PARABOLA

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IV:3

MYTH AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

THE CHILD

Frederick Franck Richard Lewis Lobsang Lhalungpa John Loudon
Lynda Sexson Don Talayesva P.L. Travers

AND: ART AND STORIES BY CHILDREN

VOLUME IV, NO. 3

PARABOLA

THE CHILD MYTH AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

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FOCUS

What is childhood? Is it a privileged period of life up to a certain age, or is it the beginning of a trajectory that to all human intents and purposes may be as "eternal" as the life processes of stars and planets? As the beginning of the human life process, how far can it go? What is the ultimate possibility of man and woman? Can anything continue to develop after the death of the body, and if so, what could it eventually become? Would we, like lead, "become gold if we had time"? And how much does any of this depend on how the process begins?

Questioned in this way, the meaning and importance of childhood take on a sense of dependence on the meaning and importance of the process that it opens — the process of creation itself. And little as we appear to recognize that, much as we sentimentalize about children and childhood *per se,* something in us is essentially aware of it, for we really don't wish children to remain children. Even at their smallest and most enchanting, we rejoice quite naturally at each new sign of change toward maturity:

the new tooth, the first step, the beginning words. When a child dies in infancy, his loss is unbearably tragic, yet we feel no grief at all at losing him just as completely as he grows up. Something in us knows that it is *more* to be an adult than a child.

But this is not so, of course, if the growing is not truly *up* into another level of understanding and capacity — if it is not a real maturity in other than physical ways. If, as has been said, the only difference between men and boys is the size of their toys, then the "more" of the adult over the child is one of mere volume. Too many of us are only larger and dirtier children; but we complain bitterly when our children "grow up" to be basically the same as the rest of us. What can change, what *must* change for the process of evolution to continue? Or perhaps I should say, for it to take place; for we talk about "evolution" and "progress" in the blithest possible way, as if it were something that was bound to go on by itself and that we had no evident responsibility in the matter.

This loss of responsibility to a life process — and consequently, of course (although we would deny it indignantly), to our own children — is something our times have to answer for. I believe that its direct cause is the prior loss, by our preceding generations, of the recognition of levels — levels of being, and their consequent meanings and manifestations, which are wholly different in kind and in dimensionality one from another. Everyone thinks they grasp the idea of levels, but that few do is proved by our goals and our way of living. And without it, all our processes are linear, all our discoveries are simply rearrangements of what was already there. But in the light of this idea, we see ourselves as links in a great, vertical, life-bearing and possibly life-transforming chain, and we cannot avoid our responsibility.

We have played with our large toys in such a way that we are leaving our children a badly messed-up world. And we seem to be teaching them to go on playing the same games with even bigger playthings. It is not the playthings that are to blame; technology is not in itself an evil. It is the way of taking it as something to play with that is an attitude of childhood that should be left behind, and replaced with an adult understanding of tools to serve a responsible purpose.

It is greatly to be hoped that we can mature enough to learn this before it is too late to help our children.

— D.M. Dooling

FULL CIRCLE/A Readers' Forum

PARABOLA *is interested in an exchange of ideas and points of view through the active participation of its readers. We welcome your letters and comments on the issues raised in our pages. Please address all correspondence to:*

The Editor, PARABOLA, *150 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011*

The artwork depicted on your recent cover (Vol.IV, #2) *is not* one of the prehistoric rock frescoes of the Tassili-n-Ajjer in the central Sahara.

This picture, from Henri Lhote's book *The Search for the Tassili Frescoes*, depicting *Bird-Headed Goddesses* of the Egyptian period, were painted on the rocks by a member, or members of Lhote's group.

It was not until sometime *after* the publication of his book that Lhote learned of this joke turned hoax perpetrated upon him and the public.

That is why *those specific* paintings (unlike the thousands of others) cannot be found by the many visitors to that area today.

— Knate Stahl
Woodstock, N.Y.

We are indebted to Mr. Stahl for this information. We took the picture, from the above-mentioned volume, because of its beauty and relevance to our theme. We understand now that a photographer named Lajoux, who accompanied the expedition, subsequently wrote a book which exposed the hoax. We regret our error in attributing the art to the prehistoric period; but the modern version by members of Lhote's group is also a thing of beauty, whatever its age and origin.

— *The Editors*

The criticisms leveled by Roger Lipsey upon my book *Serpent in the Sky* misrepresent it severely enough to warrant reply.

I do not "attack" modern mathematics, nor do I "rail" against it; I am not on a "crusade" — unless a sober discussion of putative mathematical inadequacies automatically connotes attack, raillery and crusade.

Implicit in Mr. Lipsey's review is his own knowledge and mastery of de Lubicz's work. But that knowledge is suspect in view of his remarks. For he should know that it is not I but de Lubicz who (in Parts I and II of *Le Temple de l'Homme,* in *Symbol and the Symbolic* and elsewhere) develops the contrast between ancient "mystical" mathematics and modern abstract mathematics. Nor was de Lubicz alone in his objections. J.G. Bennett, mathematician and philosopher, developed a six-dimensional geometry in an attempt to overcome them, and Bennett discusses the work of Minkowski, Podalanski and others who were bent on a similar quest to resolve mathematical shortcomings they considered fundamental.

The matter is complex and cannot be resolved in a letter. But since Mr. Lipsey repeatedly impugns my credentials, it is crucial that readers realize that my role here is *wholly* that of expositor: attempting to convey to the nonmathematician the essence of de Lubicz's thought and the nature of the problem.

Mr. Lipsey's other strictures are no less ill-founded — for example, the astonishing amount of space devoted to my alleged misuse of "manipulation" — in fact, used perfectly legitimately in its context in the book.

Though it is not easy to refrain from replying in kind to the sustained abusive tone, my chief concern is the gross distortion of my book which Mr. Lipsey's review implies is little more than an extended, intemperate polemic. This is simply untrue.

There *is* a polemic aspect to the book, and necessarily so. De Lubicz's brief could not be presented without juxtaposing it to the views of his orthodox opponents, setting up a polemical situation. But the self-

evident purpose of *Serpent in the Sky* is to provide an introduction to the tremendous themes and issues raised by Schwaller de Lubicz. If de Lubicz is right, then modern man must drastically revise his conception of the history of civilization, which in turn will force a revision of his view of the present and of the future. This is the obvious, overwhelming concern of my book; it is quite unmistakable, and any responsible critic would concentrate upon the validity of de Lubicz's ideas and upon my own success or failure in presenting them — matters largely ignored by Mr. Lipsey, an oversight that leaves the shortchanged reader knowing no more about R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz than he or she did at the beginning.

— John Anthony West
White Plains, N.Y.

Mr. Prensky's article was a sensitive introduction to the spirit of T'ai Chi Ch'uan. There were, however, a few inaccuracies and misleading references.

Mr. Prensky says that Chang San Feng studied Taoist alchemy in the Shao-lin Monastery. Chang never visited the Shaolin Monastery, neither the one in Honan nor in Fukien! Chang San Feng is not, in any case, a historical figure. He is not listed among the masters of any of these sects.

Readers should understand that the *Chi* of T'ai Chi is different from *ch'i*, the life force. Mr. Prensky mistakenly renders both of these terms by *Chi*. Ch'i (pronounced chi) is the life force, the divine breath. T'ai Chi (pronounced Tai Jee) literally means "Supreme Ultimate" or "Extreme Limit" but might be better translated "Undifferentiated Unity."

On the last page, Mr. Prensky speaks of "the erroneous attempt to control the breathing" while practicing the form. [He also] speaks of three stages of T'ai Chi practice: learning the form, finding the center of gravity, learning self-defense applications. As I see it, one learns the forms first, and once they have been mastered, one learns to regulate the breath. Now the form must really be precise, because there is a specific inhalation or exhalation for every posture, every shift, every pivot of the heel. According to the alchemical school of T'ai Chi every yang, creative movement — a punch, a push — is an inhalation. Every yin movement — pulling, yielding, shifting the weight to the rear — is an exhalation. This is called "reverse breathing"; it is the "inflowing energy" mentioned in *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. It is as if every time I am about to expend ch'i, I "close the gates"; the ch'i is brought back into the tan t'ien for inner-circulation. Soon even this method of breathing will become automatic.

Learn the form, watch the form, forget the form. Then learn the breathing, watch the breathing, forget the breathing. Now I am the T'ai Chi; I am the undifferentiated unity, one with the whole universe. Acquired and inborn, mind and Mind are one.

— Kenneth S. Cohen
Berkeley, CA

Mr. Prensky responds:

There are many complementary rhythms: the breathing is one. Each movement of the body elicits a corresponding demand on the breathing, instinctively and automatically. In this way, the perfecting of the form itself teaches a rhythm of breathing which is in correspondence to the progression of the movements. The moment when the unexpected silence emerges, all these rhythms, including the breathing, find their right place and the attention is freed to follow.

Manipulation by the thought is an expression of the unceasing inner conversation, and has no real authority over these automatic functions. The appropriateness of teaching breathing presupposes a level of awareness which these thoughts take for

(Continued on page 133)

TWINS TWISTED INTO ONE

by Don Talayesva

In 1890 Don Talayesva was born at Oraibi, Arizona...

When we were within our mother's womb, we happened to hurt her. She has told me how she went to a medicine man in her pain. He worked on her, felt her breasts and belly, and told her that we were twins. She was surprised and afraid. She said, "But I want only one baby." "Then I will put them together," replied the doctor. He took some corn meal outside the door and sprinkled it to the sun. Then he spun some black and white wool, twisted the threads into a string, and tied it around my mother's left wrist. It is a powerful way to unite babies. We twins began, likewise, to twist ourselves into one child. My mother also helped to bring us together by her strong wish for only one baby.

My mother has described how carefully she carried me. She slept with my father right along, so that he could have intercourse with her and make me grow. It is like irrigating a crop: if a man starts to make a baby and then stops, his wife has a hard time. She had intercourse only with my father so that I could have an easy birth and resemble him.

She refused to hold another woman's child on her lap and took care not to breathe into the face of small children and cause them to waste away. She had nothing to do with the tanning of skins or the dyeing of anything lest she spoil the goods and also injure me. When she grew big, she was careful to sit in such a way that other people would not walk in front of her and thus make my birth difficult. She would not look at the serpent images displayed in the ceremonies, lest I turn myself into a water snake while still in her womb and raise up my head at the time of birth, instead of lying with head down seeking a way out.

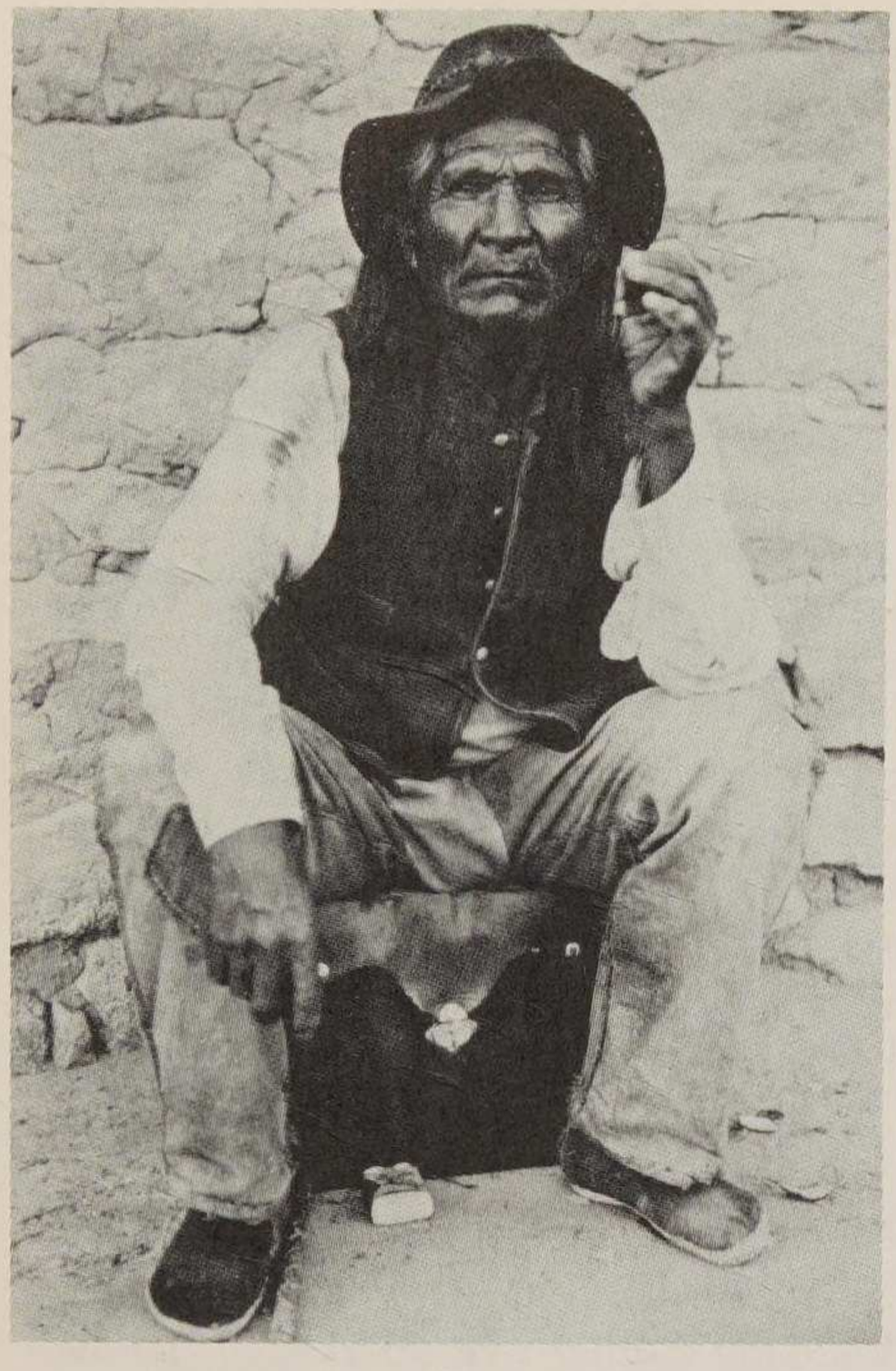
My father has related how he took care to injure no animal and thus damage my body. If he had cut off the foot of any living creature, I might have been born without a hand or with a clubfoot. Any cruel treatment of a dumb beast would have endangered my life. If he had drawn a rope too tightly around the neck of a sheep or burro, it might have caused my navel cord to loop itself about my neck and strangle me in birth. Even if I had been able to free myself from the cord, I might have remained half choked and short of breath for a long time.

Whenever I made movements in the womb, my mother was encouraged to expect an early and easy birth. She worked hard at cooking, grinding corn, and bringing water, so that her body would be in trim for labor. My father fed her the raw flesh of a weasel and rubbed the skin on her body so that I could be active and come out swiftly, in the way that sly little animal slips through a hole.

I have heard that I had a hard birth. It began in the early evening of a day in March, 1890. Since the exact date was not remembered, I could never have a birthday. When my mother's face darkened and she felt the expected pains, she settled down on the earthen floor in the third-story room of her Sun Clan house. She had sent my five-year-old sister Tuvamainim with my little brother Namostewa to a neighbor's house. Namostewa was about two years old and still nursing.

My grandfather (mother's father, Homikniwa of the Lizard Clan), who lived in the same house with my mother and father, has told me how he climbed the ladder to the third floor where my mother lay. There he rubbed her belly and turned me straight to come out. The power in his hands helped her womb. His presence encouraged her, too, because he was the best medicine man in Oraibi. My father, Tuvanimptewa of the Sand Clan, also came in to help, which was rather unusual for a Hopi husband. He soon sent for Nuvaiumsie, an experienced old midwife and a member of his father's linked Water-Coyote Clan. As soon as she came, she heated water in a clay pot over coals in an old-fashioned fireplace in the southwest corner of the room.

In labor, according to all reports, my mother moved over on a pile of sand which was especially prepared for my birth, rested



Hopi Medicine Man, 1902

herself on hands and knees, raised her head a little, and began to strain downward. My father and her father took turns standing over her with their arms around her belly, pressing down gently and trying to force and shake me out. If I had refused to come, more and more pressure would have been applied, but no Hopi doctor would have opened her body to get me.

I was a big baby. I caused a lot of trouble and took a long time coming out — head first. Old Nuvaiumsie is said to have taken me fresh and crying from my mother. She cut my navel cord on an arrow to make me a good hunter, folded back my end of the cord, and tied it about a finger's length from the navel to keep out any fresh air. She used a piece of string from my mother's hair, which was the proper thing to do. If she had not tied the cord securely, fresh air would have entered my belly and killed me. My mother was given some small twigs of juniper to chew and some juniper tea, in order to strengthen her and to hasten the discharge of the afterbirth.

My grandfather, my father, and Nuvaiumsie examined me closely. Sure enough, I was twins twisted into one. They could see that I was an oversize baby, that my hair curled itself in two little whorls instead of one at the back of my head, and that in front of my body I was a boy but at the back there was the sure trace of a girl — the imprint of a little vulva that slowly disappeared. They have told me time after time that I was twice lucky — lucky to be born twins and lucky to just miss becoming a girl.

Wrapping me in a cloth, they laid me near the fire and waited for my mother to free herself from the afterbirth. Nuvaiumsie is reported to have taken hold of the free end of the placenta cord and pulled gently, while my father stood behind my mother, held her around the waist, and shook her. She was told to stick her fingers down her throat and gag until she expelled the afterbirth. Finally it came out. Then my mother was placed near the fire in a squatting position on a low stool — perhaps the Hopi birth stool — so that the blood could drip upon the sand. She was given a drink of warm juniper tea to clear out the womb. A little later Nuvaiumsie bathed her in warm yucca suds, wrapped her in a blanket, fed her some warm corn mush, and had her lie on her side before the fire so that the bones could fit back into place. The old lady carefully swept up the sand and blood from the floor with a little broom, placed them with the placenta, the dirty rags, and the broom in an old basket, sprinkled the whole with corn meal, and gave them to my father to throw on the placenta pile. This he did at a special place near the southeast edge of the village, so that no person would step upon them and cause his feet to become sore and chapped, his eyes yellow, and his urine thick.

When all bloody traces of the birth were removed, my father hastened to the house of his mother's sister, Masenimka. He would have fetched his own mother, had

she been alive. Masenimka came quickly, bringing a bowl of water, some corn meal, a piece of yucca root, two white corn ears, and some baby wrappings. She came with a smiling face and a happy heart, hoping thereby to bring me good luck and to insure my having a cheerful spirit.

Masenimka has related how she greeted me with tender words, washed my head in warm yucca suds, rinsed it with clear water, and bathed me from head to foot. She rubbed the ashes of juniper or sage bush over my skin to make it smooth and to cause hair to grow only in the right places. Then she pulled up her black dress (*manta*) to her thighs, rested me on her naked knees, and announced that I was her boy and a child of her clan. Chewing some juniper twigs, she spat upon my ear lobes and rubbed them to numbness. Then she pierced them with a sharp instrument and passed a thread through the holes to keep them open. She placed my arms by my sides, wrapped me in a warm baby blanket, and laid me on a wicker cradle made of a frame of bent juniper branches which was filled in with a network of small lemonberry stems and other twigs. There was a face guard of the same material. The cradle was padded with cedar bark or old clothes. A larger blanket was wrapped about me and the cradle and bound tightly with a string. Masenimka sat before the fire with me in the cradle upon her knees for a long time. Then she placed me on the floor near my mother and put an ear of corn on either side, one to represent me and the other my mother.

In the early morning hours when the cocks began to crow, Masenimka took a little finely ground corn meal and rubbed four horizontal lines, one inch wide and six or seven inches long, one above the other, on the four walls of the room. Then she resumed her seat by my mother and me and said, "Now, thus I have made a house for you. You shall stay here while we wait for you twenty days." Soon after she went to her own home and brought over some corn which she cooked with a few small twigs of juniper. This food was to make my mother's milk flow freely. Masenimka might have given her some unsalted gravy and some milkweed for the same purpose, since when that weed is broken the milk runs out.

Before the eastern sky had turned gray, the Sun Clan women propped two poles against the door that faced the rising sun and draped a blanket over them. This was to keep out the sun's rays from the birth chamber, for they were considered harmful until I had been properly presented to the Sun god. By breakfast many neighbors are said to have dropped in, taken a little food, looked me over, congratulated my mother, and expressed best wishes for my life.

I was bathed again by my godmother, Masenimka, who rubbed me anew with juniper ashes or the powder of a special clay found near the village. After my bath I was fastened back in my cradle and given the breast. My brother may have thought that I was stealing his milk, but he could do noth-

Hopi mother and child

ing about it. If my mother had been dry, I would have received the breast of a relative, fed upon finely ground sweet corn mixed with the juice of stewed peaches, been given a little gravy without salt, or perhaps some milk from the cows of the missionaries. If I had taken the breast of another woman, her own nursing baby might have discovered the theft of milk, worried, and even become nervous or sick. Babies are pretty wise about these things and quickly learn what is going on. I could not have taken the breast of another pregnant woman, for that might have caused my death.

For twenty days my mother was not allowed to eat or drink anything cold or salty, lest blood clot in her womb. All her food was cooked with juniper leaves. The fire in our room was kept going. No one was permitted to kindle other fires from it, for this fire belonged to me and such a theft would have made me unhappy. If it had become extinguished through accident, it would have been rekindled immediately, and that day would have gone uncounted. No food could be cooked on the coals themselves, although it might be cooked in a vessel over the fire. Neglect of this rule would have made me a "fire meddler" and caused me to play with fire carelessly in childhood. My father could not have intercourse with my mother during those twenty days, nor for twenty days thereafter. If he had done so before all the blood had drained from my mother's womb, a new baby would have been started which would have worried me, brought on sickness and nervous spells, and perhaps spoiled me for life. Had he attempted intercourse, the sisters and clan sisters of my mother would have interfered. If he had had intercourse with some other woman and then had an argument with my mother over it, that would have been almost as hard on me, for I would have sensed that something was wrong.

Hopi boys at Oraibi, 1897

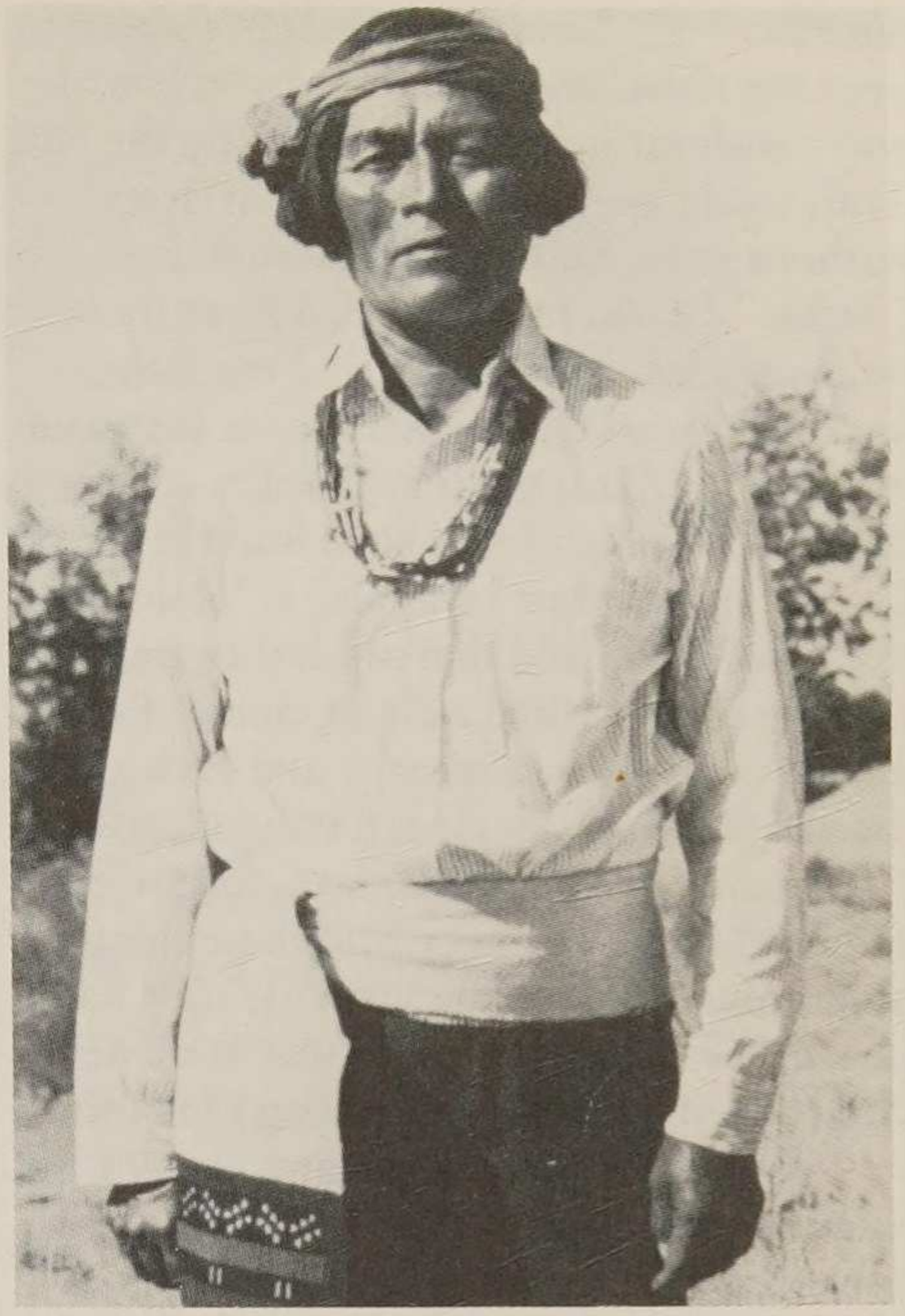
A routine was set up for me. Every morning I was unbound, bathed, rubbed with "baby ashes," and put back on the cradle. A little pad of cloth was placed at the back of my neck to keep me from becoming bull-necked and soft cedar bark was placed under my buttocks to drain off the urine. Someone probably cleaned me three or four times a day. I was always fed in the cradle and could move only my head a little in nursing. I do not know that anyone took saliva from my mouth and rubbed it on the nape of my neck to conceal my crying from the evil spirits, as is done with many Hopi babies.

When my navel cord dried and dropped off, it was tied to an arrow and stuck beside a beam overhead in the room. This was to make me a good hunter and to provide a "house" for my infant spirit in case I died, for my soul could then stay by the arrow in the ceiling and quickly slip back into my mother's womb for an early rebirth.

On the fifth morning I was bathed as usual, but with a special application of

yucca suds to my head. My mother's head also was washed with the suds, and her body bathed with warm water in which juniper leaves had been boiled. Her clothes were changed and the soiled ones were taken to a near-by rock cistern and washed. After our bath my mother scraped off the lowermost of the four lines of meal from the walls of the room. She took the scrapings in her hand, and going to the edge of the mesa, held them to her lips, prayed for my long life, and sprinkled the meal to the rising sun. On the tenth and fifteenth days the same ceremony of bathing and prayers to the sun was repeated. If I had been the first baby, my mother could not have gone out before the sun on the fifth day and thereafter. Had she been too sick or weak to go, my godmother would have gone for her. The water with which our bodies had been bathed was carried to the placenta pile and emptied there.

On the twentieth day of my life I was named according to strict custom. About four o'clock in the morning Masenimka and her sisters, Kewanmainim and Iswuhti, and many other clan aunts — any woman of my father's clan and linked clans — came to our house to wash our heads again. Masenimka first washed the two "mother corn" ears in the yucca suds, rinsing them with fresh water. These were the ears that had been by my side since the night of my birth. Then she washed my mother's head, as did all her sisters in turn. Fresh water was poured over it, after which her hair was wrung out dry. They also bathed her arms and shoulder with warm water which had a few sprigs of juniper in it. Sweeping a little sand from the corner into the center of the room, they heated a stone, set it upon the sand, and laid yucca roots and juniper leaves on top of it. My mother stood with her right foot and then her left resting upon this heap of sand, stones, roots, and leaves while Masenimka bathed them. The entire heap



Don Talayesva

was then placed in a tray along with the broom that was used to sweep the floor. The last of the corn meal lines from each wall was scraped off and the dust thrown on the tray. A live ember from the fireplace was put on top and the fire permitted to go out. One of the women took the tray and its contents and some of the bath water and carried them to the placenta pile.

Within a few minutes the customary naming ceremony began. Masenimka unfastened the wrappings that bound me to the cradle, stripped me bare, and washed my head in a bowl of yucca suds. Then she bathed me from head to foot, rubbing on "baby ashes." My head was rinsed in fresh water and each of my many aunts bathed me in the same manner, one after the other. The last one handed me back to Masenimka, who wrapped me in a blanket that had been warmed by the fire. My bath water — like my mother's — was handled with care and carried out to the placenta pile. During so many baths I probably cried a little, but no one has reported it.

Masenimka took me again on her left arm, picked up my "mother corn" ears

with her right hand, waved them forward over my chest, and said, "May you live always without sickness, travel along the Sun Trail to old age, and pass away in sleep without pain. And your name shall be Chuka." Chuka means mud, a mixture of sand and clay. Masenimka and my father are of the Sand Clan, which made my name appropriate. This name was a sign to everyone that although I was born into the Sun Clan of my mother I was also a "child of the Sand Clan" and that my father and all his clan relatives had a claim on me. Each aunt repeated the ceremony and each gave me another Sand, Lizard, Earth, or Snake Clan name, but they have been forgotten. Even if I had never been told these things about myself I could be sure that they happened, for there is no other way for a new child to get a good name among the Hopi.

After the naming ceremony most of the women went back to their houses. But just before sunrise Masenimka placed me in a blanket upon her back and started with my mother to the edge of the mesa where they were to present me to the Sun god. Each took along a pinch of corn meal, and my mother carried my pair of mother-corn ears. They stopped with me southeast of the village where the trail leaves the mesa. This is a kind of "highway" of the Sun god, the main Sun Trail for the Oraibi people.

My mother took me with the cradle and blanket from Masenimka's back and placed me on the right arm of my godmother. Masenimka, thus holding me before the Sun god, breathed a silent prayer on a pinch of meal which she held in her right hand. Then she uncovered my face to the early dawn with her left hand in the proper way, rubbed some of the sacred corn meal between my lips, and threw the rest to the rising sun. She then sucked the meal from my lips with her mouth and blew it toward the east four times. Taking the ears of corn from my mother, she extended them toward the east with a circular motion from right to left and brought them close up to my chest four times. As she concluded she prayed again for my long life and called out to the Sun god the different names that I had received, in order that he might hear them and recognize me. It was my mother's privilege to take me in her arms and repeat the same ceremony, but it is not required by Hopi rules, and I have never learned whether she did it or not.

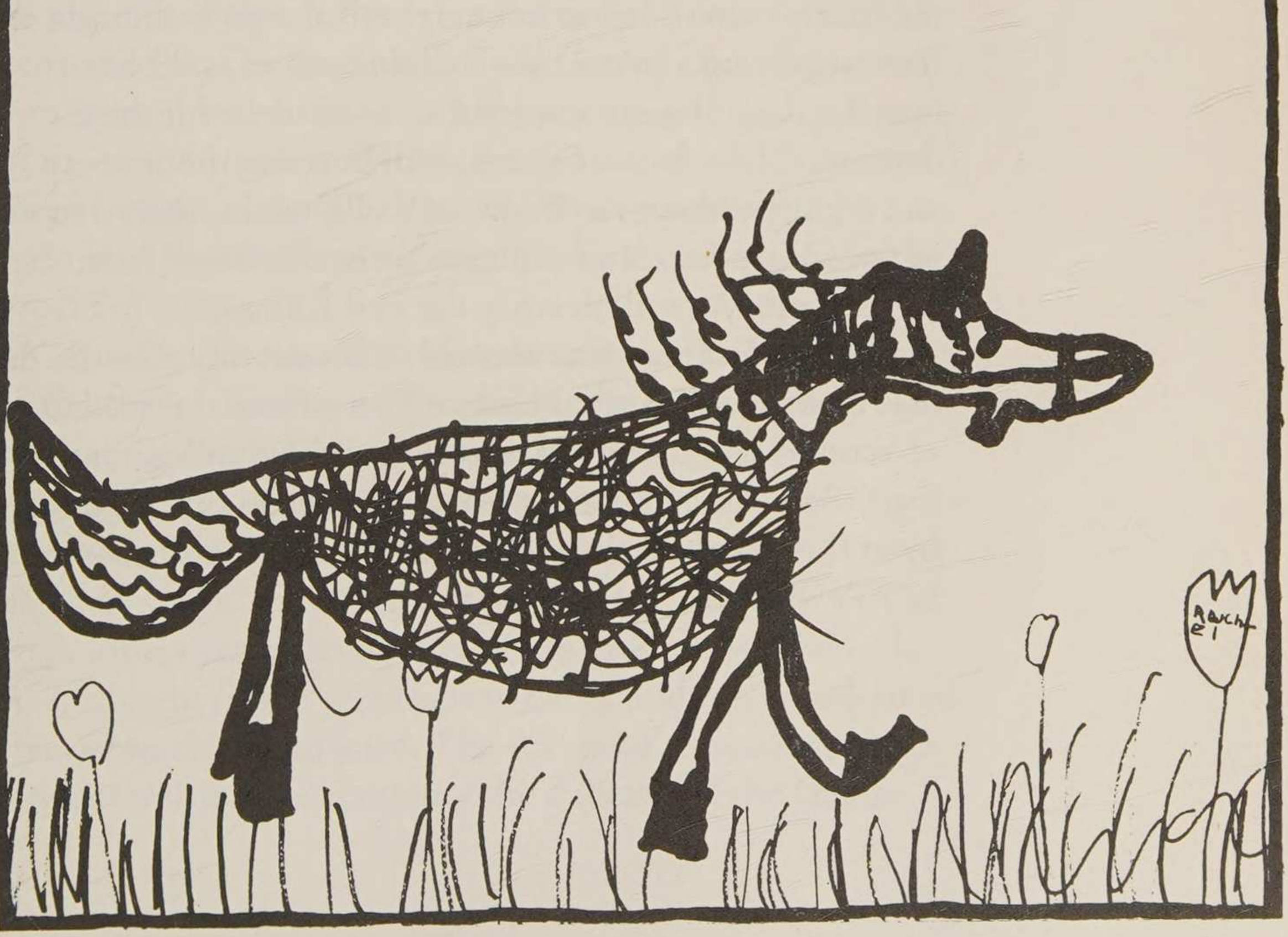
When we returned to the house where my father had just washed his own head in yucca suds, a big breakfast feast was served to relatives and friends. They were invited to eat *piki* (native wafer bread), boiled meat mixed with hominy, puddings, and other choice foods. Masenimka received a big load of food in payment for her services as my godmother and carried it home on her back. Many of my mother's sisters and clan sisters were present and were all called my "mothers," while the sisters and clan sisters of my father were called my "aunts." The Sun Clan men who came and ate were called my "uncles," while my father's brothers and clan brothers were all called my "fathers." Almost everyone praised my mother, made hopeful remarks about me, and predicted that I would become a good hunter, a fine herder, and perhaps a powerful healer, for I was a special baby — twins twisted into one. There was no doubt about this, for they could see the two whorls of hair on the back of my head, and those present at my birth told others how large and double-sexed I looked when fresh from the womb. All knew that such babies are called antelopes because these animals are usually born twins. It was anticipated, therefore, that I would have a special power to protect myself, do many strange things before the people, and be able to heal certain diseases, even as a boy. My mother, father, and grandfather made careful note of these signs and sayings and were prepared to fill my mind with them as soon as I could know anything.

Adapted from Sun Chief, *edited by Leo W. Simmons, Yale University Press, copyright © 1942. Reprinted by permission.*

Riding a Horse

One day I was riding on a horse when there was a fork in the road and suddenly I heard, "Go this way." I said "What way?" and went on. I rode for a while, then all of a sudden the road opened. I fell in and blue birds were dancing. I joined in, but after a while I had to go. I said "Bye!" When I got home, I told my mother and father. They said they believed me, but they really didn't. So the next day I took my parents there. Now they believed me. They saw it with their own eyes.

Nicholas Weiss [8]



EPICYCLE

The Eighth Embryo

Once upon a time the Earth, groaning from the oppression of the myriad demons that had arisen on her breast and had overthrown the world of mortals, prostrated herself before Brahma and all the gods, seeking relief. "My heart is tormented, O ye gods, because the demons, led by the evil Kamsa, have subjugated all mortal beings in my care. Even as I speak, more demons are being born in the houses of kings — they are so numerous I cannot keep count of them. I beg you to relieve me of this terrible burden lest, in despair, I plunge into the netherworld!"

Upon hearing her fervent plea, the Supreme Lord Brahma assembled all the gods in one place, and plucked from his own august head two hairs, one white and one black. He said to the gods, "These two hairs of mine will relieve the pain and oppression suffered by the Earth and the mortals confided to her care. All the gods should consent to give up a part of their divine selves and be born into the race of men, in order to do battle with these demons. These hairs, O gods, will become the seventh and eighth embryos in the womb of Devaki, the virtuous wife of Vasudeva. In its human form this black hair, the eighth embryo, will destroy the evil Kamsa."

But Kamsa was forewarned of his destiny. On the day that he drove the bridal chariot home from the wedding of Vasudeva and Devaki, a voice rumbled in his ear saying, "Fool! Thou dost not know that the eighth embryo from the womb of the woman who rides in thy chariot

will rob thee of thy life!" Aroused, Kamsa drew his sword and prepared to slaughter the modest bride of noble Vasudeva; but her husband pleaded with the demon, promising to deliver into his hands each child that arose in his wife's womb. Assured that thus he could control his fate, Kamsa was quieted. He drove the saddened couple home, and afterwards held them captive in their house, keeping constant watch over all the offspring of that marriage. He did not know that Vishnu had consulted with Sleep and instructed her to take from the underworld the six embryos resting there, and put them one at a time into Devaki's womb. He did not know that the seventh embryo was Lord Vishnu, in the form of the white hair of Brahma; nor that before it was born, the child was taken from Devaki's womb and placed in the womb of Rohini, another of Vasudeva's wives. Kamsa thought only that he had slaughtered the first six children, and that the seventh had miscarried. But the seventh conception had not lost its life but changed its dwelling place to the womb of Rohini; and after this had occurred, Lord Vishnu as the black hair of Brahma entered the womb of Devaki, and awaited his birth as Krishna in the world of men.

During the time that Devaki carried the Lord Vishnu, as the future Krishna, in her body, she shone with great brilliance; indeed, those around her could hardly bear to look upon her, and their minds trembled before her flashing radiance. Unseen by mortals, the gods praised Devaki day and night, and when her time came, she bore a child with lotus eyes, who was to be the savior of the world. At his birth, fierce winds grew calm, and the muddiest of rivers ran clear and pure. The waves of the oceans made a sweet music to accompany the dancing of the Gand-

harvas and Apsarases. The thunder rumbled softly in the clouds and gentle rains came, pouring down showers of blossoms.

As joyous as the world was upon the birth of the child, his father Vasudeva looked upon his son with dismay as well as worship, begging him to put aside his appearance of divinity, lest the evil Kamsa learn of his descent. Then under the cover of night the great-minded Vasudeva secretly made his way towards the river Yamuna, towards the houses of Nanda and the other cowherd elders, while Sleep gripped the watchful minds and hearts of Kamsa's guards. And Sleep herself had prepared the delusion of Kamsa by entering the womb of Yashoda, Nanda's wife, who this night bore a baby girl. In the darkness Vasudeva took the girl child and replaced her with his own son, giving the baby girl to his wife Devaki. So, when morning came, Nanda and Yashoda rejoiced at the birth of a son; but Kamsa, hearing that Devaki had been delivered of a girl, took the child from Devaki's arms and dashed her onto the rocks. Thus the soul of Sleep was released, and she rose into the sky, laughing at Kamsa and saying, "By this deed, O Kamsa, you have assured the gods of your own destruction! The one who will destroy you is now born and your destiny lies entirely in his hands!"

In the morning, Vasudeva went to Nanda's wagon, and heard from the overjoyed cowherd's own lips, "A

son has just been born to me!" Courteously, Vasudeva blessed the worthy man, and then said, "Your fortune is indeed bounteous, Nanda! Not only has a son been born to you, but you have freed yourself by your own labors from the king's annual tax. Now there is no cause for you to remain here, and you should return at once to your own home, Gokula. In this night a son was born to me also, of my wife Rohini. Please take him with you in your travels, and protect him as your own." And so it was that Brahma's other incarnation also, the white hair who was the future Rama, came into the care of Nanda.

For some time the two boys confided to Nanda's care had no names among the cowherds of Gokula. Their names were given only after the life-passage rites had been performed over them. To the child of Rohini, the elder by a few hours, Garga the seer gave the name Rama; to the younger, born of Devaki but thought to be Nanda's son, he gave the name Krishna. But Krishna came to be known by other names as well, for the two boys were not, as you might imagine, well behaved and goodly mannered. They were children like all children, perhaps even naughtier than most. Indeed, the tireless activity of Rama and Krishna, born as they were by the gift of Brahma himself, creator of all worlds, plagued greatly their good mother, Yashoda. Exhausted by their antics one day, she bound Krishna around the waist with a stout rope, and tied him to a heavy wooden mortar. Then she returned to her duties, while the lotus-eyed child crawled happily around the fields, dragging the mortar behind him. In the course of his travels, he passed between two trees, and the mortar became entangled in their roots. The child still continued on his way, until the crashing down of the two trees brought all the village to see what had happened. There they found Krishna, laughing at his mischief, the rope still tied tightly around his belly. And so, for a time, he was called Damodara, that is, Rope-Belly.

