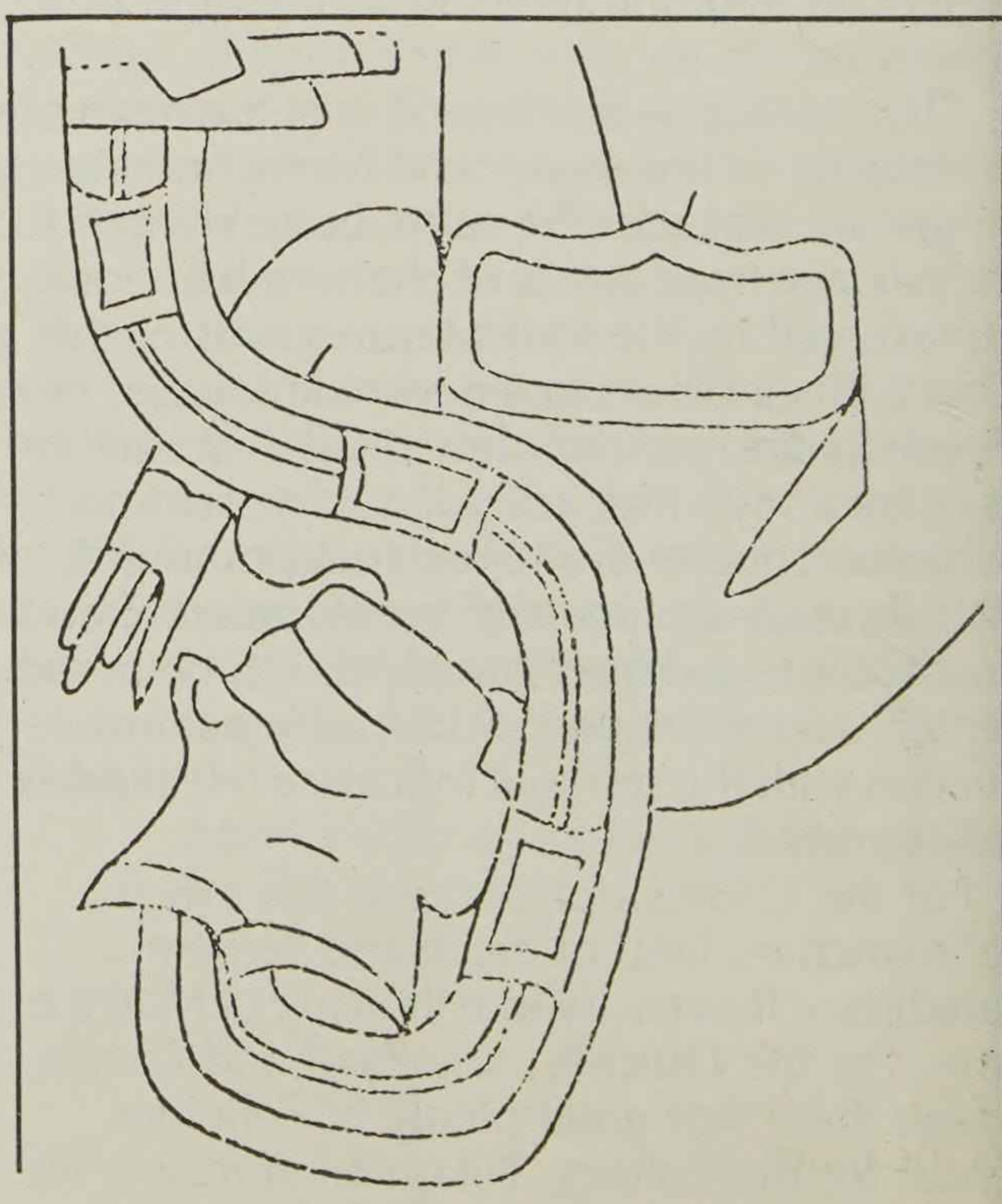


Plate 2: "The Diving Man"

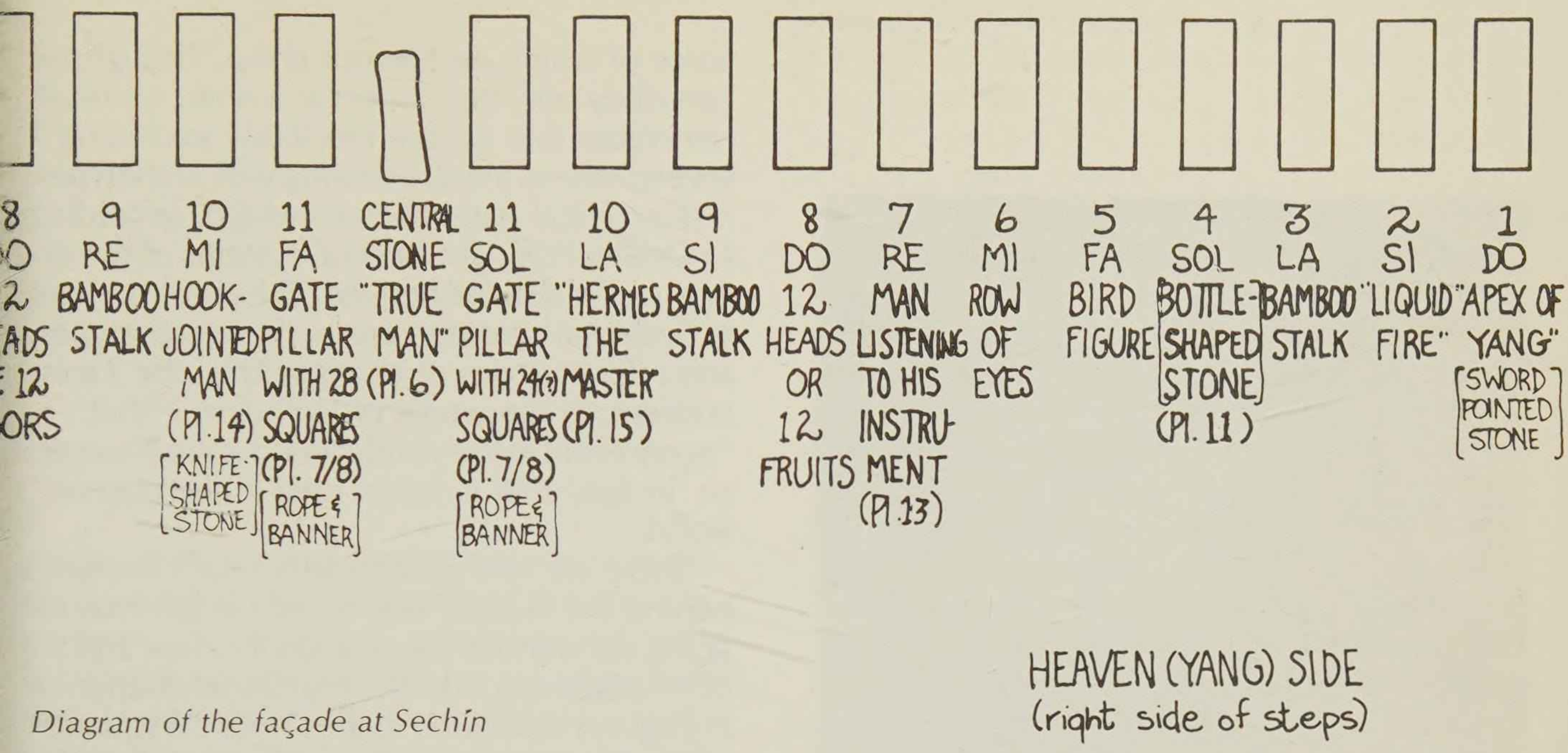


Diagram of the façade at Sechín

as stemming from Tay-pi or Chaipi, which in aboriginal language means "in the middle" or "in the center."

The symbolism of this extraordinary holy place at Chavín constantly refers to primordial man: Man the Microcosmos or Transcendent Man, the bridge between heaven and earth. The symbolism of Sechín constantly refers to Primordial Man, and in my view expresses the stage of initiation previous to Transcendent Man, according to Oriental tradition. This stage is called that of True Man, a reflection of Transcendent Man on the horizontal plane, placed in the center of the Wheel of Existence, and subject to the alternating forces of life and death, Yin and Yang, which constitute the flow of the "current of forms."

In front of the façade, forming the apex of a triangle with the axial pillars that frame the entrance to the compound, is a six-foot-high rectangular monolith of extraordinary syncretistic and abstract design. A vertical axis is drawn, with a central cylindrical axle box, like that of a chariot. The central axle is framed by two ears or "ear handles" as in an oriental cauldron or Ting, a sacred ceremonial vessel. [Plate 6]

This is a symbol of Individual or True Man: the synthesis of the elements, the place of connection between the inner and the outer, the cubic stone of Masonic symbolism, the alchemical vase. Through the inner, concentrated fire, he "unites the germinal and the clear." Placed as it is on the esplanade in front of the main entrance, this monolith could also be the closed fist of man, holding the rod of power and divination at the point of equilibrium, the interval between the terrestrial and celestial forces, indicated by the two sides of the façade. At the same time, it represents the place of passage between the ascending and descending currents, or, as Eliade says, "the gate of the world of Heavenly Light . . . 'where Sky and Earth embrace' and the 'Ends of the year' are united."[1]

Engraved on the two monoliths that frame the entrance to the compound at the center of the façade, is a post to which a rope is tied at the bottom, twining around it in a spiral to the top. This suggests the oldest known form of the familiar Tai-Ki symbol of Yin and Yang, that of a dragon twined around a column, shown here as Tai-I, in which the forces of Yin and Yang are presented separately, but approaching each other from the two sides of the facade, and concentrating in these two ascending and descending poles. [Plates 7 and 8] A thin banner, attached to the ropes, rises from a curved handle at the bottom. The outer half of these vertical banners is divided into squares, twenty-eight on the enormous monolith on the



Plate 3

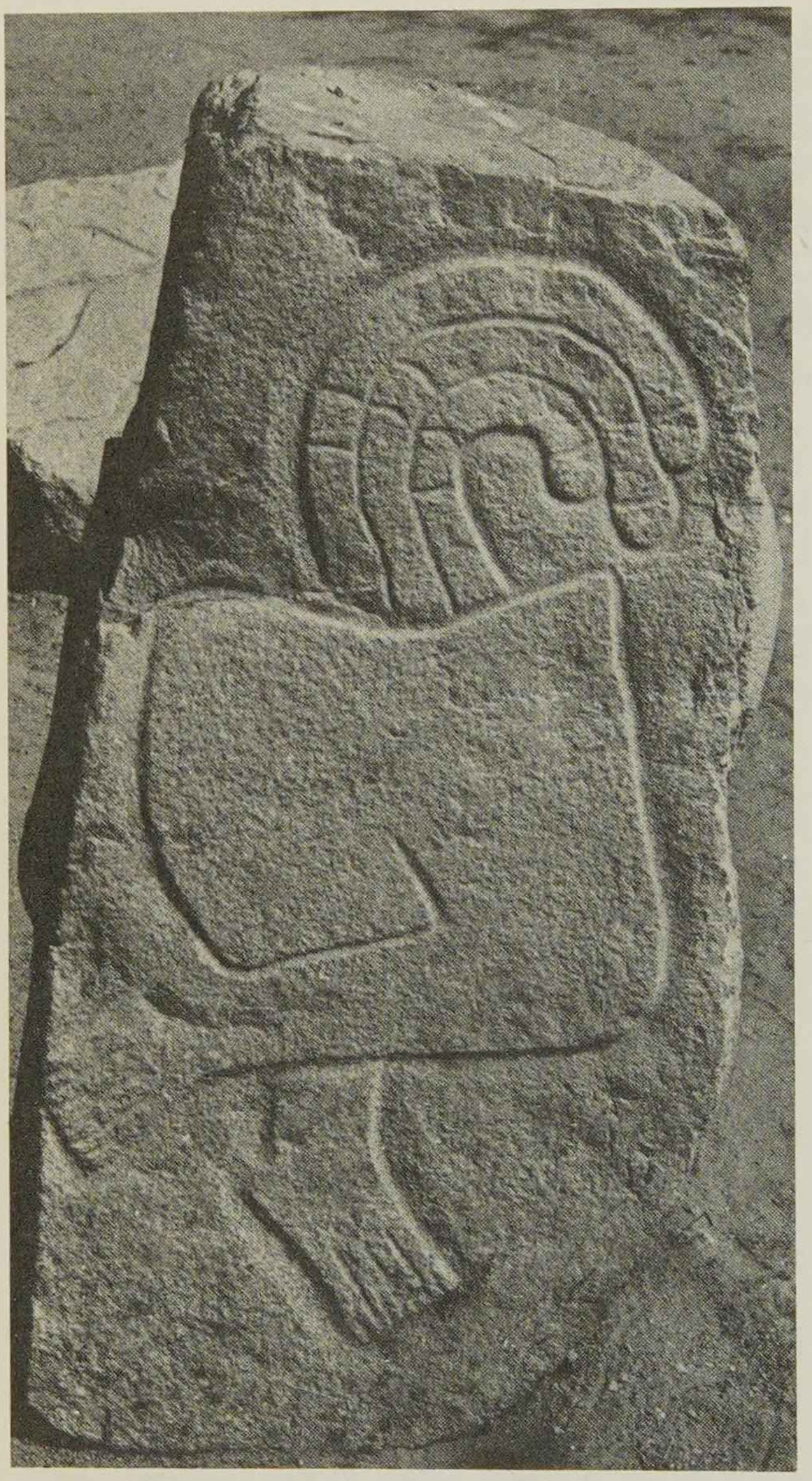


Plate 4

Earth or Yin side of the façade, and twenty-three on the much smaller stone of the Heaven or Yang side. On the latter a small piece is missing at the top. These numbers could refer to the twenty-eight lunar mansions and the twenty-four solar periods of ancient China. Small circles are engraved beside the squares, united like beads on a rosary by a vertical filament, in the Far East. The square, of course, is a Yin sign, corresponding to the Earth and the Moon, while the circle denotes Yang, Heaven and the Sun.

In the effort to approach an understanding of the structure of thought that lies behind the façade as a whole, we must keep in mind that this art expresses ideas through designs which are a synthesis of different levels of reality, some of which escape our grasp. Though we can study only one aspect at a time, we must remember that we are inevitably excluding several others. We are dealing with archetypes, metaphysical patterns from which, according to Oriental thought, several systems of the ordering of reality are derived. The visible images in Sechín are expressions of these archetypes, and refer to states of change. Thus the Taoist concept, in the words of Wilhelm, is that "every event in the visible world is the effect of an 'image,' that is, of an idea in the unseen world."[2]

There are two general structural concepts behind the façade, one based on the musical scale, the world of sound and vibration, and the other stemming from the spatial distribution of the figures in relation to the "magical squares" of Oriental tradition. Thus the whole façade can be envisioned as a scale, and True Man as the diapason, the concord between the first and last notes—Heaven and Earth, or essence and nature—as represented by the two monoliths at the corners. In Oriental tradition, it was said of Yu, legendary hero and prototype of man, that "his voice could serve as a diapason."[3] At the same time, the twenty-two stelae can be divided into three basic octaves, corresponding to Heaven, True Man, and Earth. The smaller stones could represent semitones, placed among the major monoliths.

At the center of the façade but apart from it, True Man, symbolized in many Eastern and Western traditions by the pentagram, is also diapason-diapente (*dia:* through; *pente:* five), the interval of octave and fifth, the twelfth.[4]

This concept of man as a scale, or as a musical instrument played upon by a primordial force or breath, creating sound, is common to several great traditions: the Vedic, the Islamic, and the Far Eastern, among others. It is frequently linked to polar symbolism; the Book of the Tao says that the cosmic axis, the space between Heaven and Earth, is a flute whose melody must be played by man. In ancient China, the first guitars were made of the wood of the pawlonia tree, which represents the Eastern Wind and Pole, and is said to be hollow.

Let us now consider the corner stele, placed at the East, on our left, which corresponds to the right side of the compound, and which we will refer to as the "Earth side" of the façade. A large human figure faces the center, left arm raised in a right angle, the hand closed over six bars or sticks (yarrow stalks?) in a St. Andrew's cross. At the center of the cross, the folded fingers form a square over the sticks, dividing them into four

groups of three, an arrangement which is evidently related to the trigrams of the divining compass. The thumbnail points upward, to the Northeast, a place of power in Far Eastern tradition. The symbolic intention is indicated by the obvious impossibility of maintaining the sticks at that angle in a closed fist. [Plate 9] The right shoulder of the figure is slightly raised in a ritual position, with the open hand pointing toward the center of the pelvic plate. The oversized thumbnail points Southwest, resting on the intermediate band of three that form the skirt.

This monolith is especially important to a study of the facade since the matching stone at the other corner has been partially destroyed. It is shaped like a knife blade with a rounded top (the knife is symbolic of the Moon and the Yin side in Far Eastern tradition.) On the outer side, the stele is almost vertical, and on the inside it curves with an undulating movement toward the other stones. The skirt worn by the figure is formed of two sets of three bands springing from top and bottom of the rectangular plaque covering the pelvic region, and ending in foliated points, like those of the yarrow stalks or

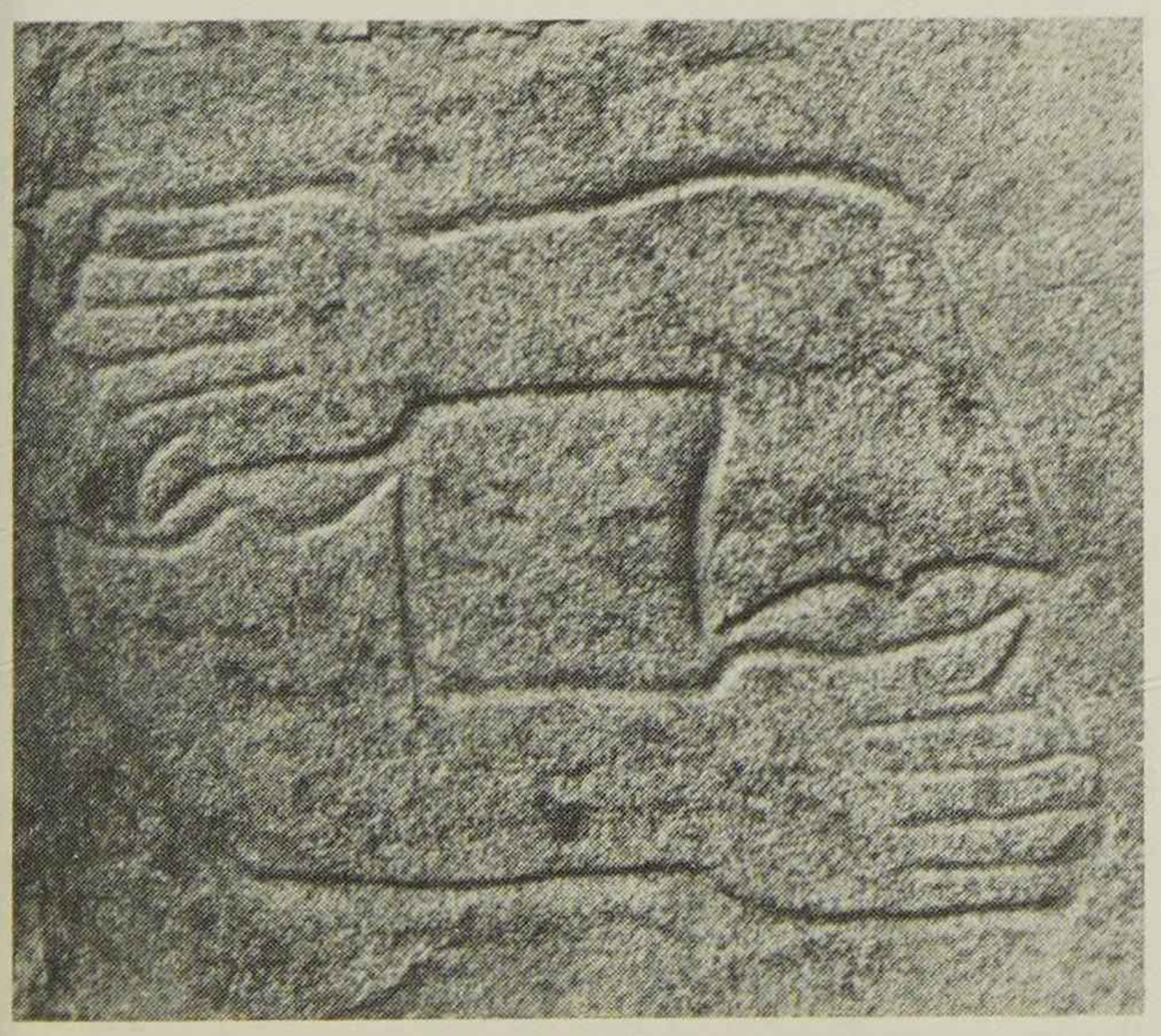
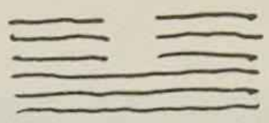


Plate 5



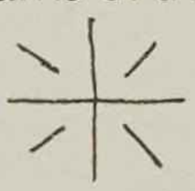
Plate 6: "True Man" (Central Stone)

sticks the figure holds in its hands. The upper bands are broken and the three lower ones continuous, which I think refers to the hexagram "Tai — Peace."



I believe this monolith represents the "apex of Yin" or tranquil passivity, which taken together with the fruitful activity, the "apex of Yang" represented by the stele on the other corner, creates the movement of the world of forms in its action and reaction.

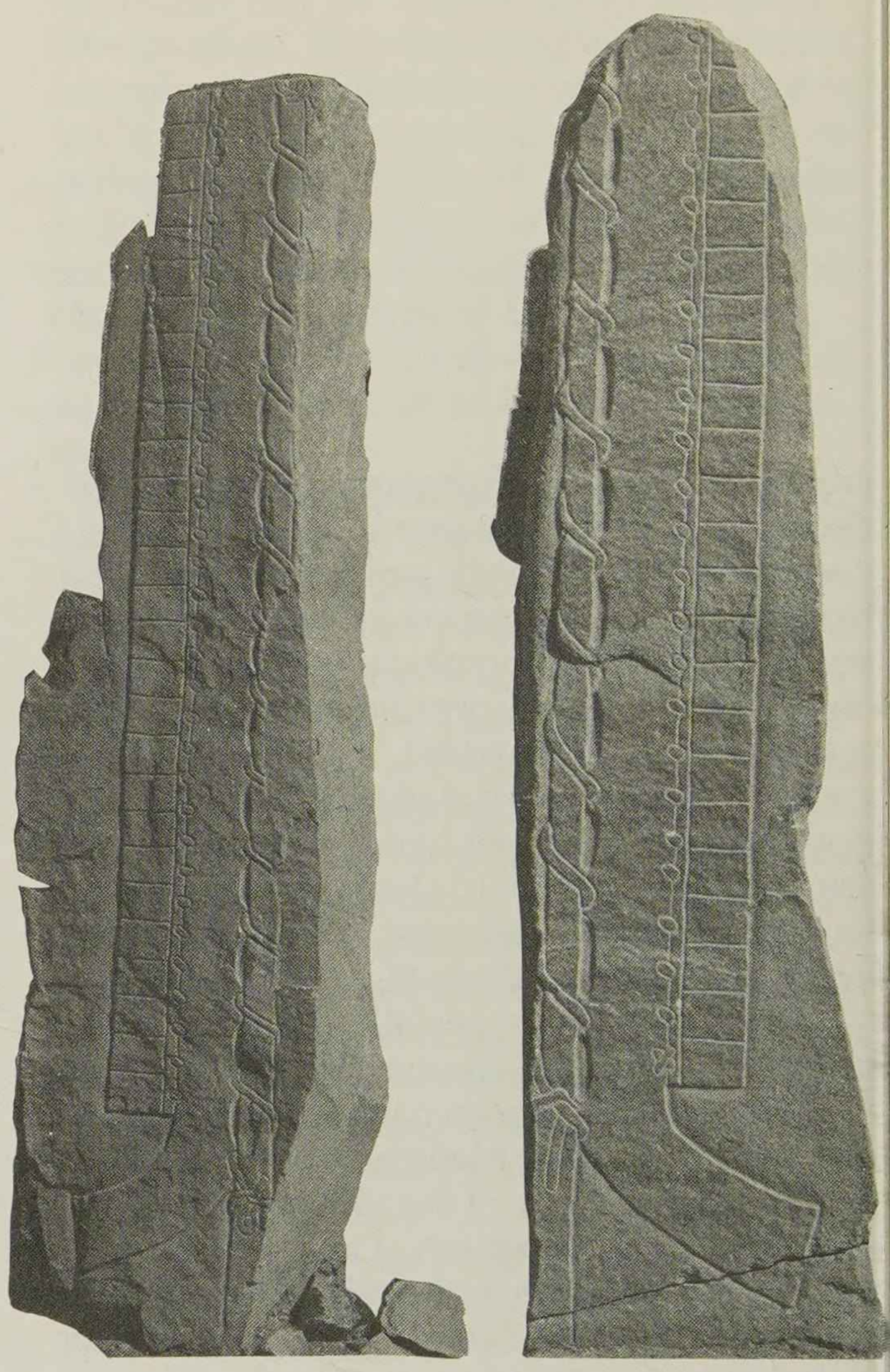
According to eight fragments found by Tello, this latter "Yang" stone on the other side of the façade terminated in a point like a Yang sword. From the point of view of the center of the compound it was on the left-hand corner, which in Oriental tradition corresponds to the side of Heaven. It had its right arm raised, probably holding similar sticks in its hands in a simple cross (equivalent to the compass in Eastern symbology), thus forming with the St. Andrew's cross held by the first figure the "Rose of the Winds" or eight trigrams of the divinatory compass.