These wonders, and other feats of unrestrained power, frightened the cowherds, and under the leader-

ship of Nanda, they all moved again to another forest, where they were unknown and might not attract attention. Perhaps it was there that Yashoda once found her remarkable child sitting in the dust, eating dirt. Scolding him the while, Yashoda went to Krishna to clean out his mouth, but when she opened it and looked in, she saw not the bright teeth and red tongue of her little son, but a vision of the vast expanse of the universe, world after world unfolding in the dark cavity of his mouth. For a moment, she stood transfixed by the vision of the dream of Vishnu, but then Sleep, the dreamer, lightly touched her in her amazement, and she forgot all that she had seen.

It was events such as these that one day brought all the villagers before the young Krishna to ask him if he were not a god. "Tell us the truth," they implored him. "Your strength is infinite, and you cannot be a mere man. We cannot reconcile your childish ways with the remarkable feats you have performed before our eyes. Are you a god, Krishna, or a Gandharva, or are you our kinsman after all? Tell us the truth, and let us honor you and sing your praises if indeed you are divine!"

Then Lord Krishna was silent for a moment, and though feigning anger, he replied with affection: "Cowherds, if you are not ashamed to be my kinsmen, why should you worry about these matters? If you love me, and if I merit your respect, then regard me only as your kinsman. I am neither god nor Gandharva, neither Yaksha nor Danava. I have been born in your family: that is all!" And all the villagers went from him to their homes in silence, pondering the words of Krishna, who was affectionately angry with them.

—Adapted from the Puranas by Paul Jordan-Smith

TOWARDS BEGINNINGS by Richard Lewis

Illustrations by Amanda and Sascha Lewis

The contented innocence of children has been greatly exaggerated: there seems to be in the pull and tension of their everyday living a suffering, a rising and falling from high exaltation to deep grief that in its sheer energy would be difficult for most adults to sustain in the brief time it takes a child to move from one extreme to the other.

The child who has discovered the excitement of uncovering and happening upon a phenomenon, an idea, a feeling, an event, a circumstance — that could not and would not exist without his act of discovering — finds that the only relief for this energy is more discovery.

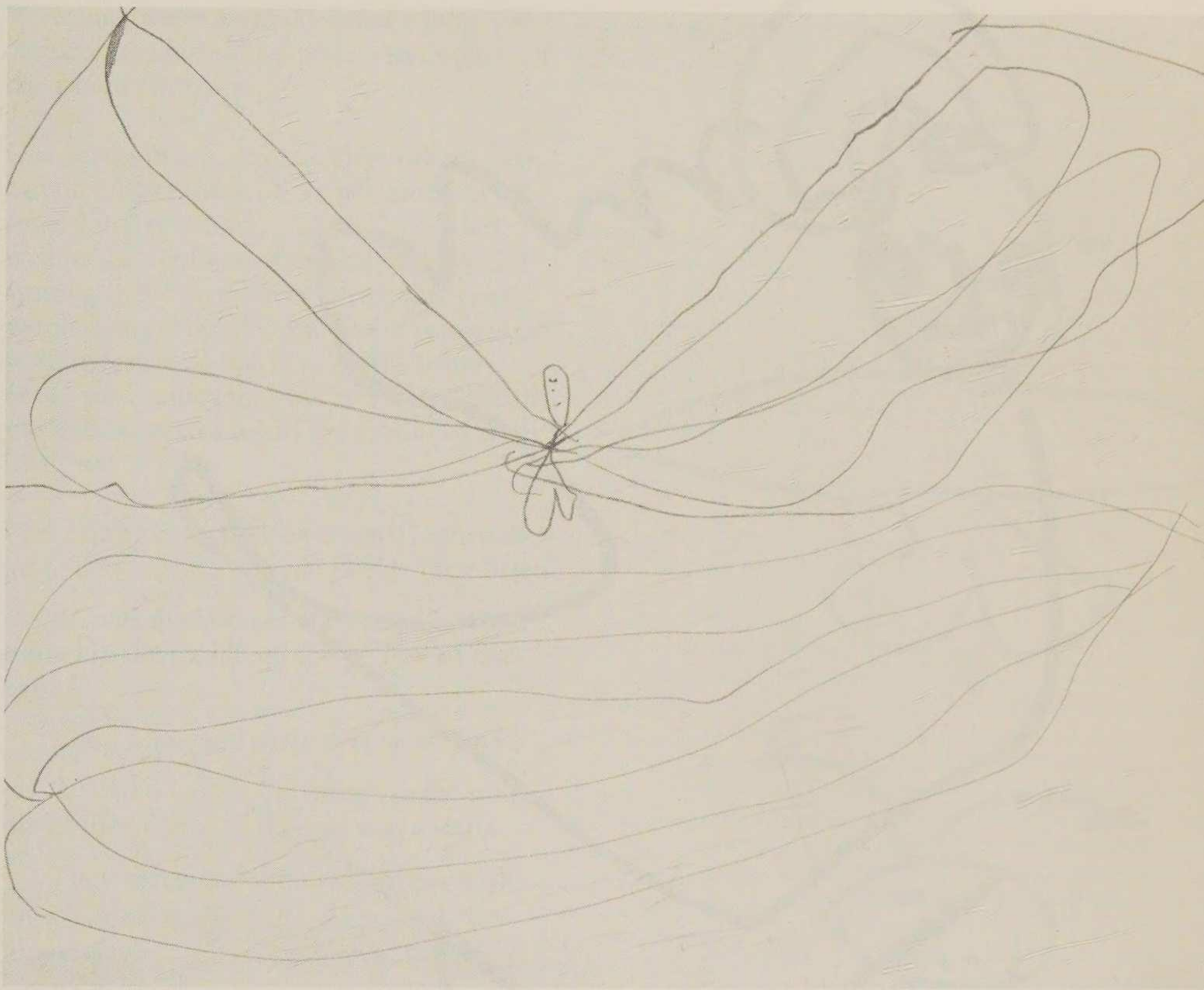
What children create is from the "doings" of childhood — it is the doing of consciousness, of consciousness making itself, of consciousness displaying its appearance, of consciousness becoming conscious. What children create is in the natural order of creation, and the materials of their creation cannot be separated from the the creation of themselves. They "make" things because without making there is no feeling of the self making itself, no feeling of things in relation to other things, no feeling of changing and transforming something in order to reach its particular "self," no feeling of the engagement in the process which is themselves, affecting and recreating *from* themselves, the furthering of the human — *in* themselves.

As my daughter lets the lines of her drawing extend and twist their way into circles, out of and into which two eyes blink, a mouth opens, two hands stretch, two feet stand, and the sky and the sun and the moon meet, she quietly whispers, "My pencil is growing."

Mmm...It's marvelous!
It's magical!
With my paintbrush
I unfold the sky,
I unfold the earth.
I make the sun shine;
I make the river flow.

— Age 7

To the child the power of the poetic, the power of the mythic, are deeply physical presences entering through him and around him. The child does not simply imagine these powers, he becomes the powers them-



selves, entreating them to be the source of his whole being.

For a child to want to become a butterfly while dancing is not simply a fantasy of childhood. It is childhood finding what part of the butterfly still remains dancing in childhood.

I saw a beautiful
butterfly that flow
and blow through the
purple sky, and
glided so wide that
that the air
not dare to blow.

— Adam M., Age 7

We notice something, not because we were asked to notice it, but because it accidentally was there in front of us — and as we glanced at it, it became apparent that it had more to do with us than anything that was specifically brought to our attention.

Watching the watchful eyes of a frog, these children are brought inside a community of their own curiosity.

Our imagining is surely a physical act. We can no longer think of the imagination as something peculiarly "mind," enclosed within the confines of mental activity. Imagining is the possibility which turns my whole body around from where it might be standing, transforms it to some "otherness," and causes the rhythms of my breathing to change as I fulfill the extent of what I imagine.

I am telling our children a story before they go to bed. Sitting in front of me, they listen.

"...and the bumblebee went down the tunnel in the middle of the yellow of the egg.."

They listen and their eyes watch me.

"...and down in the tunnel in the middle of the yellow of the egg was a stairs..."

They listen and their eyes move with me.

"...and at the bottom of the stairs was a small door..."

They listen and their eyes are waiting.

"...and the bumblebee saw a small crack of light underneath the door..."

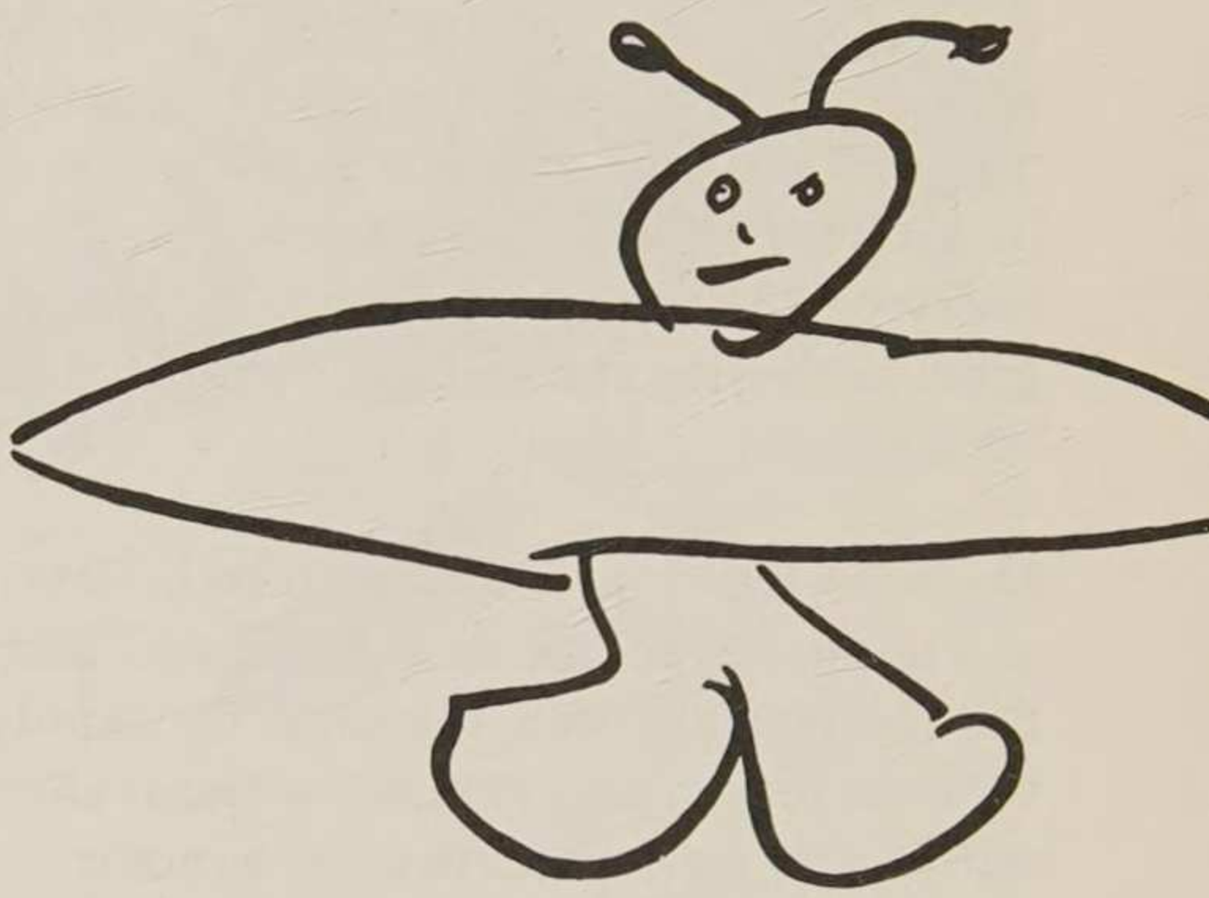
They listen and their eyes are searching.

"...and slowly the bumblebee bent down to look through the crack..."

They listen and their eyes are a question.

"...and do you know what he saw?"

"What?" they whisper, their eyes and my eyes held together by an answer just a step of silence away.



Children invite mystery, they invite opportunities for the incongruous, the unexplained, the half-revealed, the not knowing, the impending moment, the fear of the hidden, the tension of waiting, the anticipation of surprise, the possibility of danger, the savoring of darkness, the games of guessing, the condition of secrecy. And like explorers on a perilous cliff they lean over its edge looking for what will appear, hanging onto every surge of suspense, frozen in their gaze, as the unexpected slowly takes their breath away.

Magic to the child is what can be believed and not believed, the denying of awe and the accepting of awe, the capacity to judge without judging, to commit without committing, to feel, momentarily, a moment luminous in being.

As the moon sometimes does — the question of why — meditates us.

Between the known and the unknown is that tension upon which pivots our desire to express, that balance upon which gravitates the meaning of our expressiveness.

We are made vulnerable by the whims of the unknown striking us.

You, in your shell of white sheets, cry at how your dreams spread their voices across your sleep, waking you, afraid...

From out of the womb's nightful time, the child brings with him something of his original darkness. Even after birth, the darkness does not recede, but becomes part of the child as he gropes with what makes him afraid to what he imagines of the dark. Picking his way through night's shadows and night's voices, he creates the imaginary, that vision which is his guide into the unknown, making it into what is known and able to be seen by the light of his imagining.

Subject of Thought

If you get into a small boat, from almost anywhere, you must try your hardest to find some water. After you have done this you must take off down a channel of thought. You may make it whatever you suggest. As you begin to move much faster you forget completely about the boat, until it's not there. The wind breathes hard now and you can see something distant in the beyond.

Now you have reached the shores of your mind, and the sands of the beach are white.

The coral reefs to each side of your head are covered with many dreams. (You make of these as you wish.) The path before you is of a sharp incline, but you feel as though it could be steeper, the pathway is tiring.

After sleeping for a good time, you walk down the path to the coral, pick a dream, go back to the boat, and — sleep more, as you float down the channel homeward.

— John F., Age 10

Often the first thing our children told us in the morning were their dreams, as if their dreams had been suspended lengthwise from the night to the day — and holding onto them, they climbed, one word after another, back into the morning — at last, safely arrived in...

In her daydreaming, she talks to herself. Between who she is, and who she isn't, she hears the words she speaks spoken to who

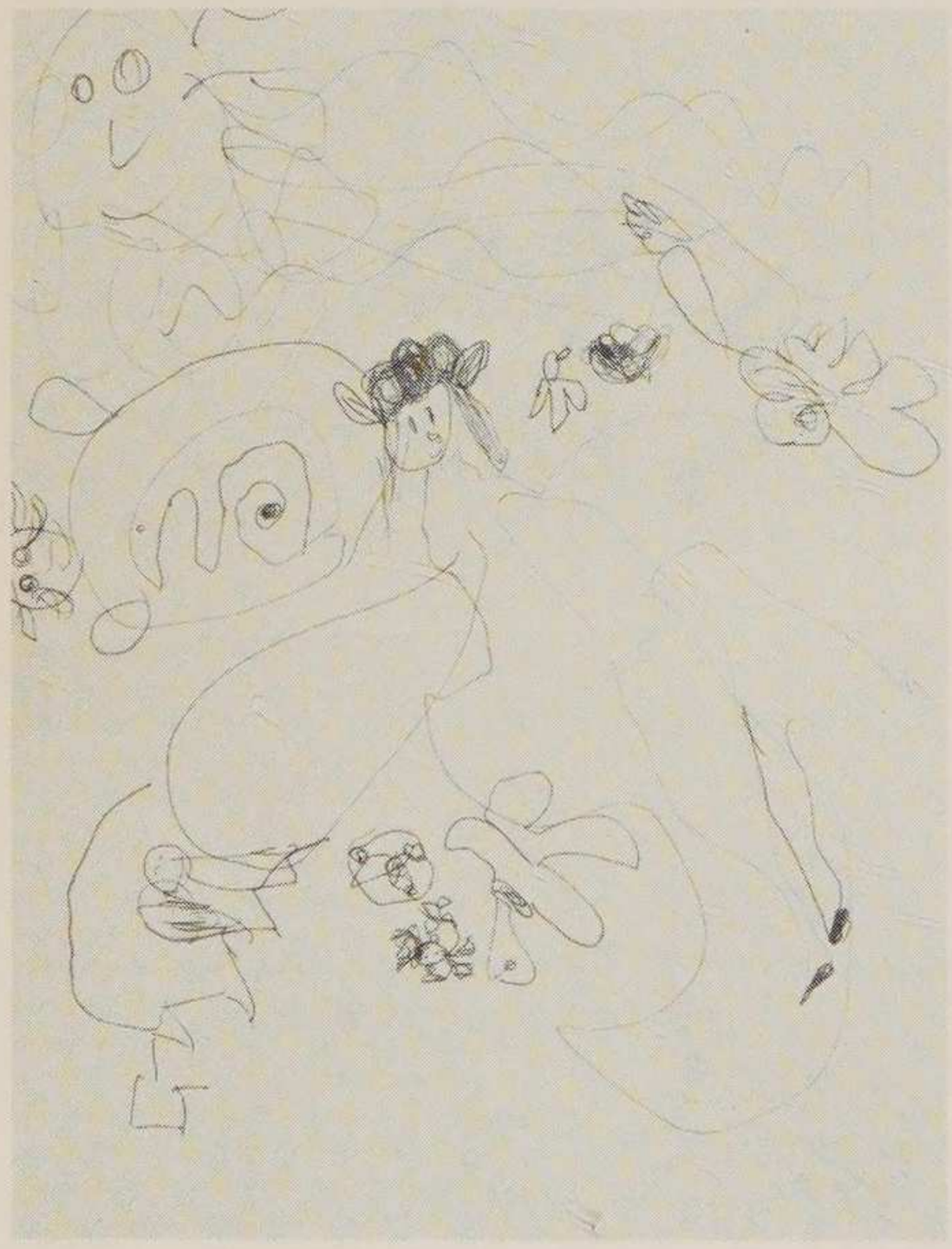
she might be. Listener and speaker, she is all in one, crouched in the secrecy of her dream.

Then, without warning, she stops. She drinks her juice, asks what we are going to do today, bites into her toast, scoops the egg from its shell, leaves the table and goes into another room.

The day was startled to continue...

Our son dances — stomping the ground in order to penetrate the rhythms he's making, stomping as if to listen to the hauntings of the earth's heartbeat...

Children bring with them the most archaic of histories, intuited mythologies of the



earth attempting to expand, waters about to be stirred, air starting outward...

The child reaches back, asking where he was born, how did it feel, where did he come from, how did he get there, what was there before, what was inside, was it dark there, how did it happen. The child reaches back as if to tell himself that he really began, that he was a beginning somewhere, that his growing has begun, that he is still linked to a beginning, that he is, because he began.

To be born is to feel like a seed of corn planted for the first time.

— David U., Age 9

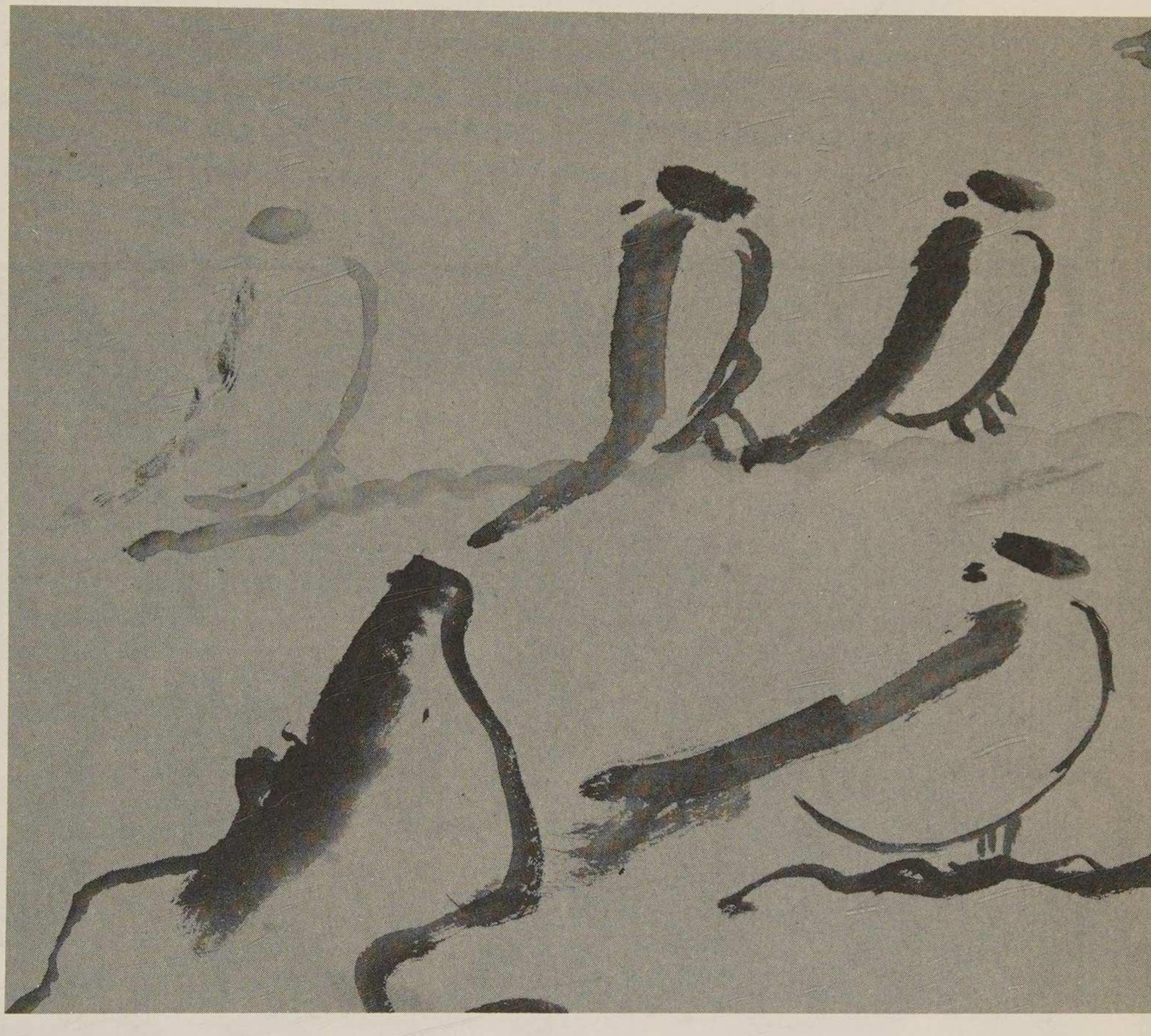
To Be Alive

It was there
Something - happened
What was it
A bird
A fish
A lizard
Was it the girl
Listen.
I hear it again
It is the wind
Wind.
It created me
I am its friend
The wind lives
in a secret garden
far away from me
It comes and I sleep
Sleep and the wind and I
drift to air.

— David U., Age 10

To be born is happiest in a place full of angels. To start a new life. To remember what may come.

— Tony, Age 9



We are of a childhood still growing, still beginning what in us still proceeds towards beginning.

It is the child who has brought with him and keeps in himself the last of a message he overheard in the quandary of voices before he was born.

When I was a tree in a dark forest,
I saw the beginning of the world.
Then some leaves fell on the ground,
And I saw the beginning of the end
of the world.

— Age 9

BIRTH OF THE SUN

There was once a little boy who was playing in a mud pile and made a gigantic mud ball. His mother called him in for lunch. He left the mud ball in a very sunny spot. When he got out again the ball was on fire. The mother prayed to the gods to get rid of the fire ball. So one of the gods took the ball and threw it up in the air. And that is how the sun began.

Anonymous [8]

EPICYCLE

Hermes

In that time before the Ages of Iron and of Gold, when the gods first moved among men, Maia the star maiden, daughter of Atlas and sister to the Pleiades, went to Arcadia to have a child. Great Zeus had loved her, but fearing the wrath of Hera, Maia sought a hiding place where she might safely give birth to Zeus' child. She found a cave at the foot of Mount Cyllene, covered over with flowering vines. The cave was dry and comfortable, and one bright morning Maia gave birth to a boy whom she called Hermes.

Hermes was born at dawn, and by midday he stood on his own two feet and walked. Now while his mother slept he saw the afternoon light as it filtered through the green and rosy covering of the cave. "How wonderful!" he thought, "I will go out and see what this green world is like."

When Hermes stepped out into the meadow, he saw a grove of wild olive trees, and in the sky above circled a flock of cranes, turning northward. Hermes watched and followed them; across the face of Greece he moved, across the Isthmus, where he found a tortoise shell upon the beach, polished by the sea, its history written in curving patterns on its surface. When he struck it, it gave forth a sound so lovely that he took it with him. He traveled on, past Parnassus and northward to the hills beyond Olympus, where he gazed in wonder at the dwelling place of Zeus. By nightfall Hermes had reached Pieria where he found a herd of white cattle gleaming in the dark of night.

"These are no ordinary cattle; they are the cattle of the gods and they can help me reach my father," he said. Then he began to pick grasses and weave shoes for the cattle and for himself. When he had fitted the cattle with these shoes, he drove them off and no trace was left to

show where they had gone. He drove them backwards through an olive grove and deep into a ravine where no eyes could see them. Then he sacrificed two cows to the gods, and taking seven lengths of cow gut he stretched them taut across the polished tortoise shell so that when he plucked those seven strings a sound marvelous and fresh and new came forth. And he sang a song of praise to his unchanging father.

By morning Hermes had returned to his mother's cave. Maia was awake and waiting for him. He crawled into her warm embrace, and Maia, being wise in the way all mothers are, said to him, "You have been up to some mischief."

"I have found a way to meet my father," said Hermes. "Surely you and I will join him soon. Be patient with me. Listen to this wonderful thing I have made; I will call it a lyre." And Hermes played a song for his mother, a lullaby so soft and sweet that they both soon fell asleep.

At dawn Apollo came to count his cattle in Pieria. "What thief has been at work here?" he wondered when he saw no cattle grazing there. No tracks could he find upon the ground, only strange dusty markings leading nowhere. Apollo searched east and west without success. He enlisted the aid of Silenus and the satyrs who searched the whole of Greece, but the cattle of the gods could not be found.

Now it happened that Apollo, while contemplating the empty meadow where his cattle had once grazed, heard two cranes in conversation. Although what they said made little sense, he heard the words "Apollo's little brother" more than once. "I have no little brother," he thought. "But if I had, there would be a sign somewhere of something wonderful and strange. Certainly a brother

of mine could play a thieving trick on me as well." So Apollo went out across the land and looked and listened for what he thought had never been.

When at last the bright lord reached Arcadia, he heard a marvelous sound and could not help but smile; there was Hermes in his basket, playing on the lyre. But

Apollo was still angry at the theft and stalked into the cave demanding the return of his white cattle. Hermes in the basket pretended sleep, but when Maia awoke in fright, he had to face Apollo.

"Why, brother," Hermes said, "how could one so small and helpless as I have knowledge of your cows? I

have been sleeping here beside my mother, for I was just born yesterday. As you can see, there are no cattle in my mother's cave."

Apollo, losing patience, took Hermes in one hand and lifting him up to heaven brought him before great Zeus. Apollo told their father of the theft and how he suspected this sharp-witted child of having committed it.

"I have watched it all," said Zeus. "And truly, Hermes did steal the cattle, but with good intent. And he shall return them to the rightful place." To Hermes, Zeus then said: "Do as I say and you as well as your mother will find your place in high Olympus."

So Hermes took his shining brother to that deep ravine where he had hidden the cattle, and while Apollo counted the herd, he played sweet music on the lyre. "This herd is two head short," said Apollo. "That is true," said Hermes, "for I made a sacrifice to the twelve gods." "Twelve gods?" said Apollo. "I count only eleven." "Ah well," said Hermes, "I did include myself." Smiling, Apollo said, "I will make a bargain. Give me that pretty toy you play on and I will give you custody of this herd in exchange." And so a bargain was made, and Apollo gained power over music and Hermes over trade and commerce.

Now Zeus, admiring his sharp-witted son Hermes, made him his messenger between the three worlds. He gave him his staff, and winged sandals so that Hermes might move swiftly between Heaven, Earth, and Hades. The storytellers of later days say that Hermes was the inventor of the alphabet, and that you can tell this is true by turning the first letter, A, upside down; you will see a cow's head with two sharp horns, in honor of the famous cattle theft.

—Retold from classical sources by Thomas White

The Dancing Butterfly

There was a war in Heaven. And all the good angels chased out the bad angels. One little angel dug through the blue of Heaven, and then the same little angel made a little cute stairs and decorated it. And she had a little candle and she put it on the stairs and lit it. And then all the angels came and looked down below to the earth. And they saw a little grave and they saw a little butterfly what was praying and kneeling and bowing before the little grave. He was dancing.

The little candle was all through burning and then it started the little stairs on fire. And then the Devil came and he saw what the angel had done. The little angel went to God and the Devil went to God and the Devil told God that the stairway was on fire and Heaven was on fire. It was. But all the angels came and put out the fire. Then there was no danger.

The little angel made the stairway again and decorated it, put the little candle and lit it. They saw the little butterfly again, praying and wondering how to get up to Heaven. And then they flew down to him and said "Why are you praying?" And he said "Because I have two little children under the ground." And then they said, "Oh!" And then they said, "We'll make you a wish — that is that your children will come alive." And then the two children and him went to Heaven and lived happily ever afterwards.

Angela [4]

BECOMING A CHILD

by John Loudon

Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 18:3-KJV)

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

(I Corinthians 13:11-KJV)

Religious traditions, especially Christianity, seem to offer conflicting messages about childhood as an ideal state. On the one hand, the Gospels say that unless you change the direction of your life (*metanoia*) and become as a little child you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. In the more mystical Gospel of John, Jesus says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3-KJV.) On the other hand, Jesus regularly rejects the rote passivity of childish religiosity, and Paul admonishes us to put away, as he did, the things of childhood. More significantly, all of the Gospels and Paul's proclamation are, in effect, stories climaxing with Jesus's passion, death, and resurrection and declaring that only by losing your life will you find it. What is this ideal that is something like childhood yet comes only with reaching maturity, with a dying to self and being born to a new life?

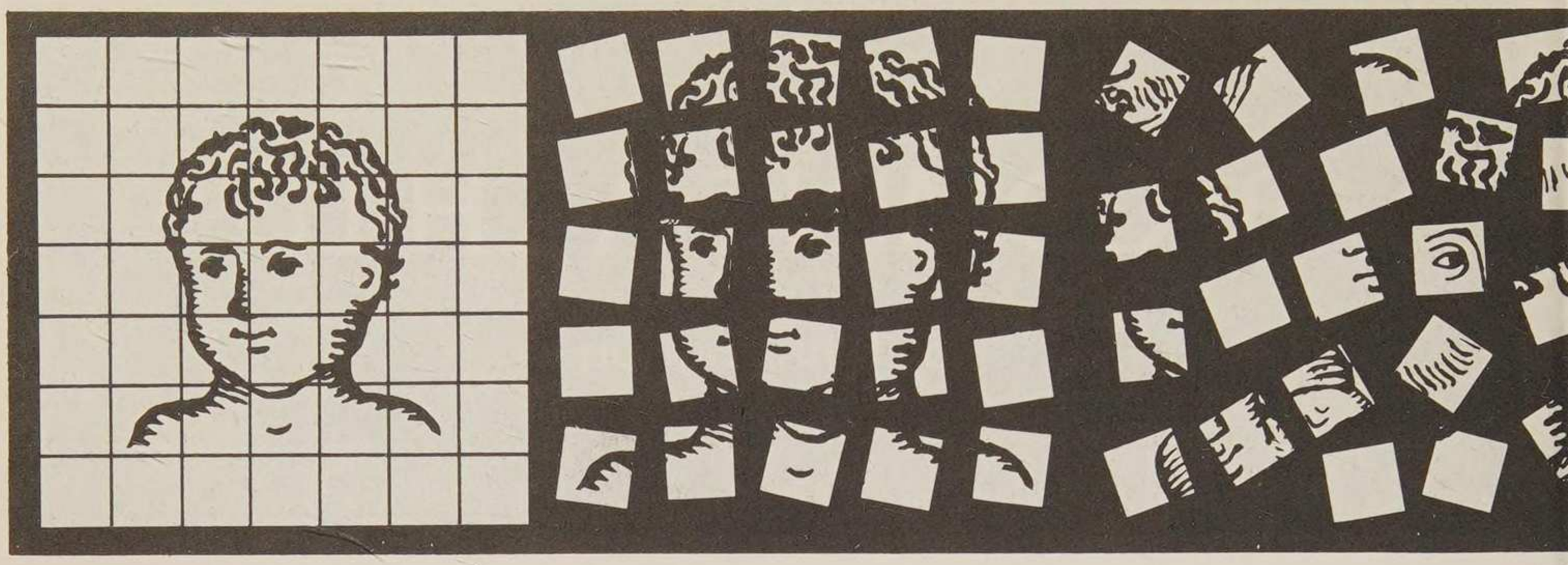
Obviously, two different views of childhood are involved here. For me, the paradox they present seems another of those rich seeming-conflicts with which living traditions are rife and which invite deeper probing, a quest for understanding.

One line of resolution — the one most Christian exegetes and theologians would tend to take — would be to study the seemingly contradictory passages with painstaking analysis (examining the language, the context, the function, the date, etc., of the passages) and to come up with a synthetic interpretation. Doubtless some such studies have been conducted already. But I am hesitant to remove the sting of contradiction too readily. There's a challenge here worth taking up, and I sense that it is authentic and somehow central to what the New Testament wants to say.

So I propose a perhaps more fruitful, or at least novel, avenue into the truth at the heart of the paradox. It is to investigate the seeming ideal of childhood in the light of traditional and contemporary understandings of the stages of life. How does the demand to become like a child relate to traditional stages of growth and to the burgeoning research into the various dimensions and discernible steps in human development? Is the biblical injunction anomalous, or a coded saying reflecting early Christian debates, or does it contain accessible insight into human growth and potential, into the laws of our becoming and perfection?

The most universal distinctions between stages of life in traditional societies and religions are surely those exhibited by rites of passage. As an Apache woman forthrightly put it:

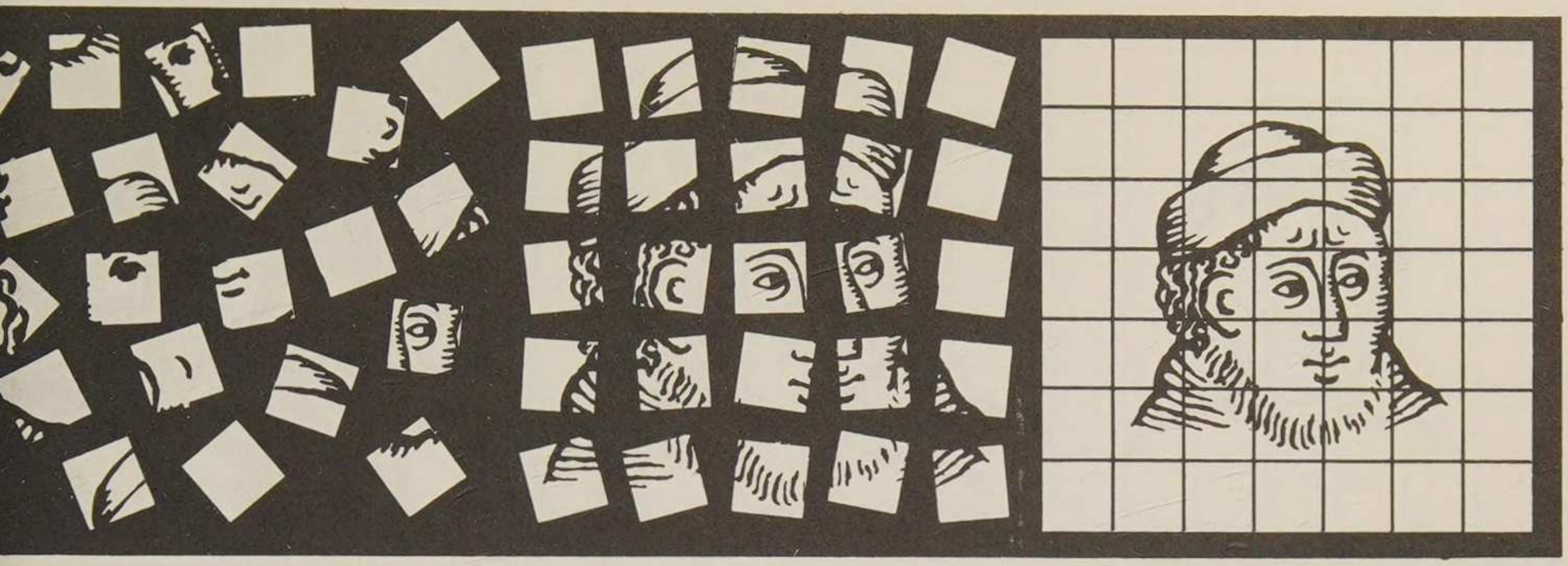
We think of a woman's life as blocked out in parts. One is girlhood, one is young woman-



hood, one is middle age, and one is old age. The songs are supposed to carry her through them. The first songs describe the holy home and the ceremony. Later come the songs about the flowers and the growing things. These stand for her youth, and as the songs go through the seasons the girl is growing up and reaching old age.

There are rites for pregnancy, birth, childhood, initiation into adulthood, betrothal and marriage, initiation into priesthood, and for death as the final passage. What is particularly noteworthy about the stages these rites identify is that they are connected with growth, development. They are cumulative, with each transition adding a dimension or level to one's life. Thus, for instance, the initiations into adulthood generally involve the acquisition of special knowledge with a concomitant disillusionment from childish beliefs and a new burden of responsibility. In some traditions, these stages of life have been discriminated into distinct religious ideals, each with their attractions, perils, and responsibilities. In Hinduism, for instance, there are the four stages (*ashramas*) on the way of knowledge: student, householder (family, career), forest dweller (recluse, ascetic), and wanderer (holy man, *sannyasin*). While a relative perfection is attainable in each state, the clear teaching is that full development, full attainment of *moksha* (release from finitude), comes only with completion of the cycle. And in general the traditional divisions of the stages of life forcefully suggest that childhood is a stage that obviously must be passed beyond to reach full knowledge, life, being. Still — and this observation begins to adumbrate something of the answer to the posed dilemma — there are aspects of the final stage (simplicity, a certain dependency, contemplation, etc.) that in some ways bring the life full circle back to the world of childhood.

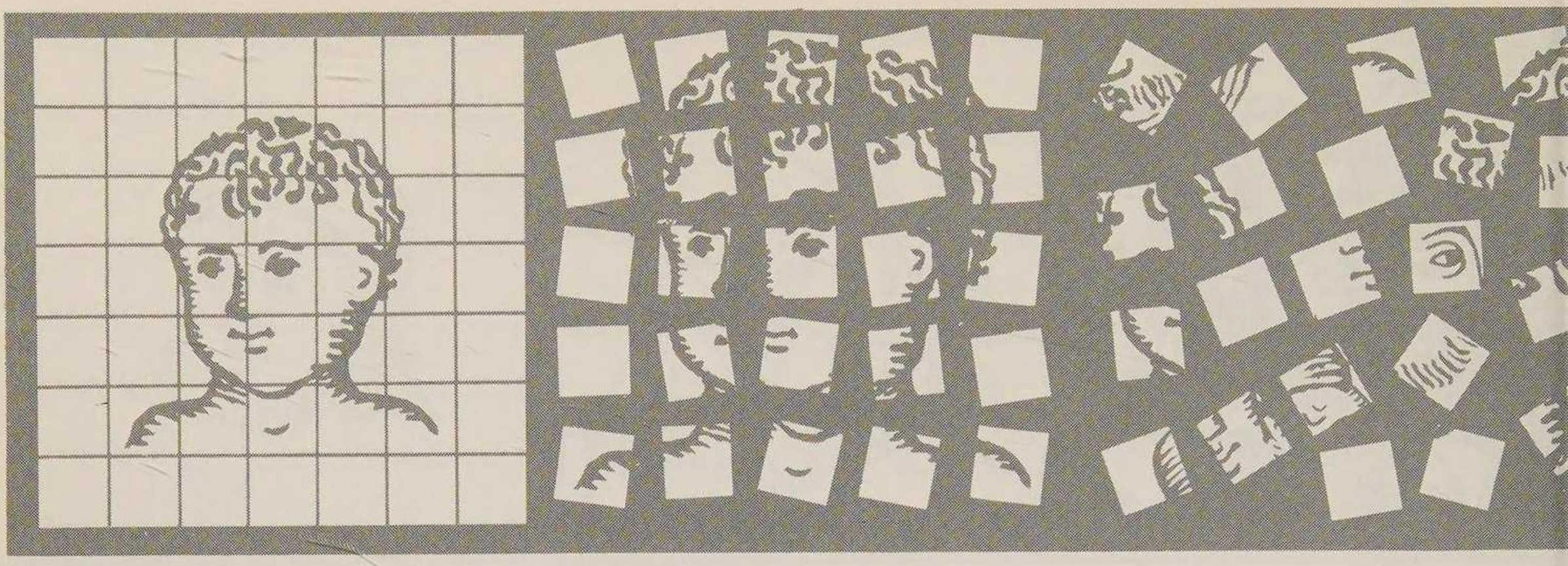
The psychology of human development is very much an independent, twentieth-century science, basing its conclusions on empirical evidence. Jean Piaget, the Swiss psychologist, pioneered developmental studies with his painstaking observations of children's intellectual and moral development and ingenious tests to determine stages of growth. He identifies four basic stages of child development up to age twelve, and each involves an expansion of the initial infantile worlds of self-centered feeling-action response into a wider world via language, socialization, thinking. Erik Erikson built on Piaget's foundational work (and Freud's) to identify eight stages through the whole of human life: four stages from infancy to adolescence, and then adolescence, early adulthood, middle age, and maturity. At each stage, we are faced with a new hope, new potentialities, and a new responsibility, and the basic success or failure with which each challenge is met affects the fullness of our development throughout life. Thus, for instance, at the stage of infancy (roughly the first year of life), a fundamental sense of trust or mistrust is established and it pervades the rest of life. Hence, the "task" of infancy is for the child to develop a root sense of well-



being and of being accepted, belonging, being at home in the universe. Subsequent tasks are the "achievement" of autonomy, initiative, industry, identity, intimacy, generativity (productivity in a quite broad sense), and integrity (a sense of satisfaction for a life whose parts add up to a well-lived whole). Failure in these psychosocial "accomplishments" produces a comparable devolution of human potentiality. Thus, for instance, if in middle age one doesn't achieve the "self-actualization" that the dynamism of human development calls for, one tends to "stagnation" — as Erikson put it — marked by a retreat to childish indulgences and an arrested development of personality and personal relations.

Needless to say, the work of Piaget and Erikson is often technical and quite complex, and it has been integrated into a vast ongoing program of research and theorizing. What is most significant for present purposes is to know that fairly clear developmental stages in life can be scientifically determined and that these stages are not just an automatic sequence lived out by simply growing older. Rather there is a dynamism to the development — both inner drive and external demands — that propels us from stage to stage, while each stage involves fundamental tasks to be accomplished and dimensions of our humanity to be discovered and integrated in order for us to become whole persons. There is a sense then in which the self is a lifelong project, as long as we remember that it is a project that requires as much passivity as activity (to use Teilhard's terms) — both receptivity and taking hold, yin and yang.

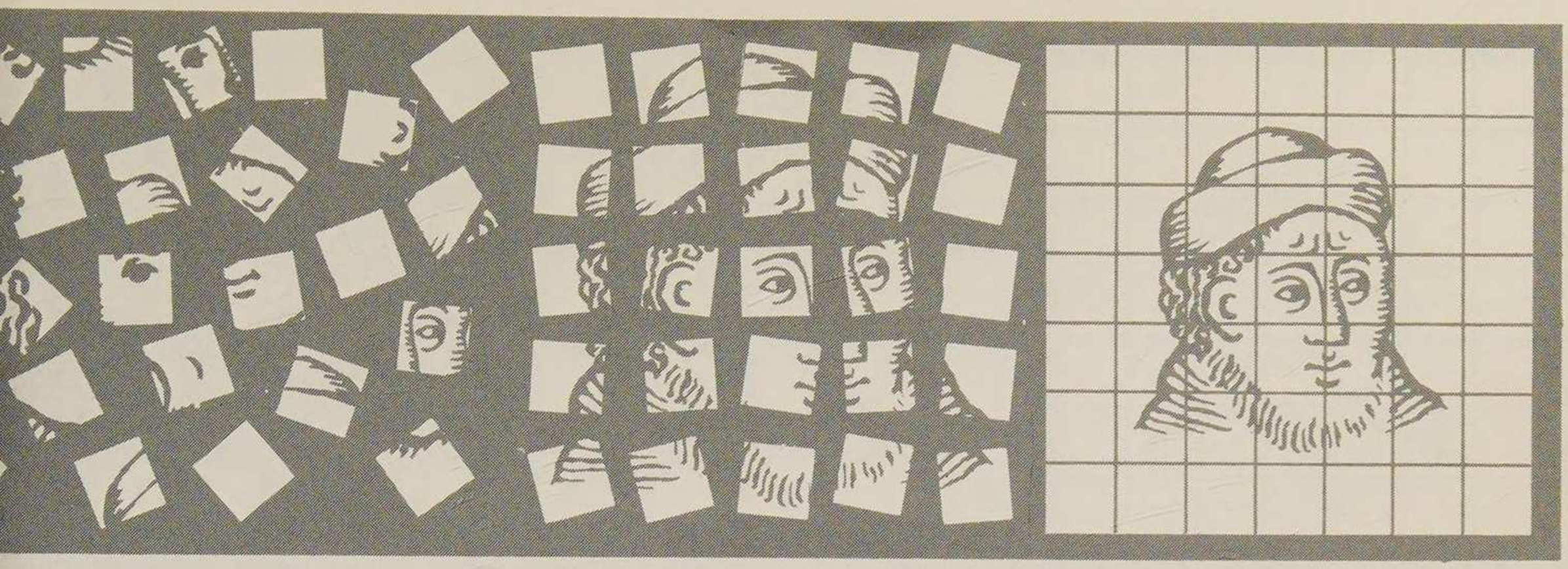
Since our concern is with childhood as a kind of religious ideal, another aspect of developmental psychology deserves exploration: viz., the analysis of stages of moral and religious development. In the late fifties, Robert Havighurst and Robert Peck identified five character types through which people might develop: the amoral in infancy; the expedient in early childhood; the conforming (following an external norm) and the irrational-conscientious (following one's own internal norm) in later childhood; and the rational-altruistic (objective decision-making), of which adolescents are capable (though the capacity is rarely actualized). They discovered that adolescents and adults could be at any of the stages, although many remain in the second type. Then in the last two decades Lawrence Kohlberg has devised tests for discerning six stages of sequentially related moral stances. In moral development, he finds that there are preconventional, conventional, and postconventional levels (adopting John Dewey's distinctions) of two stages each. Younger children (up to grade six) are mostly on the first level of trying to keep the rules that authority figures set: in stage one (ages six and seven), rules are obeyed in order to escape punishment; in stage two (eight and nine), the right course is identified with satisfying personal needs, such as acceptance, rewards, etc. Older children may advance to the second level: in stage three — the good-boy/nice-girl orientation



— one acts in ways that win approval from the group; at stage four — the law-and-order orientation — acting rightly means obeying the law, respecting authority, maintaining the social order. The third level involves autonomy and principle, and can be attained only when one has the capacity to make reasoned decisions (i.e., with the dawn of abstract thinking in adolescence): stage five is a social contract orientation, with principles of behavior gauged according to their contribution to the highest good (which could be contrary to the prevailing conventions of law and order); stage six requires moral judgments on the basis of universal (and universalizable) moral principles, and — according to Kohlberg — is rarely achieved. It is important to note that progress in moral development is dependent on psychological and intellectual development.

On the religious side, Lewis Sherrill early on (in *The Struggle of the Soul*, 1951) drew out the parallels between religious development and Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. He argued that at the various critical junctures in life there was a struggle between reversion to an earlier simpler level of faith and commitment and the challenge to a higher phase of maturity. Such turning points occur on entering childhood from infancy, with the dawning of adolescence, the coming of adulthood, and then middle age and old age. More recently, James Fowler has developed tests and analyses based on Kohlberg's work in order to differentiate six stages of faith development: 1. infant/undifferentiated faith — caught up in feeling and a sense of magic; 2. mythic/literal faith — dependence on the religious explanations of authority figures; 3. synthetic/conventional faith — sharing the meanings and values of the home, school, church, peers; 4. individuating/reflexive faith — deciding the meaning(s) of life for oneself; 5. polar/dialectic faith — a personal reappropriation of one's own tradition; 6. fully integrated faith — a stance that is at once completely personal and universal. For Fowler, as for other developmentalists, it is possible for one to stop at any stage or to revert to earlier stages. Thus, the achieving of mature faith is not so much a matter of finding the right things to believe as it is what John Dunne calls a "spiritual adventure," an odyssey of discovery with more ports of call than conventional faith. Development — psychological, moral, religious, even physiological — involves continuing demands, key breakthroughs to new levels, and our "conversions," our *metanoias* at each stage are fragile attainments.

It is time to return to our original question. In what sense are we called to become like a child and yet put away the things of childhood? It seems from our quick survey of traditional and modern views of human development that childhood itself entails various stages and these form the foundation for subsequent stages all the way to death. Childhood is a period of life in which basic achievements must be made in order to allow full human development. And it



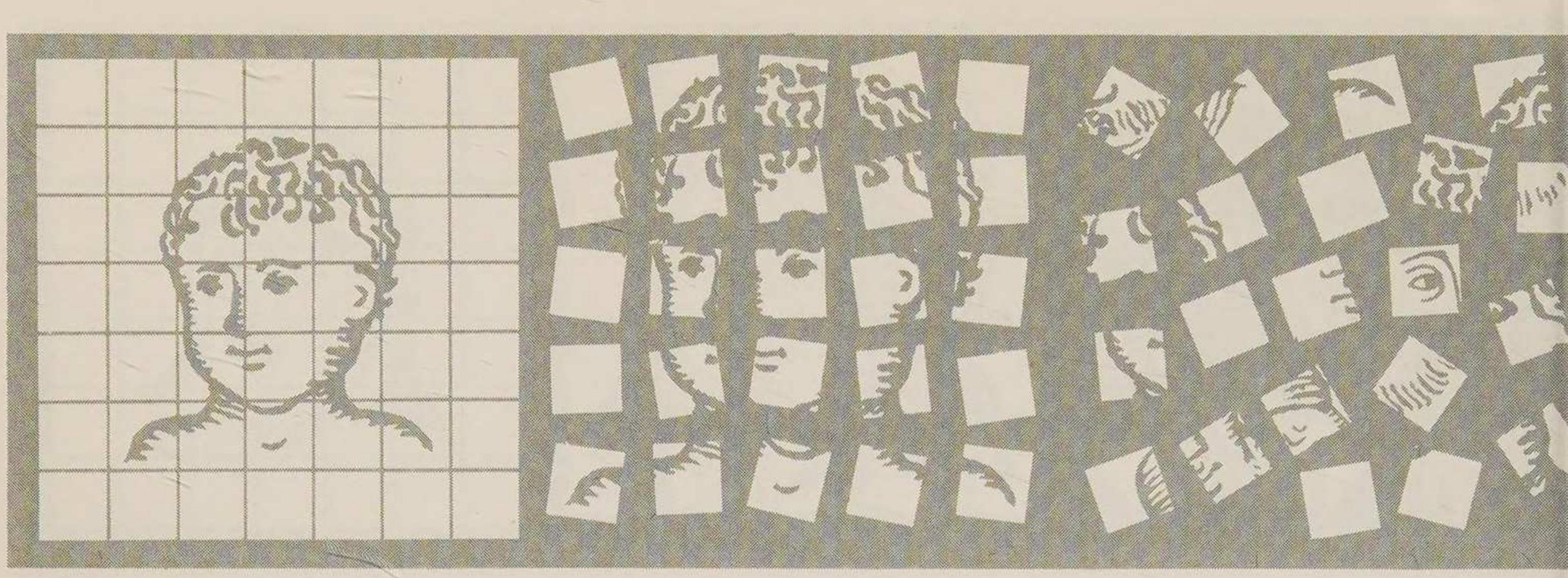
seems clear that the struggles of growth in childhood continue through life; in a sense, becoming a child — achieving the levels, skills, orientations, and so on that we are called to — may be a task it takes a lifetime to accomplish.

But there is, I think, a richer way to grasp the paradox in developmental perspective. The various stages alluded to above can, as the Apache quotation suggests, be boiled down to the common ones of childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and maturity. In this scheme, as in the more elaborate analyses, each stage is double-edged: full of promise and peril, hope and despair. Childhood, both popularly and psychologically, represents a kind of ideal: at root, it seems to be the pure, and hence uncorrupted, potential of the young child that is so attractive. Seemingly without burdening responsibilities and compromising demands, the child appears to possess a wholeness, a simplicity, a spontaneity, an integrity that all our adult striving cannot seem to attain (or recover). The child has the glory of simply being, like a flower or an animal, without the necessity of doing anything, becoming anything in order to be fully what it is. This kind of idealization of childhood has been especially prominent in the West, particularly since the Renaissance and then the Romantics. It represents innocence, wonder, receptivity, freshness, noncalculation, the lack of narrow ambitions and purposes. At times the child seems peculiarly capable of living out the Hindu ideal of "acting without seeking the fruits of action" or the *wu-wei* ("non-action") of living with the Tao.

However, appearances deceive, and much of our idealization of childhood involves adult projections of our own hopes and fears. For childhood, as Piaget and others show, is a time of intense and vital development — of becoming and doing, and not just being — and to the extent that its tasks remain unaccomplished the child's life becomes more and more problematic. For the young child lives in a world of immediacy (the real, the important is what is tasted, touched, seen, etc.), is dependent for meanings and values on others, is constitutionally self-centered, and lives in worlds of fantasy and magic that can relate little to how things actually happen. Thus childhood religiosity — as Gordon Allport observed — is very dependent, full of magical beliefs and uncontrolled fantasy, and if carried into adult life (as it often is), it retards other aspects of development and is one of the things that gives religion, myth, contemplation, etc., a bad name.

In later childhood, one is socialized into conventional values and meanings. While this is necessary for an adequate sense of self-worth and basic orientation and for social order, all too many of us can become arrested at this stage of development and lead what Paul Tillich calls "heteronomous" lives, in which something external sets our priorities, establishes what is meaningful and worthwhile.

Thus, the dawning of adolescence is both liberating and daunting. The onset of

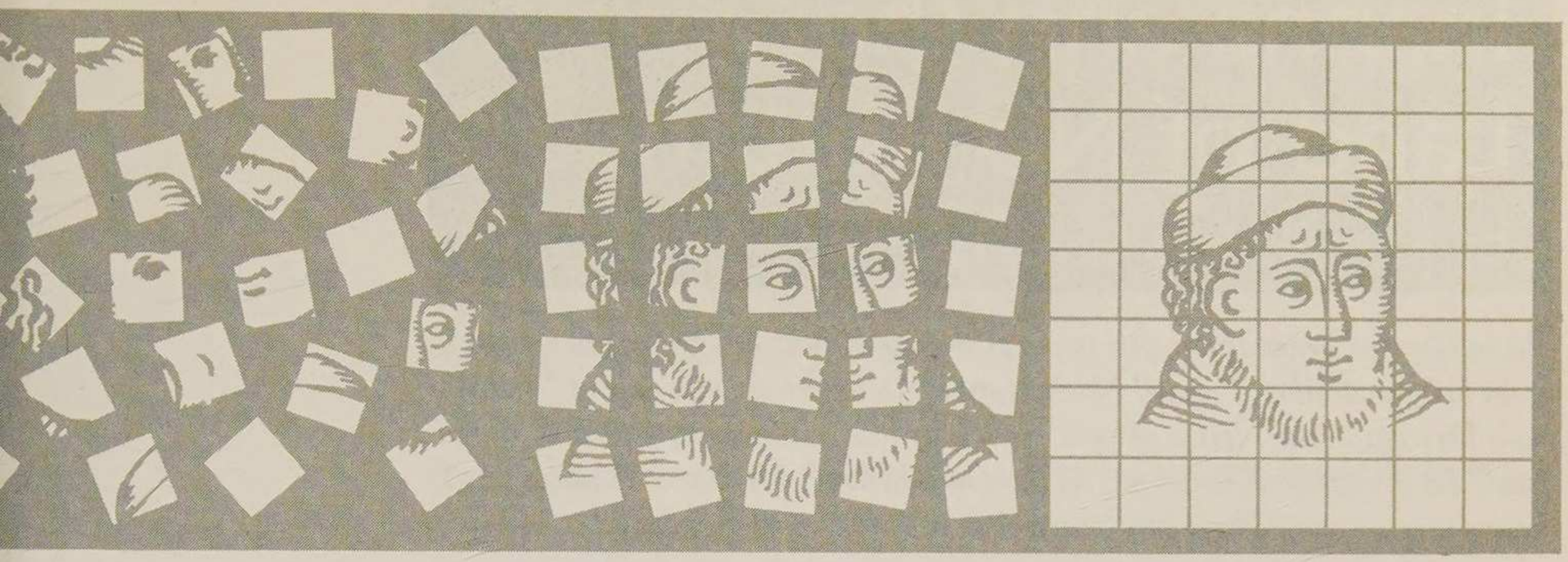


doubt, distinctions, questioning, complications, anxieties (sex, death), responsibilities of learning and work, rebellions and reconciliations, sufferings, opens the path to autonomy and self-determination. It is vital to the choice of one's own meanings and values and the discovery of one's own identity. But the dangers are many, and we can be swept up by the strong tides that begin to ebb and flow. In many areas of our life, we tend to remain adolescents: our questioning can degenerate into a kind of functional nihilism, our challenges of authority rebellions without cause, our self-discovery an ego trip. It is all too easy to give up on the work of development, to either shun or become trapped in our "dark nights," and to retreat again and again — when crises come — to the hedonism, the egocentricity, the simple-mindedness of childishness.

But if we give ourselves to the process of growth, if we take up the search for wholeness, the quest for understanding (rather than vain longing for certainty), we are set on a path that leads not back to the childhood we may nostalgically idealize but forward toward an authentic fullness and integration. Without undertaking the quest, we remain children; without committing ourselves to real growth, we can remain prodigal sons who never come home. And so there are the challenges of adulthood, in which our youthful drives and needs are to be met in achieving intimacy, personal identity, creativity. And it is not that we simply grow up to be persons who love, have convictions and a sense of being and worth, make contributions to the world's store of meaning, beauty, value, life; it is rather that as we struggle with the "tasks" of adulthood we "make" ourselves. To the degree we retreat from the demands, the sacrifices, the stretching, to that degree we are less ourselves, and, instead, narrow selves, "hollow men," empty symbols. As Tillich said, there is a courage to being.

However, it is also possible to get caught up in the tasks of householding and to make of life nothing more than sets of conventional obligations, to endure the struggle without being transformed. It can easily seem that it is the tangible fruits of action that count, and one measures one's life by its external results (whereas, in the end, what seems to matter is what sort of self one is becoming in the course of all one's activities). This attitude too is a kind of reversion to the simple pain-pleasure principles and conventional behavior of childhood. It seems that in mid-life one needs somehow to maintain the potential ideals of childhood and the drives of adolescence.

Maturity, then, is an achievement of synthesis. It is not simply a chronological stage of life. As synthesis, it represents a kind of second childhood — a wholeness, a certain perfection and completeness, a joy in being — but an "achieved" childhood, in which initial ideals, even dreams, have been integrated into real living. One is full of wonder without being naive, reverent without being a dupe, humble without being a milquetoast. It involves a centeredness, an integrity, a wisdom, a compassion that come only from traveling the full



route, the *via crucis* of the crises (as Erikson calls them) on life's way. There is objectivity, real knowing: it is the real mysteries one marvels at, the real graciousness at the heart of being that one trusts in.

This final stage of integration is one known to the great traditions of spirituality and philosophy. It is that of the elders of the tribe, the Russian *staretz* who culminates a long life of acquiring the spirit by becoming a spiritual guide, the true Master and guru, the genuine thinker who knows his field not only in its particulars but in its essences, the mature believer who has experienced the consolations and endured the dark nights to come out with tempered faith, the critic who can respond to literature with informed delight, "educated imagination" (Northrop Frye), the seeker who has found the path with heart and has learned how to will one thing. And the virtues of the child one is challenged to become turn out to be — and this seems to me Jesus's answer to our question — those of the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."(Matthew 5:3-KJV) As one searches the literature of mysticism and spiritual guidance and the life stories of those who seem to have become mature selves, the goal seems common: an integration that embraces the fullness of human potentiality that is at the same time uncomplicated, wise, joyful, and even playful. One thinks of Gandhi, Merton, Einstein, John XXIII. Or someone closer to us in capacities and circumstances, like Dag Hammarskjöld, whose *Markings* reveals a remarkable sensitivity to the rigors and rewards of full human development. He knew that "The longest journey/Is the journey inwards," and experienced something of the journey's final stage:

There is a point at which everything becomes simple and there is no longer any question of choice, because all you have staked will be lost if you look back.

Maturity: among other things, the unclouded happiness of the child at play, who takes it for granted that he is at one with his playmates.

And the achieving of maturity should not be taken as journey's end. Rather it is a new beginning, in a sense *the* beginning, and it first dawns once we set forth on the quest and are determined to live it out. As John Dunne says in *The Reasons of the Heart:* "To enter upon the spiritual adventure is...to be 'born anew,' to be 'born of the Spirit.'" And in the same book:

The individual emerges in a life...whenever the deep aloneness...that is not ordinarily touched in love and work and communal life, becomes so intense that it begins to undermine ordinary human intercourse and makes it seem unsatisfactory, when it seems no longer possible to find fulfillment in love and work and communal life. When that happens, the spiritual adventure... can begin.

"Old men ought to be explorers," T.S. Eliot tells us, and all the stages on life's way are vital journeys too, on the way to that ultimate vocation — a voyage into the unknown not unlike the newborn child's venture into life.◆

Inanna and the Land of No Return

by Rachel Nora Greene

Rachel Nora Greene wrote this poem at the age of nine in response to a request from her grandfather, Samuel Noah Kramer, to render the epic tale of "Inanna's Descent to the Nether World" in a way less "stilted, stylistic and formalistic" (as Professor Kramer put it) than he had done. He also was curious as to how the myth would be seen through the eyes of his poet grandchild.

Once there lived a goddess of love,
Her name was Inanna; she ruled the heavens above.
And would you believe her greatest desire
Was also to rule the land of death, hatred and fire;
"To my sister, Queen of the Nether World, I shall descend,
For Ereshkigal's cruel and evil ways I must mend.
I shall desert my holy temples and cities
For the world below, with its sorrows and pities.
And when I go to those dark and dismal lands,
I shall glorify my body, my feet and my hands
With jewels and garments and a gown made of lace,
And the heavens' regulations will be in their place."

To Ninshubur, her messenger, Inanna then said,
"If I am not back in three days, you will know I am dead.
If I am put to death in the land below,
All heaven above will be in deep woe.
So if death comes to me, Ninshubur, go to Enlil and weep,
'Our dear heavens' Queen we surely must keep.'
If to your request Enlil says no,
To the house of Nanna you then must go.
What you said to Enlil to Nanna you must repeat,
If Nanna says no, your mission is not yet complete.
You must then go to Enki, who will surely say yes,
For all water and food of life does Enki possess.
Then, dear Ninshubur, you will at last be through,
For that is all I shall ask of you."

When Inanna arrived at the Nether World, to the gatekeeper
she proclaimed,
"I am Queen of the Heavens, up there are my domains."
Suspiciously the gatekeeper inquired,
"Why are you here? What are your desires?"
"My sister's husband is dead, his funeral I wish to see,"
Was her false response. "Please open the gates for me."
"Pray, not so fast," he quickly replied,
Staring at Inanna with a strange look in his eyes.
The gatekeeper then left and told Inanna to wait,

"You must remain standing at that large gate."
He described to Ereshkigal the stranger's jewels and garments,
Her breast plate and bracelets and gown with bright ornaments.
Ereshkigal recognized her sister and was enraged,
An appointment for Inanna's trial was immediately arranged.
The seven judges of the Nether World soon made their decision
To have Inanna killed under Ereshkigal's supervision.
Inanna, Queen of the Heavens, was put to death then and there,
And hung by a nail with little care.

In the heavens above Ninshubur awaited her mistress's return,
When Inanna didn't come, her heart began to burn.
So to Enlil's house she went to give the word
In case he had not already heard.
To Father Enlil Ninshubur said
Exactly what her mistress had bid.
Enlil said, "Inanna is far too ambitious,
If I spoil her more, I may make her vicious."
Ninshubur then went to Nanna's house to give the word
In case he had not already heard.
To Father Nanna Ninshubur said
Exactly what her mistress had bid.
Nanna said, "Inanna is far too ambitious,
If I spoil her more, I may make her vicious."
With sadness in her heart, Ninshubur went on
Even though she thought all hope was gone.
Then by Father Enki she was received,
And Ninshubur was extremely relieved.
Her longed-for wish was at last accepted,
Said Enki, "Your ambitious mistress for years I have respected."
Then from his fingernail he brought forth dirt,
Creating two sexless creatures, quick and alert.
Enki commanded the creatures thus: "Flatter Ereshkigal
the Queen,
She who has been so cruel and fiendish and mean.
Then when Ereshkigal says, 'Ask of me anything you want,'
You must reply without tease or taunt.
'We want your sister's body so dear Inanna may awaken,
Revived by the water and food of life we have taken.'
'Oh, anything, anything but that,' she will say
And you must answer firmly, 'Our command you must obey.'"
With no more speech the creatures departed,
Dear Ninshubur was no longer downhearted.
The little creatures in their mission did succeed,
So Inanna's life could now proceed.

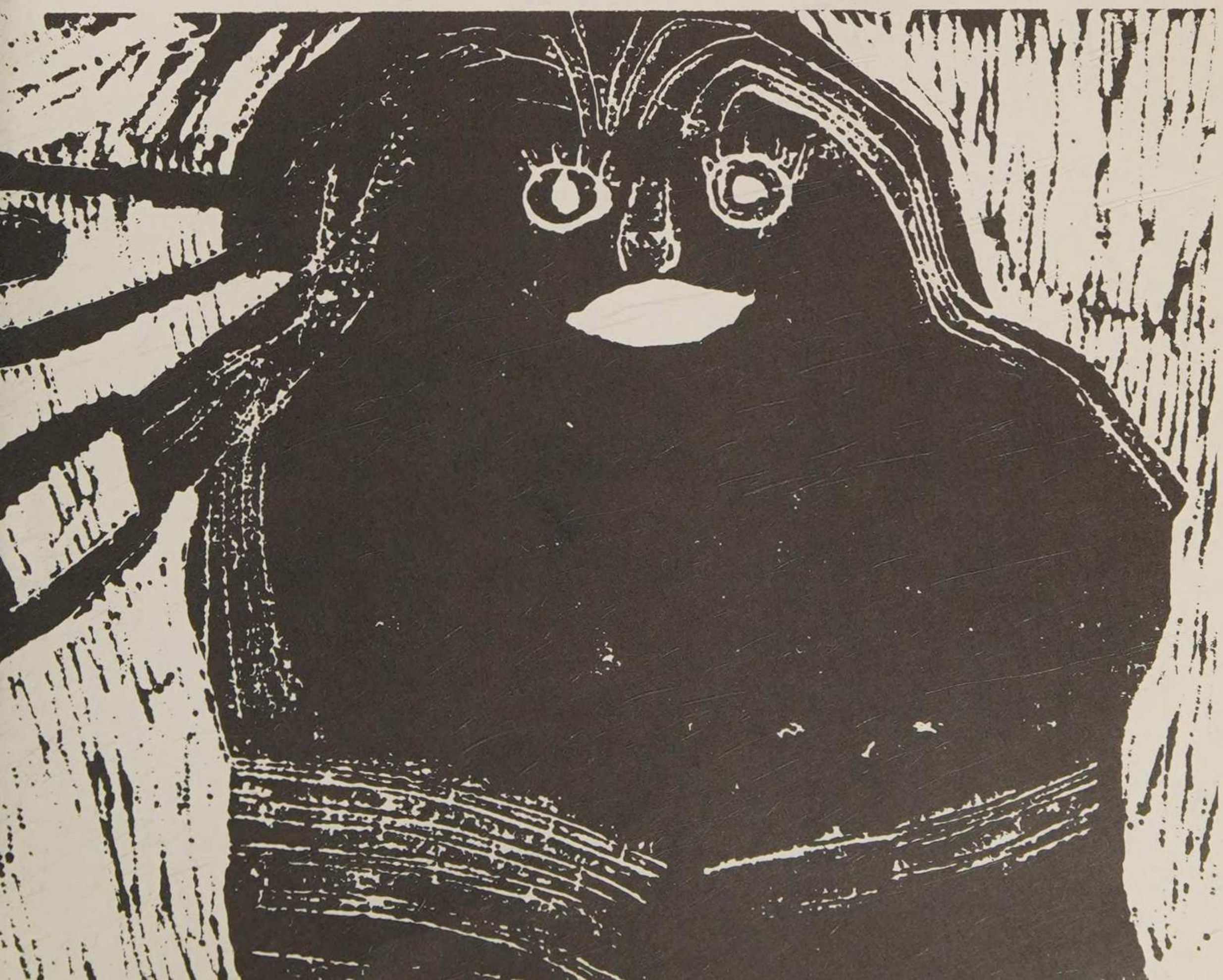
But those who descend to the Nether World can only leave it
If they find a substitute, which can be most difficult.
So accompanied by devils, Inanna ascended to find a replacement,
Although it was very hard for her to make such an arrangement.
First they met Ninshubur who began to cry,

"Why must those little devils be with you, why?"
Inanna then spoke to the devils thus: "Ninshubur loves me
through and through,
She is not the substitute for you."
They then met Inanna's son who began to cry,
"Why are those creatures with you, Mother, why?"
Inanna spoke to the devils thus: "My son loves me
through and through,
He is not the substitute for you."
They then met Inanna's second son: "Oh Mother,
let me see no more!"
He wept, covering his eyes in horror.
For the third time, Inanna spoke: "My son loves me
through and through,
He is not the substitute for you."
They next met Inanna's husband, who was making merry
and drinking wine,
To Dumuzi everything seemed perfectly fine.
Inanna turned to the devils and cried: "He does not love me
through and through,
There is the substitute for you!"

Upon hearing this, the demons seized Dumuzi and tortured him,
For Inanna's husband things looked very dim.

To Utu his brother-in-law, Dumuzi did say,
"Dear Utu, oh please be merciful, let me stay."
Having pity on him, Utu turned him into a snake,
Whereupon a path over the meadows Dumuzi did take.
To his sister's house he fled and human again,
his wounds he did show,
He told her his story and she cried out, "Oh, no!"
So when the devils at his sister's house arrived,
Dumuzi was gone, again he had survived.
But the devils then looked for him in his holy stall,
Where they found him and beat him, and that's not all.
With Dumuzi beside them they prepared to make their descent,
When his sister arrived, her strength nearly spent.
Seeing her brother who was almost dead,
She pleaded, "Take me, take me, take me instead."
The girl wept, it was a pathetic sight,
Inanna said, "Oh, you may go all right,
But there is one condition: You may go for only half the year,
The other half you must return up here.
The half she is up, Dumuzi, you are to go down,
For only then can it be the other way around."

Thus ends the story of the goddess of love
Named Inanna, who ruled the heavens above.



The Awakened Eye

by Frederick Franck

I was five years old. My mother and a friend I was expected to address as "Aunt" had taken us children to a modest little tea garden with swings and seesaws on the edge of our small town on the Dutch-Belgian border. It sported the elegant French name of "Les Champs Elysées": the Elysian Fields — Celestial Fields of Bliss...I can still see and hear the trio that was playing on the rickety bandstand: the thin, sorrowful violinist in his patent leather shoes, the bald, rotund pianist, the bosomy lady in white tulle, a moaning cello clamped between her short, plump thighs.

The other children were still swinging and seesawing when I got bored, and as mother and the pseudo-aunt, with her long nose, were absorbed in the music — which did not prevent them from chattering rapturously in whispers — I saw my chance to escape across a narrow stream, and found myself in a sun-drenched meadow. I lay down in the fragrant, swaying grass, tall enough to make me unfindable, and listened to the trio far away. Then, suddenly there was a loud zooming close to my ear and I was terrified: a velvety bee circled around my head, almost touching it.

But ignoring me, it sat down on a hairy purple flower that was so close to my head that it looked huge and vague, and started to suck...At that moment something happened: all my fear evaporated, but so did bee and sun and grass...and I.

For at that instant sunlight and sky, grasses, bee and I merged, fused, became one, and still: remained sun and sky and grass and bee and I. It lasted for a heartbeat, an hour, a year... Then, as abruptly, I was I again, but filled with an indescribable bliss — were they not Elysian Fields?

The trio was still playing the tune that I remember to this day, and I can whistle it for you anytime you wish...I had probably come as close to reality as I ever was to come in this life.

Excerpted from *The Awakened Eye* (a companion volume to *The Zen of Seeing*), to be published by Alfred A. Knopf in September, 1979.

The Sword Under the Stone

In the days when the sons of Pelops ruled much of Greece, there lived and ruled in the city of Troezen King Pittheus, son of Pelops and Hippodamia, to whom was born a daughter, the fair Aethra. She it was who gave birth to Theseus; but though some say his father was Poseidon, lord of the deep, this story says it was Aegeus, the king of Athens.

It was the Delphic Oracle who foretold the danger in store for Aegeus through his own much-beloved son; but so cryptic were the words of portent that they passed almost unheeded. But perhaps it was a vague presentiment of doom that prompted King Aegeus to warn his bride of one night to raise the son born of their union in the town of Troezen. He said to her upon the morn, "Princess, should you find yourself with child from this union, and should the child be male, I beg of you not to send him to me in Athens until he has come of age; and then armed only with my sword, and wearing my sandals. These I will leave under the sacred stone known as the Altar of Strong Zeus. Only my son will know how to lift that stone with one hand, and pluck the sword and sandals from under with the other. Until he is of that age, keep silent, speaking to no one of his origins." Such was the warning of Aegeus, and Aethra heeded his words.

Of that childhood one incident stands out to mark the nature of young Theseus. When the boy was seven, the court of Troezen was visited by the great hero Heracles, and a great feast was prepared by King Pittheus. Upon entering the banquet hall, Heracles removed the lion skin that was his cloak and flung it down. All the children of the court, thinking it alive, scattered in terror, except Theseus, who ran for an axe and returned prepared for battle.

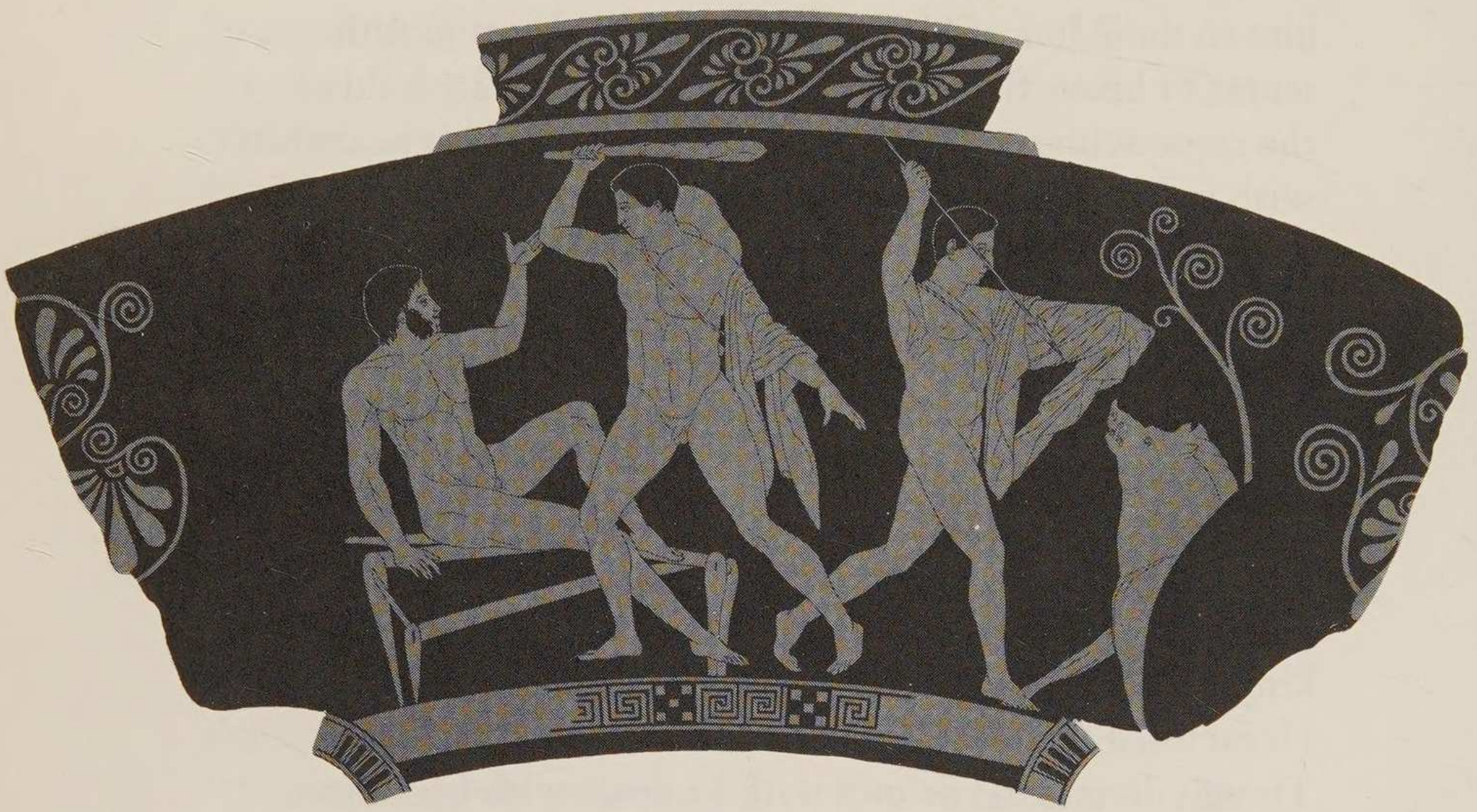
At sixteen, Theseus came into his manhood, and inquired the whereabouts of his father. Princess Aethra led

him to the Altar of Strong Zeus, and told him that the secret of his birth lay beneath the stone. Laying hold of the stone with one hand, and keeping firm in his heart his wish to know his origins, Theseus with one hand lifted the great stone, and with the other retrieved the sword and sandals left there for him. Then did the Princess Aethra inform him of his birth, and told him to set sail for Athens at once, that he might come into his inheritance.

Though the way by sea was easier, and the way by land beset with thieves and murderers, Theseus chose to go by land, and it was this choice that led him through his kingly apprenticeship. And so it was that, like his cousin Heracles, Theseus fulfilled the labors of the true hero. Those villains that he met with he dealt with like unto like: as they had dealt with travelers, so did they meet their ends.

The first challenge to Theseus was from Peiphetes, the club-bearer. Swift of foot, Theseus wrested the brazen club from his enemy's hands and destroyed him with

Theseus on his journey to his father



Theseus attacking the highwayman, Procrustes

it. Delighted with the new weapon, Theseus kept it ever at his side. Sinis the Pine-bender was next, so called because he killed his victims by bending a pine-tree to the ground, asking innocent travelers to help him. Then, releasing the top, he caused them to be flung over the cliffs. But Sinis himself was the next to fly into the sea from that high road. After this, Theseus killed the Crommyonian sow, a savage monster whose marauding had forced the farmers to leave their fields untended. Then Sciron, who made travelers wash his feet at the cliff's edge and then kicked them into the sea, was hurled to his destruction by the young hero. Cercyon the wrestler he crushed to death. At length he came to Attica, where he met Sinis' father, Polypemon, known by his surname, Procrustes. Procrustes lived by the side of the road, and invited travelers to be his guests. Two beds he prepared for the unwary, one small, the other large. To shorter

men he gave the larger bed, and then stretched them on the rack until they fit. Taller men took the shorter bed, and Procrustes lopped off as much of their legs as protruded from the end. Onto this bed Theseus forced Procrustes so that his head stuck out to be cut off by the hero.

After his conquests, Theseus came to the city of his birthright, Athens. One danger more awaited him there, this from the murderous hands of the sorceress Medea. Into the ears of King Aegeus she poured the poison of her scheming mind, saying that the young stranger who had entered the court had come to assassinate him. She so persuaded the king that he permitted her to prepare a cup of wolfsbane, distilled from the venom that dripped from the jaws of Cerberus, the triple-headed hound that guards the underworld. But when young Theseus took up the cup offered to him in false welcome, he chanced to put down his sword in such a way that the light fell upon its hilt. Then did Aegeus see the serpents entwined upon the hilt, and starting from his throne, he dashed the cup from his son's hands. The cup fell at Theseus's feet, and looking down, Aegeus saw his sandals, which he had left with Aethra years before.

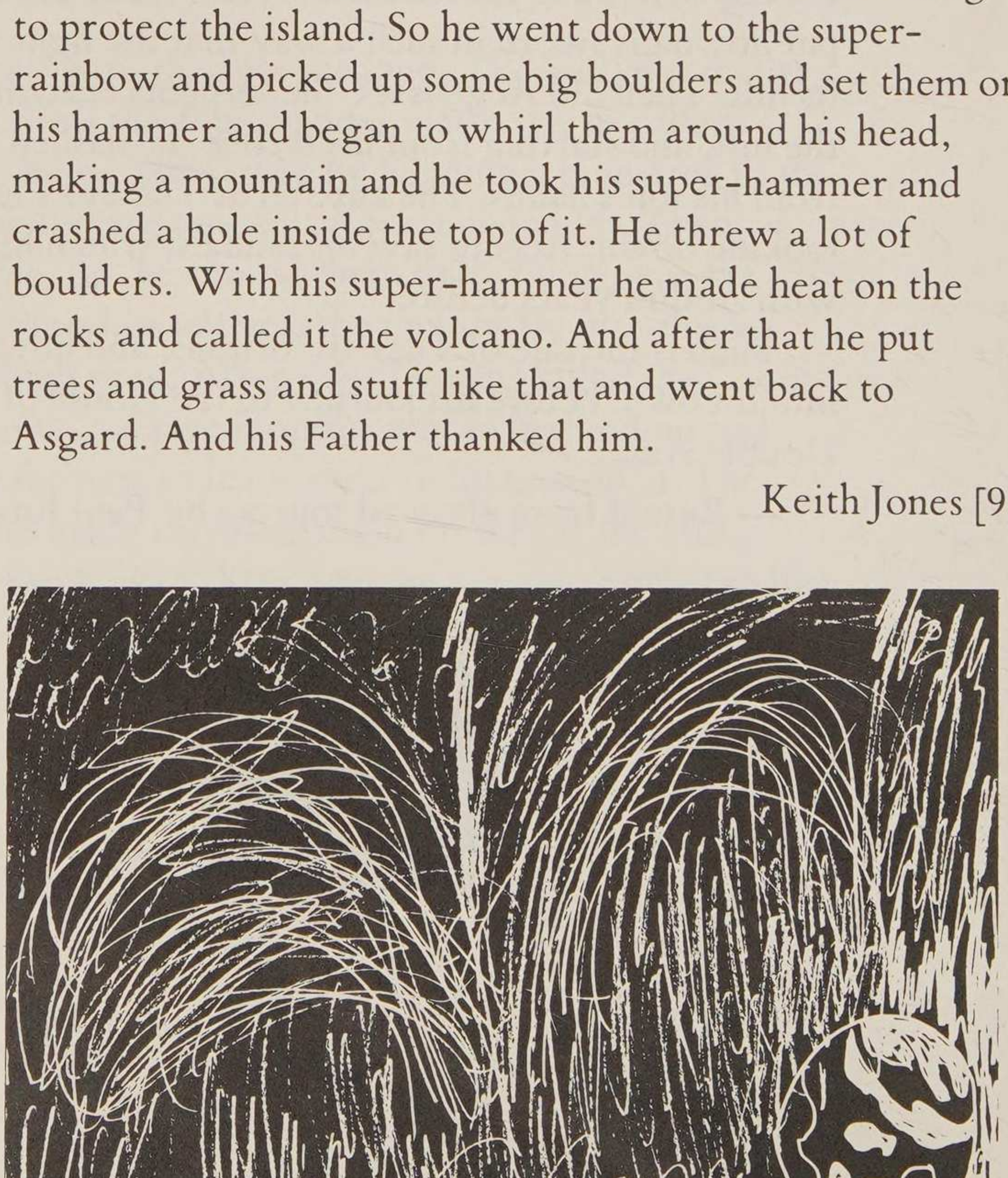
Such is the tale of Theseus' origins, and how he came into his own, before his journey to the House of the Double Axe.