These corner monoliths, and six other human figures, wear semihexagonal hats containing three small squares arranged in a triangle. Their eyes have the form of a flattened U-shaped receptacle. A band curves down from the center of the head, a characteristic feature of the bird-man in ancient America. [See Plates 10 through 14, and 17]

We are once more confronted with the great power for synthesis in the art of Sechín. In Oriental tradition, particularly Vedic and Chinese, the construction of temples and chariots was considered a royal craft, expressing the laws of the cosmos and serving as a means for the initiation of man into the world of the sacred. It is therefore not surprising to find this symbolism applied here to the human figure, in the shape of the hat. The semi-hexagon, in the royal art of chariot builders, represents the chariot's tent. According to the Ming-Tang temple builders, the outline of the semi-hexagon is equivalent to a semi-circle and corresponds to Yang and Heaven, while the straight base of this trapezoidal figure refers to Yin and Earth. The *Chou Li,* ancient Chinese book, states that "the round springs from the square, but by means of the Hexagon."

The shape of hats and skulls, trunk and pelvic plate, the birdman's hand descending from the "celestial dome" through the U-shaped eye, the hands pointing towards the "solstitial



Plates 7 and 8: The Gatestones on either side of central steps

doors," which lead to the "ascending Way of the Gods" and the "descending Way of the Forefathers" of the Vedic and Far Eastern traditions—all these aspects and others expressed by these figures relate this art to central currents of thought and may confirm once more that it came from a primordial source which influenced the major Eastern and Western traditions.

The six marching figures express a progression towards the center from each end of the façade, two groups of three which confront each other. The men in the fourth place from each corner are graven on bottle-shaped stones, which I take to indicate a stage in an alchemical process, only one of many such references in Sechín. [Plates 10 and 11] Both figures hold an instrument upright in their hands, while the men in the seventh place hold theirs in a diagonal position.

What is most unusual about the latter, is that



Plate 9: First stele, Earth Side–"Apex of Yin"

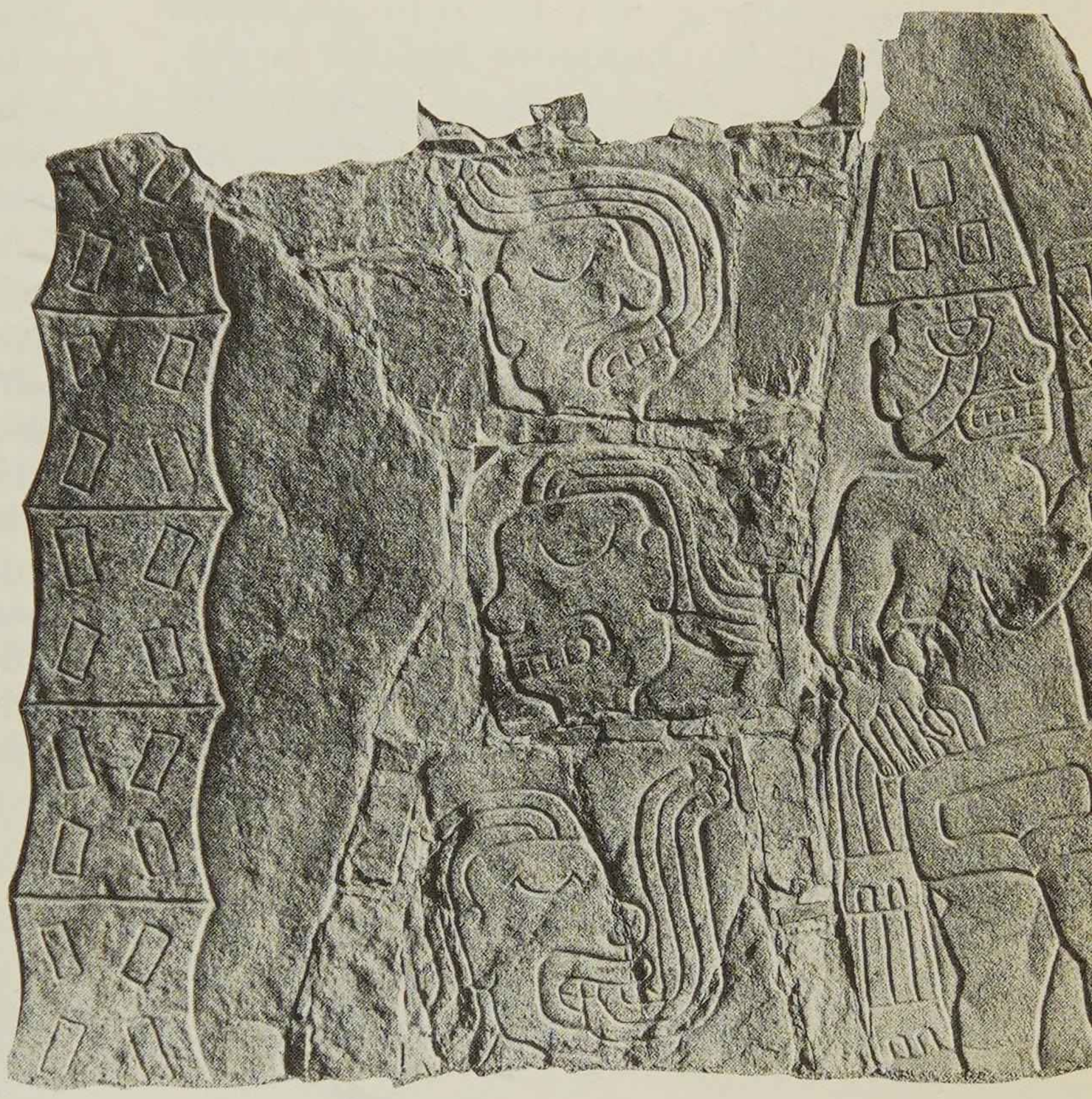


Plate 10: Fourth place, Earth Side–"Man in the retort"

the man on the Earth side holds his instrument with arms twisted in a physically impossible position [Plate 12] while the corresponding figure holds his to his ear, at the place where the solar skull band ends, and seems to be listening to it. [Plate 13] This brings us to postulate that the first represents, at the end of the octave of Earth, Man who cannot "do," and the second, Man on the side of Heaven, connected by the instrument of his craft to the world of light and sound.

The instruments of all four men look alike: a long handle with a triangle at the top surmounted by a double step design, the symbol of lightning. The triangular figure contains small squares, varying in placement and number with each instrument. [See Plates 10, 12, 15, 16]

The most important marching figures are those in the tenth position, next to the axial pillars that frame the entrance. They are the most complex in design and content. We note that the man on the Earth side has joints shaped like hooks (symbol of the crescent moon), which unite head with body, shoulders with torso, and knees with thighs, thus giving a deformed appearance to the figure. [Plate 14] This stone is shaped like a knife, blade downwards, and made of the same granite as the Sechín hill. When it was found it was covered with a light ocher patina, as were three other stelae on the Earth side. (This is in contrast to the Heaven side, where red, blue, sepia, and black covered some of the larger and smaller stones.)

The figure on the Heaven side is engraved on the only oval stone in the façade, granite interspersed with black mica, an igneous and metamorphic stone. [Plate 15] Superimposed on the whole figure from the top of its hat to its feet is a staff in a vertical double spiral, symbolizing both the ascending and descending currents. It is composed of three bands which

are linked at the center of the figure around the solar plexus. Two heads are depicted on the upper spiral, and two more, upside down, on the descending spiral. These four solar heads represent the annual cycle, and are similar to the twelve zodiacal heads on the monoliths in the eighth place which represent on one side the twelve months of the year or the twelve exterior doors of the Ming-Tang, and on the other the twelve fruits of the Tree of Life, symbol of the immortality that man has to regain.

Here is the master, like Hermes a messenger and interpreter of the Gods, leading the marching men towards transformation, towards the axial center, where high and low can unite.

Both figures carry an instrument similar to the others, with the addition of a circle at the lower end of the handle. The circle on the instrument held by the man on the Earth side contains five squares arranged in a cross, and the other five circles, similarly disposed. Circle and square, as we have seen, correspond respectively to Heaven and Earth, and also to



Plate 11: Fourth place, Heaven Side bottle-shaped stone

circular and rectilinear designs, to the compass and the square, in Eastern and Western traditions. Usually the compass or circular designs are placed above, since they correspond to Heaven, and the square or triangle below. When this relationship is inverted, the symbol takes on a particular meaning in Masonic tradition, comparable to the inversion of the alchemical symbol for sulphur. Like it, this represents the accomplishment of the Great Work.[5]

Let us now consider the sequence of the four stelae next to the corner monolith on the Earth side of the façade, which in my opinion develop the symbolism of the five elements: fire, water, wood, metal, and earth. The first represents a human figure facing the esplanade, its head turned toward the center of the façade, its hair standing up in flames, and its webbed feet pointing downward below human ones. The eyebrow is shaped like a dragon's emblem in Oriental mythology. [Plate 16] These details and the figure's place in the façade would seem to relate it to the well-known alchemical theme of the dragon at the foot of the column, symbol of the world of the elements. The figure is split in two below the belly and covers the center of



Plate 12: Seventh place, Earth side–"Man who cannot do"

its body with its hands. I believe it to be essentially a mercurial figure, "fiery water," the beginning of the movement of energy.

The next monolith is engraved with a bamboo stalk divided into five segments, each con-

taining four small rectangles. Here is the element wood, related to the idea of growth. The shape of the stone seems to confirm this since it opens out in a wide curve toward the center of the façade. [See Plate 10]

The stone following it, the first marching figure mentioned above, engraved on a bottle-shaped stone, I call "man in the retort," the element metal. [See Plate 10] The front curve of this monolith indicates the first downward movement in man's effort to bring his energy down to earth, to the center, which is represented in this case by the next stele, a bird-like figure with a human face and no feet, which in this sequence represents the center, Earth. [Plate 17]

The many alchemical references on both sides of the façade have led me to consider that the monoliths on the Heaven side represent the planetary world. There are possible allusions to Mercury in the stele next to the corner monolith, to Venus in the next, to Mars in the following stone, and a striking resemblance to the astrological sign for Jupiter in the bird-man figure beside it. There are also correspondences in the following monoliths to Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Thus a progression develops in relation to the distance of each planet from the sun, which opens up another aspect of the message of Sechín which would be essential to its full interpretation.

Alchemy and astrology are traditionally the primary sciences of the animic or "intermediate" world of cosmic forces, which according to René Guénon, "though produced in the corporeal world, belong to the subtle world." The fundamental action of True Man, at this level, is considered to be the "action of presence."

This is only a sampling of the evidence that Sechín is a great book of knowledge, the work of a school of thought emanating from an unknown center in the Far East; there are further indications that it is directly related to an early version of the *I Ching*.

This cultural influence can be traced back to the first appearance of the pyramid builders on the Peruvian coast at the end of the third millennium B.C. Over the next thousand years a rosary of cultic centers spread from the north and central coastal plains to the eastern slopes



Plate 13: Seventh place, Heaven side–man listening to his instrument

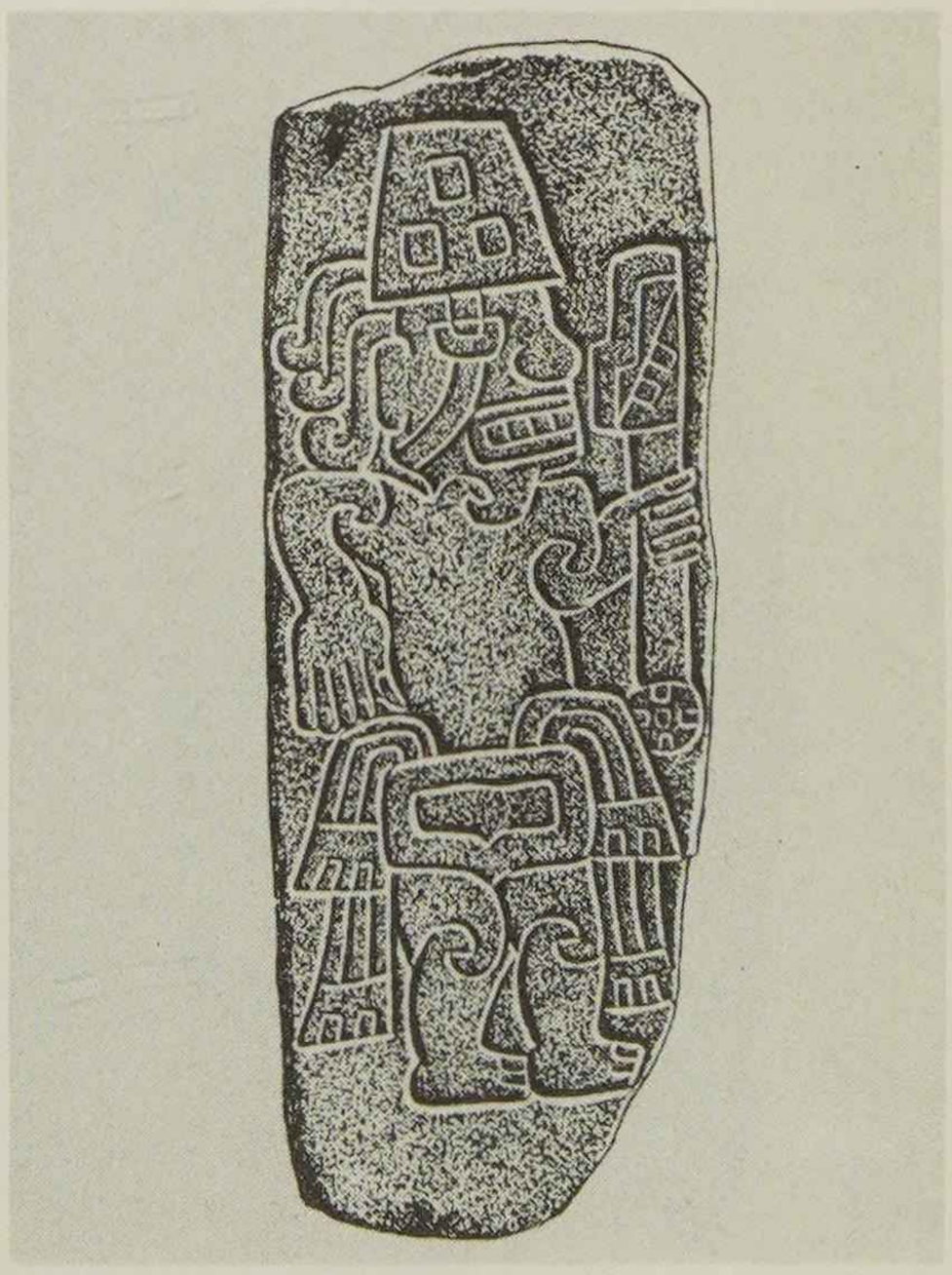
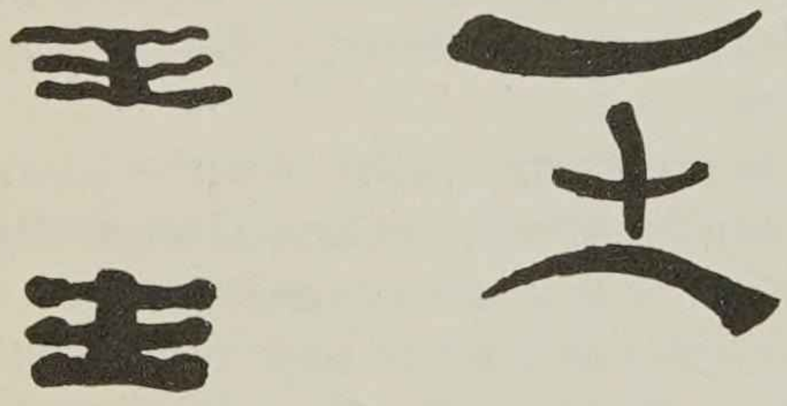


Plate 14: Tenth place, Earth side –hook-jointed man

of the Andes, culminating in the sanctuary at Chavín de Huantar spoken of earlier, where at the center of the Early Temple stands the monolithic Great Spear or Great Image, the oldest idol of ancient America still in its original place. [Plate 18] A fifteen-foot-high shaft of rose-white granite with an essentially spiral structure, it represents an anthropomorphic figure with the right arm twisted behind his back, hand pointing upward, palm out, facing west, and the left arm hanging down in a natural position. The whole figure faces east, and stands where two galleries cross at right angles. Above it run three short parallel galleries on a north-south axis, united through the middle by a fourth, thus forming the Oriental symbol "Man, the King." who unites the three worlds: Heaven, Earth, and the World of the Middle.



This Great Image, in the context of Far Eastern tradition, is a representation of Universal or Transcendent Man, who "pillars apart" Heaven and Earth on the axis of the world. This axial, helicoidal tree unites both the ascending and descending cosmic currents, and its iconographic content can be read in both directions. If the photograph is turned top to bottom,



Plate 15: "Hermes the Master"

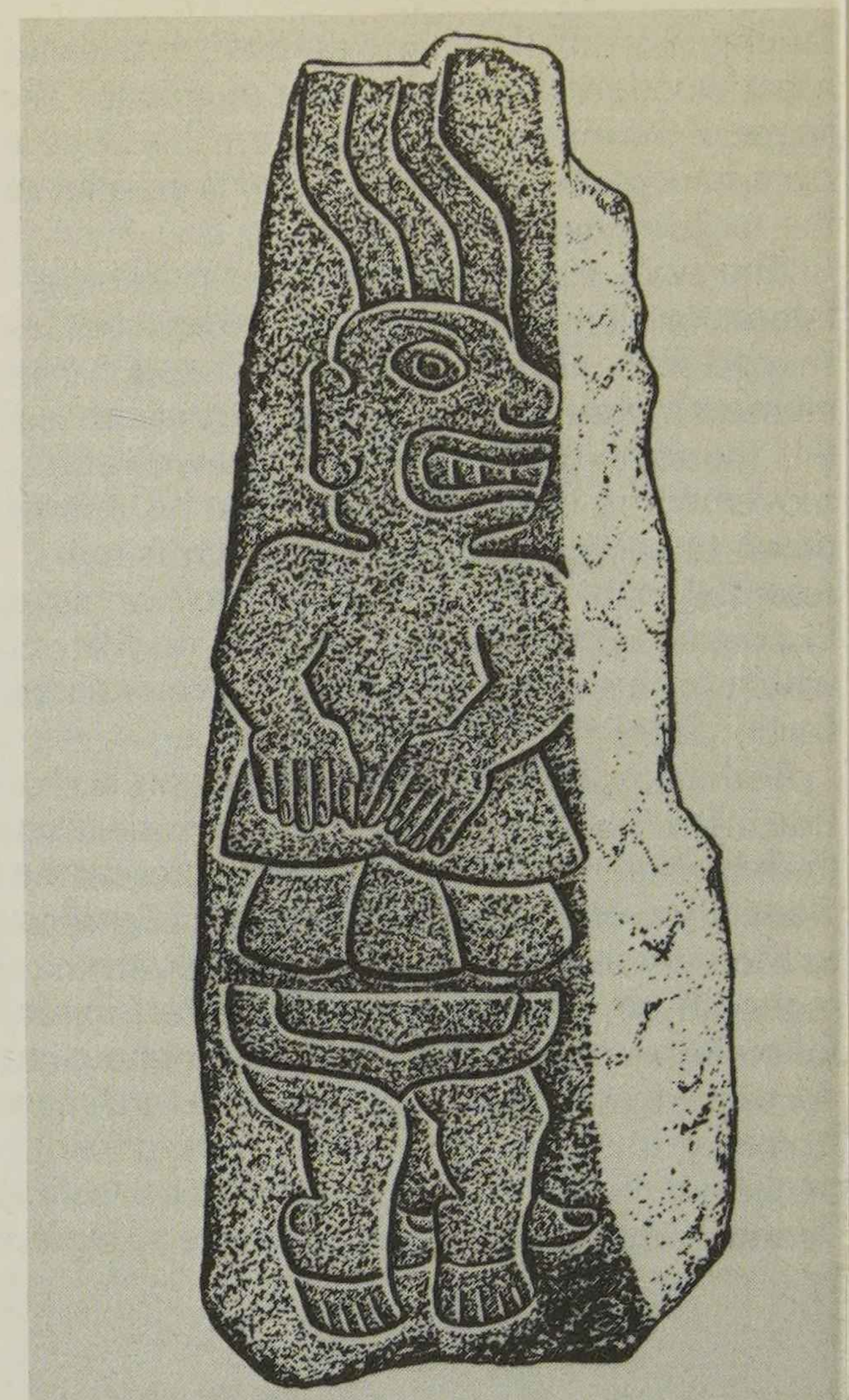


Plate 16: Second place, Earth side–"Fiery Water"

it can be seen that the male figure becomes female; the currents of force are reversed.[6] The same reversal is reflected in the diving figure in Sechín mentioned at the beginning of this article, which now rises in Chavín, on the vertical axis. Here, the right hand points upward rather than downward, and placed as it is, hidden behind the figure, it also emphasizes the "actionless activity" of Universal Man, according to Taoist thought. In the language of ancient American iconography, the Lord of the Dawn is emerging from the world of duality, a symbol of the awakening of conscience in man. In the Andes he is Wirakocha or Tunapa, the central figure of Indian religion up to the 15th century, of whom it was said:

> *"Wirakocha, the eternal master and sign of the world; the unceasingly powerful foundation, and certainly a sign; the Tunapa, who becomes the steward and the sign, of whom no one knows whether he is man or woman; who points the way, who makes everything remember, who is the Sun of the Sun."*[7]



Plate 17: Fifth place, Earth side

Both Sechín and Chavín offer descriptions of the process by which man, if he can accept the simultaneous action of the opposing directions of cosmic forces, may be transformed into the relation between them which creates a new unity, a new note in the universal harmony. The ideas they express are a germinating influence on all subsequent developments in the Andean region, and we cannot therefore separate them from their effect in time. With their advent a new era came into being, or, in the language of ancient America, the birth of a new sun.

Footnotes

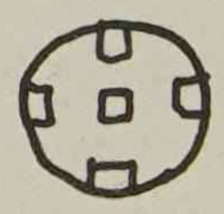
[1]Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

[2]Richard Wilhelm, "Preface" to *I Ching*. Bollingen Series XIX. (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1967).

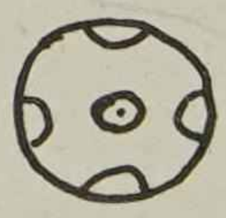
[3]Marcel Granet, *La Pensée Chinoise* (Paris: Albain Michel).

[4]There is a relationship here to the series of pentagonal numbers 1, 5, 12, 22, as well as to the numerical progression 1, 2, 3, and 4, suggested by the alternating rhythm between the diapason, the two axial pillars, and the corner monoliths. Pythagorean thought has expressed the harmonic qualities of this progression: the numerical ratio of 4 to 2 or 2 to 1 represents the octave, and the ratio of 3 to 2, the fifth. Adding the number 5, we obtain the triangle of 15, or Pentactys, which in Pythagorean thought is the first triangle of things: the Tetractys manifested.

[5]Another correlation of square and circle is with even and uneven numbers.



2
8 6 4
10



9
3 5 7
1

The sum of the even and uneven numbers of the crosses of the "magic squares" with centers 5 and 6 is Hexagram number 55, "Feng — Abundance," formed by the ideas of Movement and Flame.

[6]That this inversion was the intention of the artists is corroborated by many details which cannot be seen in the photograph.

[7]Juan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti Salcamaygua, *Crónicas* (17th century.)