— Retold from classical sources by Paul Jordan-Smith

The Strength of Thor

At First, the mother had a baby. Thor was the god of thunder and so one day, when he was old enough he put his strength to the test and found that he had a lot of strength. They sent him down to earth to battle all evil and so after he finished with earth, they sent him down once more to make an island and prove his super-strength. He began to make an island. He took his super-hammer and put a lot of boulders on it and whirled it around his head, and they flew everywhere, making an island. And after that he went back to Asgard. And after that his father Odin said that he should make something to protect the island. So he went down to the super-rainbow and picked up some big boulders and set them on his hammer and began to whirl them around his head, making a mountain and he took his super-hammer and crashed a hole inside the top of it. He threw a lot of boulders. With his super-hammer he made heat on the rocks and called it the volcano. And after that he put trees and grass and stuff like that and went back to Asgard. And his Father thanked him.

Keith Jones [9]



The First Act Repeated

by Lynda Sexson

Illustrations by Devin Sexson

I found myself last winter confronted with a request to deliver a "Christmas" talk to a group of secularized, rational-humanist Unitarians who did not presume or assume traditional modes, yet desired something special for Christmas. Following my initial amusement at our inabilities not to practice what we will not preach, I decided to make as holy a spectacle as I could. Much rhetoric called for a little drama. So, I gathered up ten children and set about to assist them in creating and improvising their own "Christmas" play, curious about what children from non-traditionalist families with seemingly schizophrenic attitudes toward holy days would devise. Secularism, I suspect, is a pretense. At the very least it is an artificial attempt to dualistically divide a holistic world. Institutions, humanistic or not, are sometimes sarcophagi, petrified flesh eaters, hiding us from the religious character of experience. But religion is made of stories, of myths and dreams which seep out of institutions and animate whatever their breath brushes. One of those authentic stories, a myth, was born in my presence in the humble straw of the "Christmas" play.

Myth cannot be defined by its archaic usages or by its exterior, formal qualities. That is, myth is not to be defined as a script for ritual or as stories about the gods. We can define myth only as the great story falling between drama and dream, a psychological structuring of the depth imagination. If we understand myth in sociological terms, or as a formation of corporate consciousness, then myth would be difficult to apprehend in this fragmented culture. If myth is to be understood as carrying a psychological/aesthetic function, as the means of binding together fragmented experience, of giving reality or form to culture, then myth, indeed, will be apprehended in contemporary manifestation of the eternal imagination.

Myth is the narrative of depth which traces its vertical story on horizontal events. It may emerge as an individual's encounter with "soul" is played out within the terms of the particular cultural context. Thus, that depth narrative may resonate with the experience of others and give cultural meaning. If the story mythically succeeds, it would transcend the culture as it gives expression to it, just as the individual's experience is transcended in its expression. The archetypal story (myth) is not *im*personal, it is deeply personal and *trans*personal. "Mind" cannot be surgically separated from the body, nor can "myth" be extracted from life's meaning.

The question, then, is not *whether* myth is possible in contemporary life, but the question is *how* myth is manifested in today's experience. The archetypes are not specific, stamped-out figures inserted as signposts into significant psychological

materials. Rather, the archetypes make up a precondition, appearing almost as a recognizable quality or dimension which may be filtered through any historical circumstance. Archetypal dimensions do not poke through like ill-fitting bones in artistic works. Myth demands the color and texture of the entire body — bones and blood and fur. The pure state of the archetypal is in whatever state we discover it. The state in which I discovered it recently was in the improvisational play of these children. Where does one begin?

At home. Since I was slightly trepidatious about the project, I decided to cheat a little and ask my own children to supply an advantageous beginning. My son, an eleven-year-old sometime dramatist, would have nothing to do with holiday pageantry. My daughter, seven, evoking similar visions of holy families, loved the idea. "Let's begin," she said calculatingly, with her eye on a good role, "with Mary and the baby Jesus." "No," said her brother, "I wouldn't be in any play with Mary and Jesus." "Well," she retreated, "at least the three kings." "No!" Again she sought compromise, "At least Martin-Luther-King." Her brother hooted at her, but she defended her historical acumen with the information that Martin-Luther-King was indeed one of the three kings who lived a Long Time Ago and said that everybody had to be nice and sit together and he came to visit the baby Jesus. Her brother told her she was dumb; I bogged down in bland thoughts about creative conflations and about how historical dramas frequently edge on excessive didacticism; and she went off to write her own play by herself. The unfinished manuscript rests at:

Mary and Baby.
Knock at door.
Who is it?
Martin Luther King. I came to visit you.
Oh good. Come in.

I report this to emphasize that although myth is made in contemporary experience it is not *inevitably* made. Just as I was desperately beginning to see "possibilities" in the script, her brother saw that there were none and finally agreed to cooperate. "Okay, you can't have Jesus, but you can have a god. I'll compromise." End of conversation. End of planning. End of the old mythological order. Nothing.

At the first meeting I bravely began with the quasi-lie that one of their company had suggested that in this play they were going to make up together there should be a god. Would anyone here like to be God? Six scoffs, two no-interests, but two enthusiastic volunteers. I immediately grasped at the straw gods and declared that both of them would be fine gods. I waited for objections, but monotheism, is, apparently, an outmoded issue.

If we live in a culture without gods, without cohesive stories validating our culture and our place within it, then what sorts of stories will we make? The same old stories will be made, the stories about being strangers to the story we already know. The little drama created by these ten children offers the suggestion that today's stories may be about fake gods, still authenticating human experience. Perhaps only fraudulent gods can be a genuine expression in such times. The making of myth in contemporary consciousness seems to demand that it will carry its own parody within it. Certainly this drama company reinforced such a thought.

The six-year-old decided he would be Buddha because there was a statue of Buddha on his mantel. The ten-year-old decided she would be the one with the thunderbolt. Without realizing it, the play was set at this point. The new gods stood up on a low table looking awkward. I asked them to begin the play. They giggled and muttered like some dull, self-reflective divinities about what it was like to be a god. Everyone became bored with their abstract theology. I suggested that since there was nothing else, they might choose to bring someone else into the play. The others were restless.

ZEUS: *Let's create something.*
BUDDHA: *What's that?*
ZEUS: *Let's make something out of these lumps of nothing* (pointing to the others, arousing laughter and interest).
BUDDHA: (Always more passive and receptive) *Okay, What?*
ZEUS: *Let's make* (prompting from future screeching angels)...*an angel.*

The play evolved in three quick, intense sessions. Additions and revisions were adapted and responded to by the entire group. However, I noticed that the work was done by individuals modeling, creating, and the group reinforcing. No one was able to follow his own whim unless it resonated with the larger group, but the group was impotent unless activated by individual inspiration.

BUDDHA: (Pause, mis-prompting from one of the older lumps of nothing attempting to be disruptive) ...*an angle?*

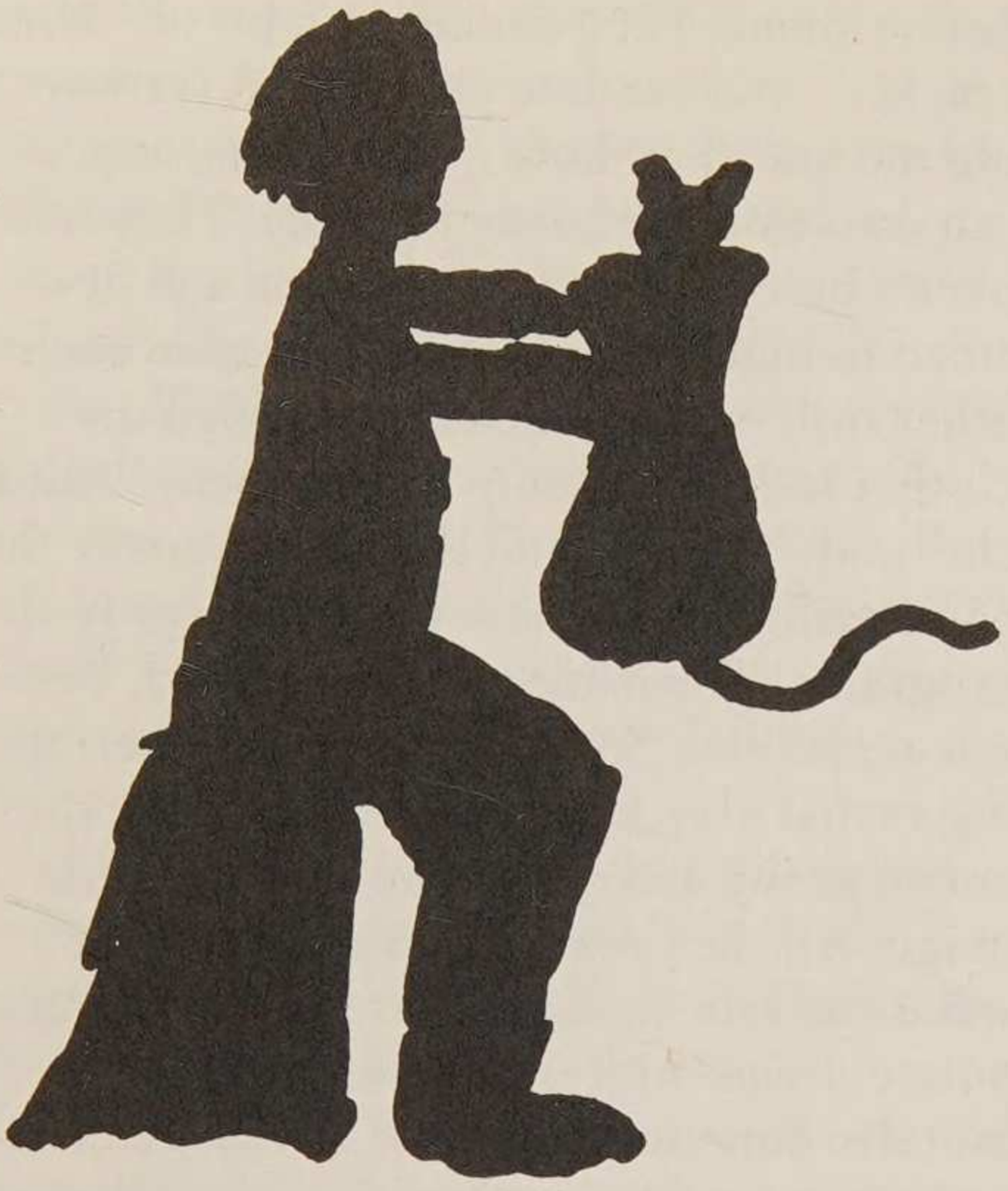
The disruption, to the initial surprise of the older wits, was always incorporated into the drama. As Buddha developed his role over the three organizing sessions, he made angles with his fingers and elbows, reminding the director, at least, of ancient, cosmographical pictures of the Creator inscribing the contours of the universe.

ZEUS: *No, an angel.*
BUDDHA: *What's an angel?*
ZEUS: *I'll show you.* (Screams, "I *am the angel.*") *Zap. Zap.* (Two angels.)

As it developed, the play opened with Zeus and Buddha onstage. Seven little lumps, as they called themselves and sometimes their drama, crawled in to music under drapery cloths of chaos, waiting for their acts of creation. The angels emerged from under their cloths and laughed. They were costumed in old nighties and foil wrapped coat hanger wings, like the multitudes of less than celestial heavenly hosts before them. They danced to a bit of "Nutcracker" and ran into each other, (renewing the question: how many *graceful* angels can dance on the head of a pin?). They fell over a bit of the stuff of creation and decided to make something. They gave each other orders and pulled and wadded the cloth. One clever lump named them "Miracle" and "Whip," and they fought over the names which were never used except in the programs. The names were accepted, but not acclaimed. Some of the really interesting verbal play was too "esoteric" for the entire group and did not go into common usage. All the great stories seem to have some esoteric qualities that fall in and out of notice. I was interested to see that these esoteric dimensions are not always later interpretations, but often part of the original textual fabric.

MIRACLE: *I'll make the head.*
WHIP: *No, I will.*

This quarrel, they happily realized, would result in the creation of the two-headed cow. A ten-year-old had decided at the outset of the project that he was unwilling to be anything but a two-headed cow, deluding himself that he would be an unworkable problem. He was then stuck with the role that he, and only he, had deter-



mined to be negative and unworkable. He was, by turns, happy and discontent with his part. It was finally his mother, as his wardrobe mistress, who had to take the most active adult part and suffered the only real difficulties of this play making. She had to help him costume himself. He wore a hooded sweatshirt which held an extra styrofoam head. The boy and the styrofoam wore matching horns and nose. And so, the first earthly beast was born.

TWO-HEADED COW: *Moo. Moo.*

The angels, doing the work of improvisational drama, which often does the work of dream, threw back the cloth, and uttered their spontaneous pun:

ANGELS: (Slapping their foreheads) *Holy Cow.*

Trying to hold center stage, they flitted on half-learned ballet steps to another lump.

WHIP: *Let's make something else.*
MIRACLE: *Let's make a boy.*
WHIP: *What's a boy?*

The pleasures of repetition were apparent. I should have realized that a creation "formula" was already in use.

MIRACLE: *Let's make legs.*
WHIP: *I'll make the hands.*
MIRACLE: *I'll make a tongue. Stick out your tongue. I'll give him a tongue like ours.*

One angel modeled her tongue while the other modeled the tongue of the boy, the divine form and the particular creation. None of the children were struck by the profoundly different scenes between their creations of cow and boy. None of them had been corrupted by the Pauline letters. Cows could have two heads, but only human beings would speak with the tongues of angels. Even Buddha seemed to feel the moment, and said with great solemnity, "They're making angel tongues." Improvisation offers the chance to perceive lively transformations of things turning into themselves and of the uncreated knitting itself into new inventions.

Boy stood up. No one in the play ever considered giving Boy anything more specific than his Everyman name. He was fourteen, tall, in bib overalls, and the other, smaller characters looked upon him and uttered sounds of approval. He blinked his eyes and became a human being: he looked around with curiosity. He asked a rapid succession of questions about everything that he saw. He asked the big questions that constitute the fundamental quest inherent in sacred texts from myths to improvisations:

BOY: *Who am I?*
ANGELS: *Boy.*
BOY: *Who are you?*
ANGELS: *Angels.*

There was obvious delight in their catechism.

BOY: *Where did you come from?*
BUDDHA: (An admission) *We made them.*
BOY: *What are you?*
ZEUS: *Gods.*
BOY: *What are gods?*
BUDDHA: *We make things.*
BOY: *Where'd you come from? Who made you?*

Pause. All the children were waiting for the answer, the air was still. But, gods

do not reveal the nature of Being so readily. In the silence and confusion, the Devil, as yet uncreated but already contriving, peeped from under his chaos blanket and prompted the gods: "You should say, 'God only knows.' " Buddha used the line and stole the show, though he had to be reminded with a nudge from Zeus' thunderbolt. They were uninhibited about giving suggestions and lines to one another. At each session of play making the characters enjoyed the double pleasures of making and watching, of "let there be" and "behold, it is good." They stepped in and out of the drama at will, but never out of the play. One of the problems with the improvisational technique, which is so rewarding to the participants, is that some of the most significant features can be lost when translated into a performance. The audience did not learn that the words came to the God by means of the Devil's not-yet mouth.

Faced with the mystery Boy did what humanity has always done.

BOY: I'm *going to make something myself.*

This, indeed, was the Creation of Man. Boy made himself by naming himself maker. The play is fabrication: the art of making and the art of lying, the art of making by lying. Homo Faber then took up one of the lump's cloths and began twisting and twirling it up into a spiral.

ZEUS: *What are you doing?* (spoken with the authority of a sister, no mere god).
BOY: *I'm making something,* (trying to think of something), *I'm making a pot.*

The pot burst out from under her cloth and screamed, "I'm not going to be a pot, I'm a cat." In the final version she wore decorated brown paper under her cloth and at the proper moment "shattered" it and emerged. The Devil, still locked in chaos, supplied her name, "Platter Puss," worked out the dialogue, and explained the etymology. Myths, of course, are filled with language play and folk etymologies which point to the sacred nature and multi-dimensions of the words of the story. Again, the Devil was the source of the language play, but hidden from the audience.

BOY: *Because you came out of a pot and turned into a cat, I will call you Platter Puss.*

The order of creation was given. The gods created by their word (zap); the angels by dance and laughter, by imitation and invention; Boy created by shaping, by imitation and hubris. The creations of humanity seem to have a transformative power of their own, and by means of the word shift their shapes, pots become cats, experience becomes poetry. Creation, in this story, moved from the word to dance and back to the word. I was very content, my mind gathering golden boughs of comparisons, when,

Enter history. The Fall. "This play isn't any good. All we do is create things. That's boring." Well, I asked, what should happen next? They were quite right. There was no story without a break in the pattern. There is no mythic dimension without depth-plunges into the meaning of humanity. Endless creation, gods begetting angels, angels begetting cows and boys, boys begetting pots, and pots begetting cats, begins to pall like priestly chronologies from the ancient Near East. Creation myths are not in the creation, but in the fall or the change. There is no birth until there is death. (The alternative title they chose for their drama was "The Beginning and the End".) There is no story until there is humor or deceit.

The gods themselves were beginning to be bored, so they made devils to take the place of angels. They went "zap...zap" and created a Devil and a Demon. (The Devil was created mostly because the Devil was begging to be a devil and promising to do something interesting to make the play better, and the Demon was created because she was little and they didn't know what else to do with her.) The Devil laughed fiendishly as he emerged and the Demon grinned — with two teeth missing.

Once on stage, though, the Devil had so many plans he couldn't think of one to put into action. It was his turn to be prompted. Zeus said that a story she had read about three wishes was good — the three wishes came from three hairs of the Devil's head. So, this bit of plagiarism was unselfconsciously welcomed. The Demon was outfitted with a pendant made of nursery scissors. The Devil supplied the exposition for the audience and bent over to have three hairs cut from his red head. The Demon was demonically literal as she agonized to cut exactly three hairs. I explained to her that for the sake of theater she could fake it and just flourish her scissors and pretend to cut hair. She could not. She cut exactly three hairs from the Devil's head.

DEMON: *Here.*
BOY: *What's this?*
DEMON: *Three wishes.*

Ah, she had made the metaphorical leap. She was after precision, but not literalism, after all. This plagiarism in the service of narrative form was the only such experience in the play. Poets have always chosen the familiar in the hope of the unknown. They plagiarized and produced a first-order experience from it. They chose the plot so that they could find out what was going to happen next.

"I've been here all this time and I'm not in the play yet," complained the one character left to emerge.

"I'll bring you in as soon as I have my wishes," said Boy, not wishing to relinquish his opportunity. He began to work on his wishes, thinking it through, as ambitiously as if there were real devils giving him real opportunities. Quite spontaneously the characters began to advise him and to seek personal favors through Boy's wishes. This was one of the most difficult moments for the director. The scene had to be paced and staged so that the actors could maintain the look of frenzy they had produced, and so that the audience could understand each character's advice or plea.

Zeus, with her Olympian mind, said that given three wishes Boy should ask for one wife, one daughter and one son. She (Zeus) was certain her advice would prevail and was self-satisfied with the tidy, pleasing conclusion she perceived she was bringing to the play. It was tempting for the director to lobby for Zeus' suggestion. It would be sure to tug at holiday sentimentality (and make up for the absence of the more holy family of Mary, Jesus and Martin Luther King). However, the other characters were suspicious of domestic happily-ever-afters, and Boy vetoed his sister's plan.

Buddha didn't care for the direction the play was taking, he seemed to feel his power, his central role on the table top was diminishing and asked Boy NOT TO WISH FOR ANYTHING. I jumped in and told him about Buddha and extended the natural direction of his plea for nonstriving and nondesire. All of the Buddhist phrases were ignored in performance, and Buddha kept his own high-pitched plea to wish for nothing in his own language and for his own reasons.

Platter Puss meowed and bounced around Boy begging for a mouse. When it occurred to her there were three wishes she begged for two mice, then three. Two-headed cow pleaded to have one of his heads removed.

The devils, those spirits of symbol-making, were the most vocal, inciting Boy to all the vices they could conjure.

At this point chaos threatened to submerge creation again (cosmic and dramatic). The director was searching for a way out, but they found it themselves. The two-headed cow and the cat were most irritating and strident, hanging on to Boy and screaming at him. He tossed them backward and said (to fellow actors more than to characters), "I wish you animals would shut up."

The Devil squealed and said, "That's your first wish — the animals have to shut up." Cat and cow obeyed as though they had been struck dumb by some Great Power. The director was nearly silenced, too, to see a play save itself — at least to

quiet itself down. Yet, I could not resist pointing up the etiological message to the actors. "That must be why animals can't talk today." There was a flicker of interest from the children, but they were more interested in wishes. With the animals silenced the gods were able to hear their own commands again. Zeus and Buddha became so overbearing in their demands on the human soul that Boy exclaimed to them, "You gods get out of here." The Devil once more erupted in demonic laughter, "Your second wish, your second wish, the gods have to go."

Boy attempted to argue with this younger child. He had not intended that statement as a wish, "Wait a minute, you're counting things as wishes when I don't mean them as wishes," never realizing that he was playing his part just as a thousand stories played it out. Neither did he realize that no younger child is going to give up supernatural power so easily. So the Devil's decision prevailed with the cast and the gods went out, stage left. I unforgivably stopped the progress of the play again to tell them about *deus absconditus*.

The Devil, always clever and conscious that no one really cares about the death of god, playful and distracting, got us back in the mood with, "That's your second wish, just ONE left." Boy realized that he had wasted two wishes, and we reached that in-

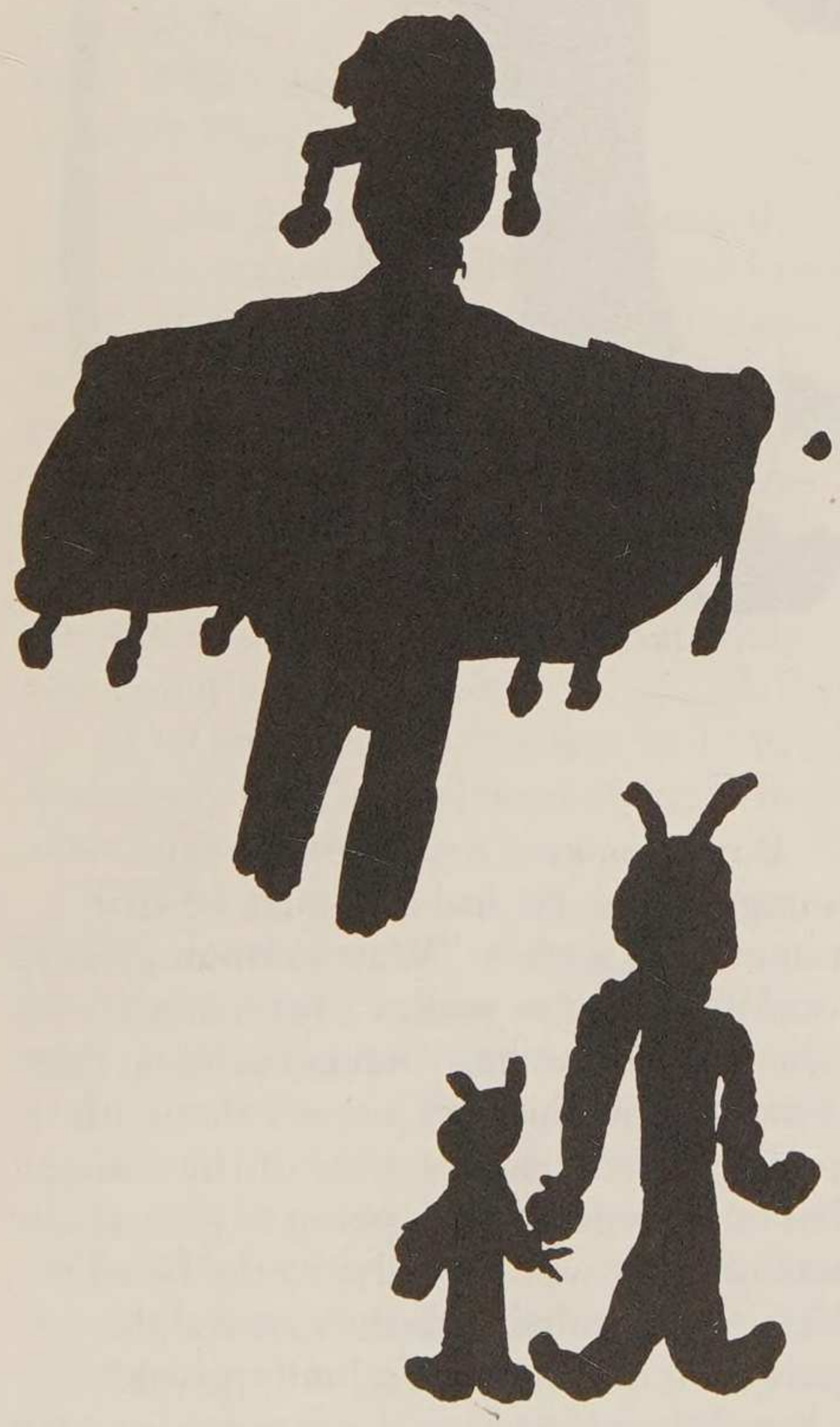
evitable point that always happens in these fairy tales, the lesser myths of luck and mismanagement of magic. Boy was feeling foolish and pressured by the Devil and the Demon on either side of him, threw his hands to his head and moaned in a plea to the director, "I wish I had time to figure this out." The devils went wild, wild enough for me to channel it into some sort of dance for the scene.

DEVIL: *You wished for Time. That's your third wish.*

"Time? How would we do that?"

"Is that me? Do I finally get to come into this play?" asked the last man out.

"Yes."



"Okay, I'll be Time and wear a big cloak and a lot of clocks on me."

BOY: *Okay, Time, come in and end this play.* [!]

When the drama was performed before the audience the word "time" caused a sudden, palpable change in mood. The characters stood silently as Time entered to music, flourishing his cloak.

TIME: (As lugubriously as he was able), *Did you call? It's TIME.*

He explained to the others that time can make one die. He touched the animals and they fell over dead. In the final version they crawled back under their cloths to become "lumps" again. He explained to Boy that time would make him old. In the actual presentation Time wrapped his cloak quickly around Boy's head and whipped a white wig and beard on him. Boy backed up, felt his face and groaned, "What's the matter with me?"

TIME: *You made time, you wished for time, so you have to die.*

BOY: *I'm old. I'm going to die.*

The moment was as poignant as when Gilgamesh sat down to weep. Then, the director, like a priestly gloss, asked what good things Time was bringing. Time stood there, ticking off nothing. So with the animals silenced and dead, the gods banished, the devils once more began to furnish answers, now for Father Time. They said time is needed to bake a cake, for music, for doing plays, etc.

Apparently, too, for boredom. Time interrupted them and said, "And time for plays to end." Later, before the audience, the cliché was interpolated, "And time for all good things to come to an end." Imaginal time and space, once manifested into ordinary dimensions, does not, of course, permit conclusions but continues to enhance the creation of consciousness. After the performance Zeus wore her painted stars on her face all day long, masking her ordinary self. She had rediscovered the ways we mingle fictions in order to arrive at truths.

Theater's first act is to reproduce the FIRST ACT. The play is always a divine dis-

guise reflecting creation by creating reflections. The masquerade divines realities. But in all of my experience with adults in improvisational drama the world was never created. The performances have been metaphysical, frequently archetypal and mythic, but never a Hymn to Creation. These children, both by accident and design, began at the beginning and brought it to one of many endings. Their experience of myth making would not be ours. Part of contemporary existence is knowing that although we can't make up a new story, each time we tell the story it will be different. We cannot stop making myths any more than we can stop inventing ourselves.

Their myth was not merely the emergence of ego — creation and the fall in the simple sense — nor the validation of community — corporate ego. Their myth was more; it was what myth always is, and it did what myth always does, it merged depth and daylight and bestowed a new order to the chaos of both. Myth is a symbolic narrative which gives order to chaos, truth to tales, and the fancy of their un-Christmas play did just that.

There is no doubt that the play functioned to create and unite a comunity of players, although it did much more. They felt positive about themselves, respected one another, asked for more — to be continued.

As for ritual, the companion of many myths, the kids continue to request *another* play. Our ritualist repetitions are acted out in uniqueness, invention and spontaneous laughter. To achieve the mythical in the postmodern age is not to imitate or attempt to capitulate to preconscious forms. It is to bring the fullness of conscious experience from depth awareness.

The modern age determined its difference from the past by somehow attempting to sever contact with depth. The age we are entering now is not so existential, nor so fragmented. We are coming into a time in which we can be at once archetypally attuned, existentially conscious, aesthetically sensitive, and religiously awakened.

The *myths* of the postmodern age may resemble children's play: archetypal and comic, ritualistic and spontaneous. Comic self-consciousness is one of the significant ways that our contemporary myth making is manifested. It is the soul that laughs, and laughter is created when depth makes mockery of time and when time makes fun of the unconscious.

God and Moses are no longer responsible for the Hebrew canon, yet the antiquated notion persists that myth must be more than the work of human, articulate, creative individuals assisted by their communal experience. When Yahweh wrote the Ten Commandments with his own finger, myths were the spontaneous outflow of societies that were witness to such an event. As our perspectives on the stories change, our perspectives on how stories are made change. Stories and the making of them are a double-helix structure. To untangle them is to damage their life force. The making of the story is the telling of the story, the retelling is making it new. Myths in our time are likely to be ephemeral, improvised.

The cast of wonderfully individualistic gods and creatures meshed and merged. Everyone knew the structure and perceived the need for it. At play we are most conscious, clever, sharp, yet most deeply unconscious and playing out. The playing of this group was at once new and ancient. If we are to find myth in contemporary times it is not a story without contemporary consciousness, but rather a story which creates from timeless patterns and contemporary wit. Dreams are made up of the strange and the familiar. History, like myth, is made of metaphor. They are both made of essentially aesthetic patterns. Stories are made by time encountering the gods.

This year I will direct another ten-minute epic. I anticipate discovering what I can't quite remember now — what comes next. ◆

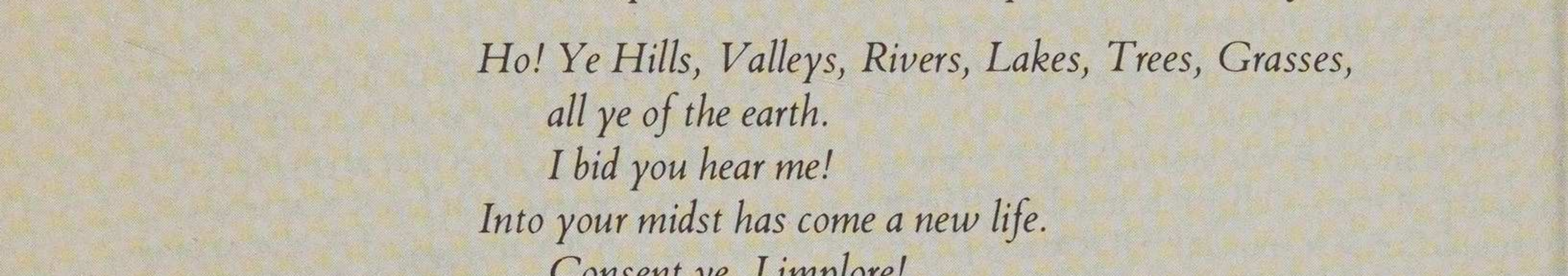
ARCS

"Grown men may learn from children...

Ho! Sun, Moon, Stars, all that move in the heavens,
I bid you hear me!
Into your midst has come a new life.
Consent ye, I implore!
Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the first hill!

Ho! Ye Winds, Clouds, Rain, Mist, all ye that move in the air,
I bid you hear me!
Into your midst has come a new life.
Consent ye, I implore!
Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the second hill!

Ho! Ye Hills, Valleys, Rivers, Lakes, Trees, Grasses,
all ye of the earth.
I bid you hear me!
Into your midst has come a new life.
Consent ye, I implore!
Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the third hill!



...things which older people miss."

The world goes round without a sound
the world is like a never-ending top
nobody knows what makes it go
nobody knows what makes it stop
maybe if it goes around two million times
then maybe it will need another wind.

—Anonymous [8]

Note: The title of ARCS *comes from the words of Black Elk.* [1]

Ho! Ye Birds, great and small, that fly in the air,
Ho! Ye animals, great and small, that dwell in the forest,
Ho! Ye insects that creep among the grasses and burrows
in the ground.
I bid you hear me!
Into your midst has come a new life.
Consent ye, I implore!
Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the
fourth hill!

Ho! All ye of the heavens, all ye of the air, all ye of the earth,
I bid you all to hear me!
Into your midst has come a new life.
Consent ye, consent ye all, I implore! Make its path smooth —
then shall it travel beyond the four hills!

— Prayer from Omaha Indian
Ceremony for the Newborn[2]

There is all different kinds of time. When you don't have anything to do or you don't like what you're doing then time is slow. But when you are having a good time, time is fast. Time is different for some people than others. So clocks only tell one kind of time. That kind of time isn't very accurate. Because say you are going to the zoo. You are having a real nice time. Then it's time to go. On the clock it says it's been three hours, but for you it was only fifteen minutes. Waiting time: say it's a month until Christmas, you can't wait. It seems like its taking millions of years. Finally it's Christmas, after it's over it seems like it was only a day that you waited.

— Christopher Renna [8]

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!...

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!...

Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea

The days go by. They float past you, very lightly, except the ones that have gravity. They're heavy. When they finish they go down into a dark hole. They stay there until they get clean, and then they come up again and start floating past you. Then it starts all over again. It never ends.

— Matthew Myerhoff [4]

I don't know when I grow,
I'm always with myself.
I'm not mad when I'm bad,
I'm always with myself.
I can't see that I'm me,
I'm always with myself.

Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

— *William Wordsworth,*
"Intimations of Immortality from
Recollections of Early Childhood" [3]

Whatever else the child may suffer from, it does not suffer from remoteness of life, normally... it is fully alive, and that is why people, thinking back to their own childhood, long to have that naive vitality which they have lost in becoming grown-up. The child is an inner possibility, the possibility of renewal.

— *Marie Louise von Franz* [4]

It's strange that you change,
You're always with yourself.

— *Gwen Miller* [7]

I am an eternity of myself
But I change myself even
if I don't
Know who I am. Can
somebody
Tell me? No? I have to
find out
Who I am. I am a mystery.

— *Paula Litshauer-Tischler* [11] [9]

My youngest grandchild uses silence as well as he does sound. He is consummate in making soft, confiding noises that bind the heart of the hearer to him. But for long periods he prefers to keep his own counsel. Then he looks forth on the world unblinking, unhurried, and with a dignity that should be the rite of Kings.

At times he gazes at me without interest; above self-doubt he yawns, a wide, slow, complete and uncovered yawn. He removes his gaze from me so that I wonder if I was seen, if I was present. With grave deliberation he discovers a hole in the arm of his chair so small that no one else could have had the calm to take it in, and he gives it his undivided attention. He gives all of himself to that hole which just fits the tip of his minute first finger, and I know that all hope of further conversation with him is over. I also know that I have been in the presence of perfect naturalness, and I feel chastened and uplifted.

— *Florida Scott-Maxwell* [5]

I am a diamond necklace,
Dancing on a cloud.
I am the biggest bumble bee,
Going around stinging
everybody.
I am the biggest snake,
Squeezing everybody that
comes near me.
I am an opened door going
on forever.

— *Denise Varletta [11]* [10]

Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime.
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see
Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time.

— *William Shakespeare, Sonnet III* [6]

He hath brought me forth His son in the image of His eternal fatherhood, that I should also be a father and bring forth Him.

— *Meister Eckhart* [7]

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

When I was a baby and a little child, I cried so much because everyone had their doors so closed. It took me a while to get used to living in a place where the doors were so closed.

When I'm walking down the stairs at school, I don't think about anything else. I just walk down the stairs.

— *Simon Firestone* [8]

The Feeling that I just learn today that feelings is joy, sad, glad, and sorrow. With a touch of tomorrow. And you will that you have feeling.

— *Olivia Arthur* [8]

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.

— From Psalms 127 and 128 (KJV)

To my mother I am a flower standing next to her. She never lets me out of her sight.

To my father I am a bed always sleeping. He stands next to me so no one can hurt or harm me.

To myself I am a boat sailing the seas.

— Alisa Meilik [9] [11]

There is something in my stomach that knows everything. And that's what magic is.

— Christopher Corthay [6]

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

— Matthew 18: 1-6 (KJV)

Sometimes I hear voices inside me but no words are coming out of my mouth. It's not quite like thinking. It's all the voices talking. There's the BIG voice. That's my head. There's the little voice. That's my heart. The big voice is the daddy, the little voice is the mommy. They're married to each other. Sometimes they talk to each other. Sometimes they all talk at once. That's confusing. When my feet talk, the voice is so small that you have to get your ears down to the floor to hear it.

God is the grass. His skin is the grass. He is all the things you say he made.

— Matthew Myerhoff [4]

So too, in my lessons with the Child. When I try to articulate what I know, I stumble suddenly on what, till that moment, I did not know. There are times when it comes strongly upon me that he *is the teacher, and that whatever comes new to the occasion is being led slowly, painfully, out of* me.

We are moving in opposite directions, I and the Child, though on the same path. He has not yet captured his individual soul out of the universe about him. His self is outside him, its energy distributed among the beasts and birds whose life he shares, among leaves, water, grasses, clouds, thunder — whose existence he can be at home in because they hold, each of them, some particle of his spirit. He has no notion of the otherness of things.

I try to precipitate myself into his consciousness of the world, his consciousness of me, but fail. My mind cannot contain him. I try to imagine the sky with all its constellations, the Dog, the Bear, the Dragon and so on, as an extension of myself, as part of my further being. But my knowing that it is sky, that the stars have names and a history, prevents my being the sky. It rains and I

NOTES

1. *"Grown men may learn from very little children for the hearts of little children are pure, and, therefore, the Great Spirit may show to them many things which older people miss."* From The Sacred Pipe, Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux, *recorded and edited by Joseph Epes Brown (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953).*

2. *Alice C. Fletcher and Francis La Flesche,* The Omaha Tribe *(Washington, D.C.: ARBAE 27th, 1905-1906), quoted by Peggy V. Beck and A.L. Walters in* The Sacred *(Tsaile, Arizona, Navajo Nation: Navajo Community College, 1977).*

3. *From* The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, *edited by Thomas Hutchinson and Ernest de Selincourt (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950).*

4. *Marie Louise von Franz,* The Problem of the Puer Aeternus *(New York: Spring Publications, 1970).*

5. *Florida Scott-Maxwell,* The Measure of My Days *(New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1968, 1978, copyright © Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.).*

6. *From* The Complete Works of Shakespeare *(New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1936).*

say, it rains. *It thunders and I say,* it thunders. *The Child is otherwise. I try to think as he must:* I am raining, I am thundering, *and am immediately struck with panic, as if, in losing hold of my separate and individual soul, in shaking the last of it off from the tip of my little finger, I might find myself lost out there in the multiplicity of things, and never get back.*

But I know now that this is the way. Slowly I begin the final metamorphosis. I must drive out my old self and let the universe in. The creatures will come creeping back — not as gods transmogrified, but as themselves. Beaked, furred, fanged, tusked, clawed, hooved, snouted, they will settle in us, re-entering their old lives deep in our consciousness. And after them, the plants, also themselves. Then we shall begin to take back into ourselves the lakes, the rivers, the oceans of the earth, its plains, its forested crags with their leaps of snow. Then little by little, the firmament. The spirit of things will migrate back into us. We shall be whole.

Only then will we have some vision of our true body as men.