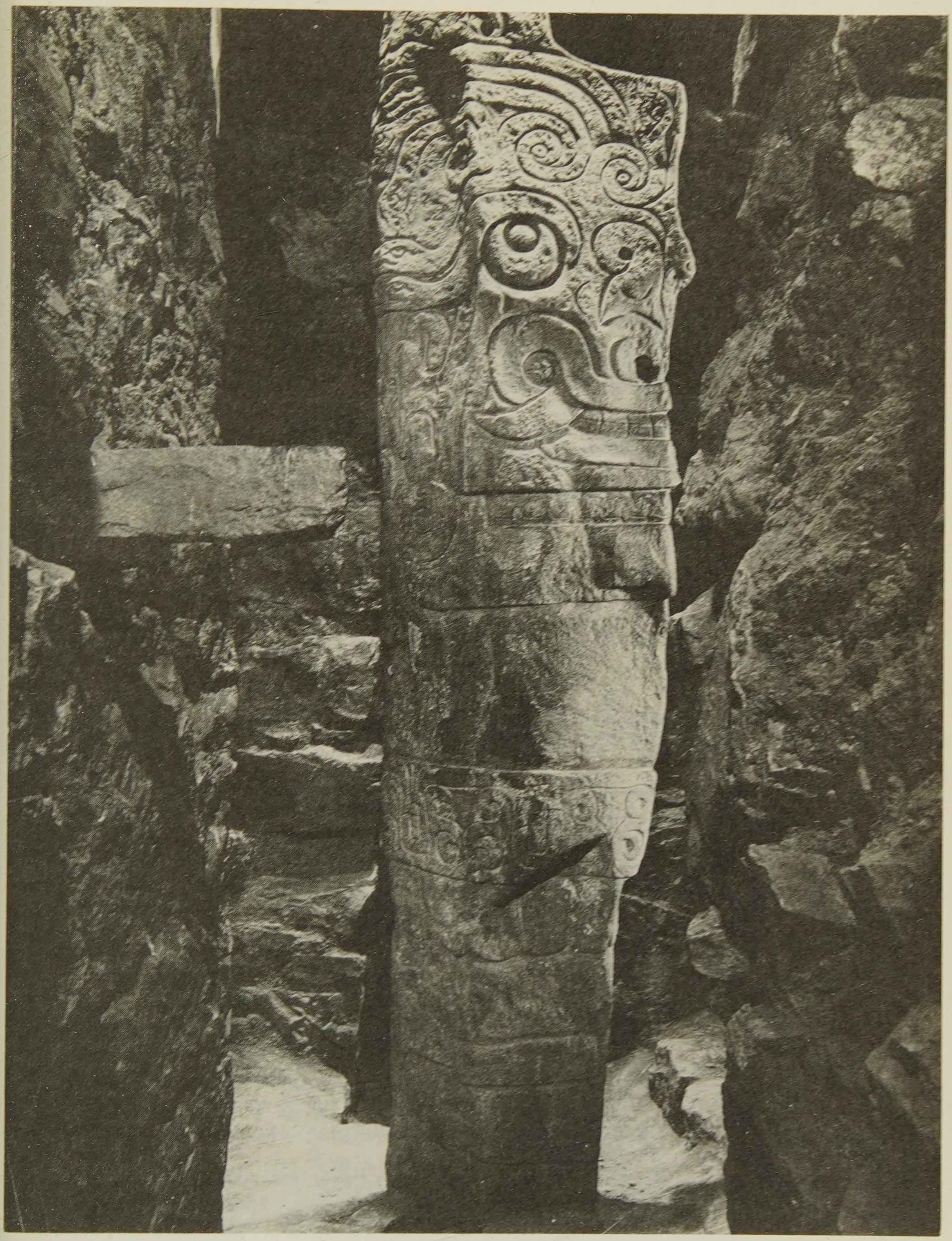


Plate 18: The Great Image of Chavin: Yin and Yang, the double current of force

Epicycle III



Two Pairs of Shoes

Abu Kassem's Slippers

Listen to the story of Abu Kassem, the merchant, who was known throughout Baghdad not only for his riches and his parsimony but also for his slippers which were the outward and visible sign of his miserliness. They were so old, so dirty, so patched and tattered that they were the bane of every cobbler in the city and a byword among the citizens.

Clad in this deplorable footwear and a shabby kaftan Abu Kassem would go shuffling through the bazaar sniffing around for bargains. One day he happened on a collection of little crystal bottles which, after much haggling, he managed to buy quite cheaply. And then, with typical miser's luck, he came upon, at cut-price, a large supply of attar of roses with which to fill the bottles. The bazaar was agog at this double stroke and Abu Kassem, congratulating himself on his sagacity, decided to celebrate the occasion by paying a visit to the public baths.

There, in the dressing room, he met his old friend Hassan who took him to task in the matter of his slippers. "Look at them, Abu Kassem! Any beggar would throw them away. But thou with all thy stored-up riches dost refuse to part with the dreadful things!"

"Waste not, want not," said Abu Kassem. "There is still a lot of wear in them." And he took off the offending slippers and hurried into the bath.

But Fate had caught him in her grip, as we shall presently see. It so happened that the Cadi of Baghdad had also decided to bathe that day. Abu Kassem finished before him, put on his outer clothes and

The Sandals of Ayaz

Listen now to the story of Ayaz who had risen from a lowly condition to that of Treasurer and trusted friend at the court of the great King Mahmud. From time to time, in the course of his duties, Ayaz would bring his master a tally of all the gold and silver and jewels that were stored in the palace cellars. But of the contents of the modest chamber in the topmost tower he brought no tally at all. Every day he climbed to this little room and remained there for a certain time. And every day as he came out he locked the heavy door securely and kept the key in his pocket. What lay behind that locked door was known to nobody and Ayaz never spoke of it.

Now, it so happened that on a particular occasion the King came into the council chamber carrying a large pearl which he gave to the Vizier. "Tell me," he said, "what this pearl is worth."

"More than a hundred ass-loads of gold," the Vizier replied.

"Break it!" commanded King Mahmud.

"But how should I break it?" the Vizier cried. "How could I waste this priceless thing?"

"Well said!" exclaimed the King, and presented him with a dress of honor.

Then he turned to the palace Chamberlain and handed him the pearl.

"What is this jewel worth?" he asked.

"Half a kingdom, may God preserve it!"

"Break it," commanded King Mahmud.

"Alas, such a deed would be a great pity. How could I be an

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turban and felt about for his slippers. Where were they? They had disappeared. But in their place was another pair, shiny and bright and new. "Ah," said Abu Kassem. "This is Hassan's work. He has gone out into the marketplace and bought me another pair of slippers." He drew on the resplendent footwear and went home thoroughly pleased with himself.

But what did the Cadi say, I wonder, when his servants, searching the dressing–room for their master's slippers, brought him a tattered pair of objects that everybody recognised as belonging to Abu Kassem? The story is silent on this point. All we know is that he sent immediately for the culprit, fined him an enormous sum and restored to him his slippers.

Abu Kassem was sad at heart, as he looked at the ragged objects. To have had to pay so much for so little! Well, at least they would give him no more trouble. He would get rid of the wretched things. So, with a gesture of farewell he flung them into the River Tigris. "That," he thought, "is the end of them!" Alas and alack! Poor foolish man! Little did he know.

A few days later some fishermen discovered in their net two bundles of tattered leather. "Abu Kassem's slippers!" they said, and angrily hurled the offending footwear through Abu Kassem's window.

Down went the row of crystal bottles and up rose the scent of attar of roses as Abu Kassem's splendid bargains went crashing to the floor.

The miser was beside himself. He swept up the scattered glassy fragments and seized upon his slippers. "Wretches!" he cried. "This is enough! Ye shall do me no more harm." Thereupon, he took a shovel, dug a hole in his tulip garden and buried his once-prized possessions.

"What can he be doing?" a neighbor asked, as he watched the laboring figure. "A rich man with so many servants to be digging in his own garden! He must be looking for hidden treasure. I will go and tell the Caliph!"

And since it is a law that hidden treasure belongs to the state, Abu Kassem soon found himself in court, standing before the governor. Where, he was asked, had he put the treasure? And when he protested that there was no treasure, that he had merely been burying a pair of old slippers, the statement was received with laughter and general disbelief. The more he protested the more unlikely the story seemed, even to himself. Inevitably, he paid the fine and went home to unearth his slippers.



enemy to the treasure house of the King?"

"Well said," the King exclaimed, and he gave the Chamberlain a robe of honor. And turned to the Minister of Justice.

So it went on. Each courtier refused to break the pearl and to each the King gave a costly garment. Unfortunate men! How was it that they could not guess that they were being put to the test?

Last of all came the turn of Ayaz.

"Tell me what this pearl is worth."

"More," said Ayaz, "than I can say."

"Break it," commanded King Mahmud.

Now Ayaz had two stones in his sleeve. And without a moment's hesitation he crushed the pearl between the stone and so reduced it to dust.

The courtiers rose up in a clamor. "Whoever breaks such a radiant thing is an infidel!" they cried.

"O princes," Ayaz cried to them. "What is more precious to your hearts—the pearl or the King's command? He is lacking in the true pearl who puts a stone before the King. When I look for radiance, I turn my gaze to him."

At that the courtiers bowed their heads, realising that they had been deflected from the path of truth by the grandeur of a worldly bauble. "Alas," they cried, "our fate is sealed."

"For the sake of a colored stone," said the King, "my command has been held contemptible." And he made a sign to the Executioner.

But Ayaz, full of boundless love, prostrated himself before the throne. "O thou from whom comes every fortune, grant them, as a boon, their lives and do not banish them from thy presence. He who ignores thy least command, what should teach him except thy pardon?"

The King heard the words of his faithful servant and for love of him reprieved the rest.

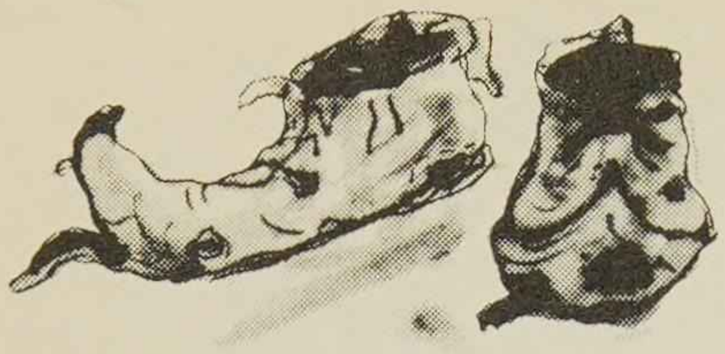
The courtiers breathed a sigh of relief. They had been given back their lives. But as the fox is to the lion, so were they to Ayaz.

Before long they were plotting against him, whispering scandal to each other.

"What has he hidden in the uppermost chamber, of which he keeps the key? Is he not Treasurer to the King? Of a truth, he has hoarded gold and silver and is keeping a secret store for himself. It is right that we tell the King."

So they did that. And the King wondered. "What has my servant concealed from me?"

And he gave orders to a certain Amir saying, "Go at midnight and



"The cursed things!" he cried, in despair. "Shall I never rid myself of them?" He decided, then, to take the slippers out of the city, far from the sight of men. This he did. He hied him out into the country, dropped the offenders into a pond and breathed a sigh of relief. At last, he had seen the last of them!

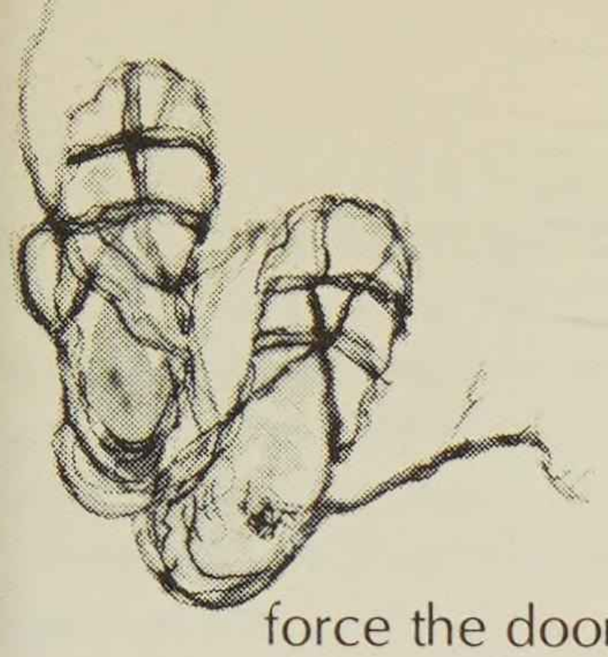
But Fate had not finished with Abu Kassem. When he returned he discovered that the pond had been no pond but a reservoir, that the slippers had fouled the water-pipes, that the workmen had recognised the slippers—how, indeed, could they help it?—and that he himself was to go to jail for stopping the city's water supply. So once again he paid a fine and once again he carried home his old unwanted possessions.

What was to be done? How could he free himself from his slippers and all their devil's tricks? Earth had refused them, so had water. What remained? Fire, of course! He would burn them to ashes. However, at the moment they were still wet, so he put them out on the rooftop to dry. There they lay, bleaching in the sun, till a dog on a nearby rooftop spied them, leapt the intervening space and snatched up the fatal slippers. He tossed them lightly into the air and down they fell to the street below where a woman was passing by. Now, it so happened that this woman was pregnant and the sudden blow on the top of her head quickly brought on a miscarriage. Her indignant husband, seeing from what the blow had come, ran to the judge and demanded payment. So Abu Kassem, now distraught, had once more to put his hand in his pocket.

But he cried, as he flung the money down and brandished the slippers aloft: "Lord judge, hear me! Be my witness. These slippers have been the bane of my life. Their tricks have reduced me to penury. Set me free from them, I implore thee! Let the evils that they bring in their train no longer be visited on my head. Of thy mercy, let this be enough!"

And the story relates that the Cadi, being a merciful man, heard the miser's plea. But he counselled Abu Kassem, saying "Hear, O Merchant, the voice of wisdom. Nothing lasts forever, it says, and when a thing is no longer useful that thing should be relinquished."

Retold from the Thamarat Ul-Awrak (Fruit of Leaves) of
Ibn Hijjat Al-Hamawi



force the door and whatever you find is yours."

Now, the King had no evil thoughts of Ayaz. He was putting the courtiers on trial. Nevertheless, his heart misgave him, lest the charge be true and his servant shamed.

"He has not done this thing," he mused. "And if he has it is rightly done. Let Ayaz have whatever he will for he is my beloved. I need a mouth as broad as heaven to describe the qualities of one who is envied by the angels."

Thus he thought within himself while the courtiers went to work. They struck at the door of the uppermost chamber and broke the iron lock. Then they swarmed in, jostling each other, greedily seeking the hidden treasure.

They looked to the right. They looked to the left. Up and down and round they looked. But the little uppermost room was empty, except for a dusty sheepskin jacket and a pair of tattered sandals.

"Bring picks and shovels!" the courtiers cried. Thereupon they began to dig, making holes in the walls and floor. And the very holes cried out against them: "Behold, O men, we are empty."

The fact, indeed, could not be denied. No treasure lay in the uppermost chamber and the courtiers returned to the King, palefaced and ashamed.

"Are you heavy-laden?" the King asked, slyly. "Show me the hoarded gold and jewels and the treasure my faithful friend has stolen."

"O, King of the world," they cried. "Forgive! We have nothing but a sheepskin jacket and a pair of sandal shoon."

"Nay," said the King. "I deal not with punishment or forgiveness. That right belongs to Ayaz."

"O king," said Ayaz, "the command is thine. When the sun is here the star is naughted. Let it be remembered on their behalf that if I had neglected jacket and shoon, I should not have sown the seeds of envy."

"I shall note it," answered King Mahmud. "But, O Ayaz, tell me this. Why these marks of affection to a rustic shoe? Thou hast mingled so much of thy soul's love with two old articles of dress, and kept them both in a chamber. Why in the presence of these things dost thou show so much humility?"

"It is fit that I do so," said Ayaz. "I was low on the earth and thou lifted me up. From my tent thou hast brought me to marble halls. I know that all this eminence is but a gift of thine, otherwise I am nothing but this sheepskin jacket and this pair of sandal shoon. The Prophet himself hath propounded this matter when he said 'He who knows himself, knows God.' The seed from which I came is my shoon, my blood is the sheepskin jacket. I therefore commune with my beginnings. 'Do not regard thy present greatness,' the sheepskin jacket tells me. 'Remember, Ayaz!' say the sandal shoon. So I keep them, O Master, to remind me. That is all my secret."

Retold from The Mathnawi of Jalalu' ddin Rumi

A Conversation with Mircea Eliade

It is hard to find anything to say about Mircea Eliade that would not already be known to any reader of this magazine: for among those interested even peripherally in myth, symbolism and religion, his is a name to conjure with—or would be if it could be pronounced. We had heard, and vacillated between, Mursée-a, Merse-ah, Mursia, Mursha, Eliad, Eliad-eh. So he answered our first question to him by saying that it is (approximately) Meer-Cha Eliádeh, although Eliád is also acceptable.

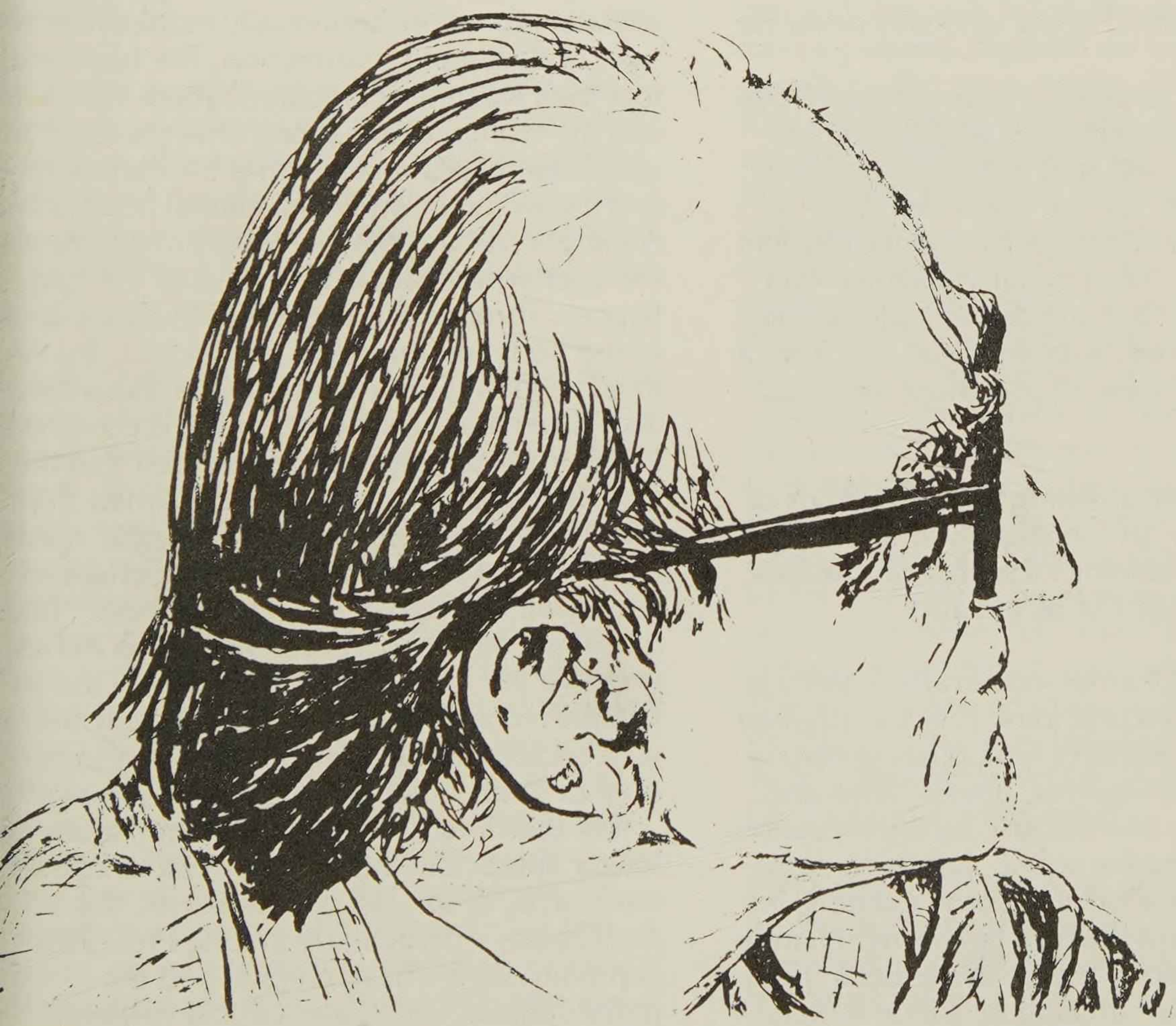
One cannot help having some sort of image of a scholar so famous, so unique in his field, and so authoritative as Eliade. His learning, his formidable vocabulary, and the number and profundity of his books suggest an exaggerated version of the high-browed, absent-minded professor, some sort of august rat de bibliothèque *heavily endowed with academic honors and degrees. So it is a surprise to meet this tall, slim, rather sprightly and certainly humorous and charming person who looks much younger than his seventy years; professorial perhaps, but absent-minded, no. His eyes are keen as well as kindly behind his glasses, and he gives the very strong impression of a man who knows what is going on.*

His office, as one might expect, is lined with books; not only from floor to ceiling, but from wall to wall. Books, papers, and periodicals are literally stacked; neither the desk nor the floor are visible, their presence is merely inferred. But in the course of our conversation he would frequently mention a book or a magazine article: "It is right here, I believe," and there it would be, fourth from the top in the third stack due north of the window.

The United States claims Dr. Eliade because of his 20-year connection with the University of Chicago, but the whole world is his home. He was born in Bucharest and went to the university there. Then he traveled and studied in India, as he tells us in this interview, from 1928 to 1932, returning to Bucharest to take his Ph.D. and to teach. Later he was visiting professor at the Ecole des Hautes-Etudes at the Sorbonne in Paris, and for five years, from 1950 to 1955, he headed the Centre

Roumain de Recherches there. The following year he came to the University of Chicago as a lecturer, then visiting professor, and is now chairman of the department of Religions and editor of the university's journal History of Religions. *But he maintains his contacts with Europe where he spends a part of each year; he has taken part in the Eranos conferences in Switzerland, and this year he received an honorary degree at the Sorbonne.*

Besides his many books on the history of religions which are known all over the world, he has written several novels and short stories, and Harper & Row will publish his journals this fall. But it is not only this wide-ranging quality of his mind that one feels in talking with him or in reading his work; what gives his words their particular weight is that behind the scholar is a man whose life has been molded by the "sacred" of which he speaks. At times one hears the resonance of personal experience without partisanship, of something living and felt although so objectively described. He insists on the title of "religious historian," as if he wished to conceal something within those safe limits, but his own tone of voice betrays that he is something more: he is also, and more importantly, a man of religion.



Parabola: In this issue of *Parabola* we are considering some aspects of the idea of initiation. How would you approach this idea?

Mircea Eliade: I would like, first of all, to review the meaning of "initiation" in the history of religions. In the most general sense, the term denotes a body of rites and oral teachings



whose purpose is to produce a radical modification of the religious and social status of the person to be initiated. To put it in philosophical terms, this is the same as "an ontological mutation of the existential condition." Initiation is such an experience that the novice emerges from his ordeal a totally different and transformed being who will never be the same again.

Broadly, we can point to three different types of initiation: initiations into adulthood, into secret societies, and into mystical vocations. Each has its own special characteristics—for instance, the prevalence of the ecstatic element in the initiations of mystical vocations—but there is a sort of common denominator among all these catagories, with the result that from a certain point of view all initiations are much alike.

Parabola: Is there anything in our religious or social life today, in the education of young people or in the training for special professions, that can be thought of as initiatic?

Eliade: Initiatory themes remain alive chiefly in modern man's unconscious. This is confirmed not only by the initiatory symbolism of certain artistic creations—poems, novels, films and works of plastic art—but also by the reception of these works by the public. Just think of the enormous success of Jules Verne's novels, the initiatory structure of which has been brilliantly analyzed by Simone Vierve in her book, *Jules Verne et le roman initiatique*. Other writers have recognized initiatory scenarios in *Moby Dick, Walden, Huckleberry Finn,* Faulkner's *The Bear,* as well as in the work of such diverse authors as James Fenimore Cooper, Henry James, Sherwood Anderson, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Thomas Wolfe. The fact that artistic representation of initiatic theses can find massive, spontaneous acceptance certainly indicates that in the depths of his being, modern man is still capable of being moved by initiatory scenarios or messages. The very fact that a journal like yours devotes a special issue to the topic of initiation would indicate that this theme still has great power.

Parabola: Would you say that initiation is fundamental to all religions, or are there initiatic and non-initiatic religions, and how, essentially, would they differ?

Eliade: All religions possess a fundamental initiatory scenario but its importance varies widely from one type of religion to another and from one historical moment to another. In the last two centuries, for example, Christian initiation has almost disappeared. But from the first Christian baptism was equivalent to an initiation. Baptism introduced the convert to a new religious community and made him worthy of eternal life. The Church Fathers emphasized its initiatory function, continually multiplying images of death and resurrection. The baptismal font itself was often compared to both the tomb and the womb, being at one time the tomb in which the catechumen buries his earthly life and the womb in which the eternal life is born. Another cultic act that is initiatory in structure is the Eucharist, instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper. Through this rite, the Christian shares in the body and blood of his Saviour. By the fourth century, the constitution of the *arcana disciplina,* the "secret teachings," is complete. In other words, it had been decided that the Christian mysteries were to be guarded from the uninitiated. The Pseudo-Areopagite warns the Christian initiate—who has experienced the divine mystagogy—to keep silence: "Take care that you do not reveal the holy of holies; preserve the mysteries of the hidden God so that the profane may not partake of them and in your sacred illumination speak of the sacred only to saints" (i.e., the "Christian initiates").

But the various Christian denominations no longer appreciate the initiatory values of their cultic acts. In the last two centuries, the theologians—particularly among Protestant denominations—have emphasized the philosophical, social and ethical values of Christianity, ignoring its initiatory dimension. This is perhaps due to the apparently "undemocratic" intent of initiation—since any initiation implies a selection.

Parabola: Then Christian esotericism has disappeared along with initiation? Where did it go? Might it still be found at Mt. Athos, for instance? In the material submitted to *Parabol*





've often feel there is confusion about the real meaning of esotericism. How would you explain it? In fact, we see many terms in common use that are very vaguely defined in practise. What, for instance, is religion? or tradition? and what is the difference between them?