— *David Malouf*[8]

7. *From* Meister Eckhart, A Modern Translation, *by Raymond Bernard Blakney (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1941).*

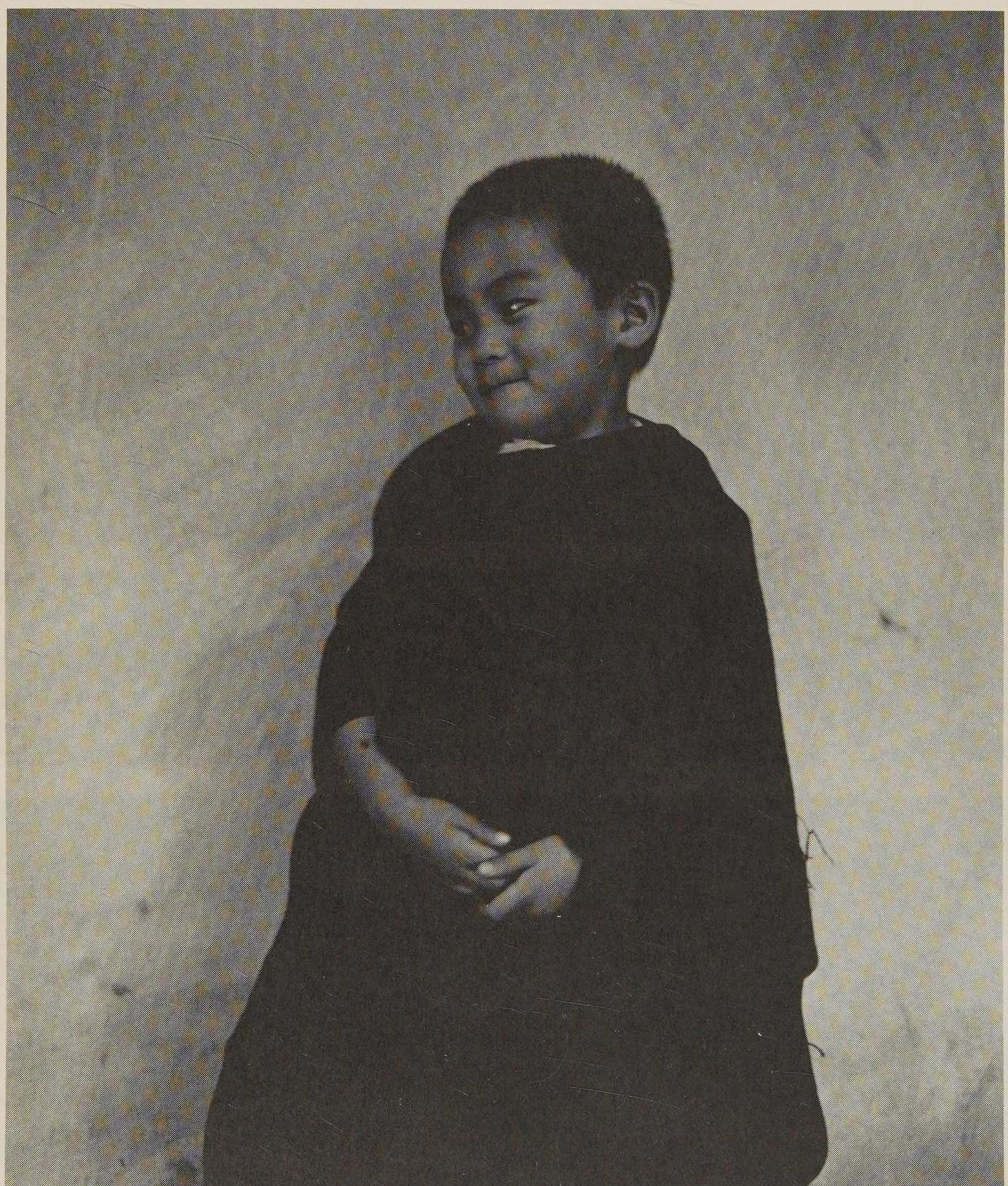
8. *David Malouf,* An Imaginary Life *(New York: George Braziller, 1978. Copyright © 1978 by David Malouf. Reprinted by permission of the author and his agent, James Brown Associates, Inc.).*

9. *From* Listen to Us! The Children's Express Report, *edited by Dorriet Kavanaugh (New York: Workman Publishing. Copyright 1978 by Dorriet Kavanaugh. Reprinted by permission of the publisher).*

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

THE CHILD INCARNATE



by Lobsang Lhalungpa

The concept of the reincarnation of the creator and the rebirth of his creatures is very ancient. Although both reincarnation and rebirth share the same principle of successive existential emergence, the two differ insofar as the levels of their being, purpose, and functions are concerned.

Hindu theology speaks of the ten incarnations of the God (Vishnu) as being operators of the divine scheme to redirect those creatures who tend to recede farther away from their creator. Incarnations therefore arise from the highest source, the God, whose creatures do not possess such capacity.

As for the Buddhist tradition, incarnations originate from Enlightened Minds who, in turn, come from ordinary human intellects. As the saying goes: "Butter originates from milk, Buddhas originate from sentient beings." Incarnations are the result of man's consciousness-elevation and mastery of spiritual faculties. Every incarnate man or woman is believed predestined to play a role in shaping the spiritual destiny of humanity.

The story of incarnations in Tibet is an essential part of what the tradition describes as a cosmic scheme of Enlightened Minds. From their ultimate psychical state arise spiritual manifestations and human incarnations setting in motion such an unending fission.

Nonetheless, human beings cannot and must not be helpless spectators, for they also are capable of similar attainment and similar roles. Every ordinary man and woman possesses higher spiritual potential. The pacifying of self-delusion and inner distortion through moral discipline and intellectual transformation are the basic practical steps towards the realization of transcendent wisdom and boundless compassion.

Above: The enthronement of Choling Rimpoche at Chogan, a Tibetan settlement in India.
Opposite: Choling Rinpoche, Kagyu sect.

These enlightening processes must further be extended to serving sentient beings to the limit of one's capacity and level of attainment. Cosmic sentient beings are to be looked upon by every initiate as a challenging field to work in, if only through expanding aspiration and ever-renewed attempts.

Before dealing with child-incarnations it is perhaps necessary to make a brief reference to the Buddhist concept of rebirth, the existential counterpart of the incarnation theory. Central to the belief in rebirth is the idea of an individual stream-consciousness. As an unceasing flux of primal spiritual energy, it acts as a concurrent link with the new body conceived in the mother's womb. The nature of rebirth is closely linked with, or is the effect of, past thoughts and deeds. Rebirth is thus an essential part of the natural law of causality. Even reincarnations are subject to the cycle of birth, decay, disease and death. Unlike ordinary sentient beings, incarnations are considered capable of steering the ship of their preconceived destiny and of fulfilling their spiritual commitment.

Tibetans are fascinated by stories of incarnate children, as found in Buddhist literature and the oral tradition. The first child-incarnation was Prince Siddhartha, the historical Buddha. According to Buddhist tradition the source of this incarnation was a Bodhisattva who — through many successive incarnations — sought ways of liberating sentient beings from their existential miseries. His immediate predecessor was Dampa Togkar, a celestial ruler of the Joyful Heaven in this "Dauntless Universe" (Mejik Jigten). Perhaps the traditional story is worth repeating both for its spiritual significance and for its cosmic implication.

The celestial ruler had foreseen the time to reincarnate himself in human form so that he might fulfill his past vow to guide humanity towards spiritual emancipation during that age of crisis and conflicts. Dampa Togkar crowned the Bodhisattva Maitreya — his celestial companion — as the regent.

Dampa Togkar was reborn as Prince Siddhartha in the land of the roseapple tree (Zambudippa) on a full moon day (in 563 B.C.). An old ascetic read the child's bodily signs: "He will be an extraordinary monarch if he chooses to pursue the worldly life. Or else he will be a great teacher of humanity who will show the path of inner peace." This was the Buddha!

The little Prince Siddhartha showed many unusual qualities. His compassion embraced not only humanity but all sentient beings. He was deeply concerned not only with the conditions of human life but also with man's inner delusion. His intellectual perception and creativity were focused on the deeper roots of existential miseries.

Since then a vast number of great men and women have been recognized as being reincarnations of various Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Reincarnation as an institution began in Tibet in the beginning of the twelfth century with Dusum Khenpa, the first Karmapa (1110-1193), and the first of the incarnate Lamas (Tulkus). There have been sixteen successive reincarnations of this Lama right up to the present, the sixteenth Karmapa, now living in India.

Dusum Khenpa was born during a period of Buddhist renaissance in Tibet when monasteries and nunneries were springing up everywhere. This was a most opportune time for strengthening the growing lineage of extraordinary teachers.

In 1110, the iron/tiger year, a child was born to a deeply religious couple in eastern Tibet. Growing up, the boy amazed everybody with his intelligence, compassion and extrasensory perception. He was able to reveal events of the forgotten past or the unforeseeable future.

Recognizing his great spiritual potential, his parents sent him away for monastic training. In the course of his religious studies he became a disciple of many great Lamas. Before long he was hailed not only as a great teacher but as the living incarna-

tion of the Bodhisattva Avaloketesvara (the adept who enbodies boundless compassion). Being the foremost disciple of the Incomparable Gampopa, he became the founder of the Karma Kagyu branch of Tibetan Buddhism. Dusum Khenpa left a secret will giving the details of his reincarnation so that his disciples might find him without doubt or difficulty. He died at the age of eighty-four.

This practice of predicting the birthplace, names of parents, etc. was repeated by every successive Karmapa up to the fifteenth. The present Karmapa was found according to the exact predictions of his predecessor.

Each child-incarnation of Karmapas bore many sublime qualities. Among their common characteristics were extraordinary spiritual power, vision and enlightened attainment. The present sixteenth Karmapa is the living embodiment of all these.

The most fascinating and intriguing of the incarnation stories is that of the Dalai Lamas. The first of the fourteen successive incarnations was the great Gedundrub (1391-1474) who was one of the foremost disciples of the Incomparable Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), the founder of the Gelukpa order.

Each child-Dalai Lama was discovered through a prophetic will, oracular guidance and observation of extraordinary personal qualities. The search process was diversified during the period of discovering the thirteenth and fourteenth Dalai Lamas. Prophetic visions from the sacred lake at Chokhorgyal and the ability of each child-candidate to remember his past life in a number of ways began to play a crucial role.

Thus, for instance, the thirteenth Dalai Lama (1876-1933) did some strange things years before he died, but they seemed so ordinary that nobody then had the slightest sense of their prophetic significance in respect to His Holiness' death and the installation of his succeeding incarnation.

In 1920, twelve years before his death, the Dalai Lama ordered the chief artist to draw a blue bird on the west wall of the Potala Palace and a white dragon on the east wall. Between the two was a set of stairs leading to his private chambers. The officials and artists engaged in the renovations of the Potala Palace thought this idea was very strange. They felt that it was neither relevant to the artistic theme nor to the formal pattern of the mural. After nearly two decades the prophetic significance began to emerge as events of major importance unfolded before them.

The blue bird was seen to signify the water/bird year (1933) when the thirteenth Dalai Lama died. The western wall symbolized a westerly direction — the direction of Norbu Lingka Palace — where he died. The color blue is synonymous with water. The white dragon signified the iron/dragon year (1940), the year of the official installation at the Potala Palace of his reincarnation, the fourteenth Dalai Lama. The eastern wall seemed to suggest eastern Tibet where the new Dalai Lama was born.

The first stage of the search for his successor began with an extended period of national prayers in monasteries, nunneries, private and public shrines, and homes. A special prayer was composed by the Regent Reding, a great Incarnate Lama. The determination of the general direction of the new incarnation's birthplace was made through consultations with great Lamas and state oracles. Even the personnel of the various search parties was chosen by means of divination and the oracle. Each group was headed by a great Lama who was accompanied by several officials. And each search party sent preliminary information on possible boy-candidates. At an early age, candidates from the south were treated as "remote possibilities," the government having had many indications and signs of the east being the true direction.

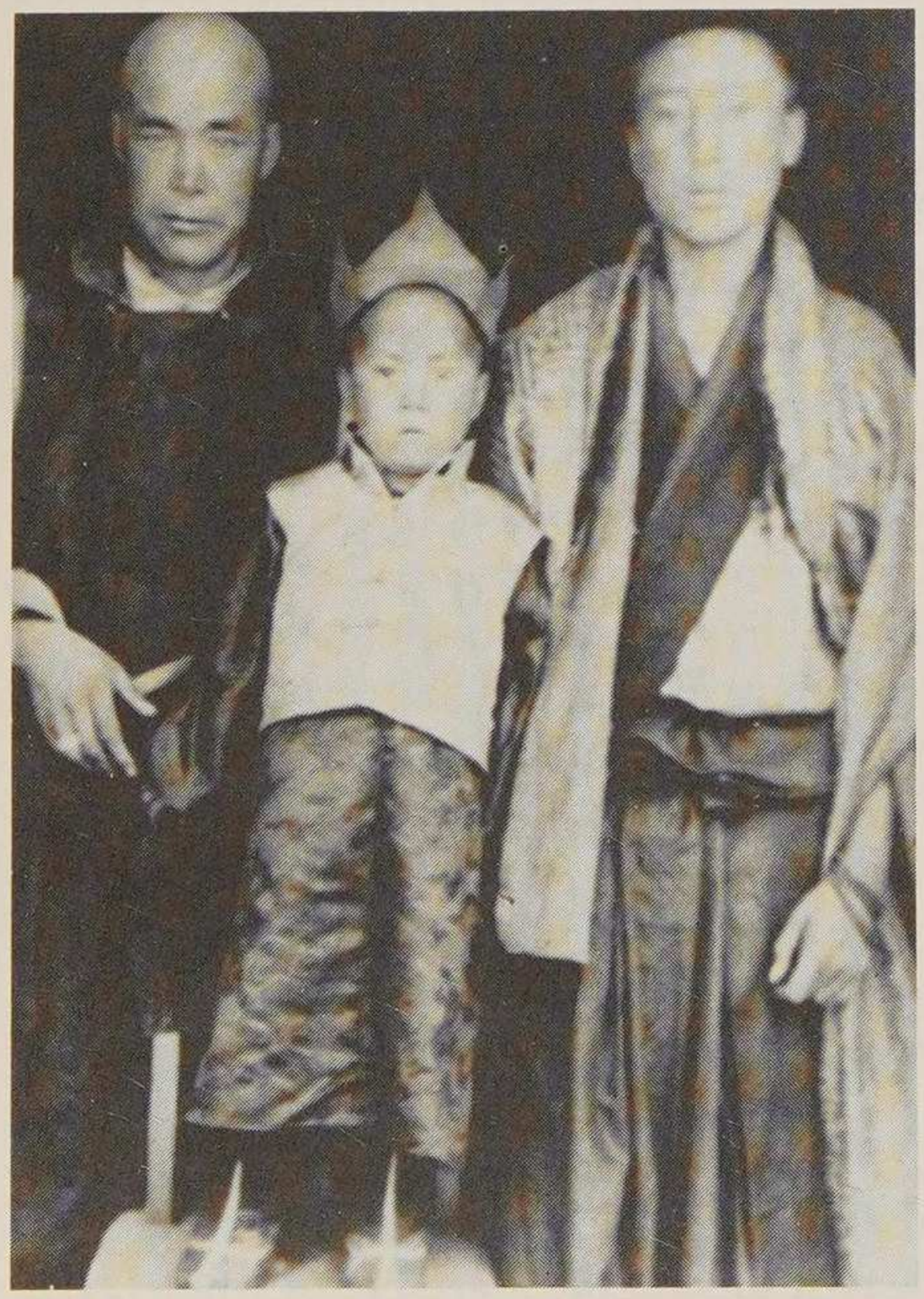
Efforts were now being directed towards pinpointing a specific region, place and family. In an essentially mysterious endeavor such as the search for a child-Dalai

Lama, there was an even more mysterious tradition, namely to obtain a crucial prophetic guidance from a sacred lake called "The Goddess' Soul" (Lhamoi Latsho) situated at Chokhorgyal in southeastern Tibet, some six days' journey from Lhasa. The lake had been consecrated by Gedun Gyatsho, the second Dalai Lama (1476-1542). So great an importance was attached to this that the Lama Regent himself was persuaded to undertake the journey. The Regent had been a most extraordinary child-incarnation himself who had given awe-inspiring examples of his mind power.

Religious services were conducted by the Lamas for several days, worshipping Palden Lhamo, the female guardian of the Buddhist faith, while the Regent himself went into meditation and watched the lake. What he saw was recorded in secret personal notes which were presented to the cabinet and the prime minister.

Apparently the images observed were as clear as mirror reflections. The Regent saw three Tibetan letters: A, KA, and MA. The next vision consisted of a three-storied monastery, the top floor of which had blue tiles on the outside and was covered by a golden roof decoration. From the east side of the monastery a white road led straight to the base of a hill and to a cottage with a blue roof.

The child-Dalai Lama after passing the personal test, with his father (L.) and his brother Taktsher Thubten Norbin (R.).



The letter "A" was said to symbolize the Amdo region of Tibet (where the child-incarnation was to be found), "KA" seemed to indicate Kubhum Monastery in eastern Tibet and "MA" was an indication of another famous monastery nearby.

The search party was able to identify this monastery with the great Lamasery of Kubhum and the blue-roofed cottage with the home of the Taktsher family in the Amdo region of eastern Tibet. The son of this family was to be recognized as the fourteenth Dalai Lama.

The four members of a search party from Lhasa, in disguise, were accommodated by this family in keeping with the practice of giving shelter to pilgrims and monks. The head Lama Ketsang of Sera Monastery, who wore servant's clothing and was staying in the servant quarters, wore around his neck the personal rosary of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. The two-year-old boy of the Taktsher family came and sat next to him, greeting him as enthusiastically as if he had always known him. Touching the rosary the boy said, "I would like to have it." The "servant" replied, "I shall give it to you if you tell me who I am." The boy then said, "You are a Lama from Sera (Monastery)," following which he recited the mantra "Mani Mani," an abridged version of "Om Mani Padme Hum." This is the most popular mantra for the Bodhisattva of Compassion, whose principal incarnation is believed to be the Dalai Lama. Thereupon, the head Lama said to the child, "Tell me who the gentleman in the other room is." "He is Tsedrung Lozang," was the reply, as indeed he was. (The term Tsedrung means a monk official of the Potala Palace.) The

child then went on to identify the guide as Kalzang and the fourth person as a monk from Sera. The party was greatly astonished by these revelations of the boy's extraordinary mind. This was the climax of the long, delicate and difficult mission that discovered the child-Dalai Lama.

The search party sent a coded message to the Government in Lhasa seeking permission to subject the boy to a personal test by which his authenticity was to be either proved or denied. In the capital the successful preliminary test was confirmed by the pronouncements of the Chief State Oracle, the Neychung Chokyong.

There followed the most crucial of all these complicated tasks of conducting the personal test. The search party returned to the Taktsher house. Both parents were asked to allow the two-year-old child to be examined in the following manner: personal belongings of the late thirteenth Dalai Lama, each with a duplicate or replica, were spread on a wooden table. The four members of the search party seated themselves on either side. The child was brought in and the chief Lama, holding two black rosaries, asked him which of the two he would like to have. Unhesitatingly, the child snatched the real one, the one having once belonged to the thirteenth Dalai Lama, and put it around his neck. Then two cane walking sticks were produced. At first the child took the duplicate of the one owned by his predecessor. Thinking the child was now making a mistake, the search mission was momentarily shocked but did not show their disappointment. The child—having examined the tips and bottoms of both sticks—dropped the duplicate and held the real one as if it had been his own. It was later found out that the "fake" stick had initially been used by the thirteenth Dalai Lama and had been presented to Lama Drupkhang Rinpoche. It finally came into the possession of the head of the search party. Thus it was not really a fake.

Now came the last test, involving two miniature drums. Their frames were made of ivory and one of them had a handle. The other one, a specially produced duplicate, had a golden band around it and a multi-colored brocade tassel, making it look more attractive. The party watched nervously fearing that the child might pick the wrong drum which was the prettier. But again the child picked up the real one without the slightest hesitation. Trying out the drum he looked intensely at each member of the party in turn. They were so deeply moved by the wondrous performance of this little boy with the mind of a great Lama that they abandoned the idea of conducting similar tests for a number of other child-candidates. Thus the little son of Taktsher was installed as the fourteenth Dalai Lama (who now resides in India). The faith of the Tibetan people in him as a living Bodhisattva has been unshakable!

The child-Dalai Lama, age 7, at Potala Palace, Lhasa.

OUTER SPACE AND EARTH

Once upon a time there was a little house. And up in outer space there was a little house. In both of those tiny houses there lived two men and they both were married to the same woman.

One woke up at night and one woke up in the morning. The one in outer space was up at night because he was so close to the moon that he thought it was the sun and it was morning. But the one below woke up in the morning and went to sleep when the other woke up.

Then the one in outer space saw the other's house and saw his wife was there. He got angry. He woke up the man and the woman and said:

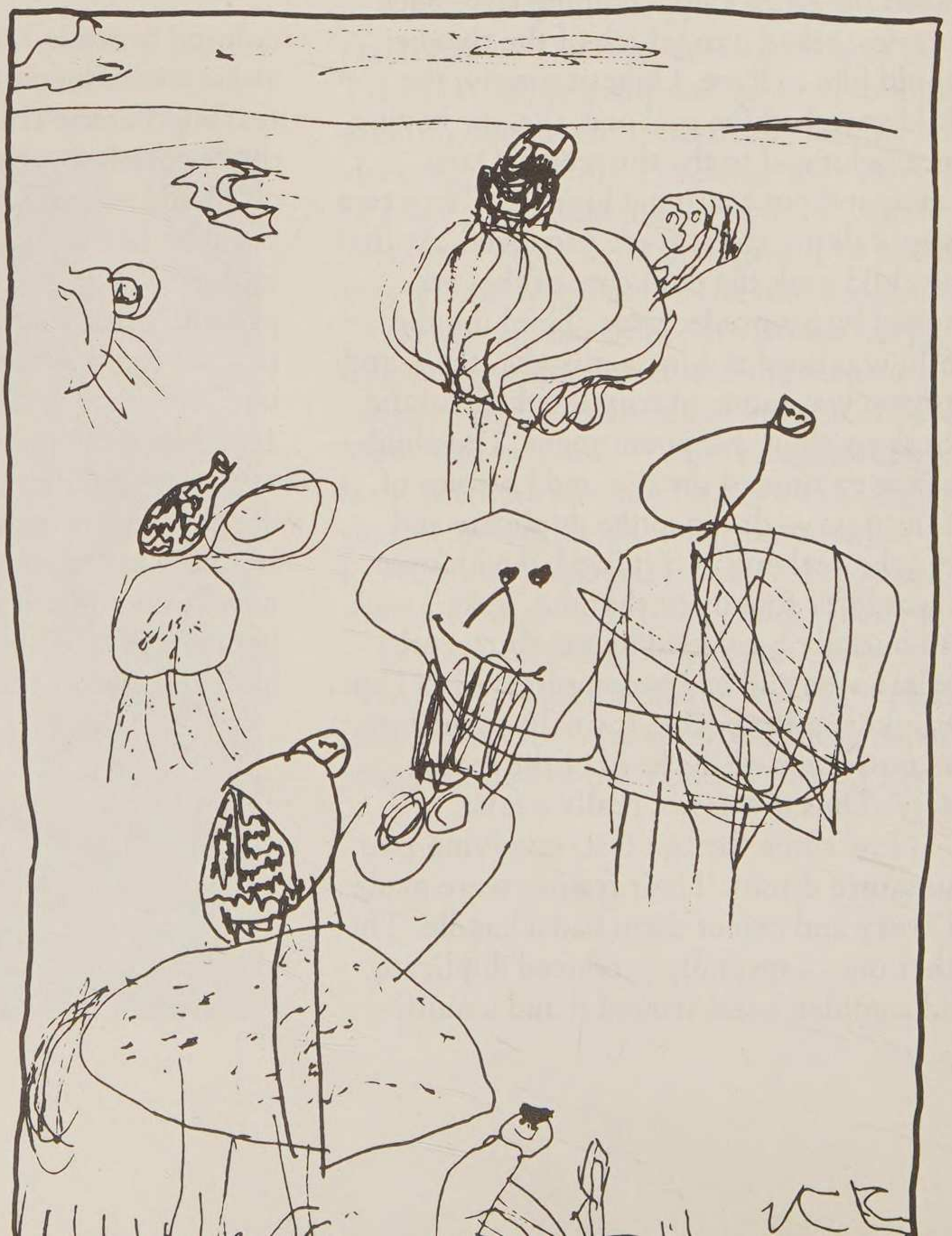
"That is my wife, not yours."

The woman said:

"I'm married to both of you, so what's the trouble? I will go with the night robber in the night and in the day with the day robber."

And that is how they solved the problem.

Rachel Cloudstone Zucker [4½]



EPICYCLE

The Secret Son

Igboland, in eastern Nigeria, is rich in folktales of many kinds, still related by heads of families and professional storytellers in homes or at village gatherings. One important function of such stories is to instruct the young in basic principles of good behavior. The following tale, collected by Professor Peter Thomas during his years as a founding member of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka, is an excellent example of this kind of story.

Once upon a time, in what is now Nigeria, there lived a King who ruled a large and prosperous kingdom and was served by many wonderful servants. There was, for instance, a giant called "Eater-of-Wars," and another known as Izomo the Cruel who would kill wrongdoers at sight. There was even a Town Crier who, whenever the King commanded it, summoned the people together by climbing a coconut tree and striking its hollow trunk with his legs so that it echoed for miles around. So great and so many were the marvels of this kingdom, they could never all be told.

As for the King himself, his wealth was incalculable; his wives and children were beyond counting — the splendor of his court beggared description. Among his subjects, the young men were all so handsome they were much desired by all the lovely girls, whose own beauty and charm were beyond compare. So productive were their farms the people did little work, yet had enough and to spare. Fish and game abounded, too, in this land of peace and plenty.

Among the royal wives some, who were especially dear to the King, had ready access to him at all times. These knew his secrets and enjoyed his bounty. They had slaves in plenty, were always finely dressed, behaved with dignity, and were respected throughout the land.

Unfortunately, however, there were other wives the King did not love so much. Among these was one he actually hated, known to the rest as "Carrier of Wood Ashes" because of the menial work she did. Sometimes she ate, more often she did not. She was mostly alone and

always lonely, as the other women treated her unkindly and no man dared to speak to her on pain of death, even though the king never wished to see her any more. Yet, painful as life was for her, she would not run away.

The King himself, you might think, had everything he could desire, yet he was very far from happy, for there was one thing he wanted so much it touched him to the core and made him pensive whenever he was alone. He had sought aid from all the best doctors and wizards in the land, but nothing helped. Yet the King knew that, unless his dearest wish was granted, when he died a stranger would rule his kingdom — for he had no son.

His favorite wives kept telling him they had just dreamed of bearing him an heir. This or that doctor would promise him a son by the most favored wife of all. He would reward them all — the wives for their dreams, the doctors for their prophecies — yet still he had no son.

Far away from that kingdom, however, lay the Land of Women, all of whom were highly skilled in magical arts and charms. At last the King decided to visit them and ask their help. Disguised as a hunter he set out, carrying his gun, but these women knew everything and were prepared for his coming.

When he arrived they were all assembled in council, and at sight of him the eldest, Adda, cried out, "You are the Oba of Idu, are you not? And what you desire is a son!"

The King stood speechless, for it is not easy to appear before those potent ones.

"We have heard of your endeavors to produce an heir," Adda continued, "and you will surely have one. But it will come from where you least expect it, and this should be a lesson — to you and generations of men thereafter — against further mistreatment of womankind."

Then the women gave the king some herbs and told him how to prepare them. He was to include one alligator pepper in the brew, for the wife who swallowed it would bear his son.

The king hurried home, prepared the herbs as he had been instructed, and assembled his wives; all except Carrier of Wood Ashes. Each of the others tasted the dish, beginning with the most favored wife. Each in turn made a wry face, as if she had eaten something hotly flavored, trying to convince the Oba she had eaten the pepper and would bear his son.

Among them all just one felt pity for the rejected wife and, when the feast was over, took what was left to her friend. The poor woman was so grateful she swallowed all that remained of the brew, including the pepper, but they both agreed to keep this secret lest someone else should hear of it and tell the King.

The next problem was how to smuggle Carrier of Wood Ashes into the Oba's chamber. Eventually they hit on a plan: the hated one would replace her friend when her turn came to sleep with the King. The occasion came — a trying moment, for if he discovered the trick it would mean death for them both. Remembering, however, that "though water kills people, people still drink it," they refused to be daunted.

Carrier of Wood Ashes took her evening bath and was dressed in her friend's clothes. Then, in the dark, she was ushered into the King's room and nervously entered his bed, her heart thumping. Her friend wished her good fortune and went away. Soon afterwards the King joined her.

Before dawn the next morning, the kind woman hurried back to her friend. The Oba had been outwitted. The two friends parted, and the days wore on. There was great anticipation among all the King's wives as they

waited to see on whom the luck would fall. Within three months a number of them seemed capable of fulfilling the King's hopes, though no one noticed that the hated wife was one of them. This she concealed from all but her friend, till the most favored wife somehow got wind of it and laid schemes to get rid of her.

Carrier of Wood Ashes was warned of this in time and ran away to the house of an old crone in a neighboring village. She was soon discovered, however, and brought back to the palace, where she was closely watched and guarded. People wondered how she came to be with child, for if she had been unfaithful the gods should have punished her long before — yet here she was, fit and strong.

In the tenth month the child was ready to be born. By chance, the children in the other wives' wombs were also pressing to be born on the same day, so all the women were taken to the midwife, who was known as "Mother of All Women," and all were put to bed except Carrier of Wood Ashes.

To their bitter disappointment, all the favored wives gave birth to daughters once again. Then the midwife was called away and in her absence poor Carrier of Wood Ashes was brought to bed. The other women blindfolded her so that, when she finally gave birth, she did not know she had been delivered of a fine male child. One of the jealous wives took him and threw him into the nearby river, then told the mother it had only been a stillborn female. The other wives all went away, leaving Carrier of Wood Ashes crying helplessly, and the King kept to himself, feeling more depressed than ever.

When Mother of All Women returned, she did not believe the story of the stillborn girl child and decided to find out the truth of the matter for herself. She consulted her charms and repeated her incantations until she was

directed to the King of the River Gods, who had saved the child and was now taking care of him. She set out to visit the god, carrying with her a white goat, a white hen, and other clean gifts, for the god will not accept anything impure.

Arrived at the riverside, the woman made her offering and the river rose to engulf her gifts in one swift movement. She then stepped into the water and entered the kingdom of the god — where she found the child, healthy and handsome, being fed on chalk only, since no mere human may eat the food of gods and live.

Mother of All Women explained to the King of the River Gods how the boy had come to be in his kingdom, and at last he consented to let her take him home with her. There, she raised him as if he were her own son, until he had grown into a handsome and gracious youth. Then she sent the King a message that he had a son after all. She did not reveal the mother's name, leaving that to the disposal of the gods. Meanwhile, a day was appointed for her to present the youth to his father, nine days after her announcement.

When the great day came, the Town Crier climbed the coconut tree and beat it with his legs till it was heard all over the kingdom. When the people understood what it signified they all set out for the gathering in the Oba's compound, rich and poor alike, all glad that they would eat that day if not the next. It was a mighty assembly, so tightly crowded that a twig thrown in the air could find no space to fall; yet the silence was absolute, for Eater of Wars kept watch over all and anyone who so much as whispered would be sacrificed to the Oba's god, Nzemu, who lived on blood alone.

At last the King emerged from his chamber, clad from head to foot in scarlet, loaded with costly beads, and using a glittering ornamental rod as a walking stick.

Everyone rose and remained standing until he had seated himself on his throne; then each in turn prostrated himself before the Oba before taking his own seat. This went on for a long time, there were so many present. The King's wives, too, appeared in their best finery and took their assigned places. Then the great moment came.

Mother of All Women had dressed the youth in his most attractive clothes and given him a charm, hidden in a little gourd, to carry on his head. She had arranged for each of the royal wives to throw a twig at this charm, but only the true mother's twig could strike it. The first cast went to one of the least favored wives, and of course her twig dropped short of the gourd; at which the unknown son sang a little song to show she was not his mother.

So the trial continued, all failing till it came to the turn of the most favored wife, who walked towards the youth, all elegance and charm — till now the Oba's darling. Both he and all the people now sat breathless and open-mouthed as she took up her twig, took careful aim, and threw it. All eyes followed as it arched towards the gourd, seeming to fly slowly, dancing in the air. Then, just within a finger's breadth of the charm, it changed direction.

There was a gasp of incredulous dismay; then a hum of voices from all sides, as if thunder rolled continuously in the distance. The King slouched miserably on his throne. Doctors and wizards were summoned to consult the gods and their charms, but only Ejine, oldest and most powerful of witches, knew the answer. "There is one wife left," she said, "the one called Carrier of Wood Ashes."

At once the Oba sent his palace guards to bring the hated wife before him. It was many years since he had more than glanced at her. In truth, she was a beautiful woman, but the most favored wife, discerning this, had long ago given her a charm which made the King hate

her so much he had banished her from his sight and never really looked at her again. This charm had long since lost its power, however, and now he once more recognized her beauty. It even seemed, for a moment, that he would rise and embrace her; but Kings never do such things in public, so he remained seated.

As Carrier of Wood Ashes walked into the assembly cheers greeted her from every side, for never before had such beauty been seen in the land. She walked gracefully into the center and, without even taking aim, threw her twig toward the youth. The twig flew straight; the gourd fell to the ground — the city walls shook to the echoes of the applause that followed. Carrier of Wood Ashes embraced her son, and all could see he was a perfect mirror image of his mother.

Overcome with joy, the Oba rushed to his son and his long-rejected wife and embraced them both. His arms still around them, he turned and strode back toward the palace, to start a new life with his heir and the wife who was now the most favored of all.

As for the wicked wife who had kept them from him for so many years, she was convicted of treason and sacrificed to Nzemu. Mother of All Women was given a position in the palace, so that she should not suffer want any longer. It was then decreed that the King of All the River Gods should receive a gift of white goats, white fowls, white cloth and white chalk once every year.

To make their happiness complete and fulfill the boy's destiny, among the crowd there had been a particularly lovely young girl — lovelier than any other in all the land. The Oba therefore arranged that she and his son should marry when they both came of age. This, in due time, they did, raising many fine children to whom they told this story, so that all might know how loyalty wins its just reward.

— Retold by Peter Thomas

THE PRIMARY WORLD

by P.L. Travers

I was brought up in Ancient Greece, a country I have never seen, even in its modern aspect. That this was so was made clear to me when I came to read *The Republic*. Plato somewhere makes the point that the most profound truths can be elicited from children when, simply, stealthily, logically, they are asked the right questions at the right moment and in the right order. At the same time, he holds no brief for formal education — ethical, philosophical, mathematical. The early needs of his ideal citizens will be amply filled, as were his own, by traditional myths and stories. And Aristotle echoes him, in this if not in other foibles, by asserting that "The lover of myths, compact of wonders, is by the same token a lover of wisdom."

This is not to suggest, far from it, a background of erudition, but rather one of lore and legend. What had been good enough for my parents — the lively, articulate, hotchpotch stuff bequeathed by remote ancestors and added to miscellaneously by each new generation — was good enough, they thought, for children. Questions they did, unwittingly, ask and were often appalled by the replies; and as often brought to the brink of madness by the questions their questions evoked.

These, as was inevitable, became part of the general folklore; the stories, ballads, old wives' tales shared among widely scattered neighbors, that made our Antipodean world — archaic, antique, for all its newness — intimate and coherent. Heaven was merely a celestial suburb, bright with its close and bending stars, inhabited by a circle of friends, familiar however patrician — the Two Bold Pointers of the Southern Cross, Orion with his studded belt, Venus, early to bed and to rise. And among these dwelt, apparently, the Well-Wisher who was nightly reminded to pity mice implicitly, bless our nearest relatives and, as a personal addendum, teach Father not to cheat at Ludo.

The smallest event, in that huge landscape, became, of necessity, an occasion. To take a trip to the nearest town, no town in any modern sense, was to ride in triumph through Persepolis; the loss of a milk tooth no less an omen than the dropping of Cinderella's slipper; the gift of a pig's head or a batch of papers arriving from England, the excuse for a celebration. So, to horse, far and wide, with invitations. Come tonight to a dance! And presently, to banjo and fiddle, the house would be turning in a gyre — Bacchic for all its rusticity — with "Strip the Willow," "Six-Hand Duke," "Lochiel," "Waltzing Matilda."

Waltzing Matilda, I then thought, was none other than our washerwoman, the third person in a trinity known as Father-

Mother-and-Mat. Notoriously inadequate as a laundress, she was also notorious, for miles around, for her masterly telling of grims. This was a word much bandied about, and in my crooked understanding, got from essentially grimmish parents, I took it as a generic term for narrative, tarradiddle, story. Matilda's grims — so much more important to her, and to us, than having clean sheets and underwear — were centered round a vagrant gypsy, "unsighted-and-yet-seeing-all," whom she called familiarly Ould Raff. I had to grow taller and cross the world before I knew him for Raftery, the Homer of the Irish hedgerows, whom A.E. and Yeats so deeply revered.

But Matilda was not the only teller. In a certain sense, everyone had a grim. The grim was social currency. Rumor and gossip were founded upon it, so was the Sunday sermon. "There was a man went forth to sow" and "Leda lay under the wing of the swan," inevitably, were grims. Only when the alphabet had revealed itself through stencils on tea-chests, letters stamped on bags of flour, labels on boxes of Beecham's Pills, "Jumble Today" on the church board — only then did I understand that grims were, in fact, Grimms'! "Sweetheart Roland," "The Goose Girl" and the rest had been corralled, like a herd of wild horses, and stabled in a book — or, two books to be precise; squat, red, sturdy volumes, coarse of paper, close of print, discovered in my father's bookcase along with "Twelve Deathbed Scenes" and someone called William Shakespeare. Did he know a grim or two, I wondered.

They are faded now, those two old friends, their red weathered to pink; but in spite of time and rough usage, however loving, well able to cope with more of the same from future generations.

There have, of course, been next-of-kin or, at any rate, successors. One of these is

here to my hand, in Ralph Mannheim's translation. And the mere thought that I am not only permitted, but required by the editor to read a new Grimms', fills me with intimate joy. My blood runs as softly as Sweet Thames. And then, at the outset, it encounters a weir.

"I thought the time had come," says the Introduction, "to attempt a new translation that would be faithful to the Grimm Brothers' faithfulness." Indeed, a noble ambition. But has no one, hitherto, been faithful? It is true that the red books went out of print and that *Household Tales* no longer flourished. Was it after the First World War that people who had been children themselves and would therefore have known the brute facts of life, decided that Grimms' were too grim? It would have been about that time that childhood *qua* childhood assumed importance. A passing phase — ten seconds out of a total of sixty — became, as it were, a thing in itself; something static, with boundaries, and capable of being mapped as one charts a geographical unit. "Inspect it, dissect it, and protect it!" said psychologists, teachers, social workers. So —children became, for the first time, childish. And, to keep them from knowing what they knew—and, sorrowfully, have always known — they were told about the fairies in flowers, boys who didn't want to grow up, Mr. and Mrs. Mickey Mouse; but not of "The Devil's Sooth Brother," "The Blue Light," "Pif-Paf-Poultrie." The only Grimms' available, until about thirty-five years ago, were carefully bowdlerized selections, or the occasional single story, used

as a sort of lay figure for an illustrator's creations. And even these were suspect. Librarians in the New York Public Library, proudly showing a guest around, put fingers to their lips when asked: "But where are the *Household Tales*?" Oh, they were there, along with the myths, but kept in an inner secret chamber. Parents were anxious, it was said, that their young be shielded from anything that could lead to wishful thinking.

Wishful thinking! If there are latitudes less accessible to wishful thinking than the fairy tales, I would like them pointed out to me. To enter such dangerous terrain, you need a stout heart, a will well-tempered and a bulletproof digestion. But, perhaps, after all, those parents were right. The strong drink brewed by Grimms' and the myths produces, in those who can stomach it, the stuff of which heroes are made. And heroes, in the long run, may be far more difficult to live with than any wishful thinker.

But time, as time must, came round again. And the door of that inner chamber

opened. An article appeared in the *Herald Tribune* suggesting that the tales had meaning, lamenting the loss of their ancient lore and praying that someone with a seeing eye would cast it on the Complete Grimms' and publish it, along with the Notes, in Margaret Hunt's (1894) translation.

That night, at a party, W.H. Auden came striding in, brandishing the paper aloft. "This is what we want!" he cried. And that was what we got — or almost. The Pantheon Press, thinking wishfully, borrowed the two red books and acted. James Stern, short story writer, master of German as well as English, was brought in to remove — as delicately as one playing Spillikens — the Victorian squeamishnesses; Padraic Colum, himself a man of the Irish hedgerows, to reintroduce the stories; and Joseph Campbell, addict and scholar, to collate the material of the Afterword. But, alas, no Notes. That word is poison to publishers. They believe that when it comes in at the door the buyer flies out of the window. But who, young or old, wouldn't want to know of the Story-Wife of Niederzwehren, de Alte Marie, and the Old Soldier, all of whom, time upon time with the same details, told the stories to the brothers? Or the fact, enormous and wonderful, that giants take out their hearts when they sleep?

Never mind. Grimms were back. The world, unprecedentedly, had noted and long remembered. And, as if the Pantheon edition were not enough — a book fit for a grandee — the Southern Illinois University Press published a new translation (1960) — simple, colloquial, unadorned — by Francis Magoun and Alexander Krappe — again

without notes but, and let them be blessed for this, with German as well as English titles.

So, remembering the Fifth Commandment, it has to be said that the Mannheim version, with its assumption that no one has, until now, been faithful, may perhaps be the bird of loudest lay but not by any stretch of fancy the sole Arabian tree.