Eliade: The simplest definition of esotericism is, in my opinion, a secret corpus of doctrines, rituals and spiritual techniques regarded as revealed in primordial times by Supernatural Beings, and transmitted by means of specific initiation to a limited number of disciples. In every religion we find a large *exoteric* set of beliefs, rituals and theological formulae and, concomitantly, their *esoteric* interpretation. The term "tradition" is usually employed with relation to an esoteric understanding of a particular religion. However, "tradition" and "traditional" are also used to designate any authentic, not yet acculturated type of culture, religion or society.

Parabola: Another term that we would like your help in defining is myth itself. What really is myth, as differentiated from folk tale, parable, fable, epic? Are there "modern myths"—do new myths emerge, or are they simply old ones in new clothing? How does myth actually operate in our times?

Eliade: Myth is an extremely complex cultural reality which can be approached and interpreted from various and complementary viewpoints. Speaking for myself, the definition which seems least inadequate and most embracing is this: any myth tells *how something came into being*–the world, man, animal species, social institutions, and so on. Myth, then, is always an account of a "creation"; it relates how something was produced or began *to be*. The actors in myths are Supernatural Beings. They are known primarily by what they did in the mythical times of the "beginnings." Hence myths disclose the creative activity of these beings and reveal the sacredness (or "supernaturalness") of their work. For this reason, myth becomes the *exemplary model* for all significant human activity. In traditional societies, myths are considered "true stories," and as such are carefully distinguished from fables or tales, which are called "false stories."

Some forms of "mythical behavior" still survive in our days. I have discussed a number of "myths of the modern world" in my book *Myth and Reality*. Of course it is difficult to summarize the long analysis given there in an adequate fashion. To give only a few examples, though, one can discover the mythical structure of Marx's classless society and the consequent disappearance of all historical tensions after the triumph of the proletariat; the "Aryan purity and perfection" exalted by Nazism is equally a mythological construction, shrewdly adapted for specific political objectives. One can also see how much the images and behavior patterns imposed on large numbers of people by the mass media correspond to specific mythical structures. The sociologist of religion Andrew Greeley has correctly and humorously described the "cult of the sacred automobile" in contemporary American society. But even the *intelligentsia* experiences the fascination of mythical behavior. There are a number of "myths of the elite" that merit study. For instance, the redeeming function of "difficulty," especially as found in works of modern art. If the elite revel in *Finnegans Wake*, in atonal music, or in the latest expressions of non-figurative arts, it is largely because such works represent closed worlds, hermetic universes that cannot be entered except by overcoming immense difficulties, like the initiation ordeals of the archaic and traditional societies. The *cognoscenti* proclaim to the "others" (i.e., the "mass") that they belong to a select minority, to a gnosis that has the advantage of being at once spiritual and secular.

Parabola: As an historian of religions, you are no doubt able to see the historical place of the present-day interests in all kinds of religious teachings and practices. What do you consider the causes of this phenomenon?

Eliade: Most of these teachings and practices express the rebellion of youth against the institutionalized religions of the so-called "establishment." The main cause of this phenomenon is, it seems to me, the unbearable experience of a religious void. Because the younger generations cannot grasp any longer the meaning of

Jewish and Christian symbols and rituals, they search for meaning and spiritual help in the Oriental religions, especially in some eccentric neo-Asiatic cultural vogues. No less significant for a historian of religions is the kind of neo-paganism much in favor with the younger generation: the rediscovery of "cosmic religion" and the sacramental dimensions of human existence—for instance, communion with nature, ritual nudity, uninhibited sexual spontaneity, the will to live exclusively in the present, and so on.

Parabola: But in spite of this widespread interest in religion, it seems that traditional ideas take no part in contemporary life. If we speak of a traditional society as one in which another level of reality, which might be called the sacred, is recognized as the real point of reference for everything that takes place on the ordinary plane and so is what gives life its meaning, we certainly can't call our society a traditional one. What would you say about this?

Eliade: By definition, *traditional* ideas cannot play a role in *modern* societies. However, in the last few years we have begun to witness a growing and ever more competent criticism of "modern life" directed from different traditional perspectives. This is particularly true in Europe.

Parabola: You have said, however, that modern man has lost the dimension of the sacred. Do you feel that we live in a dark age, religiously speaking—*Kali yuga,* as some say—a time that is unfavorable for a real spiritual search?

Eliade: Yes, "modern man" has lost the dimension of the sacred. Of course, however, I do not include those who *believe, practice* and *ponder* their own religious heritage within the rubric of "modern men." But even the non-religious Western man still dreams, reads novels and poetry, listens to music, goes to the theater, loves "Nature," and so forth. And this means that *unconsciously* he communicates with the sacred. I must add, however, that the problem is too complex to be solved in a few sentences. For this reason I am somewhat reluctant to discuss such delicate problems in an interview; they are difficult enough to investigate even in a long essay . . .

Parabola: Do you see any hope of a return to traditional values? Would such a hope reside in a return to separate teachings or "churches," or



in the discovery of a central, source teaching which is perhaps the root of all the others?

Eliade: In the world of the spirit, *everything* is possible. But I would not dare to utter oracular predictions. Most probably there will be a kind of "opening" in the great religions, a growing interest in the "universalistic" values discovered in religious traditions that have been heretofore considered "heretic," "pagan," or even "diabolic."

Parabola: Do you believe there is such a central tradition which has found different cultural expressions in different times and places?

Eliade: There is, certainly, a central tradition which different cultures inherited from at least the neolithic era. That is to say, a certain number of fundamental concepts related to man's discovery of his own mode of being were transmitted from generation to generation. Although the expressions of this understanding differ, the theoretical content is largely the same.

Parabola: What is the focus of your present work and writing?

Eliade: I am trying to write a *short* history of religious ideas, from the Stone Age to the contemporary atheist theologies. The first volume, which covers the period from prehistory to the Eleusinian Mysteries, was published in Paris this April. The English translation will be brought out next year by the University of Chicago Press.

Parabola: In our second issue, Jacob Needleman mentioned the possibility that magic is, as it were, the technique or science of religion, both religion and magic together being the indispensable elements of a tradition. It seems that alchemy might be thought of as part of th

magical aspect of religion. In *The Forge and the Crucible* you speak of the belief of the alchemists that the process of the transmutation of metals was simultaneously a process of self-perfecting or transformation of being. Do you think the operational side of alchemy was purely symbolic?

Eliade: The operational side of alchemy was *ritual,* and as such, symbolic. This means that the alchemist was operating simultaneously on physical matter and on his own "human condition"; the processes which were intended to effect the transmutation of metals concomitantly realized a radical transformation of the alchemist's own mode of being.

Parabola: In the last chapter of the same book, you make some tantalizing statements that we would like to ask you to amplify. You say:

> "The secularization of work is like an open wound in the body of modern society. There is, however, nothing to indicate that a *re-sanctification may not take place in the future.* As to the temporality of the human condition, it presents an even more serious discovery. But a reconciliation with temporality remains a possibility, *given a more correct conception of time."*

Will you say more about that?

Eliade: I still think that the "resanctification" of work is possible. There are a number of recent examples of voluntary, "spontaneous" labor undertaken in the name of an *ideal* (even a political cause!). This labor was effectuated with joy, and none of the workers ever felt the *burden of time.* I have known many "volunteers" in Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent campaigns (for instance, extracting salt from the sea to avoid the British imposed tax on salt) who could work between 16 and 18 hours a day, singing, laughing and shouting out of sheer joy. I have also met some sincere Communists who, so long as they thought that they were "building a new type of society," were neither tired nor oppressed by the *burden of time,* not even after 10 – 12 hours of hard work in a factory. Any type of labor that is undertaken for an *ideal* such as defense or liberation of one's own country, preaching a religious, social or ethical message, and so on, can be performed in a kind of "ecstatic" enthusiasm—one might also say, "outside of time."

The only problem, but a terribly difficult one, is to what extent such "voluntary" or "spontaneous" work can be integrated into a technological society.

Parabola: You have been criticized on occasion for drawing your view of the nature of religion primarily from primitive religions rather than from the full spectrum of religious traditions. How would you respond? In particular, you say in *The Sacred and The Profane:* "Acting as a fully responsible human being, man imitates the paradigmatic gestures of the gods, repeats their actions. . . ." In what sense is this true of such contemporary religions as Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism?

Eliade: I have insisted upon the importance of primitive religions because they were more or less neglected by historians of religions in the past. The most important books on this problem were written by anthropologists and sociologists such as Frazer, Durkheim, Levy-Bruhl, Wilhelm Schmidt, Robert Lowie, Malinowski, Paul Radin and others.

Now, with regard to the imitation of paradigmatic models revealed by Supernatural Beings, there is a linear continuity between the archaic, "primitive" religions and the so-called high religions. In Christianity, Islam or Buddhism, we do find the same basic principle: *imitatio dei.* The faithful repeat the exemplary *gesta* of their model. The ideal Christian—



i.e., the Saint—is the one who achieves most fully an *imitatio Christi*. The ultimate goal of every Buddhist is *nirvāna,* and he knows that he will attain *nirvāna* only through a perfect "imitation" of his model, Gautama Buddha.

Parabola: You told us that we might ask indiscreet questions. Would it be too indiscreet to ask you to what tradition and to what teachers you feel the closest ties, and by which you have been the most deeply influenced?

Eliade: I consider myself deeply influenced, I can almost say "formed" or "shaped," by the Indian tradition. I had the great opportunity to live and learn in India as a young man, being 21 years old when I arrived in Poonamalee and almost 25 when I left Calcutta. Thanks to my Indian experience, I discovered my own Eastern Orthodox tradition, and I learned how to approach and understand other religious creations. My teacher at the University of Calcutta was Surendranath Dasgupta, the author of the great five-volume *History of Indian Philosophy*. He guided me in the fascinating intricacies of Panini's Sanskrit grammar, and helped me to translate almost *in extenso* the 3 famous commentaries of the *Yoga Sūtra*. In 1930-31 I spent six months in the Himalayan *ashram* at Rishikesh, where I had the chance to practice Yoga under the guidance of Swami Shivananda, who completed his first book in that winter of 1931. (In the twenty-five years that followed, he wrote more than 200 volumes). But the simple fact of living among Indians—in Dasgupta's house in Bhovanipore, in Shantiniketan, in Benares, and in so many villages of Bengal and Orissa—was an uninterrupted series of experiences and spiritual discoveries. It was in a poor peasant's house near Chandernagore that I understood the function of *icons* and I realized how misleading such terms as "idols" and "idolatrous" can be.

Parabola: Do you believe that for a serious search it is necessary to find a teacher? And if so, how can a would-be disciple distinguish the true from the false? Are there signs of the genuine Master, like the signs of the Buddha?

Eliade: The teacher is indispensable. Anyone who *really* wants to find a teacher will find him. Of course, I do not have in mind the innumerable self-proclaimed "teachers," "*gurus,*" or "initiates" who have become so popular in recent years. A *real* teacher is not necessarily well known.

Angelus Silesius:
Western Zen Poet

by Frederick Franck

This is essentially a translation of a little book I rediscovered while browsing in a secondhand bookshop in Copenhagen. I had first read it as a medical student in Holland, where I was born. It had made an impression on me then, this collection of deceptively naive, mystical rhymes, which I remembered finding much too pious at the time. Some I still recalled vaguely.

That night in my Copenhagen hotel room they opened up in their full and rather awesome profundity, these little rhymes written by a man who died three hundred years ago. He had written them during four days and nights of illumination, satori–in direct confrontation with That which he addressed as God.

The eyes which reread Angelus Silesius, however, had been opened meanwhile by some twenty-five years of almost daily Zen study, and as I was reading, it was as if

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Editors' Note:

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the ancient Zen masters, who had become my companions and friends, were bending over me, whispering their own–sometimes quite ironic–commentaries in my ear.

It was a fascinating spiritual entertainment, and I decided then and there to translate Angelus Silesius into English and let the Oriental echoes be the running commentary, leaving it to the reader in his meditation and free association to judge their relevancy, their contradictions and agreements.

Angelus Silesius was born Johannes Scheffler in 1624, in a Lutheran family in Breslau, the capital of Silesia. He is a Christian although an unconventional one–and in every breath he mentions God, love, sin, prayer, heavenly bliss. To the Zen man these words mean little or nothing. But when the poet talks about human fate and foibles and of his firsthand experience of what lies beyond, when he speaks about ego and what lies beyond ego, he is a radical for whom God is the unknown Mystery, Nothingness, Abyss. Here the Zen Master would understand him perfectly. Are they perhaps speaking in different words of a very similar experience?

To pretend that all religions are "the same" is as superficial as it is untrue. One might as well say that Madras curry and strawberry sundae are the same, since both are food. Religions were born in very different cultural climates. Each speaks in its own language of man's irrepressible concern with Ultimate Meaning, and each one points to the overcoming of ego as the precondition for the perception of this meaning. To make a hodgepodge of their vocabularies and concepts is confusing rather than helpful. On the other hand, to notice parallels and convergences has become unavoidable, for we are becoming less and less

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The following text is a digest of Frederick nck's new translation of *Der Cherubinische ndersmann* by Angelus Silesius, together with rpretive quotations from Zen masters. Rather n excerpting one or two random chapters, we e ventured to offer here a representative sampling of the whole book; thus the juxtaposition of rhymes, quotations, and drawings is our work rather than Franck's. It is our hope that this sample will encourage readers to experience the full richness of the original as handwritten and illustrated by Franck.



imprisoned within set cultural borders.

The world is fast becoming a single spiritual continent. Symbols and concepts (yes, even God versus no-God) may clash in the brain, yet fuse quite naturally in the much more clairvoyant heart. Our spiritual home is where the heart is. And the human heart has no plural.

Hui Han in the ninth century spoke the definitive word on this underlying unity. He was asked: "Do Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism really amount to three teachings or to one?" He answered: "As understood by men of great understanding they are the same. For men of mediocre understanding they differ. All of them spring from the functioning of the same Self-Nature. It is views involving differentiation that make them three. Whether a man gains Illumination or remains deluded depends on himself, not on differences and similarities in doctrine."

Only recently has modern psychology, after a century or more of concentration on mental abnormalities, started to study healthy, integrated human beings. And soon it discovered in the history of these quite normal people what became known as "peak experiences," moments which these ordinary mortals had felt Reality break through, and when, in a flash, life in its inexpressible fullness had opened up. This is the kind of revelation that had always been regarded as the monopoly of privileged mystics. It was found to be within the reach of normal human experience. It may well be the human experience par excellence.

Such experiences one remembers as long as one lives. They are the root experiences of art and of religion. They are the first manifestations of the True Man within. And all too often these first intimations of wonder are blotted out by years of schooling and conditioning instead of being encouraged. But to the extent that conditioning and indoctrination fail, the inner-artist may still blossom and the inner-mystic find scope to ripen that is, to find his treasure house within. Religious experience is the finding of the treasure house within.

Of time and eternity

There is that which precedes
heaven and earth.
It is formless, nameless.
The eye cannot perceive it.
To speak of it as mind or Buddha
is inexact,
then it becomes again
something in our imagination.
The Tao
cannot be expressed in words.

—Dai-o-Kokushi

There is no here, no there.
Infinity lies before our eyes.

—Sengtsan

A man who has seen into
his Self-Nature
sees it whenever questioned
about it.

—Hui Neng

To what shall I compare
this life of ours? Even
before I can say it is
like a lightning flash or a dewdrop,
it is no more.

—Sengai

Do not compute eternity
as light-year after year.
One step across
that line called Time:
Eternity is here.

The rose that
with my mortal eye I see
flowers in God
through all eternity.

Eternity is time,
Time, eternity.
To see the two as opposites
is mind's peversity.

Man has two eyes.
One only sees what moves in
fleeting time,
the other
what is eternal and divine.

Timelessness
is so much part of you,
of me,
We cannot hope to find
the Self
until aware of our eternity.

I am God's alter ego.
He is my counterpart.
In timelessness we merge—
in time we seem apart.

At the end of that
which we call history
God is who IS:
for Him there is no past
nor future yet to be.

Angelus Silesius



Of the one and the many

The Tao can be shared,
it cannot be divided.

—Chuang Tzu

The Supreme Wisdom (Prajna)
is the Oneness of things;
the Supreme Compassion (Karuna)
is the Manyness of things.

—D. T. Suzuki

In the world of Reality
there is no Self,
there is no other than Self.

—Sengtsan

The mind, the Buddha and
living beings,
these are not
three different things.

—Avatamsaka Sutra

When the Ten Thousand Things
are seen in their Oneness,
we return to the Origin
where we have always been.

—Sengtsan

It is not that things are illusory
but their separateness in
the fabric of Reality
is illusory.

—Anon.

The wise have one wish left:
to know the Whole, the Absolute.
The foolish lose themselves
in fragments
and ignore the root.

To reflect God in all that is
both now and here,
my heart must be a mirror
empty, bright, and clear.

Do not malign
a single thing
for God
not only is its maker
but also its design.

Who is God? No one can tell.
He is not dark of night
nor light of day.
He is not One nor Many
nor a Father as some say.
Nor is he wisdom
intellect, or even mercy;
He is not Being—
nor non-Being
neither thing
nor no-thing.
Perhaps He is
what I and all
who ever did or will have being
could ever be capable of seeing
before becoming what He is.

God is the circle's center
for those who dare embrace Him.
For those who merely stand in awe
He is the circle's rim.

A ruby
is not lovelier
than a rock,
an angel
not more glorious
than a frog.

Angelus Silesius

Of ego and the makings of destiny

We are like those who,
immersed in water,
stretch out their hands
begging for a drink.

—Seppo



We have one moon,
clear and unclouded,
yet we are lost
in the darkness of the world.

—Ikkyu

Because of our accepting
and rejecting
the Suchness of things
escapes us.
The Way is not
difficult, provided we stop
picking and choosing.

—Sengtsan

If you want to do a certain thing
you first have to be a certain
person.
Once you have become
that certain person
you will not care any more
about doing that certain thing.

—Dogen

By honors, medals, titles
no true man is elated.
To realize that which we are,
this is the honor
for which we are created.

All evils—
murder, war, and cruel oppression—
from what else do they spring
than from the Me's obsession?

Be sure as long as
worldly fancies you pursue
you are a hollow man—
a pauper lives in you.

Go out and God comes in;
die and in God withdraw—
not-being you will be,
not-doing you will live His Law.

Man the great glutton,
devours the whole cosmos
like a beast.
Then, hungry still,
claims yet another cosmos
for his feast.

She blooms because she blooms,
the rose . . .
Does not ask why,
nor does she preen herself
to catch my eye.

Angelus Silesius

There once was a one-legged dragon
called Hui— How on earth do you manage
all those legs, he asked
a centipede,
I can hardly manage one.
—Matter of fact,
said the centipede, I do not
manage my legs.

—Chuang Tzu

Of life and death

Whence is my life?
Whither does it go?
I sit alone in my hut
and meditate quietly.
With all my thinking
I know nowhere
nor do I come to any whither:
such is my present.
Eternally changing—
all in Emptiness.

In this Emptiness the ego
rests for a while
with its yeas and nays.
I know not where to place them.
I follow my Karma as it moves
with perfect contentment.

—Ryokwan

If you long to transcend life and death
coming and going, if you want
to attain liberation
you must recognize the man who
is now listening to the Dharma.
You who sit here listening to me
are not the elements that make
up your bodies. You are that which
makes use of these elements.
Be able to see into this truth and
you will be free, whether coming
or going.

—Rinzai



All you achieve
must perish
when this world ends.
Therefore become that which you are
and which the world transcends.

Christ is forever
rising from the grave—
the Spirit cannot be
held captive in a cave.

Death does not frighten me,
it only makes me see
how in the here-and-now
life conquers death in me.

You are not real, Death,
for I die every minute
and am reborn in the next
into life infinite.

The arrow always fails the mark—
will never enter—
if it is I who take the aim
instead of That which is my center.

The heart that grasps the point
of each contingency
sees the chaos that surrounds it
as pure transparency.

Saints do not die.
It is their lot
to die while on this earth
to all that God is not.

Angelus Silesius

I shall not die.
I shall not go anywhere.
I'll be here . . .
Just don't ask me anything.

—Ikkyu

Of an early death
showing no signs
the cicada sang.

—Basho

Of heaven and hell

—Do hell and heaven really exist?
a samurai asked. Hakuin growled:
—Who are you?
—I am a samurai.
—You a samurai? You look like a bum to me!
Infuriated, the samurai grabbed for his sword.
—So you do have a sword, huh?
It is probably too dull
to cut off my head.
As the sword came out of its
sheath, Hakuin cried:
—Here open the gates of hell!
The samurai, impressed with Hakuin's calm, put his sword back and bowed.
—Here open the gates of paradise,
said Hakuin.

That which acts in all and meddles
in none, is Heaven (Tao).

—Chuang Tzu

All sins committed
in the three worlds
will fade and disappear
together with myself.

—Ikkyu

No thought for the hereafter
have the wise,
for on this very earth
they live in paradise.

All heaven's glory is within
and so is hell's fierce burning.
You must yourself decide
in which direction
you are turning.

Unless you find paradise
at your own center
there is not
the smallest chance
that you may enter.

What is it not to sin?
I did not ever know
until, one day,
my eye did really see
a flower grow.

He whose treasure house is God
his earth is paradise.
Why then call those
who make this earth a hell
the worldly wise?

Angelus Silesius

Your treasure house is within.
It contains all you will ever need.
Use it fully instead of
seeking vainly outside yourself.

—Hui Hai



Of prayer and meditation

—What is the Buddha? a monk asked.
—Will you believe me? Can I tell you?
—Of course, Master!
—Well, you are it!
—How can I remain it?
—Ah, if your eye is just the slightest
bit blurred, all you see are hallucinations.

We pray for our life tomorrow.
Ephemeral as life may be,
this is the habit of our mind
that passed away yesterday.

—Ikkyu

The mind remaining
just as it was born—
without any prayer
it becomes the Buddha.

—Ikkyu

Zen practiced in the state of
activity is incomparably
superior to that practiced
in the state of withdrawal.

—Daie

If you seek the Buddha outside of
the mind, the Buddha changes
into a devil.

—Dogen

How often have I prayed
"Lord, do your will . . . ."
But see: He does no willing—
motionless He is and still.

The deepest prayer
which I could ever say
is that which makes me One
with That to which I pray.

God is such as He is,
I am as I must be.
And yet no two-ness
do I see.

Give me all your bounty,
give me eternal bliss—
as long as You withhold Yourself
all things I miss.

Be still and empty:
He shall fill
you with far greater fullness
than you could ever
wish or will.

So far beyond all words is He,
I know no other way
than not to speak.
Thus without words
I pray.

In the depth of His Abyss
God is pure contemplation.
The deepest ground
of all that is
dwells in perpetual adoration.

Prayer is neither word nor gesture,
chant nor sound.
It is to be in still communication
with our Ground.

Angelus Silesius



Of the inner light and enlightenment

—What is the Buddha, Master?
—You have no Buddha Nature!
—Then what about the animals?
—They do have the Buddha Nature!
—And why should I be devoid of it?
—Because you have to ask and do not recognize it yourself.

—Chuang Tzu

Walking is Zen, sitting is Zen;
whether we speak or are silent
move or are still,
it is unperturbed.

—Yungchia

—What happens when an enlightened
Man slides back into delusion? a
monk asked.
—A broken mirror does not reflect
properly, fallen flowers do not
jump back onto the branch!

—Sengtsan

I know the joy of a fish
in the river
through my own joy
walking along the river.

—Chuang Tzu

Do not search for Truth.
Just stop having opinions.

—Sengtsan

The longest way to God,
the indirect,
lies through the intellect.
The shortest way
lies throught the heart.
Here is my journey's end
and here its start.

Unknowable, unnamable,
You seem the other pole.
And yet
my human heart
contains You whole.

The Clear Light
Cannot be attained
until both heart and mind
have deepest insight gained.

Desire returns
as soon as we ignore
the divine essence
at our core.

Mysterious Being
infinitely far from me,
who yet in every beating
of this heart must be.

I am not outside God,
He is not outside me.
I am His radiance;
my light is He.

No sweeter tone
from any lute could spring
than when this heart
and that of God
resound as with one string.

Angelus Silesius

Of God and the true Self

God is not nice. God is no uncle.
God is an earthquake!

—Hassidic saying

—I came here to find the Truth, Master.
—Why wander around? Why do you
neglect your precious treasure at home?
—What do you call my precious treasure?
—That which asks the question is the
treasure.

—All these mountains, rivers,
this whole great earth,
where does it all come from?
—Where does your question
come from?

—Cheng-Tao ke

—What is the deepest meaning of Buddhism,
Master?

The Master made a deep bow to his pupil.

Wherever I may be, I meet him—
He is no other than myself.
Yet I am not he.

—Dosan

All the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas
are his servants. Who is he?
Whoever sees him clearly, feels
as if he has met his own father
on the street corner—
he does not have to ask others
if he is right or wrong.

—Mumonkan

The figure of the True Man
standing there—
One glimpse
of him and we are in love.

—Ikkyu

I am as rich as God.
Each dust mote
more or less
do I in common
with my God possess.

See what no eye can see,
go where no foot can go
choose that which is no choice—
then you may hear
what makes no sound—
God's voice.

Do not cry out to God.
Your own heart is the source
from which He flows unceasingly
unless you stop its course.

God is a phantom
drifting by—
until you see Him all around you
and stop asking
who? what? why?

The saint forgets
all about God's commands.
He acts spontaneously
as love of man—and God—demands.

God is abundance,
His gifts beyond all measure.
My heart is bewildered—
afraid to hold such treasure.

As great as God I am,
as small as I is He.
How could I below Him
or He above me be?

Do not seek God
in outer space—
Your heart's the only place
in which to meet Him
face to face.

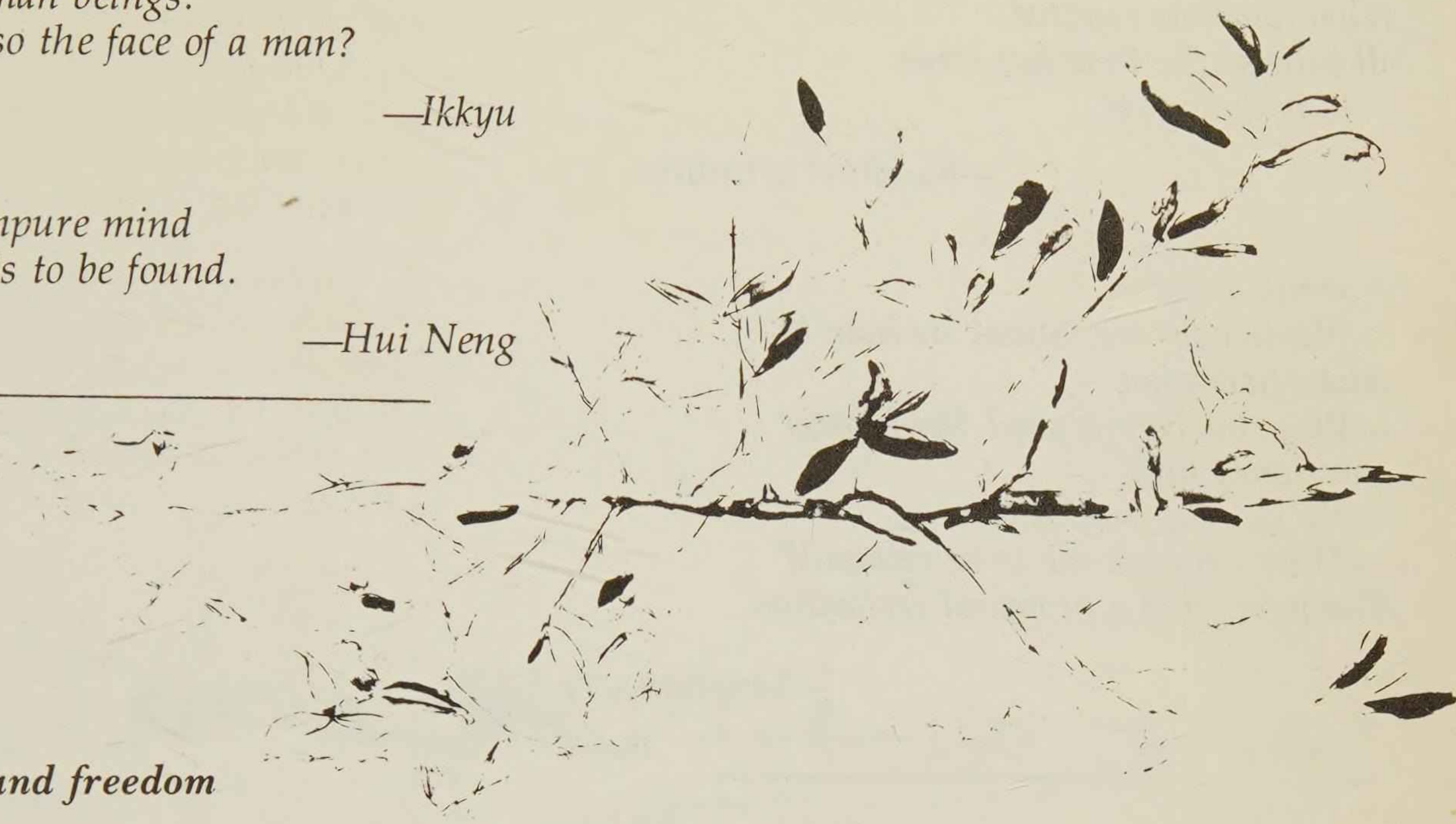
Angelus Silesius

Gautama and Amida too were
originally human beings.
Have I not also the face of a man?

—Ikkyu

Within our impure mind
the pure one is to be found.

—Hui Neng



Of bondage and freedom

Whether you are bound by a gold
chain or an iron one,
you are in captivity.
Your virtuous activities are the
gold chain, your evil ones the
iron one. He who shakes off both
the chains of good and evil
that imprison him,
him I call a Brahman—
he has attained the Supreme Truth.

—Buddhist Scripture

One of his disciples asked the
Buddha:
—If I should be questioned about
my Master's opinion, what shall
I say?

—You shall say: The Venerable One
holds no opinions.
He is freed of all opinions.

—Buddhist Scripture

Nothing keeps you bound
except your Me—
until you break
its chains, its handcuffs,
and are free.

To see the light at all
I must first leap across
all barriers,
destroy the Me's defenses,
tear down its wall.

The emptier I do become
the more delivered from the Me,
the better shall I understand
God's liberty.

I was God inside God
before I became Me
and shall be God again
when from my Me set free.

You who did create
and can unmake this earth,
You cannot force
against my will
my second birth.

Who freedom loves
loves God
and only he is free
who freed from all desire
in God finds liberty.

Angelus Silesius

When one no longer believes
in the "I,"
When one has rejected
all beliefs, the time has come
to bestow gifts.

—Buddhist scripture

A monk asked:
—Please help me: Show me how to
attain liberation.
—Who has bound you? the Master
questioned him.
—No one has bound me.
—Then why ask me to be released?
The monk had a profound realization.

—Sengtsan

Of the central mystery

Form is the Void, and the Void is Form.
The Void is nothing else but Form
and the Form is nothing else but the Void.
Outside the Void there is no Form,
and outside the Form there is no Void.

—Nagarjuna

The infinitely small is as large as the
infinitely big. Limits are nonexistent.
The infinitely large is as small as
the infinitely minute.
No eye can see their boundaries.

—Sengtsan

Outside the Buddha
there is no mind,
outside the mind
there is no Buddha.

—Baso

How this heart
no larger than my hand
can enfold heaven, hell, and
this wide earth
this is the Mystery
no man will ever understand.

All the unfolding, growth
and evolution we are seeing,
all this changing and becoming
God sees as timeless Being.

I know, but don't know why,
that without me
God cannot live
nor without Him
can I.

When I am neither you nor me,
When there is no more
here nor there—
then I begin to be
of God as Nothingness aware.
Nothingness You are,
fathomless Abyss.
To see Abyss in all
is seeing
that which Is.



—I come to you with nothing, said
the monk.
—All right, just drop it! Joshu
answered.
—But I just said that I have
nothing; what is there to be
dropped?
—Then just carry it away with you!

If you break open the cherry tree
where are the blossoms?
But in springtime
how they bloom!

—*Ikkyu*

It is spring
In this hut
there is nothing
there is everything.

—*Ryoto*

He is pure Nothingness.
He is not now, not here.
I reach for Him
and see Him disappear.

De profundis,
my heart cries out
to the divine Abyss.
Which of the two
the deeper is?

Now I must end.
Beloved,
if you would read more,
look deep into your heart
all Scripture's
root and core.

Angelus Silesius

Epicycle IV

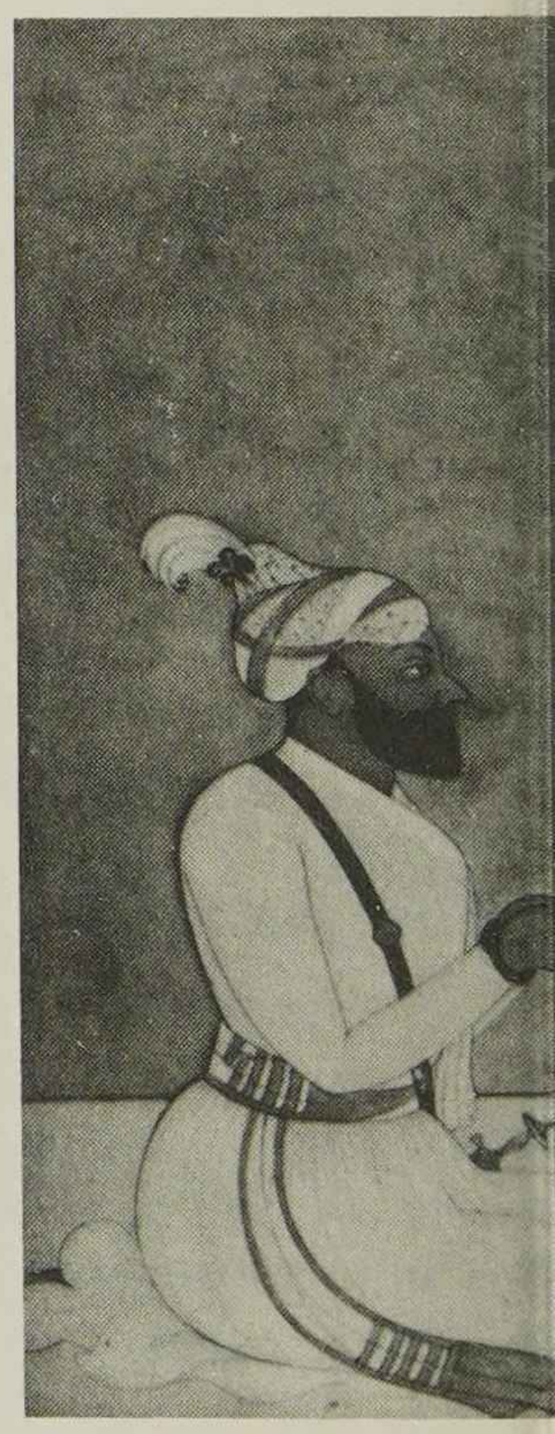
Tales of a Demon is adapted from the *Vetalapanchavimshati,* or *Twenty-five Tales of a Vetala,* a cycle of stories embedded in the eleventh-century Indian epic known as *The Ocean of Stories,* by Somadeva. The "Tales of a Demon," twenty-four in number, are all riddle stories which were used for religious 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

The previous Tale concerned a troubled love-match between the beautiful Padmavati (the daughter of an ivory-carver) and a certain Prince who had travelled a great distance in order to take her back with him to his own kingdom. In the wooing of Padmavati, he had been unable to make any sense out of the subtle signs which his beloved gave him (when to visit her, how to steal into her chamber) and would have failed completely in his adventure had not his crafty servant Buddhisarira been able to interpret the language of signs used by the lady so that his Prince could act appropriately.

Through an intricate artifice, the King, Karnotpala, had been persuaded to banish the beautiful lady from her own homeland, enabling her to return with her Prince to his own domain. The parents of Padmavati, not knowing what had become of their daughter, and believing her to have been eaten by tigers, died of grief.

The riddle posed by the Vetala, ending the Tale, was this: who was responsible for the unhappy death of Padmavati's parents? Was it the servant, was it the romantic Prince, or was it the beautiful lady herself?



The Three Brahman Suitors



"What doubt can there be about this tale?" said King Trivikramasena, when the Vetala had finished speaking. "Why, not one of those three were at fault, of course. The entire blame falls upon King Karnotpala." Thus did that king, whose name signifies the three victorious steps of Vishnu, answer the demon.

"How can that be, O King? What did the king do? Those three adventurers were instrumental in the death of Padmavati's parents. Are crows to be blamed when swans eat the rice?" Then King Triple-Victory replied and explained the matter in full:

"Indeed none of those three were at fault, but only the king. For Buddhisarira, the wise minister's son, did only that which forwarded his master's interests. No blame can come to one so loyal. As for Padmavati and the prince, burning as they were with the fire of love, they were undiscerning and ignorant, and intent only upon their own delight. King Karnotpala, however, was impolitic in his actions, and failed to act as befits one whose word is law and who therefore bears a great responsibility for the welfare of his subjects. By means of spies he should have sought out the true state of affairs, and the guilt is more his for not seeing through the tricks of rogues. Thus he was indiscreet, and behaved in a way unseemly for kings."

When King Triple-Victory had finished speaking he noticed a sudden lightening of the burden on his shoulders: he had broken his silence, and the demon, having heard the correct answer, immediately transported the corpse back to the top of the simsapa tree. How intrepid and undaunted are heroes! As soon as the king saw this, he immediately climbed the tree and retrieved the corpse.

After loading the corpse onto his shoulders again, King Triple-Victory set off down the path back to the mendicant Kshantisila. He shut his lips tightly and vowed not to speak, but once again the demon in the corpse spoke up and said, "Noble

King, what a dreary journey you have before you! Allow me please to make the hours pleasant by telling you a tale."

On the banks of the River Yamuna, in the district reserved for Brahmans, there once lived a Brahman whose name, Agnisvamin, means "Master of Fire." A wise man, he had completely mastered the Vedas and was highly regarded by all who knew him. No less highly regarded, but for utterly different reasons, was his beautiful daughter Mandaravati for she was as lovely as the Mandara, or Paradise-Tree. Indeed, when the Lord Creator made this wonder among women, he came to regard his previous handiwork, the nymphs of heaven, with disdain. Doubtless Mandaravati had many admirers who wished, did they not lack the courage, to woo her and take her to wife.

One day, when she had come into the full flower of her maidenhood, there came from a city not far away three young Brahmans, each as handsome as the others, and all equally matched in virtue and knowledge. But what was the father of fair Mandaravati to do when each of the three Brahman youths demanded his daughter's hand in marriage, and declared, each of them, that they would rather die than see her wed to another? In fact, that perplexed Brahman did nothing, for he feared that the bliss of one would mean the death of the others; so Mandaravati remained unmarried. And day and night, the three Brahman lovers remained with their eyes fixed constantly on the moon of their beloved's face, as if they had taken a vow to become peacocks and live upon moonbeams.

But alas! to the grief of all, Mandaravati suddenly contracted a burning fever, which ended in her death. As distracted with grief as her father, the three Brahman suitors bore their beloved to the cemetery, after she had been duly adorned, and there performed the necessary sacred rites and burnt her body upon a pyre.

Now one of them, when Mandaravati's dear body had been reduced to ashes, built himself a hut on the place of the pyre, making her ashes his bed and living by alms-begging. The second young Brahman took Mandaravati's bones to the Holy Ganges, to wash them and to pray beside them. The third suitor became a wandering ascetic, and his travels took him to many lands.

One day, as the ascetic Brahman was roaming about, he chanced upon the village called Thunderbolt. There he entered as a guest into the house of a certain Brahman, who received him courteously and invited him to dine. During the course of the meal, a child began to cry, and no efforts of the mistress of the house would suffice to bring the child peace. At last, in a fit of vexation, the woman took the child up in her arms and flung it into the fire. The child's body being soft, it was instantly reduced to ashes.

When the ascetic saw all this, his hair stood on end and he exclaimed to himself, "Alas! I have entered the house of a demon! To continue this meal would be to eat sin itself!" As he began to depart, however, the householder said to him, "Do not be dismayed. Behold the power of charms, especially one

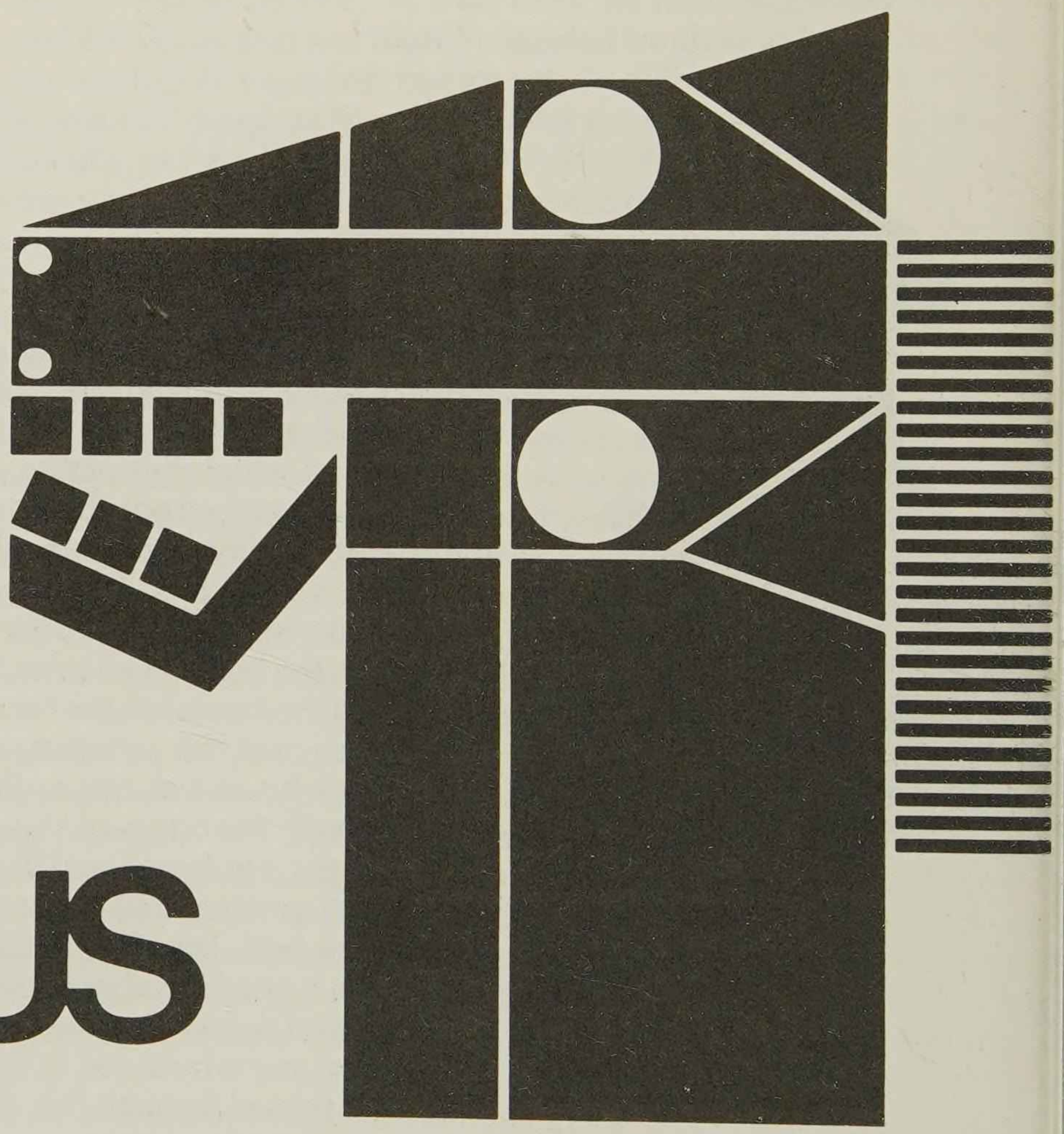


which will bring the dead to life as soon as it is recited." Then, taking up a book, the householder read the charm and behold! as soon as it was uttered, and some dust thrown onto the ashes of the child, the child rose up alive, exactly as he was before.

The relief which this action induced in the mind of the ascetic was matched only by his excitement at the discovery of the charm. He finished his meal in peace, observed how and where his host put the book away, and followed the householder's example after the meal and retired for the night. As soon as the house was quiet, however, he cautiously arose and taking the book, left the house and travelled day and night until he reached the cemetery where his beloved had been burnt. Upon his arrival, he saw the second young Brahman just returning with the bones of Mandaravati from the banks of the Holy Ganges. He then found the other suitor, who had built a hut in the cemetery and made the ashes of their dear Mandaravati his bed. Together, the three Brahman suitors pushed over the hut, read the charm over the ashes of their beloved, and sprinkled dust on the ashes. Upon the instant, Mandaravati arose, alive and whole and as beautiful as ever; in fact, as her body had passed through fire, it now was more splendid than before, as if made of gold.

As soon as the three Brahman suitors saw their dear one alive again, they fell in love all over again and began quarrelling with one another as to who should wed her. "She is my wife," said the first, "for I preserved her ashes and revived her by prayers and asceticism." "Not so," replied the second. "Did I not take her bones to the Holy Ganges, whose waters, as everyone knows, are universally efficacious in the matter of rebirth and resuscitation?" And the third said, "By right she is my wife, for she was won by the power of the charm which I produced."

"Brave King!" said the demon to King Triple-Victory. "Give me a true judgment if you can, and help decide this dispute. Whose wife ought the maiden Mandaravati to be? If you know and do not tell me, your head will burst into a thousand pieces."



EQUUS

and the Death of Psychiatry

by John A. Miles, Jr.

Two years ago, a research psychiatrist at the National Institutes of Mental Health quietly broke the news that psychiatry was dead.

E. Fuller Torrey, M.D., in a dispassionate book entitled *The Death of Psychiatry,* went a step beyond the questions and complaints of other psychiatric dissidents to declare that not only the profession of psychiatry but the words "psychiatry" and "mental illness" themselves were obsolete. Six "patients" in eight, he affirmed, have nothing medically wrong with them. Only one in eight has a disease or injury treatable by a physician. The remaining one, if he cannot yet be categorized, ought not in the meantime be regarded as infected with a disease if he can as reasonably be regarded as confronted with a problem. In the future,

Many present-day psychiatrists will probably elect to remain in medicine as neurologists and work with this group of patients. Other psychiatrists, who enjoy teaching people about problems of living more than treating disease, will elect to become behavioral scientists.

The veterans of psychiatry will find work, in other words, but the army itself will be decommissioned.

If the psychiatric community has refused to disperse, it has done so, Torrey argued, partly because of that challenging eighth patient and partly for less respectable reasons. Psychiatrists have kept psychiatry alive as a medical specialization because they wish to be paid as physicians rather than as behavioral scientists or (Torrey's plainer term) as tutors. They aspire to be research scientists in medicine rather than adepts in the application of a more or less perennial wisdom to more or less perennial problems. No less important, magistrates and policemen have kept psychiatry alive because "mental illness" is an omnibus charge with which they may conveniently dispose of any public nuisance who happens not to have committed a crime.

Torrey did not specify in detail the non-medical attention his tutors would have to provide, though he made the seriousness of their work plain by describing cases they would have to handle. As it happens, however, a play opened on Broadway as Torrey's book was being published; and in that play—Peter Shaffer's *Equus*—we are afforded what may be a glimpse into the post-psychiatric tutorial of the future.

Equus is a re-enactment, in the memory of a psychiatrist, of a series of events which have become for him a private revelation. Alan Strang, 17, patient of Dr. Martin Dysart, believes that all horses are one Being, a Divine Horse, Equus the God. It has been Alan's secret habit to strip naked and ride Equus by night. But now, convinced that the jealous God has seen and condemned his lust for a local stablegirl, he has blinded nine horses with a spike. If Alan is not medically sick, what is Dr. Dysart to make of him or say to him?

In the 1935 *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, W. B. Yeats, the editor, put three strange poems nearly back to back. One was Thomas Boyd's *The King's Son:*

Who rideth through the driving rain
At such a headlong speed?
Naked and pale he rides amain
Upon a naked steed.

Not hollow nor height his going bars,
His wet steed shines like silk,
His head is golden to the stars
And his limbs are white as milk.

But, lo, he dwindles as a light
That lifts from a black mere,
And, as the fair youth wanes from sight,
The steed grows mightier.

Ah, 'tis not holy so to ban
The youth of kingly seed:
Ah! woe, the wasting of a man
Who changes to a steed.

There are natures, Boyd seems to say, which must wax to royalty or wane to animality. Alan, whose mother has read him stories of "Prince," a horse no one can ride, would become with his mount a single indomitable being. But why is his metamorphosis necessary? Who is it who has forbidden him his natural royalty? In Boyd's poem, a wizard mutters curses to the sky. Who has placed Alan under such a ban?

Frank Strang, Alan's father, is a man who might say of his troubled son what E. M. Forster's Mr. Emerson says of his son in *A Room with a View:*

> *How can he be unhappy when he is strong and alive? What more is one to give him? And think how he has been brought up–free from all the superstition and ignorance that lead men to hate one another in the name of God. With such an education as that, I thought he was bound to grow up happy.*

Mr. Strang is "an atheist, and I don't mind admitting it." Certain that religion is all "bad sex," he has done what he could to prevent his wife from infecting Alan with it. He admits, however, that he has not been entirely successful. A crisis of sorts was reached over a particularly "kinky" picture of Christ in agony. Mr. Strang tore that picture from Alan's wall. Alan "cried for days without stopping—and he was not a crier, you know" until his father replaced the picture with one of a white horse. Then "we had no more of that awful weeping."

It is strange to recall that our final biblical glimpse of Jesus is that of a knight mounted on a white horse at the head of a cavalry. In the words of Lionel Johnson's *Te Martyrum Candidatus,* the second of the three poems so oddly juxtaposed by Yeats, we see

. . . the fair chivalry come, the companions of Christ!
White horsemen, who ride on white horses,

the Knights of God!
They, for their Lord and their Lover who sacrificed All, save the sweetness of treading, where He first trod.

Three chapters remain in the Bible, but the Savior exits here, "a judge with integrity, a warrior for justice, his eyes flames of fire, his head crowned with crowns, the name inscribed upon him known but to himself, his mantle soaked in blood" (*Revelations* 19:12).