It is a competent, lively text — "As spry as a fish in water" — delicious! But allowing for the fact that we tend to stick to older versions as barnacles to a keel, we must, sometimes, in honor, cry No! to the new.

Take, for instance, "The Juniper Tree," most fearful and beautiful of stories, where the father, unknowing, eats his son in a stew. Both Hunt and Magoun have him exclaim: "Give me more! I feel it is all mine!" — as, indeed, alas, it is. But Mannheim has "It belongs to me." More faithful this may be, linguistically, but it has lost faith with truth and terror. Taste, feel, sense the difference in levels; prove it, as Keats said, upon the pulse. From that "All mine!" we fall like

stones to where the son is a mere belonging, a trinket or a walking stick, not the father's substantive soul.

And again No! In "Harsichenbraut," which means The Little Hare's Bride. Hunt and Magoun — rejecting leveret as recondite — settle, acceptably, for Hare. But Mannheim, flinging his faithfulness to the wind, takes Harsichen for Kaninchen and panders to the populace with "Bunny Rabbit's Bride." Now, hare has never been a bunny rabbit; it belongs, biologically, to a different genus; is born, unlike rabbit, furred and waking; lives in the overland, not in warrens; and even asleep — cousin german to Ould Raff, perhaps! — has an ever open eye. In every culture, every tradition, the hare is a divinatory spirit with dimensions both mythological and symbolic that a rabbit could never aspire to. But who, in a degraded world, can measure up to the fabulous? It has to be domesticated. But a hare will die if kept in a hutch. So, the primrose path being easier, we descend to bunnies.

The great success of *Watership Down*, a portentous modern allegory with rather less portent than *Peter Rabbit*, was due to the fact that its goodies and baddies were dear familiar furry bobtails; Bunny St. George, after various rabbity tribulations, outburrowing Bunny Hitler (or Trotsky?) and then at last disappearing — not into a pie, as one might have hoped — but into a sort of Bunny Nirvana! Mrs. MacGregor, where are you?

There are no rabbits in Hans Andersen. But, for all that, unlike the Grimms, he has never been in eclipse. His tales were among my early grims and I loved, and still love, his retellings of what he was told in childhood — tough, shrewd, ironic, witty — and his own folksy, miniscule fables, "Five Peas in the Same Pod," "The Darning Needle," "Soup on a Sausage Pin," "Auntie Toothache," as well as that subtle story, "The Shadow," wherein he showed himself, for once, to be wiser than he knew. But the great reverberant set-pieces, so admired, wept over, doted upon — "Mermaid," "Snow Queen," "Red Shoes," etc., filled me, in childhood, with unease and a feeling that I was being got at. Oh, I wept and, I suppose, doted — but felt no better for it. Grimms' belonged to the sunlight, asked nothing, never apologized, curdled the blood with delight and horror, dispensed justice, fortified the spirit. Andersen, moon-man, asked for mercy, was always sorry, curdled the feelings with bane-and-honey and undermined the vitality by his endless appeal for pity. When the millstone was dropped on the wicked stepmother, I did not miss a breath. That was how it should be. But for Karen who had her feet cut off because she preferred red shoes to God, I had to break my heart; suffer for Kay and his monstrous word — "the artifice of Eternity," as Yeats put it — when Now, as it seemed to me then, and does still, would have been a better, if more demanding word; and try, ever failing, to be a good child in order to shorten, by three hundred years, the term of the Mermaid's waiting time.

That story has much to answer for. It is in the last three paragraphs — so sad, so romantic, the devotees say — that Andersen, with his wanton sweetness, his too-much rubbing of Aladdin's lamp, stands most in need of forgiveness. All right, let the creature have her wish — though it breaks all

cosmic laws — but you may not let its consummation, a barren, adult illusion anyway, depend upon the chivalry of those not yet adulterated. She has given up her tail — good. She has graduated to air — better, at any rate from *her* point of view. Let her now discover patience. The soul will happen in its own time. But — a year taken off when a child behaves; a tear shed and a day added whenever a child is naughty? Andersen, this is blackmail. And the children know it, and say nothing. There's magnanimity for you.

The Secondary World — Tolkien's phrase — fashioned as it is by fallible man, is full of such moral pitfalls. In this regard, one needs to read Tolkien's wonderful essay "On Fairy Tales" many times over, taking note of its intricate warp and woof, its air of being a palimpsest, before one arrives at

what he means by Primary and Secondary. And even then, one cannot be sure that one has indeed arrived.

> It is not [he says] difficult to imagine the peculiar excitement and joy that one would feel, if any specially beautiful fairy story were found to be "*primarily*" *true, its narrative to be history*, without thereby necessarily losing the mythical or allegorical significance that it has possessed.

This suggests that, for him, the "true" is that which can be documented, an element of history. For me, remembering D.H. Lawrence's axiom — for which he should be canonized — the opposite holds good. For me, the Primary World is that which has never been invented but came into being, along with the blood stream, as a legacy from the Authors who, according to Blake — that word again! — are in Eternity. All the rest is manmade, or as Tolkien has it, "subcreated," the Secondary World. He himself is a subcreator; Ursula Le Guin is also one; so, too, is Sweetheart Hans in his own imagined tales — though his is not a tangible subworld, like Middle Earth or Earthsea, but rather an inner idioverse where the annals are all of Andersen and Andersen makes the laws.

Tolkien and Le Guin, suckled on the Ancient Code, pay filial duty to their wetnurse, except for one moment when Tolkien lapses. Or was it not a lapse at all but rather prevision and intention that made Bilbo acquire the ring by unheroic means? That would make all the difference and give to what, in essence, is a grandiose adventure story, a much larger dimension. It may be — and I'm giving the benefit of a very doubtful doubt — that this was a foreshadowing of the ambivalent outcome.

In *The Silmarillion* —and if you've read that you don't need Purgatory — Frodo restores the ring to the fire, as in the Niebelungenlied it is restored to the water, with the self-effacement one expects from any

well-brought-up hero. In *The Lord of the Rings*, infringing all the laws of lore, the great deed happens by accident. Fallible hero, and villain who proves at last redemptive — the one who would keep and the one who would get — grapple together at the edge of the chasm; and Gollum, with the ring in his hand, loses his footing and falls. You can't lose footing intentionally; it's a happening, not a deliberate act. So, after all the oracular pother, the ring is not restored, but lost, a very different matter. Did Tolkien realize that with such an equivocal beginning, the story, for all its mythical content, would inevitably have an ambiguous ending? The question will not be acceptable to those who chalk up "Frodo lives!" on any convenient wall. Even so, it needs to be aired. "Is it possible," asks John Davy, in his essay on "The Education of Children," "that, in turning to drugs and Tolkien, teenagers may in part be attempting to make good the lack of fairy tales in infant school?" I think it may well be so. The lack has to be made up somehow. And all those seemingly endless volumes may serve a significant purpose.

For Tolkien is one of the signs of the times. Those who emigrate to the space colonies of the future will certainly take him with them. All subcreations will be needed there to give the inhabitants — I had almost said inmates — an inner psychic plenitude to balance the outer emptiness.

But the Primary World — in all its aspects subsumed for me under the generic term of "Grimms" — could never become acclimatized to a climate made by man. It needs, in order to go on living, the things man cannot create — the earth with all its composted dead, the rain that raineth every day, the seasons, nightfall, silence — and an ear free of all pulsation but that of its own blood.

Only in such a well-found steading could Apollo, resting at dusk from his day's herding, tell the stories to Admetus, the yeoman monarch who, in time, would pass them on to his children.

But who told Apollo? Tom o' Bedlam?

I know more than Apollo
For oft when he lies sleeping
I hear the stars at mortal wars
And the wounded welkin weeping.

Very well, then. But who told Tom? Unnecessary question. What matters is that *we* be told, ourselves wounded as the welkin is, and so in need of solace. And that we, in turn, become Tom — for this generation and those to come — and tell the ever-spreading circumference which, never doubt it, will also be wounded, the news of its navel center.

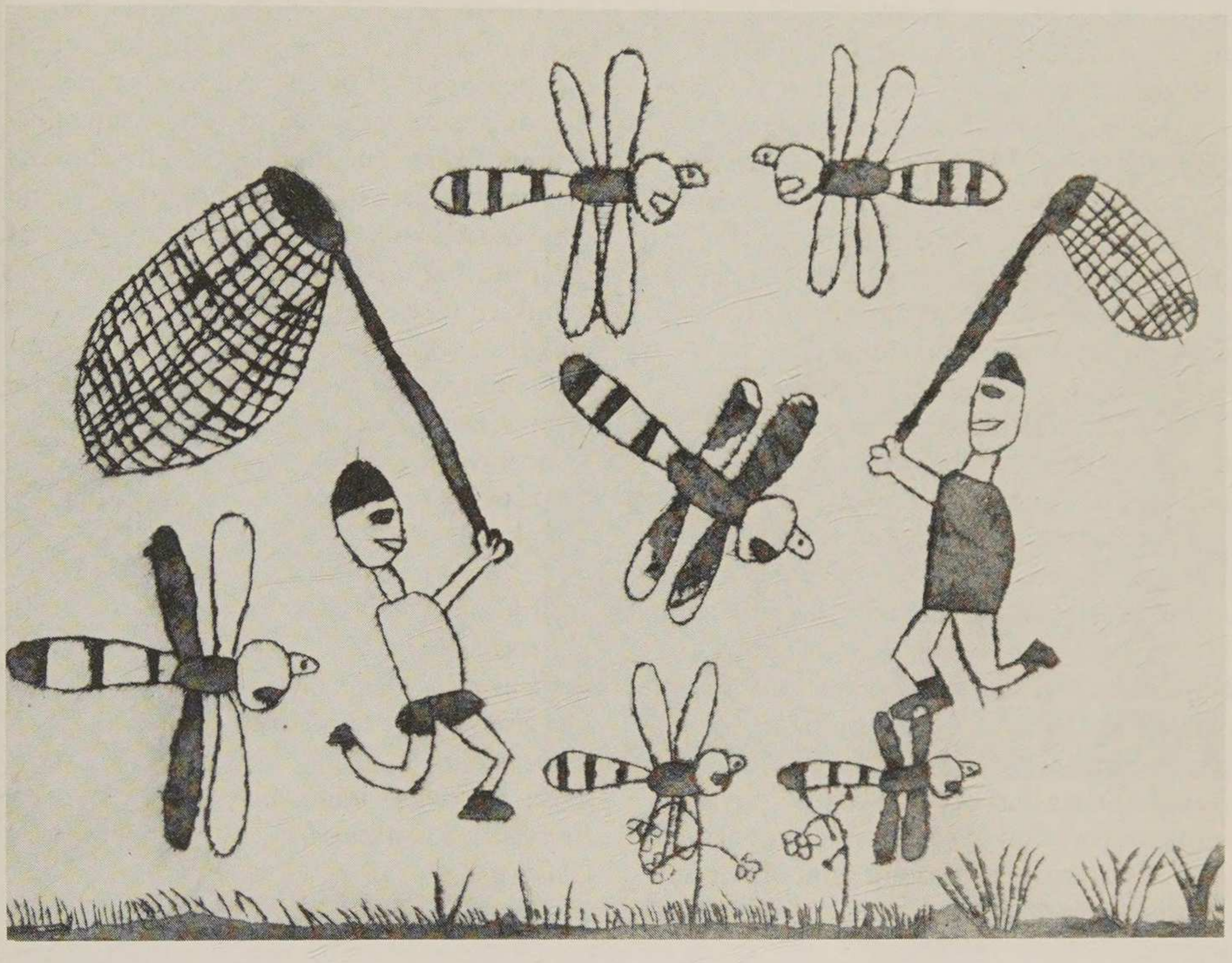
I owe it to you, old ancestors, quick and still vocal in my blood, that I have been, however ineptly, a gladiator in this ring and kept, under one collective name, its unfallen day about me.

So, hail! I who am about to die — one year, twenty years, a hundred — salute you, faithful brothers!

Waltz with me, Jakob and Wilhelm.
Tell me a grim, Matilda.

P.L.Travers lectures and writes about myth, legend, folklore and classic fables. She is the author of the Mary Poppins *books,* Friend Monkey, The Fox in the Manger *and* About the Sleeping Beauty *and is currently at work on a book of essays. She has been a Consulting Editor to* PARABOLA *since its inception.*

LOOKING AT THE CHILDREN PLAYING, FROM THE SKY *by Frederick Frank*



Naoki Shiozi [6]

Prints and Poems by Children of Japan. Prepared by The Touchstone Center for Children, Inc., at 80 Washington Square East Galleries, New York University, New York City.

Reviewed by Frederick Franck

The remarkable exhibition of prints and poems by Japanese children presented during May at the N.Y.U. galleries is an admirable, diverting and thought-provoking one. It is being circulated by the N.Y. Foundation for the Arts with funds from the N.Y. State Council on the Arts, and consists of forty-six prints, all in black and white, but executed in different media. These lithographs, wood engravings and soft-ground etchings are the work of children between the ages of six and eleven, and are technically of an astonishing sophistication.

The information on the single catalog sheet is disappointingly scant. All it indicates is that certain groups of prints and poems are "related to each other," but it is not disclosed in what respect they might be related. One asks oneself: who taught these children the graphic techniques? Is such instruction part of the curriculum in many schools or in just a few? Were some of these children pupils of the same teachers? Moreover, are these metropolitan, small town or country children?

The quality of the prints is invariably high, and immensely more accomplished

than what passes for typical children's art in the West. It so happens that in the gallery next door there was an exhibition of children's art entitled: "The Development of Representation." It intends to demonstrate and analyze the evolution of representation as it reflects the development of the child's thinking process, according to the documentation which credits Jean Piaget and Heinz Werner with providing the "theoretical background of this analysis."

If the explanatory matter that accompanies the Japanese show is sparse, it is voluble for the American one. But I did not find it particularly helpful to read: "Strongly physiognomic designs — in which global, wholistic, dynamic, vectorial and affective qualities of the material begin to prompt subject matter," or the apodictic statement that we as adults are "predominantly geometrical-technical in our conscious thought," but that because of his "physiognomic perception of expressive properties in configuration, the young symbolizer designates idiosyncratic and unusual subject matter..."

Could fondness for such erudite gibberish account for some of the radical differences in quality between the work of the little Japanese and the "self-expression" in our children? Returning to the Japanese, I was even more impressed by these wonderfully poetic, accomplished prints, this often humorous, always reflective, imagery. Each subject, directly connected with the child's environment, is transcribed into a formlanguage that is universally recognizable and immediately communicative. This is not "creative" bungling, but the work of young human beings.

Something seems amiss. The gap is just too big! There is no reason to assume that Japanese children are geniuses compared to their American contemporaries. Still one can't help feeling uneasy...

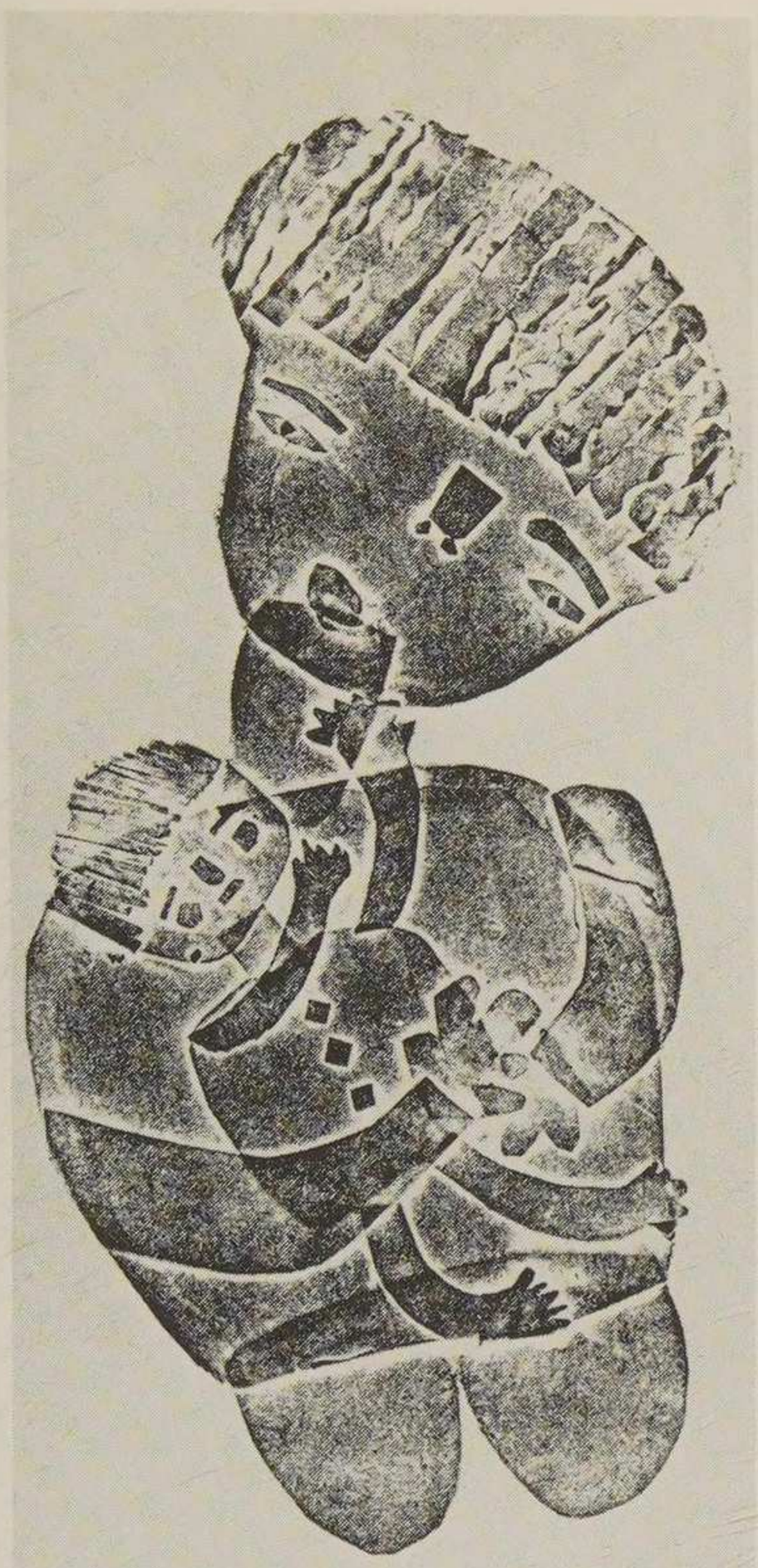
On my second viewing it seems that much of the reticence of the catalog text is compensated for by the children's poems that accompany the prints. These young "symbolizers" (no doubt carefully chosen) apparently have intensely, honestly "seen," have been deeply stirred by their visions of their mother with the baby, grandmother's wrinkled face, the cat suckling, the massive power of a locomotive, their sister in front of the mirror — and were able to transpose these visions into these splendid graphics, these moving poems.

Listen to eight-year old Itozakura Takako:

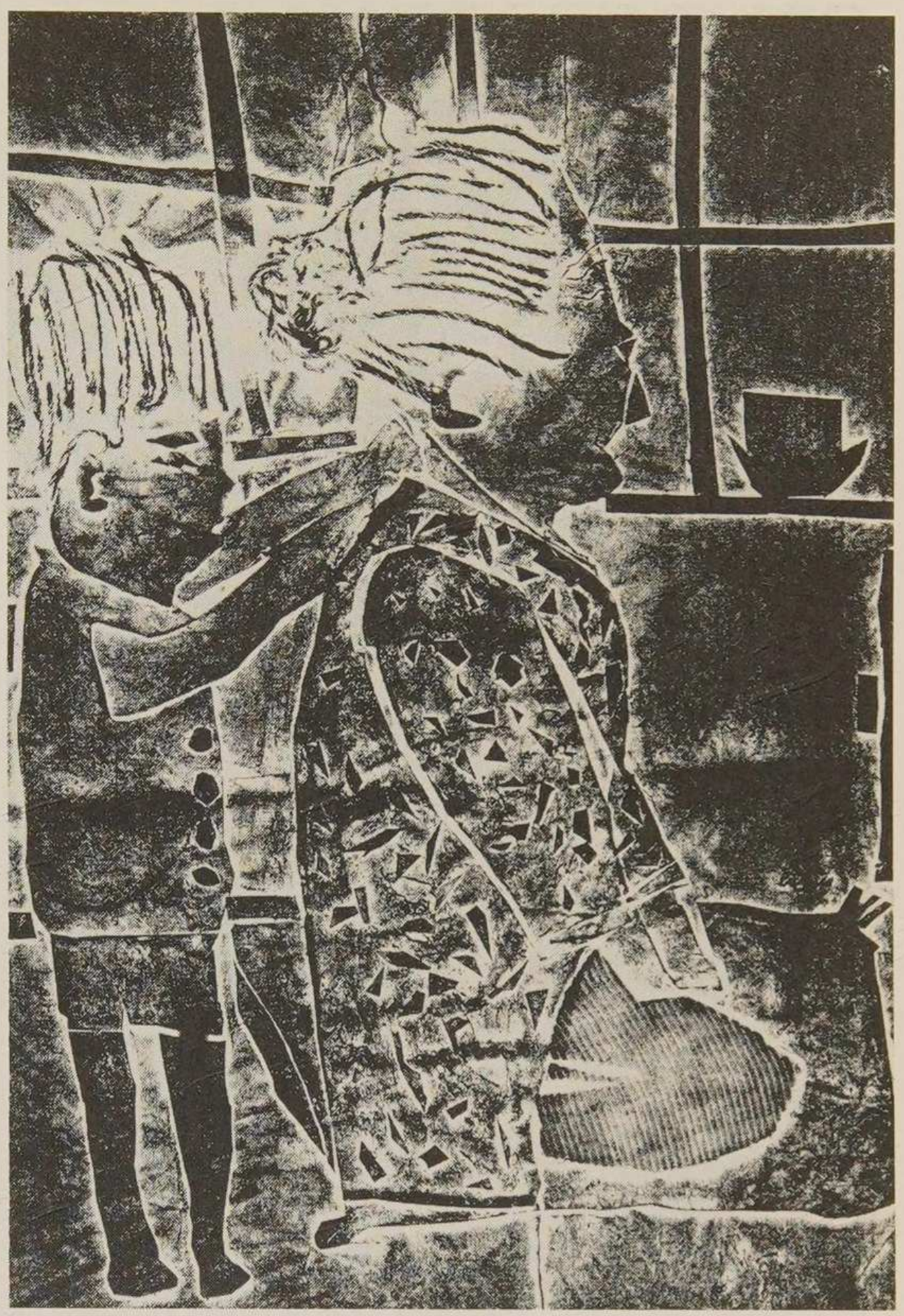
I was living in the mirror.
The small mirror
swallowed a big house.
Everybody will be swallowed
by the mirror
if they're standing near it.
Everybody is swallowed.
Children,
grownups,
everybody goes in one by one.
It never becomes crowded.
I lived in the mirror forever.

Or to Takashino Tatsuo (10):

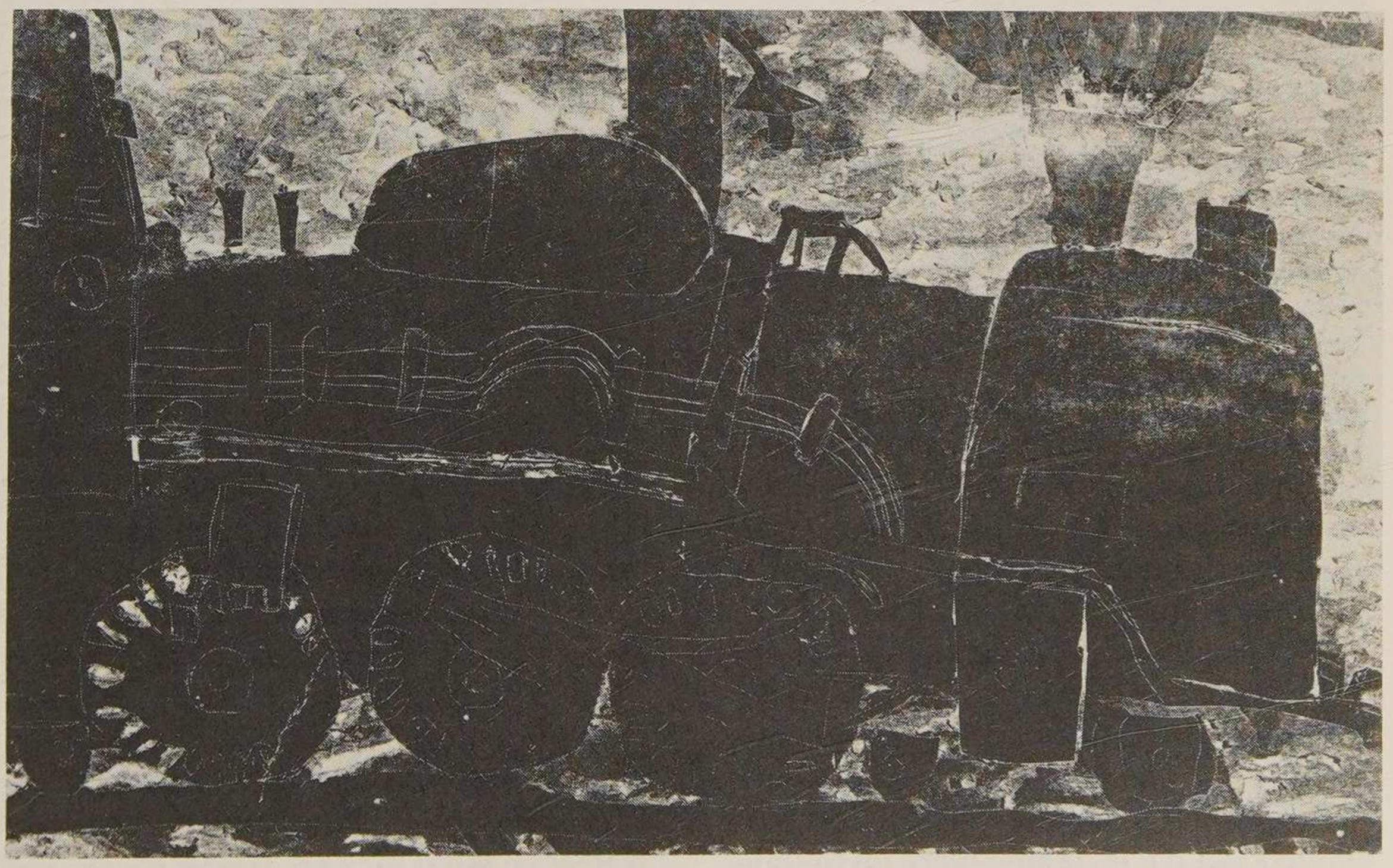
Grape!
I am a grape,
a sweet grape.
Suddenly I drop down.
A hen is pecking me.
My head,
my chest,
my stomach,
my hands,
my legs,
all are gone.
In the hen's stomach
I dissolve.
I vanish.



Noriko Uchiyama [6]



Kenichi Ogasawara [7]



Akihiko Nagao [6]

Masumi Kawaguchi [7]

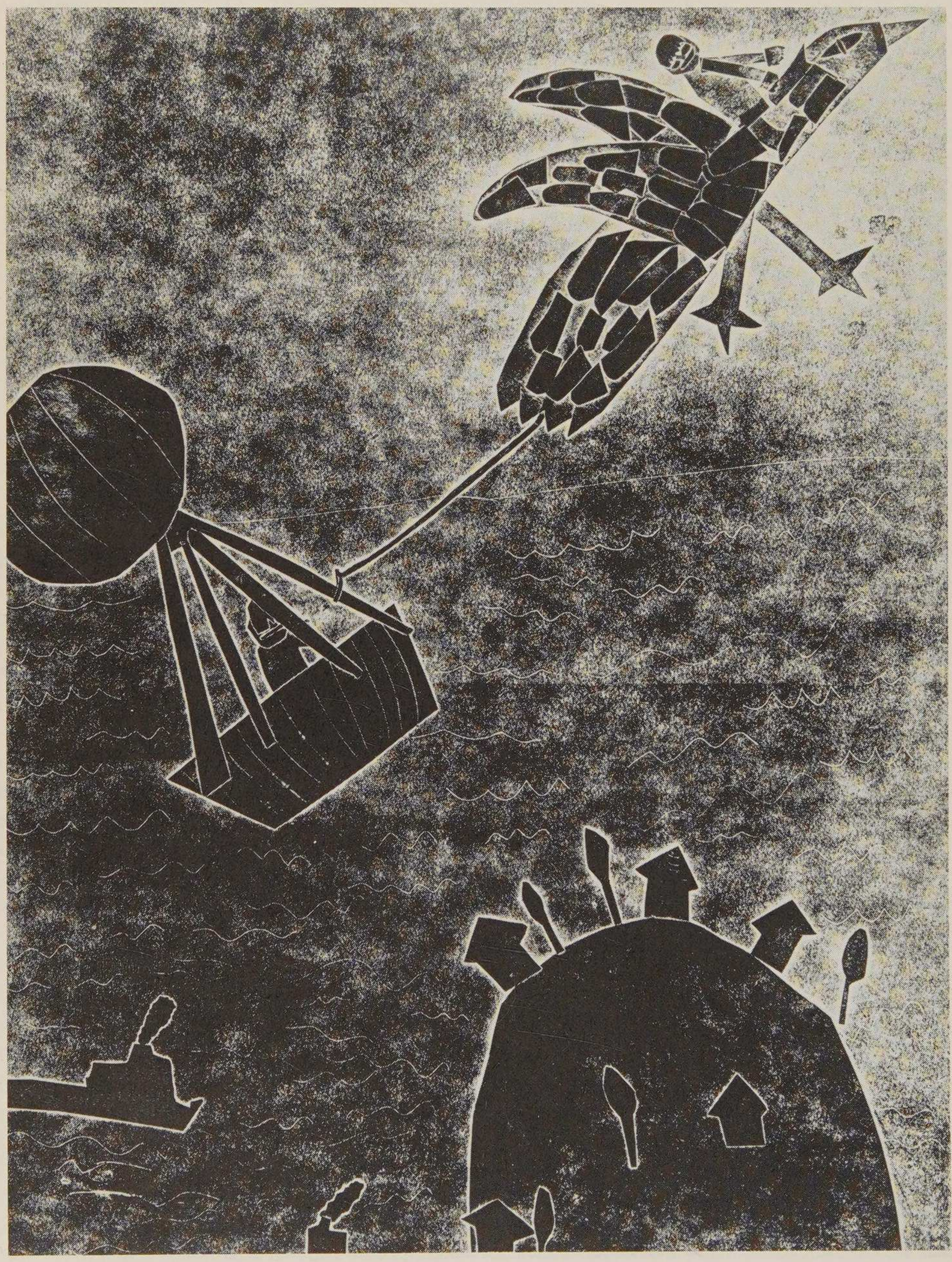
In these prints and in this poetry I find a still unfurling, but already completely human dynamic expressed, a quality of wonderment, a painful, yet profoundly ecstatic, first disclosure of visual reality and of the creaturely condition transmitted. Much as I try I can hardly find a trace of it in the American products next door...

There are no conclusions to be drawn, only questions to be pondered. Unavoidably, both here and over there, teachers were present while the children were at work, and whether intentional or not these adults provided a guidance, radiated certain influences.

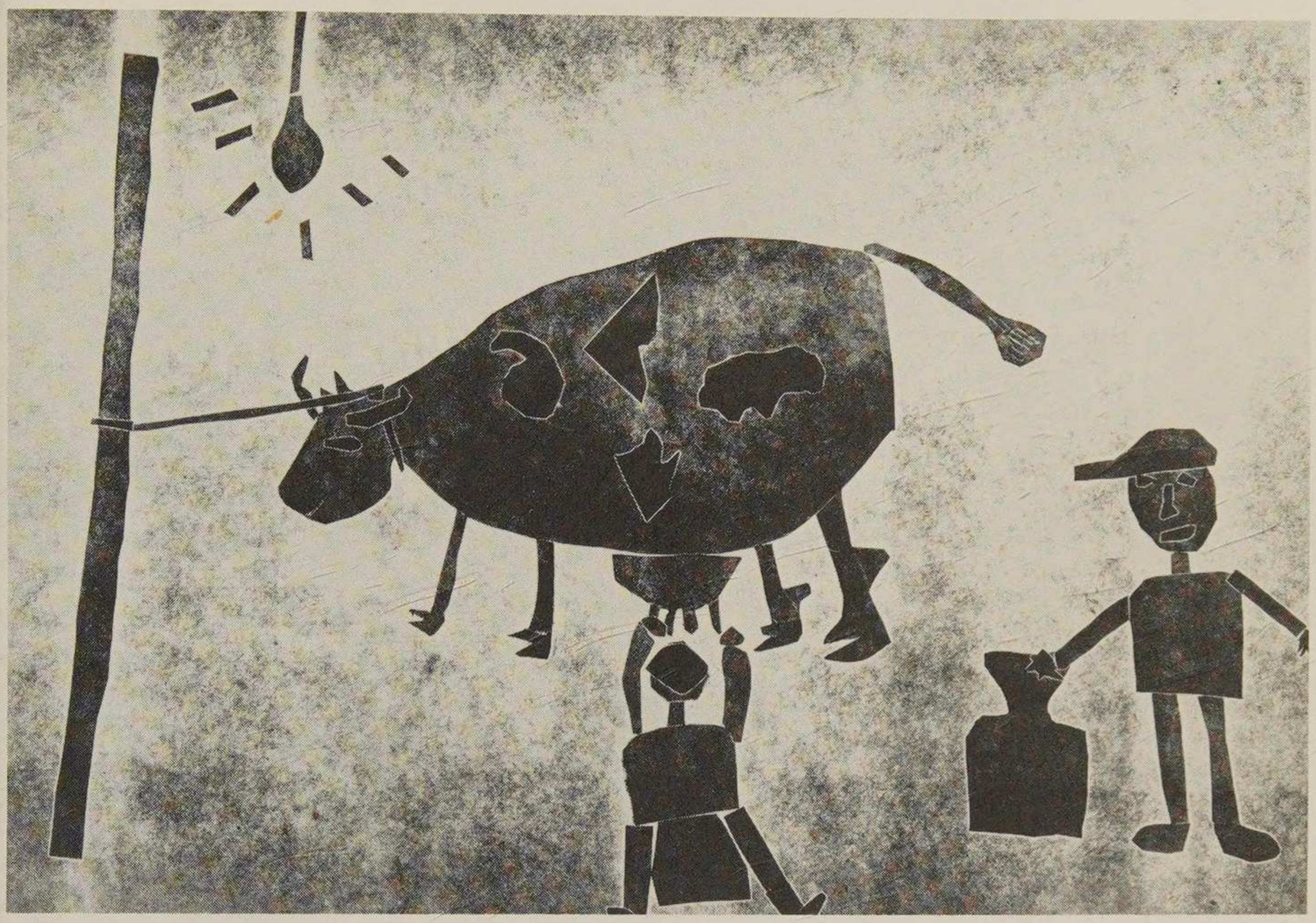
One of the differences must be that the Japanese children obviously had to be initiated into the techniques of etching, engraving, lithography. A discipline was, therefore, quite consciously imposed from the start, and this may well be characteristic of the culture: I think of a children's flute corps of this same age group in Kyoto, being trained to play in a religious parade. Night after night, I met these youngsters and their teacher, marching around a Shinto shrine, playing the same tune until both the playing and the marching were up to standard for the occasion. The teacher was kind, joyous but quite strict. The little boys looked very proud of their achievement. I think of the yearly Noh play performances by amateurs, fruit of years of almost fanatical study. I think of the people you see all alone practicing kendo or akido techniques in dark city parks...Do we totally lack such seriousness of purpose, frown on it as being restrictive of "creativity," of "spontaneity"? Is it our way to force the child to "express itself" from the very start before being acquainted with the very means with which to do this "expressing," so that spontaneity and bumbling self-indulgence become synonymous?

Some years ago in Amsterdam I saw an exhibition of etchings by children with behavioral and learning problems. These etchings too were surprisingly sophisticated technically, however disturbing and outlandish their imagery. I spoke to the teacher responsible for these remarkable etchings: "I teach them etching," he said, "because the technique requires a certain struggle with the medium. It imposes certain steps, a certain discipline. And so they have time to reflect on what they are trying to say, and it

Tokesi Mukai [9]



Tomoki Kakeya [7]



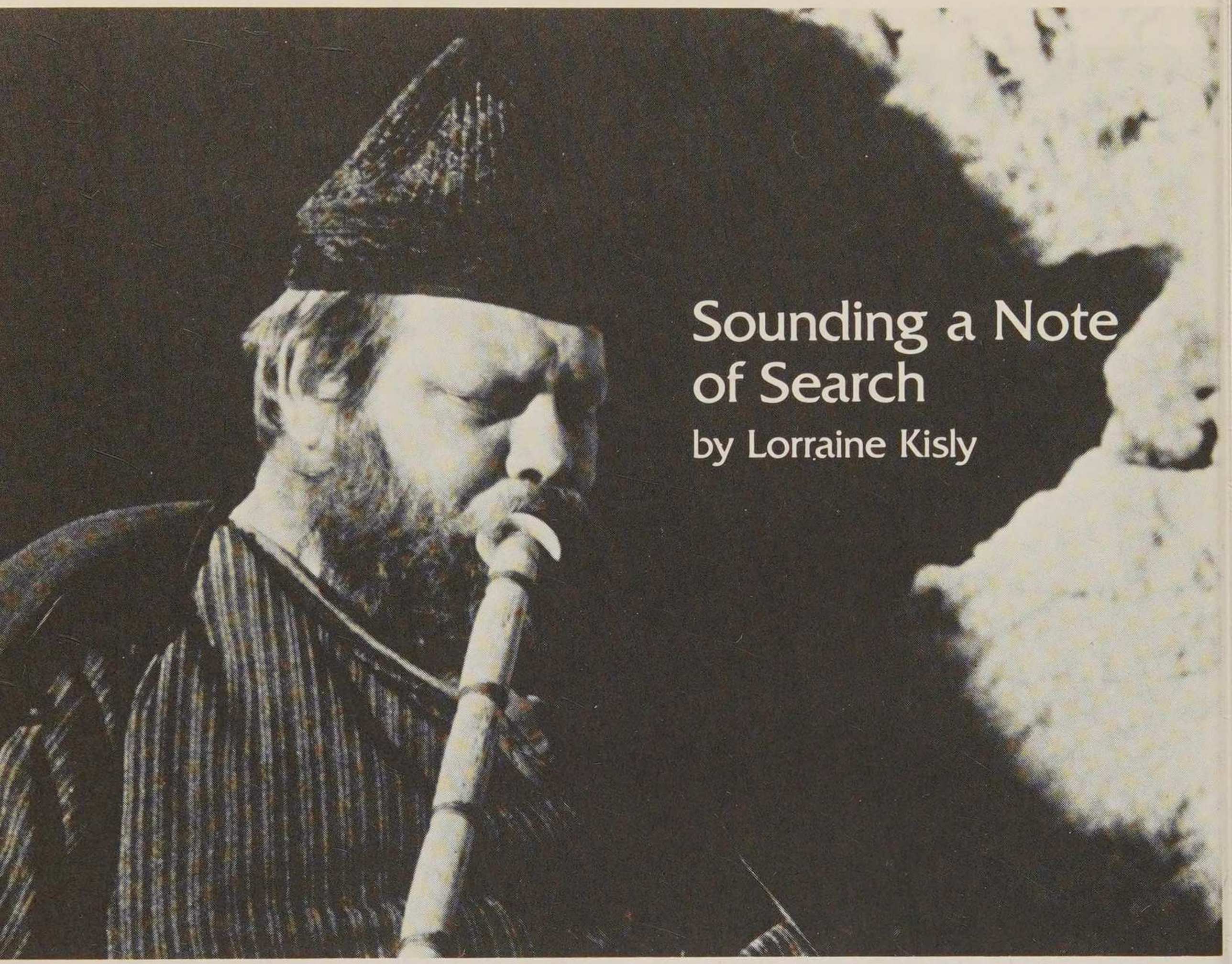
Akina Kubota [6]

takes on more definitive form..." Looking again at these sober black and white prints I wonder: Johnny, 6, is unlikely to be spectacularly inferior in comparison with Tazuo. But possibly at school Johnny is presented with a "complete set" of poster colors, and is promptly let loose to express himself. Tazuo is given a writing brush or a pencil. There is no automatic applause at his first abstract expressionist drip piece, but he is encouraged to try again and again, to look more intensely. Not that Tozu Norio (11) is inhibited or even squashed by all work and no play; perhaps his serious playing IS work:

I got into the ocean and played.
I played on the land too.
I also played in the sky.
I played with the devil's children
in the clouds.
I played with the shooting star in space.
I played too long and years passed.
I played even when I became a tottering
old man.
My beard was fifteen feet long.
Still I played.
Even when I was sleeping, my dream
was playing.
Finally I played with the sun,
seeing which one of us
could be redder.
I had already played ten thousand years.
Even when I was dead I still played.
I looked at the children playing,
from the sky.

Maybe "symbolizers," instead of "designating idiosyncratic and unusual subjects," should (for heavens' sake, *not* go back to school!) but on the contrary learn to see, to draw, to work. For the Japanese children seem to prove that we should no longer fear that some discipline in training is fatal to spontaneity in the visual arts.

Frederick Franck is the author and artist of The Zen of Seeing, Pilgrimage to Now/Here, EveryOne *and the forthcoming* The Awakened Eye *(Alfred A. Knopf). He is a Consulting Editor to* PARABOLA.



Sounding a Note of Search

by Lorraine Kisly

Meetings With Remarkable Men
From the book by G.I. Gurdjieff. Directed by Peter Brook. Screenplay by Jeanne de Salzmann and Peter Brook. Produced by Stuart Lyons. Remar Productions, Inc. A Libra Films Release.