Mr. Strang issued a dangerous invitation when he replaced Jesus with a horse. Jesus was born in a stable. So are horses. Jesus was whipped naked through the streets. So are horses. Jesus bore the burdens of men. So do horses. Jesus was tricked out in comic clothing for the amusement of the ruling class. So—in the "equitation" of Mrs. Strang's patrician background—are horses. Jesus is the divinely innocent victim, inviting all innocent victims to hang with him now on the cross and trample with him later in the apocalyptic victory. Such, for Alan, is the promise of Equus, his "Lord and Lover;" and as Jesus rides against the pagans, ready to smite them with the sword of his mouth, so Alan rides against "The Hosts of Hoover. The Hosts of Philco. The Hosts of Pifco. The House of Remington and all its tribe! . . . Come on, Equus. Let's get them . . . *Trot!*"

Alan needs help, we could conventionally say; and yet—Shaffer forces it on us—Alan's psychiatrist needs Alan. Dr. Dysart's voice is that of Ernest Dawson in the third Yeats selection, *To One in Bedlam:*

O lamentable brother! if those pity thee,
Am I not fain of all thy lone eyes promise me;
Half a fool's kingdom, far from men who sow and reap
All their days, vanity? Better than mortal flowers,
Thy moon-kissed roses seem: better than love or sleep,



M. Chagall: "Auto-Portrait with Clock"

The star-crowned solitude of thine oblivious hours!

The psychiatrist reflects:

The normal is the good smile in a child's eyes –all right. It is also the dead stare in a million adults. It both sustains and kills –like a God. It is the Ordinary made beautiful: it is also the Average made lethal. The Normal is the indispensable, murderous God of Health, and I am his Priest.

That the Normal is the Average made lethal is by now almost a cliché. What rescues Shaffer's play from banality is Dysart's reinterpretation of the practice of Normality as the practice of a religion. If Normal is God, how does God compare with Equus? At the conclusion of a session with Alan, Martin does not reflect only upon what Equus means in Alan's life: he also asks what Equus may mean in his own life, and his answers are theology rather than psychiatry. Dysart allows the meaning of Equus to pierce

eyond the subjective dynamics of Alan's dis-
rbed psyche; for, more than once in imagina-
on, he has found himself staring into the
orse-God's mouth:

Of course I've stared at such images before. Or been stared at by them, whichever way you look at it. And weirdly often now with me the feeling is that they *are staring at* us *—that in some quite palpable way they precede us. Meaningless, but unsettling . . . In either case, this one is the most alarming yet. It asks questions I've avoided all my professional life.*

a passage like this, Shaffer, like some
sychiatric Ezekiel, sees the bones of that pro-
ession taking on new flesh. In effect, he sees E.
uller Torrey's tutors pondering over and ap-
lying to their own as well as to their patients'
ves those images "that in some quite palpable
ay . . . precede us."

Among these ancient images, those of the
orse, the horseman, and the horse-man may
emain prominent. The horses in *Equus*
-portrayed, as in ritual drama, by masked
umans—are compelling figures. And yet it is
orth recalling that it was Christ, not Equus,
ho was Alan's first choice. In *Madness and*
ivilization, A History of Insanity in the Age of
eason, Michel Foucault discusses the trans-
erence of madness from holiness to beastliness
hich occurred between the sixteenth and the
eventeenth centuries. For the Renaissance,
hrist was the sanctifier not only of death but
so of folly. Life and sanity alike were limits
at a man might be called upon at any moment
transcend, and the Christian was not to be
candalized at either call.

In the seventeenth century, however, "Chris-
an reason rid itself of the madness that had so
ng been a part of itself," and

the madman, in his abolished reason, in the fury of his animality, received a singular power as a demonstration: it was as if scandal, driven out of that superhuman region where it related to God and where the Incarnation was manifested, reappeared, in the plenitude of its force and pregnant with a new lesson, in that region where man has a relation to nature and to his animality.

the later seventeenth and in the eighteenth
entury, this animality was fought: "If wild
easts can be broken to the yoke, it must not be
espaired of correcting the man who has
rayed." In the nineteenth and twentieth cen-

turies, it was treated as a disease. In the late twentieth century, if de-medicalization of most madness is at hand, it may be interpreted as a revelation.

The patient in *Equus* has created a personal mythology. The psychiatrist, by accepting the relevance of this mythology for his own life, has created a personal theology. Martin Dysart does not ask whether Equus exists, but what he means and what he wishes. This kind of interrogation is *fides quaerens intellectum*—faith seeking understanding. It is theology. There is



M. Franz: "Tower of Blue Horses"

no other word for it.

It may be that beyond the death of psychiatry there wait only such secret plunges into animality and such private discoveries of theology. But if Martin Dysart can borrow from Alan —that is, if he needn't himself ride naked on God's bare back but can learn from one who did—then perhaps he can teach others to learn other lessons from other stories. This is to claim nothing more than that stories can teach and to suggest that E. Fuller Torrey's post-psychiatric tutor may well be a special sort of story-teller—a practitioner, if you like, of applied mythology.

In a recent issue of the *New York Review of Books,* critic Helen Vendler reports with disdain that psychiatrist Robert Coles uses the novels of William Carlos Williams in his practice. "The evangelist is the failed poet," she snarls, having earlier proclaimed her principle that "literature is fundamentally non-referential." Alas, if the evangelist is the failed poet, then most of mankind is the evangelist. A Yeats may assemble the poetic voices of a generation in a chorus behind his own. The rest of us may quite literally die in that attempt.

It must be so, for more is at stake than simply becoming "verbal" in the therapeutic way. One cannot "come to terms" with an extraordinary experience in other than extraordinary terminology. Terrible truth wants terrible language and, deprived of it, may resort tó terrible action. It is here that the referentiality of literature begins to count. Words certainly do *refer* in a way that musical tones or spots of paint do not.

Successful communication is the victory of mercy and understanding over ignorance and pain; but in that victory, the intent to understand precedes understanding itself. When language "refers," it carries us back into the battles where it was won. A man who has not yet understood is "understanding" so long as he recognizes that there stands before him something which, if he would be merciful, he must seek to understand. Sometimes our language is victorious, sometimes it is only valiant. Psychiatric jargon is more valiant than victorious. It is a brave determination to understand rather than understanding itself. But such valor



From the play, Equus

is never wasted.

Psychiatric jargon is a sign of hope to the extent that each clumsy neologism memorializes some attempt to understand. The jargon never refers to nothing. It always refers at least to the struggle to grasp the meaning in madness. But once heard in this way, there is no reason not to move past it: it is not evil but, by contrast with other languages, impoverished. If "a poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man" presents his distress for a therapist's ministrations, and if the therapist on hearing him out says, "You are Lear," he has, to be sure, labelled the distress. But this label also refers the distressed man to Shakespeare, just another human being, but one who recognized that something in betrayal and decrepitude demanded understanding and who gave his recognition a superlative expression in words. And "Lear" is not only a kinder label than its clinical alternatives, it is one more equal to the real complexity of the condition.

In *Equus,* with no richer mythological vocabulary than that of his television jingles, a nursery tale, and a few lines from the Bible, Alan Strang must become a dumb animal to speak. Outside, on the streets of Manhattan, others, in still more desperate straits, take still more violent action. Grieving for America, the late Arnold Toynbee once said:

> *You have to shoot somebody, burn yourself alive, do something violent, in order to get any attention at all, however good your cause or causes, however patient you have been, however well you have put your case.*

Alan's mother asks: "What do you have to do in this world to get any sympathy—blind animals?"

For many now, the answer seems to be "Yes." There is no alternative to "acting out" unless and until there is language more eloquent than action. If we are a step closer to such language now than we have been, we may in some modest measure have Peter Shaffer to thank. *Equus* is that kind of play.

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Death and Evil: Becker's Brilliant Pessimism

Eugene Bianchi

THE DENIAL OF DEATH. By Ernest Becker. New York: The Free Press, 1973, 1975. Pp. xiv + 314. $7.95; paper $2.95.

ESCAPE FROM EVIL. By Ernest Becker. The Free Press, 1975. Pp. xix + 188. $9.95.

I have wondered why these two books stimulated and challenged me as few volumes have in recent memory. Part of the answer is the author's special genius for cutting through to the heart of the matter in the works of great intellects. Rarely have I experienced such precision of analysis coupled with an enviable synthetic quality of placing masters of the modern mind in dialogue with one another over bedrock issues of death and evil. Another reason for Becker's impact stems from the interdisciplinary character of his approach to central topics. Perhaps "interdisciplinary" is too trite a designation, because it usually connotes the academic effort to reach across fragmented departmental disciplines. Rather, in one writer psychology and anthropology, sociology, philosophy and theology blend with naturalness and power. Becker cannot be easily categorized; because he has integrated the disciplines so well within himself, his pen moves with extraordinary dynamism.

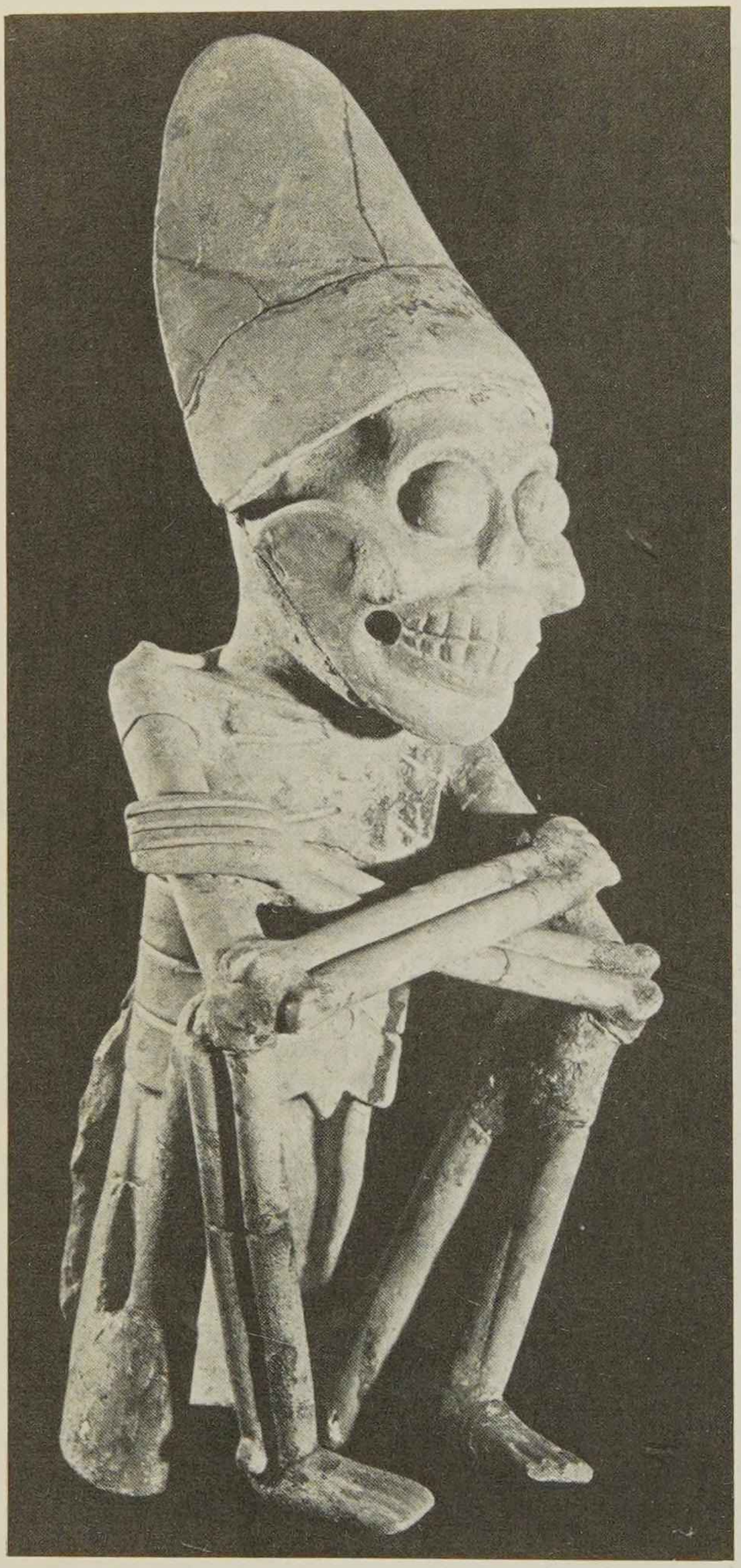
Beyond the impact of his style is the nature nd the context of his message. He links fun-damental motives of human activity and cul-ure to the more or less conscious fear of death. s he readily admits, Becker's theme is not ew; his chief mentor, Otto Rank, elaborated a sychology on the basis of the paradoxical ituation of humankind in face of death. These wo books, however, are not simply a rehash of ank. Their intensity emanates in strange ways rom the life-death context of the writer's own redicament. Becker died of cancer in 1974, bout a year after the publication of his Pulitzer rize winner, *The Denial of Death*. *Escape from vil* is a posthumous work which happily saw he light through the efforts of his wife, Marie. In deathbed interview with Sam Keen for *sychology Today,* Becker dated his conver-ion to the understandings expressed in these ooks to a period well before his final illness. et I sense a kind of personal urgency in these ast two works.

Between the lines of scholarly reference and onstruction, a strong note of personal en-agement prevails. The prose often becomes ividly descriptive, with too much dramatic epetition for merely intellectual argument. I do ot know whether Becker had intimations of is own death when working on these books, ut I perceive a kind of synchronicity between is literary intensity and the purposes at work in is body. The author's life and work were un-onsciously addressing each other; Becker's rapplings with the profundity of death come cross as a final search for meaning on a per-onal level. It is as though the energy of a fetime quest had been condensed into a last, omprehensive vision. Becker's life myth ouches readers to the degree that they can nare similar experiences. This, I believe, is the ey reason for the books' influence on me. I ame to the volumes at a time when questions f physical and social death were seeking exis-ential resolution in my own life.

The indulgent reader of this review may be sking at this point for a more objective ac-ount of Becker, not an excursus on Bianchi. or me, however, such an insistence on cool nalysis would be to miss the deeper point of serious understanding and criticism of another's writing. Beyond intellectual wrest-ling, there is a form of empathetic, gut-level feeling that we bring from our own experiences to the author under judgment. How does my developing life myth, with its terror, inade-quacies, and joys, correspond to that of another sensitive person? This query becomes a criter-ion on levels of both epistemology and ontol-ogy. Depth of knowing rests on and springs from profundity of experiential, personal being. I see this frequently in an academic setting with students in a course on death and dying. Stu-dents' grasp and appreciation of Becker's cen-tral themes depend on how vitally they have personally confronted what he calls the tragic paradox of the human condition.

This paradox inheres in each of us, and from it arises the primordial fear of death, which, though ordinarily repressed, governs our nar-cissistic strivings to live at any cost. We tame the terror of extinction through various ideologies of immortality, all of which for Becker are, finally, lies. Each of us learns early in childhood the strategies of heroics and trans-ference to overcome the terrifying awareness of our impotency (death-orientedness). We deny in manifold ways the irreconcilable tension be-tween awareness of death, with its incessant reminders of decay, and the impulse to live, to defeat death. Each person's life project thus becomes a quest for immortality, a form of self-heroics by which we endeavor to steal the fire of life from the gods. The chapter on Freud in *The Denial of Death* points to Freud's own desire to immortalize himself through psychoanalysis. More than an attempt to build a science of and a therapy for persons, psychoanalysis was Freud's own heroic strug-gle to deal with his own death.

Becker finds Freud's immortality project, de-spite its singular contributions to human under-standing, inadequate by comparison with Kierkegaard's faith solution to the human paradox. The only resolution for this paradox consists in the union of opposites, and this is impossible to achieve without an "irrational" act of trust in the benevolent designs of an earth-transcending power or being. Becker



Death (Allegorical): Mictantcuhtli

affirms this Kierkegaardian solution in the Sam Keen interview conducted during the author's terminal struggle with cancer. Yet he clearly points out that his own pilgrimage back to religious faith via psychoanalytic self-analysis should not be confused with "getting religion" as ordinarily understood. Becker views many religious solutions as distorted ideologies for anaesthetizing our terror of death.

In contrast, the Kierkegaardian answer holds no easy hope; it calls for tasting the dread of our situation in the fullest possible encounter with death. Only in and through this experience comes the possibility of a resolution of opposites beyond ideology. In his discussion of Freud and Kierkegaard, Becker lucidly explores the intrinsic relationship between religion and psychology as attempts to speak and deal with the fundamental human paradox. Becker's starting premise allows him to make telling criticisms of various contemporary psychotherapeutic systems. In general, these therapies, while helpful on many levels, promise too much; they refuse to look truthfully and unflinchingly at death. Because of this lack of nerve, a brilliant neo-Freudian like Norman O. Brown and a stimulating Marxist like Herbert Marcuse produce overly optimistic and inconsistent solutions. Neither the unrepressed body-person nor the non-repressive, unalienating society will mitigate finally the terror of death.

A crucial facet of death-denying heroics is the personal and societal phenomenon of transference. Before treating this concept, a word is in order about the fascinating sections of *The Denial of Death* that relate mental illnesses to the fundamental paradox. These chapters are especially rich in joining religion and psychology where the extremes of schizophrenia and depression, as well as the middle ground of neurosis are concerned. Becker explains schizophrenia as a desperate, reality-denying flight to the possibility pole of the human paradox, while severe depression represents a collapse into the death-decay aspects of the paradox. Although the depressive and the schizophrenic portray the illnesses that can derive from an overwhelming sense of the human condition, they are at least in touch with the human tragedy. Most of us in the middle ground of neurosis and "character armor" have settled for "clumsy lies about reality." Becker's assessment of our situation is not a happy one. Though I find his perspective too pessimistic, he succeeds in keeping our feet to the fire of creatureliness in its limits and dread. He is right: there is no way out of creatureliness; the

onl y exit is through it in courageous confronta-
ion and without ideological panaceas.

Transference is the major psychological
mechanism for seeking the power to sustain life
and forestall death. In childhood fears and in-
adequacies, we learn early to place ourselves at
he disposal and curry the favor of stronger
adults and social institutions. The dynamics of
ransference between client and therapist have
a different configuration and purpose, but they
are analogous to the childhood experience. In
he socio-political realm, people easily surren-
der themselves to leaders and ideologies in
order to find strength against death and place
hemselves among the victorious. Relying on
he anthropology of A.M. Hocart, Becker criti-
cally evaluates classic explanations for the
origins of personal and social evil and inequal-
ty. He finds the phenomenon of transference
at work in the most primitive (pre-class-
tructured) communal groupings. There is first
he transference to the tribal ritual as a technol-
ogy for controlling chaos and protecting the
hreatened existence of members. It isn't long
before the transference to charismatic priest or
kingly politician takes place. The life of indi-
viduals and the tribe must be preserved and
enhanced against all threats. From the forma-
ion of totemic symbol systems to the political
nythologies of the contemporary era, history,
s Becker describes it, is a succession of
deologies to secure immortality, myths to pre-
erve group life and ward off death.

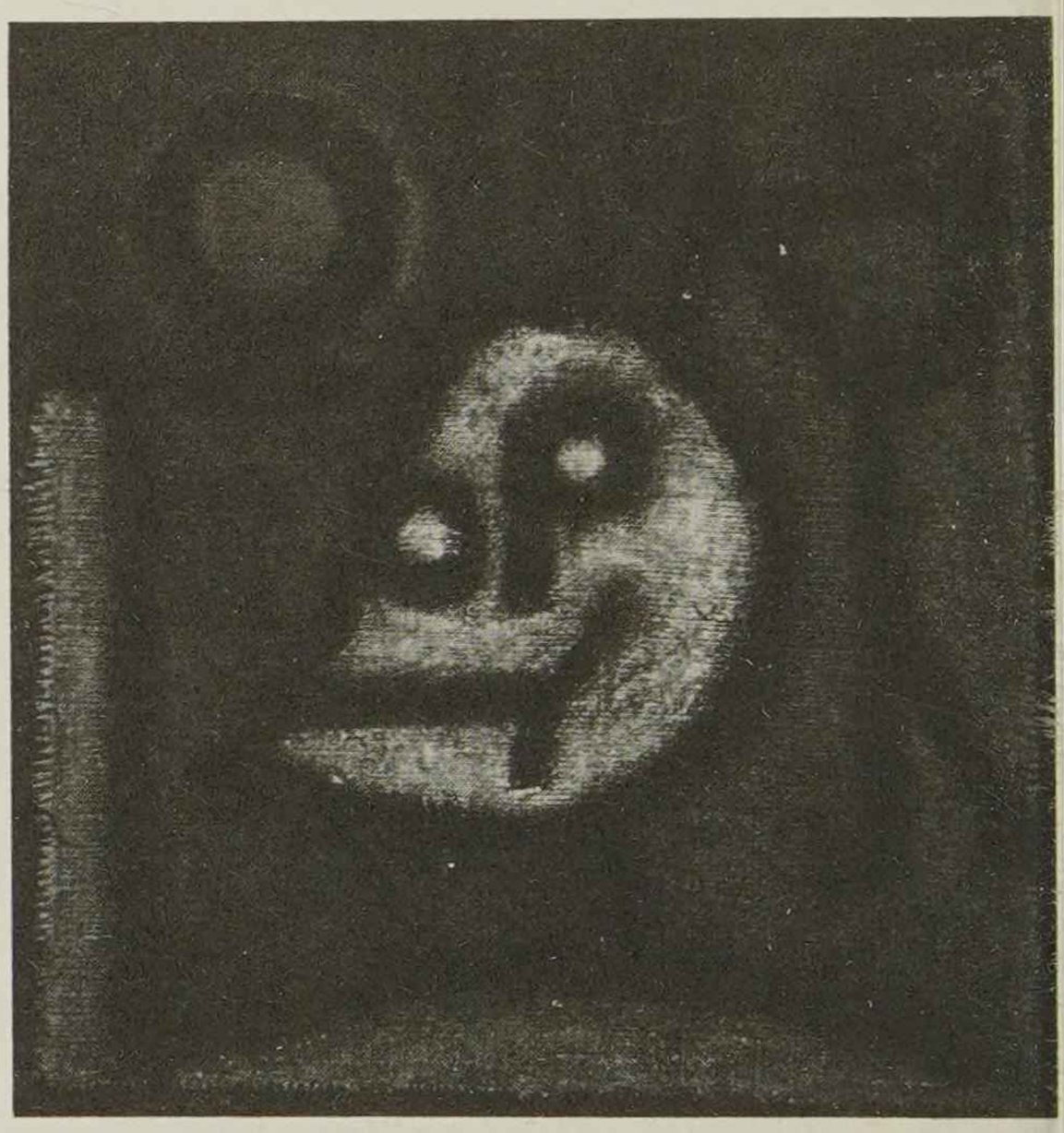
For Becker the root of personal and social
vil stems from the fear of death and "man's
unger for self-expansion and perpetuation."
On the social plane, human beings all too ea-
erly transfer their independence and self-
nitiative to leaders who promise to foster life.
his concentration of power in "visible gods"
eads to hierarchies which abuse outsiders and
ven oppress their own kind. The process of
fe-power maintenance leads to greater injus-
ces, as ancient and modern rulers direct their
tribes in all manner of destructiveness. Becker also describes a mechanism of propitiatory sacrifice at work in social evil. The fire sacrifice of Vedic priests as well as the North American Indian potlatch ceremony are analogous to the Hitlerian sacrifice of Jews in the Holocaust. Of course, the context and the results are very different, but the sacrificial imperative is the same. Sacrifice of surplus crops or of enemies (so termed through psychic projection) has been a means for expiating existential guilt and supposedly sharing in transcendent power. Social evil, therefore, arises from the human passion to deny death for the in-group, to thwart extinction at any price.

Individual evil finds its sources of motivation in a similar repression of death terror. Anxiety and fear vis-à-vis the overwhelming threat of the world call for the spilling of blood and other destructive actions in order to expiate guilt and gain immortal life. Scapegoating wards off the flow of one's own blood. Cruelty to outsiders becomes a kind of torture for self-affirmation (as seen in the film "Deliverance"). The worst part of this human propensity is that we kill and harm not only out of self-defense or need, but with a chilling joy over what are construed to be positive reasons. The individual, as "a limited animal with unlimited horizons" does in his fellow out of fear of losing the power of life. If this analysis of the penchant for evil in humans is even partially true, it should give us pause in accepting the Social Learning school's account of the origins and development of violence. In its perspective, destructive violence is a communally learned activity that can be altered through behaviorist techniques of reward and punishment. Surely violence is learned, but to gain a complete picture of its genesis, we need to consider seriously the claim that the basic dynamism for destructiveness resides in the denial of death and the lust for immortality.

Becker's vision is comprehensive and compelling. He opens his work on evil with a quote from Thomas Hardy: "If a way to the better there be, it lies in taking a full look at the worst." We are indebted to Becker for helping us to gaze at the worst, but he leaves us few clues about the better. He implies a way to the better through genuine acceptance of the creaturely, death-oriented condition and a consequent abandoning of the striving for immortality at any cost. Intimations of a positive road for escaping from evil are presented. But the preponderant message of the two books remains pessimistic: man has a way out but he almost certainly won't take it. Much of this pessimism derives, I believe, from Becker's radically Freud-

ian viewpoint, though modified by Rank. In place of Freud's instinct-driven creature, he describes persons as impelled by a repressed death fear. The latter is a much more satisfying approach to understanding humans. I, too, would hold that death-denying is one of the deepest motivational forces in us, but in the broader picture, it is only a half truth. I think that Jung's view of the unconscious could provide room for exploring the other half of the truth. In the Freudian perspective, the unconscious is a zone inhabited mainly by harmful repressions such as the fear of death. For Jung, the mysterious motivational arena of the unconscious contains a wealth of positive and healing, personal and collective archetypes as well as negative repressions and harmful propensities. Our individual life projects and our socio-cultural accomplishments are not simply immortality ideologies, like so many poisonous, sublimational mushrooms pushed up from a fetid soil.