After seeing *Meetings With Remarkable Men* once, it wasn't difficult to know what I thought about it; after the second viewing, the initial reactions seem not so much wrong as startlingly limited. There is no question that for most people, seeing this film a second time will be like seeing a completely different movie. The first time around, for example, the actors seem earnest enough, but rather wooden. The second time, they are subtle and intensely affecting. The transitions between scenes seem abrupt and awkward initially — during the second viewing there is an impression of a current under the surface as steady and insistent as a salmon swimming upstream. *Meetings With Remarkable Men* suddenly seems to know where it's going and exactly how to get there.

What is it that brings about this change in the viewer? I found a clue in reading an interview with Laurence Rosenthal, who was responsible for the musical score for *Meetings*. Here, he is referring to Mme. Jeanne de Salzmann, Gurdjieff's closest pupil, who collaborated with Brook on the film: "She said very often that the film con-

tained two levels and qualities of energy in constant motion, one level related to life and everything that is exterior, the other to an unseen and almost hidden inner movement in a totally different tempo...Very often, I think what has been recognized as a kind of abruptness was in fact a sudden movement from one level of energy to another in a way for which one is not normally prepared." It is just this "normal preparation," it seems to me, the habitual way we have of looking at movies, which has to be given up before this film can be seen for what it is.

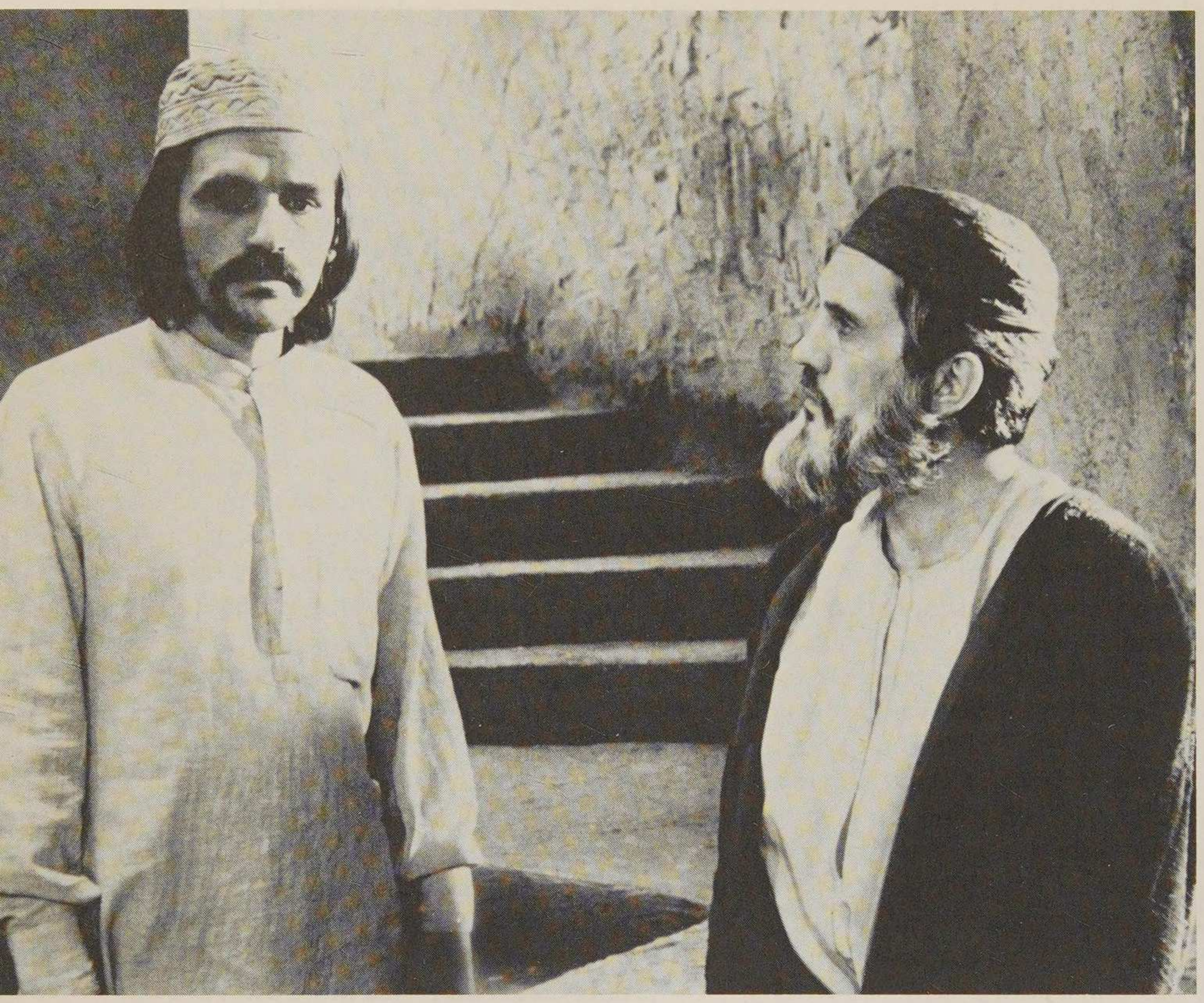
In the last issue of PARABOLA Peter Brook told us that his interest in theater and film stems from the fact that there is for him "a very special possibility of finding, for a certain period of time, a living form in which the marketplace and the invisible world coexist." This film brings Brook's interest together with Gurdjieff's book, which is the story of his search for an understanding of this balance. Brook has said many times that he would not have taken on the project were it not for the cooperation of Mme. de Salzmann. Their close collaboration and Gurdjieff's book combine to make this film a unique demonstration of the way in which the invisible and visible worlds connect.

Gurdjieff's *Meetings With Remarkable Men* is an exuberantly colorful evocation of life at the end of the last century in the region between the Caucasus and Kurdistan. His account of his own boyhood there, and of his subsequent travels through Central Asia, embodies a world in which the ordinary and the extraordinary appear simultaneously and inseparably. The film goes only as far as the book. It does not attempt to treat Gurdjieff as the teacher he became in later years. In the film we see Gurdjieff first as a young boy who encounters a series of mysterious events that he cannot explain. His search begins just here, in the anguish he feels at being unable to reconcile these two worlds — contradictory but undeniably real.

The opening scene — which strikes the keynote for the whole film — is one example of this. Gurdjieff is walking with his father to a high mountain valley where hundreds of people are assembling to witness a contest held only once in twenty years. The contestants are musicians, and each in turn chants or plays his instrument. The winner of the contest will be the one who can bring forth a sound of a certain quality. If it is exactly right, the rocks of the mountain will respond with an echoing answer. There are no words spoken during the contest, but as it unfolds there is no mistaking that this quality of sound has to come from deep inside the human being. The musicians search within themselves; they are involved in an extraordinary effort to find this quality and express it. The one who succeeds relates this invisible quality, the visible mountain, and himself, at the same resonant moment.

While we are being shown the beginning and development of Gurdjieff's search, we are somehow at the same time made progressively more and more aware of our own situation. The film creates, with an increasing intensity, both a question and a challenge. "Who are you?" it asks, as it shows Gurdjieff struggling with his own search. "What has happened to your questions? How are you facing your life?" The emphasis is constantly shifted from Gurdjieff and his way, to us and our own.

How a film can awaken questions like these is hinted at in the same opening scene. The ring of authenticity is echoed in every detail of place and period. At the same time, Brook has said that the underlying aim of the film was to follow Gurdjieff's maturing search. As it is presented to us, this search comes from an impulse deep in our nature; and in attempting to give us glimpses of it as an intensifying process, a process with definite stages, possible for everyone, the film itself becomes a search to convey a series of impressions of a certain quality in a certain order. It becomes, like the contest, an attempt which succeeds

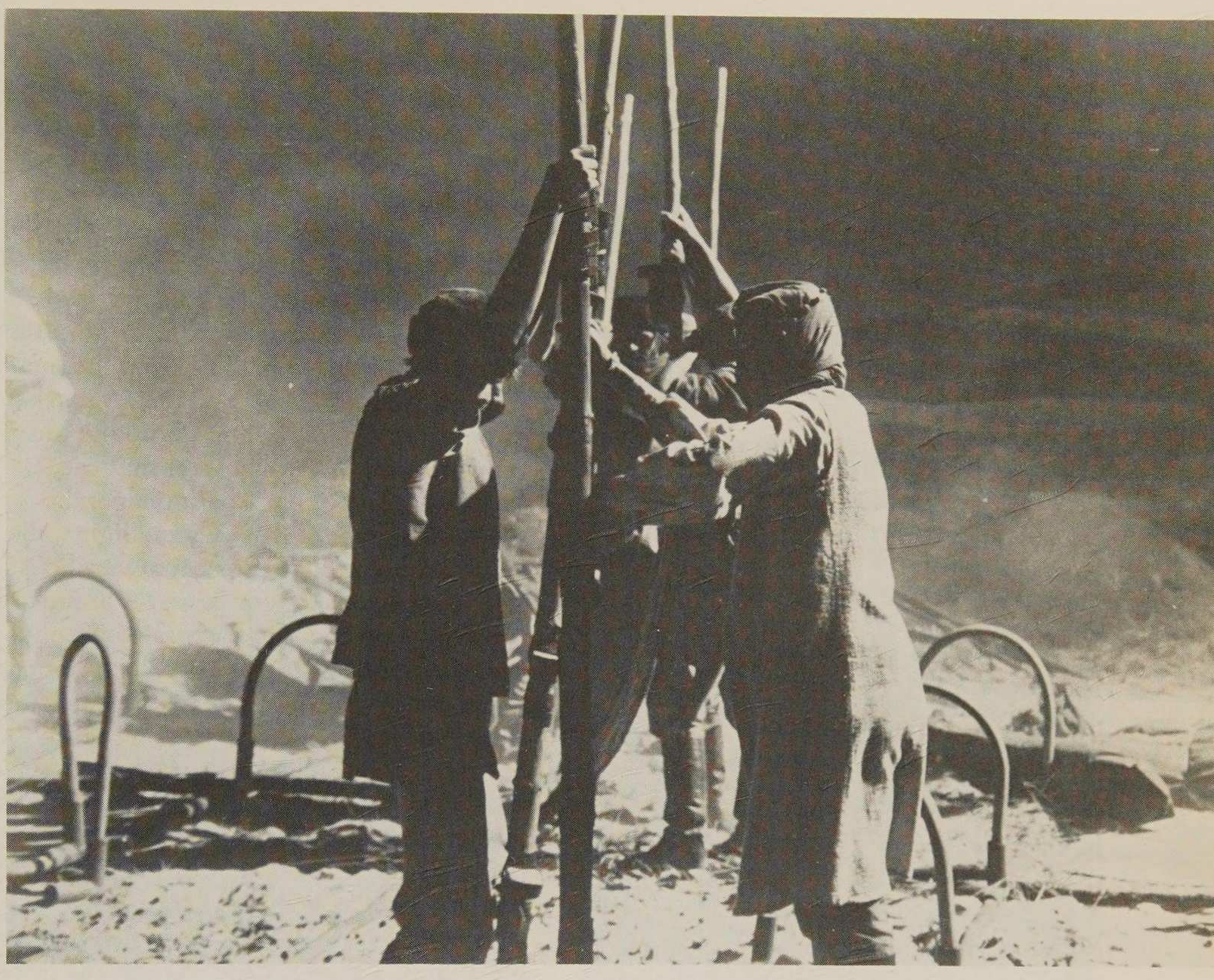


Dragan Maksimovic as Gurdjieff and Terence Stamp as Prince Yuri Lubovedsky

on its own terms when it evokes a vibration in its audiences.

It doesn't seem to me that this has been tried in a film before, and it may seem that the actors feel the strain. Most of the dialogue, after all, was not designed for actors. Quite often they must speak direct quotes from the book, words of one of Gurdjieff's remarkable men. One can sense a demand on the actors to find a place in themselves from which they could speak the words fully and authentically. One or another of the cast finds this place more completely or more consistently, but what is important is the atmosphere that is created throughout the film by the fact that this effort is being made. It can be felt, and it affects the audience.

Even on initial viewing, the beauty of the music and photography are striking, one complementing and supporting the other. The score was partly composed by Laurence Rosenthal and partly adapted by him from music written in what he calls a sort of collaboration between Gurdjieff and his pupil, the late composer Thomas de Hartmann. Near the end of the film, there is a rare glimpse of some of Gurdjieff's sacred dances and exercises. The sequences of these movements, demonstrated by pupils of the Gurdjieff work, give a double impression. They are exact postures followed rigorously with each dancer precisely at-



A scene from Meetings With Remarkable Men: *escaping a sandstorm in the Gobi Desert*

tuned with the next. At the same time each individual seems to be free, perfectly in balance; one sees the "two levels of energy" in action. It is worth seeing *Meetings* for these sequences alone.

There is a scene in the film where Gurdjieff is told by the brothers of a monastery about two monks who from time to time visit them. Both are very old, and wise. One of them, Brother Sez, is elegant in speech and manner, and enraptures the brotherhood with the beauty and grace of his words. The other, Brother Ahl, is halting and awkward, his words difficult to understand. When their visit is over, the brotherhood finds that they can recall almost nothing of the words of Brother Sez, while the gist of the words of Brother Ahl slowly take on an increasing meaning until they are "instilled as a whole into the heart and remain there forever." In trying to discover the reason for this, the brothers come to the conclusion that "the sermons of Brother Sez proceeded only from his mind, and therefore acted on our minds, whereas those of Brother Ahl proceeded from his being and acted on our being."

This scene has remained in me as a symbol for the whole of the film — the "gist" of it stays with me.

Lorraine Kisly is a Contributing Editor to PARABOLA.

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

by Roger Lipsey

Treasures from the Kremlin
An Exhibition from the State Museums of the Moscow Kremlin. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, May 19 - September 2, 1979.

Just why we go to exhibitions, and why we should, remains a knotty question. In this case, if we respond to the Metropolitan Museum's invitation, we are agreeing to peep over the Kremlin walls at gold and silver and textile workmanship of the highest quality, to feel a little closer to history through pondering such objects as the furry coronation cap of Peter the Great, and to admire the passionate imagery of the Russian schools of icon-painting. These things are exhibited in a knowing order, the great early icons first, church and royal furnishings next, and last — perhaps without dialectical-materialist irony — a little Fabergé model of the Kremlin given by the Czar to the Czarina in 1904, the hands of its penny-sized tower clocks stopped. It is easy to feel amidst the splendor that a "why" is superfluous. Better to enjoy, enjoy, or to trail around after the more voluble connoisseurs visiting the exhibition who seem to know why they are there.

The question is acutely felt before the icons: the chainmail of Boris Gudonov is one thing, these brilliant religious works quite another. In our business-and-technology society, we expect a transaction to occur between ourselves and others, and here if anywhere a transaction could be expected if negotiations in good faith are undertaken. The beginning of the negotiation is of course to give up other interests, to see the icon vividly while letting it direct you to your sensibility.

"The Savior of the Fiery Eye" (fig. 1) is without question one of the masterpieces of Russian religious art. More than three feet high and approaching a yard in width, it is altogether different in scale from the small domestic icons to be seen in the art market or occasionally in a home. Photographic reproductions effectively transmit the fierce intensity of the Christ image, the mustard and russet shadows and lights, the troubled face of a Man of Sorrows who is also, unequivocally, our judge. A product of Moscow workshops in the mid-fourteenth century, it carries forward unchanged many conventions inherited from Byzantine icons, but transforms a major one nearly beyond recognition. Perhaps the greatest Early Christian work akin to it, the icon of Christ from Mt. Sinai, of the sixth century (fig. 2), pictures a telling difference between the eyes of Christ: the right eye serene and direct as if to express the impassible divinity of the Second Person, the left eye strained and affected. So the "distinction without a difference" of God and Man in a single nature was recorded. Reworked by history, and no doubt by the Russian temperament, the distinction has faded in the Moscow icon. The pain of life has entered both eyes, the forehead records suffering and anger without serenity. In the centuries between the two icons, a meaning has been lost and a meaning has been gained, but the power of each is such that we can safely feel ourselves to be witnessing the internal modifications of a vital religion rather than its drift toward critical loss of its own meanings.

In another of the icons on exhibition, monks of the Solovetsky Monastery (the name alone can create a vagrant nostalgia)

tumble in a graceful mass at the feet of the Virgin who appears before them; in still another Virgin icon (fig. 3), kings and clergy are massed so closely that the artist can paint three full figures and merely suggest the crowd behind them by painting the tops of heads and caps. The recurrent motif is another form of "distinction without difference," suggesting that the divine unites disparate men.

Such perceptions and thoughts are a sample of possible transactions with the ancient work, but they can still leave one noticeably empty. Does it make sense to expect religious completion from old religious works, however mighty? Is the emptiness a sign that our beloved culture has its own acts to accomplish that no loans can achieve for us? These icons, howling from a lost time and place, send us back into the street with a more certain sense that we are on our own.

Roger Lipsey is a Contributing Editor to PARABOLA.

Figure 1

Figure 2

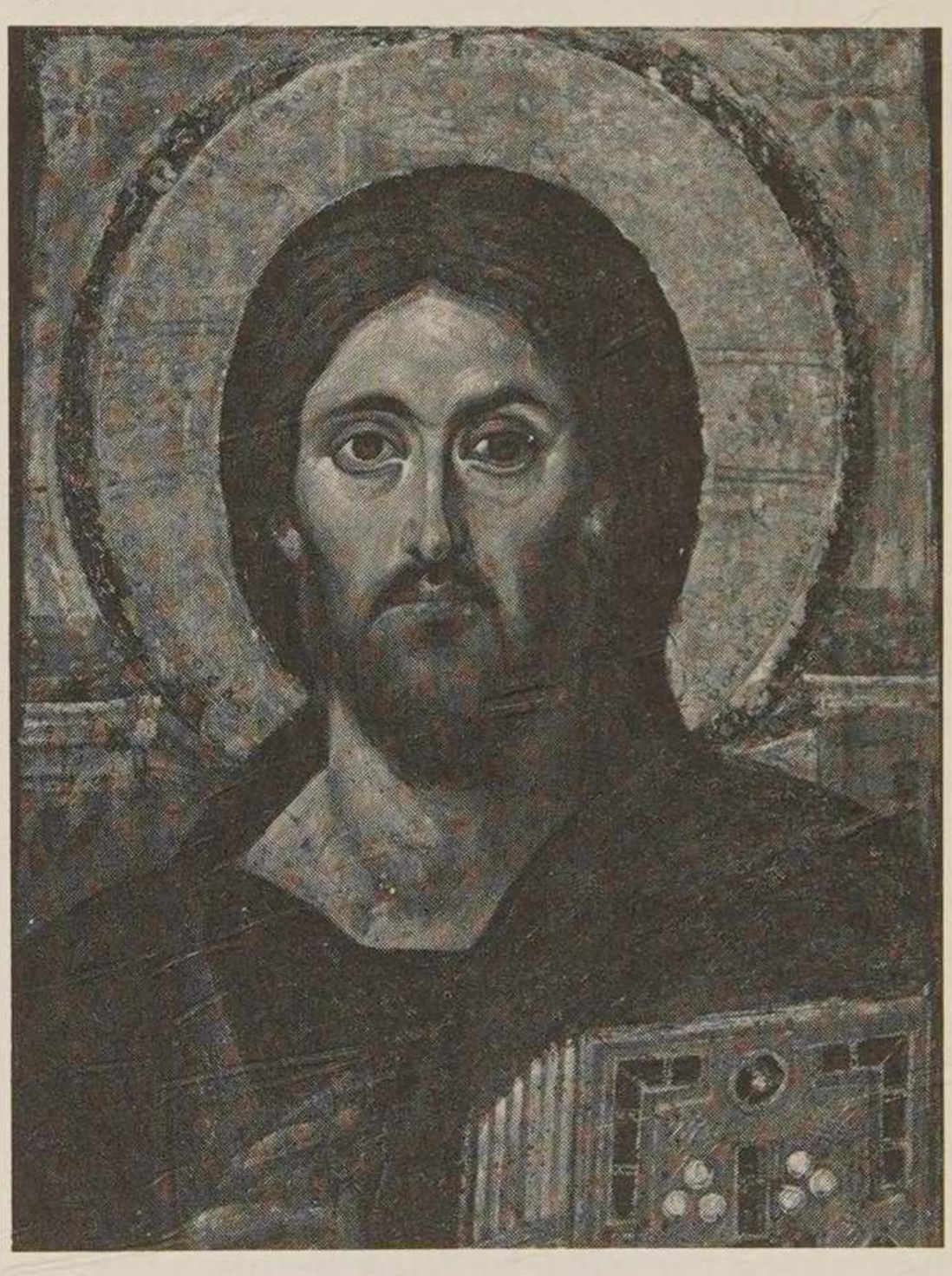


Figure 3(detail)

A History of Religious Ideas, Vol. I: From the Stone Age to the Eleusinian Mysteries
By Mircea Eliade. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978. Pp. 489. $20.00.

Reviewed by Huston Smith

To compare Mircea Eliade with Einstein is to hyperbolize, but as I started reading his book on the centennial of Einstein's birth, some similarities obtruded. Eliade has not revolutionized the history of religions as Einstein revolutionized physics, but he is an undisputed master of his field and like Einstein has been concerned with the big picture — what the facts add up to. This summarizing interest is not always evident. His *Patterns in Comparative Religion* has the feel of an enormous warehouse in which only the proprietor knows where things are, and in his autobiographical memoir, *No Souvenirs*, Eliade confesses to an inhibition that all but paralyzes him when he tries to highlight the meaning of his books; "often, the very idea of rendering them accessible is repugnant to me...I find it wearisome to summarize the content of a book" (p. 68). But the meaning is there, and before I turn to the book in hand I shall do what Eliade himself dislikes doing. In three paragraphs I shall try to establish the substance of his lifework which the trilogy the present book begins will round off like a conclusion.

As no totally secular society has ever been found, it can now be asserted as an anthropological fact that in addition to being *homo sapiens, homo faber* and *homo ludens*, man is also *homo religiosus*: he is a religious animal. "The 'sacred' is...not a stage in the history of consciousness. [It] is an element in the structure of consciousness." Far from being confined to the childhood of the human race as it used to be fashionable to assert, the sacred is embedded in the human psyche as a permanent element.

The bulk of this element, though, is buried in our unconscious. And it is from this fact that the history-of-religion's mission arises. If Marx unmasked our social unconscious and Freud our personal unconscious, the history of religions seeks to unmask what might be called our "sacred unconscious" — the largely unconscious presence and workings of the sacred in human history.

It is this exciting vision and vocation, announced by Eliade in the 1961 founding issue of *The History of Religions*, which has made The University of Chicago such a lively center for this study for the last twenty years. When speaking of statesmen in this field Wilfred Cantwell Smith should never be overlooked, but his interests are more theological and philosophical. What distinguishes Eliade is that by way of more languages he is abreast of more historical facts than anyone else in the field and at the same time excites us with what these facts portend. The selection committee did well in naming him to share with Lewis Thomas this spring the first Threshold Award for "contribution to integrative knowledge leading to a unified vision of reality and to the wholeness of man."

Now to the book in hand. Tracing the religious development of mankind from discernible historical beginnings to the Eleusinian mysteries, it comes (as I have noted) as the first of a three-volume synthesis that will crown its author's life work. Eliade tells us in its Preface that for years he has wanted to write a concise book that could be read in a few days which would set forth clearly "the *fundamental unity* of religious phenomena and at the same time the inexhaustible newness of their experience" (xv). For PARABOLA readers I wish it were that unwritten book I was reviewing here rather than the one in hand. Having been treated to exquisitely lucid, epitomizing books like *The Sacred and the Profane*, we know well what Eliade can do when he sets out to mix his scholarship with the literary talents for which he is better known in Europe than for his erudition.

The fact, though, is that the present book is not that projected one; its author

felt the need to work through his material in detail before summarizing it. The result is a book that is more scholarly than readable. It abounds with discrete insights, and at one level it too synthesizes. If one wants to know in twenty-five pages what the best scholarship now tells us about Paleolithic religion, say, or the changes in religious consciousness that were wrought by the discovery of agriculture; if one wants to know what Dionysianism or Mesopotamian religion was all about, I know of no better book to which to turn. But it is prose, not poetry. The facts are spread before us and we are continuously alerted to cross-cultural parallels. But we are left to stumble over technical terms, many of which do not appear in standard dictionaries — zigurat, ontophany, epoptes, syncope — and pretty much to mine our own meaning from the data displayed. The apparatus of scholarship is in full view. Eliade tells us in *No Souvenirs* that immersion in his materials (enormous, inert, somber documentation) calls for a temporary death of his personal, vital, and original self; when he feels he is suffocating, he must come back to the surface. But he returns, he says, seeing things differently — understanding them. At a different level most readers of this book are likely to experience a comparable asphyxiation/understanding, death/rebirth syndrome.

I found the omission of East Asian materials — China, Korea, Japan — curious; presumably they have been reserved for a later volume. In any case there can be no question but that when it is completed *The History of Religious Ideas* will be a solid capstone to Professor Eliade's career. Non-specialists can hope that it will also serve as foundation for the one-volume, synthesizing "home" he tells us he would like some day to build upon it.

Huston Smith is Thomas J. Watson Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Syracuse University. He is author of The Religions of Man *and* Forgotten Truth: The Primordial Tradition.

Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid
By Douglas R. Hofstadter. New York: Basic Books, 1979. Pp. xxi + 777. $18.50.

Reviewed by Peter Heinegg

How to characterize this gigantic *jeu d'esprit*? The dust jacket calls it a "metaphorical fugue on minds and machines in the spirit of Lewis Carroll," and Carroll (logician, mathematician, paradoxicalist) does in a way preside over these dizzying mental gymnastics. But "the spirit of François Rabelais" might have been more appropriate. For, though Hofstadter teaches the very un-Rabelaisian subject of computer science (at Indiana U.), and not a breath of ribaldry stirs in his 800-page text, still the scope, the exuberance, and the polymathic ingenuity of the book carry one back to *Pantagruel.* Apart from the strands of number theory, illusionist art, and musical invention implied in the title, Hofstadter weaves into his work such apparently far-flung topics as molecular structures, neurology, artificial intelligence, insect behavior, computer languages, etc. The end result is a triumph of cleverness, a brain-teaser to keep one busy for a month (Hofstadter actually assigns the reader homework, various problems whose solution must be worked out with pencil and paper). But, alas, for all his brilliance, Hofstadter forgets that brevity is the soul of wit. Even the liveliest of games — witness the Stanley Cup play-offs — can go on too long.

His central theme, if he has one, is the idea of self-reference. Gödel's Incompleteness Theorem comes in here, because it proved, in W.V.O. Quine's words, "that there can be no sound and complete deductive systematization of elementary number theory, much less of pure mathematics." For any such system Gödel could produce a sentence which "would be true if and only if not provable in that system." Shades of Epimenides the Cretan, who claimed that all Cretans were liars! M.C. Escher's marvelous drawings (generously reproduced throughout the volume) are relevant to this theme because they all play, in one fashion or another, with the wavering frontiers between the viewer and the world. In the

famous lithograph, *Waterfall* (1961), for instance, Escher's tricks of perspective create the impossible impression of six levels of perception that are simultaneously one. This is literally a paradox in black and white. Finally, Hofstadter invokes Bach, because his "Musical Offering" is so full of "strange loops," i.e., situations similar to the Escher waterfall, where by moving upwards or downwards through the levels of the system we find ourselves, unexpectedly but inevitably, back at our starting point. In the "Canon per Tonos," for example, Bach goes away from and returns to C using the key areas D, E, F#, G#, A#, (B♭) as stepping stones. At the same time, the theme is based on a descending chromatic scale.

Very well, but where do these strange loops lead? Hofstadter doesn't say, at first, preferring to ring the changes on this haunting theme — which he does with practically perverse enthusiasm. At long last, though, he suggests that all of human consciousness may be structured on the model of a supreme Strange Loop. Mental phenomena, he argues, constitute "an interaction between levels in which the top level reaches back down toward the bottom level and influences it while at the same time being itself determined by the bottom level." He observes a transition "from low-level physical hardware to high-level psychological software," which he finds analogous to "the translation of number-theoretical statements into metamathematical statements." This admittedly vague formula, he thinks, does justice to both holistic and reductionist views of the mind, and may be the key to the development of artificial intelligence, for which he obviously has high hopes.

In his foreword Hofstadter confesses that "this book is a statement of my religion." It is, in fact, an enormous scientific-humanistic testament — again a sort of neo-Rabelaisian outpouring. As a latter-day Renaissance man, a dazzling amateur in half a dozen fields, Hofstadter audaciously tries to fuse everything he knows in a grand display of virtuosity — and almost succeeds. What's missing is true artistic creativity. Hofstadter has a flair for explanation: he takes on all subjects, from amino acids to Zen, with clarity, energy, and good humor. But he insists on shifting back and forth between straight exposition and quasi-musical meditations, in the form of dialogues between Achilles and the Tortoise (by way of Zeno's paradox). His intent was to provide an "intuitive background" for the abstractions to follow, but his prose isn't subtle or witty enough, and after a while the device begins to drag.

But, despite the flat spots, this is a bravura performance, an incredible intellectual debut. Anyone with a good head for mathematics and modicum of patience — well, maybe a little more than a modicum — can have all kinds of fun watching the show. Where Hofstadter will go from here, one can scarcely imagine. But for readers willing and able to follow him, it's likely to be a tremendously interesting trip.

Peter Heinegg is Professor of Comparative Literature at Union College, Schenectady, N.Y.

From the Poetry of Sumer; Creation, Glorification, Adoration
By Samuel Noah Kramer. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. Pp.104. $10.50

Reviewed by John R. Maier

She sings joyously in the presence of her lover:

As for me, my vulva,
For me, the piled high hillock,
Me, the Maid, who will plow it for me?
My vulva, the watered ground — for me,
Me, the Queen, who will station the ox there?

Such simple and graceful lyricism — this guilt-ridden West rarely hears the Great Goddess sing so. The song proclaims the distance of more than thirty centuries that separates us from the Sumerians. Although some of the texts have been available since the 1870s, only in the last twenty years have readable translations of Sumerian literature come to be known to the public. We can listen today to Sumerian poetry of the

Third and Second Millennium Mesopotamia through the efforts of cuneiform scholars like Samuel Noah Kramer. *From the Poetry of Sumer* reports on the progress scholars have made in the last hundred years. But it is much more. Kramer has been making significant contributions to Sumerian studies for over forty years, bringing us *Sumerian Mythology*, *The Sumerians*, and *The Sacred Marriage Rite*. As in those works, he brings to light new texts and subtly alters the translations that had appeared earlier. Six new poems are presented here, marking it as an important book for the student of myth.

The four essays in *From the Poetry of Sumer* speak to specialist and nonspecialist alike. "Creation: What the Gods Have Wrought" and "Adoration: A Divine Model of the Liberated Woman" will catch the eye of the student of myth immediately. The two other essays, one of which deals with the recovery and translation of the 30,000 lines of Sumerian literature we now have, the other focusing on the genre of the Royal Hymn, are equally important. The student of literature will want to know of the twenty myths, the nine epic tales and the more than two hundred hymns, chants, dirges, essays, proverbs and disputations that form the corpus of Sumerian literature. And a wider audience will be interested in knowing about the "ideal man" as the Sumerians represented him in the Royal Hymns. (In the latter essay Kramer makes an important statement about the functional use of imagery in the poems.)

Many of the Creation poems taken up in his second essay have been considered in earlier Kramer works, especially those involving the god Enki. One could argue that, for example, his interpretation of "Cattle and Grain" leans too heavily on mankind receiving the "breath of life" and thus becoming man as we know him rather than the animal he was originally. The poem seems rather to point to the importance of food in the transformation. But no one knows the texts better than Kramer, and his readings are usually sensitive. A glance at "Cattle and Grain" in the earlier *Sumerian Mythology* and his latest translation will show how he subtly altered his own previous work.

Kramer has been working with poems about the goddess Inanna for many years. His final essay, on the goddess as a divine model of the "liberated woman," is thus no last-minute stab at giving his work "relevance." The status of women in Mesopotamian history seems to be one of steady deterioration of the liberties they enjoyed in Sumerian times. The myths reflect the change, too. Great male figures like Enlil usurp functions once possessed by mother goddesses like Ki. But as Kramer concludes, "God in Sumer never became all male." Inanna (Semitic Ishtar) is clearly not only the most powerful of the goddesses; she is the most complex and fascinating of all the gods. Kramer documents three major aspects of Inanna: as the Morning and Even-

ing Star; as the goddess of war; and as the goddess of love and fertility. Most of the unpublished poems translated here are Inanna poems. British Museum text BM 23820 reveals the violent wrath and also the compassion of Inanna; BM 96679 shows her concern that all other beings, those over which she exercises power, have a place, but she has no "house" of her own, a motif that shows up elsewhere. In one text Inanna is the fertile goddess, legumes pouring from her womb in great abundance. In another, she is sexually innocent as her brother, the god Utu, attempts to seduce her.

A moving poem Kramer has recently translated is an elegy on the death of a courier. It has the force of the Inanna poems, although it is not specifically one of them. Highly stylized and repetitive, it represents a good deal of Sumerian poetic technique. A sample of Kramer's translation shows how he retains the forthright elegance and power of Sumerian verse:

After the courier has come, I will provide
great things for him:
I will provide him with hot water and
cold water,
I will provide him with rein and whip,
I will provide him with a clean garment
and fine oil,
I will provide him with a chair and a footstool,
I will provide him with a verdant bed,
I will provide him with cream and milk from
stall and fold.

My courier — he has come but walks not, he has
come but walks not,
He has eyes but he cannot see me,
He has a mouth but he cannot converse with me.

There are a few typos in *From the Poetry of Sumer* (e.g. Aratts for Aratta, p. 9, and Nihursag for Ninhursag, p. 39). Otherwise it is a clean text, very readable, and quite challenging for one who wishes to understand Sumerian poetry.

John R. Maier teaches English at SUNY College at Brockport, New York.

The Dream and the Underworld
By James Hillman. New York: Harper and Row, 1979. Pp. 256. $10.00, paper $3.95.

Reviewed by Tom Moore

Ernest Jones, relating the history of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, mentions that it took eight years to sell the six hundred copies of the book's first printing. Later that much revised work became Freud's own choice creation and a classic in Western literature. James Hillman's *The Dream and the Underworld* will also probably have a slow start. The author himself alludes in the book to its difficulties. But this is an important work — not only a bridge or tunnel, as Hillman says, to his other writings, but a substantial, impeccably presented, radically fresh approach to a topic vulnerable to unbridled speculation yet worthy of such classic treatment.

At the biographical level and in the spirit of much of his writing, James Hillman works out of the matrix of C.G. Jung — he is a practicing analyst and was formerly director of studies at the Jung Institute in Zürich. But he is not a "Jungian." If Freud and Jung were step one and two in the development of modern depth psychology, Hillman may represent step three. The basis for this high estimation is to be found in two aspects of his work.

On one hand, his writing represents a true evolution of the work of Freud and Jung. As he says in this book, he is working in the very field in which they labored. He uses the intuitive insights and crafted theories of these two pioneers like oils on a palette. Freud and Jung are not destroyed by Hillman, but rather brought to a certain fruition.

On the other hand, Hillman works in a spirit of independence with history, religion, myth, and the practical insights derived from the therapist's experience. He is critical of major, fundamental tenets of Freudian and Jungian psychology. Specifically, he offers a solution to a formidable problem that has darkened the otherwise brilliant achievements of depth psychology: the tendency toward reductionism. Freud takes art, myth, religion, and even neurosis and narrows them into Oedipal patterns,

childhood, and sexuality. Jung, and especially his followers, often transform useful penetrating metaphors such as shadow, anima, and animus into conceptual categories that obliterate the complexity of art and experience. Hillman avoids these traps by maintaining a consistent, self-conscious, articulated appreciation for the metaphorical nature of the intellectual tools with which he operates.

Those looking for definitions, context, method, and system in the "archetypal psychology" Hillman has created will find most satisfaction in his major work, *Re-Visioning Psychology*; but this book on dreams is in many ways more fundamental. Here one finds the heart of Hillman's imaginative vision and the major mythic theme behind archetypal psychology. It is a psychology of depth. Heraclitus, the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who described psyche as depth, is called upon throughout the book. Dreams are imagined against the mythic backdrop of the Greek and Egyptian underworlds. The book is at once an interpretation of dreams through images of the underworld, and an interpretation of the underworld through dreams.

If the mythic complexity and the author's impressive learning do not intimidate the reader, his criticism of other approaches to dream and his suggestions for working with dreams will offer quite a challenge. For example, he uses Freud creatively, seeing Freud's statements from a fresh viewpoint; nevertheless he departs radically from Freud. If the dream, says Hillman, is the royal road to the unconscious, a bridge, he wants to walk it in the opposite direction. He would see waking experience in the chiarascuro of the underworld of dreams; he would never translate dream images into the light of waking life. As opposed to Jung, Hillman does not interpret dream figures and images as personality traits to be integrated into life. That too is the wrong direction. Hillman sees the underworld of dreams as a place of death, the place where life dies to its literal values and becomes the stuff of the psyche or soul. Even the Gestalt therapist's practice of identifying the dreamer with dream-parts translates the shades of the underworld into ego reality. Our descent into this underworld, Hillman suggests, is usually accomplished in a heroic, Herculean manner. As Hercules used his muscles and weapons in his descent, we try to "solve" the dream. We bring our pragmatic concerns to it, and thus the soul is not served. In this work Hillman serves both death and depth. He writes as would a theologian in the religion of Hades and of other deities who have a mission to the underworld.

Though Hillman warns us against the many ways we often try to bring the ghosts of dream into our familiar world of light — making the Unconscious conscious, integrating our shadows, compensating for what the dreams show to be missing in life, finding childhood roots of present difficulties, ferreting out complexes, and (one violation of the darkness he does not mention) influencing the course of our dreams — still he argues against the Romantic notion that dreams do their work at night and should be left alone. In many of his writings, as here on dreams, Hillman disputes those psychologies that advocate with imagery of growth the unfolding of the natural psyche. He prefers, with Jung, the alchemical view that the psyche is to be worked and crafted in an effort of imaginative intelligence directed against the natural, literal attitude. Dream "interpretation" is a work against the natural, an *opus contra naturam*. But in this case *homo faber*, the worker, is one equipped with the tools of imagination, a person comfortable with metaphor.

The final chapter entitled "Praxis" begins with a section headed with the phrase "Caveat lector." There are plenty of caveats in that chapter; for while Hillman wishes to acknowledge the reader's desire for guidance in working with dream images, he obviously does not want to offer a dreambook of allegorical meanings, nor to suggest ways of putting dream themes into practice. Warnings heeded, this is a valuable chapter in that it offers suggestions for imagining some common dream themes as invitations to depth. Food, forgetting,

water, animals, and excrement are among the imagistic themes Hillman considers in the context of death and underworld.

Freud said that the insights in his book, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, come only once in a lifetime. Hillman's dream book — based upon a provocative, seminal, truly original insight into the relationship between psyche and death — is clearly the most intelligent, most radically conceived work on dreams since Freud's. It demands of the reader a soul-shaking shift in attitude toward himself, a re-evaluation of his nightworld in relation to his dayworld. For Hillman, this shift in attitude is the first step toward soul-making, toward the fashioning, not of one's life, but of one's depth. Hillman sees his root metaphor of the underworld as a "helpful story," no more substantial than a dream. But his way of imagining the connection between dream and underworld offers us guidance down to a realm that is at once a place dark, winding, fearsome, and, to the literal eye, invisible (Hades) as well as a house of wealth and plenty (Pluto).

Tom Moore is Professor of Psychology and Myth in the Religious Studies Department of Southern Methodist University.

Rebel in the Soul
By Bika Reed. New York: Inner Traditions International, 1979. Pp. 140. Paper $9.95.

Reviewed by Mark Hasselriis

"To be or not to be" is the ageless theme of a difficult-to-translate Egyptian literary work concerned with the problem of suicide. It is often called "A man tired of life in dispute with his soul."

Bika Reed, following the "heart doctrine" of her mentor, R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz — that the way to approach spiritual knowledge is by the wisdom of the heart and not by the "eye doctrine," or intellectual power alone — has retranslated "A man tired of life...,"and renamed it *Rebel in the Soul.* Though she does not give a complete comparison between her transliterated version and that of the Egyptologist R.O. Faulkner, she provides a sample of both, and, within the commentary, gives her reasons for the interpretation of the text. The reader may thus easily see why even scholars avoid tackling some Egyptian writings and prefer to provide noncommittal translations.

This is not, however, to say that nothing significant may be learned when an "outsider" plunges into the labyrinth of ancient Egyptian thought or studies the fragments which have survived the millennia. *Rebel in the Soul* opens the door upon the inner stages of development along the way toward illumination or liberation and, though Ms. Reed has not described the degrees of initiation sequentially, she serves as a kind of psychopomp. As one of the few to take this great ancient tradition seriously, her work deserves praise.

She observes, rightly, that "today, in a world where highly developed intellect is at war with basic social and human needs and where, simultaneously, young intuitive forces are searching for a new way, this initiate text is vital." While realizing that specialists may not agree with her approach, she herself exhibits this intuitive force and boldly leads the reader into the intricacies of her pilgrimage toward insight and wisdom.

The author's thesis is that the text, a dialogue between a man and his soul, reflects an initiation, or an initiatory tradition, which is associated with the Judgment of the Heart (such as is seen in papyri) before Osiris and the gods of his company. The question is, "if there is no justice in this world here and now, shall I fear it in the life to come?" The faith of the candidate is tested against his doubt in Divine Justice (or himself) because his present life has become intolerable and social disorder reigns.