Becker's virtual despair of human possibilities for good (a kind of Freudian Manichaeism in which the dark forces are wholly identified with materiality and mortality) manifests itself in his curious reading of Christianity. He interprets primitive Christianity as preaching an ideology of otherworldly immortality, accepting creatureliness and death as portals to an eternal hereafter. This pristine system of achieving transcendence by embracing mortality, subsequently rejected in the history of the West, would have been much less hospitable to power-lust as a defiance of death. While there is merit in this interpretation of nascent Christianity, it etherealizes the Christian ethos right out of history and fixes it firmly in heaven. Becker fails to appreciate its incarnational dimension, which gets equal emphasis in primitive Christian sources. Paul finds the resurrection already present in some form in the corruptible body of the believer. John celebrates the divinizing spirit already at work in the Christian's flesh. Kierkegaard, as Becker's hero, should have given him some sense of this; for the Knight of Faith lives in the fleshly, earthly order, albeit with ultimate risk. The point here, unacceptable to modern socio-psychological Manichaeism, is that Christian transcendence at its best affirms personal existence as a creative project and its healthy cultural productions as a finite expression of divine energies. Buddhism could also offer perspectives on human nature which escape the strictures of Becker's negativism. Buddhist symbolism, though in some ways less incarnational than Christian myth, envisions the capability of overcoming



Paul Klee: *Death and Fire* (1940)

the fear of death and the evils of unbridled desire through its disciplines. Human beings can thereby attain to a lived sense of *anatta* (non-self as a type of interconnectedness with all reality) as a foundation for a philosophy and an ethic of peace and love.

I believe that Becker's excessive rationalism prevented him from incorporating such positive aspects of transcendence. In keeping with certain schools of psychoanalysis, Becker seeks to develop a *science* of man that is almost Cartesian in its demand for clarity and rigorous methodology. There is something admirable in the Enlightenment demand for full rational explanation, but this norm is deficient for understanding the complex opacity of human motivation. The inexhaustible realm of the unconscious cannot be plumbed adequately by scientific reason alone. The methods of art and poetry—intuition and multifaceted symbolism, revelatory listening and mythical expression—can open the seeker to perspec-

tives unattainable by discursive or historical reasoning.

On the other hand, Becker's quest for "complete clarity" strangely overlooks empirical evidence about modern therapies for coping with death. I am referring to the clinical evidence from counseling work with terminally ill persons, such as that done by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. In important ways, the results of these studies contest Becker's conclusions. Many dying patients are able to work through the preparatory stages and arrive at a peaceful acceptance of death. This mounting clinical data does not negate Becker's thesis about the pervasive and influential fear and denial of death. But contemporary death therapy provides a counterbalancing hope in the human capacity to deal creatively with the final terror. Moreover, modern care for the dying holds out the promise of a less driven and fear-motivated life for those who, well before the terminal stage, confront rather than deny their inevitable deaths.

My critique can be summed up in the claim that over against Becker's pessimism there are personal and cultural forms of transcendence that enhance our talents for life as well as for dying. All human motivation cannot be reduced to death-denying immortality ideologies. In spite of these criticisms, Becker's two books stand as powerful beacons illuminating the dark recesses of our motivations. Few writers, except great literary artists, have been able so candidly to reveal us to ourselves. These books are experiences with truth in the Greek sense of *aletheia,* of making things unhidden, of depth disclosure. As a theologian, I find that Becker's work forces me to recast the meaning of many religious symbols at a deeper level. In the future, I know that I will return to Becker as a man who aided me to formulate a hard wisdom about self and society; his is a voice that will remain with me on my own journey.

Eugene C. Bianchi teaches religion at Emory University and is the author of four books, including The Religious Experience of Revolutionaries *(1972) and* From Machismo to Mutuality *(1976, co-authored with Rosemary R. Ruether).*

The Once and Future Treasure



©Maurice Sendak, 1973

P. L. Travers

THE USES OF ENCHANTMENT: THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF FAIRY TALES
By Bruno Bettelheim. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976. Pp. xi + 310. $12.50.

I always feel a little uneasy when I come upon the fairy tales in one bed with a psychologist. What could be the result of such a mating, except perhaps a casebook? Not long ago I read the published report of a seminar given by an analytical psychologist. It began with the assertion that the first thing to do with a fairy tale was to interpret it. In other words, tear it to pieces, as hunting hounds do a hare, in order to wrest its meaning from it. But what is the good of a set of labels—animus, anima and

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shadow—if, in acquiring them, you find you have killed the story? I would have said that the first thing a fairy tale requires is to be loved for itself, brooded on, held in the mind, until it releases its secret—as after the rain the burdened leaf lets fall a crystal drop. Or drops. A fairy tale has multiple meanings but it has to be taken as a whole in order to make it part of oneself.

Dr. Bettelheim is a Freudian and the hares he starts—for he, too, is a hunting hound—have a different set of of names. But his attitude is properly modest. He goes to fairy tales to *consult* them, humbly, hopefully, cap in hand, as once the pilgrims went to Delphi and waited for an answer. After a lifetime in their service—in Dachau and Buchenwald they must have been a solace to him—he tells us, in *The Uses of Enchantment,* the lessons he has learned. The word "uses" is exact. The fairy tales are a treasure house and Dr. Bettelheim has legitimately borrowed some of the treasure for use in his work with disturbed children. At the same time he insists, and rightly, that he is speaking for all children. For anybody who has been a child —and there are many who, for all the good they get out of the experience, seem to have not —will know that the exultations and agonies of the disturbed child differ from his own early emotions only in degree. After the anguish of birth, which we all suffer, the splendor and violence of the fairy tales appear to us, not with any surprise but recognition. They are telling us a familiar story. The man who has missed them in his childhood has in him an emptiness that years spent later on a psychiatrist's couch will never conceivably fill. For without such furnishings of the mind, how will he be on peaceful terms, consenting equally to both, with his own hero and dragon?

There was a time, in this country, when the fairy tales were out of favor. They were thought to lead to wishful thinking. But what life could be more arduous, less susceptible to wishful thinking than that of the fairy tale hero? And besides, it was said, the tales were too cruel. This in a world where the atom bomb was in the making and children were still told the story of Herod! It was not until late in the war, in response to an article in the *Herald Tribune,* that Pantheon re-issued the complete Grimm's with scholarly annotations. Other collections followed this; and so the fairy tales came back—at any rate, for a literate few; a long procession from the past with anthropologists for outriders and psychologists to carry the banners, all of them eager to dissect the tales in search of their own particular meaning.

Of these Dr. Bettelheim is in the forefront for he has clearly realised that in hunting for Id, Ego, and Super-Ego he is dealing with living material, an inexhaustible matrix compounded of even more heaven and earth than are dreamt of in his psychology. Always keeping children in mind and keenly aware that childhood is often too much for a child, he examines the fear of separation, the pains of sibling rivalry and the ambivalent mother figures; takes in his stride the oedipal phase as something common to every child, dangerous only when it continues too long; insists on the need for growing up and happily welcomes the happy ending. American parents who have not been given them in childhood will be grateful to Dr. Bettelheim for showing how much the tales can teach of their children's inner landscape.

For those who have grown up with the tales, and move familiarly in what Tolkien called "the Secondary World," it is useful to have brought to mind, through this psychoanalytical probing, meanings long known unconsciously or rather known to the blood. One is forced to relive the stories on other than instinctive levels—a deeply traumatic experience, for it brings up a whole substratum of memory—and reason cannot but assent to Dr. Bettelheim's findings. *The Three Little Pigs* (No, no, by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin) indeed show the porcine conflict between the Pleasure and Reality Principles. If the question "What is real?" arises, we must simply knock it on the head. It is not relevant here. *The Goose Girl* (O Fallada, hanging there) points out a way to gain the necessary autonomy from our parents. The stepmother in *Snow White* (Mirror, mirror on the wall) is indeed the dark side of the true mother, the hated part of the loved one. *Goldilocks* (Who's been sitting on my chair?) tells of the search for identity. These and many other insights are certainly true findings, gold prospected for and discovered. But at times, as I explored this reconditioned pantheon of the fairy tales—*Cinderella, The Three Feathers, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Thousand and One*–I wondered whether the author, as a moralist, was not too absolute. Not, I must say, in *The Frog Prince,* when the princess, in one of the most unforgettable moments in all fairy tale, flings the frog against the wall. Here Dr. Bettelheim arrives at the very heart of the matter, for he shows that any strong emotion—hatred equally with love—can achieve the longed-for transformation. But in general he is interested in the "sorting out of good and evil," making of them polarities instead of complements. The fairy tale does not choose between them. It

shows their interaction. The devil should be curtsied to, for who but he awakes the angel? "Danger itself," said Hölderlin, "tosters the rescuing power." Without the element of evil how will the story be thrown forward to the ultimate happy ending? In a sense, the dragon gives birth to the hero; the Wicked Fairy by crying "Death!" brings the Sleeping Beauty to life.

And as to Dr. Bettelheim's findings, all his tally of potent meaning—it has to be remembered that, as lovers need to be loved for themselves and not their characteristics, so the fairy tale needs to be accepted in all its original nakedness, its folkly simplicity. The stick in *Jack and his Bargains* may, indeed, be a phallic symbol, but it is also a stick. As well as being "orally greedy," in the psychoanalytical sense, Hansel and Gretel when they nibbled at the gingerbread house, were a pair of hungry children. The wolf in *Red Riding Hood* may be a human seducer of virgins, but he is also a wolf. On the other hand, Dr. Bettelheim, surprisingly, takes Simpleton simply as a silly fellow. But he is more than that. He is the one who is blessed with Unknowing—which should not be equated with ignorance. Though here, of course, I have to admit that this is merely my own finding.

But just as the earth takes no account of its subterranean lodes of gold—they are simply part of its structure—and as human beings take no account of the coursing blood in their veins, so the fairy tale takes no account of the many different metabolisms that psychologists discover in it. It was not designed as a clinical treatise, though clinical elements are there; nor as a manual of morals, although the moral exists. It will never, once and for all, accomodate itself to any particular pocket. Like the water of *The Well at the World's End,* it is there for everyone's drinking. The grown-up man and the young child can equally quench their thirst. Not of today, nor yesterday, it comes to us from a long distance, this essential stuff of archaic forefathers whose unconscious need in the telling of it must have been to reconcile in themselves their own darkness and light. The intention, however, was not to instruct—though the hearers must have been instructed—but to communicate delight. All the tales have the flavor of someone deeply in love with the telling.

It is this flavor, together with the emanations and indications that rise directly from essence—a mingling of human and divine, not without awe and terror—that gives the fairy tales their place as retainers, humble and yet confident, of aristocratic Orphic art. As such they are not so much bearers of meaning but rather meaning itself, a once and future store of wisdom among the lively oracles of men.

P.L. Travers is known for her study of myth, legend and fairy tale. She is the author of Mary Poppins.

REVIEWS

All The Strange Hours: The Excavations of a Life

By Loren Eiseley. Illustrated by Emanuel Heller. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975. Pp. 273. $9.95.

By Shulamith Oppenheim

. . . I envy the dark-faced man by the fire.
His magic is not small, he is reading
something permanently bound into his
universe.

. . . The world is held together
and man has his place.

From *The Innocent Assassins* by Loren Eiseley

Mythic ordering of the universe and contemporary man's alienation from myth, the inability to come to grips with his physical and psychic past—these themes run like a leitmotif throughout Loren Eiseley's writings, from the first book, *The Immense Journey* (1957), to this autobiography. Our contemporary incapacity for situating ourselves authentically, Eiseley states again and again, means that we have denied our own nature and have brought ourselves close to spiritual disaster. We have emerged from the forest, have advanced from the crawl to the walk, from the grunt to the most refined poetic speech, yet we must harken to the green world which is still our center. The individual must reach back into his own history and see events symbolically, as fragments of an evolving story, a myth, that in each life defines anew the fundamental conflict of the human predicament. Philosopher, archaeologist, anthropologist, naturalist: Eiseley is a man of many parts; his unique turn of mind is enriched by many disciplines, and this complexity of perspective makes his work uncommonly powerful and always interesting. If surprise is elemental to creativity, then he is among the few truly original thinkers: his startling inferences make for genuine experiences of discovery, and even the most casual encounter can yield an image of stunning, unforgettable vitality.

In *All the Strange Hours,* the fragments of memory that Loren Eiseley examines are crucial to the body of his work. They make possible a tentative mapping of his life, which is an essential backdrop for the adventure of his thought. Tentative, because a man's nature is never fully explained (nor, some would say, should it be). What are the *finds* that throw light into the "wilderness of a life," into an ice-age childhood? There is a boy, an only child, turned in upon himself; at one point sitting in a ruined farmhouse, having found there not only a paper bearing the scrawl of his name, but two dice. This child, says the man who was that boy, threw the dice and played alone, against time, against the universe. Fate, Chance, The Other Player—whatever name is given—stood behind the boy, watching, a presence that he has felt all his life.

"Then, clutching the dice, but not the paper with my name, I fled frantically down the leaf-sodden unused road, never to return. One of the dice survives still in my desk drawer. The time is sixty years ago."

There is a mother, stone-deaf, trapped in a silent world, entrapping others. There is a father who "had a great genius for love." This fragment is smoothly contoured, as if washed by a stream that has flowed since childhood.

On and on go the remembrances of things past along the timeline of one man's life, through the years of the Great Depression, youthful wanderings, to the University and professional choices, among colleagues who reached out or drew away. There are musings on the great tombs of Egypt and those archaeologists who crawled into a world that had not heard a footfall for fifty centuries. And not least, there are sudden insights come upon, says the author, as if through the slitted bone used by the Eskimos to protect against snow blindness.

" 'We are dwarfed,' I muttered to myself alone, 'the tiny projection of a lantern show.' "

The time sequence is not conventional. Eiseley is at once a paleontologist—a student of the far reaches of the human past—and a man closely in touch with his own past. He has "felt" time, both personal and evolutionary. The past, present (and future) play against each other—perhaps with the one die left in the desk drawer.

Added to all, the prose is distilled, epic in the expression of loneliness and pain, of the mystical sympathy with the animal world, of the sense of being a "wanderer in the streets of men, a wanderer in mind . . . " To be sure, these elements are present in Eiseley's other writings—in *The Unexpected Universe, The Night Country,* and especially in his poetry, where at one moment he whispers a cry:

> *I cannot practice the terrible archaeology of*
> *the brain nor plumb*
> *One simple childhood thought.*

Yet in this book he does just that. Like myth-makers of old, he has negotiated the bargain in the dark forest beside the swamp. For him, every event in life, every event in nature is also something else: a mask is a fox, a blizzard a snow leopard, an alpine meadow a brain, a talking cat a message-carrier, a shattered mirror a life. With metaphor upon metaphor, Loren Eiseley practices the ancient magic, turning what might have destroyed him into a common resource for all.

All the Strange Hours is the story of the author's bargain with life: the prices paid, the rewards gained. He has now left "an account of how his character was shaped." That the mystery of this character abides, the shadows perhaps even deepened, may tell as much about him as the things he has chosen to reveal.

Shulamith Oppenheim is a writer and critic of children's literature; her books include A Trio for Grandpapa *and* The Selchie's Seed *(a fantasy).*

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THREE JOURNEYS: AN AUTO-MYTHOLOGY

By Paul Zweig. New York: Basic Books, 1976. Pp. 182. $8.95.

By Thomas W. Moore

What is particularly appealing about *Three Journeys* is its instructive failure to live up to its subtitle: *an* automythology. Again and again Paul Zweig tells the story which knits together the strands of his life, and each time the story is true but different. Beneath the three journeys lie many mythologies.

Zweig is a professor of comparative literature, a literary essayist, and a poet. His earlier books foreshadowed *Three Journeys* and his search for the myths being lived out in his own life. In *The Adventurer* he sketched the erosion of genuine adventure in Western experience from the archetypal Homeric Odyssey, through the more mannered and tamed exploits of Casanova, Robinson Crusoe, and the Gothic novel, to Nietzsche and the turn inward. Zweig's own three journeys reflect this progress: his odyssey among the "islands" of the desert, his years of polite political activism in Paris, and his discovery of an inward path.

In his acute study of Lautréamont, *The Violent Narcissus,* Zweig describes the whirlwind of images which violently shatter the poet's peace but also form a world of which he is the center. Following Lautréamont Zweig writes: "The man who hungers for infinity can find his nourishment only in a fiction." *Three Journeys* is itself a quest for the fictions, the mythologies, which bind the literal adventures to the infinite and inexpressible. None of the journeys in itself satisfies the hunger, but the stories, like the many and colorful acts in a circus, spin the storyteller down toward the dark, deep center he desires.

The book begins with a diary of a lonely trip through the Sahara desert, a flight from cities and ideologies, a search for emptiness in which Zweig might find a "submerged self," the center to which all early experiences point and from which all the rest flows. In the desert Zweig is Atlas with the hefty world of his own character and identity on his shoulders and a two-cylinder, four-wheeled, gas-guzzling "turtle" under his feet.

Atlas in the desert is the echo of persistent memories: a boy lost on a beach, a boy in Paris intellectualizing his life in perfect French, a boy cherishing his invisibility among the towering shelves of a shop, a boy trained to be "GOOD" and monotonous. The desert is his quest for a biography, a reflection of Zweig's own personal emptiness and inner dryness, and at the same time a hopeful "horizontal abyss" wherein he might still his longing for depth and vitality.

But the desert turns out to be "the wrong abyss." Viewed through a car windshield, peopled with government officials, fellow travelers, and trinket-selling nomads, the desert appears as cluttered as Zweig's political and ideological life. True emptiness, the void wherein one feels the soul, Zweig discovers in a New York ashram, in the inner image of a bright yellow circus. His final story is spun around the source of that image, an Eastern master, Muktananda, from whom he learns the kind of invisibility and emptiness through which wealth and wisdom pour.

Though the prose is often heavy with imagery, the kaleidoscopic structure of *Three Journeys* vividly depicts the nature of Zweig's quest. In a series of endings and beginnings, wishes and memories, Zweig narrates the mythologies which underlie his biography, and in so doing he artfully provides an example for making many kinds of sense out of fragments of experience and for seeing the profound underside—the soul—of everyday decisions and events.

Thomas W. Moore has recently been appointed assistant professor of religion and psychology at Southern Methodist University.

Myths, Rites, Symbols: A Mircea Eliade Reader

Edited by Wendell C. Beane and William G. Doty. Harper Colophon Books. 2 Vols. New York: Harper & Row, 1976. Pp. xxviii + 465. $3.95 per vol.

By Rita M. Gross

My students often have difficulty appreciat-

ing the illuminating genius of Mircea Eliade's analysis of religion. But amid frustration and disappointment, I try to remember that the first time I tried to read one of his books, I not only failed to make sense of it but could not even finish it. And I was already a diligent student of religion at the time. Understanding and teaching Eliade is no simple task.

This anthology makes the grasp and communication of his thought easier by providing a concise collection of key representative selections from all of his scholarly books. Reading through this two-volume set, one can discover what Eliade has to say about religious phenomena ranging from sky symbolism to initiation, from yoga to cosmogonic myths. Up to now, only a thorough reading of almost all his major works would have yielded comparable access to the essential elements of his thinking and research.

The organization and format are simple and sensible. The editors have arranged the excerpts under the rubrics, "myths," "rites," and "symbols"—thereby focusing on the three central categories in Eliade's model of religion. All sources are clearly indicated, and frequent cross-references to similar passages in other books make the collection easy to use. Eliade's ubiquitous foreign terms are either edited out or explained concisely in footnotes; his own massive footnotes are omitted or condensed.

Nevertheless, a collection of Eliade's conclusions about a multitude of religious phenomena does not necessarily add up to an adequate distillation of his thought.

Some motifs that are crucial to Eliade's interpretations receive insufficient emphasis. This results in an over-emphasis on other motifs and tiresome repetition, particularly in the sections on "myths" and "rites." Most of the selections exemplify the archetype-and-repetition theme which Eliade uses so much. But after pages and pages of examples, there is a tendency to protest: "All right, I've got that point already! What else does Eliade do with religious materials?"

Other aspects of Eliade's theory of religion need to be more explicitly represented. His concept of hierophany (the manifestation of the sacred via an object that becomes a symbol) is

C.G. JUNG
The Haunted Prophet
by PAUL J. STERN



*Excerpts from **C. G. Jung: The Haunted Prophet** appear in the May issue of **Human Behavior** magazine.*

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only dealt with obliquely. The same is true of his treatment of sacrality and the dialectic of the sacred and the profane. Both features deserve more attention, especially since a proper understanding of the archetype-and-repetition motif depends on a prior grasp of the foundational notions of the sacred and hierophany. These deficiencies are bound up with a basic organizational problem. The passages on "hierophany" and "the sacred" that are included are found in the third section, on "symbols." I would recommend that this section be read first by those looking to the Reader for a basic introduction, since it contains the most fundamental selections and concepts. I doubt whether one can comprehend or appreciate how Eliade interprets "myths" and "rites" unless one grasps what a symbol is and how completely Eliade's interpretation of religion centers on symbols as vehicles for the manifestation of the sacred.

The brevity of the individual selections is also a handicap; only the core of Eliade's interpretations is given. The supporting examples and process of exposition are largely edited out. Of course, there is little alternative to such compression in a comprehensive digest of all Eliade's interpretations and conclusions. Still, the net effect is often bemusement: how, one wonders, could he come to conclude this, contend that? Such editorial pruning also means that the most serious flaws alleged by critics to mar Eliade's thought—the generality of his theories and the lack of attention to cultural and historical context—are considerably exaggerated. Thus, on the basis of this anthology, those criticisms seem more justifiable than they actually are when the body of his work is properly considered.

More important than Eliade's interpretations of specific religious phenomena, which are often carried over from book to book, is the way he puts those interpretations together to build a systematic model and understanding of religion. Typically, Eliade deals with one or two motifs in a book. He explores them in various cultural and historical contexts, comparing and contrasting these various examples of the phenomenon being analyzed, and developing an overarching synthesis. The ultimate synthesis views the motif from a global cultural viewpoint, as well as in universal philosophical and theological perspective. This stimulating dimension of Eliade's thinking is almost necessarily missing from this Reader.

So what should I, who want very much to see Eliade understood, advise someone looking for a basic introduction to his thought? It depends. If one is primarily interested in knowing what Eliade has to say about most topics he treats, this "portable Eliade" serves better than any one or two of his books, which cannot be ex-

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pected to offer a full survey of his interpretations of religious phenomena. But if one wishes to know *how* Eliade thinks, I would still have to suggest a more complex route of reading one or two short books, selected chapters from monographs, and the tables of contents of his other works.

Rita M. Gross studied with Mircea Eliade at the University of Chicago and now teaches history of religions at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Yoga Art

By Ajit Mookerjee. With a contribution by Philip Rawson. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975. Pp. 208. $39.95.

By Brian J. Zahn

In 1945, Philadelphia biochemist David L. Drabkin first effectively crystallized human hemoglobin. On crystallizing many other species of hemoglobin, it became apparent that the crystals' fundamental structures were "closely akin to abstract and non-objective art."

In 1970 a Danish artist, Knud Hvidbarg, produced an international arts festival in Copenhagen, *POEX 70,* which exhibited the similarities between natural phenomena and historical and contemporary art.

And now Ajit Mookerjee, Indian author and authority on Tantra and Yoga art, has published this beautifully illustrated book displaying the relationship between Indian art, the philosophy of yoga, and "Western vision of unity."

Each of these ventures represents an independent exploration of the remarkable similarities between true art and the structure of nature. Each demonstrates ways human beings have attempted to yoke the infinite, to control their destiny by understanding nature and living according to that expressed knowledge of the structure of things.

Yoga Art, however, with its erudite text and profusion of sumptuous illustrations, advances beyond mere explanation of the close relations between natural phenomena and artistic images. It actually specifies how oriental and occidental disciplines may lead to a deeper understanding of one's identity. The book itself is a bridge, aesthetically and intellectually forging a link between knowledge and intuition.

Ajit Mookerjee describes the purpose of yoga and its art as the realization "through inner apprehension of the oneness of all things." Truthfulness leads one to the source and final end of yogic concentration—the joy of experiencing "complete equilibrium born of the annihilation of all duality, division and tension."

The first three-quarters of the book is devoted to exquisite reproductions of Yoga art and startling, yet lucid and logical commentary. The images often work for the viewer as they do for their yogi creators—"as the link between observation of the outer world and a very precise extraction of its essence." The author asserts that the "yogi-artist's work culminates in a simultaneous diagram of himself and the world within which he is a world." Still, however true it may be that "the mind of the yogi . . . becomes a bridge between the physics of the atom and the orbits of the planetary bodies," one needs some articulation of the gulf that remains.

It is Philip Rawson in the final section, "Western Visions of Unity," who alerts readers to the potential conceptual traps in a too-ready identification of mind and matter. He insists, nonetheless, that "all traditions agree that first the narrow self with all its prepossessions must go—not by sheer crushing, but by various kinds of radical doubt and 'fading.' " Then with reproductions of various forms of Western art and artifacts, Rawson draws parallels with Yoga art similar in appearance and intent. The revelatory dialectic unfolds throughout this last section, with Rawson concluding that "the differences among Western . . . and Indian traditions are here only a matter of emphasis in transmission. In the flood of meditation no boundaries are drawn."

In a circle that is gracious rather than vicious, nature continually gives birth to human beings whose art and philosophy reflect in turn the fundamental structure of nature. And as communication between cultures grows, we become increasingly cognizant of the universals of structure and perception that unite us. Yet we must comprehend our real differences too, if the barriers preventing mutual respect and intelligent interaction are to be effectively eliminated.

Brian J. Zahn is publisher of Yarrowstalks: A Fine Arts Magazine *and Program Director of POEX 76. He has collected, exhibited, published, and written about Indian art for the past decade.*

Exploring Mysticism: A Methodological Essay

By Frits Staal. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975. Pp. xix + 230. $15.00.

By John A. Hutchison

In widespread current usage, the words "rational" and "mystical" are contradictory opposites; to be rational necessarily excludes mystical experience, and to be a mystic necessarily entails irrationality. *Exploring Mysticism* is written to challenge this widely held assumption. To be sure, many interpretations of mystical experience are in fact irrational, and hence perpetuate the assumption of contradictory opposition. Professor Staal devotes two of the three main parts of his book, entitled respectively "The Alleged Irrationality of Mysticism" and "How Not To Study Mysticism," to such inadequate or unsatisfactory interpretations of the subject matter.

Part III, however, entitled "How To Study Mysticism," pushes past these negatives to the way in which mystical experience can be rationally apprehended and interpreted. To speak summarily, the approach recommended and expounded by the author for the rational exploration of mysticism is to go beyond all external ways of studying "about" mysticism by means of history, sociology and the like, and actually to experience it, to engage in mystical meditation.

The ways of direct mystical engagement explored by Professor Staal are largely those originating in India, ranging from the yoga discipline of Patanjali to Mahayana Buddhism. There is a chapter devoted to the role of the guru. There is also a widely ranging chapter entitled "Drugs and Powers."

Coming, as it does, as the climax of a book whose subtitle is "a methodological essay," many readers will expect a more detailed philosophic appraisal of the direct experience of mysticism. For example, the epistemological issue goes virtually untouched. Is mystical experience cognitively meaningful and/or true? At least one reader looked in vain for discussion of this question.

Staal's book testifies to his widely ranging and highly competent work in South Asian

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religion. To use them as examples of "Christian" approaches is as capricious as the dogmatism Staal condemns in others. Had he chosen other examples, he might well have drawn opposite conclusions.

More generally, Staal's negative dogmatism on this issue appears to block any serious consideration of the traditions of Christian, Jewish or Islamic mysticism, hence in this way limiting what he terms his exploration of this form of experience, and rendering his book correspondingly less adequate to its intriguing subject matter.

studies. Fellow students of India as well as general readers will emerge from a reading of this book with valuable new insights and also equally valuable bibliographical items. Let it also be said that this is at every level an attractive book: it is clearly and interestingly written; it is also attractively printed, and there are a number of excellent illustrations relating to the subject matter.

It is also a highly personal book, which reveals the author as a man of magisterial and often intensely held opinions on a broad spectrum of issues. For example, philosophies ranging from linguistic analysis to phenomenology are condemned as superficial. Zimmer's hypothesis of a pre-Aryan or Dravidian source for Indian thought and devotion is dismissed as "no more than pure prejudice." Surely Professor Staal is entitled to his opinions, but his book would be more illuminating if he provided reasoned arguments rather than flipping off negative fiats. Again, he seems all too ready to dismiss alternative approaches as "how not to study mysticism." Yet his own direct involvement in mystical experience depends upon reliable texts and other factual and historical data. These forms of study are clearly not sufficient, but they are necessary for any adequate understanding.

If there is a major flaw in this book it may be characterized as the negative dogmatism with which the author approaches religion, and especially the monotheistic religions. His unexpressed premise seems to be that these forms of experience are inherently irrational, and hence repugnant to all rational people. Armed with this premise he has little difficulty in concluding that recent and current "religious" approaches to mysticism, e.g., those of Zaehner and Panikkar, are irrational. It may be said in passing that there is some substance in his criticisms of both of these writers, but their defects derive from sources more personal or individual than their affiliation with the Christian

John A. Hutchison teaches religion and philosophy at Claremont Graduate School and is the author of The Paths of Faith.

NOTICES

The Shaman's Doorway: Opening the Mythic Imagination to Contemporary Consciousness

By Stephen Larsen.
New York: Harper & Row, 1976. Pp. xi + 235.
$10.00.

In *The Shaman's Doorway,* the shaman —mediator between the realm of myth and the everyday world—is seen as "man's basic creative response to the presence of the mythic dimension." Larsen insists (with Campbell) that "the meaning of myth is to be *experienced,*" and he proceeds to show how science and meditation may be regarded as analogous quests. Science seeks to transcend illusion to know the real while engaging the world; *yoga* offers a way of transcending illusion to experience the real through becoming disengaged.

Larsen's constructive analysis begins with his discussion of myths of relationship and integration. He imaginatively sketches five mythogenic patterns of our time: "Whole Earth, Whole Body"—holistic caring for ourselves and our planet; "Dialogue"— using the psyche's mythic vocabulary to

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speak with one's "selves"; "The Sorcerer's Apprenticeship"—learning anew the arts of magical power; "The Crippled Tyrant"—facing the shadow, the dark regressive dimension of self and society; and "The Mythic Androgyne"—sorting out stereotypes from archetypes in search of the "alchemical union." These motifs may be viewed as specific alternative interpretations of the dialogue of integration by which a new technology of the sacred is to be devised.

In building his case for an integrative "technology of consciousness," Larsen has dipped into the tool boxes of some great craftsmen —Campbell, Jung, Eliade, Bruner, Piaget, and Levy-Bruhl, among others. In the process, however, he levels at least four major methodologies in the field of myth with a few swings of his wrecking ball. Frazer, Freud, Barthes, Graves, and all "structionalist-functionalist" anthropologists are swept aside as "reductionistic." Perhaps Larsen's method itself participates in the mythic process of destruction/creation, or could it be simply the boisterous impatience of a bright beginner? For those willing to remain open to "seeing" the beauty of Larsen's work, however, its freshness, originality, and personal craft outweigh these caveats.

Larsen describes our age as a "cornucopia of psychospiritual disciplines erupting into the collective mindscape." In such a time an "instruction manual for owning and operating a mythic imagination" is a welcome option. Larsen's book will be of interest to professional mythologists, yet its "hand-built" quality and design should make it attractive to a wide range of non-specialists.

Mary Brenneman

ROBINSON JEFFERS: MYTH, RITUAL, AND SYMBOL IN HIS NARRATIVE POEMS

By Robert J. Brophy. Second Edition. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books/ The Shoe String Press, 1976. Pp. xviii + 321. $15.00.

Though Robinson Jeffers was a well-educated and highly cultivated man, when reading his poetry one often feels he has stepped into an ancient cave and has discovered wall paintings done by a primitive shaman. One finds incredible scenes of violence and bloodshed but these reveal, paradoxically, a profound affirmation of life, an affirmation of pain and death in life.

An unusual sensitivity to the presence of this paradox in Jeffers' poetry is what enriches Robert Brophy's study (originally published by Case Western Reserve University Press in 1973). Through an analysis of the myths, mythic themes, and archetypal patterns of expression that can be found in Jeffers' work, Brophy argues that the one myth that is sounded by Jeffers again and again—the "monomyth" as he calls it—is the myth of eternal renewal. Here is a statement of his thesis: "It seems clear that Jeffers has the same perception of the physical world as that from which ancient ritual and mythology grew; he creates his own myth, assimilated and adapted from a rich heritage, to dramatize the ritual-like process of the world's immolation daily taking place before his awed eyes."

The importance of this discovery should not be underestimated. Brophy, in perhaps the finest critical study of Jeffers' poetry to date, shows how one modern poet, in a time of spiritual famine, instinctively drew on an age-old source of wisdom for the articulation of his vision. In doing so, Brophy adds, Jeffers transmitted to his readers a sense—perhaps now lost to the majority of humankind—of life's sacredness, mystery, and terror.

Though primarily written for Jeffers scholars, the book should appeal to students of modern poetry and, in general, to readers who are interested in myth.

James Karman

Zen Training: Methods and Philosophy

By Katsuki Sekida. Edited, with an introduction, by A. V. Grimstone. New York: Weatherhill, 1975. Pp. 258. $8.95; paper $4.95.

In the West, Zen has often been popularly misperceived as an occult Eastern curiosity—a view no doubt fostered by works that collect or emphasize enigmatic koans and odd anecdotes, and abetted by the cultural stereotype of the inscrutable Oriental mind. Katsuki Sekida's book immediately dispels this prejudicial haze



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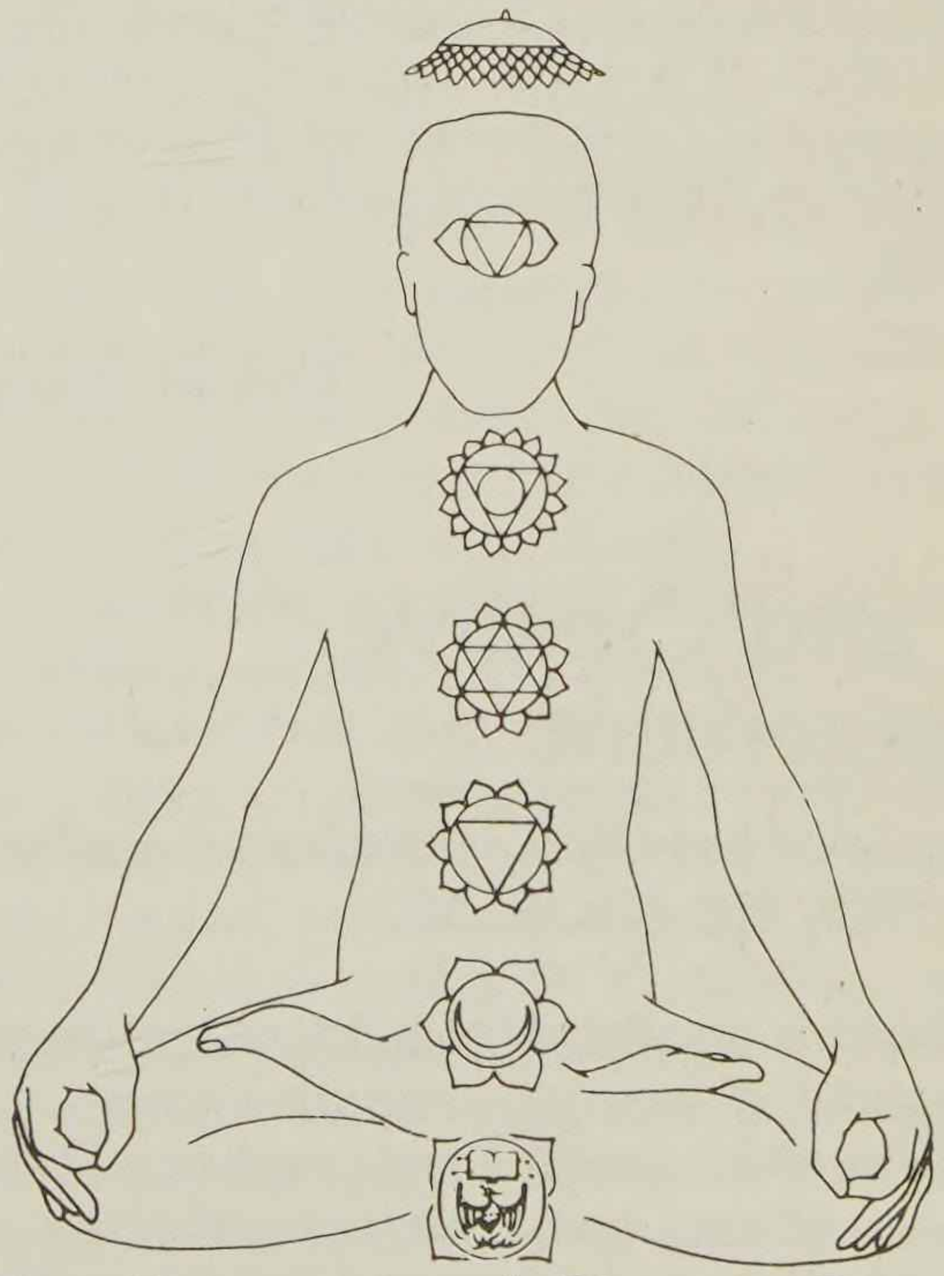
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by concentrating on the focal point of Zen practice itself—*zazen*—and providing a step-by-step manual of instruction in the technique and meaning of posture, breathing, koan-usage, and even laughter.

Though the book does not propose itself as a complete "do-it-yourself" kit, it does provide the guidance, interpretation, and personal experience of one who has himself been a lay practitioner of Zen for 60 years. Of particular value is the way in which he elucidates the meaning of *zazen,* and such basic elements as *samadhi, kensho,* and *mu,* through references to physiology and psychology. A section is also devoted to comparisons with the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger. In the process, a number of important and helpful distinctions are made with respect to features of Zen that sometimes are simply thrown at the reader, or labelled "intuitive" or "transrational" and left in the limbo of mystification.

The book leaves one with the overwhelming impression of how practical, simple, and natural Zen is—granting its disciplines and demands—which is as it should be, since Zen insists that Buddha nature is original nature. And by giving this pragmatic, psychological, even physiological orientation, the book manages to delineate clearly some of the hallmarks of Zen: the insistence on overcoming mind/body dualisms, the identification of the abdomen (rather than either the heart and head above or the sexual drives below) as the seat and unifying center of one's being, the emphasis on bringing Zen experience back into the particulars of everyday life, and an experience of emptiness which does not devalue but rather enriches the realm of ordinary day-to-day living.

Conrad Hyers

Zen and Creative Management

By Albert Low. New York: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1976. Pp. 225. $3.50.

This book is an attempt to help businessmen find meaning in their jobs and their lives through the understanding and practice of Zen Buddhism. Albert Low, a student and practitioner of both management and Zen (his *roshi* has been Phillip Kapleau), aims to show executives how to become better at what they do by coming to know themselves. His premise is that of the Buddha: it is vain to seek answers in the world, for the answers lie where the questions are—within ourselves. Radical self-knowledge, the author believes, will enable business managers to become more creative, to break out of the rut of everyday routine and find new and more exciting directions.

The author holds that the business enterprise is a system of countervailing forces held in equilibrium by the demands of shareholders, customers, and employees. If it is successful, it must grow and change. Growth is not primarily the result of market action or capitalization as is commonly believed; rather it is the response to specific questions internal to the organization, since what the enterprise will become already exists in the ideas the questions express. Thus the idea of a transportation system is more important than investment in roadbed or rolling stock; the idea of productivity is the necessary preliminary to wage increases.

Business managers control growth and change by controlling the ideas basic to growth and change, not by controlling the process *or* the structure. The business system functions through control of the tension among shareholders, customers, and employees. This tension is destructive to the individual unless he can control his role within it. Here, Low believes, Zen has much to offer because it deals with the realities of living rather than philosophical abstractions.

The openness and awareness developed in zazen helps the participant to understand and accept, rather than to resist, a world that is in constant change. Zen practice leads to mastery of one's ideas, and through this discipline to liberation. As a Zen master says, "to be bound is to be free."

This interesting and useful book is tightly written. It will repay the several readings it takes to plumb the full meaning of its simply stated yet profound ideas.

Louis A. Allen

Morita Psychotherapy

By David K. Reynolds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976. Pp. ix + 243. $10.95.

Morita psychotherapy is a method of treating neurosis developed by the Japanese psychiatrist Dr. Shōma Morita (1874–1938). It is a tradition of unusual significance for those interested in the interaction of world cultural and spiritual

streams, for it combines insights and techniques from both western psychoanalysis and Japanese spirituality, particularly Zen Buddhism. Morita taught that neurosis is caused when the natural will to live and self-actualize, instead of just moving normally from object to object—the "flowing mind" of Taoism and Buddhism—is fixated on some concept or problem. Generally the fixation involves acute self-consciousness or is on the kind of "symptom" which obsesses people of "hypochondriacal temperament"—a condition which according to Moritists is next door to the neuroses which bring patients to their programs.

Morita therapy is most characteristically conducted in small residential hospitals, although Morita doctors often have an extensive outpatient and even correspondence practice as well. It begins with a week of complete bed rest and unstructured reflection. There may then follow a combination of simple manual work, listening to lectures, Zen meditation, clinical conferences, and group therapy. The end should be the patient's accepting himself and his symptoms as simply "being there" —not as things to fight or worry about. *After* he has taken this step, he will find that his feelings do change.

David Reynolds has given us an excellent summary of Morita therapy. Of particular interest is his placing it in the context of Japanese attitudes and culture, including Zen.

Robert S. Ellwood, Jr.

The Challenge of the Primitives

By Robin Clarke and Geoffrey Hindley. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976. Pp. 288. $7.95.

The Challenge of the Primitives rests on the premise that the practices of primitive man are valuable in "helping us to rebuild a wholesome and life-enhancing society in the wasteland of the modern technological world." Clarke and Hindley appraise the adaptive ecological, economic, social, and religious practices of numerous societies.

The range of facts presented to a presumably lay audience is itself a commendable feature: anthropologists, with the notable exception of Margaret Mead, are lax in acquainting the public with the fruits of their labors. The book is structured like an introductory text, but differs markedly from the academic approach in its strongly evaluative and subjective selection of facts from mainly well-known sources.

In principle the volume is welcome; its contents are, in fact, enriching. Yet the reader's appreciation of it will depend on his or her tolerance for the heavy-handed reiteration of the guiding conviction that considering civilization's decline, life is more tolerable in the "primitive" state. The tone of moral indignation is reminiscent of the mid to late 60s.

This well-intentioned attempt to combat the Hobbesian conception of primitive life as "nasty, brutish and short," sets our rapaciousness, materialism, competitiveness, environmental waste, alienation, and spiritual degeneration in antithesis to the perceived superiority of the pristine primitive. It is reverse bias to view contemporary man as the inevitably dark and evil foil of a more primitive ideal man.

Primitive man, as portrayed here, lives in a world of stasis. But the fact is that the problems facing people in both "primitive" and "civilized" conditions are continually changing. Evolution is inevitable. All societies perpetually face unprecedented challenges, and survival depends on successful adaptation to constant change. Though natural laws are the same for all, their concrete manifestations and permutations differ significantly.

Undoubtedly we can derive inspiration from societies apparently in closer conformity with natural laws than ours, but we must remember that inspiration eventually has to be made operational. How does appreciating the virtues of early tropical agriculture alleviate overutilization of resources on the prairies, except by generally indicating the necessity of ecological wisdom? Some aspects of primitive technology are more easily borrowed than others, but the difficulty of relevant adaptation remains.

Perhaps it is out of place to expect precise answers from a popular overview. Yet the unrelenting emphasis on our own crisis, whose di-

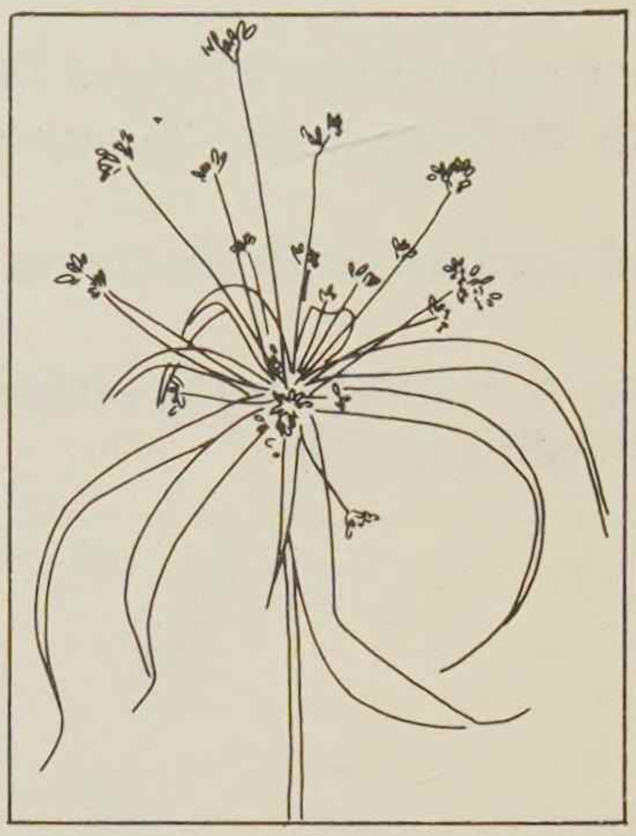
mensions are already familiar, becomes tiresome without some precision. How can we solve the real problems of industrialism in accordance with natural laws? What, in the last analysis, is the relevance of technological devices—to which the bulk of the book is devoted—to the psychic crisis that is the ultimate source of our dilemma? It would have been more positive if the authors had first explained their view of the crisis (what exactly it is that the primitives are challenging) and used their richly illustrative solutions as examples in an overarching argument, rather than simply letting that view be the underpinning assumption linking an array of data. On the other hand, we may recognize that ecological wisdom, like its spiritual counterpart, is not yet widely acknowledged as a prerequisite of successful living, and thus make allowances for the book's rhetorical overkill.

Lorna McDougall

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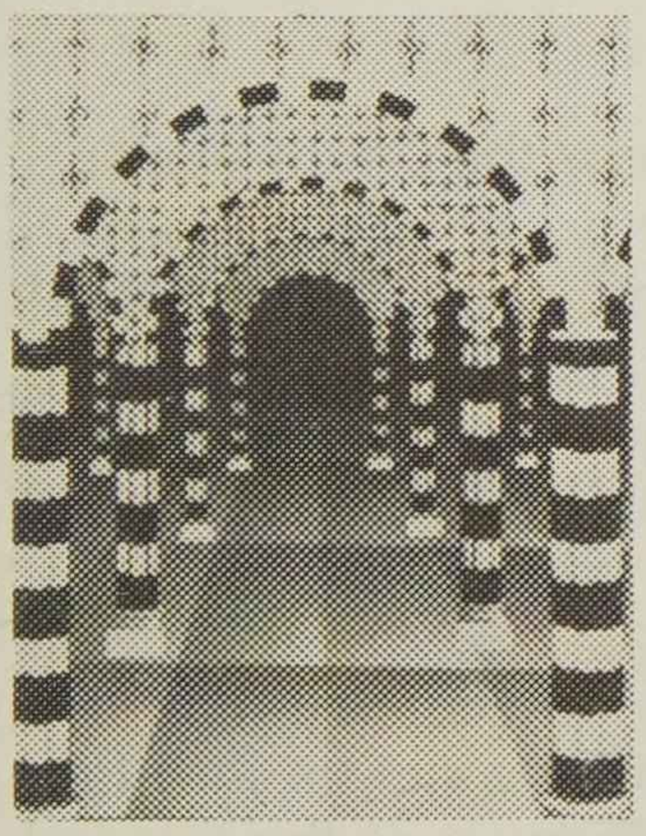
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PROFILES

Evelyn Eaton has lived for many years in what the Indians called "the Country of Lost Borders" and is now known as the Owens Valley of Eastern California. Born in Switzerland, of Canadian parents, part Algonkian, (Micmac) on her paternal grandfather's side, she has written novels *(Quietly My Captain Waits, Flight, Go Ask The River,* etc.) and many stories for the *New Yorker.* She has been accepted into Arapaho and Paiute Sweat Lodges and Ceremonies, and is herself a Pipe Woman. She has taught at Columbia University, Sweet Briar College, and Ohio University.

Frederick Franck, Dutch-born author and artist, is a modern renaissance man. He holds doctorates in Fine Arts, Medicine, and Dentistry, served as a doctor at Albert Schweitzer's famous African hospital, and was a lay artist-observer at the Second Vatican Council. The author of many books and articles, he is perhaps best known for *The Zen of Seeing.* He also has designed and built "Pacem in Terris," a chapel of peace and spiritual center, next to his home in Warwick, N.Y.

Sam D. Gill teaches courses in the history of religions at Arizona State University and is a specialist in Native American Religious Traditions. His article, "The Shadow of a Vision Yonder," will soon appear in *Seeing With the Native Eye,* a new book edited by Walter Capps for Harper & Row. Gill has two books in the works: a study of Navajo religion entitled *Songs of Life* and a complementary volume on Navajo iconography.

Fernando Llosa Porras, who lives in Lima, is working on a book about the ancient temples of Peru, which he considers to be schools of an ancient tradition. His particular interest is comparing the symbolism of these centers with that of Oriental and Middle American traditions.

Janwillem van de Wetering is a Dutch student of Zen and an accomplished storyteller. His accounts of experiences at a Zen monastery in Japan *(The Empty Mirror)* and then at one in the U.S. *(A Glimpse of Nothingness)* have won him critical acclaim both as a writer and as an interpreter of Zen to Westerners.