There is no doubt in this reviewer's mind that an initiatory tradition did exist in ancient Egypt and that the famous judgment hall scene is one of the places to look for its symbols. And the text in question is certainly an appropriate example for the type of human crisis which constitutes a "test of the sense of reality which must be successfully passed before the psychic and

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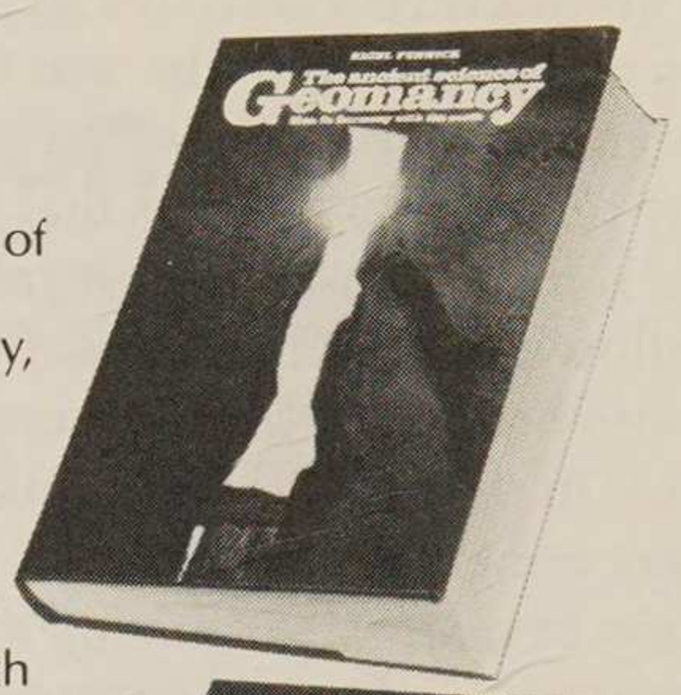

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When R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz first advanced his interpretations of Egyptian symbolism and architecture he was not taken seriously. Later on, however, it was realized by some Egyptologists that he had discovered some remarkable new information. In following in his footsteps, Bika Reed has also broken through to some valuable insights in this book. Unfortunately the book suffers somewhat from the brevity of presentation of material requiring a great deal of supportive information, especially for the non-specialist who is unfamiliar with Egyptian symbolism. The netherworld literature, for example, to which the author refers in the commentary, only makes sense when the day-night cycle of the sun and the stars is sufficiently explained as symbolic usage. Death and unconsciousness are considered equivalent states symbolically. Thus, the candidate to wisdom follows a similar path to that of the sun god who descends into the netherworld (or night) and passes on his night-journey from his nadir at midnight to his ascent into the heavens at dawn through the chambers, or hours, of night.

Rebel in the Soul contains a wide variety of fine pictures which illustrate the prose and poetic parts of the text. However, there is no listing of individual plates nor any pictorial identification, except for text figures included in the commentary. Some of these latter may be incorrect. On page 112, the youthful god called "Khonsu" may be the young Horus. The "ass" he is resting upon resembles the cow goddess Hathor, as it is clearly *both* horned and has ears. Another plate is titled "The Mystical Fear of the Loss of Identity" (p. 118). This scene is almost always interpreted to represent "jubilation at having passed the Judgment of the Heart," since a similar vignette, albeit abbreviated, in the "Book of What Is In the Netherworld" shows the King in jubilation. Ms. Reed might have come closer to the original sense had she titled the scene "Fear Overcome," as the feathers held by the candidate signify truth (or light) and accomplishment, not darkness (i.e., fear). Also, one of the illustrations of the ass (p. 116) may be the Osirian hare, but here as in other instances of ancient calligraphic art a reasonable doubt and an open mind are necessary.

Ms. Reed's assertion that the body is considered a net is supported by the fact that in the linen of mummy wrappings a single thread was removed. This represented the sinister god Set (whose symbol is the ass), mythologically the cause of the death of Osiris, whom the deceased becomes at death. Thus the net and the wrappings are variations on the same theme, that of the labyrinth.

Ms. Reed's reference to the *Ba* as soul or the principle of cohesion or unity may be too abstract. Perhaps "higher mind" fits the situation a little better, especially as the *Ka* principle is more often defined as soul. However, if the reader will accept that some subtle problems of definition yet exist in the Egyptian religion, he or she may well be inspired by Ms. Reed's work to enter into this fascinating quest for understanding.

Mark Hasselriis, an Egyptological artist and epigrapher, lectures on the symbolism of ancient Egypt at The Foundation for the Open Eye, New York City. He has illustrated volumes on Egyptian religious texts and representations for the Bollingen Series, published by Princeton University Press.

The Medusa and the Snail: More Notes of a Biology Watcher
By Lewis Thomas. New York: Viking Press, 1979. Pp. x + 175. $8.95.

Reviewed by David Finkelstein

Have you read *The Lives of a Cell?* If so, you will already be in a mood of pleasant anticipation before you pick up this book. Lewis Thomas dives beneath the familiar surfaces of life to the amazing inner processes by which life is supported, finds universal meaning there, and bears his morals up to our daylight world, as deftly as a pelican catches sardines.

This book is made of more and smaller morsels than his previous one, essays averaging six pages each, mostly from the

New England Journal of Medicine. Their flavor is accentuated by imagining them on a background of technical medical papers.

The title of the collection is a delightful biological paradox, a symbiotic pair that live in each other by turns. A free-swimming medusa ingests a snail of a specific species, the snail gradually trims the medusa to a pill-size slug, the reduced medusa attaches inside the snail's mouth and lives off the snail. The ingested creature thrives off the ingester and swallows it in turn, forever and ever. Are they really two individuals, or two phases of one? This questioning of boundaries between lives is one of the main themes of Lewis' writing.

Lewis himself is a biological paradox, according to these essays. This gives the energy to his writing: it is usually about himself.

In his snailhard *yang* phase he is the analytic scientist, explicitly convinced that each disease has "a single, dominant central cause," the example being tuberculosis and its bacillus. "If you get rid of the tubercle bacillus you get rid of the disease." Or again, in another essay, "All you have to do, armed with the sure knowledge that the spirochete is the intervener, is to reach in carefully and eliminate this microorganism." In this phase he regards holistic approaches as superstitious meddling, in a class with bleeding and purging, usually doing more harm than good, and sees biomedical research as the path to a healthy species whose aged would go from long life to sudden death like the one-horse shay.

In the essay "On Warts," however, he infers from the way hypnosis can clear warts off the skin that each of us possesses a kind of superintelligence within us, capable of directing our internal processes with enormous detail and precision, marshalling specific lymphocytes and contracting specific arterioles with the combined talents of a master surgeon, a world-renowned cell biologist, a skilled engineer, and a brilliant chief executive. This is his medusoid *yin* holistic phase. Some diseases, he recognizes in this persona, can be made to go away by thinking. He does not reconcile his two phases. What happens when Superintelligence meets the Tubercle Bacillus? Is the "single, dominant central cause" sometimes a thought?

We are fortunate in his contradictions. His plural personality provides humor and complexity in his writing. When one of him dominates the action, it is a momentary domination, lasting only until the others of him gang up and take over.

His essays about the doctor business are penetrating. Fifty years ago, he notes, doctors were poor, humanitarian, not particularly competent, and ineffectual. Today they seem rich, greedy, not particularly competent, and yet increasingly effective. Lewis lauds the increase in our health and life span, attributes it to science and sanitation, not to doctors, and detests the dominant new school program for doctors, the abominable premed major, which drives out of medicine the students with intellectual or humane ambitions and infests true science courses with anti-science students.

I agree wholeheartedly, but find his paradoxical remedy, which goes beyond merely eliminating the premed major, startling, draconic, and even inhumane in its intense humanity. This paradox of his I do not disclose.

David Finkelstein is Director of The School of Physics at Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta. He is currently at work on a book about quantum logic.

The Triumphal Sun: A Study of the Works of Jalāloddin Rumi
By Annemarie Schimmel. London: Fine Books, Ltd., 1978, distributed by Great Eastern Book Company. Pp. xvii + 531. $25.00.

Reviewed by Jane I. Smith

"This book is the result of a dialogue of forty years with Mawlana. A very personal dialogue, to be sure..." So Annemarie Schimmel confesses in her introduction the intimate nature of her long association with Jalāloddin Rumi. The work is, of course, a tribute to Rumi, but perhaps no less to Professor Schimmel herself, who has experienced the poet-master not only through

her own study but through the legacy he has left across the Islamic world.

From an admittedly subjective point of departure, Professor Schimmel goes on to present a masterful treatment of Rumi, perhaps the most universally beloved of the great medieval Sufis. The book is artfully constructed, moving from that which is most easy to grasp, and what is perhaps most interesting to the general reader, to the deeper issues of Rumi's mystical thought. Thus the first chapter provides the narrative outline of Rumi's life, drawing on a wealth of sources to outline the steps and stages of his relationships with his followers and friends. Most influential in his life and thought was his unique love-friendship with Shamsoddin of Tabriz, the sun in whose beauty Rumi experienced the divine light. *The Triumphal Sun* traces throughout the writing of Jalāloddin the pain and the joy he experienced in the presence and absence of his beloved and the ultimate rediscovery of the friend within his own soul.

From this biographical structure the author moves farther into the thought of Rumi by examining the many kinds of imagery used in his poetry and discourse. This is an unusual and highly effective way of discovering another dimension of the man as well as of his thought; metaphors are drawn from all aspects of life, from music and dance to the imagery inspired by gardens, animals, food and even diseases. In this section as in all of the book, Dr. Schimmel draws her illustrations from the range of Rumi's writings. One is led, therefore, to think categorically rather than historically or chronologically, experiencing not so much a development in Rumi's own thinking as the possibility of understanding new levels of meaning in his writings.

After feasting on the richness of this imagery, the reader is drawn into what is potentially the most difficult part of the book, a consideration of Rumi's theology. The author has laid her ground well, however, and one finds that the earlier structures of biography and metaphor form a solid frame on which to fit the theological and philosophical formulations. It is by now clear, in fact, that only through an analysis of the forms can the content actually be understood. Drawing on her own rich knowledge of Sufi experience, the author examines Rumi's treatment of such themes as the divine creation, human potential, prophetology and prayer in such a way as to illustrate not only their integrity in Rumi's thought but ways in which they exemplify and/or contrast with the thought of the greats of Islamic mysticism. Particularly sensitive is her treatment of the interplay of *fanā'* and *baqā'*, the extinction of the self in the presence of God and yet its eternal abiding in that very presence. Realization of this dual possibility, she says, is the ultimate moment in the experience of prayer, expressed by Rumi in a beautiful passage from the *Mathnavi*:

> Become silent, and go by way of silence towards non-existence, and when you become non-existent, you will be over and all praise and laud.

In the last chapter of the book one is brought back again to the concrete and historical, much as the mystic must return to the phenomenal world. Here the author provides a thorough catalogue of Rumi's influence in the medieval and modern world, as well as a review and critique of scholarly work done on Rumi and his order. As is true of each of the separate sections of the volume, this chapter can stand on its own as a significant contribution to the history of Islamic Sufism.

No secondary work is adequate in itself to convey the thought of a great master and poet, and Annemarie Schimmel would be the first to encourage a thorough reading of the primary sources. In *The Triumphal Sun*, however, she has helped provide a means whereby those without access to those sources, especially in the original, can have a glimpse of Jalāloddin Rumi and can begin to listen to the dialogue that has taken place between master and disciple, between friend and friend.

Jane I. Smith is Associate Director at the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University and Associate Professor in History of Religion, Harvard Divinity School.

Man of Nazareth
By Anthony Burgess. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979. Pp. 357. $10.95.

A Life of Jesus
By Shusaku Endo, translated by Richard A. Schuchert. New York: Paulist Press, 1979. Pp. 179. $9.95.

Reviewed by Jack Miles

Anthony Burgess's *Man of Nazareth* is a breezy novel. Most of the men in it — and its characters are mostly men — are what an American hears in the British word *blokes*:

> John and Jesus, big tough youths both, walked together through streets bright with windowed Passover lamps, not fearful of the drunken bravos, of the Syrian soldiers jeering *Yahudi Yahudi*.
> "What do you do?"
> "Work in the shop. Sawing wood mostly, I read a lot."
> "I read all the time. I'm to be a priest. Like my father."
> "Do you believe in fathers?"
> "What do you mean, believe?"

And so it goes, a companionable, almost rollicking life of Christ.

Burgess plays with Hebrew, Greek, and Latin the way he played with Russian in *A Clockwork Orange*. Sextus, an old Palestine hand in the Roman army, tells the Jews about a distant country.

> ...Britain it's called, my little yedidim.
> ...Freeze your little kadurim off, Britain would.

He plays with the various Gospel stories in other ways. And then there is the climactic miracle, the resurrection, over which Burgess hesitates not for a moment:

> "Before your death," began Peter, and then the words struck him like a crack on the jaw. "You died and you've come back. Hard to take in." He shivered. Jesus smote him on the back as though he had choked on a fish-bone.

Good bloke Jesus.

Burgess does not have it in for believers or for the sacred memory of Jesus or for anybody or anything at all, so far as I can tell. He is serious in this novel about nothing but his art and not particularly serious about that. Frivolity is Burgess's privilege, of course, but it is at least worth noting that there exists a tradition, one to which this novel does not belong, in which the artist uses his imagination only to fill in the blanks left in the received account. In this tradition, which stretches up to austere Milton and down to doting spirituals like "Mary, Whatcha Gonna Name That Pretty Little Baby?" the artist accepts major restraints on his imagination. He may not deny anything the Gospels report. If he adds something, it must accord well with what is already known. He must convey in tone and mood that he is not creating a new artistic whole but only using his imagination as a special kind of tool to fill in a narrative that has, already, a form and a meaning of its own. He is and must show himself to be like a text critic guessing at letters or words that are missing in a damaged scroll and not like a scribe writing a new scroll.

This reverent, pious sort of art is not the only way to be serious about the Jesus story. One may write a rationalist novel, telling a story like the Jesus story but telling it in such a way that an implicit class of savior stories is created. What is true about one may then seem to be true about the others, and one may make one's exegetical or polemical points indirectly. Vidal's *Kalki* is such a novel, and there have been others, as well as nonfiction compilations by students of comparative religion. One thinks of Vittorio Lanternari's *Religions of the Oppressed*. Vidal is serious, despite the trappings of comedy, because he believes that there is something about the messiah phenomenon in need of explanation. The same goes for Lanternari. But one feels nothing of this sort about Burgess. Neither honestly pious nor rationalist to any perceivable point, he wrote his Jesus book, it would appear, simply for the fun of it.

Shusaku Endo's *A Life of Jesus*, by contrast, is not much fun at all. Endo is a novelist, but this book is no novel. It is a biographical essay, tediously indebted to the work of earlier scholars. The author has read widely, if not encyclopedically; and rather as one might expect of a novelist, he gives scant attention to some major works and

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much to some minor works that touched him. His concern at every point is to establish first what is known, then what may profitably be studied further, and last where he as a novelist may release his imagination to some legitimate biographical point. Most of the time in *A Life of Jesus*, Endo does not function as a novelist at all. When he does, he is at great pains to let us know.

Endo is thus squarely in the Christian, pious tradition that Burgess eschews. His work, unlike Burgess's, is never exuberant, quotable, inventive, quaintly supernatural, or entertainingly iconoclastic. He intends to present a unique historical occurrence to an audience, the Japanese audience, that rather to his sorrow has failed to grasp its significance. True, the features he selects are those he thinks the Japanese will respond to, and the book has had a large Japanese sale. But the larger, historical portion of his work may strike Western readers as responsible rather than engaging.

If this is not necessarily as it should be, it is at least as Endo seems to wish it. The point he wants to make to his Japanese readers is that the meaning of Jesus is not bound to Western culture. And of course this point reverses: if there is something about Jesus that a Japanese can best perceive, then that in its turn will be intrinsically as important to Westerners as to Japanese. Endo offers his cautious, Japanese, novelistic insights as contributions to a common venture in historiography, as if to say: Dear Friends, we are not here to exchange our folklore.

Of these insights, two struck me as particularly full of consequence, one about the start of Jesus' public ministry, the other about its end.

Many scholars have interpreted Jesus' forty days' fasting and prayer in the desert to be, figuratively, his association for a time with the Essenes, the sect that wrote and later concealed the famous Dead Sea Scrolls. The association of John the Baptist with that sect is hard to deny, and Jesus' early association with John is amply documented in the Gospels. What Endo draws attention to is the fact that John was executed by Herod Antipas at the very start of Jesus' public life. As Endo sees it, Jesus' behavior and teaching in Galilee is shot through with a tense awareness that what had befallen John could befall him. This is an original and provocative idea, contrasting sharply with a more common view in which Jesus' early preaching and miracle-working is a kind of idyl in rural Galilee. For Endo, violence shadows Jesus long before his fateful last week in Jerusalem. The man is hunted from the start.

Endo's second key insight may owe something to the much-discussed Japanese concept of shame. Endo reads the Gospel story of Peter's triple denial of Jesus as an artistically simplified report of the denial of Jesus by *all* his followers. By securing the capitulation of Jesus' followers with threats of arrest (the Peter story) or bribes (the Judas story), the authorities sought to neutralize any popular uprising on his behalf.

Endo now imagines Jesus' followers after this capitulation, hiding somewhere in Jerusalem, ashamed of what they have done but expecting that Jesus, as he discovers he has been abandoned, will relieve their shame by denouncing them. The reports begin to trickle in. The first trial, the second, the third. The scourging. Public torture of "The King of the Jews" by the Roman soldiers. At last crucifixion, and still no word of anger or denunciation from the victim. Instead, from the cross itself, words of mercy and forgiveness: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," words the followers now apply to themselves. They realize in one and the same instant the magnitude of their betrayal and the depth of their earlier misunderstanding.

The last chapter in *A Life of Jesus* asks how a demoralized band of lower-class Jews could have founded a world religion. Endo the novelist answers: by a peculiar alignment of sudden insight and intense motivation, a mobilization, as it were, of intelligent shame. But Endo the biographer is not satisfied even with this.

As between Burgess and Endo, one is forced to conclude that when Jesus is the subject, nonfiction is rather more interest-

ing than fiction. The central figure in the Gospels is irretrievably implausible, and one just can't have a novel with an implausible central figure. Gospel-inspired fiction is thus either bad, pious fiction or good fiction that replaces the main character in the Gospels with someone else. The replacement may be interesting in his own right, but replacement is surely a roundabout way to write. On the other hand, the very implausibility of Jesus makes him a subject of inexhaustible historical interest. Endo's attempt to turn artistic intelligence to historical purpose starts slowly indeed but gathers to a brilliant conclusion.

Jack Miles is Sponsoring Editor at the University of California Press.

Robert Fludd: Hermetic Philosopher and Surveyor of Two Worlds
By Joscelyn Godwin. Boulder: Shambhala, 1979. Pp. 96. Paper $6.95.

Reviewed by Todd Barton

In the past decade there has been a resurgence of interest in the philosophy of the early seventeenth century physician-occultist Robert Fludd. Fludd was intellectual heir to Plotinus, Dionysius Areopagite, Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and John Dee. He was a truly syncretic philosopher who embraced all learning, exoteric and esoteric, and magically blended Pythagorean, Neoplatonic, Cabbalistic, Hermetic and Christian thought.

The foundation of Fludd's philosophy was the Hermetic doctrine of correspondence between the Macrocosm and Microcosm: "As it is above, so it is below"; hence the subtitle of this book, "Hermetic philosopher and surveyor of two worlds." The epithet "surveyor" suggests that Fludd *saw* both worlds, and indeed he must have at least seen them in his mind's eye, for his works abound with illustrations of the macrocosm and microcosm in explicit and covert forms. His life seems to have been devoted to explaining the myriad examples of cosmic correspondence he saw around him in hopes of leading others to a more perfect and transcendent state. His diagrams are so precise that, as Godwin points out, "Fludd's gift for summarizing lengthy explanations in diagrammatic form makes it possible to understand much of his philosophy from his engravings alone..."

Fludd's visions, which appeared in his works as intricate and exquisitely crafted copper engravings, were meant for an audience accustomed to appropriating moral and spiritual teachings from pictures. In fact, the iconographic approach to knowledge, truth, and wisdom was, for some, thought to be the most direct route. Thus, the seventeenth-century publisher, Henry Estienne, wrote about emblems, that they are like "...a mirror, where without large tomes of philosophy and history, we may in a short tract of time, and with much ease, plainly behold and imprint in our minds, all the rules of Moral and Civil life."

In the slim and beautifully printed volume *Robert Fludd: Hermetic philosopher*, Mr.

Godwin has undertaken the Herculean task of compiling, organizing and interpreting 126 illustrations from his subject's twenty-one published works. In doing this he has opened the door to the core of Fludd's world view. Each plate is accompanied by an explanatory caption which contains a very readable and accurate paraphrase of the prolix Latin, and a paragraph or two of pithy commentary which sometimes points out parallels between Fludd's thought and other Western esoteric traditions or Oriental philosophies. The sources for each illustration are given in a handy abbreviated form which is keyed to a list of Fludd's complete works in the back of the book.

Godwin's book is further enhanced by his engaging and sympathetic introduction. In just nineteen pages, the reader is acquainted with the important philosophical threads which Fludd reweaves into every picture, and a sense of the times in which this mystic lived. The introduction is complemented by the most extensive bibliography of writings about Fludd which has ever appeared in print.

For the scholar interested in the history of ideas, this book provides a useful compendium of archetypes and images which infused the philosophy, science, and art of the Renaissance. For the seeker involved in alchemy, astrology, homeopathy, or mysticism this book should be a *vade mecum* since the illustrations are grounded in exoteric doctrine and many of them could be described as mandalas which transcend their own time and place.

Todd Barton is Director of Music at the Oregon Shakespearean Festival. He is currently preparing a translation of Robert Fludd's tract The Temple of Music *for publication.*

The Dancing Wu Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics
By Gary Zukav. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1979. Pp. 352. Paper $5.95.

Reviewed by David Leeming

Inevitably Gary Zukav's *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* will be compared to Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics*. Both books are overviews of modern physics, both trace a connection between the "new physics" and Eastern mysticism, both are concerned with the philosophical implications of the revolutionary discoveries in the areas of relativity physics and quantum mechanics. And it is clear that Zukav and Capra are on what might appropriately be called the same "wave length" in terms of what they believe to be a necessarily changing world view as a result of those discoveries. There is however a major difference between the two books, one determined by the fact that Capra is a physicist while Zukav is not. Zukav's approach, reflected in his ingenuous tone and unencumbered style, is that of the intelligent amateur, and this is crucial to *The Dancing Wu Li Masters*, a book of beginnings by a beginner (each of the six parts is listed as Part One, each of the twelve chapters as Chapter I) for other true beginners. I use the word "beginner" in the Zen sense — beginner in the sense of openness and a willingness to put aside old "truths," old conventions, in order to receive new revelation. Einstein and Heisenberg were beginners and so were the Buddha and Moses.

This is, of course, the real challenge of the new physics as it has always been the challenge of the old mysticism. How can a non-beginner — a reasonable human being trained to think "rationally" — accept the "fact" that "a piece of matter is a curvature of the space-time continuum," that "'particles' are *intermediate* states in a network of interactions"? Only a beginner can hope to comprehend the implications of the Uncertainty Principle, of the "Many Worlds" theory, of the space-time continuum, of the Special and General theories of Relativity, because to understand their implications is to question the very foundations of conventional wisdom and conventional knowledge.

Gary Zukav's book is a tentative sample of a new education for a new age which will accept the findings of the new physics as a basis for its existence just as we since the eighteenth century have accepted the Newtonian model of reality. Seeing in physics "pure enchantment" — "simple

wonder at the way things are and a divine... interest in how that is so" Zukav attempts to transmit that enchantment to people, like most of us, not conversant in the esoteric language of mathematics, the usual "language" tool of physics. He refuses, in short, to leave so important a matter as the study of physical "reality" to the "experts."

A T'ai Chi master told Zukav that physics in Chinese was called *Wu Li*, which could be translated "patterns of energy," and this provided the perfect focus since quantum and relativity theory point precisely to a universe made up of "patterns of energy." A Wu Li "master" would teach physics, thought Zukav, as a T'ai Chi master teaches T'ai Chi. He would transcend the barriers of Western positivism. He would teach "essence" to expand consciousness rather than information to fill it: "The Wu Li Master does not speak of gravity until the student stands in wonder at the flower petal falling to the ground." The Wu Li Master does not teach; he "dances" with his student as he knows the universe dances with itself.

Gary Zukav becomes our Wu Li Master and leads us by the hand into the dance. And suddenly the physics which seemed incomprehensible to us as bystanders is revealed as an extraordinary, "sparkling realm of continual creation, transformation, and annihilation." Still more amazingly, we find that we are able to dance too — that we have always been part of the dance:

> The answer comes full circle. *We* are actualizing the universe. Since we are part of the universe, that makes the universe (and us) self-actualizing.

It may well be that this discovery of the new physics — a "discovery" long known to mystics — is the most important aspect of the current revelation. "May the universe in some strange sense be 'brought into being' by the participation of those who participate?" asks American physicist John Wheeler. Is human consciousness the means by which Creation becomes conscious of itself?

From here on our dancing master takes us on a mind-boggling whirl above the dance floor during which the patterns of the dance come into increasingly clearer perspective. We move from Planck's Constant to the Schrodinger wave equation to the S-Matrix, to Relativity and so on all the way to the psychedelic physics of David Bohm and others, and suddenly we find ourselves back in the dance which, as Bell's Theorem tells us, is a "non-local universe characterized by superluminal connections between apparently 'separate parts'." Even particles are alive and dancing — holding hands across distances inconceivable to all but those who know they are in the dance.

To read *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* is to experience the immense relief inherent in the discovery that we need not be refused

admittance to the romance and excitement and holiness which is the universal dance of particles, black holes, stars, and "unbroken wholeness."

David Leeming is Associate Professor of English at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, author of the Mythology *volume of the Newsweek Books "World of Culture" series and a Contributing Editor to* PARABOLA.

Search
Edited by Jean Sulzberger. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979.
Pp. v + 172. $10.00, paper $5.95.

Reviewed by Karl Ray

Search is divided into three sections: Square, Triangle, and Circle. Jean Sulzberger based her structure of this book on the three elements that appear in a painting by the Japanese artist Sengai titled "Circle, Triangle, and Square." Henri Tracol in his introduction to the book points out that the square represents material stability, the triangle direction, guidance and consistency, and the circle origin, beginning. The idea is that we work our way from a materialistic world back to our spiritual origins. Intellectually, it all makes sense: the soul progressing from one stage to the next, developing until it reaches perfection. However, time, which makes it possible for us to trace this process, also distorts it.

The reader should keep in mind something the introduction fails to bring out about the painting. It is not a painting of a circle, triangle, and a square. There is no separation. It is a painting of a circle-triangle-square; it is a painting of one subject — one experience. The flow, the direction that Tracol speaks about is only apparent to a mind functioning in a world where time is a dimension. Thus the search is very much like Sengai's painting in this respect: at any one moment all the elements that constitute it are present.

Each section of the book is a collection of loosely related writings — some are classics, others contemporary pieces — that deal with different aspects of the "search." Many readers will find familiar voices — voices that have spoken to them in the past and that will be welcomed as old friends.

The book offers the reader selections from different disciplines, making it possible, not only for the new traveler but also for the old, to find new friends and perhaps confirmation of experiences. It also offers the reader, as any book of this nature does, the possibility of an experience, a sudden seeing, a realization that may lead him into new areas of the search.

Personally, I was pleased to find included in the selections "The Hymn of the Pearl," the theme of which crops up in myths, fairy tales, and folk legends all over the world. The Sumerians used this theme in the "Epic of Gilgamesh," also included in this book; the Hindus in the *Mahabharata*; the Gnostics in their literature; the Christians in the Bible. I was confused by the editor's decision to place "Gilgamesh," a long Sumerian epic poem containing all the elements of the search and here retold by Paul Jordan-Smith, in the section titled "Square" and yet "The Hymn of the Pearl," a similar poem, in the section titled "Triangle." In many ways, I found the breaking up of the search into these different stages disturbing and distracting rather than helpful.

The piece by P.L. Travers, in which she relates a previously unpublished private report of one of Gurdjieff's group meetings that took place in Paris in 1944, will be of interest not only to followers of Ouspensky and Gurdjieff but also to those who will have the opportunity of seeing the new Peter Brook film *Meetings With Remarkable Men.* This is a curious piece and can be interpreted on multiple levels.

The reader will find the illustrations accompanying the articles as important as the text itself. All of the Ten Oxherding Pictures, attributed to fifteenth-century *sumiye* painter Shubun, are reproduced here accompanied by the poems and introductory comments of Kaku-an Shi-en, a Zen master of the Sung dynasty. An illustration for the Jacob Needleman article "The Search for the Wise Man" is called "The Ascent of the Soul." Beyond the interpretation that Needleman gives it, it reminded me that it was the role of man as a possible seeker and

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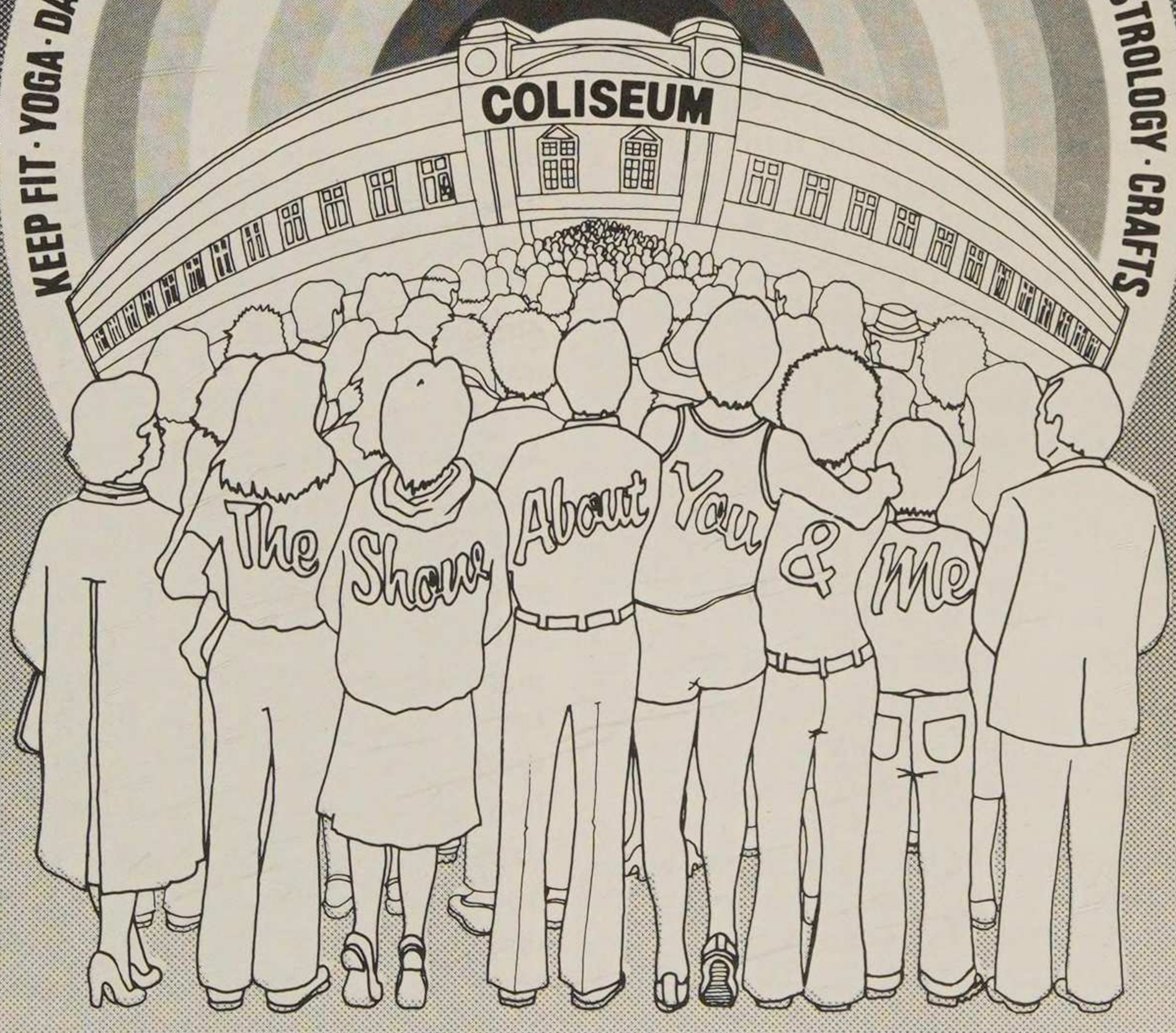

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link that forced the Church to defend its "geocentric" concept of the universe against that of Galileo's heliocentric theory, which would help man to increase his knowledge of the universe but hamper his quest for "the way back," "the bridge to the other shore" so well illustrated in this diagram. Unfamiliar to me and equally intriguing were the three illustrations titled *A Vardapet (Wise Man) Isaiah Teaching, The Cosmos,* and *Weighing the Souls on the Chinvat Bridge.* But I am sure that each reader will find his own favorites among the illustrations that will have a special intrigue or fascination for him.

Search does not try to clarify, but to state. Only one article struggles in trying to define the relationship between the search and the seeker. D.M. Dooling's article "The Search for Transformation" does attempt to come to grips with questions that, sooner or later, must plague all seekers. Needleman in his article "The Search for a Wise Man" focuses our attention on cosmic man and makes the interesting statement "that cosmic care for man (who seeks) exists in the form of guidance and help through the instrumentality of other human beings." Both articles are worth reading.

Noticeable for its absence in *Search* was any reference to the theme of God in search of man. Surely a book dealing with the search should not have overlooked this aspect. We have proof of this theme manifesting itself not only in the Jewish people and their history but in other cultures as well. On the level of the individual, this theme is beautifully expressed in the poem "Hound of Heaven" by Francis Thompson. I will quote only the first few lines here.

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my mind;....

Any anthology is a personal choice. However, it would have been enlightening and helpful to know what Jean Sulzberger based her choice on, what motif within the stages that structured the book she wanted to emphasize. When we look at the vast amount of material available today, the choice must have been difficult. Not only are the selections limited in number but also in scope; we even find that some have been abridged. Perhaps one reason for producing such a thin book was to make it handy for people to carry around. Somehow this does not sound convincing. Be that as it may, the book does encourage the reader to go beyond it in his search.

Karl Ray is Editorial Director for Heian International, Inc. and was formerly editor of the Shambhala Review of Books and Ideas.

White Wave, A Chinese Tale
By Diane Wolkstein, illustrated by Ed Young. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1979. Unpaged. $7.95.

Reviewed by Joan Bodger

A shell may interest a child but it was not made just for children. Ostensibly, *White Wave* is the story of a shell. On every page we are made aware of its form or reflection. As artifact the book is one of those that some people may argue is too beautiful for a child. For whom is it intended? For the awakened adult *and* for the kind of child to whom you hand a rare and fragile shell. Let him trace its shape, let her listen to its murmurings.

The story is based on Taoist tradition. A young farmer is too poor to take a wife, too shy to talk to a woman. He has learned to do without; he does not know what he is missing. When he finds the moon shell he senses the life inside. He takes it home, nourishes it with leaves, and is nourished in return by a warm dinner and a branch of wild peach blossom. It does not take him long to discover that a radiant moon goddess lives in the shell; it is she who keeps house for him. "And he knew, though no one had told him, that he must never try to touch her." All this is accompanied by Ed Young's grey and white drawings, translucent and shell-like.

I admire especially the picture of the young farmer hurrying home to dinner. He

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springs across the double spread, solid and earthy against the evocative spiralled background. There comes the moment, of course, when he longs to touch the girl's hair. He bursts in upon her but the goddess implores him to restrain himself. If you grasp a goddess or a shell (or anything) too tightly, the spiral breaks, the pattern of the cosmos is destroyed.

The goddess is carried off in a whirlwind (the spiral motif now becomes a dragon's coils) and the young man is left with only the dead and ossified remnant of the shell. Now he is worse off: he knows what he is missing. The farmer neglects his planting. He spends all his time searching for stones to build a shrine for the goddess, but he cannot live on a diet of stones nor be satisfied with ethereal memory. At last, when he is starving, he remembers that the goddess had told him to call her if he is in need of help. With his last strength he cries out, acknowledging his need, and is rewarded by a wave of white rice, solid, nourishing, the symbol of fertility. By complying with the rules of the universe the hero is rewarded with spiritual and earthly pleasure.

In time he marries; he tells his wife, then his children, the story of the goddess. The old man dies, the shell is lost, the shrine becomes ruin. "When we die all that remains is the story." But it is not only the goddess whom we remember. The goddess lives through myth, but so does the humble peasant who loved and obeyed her. In defining the gods, man defines himself. And in defining the myth, Wolkstein and Young manifest their own clarity as creators.

Joan Bodger is a Gestalt therapist living in Toronto. She is also a storyteller.

C.G. Jung: Word and Image
Edited by Aniela Jaffé, translated from the German by Krishna Winston. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press (Bollingen Series XCVII:2), 1979. Pp. 238. Illustrated. $25.00.

Reviewed by V. Walter Odajnyk

This is a beautiful book — lovingly put together. It was inspired by a 1975 Zürich exhibition commemorating the centenary of Jung's birth. I happened to be in Zürich at the time and saw the exhibition; but I must say that going through this volume has proved to be a more personal and moving experience than my visit to the museum-like display at the Zürich Helmhaus. I can think of no better introduction to the life and work of C.G. Jung. The format is similar to *Man and His Symbols*, except here the topic is Jung.

In a way, this is a companion volume to Jung's autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* — also edited by Aniela Jaffé, Jung's long-time personal secretary. It is a collection of documents, photographs, artistic works, and a good number of previously unpublished letters, notes, and journal entries. The text — in large print! — consists mostly of passages from *Memories*, and, at times, from Jung's other published writings. All of this is masterfully woven together and provided with an interpretative background by the editor. There are over 200 illustrations, about a quarter of them in color. Eleven of the color prints are by Jung, mostly from his little-known "Red Book": a personal calligraphic manuscript where he transcribed and illustrated his inner experiences during an intensive six-year (1913-1919) confrontation with the images of the collective unconscious. The chapters, some only a page or two, others somewhat longer, wend their way, more or less chronologically, from The Grandparents, Childhood, and Student Years, through Freud, Adler, The Mandala, Alchemy, Psychotherapy, Home and Family, Travels, The Tower in Bollingen, Religion, Life and Death — and some other topics in between.

Externally, Jung's life appears to have been relatively uneventful. But as this book demonstrates, his inner life was so rich and many-faceted that it's hard to decide where to put the focus. Had he done nothing else but to have uncovered the psychic background of alchemy, he would have already gained a lasting place in the history of

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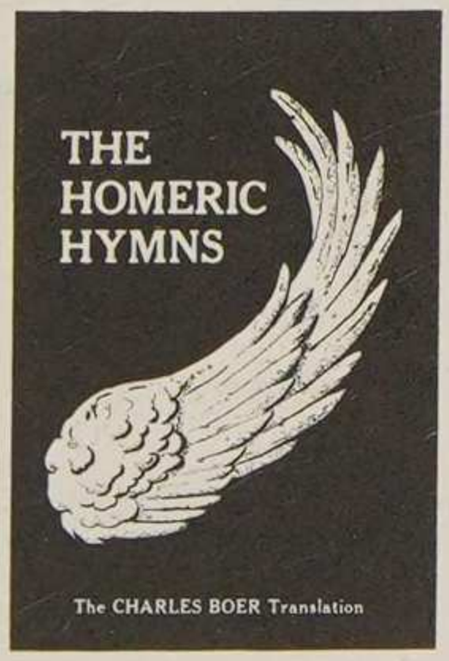

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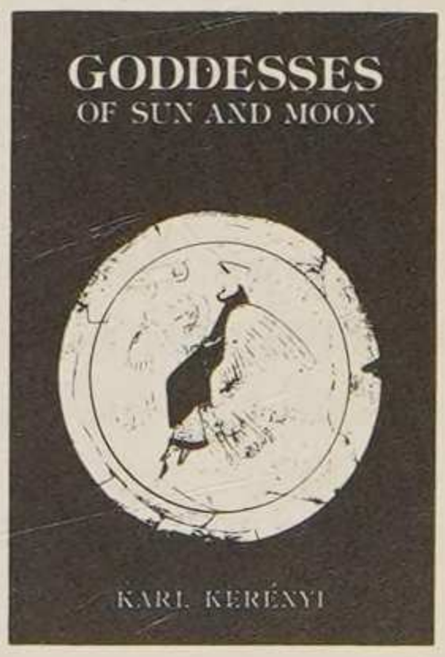

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Western thought. Yet the work on alchemy is only one of his major accomplishments. His research in mythology and his discovery of the collective unconscious and the archetypes is another area of endeavor that would have established him as a seminal figure. His psychological and psychotherapeutic work, both empirical and theoretical, is equalled in importance only by the pioneering efforts of Freud. His concept of synchronicity provided an explanatory theory for certain parapsychological phenomena and prepared the way for a merging of two apparently disparate fields of study — physics and psychology. His study of religious symbolism illuminated the religious traditions of both East and West, and probably saved them from eventually falling into the same oblivion that befell alchemy. He was keenly aware of the transitional and fragmented nature of our civilization and tried to define and understand the as yet unconscious forces working to bring coherence and meaning to the coming epoch.

All in all, the synthesis of knowledge that Jung achieved is such a powerful construct that its effects will be felt for years to come. It will take a long time, first to assimilate his opus, and then to draw out its various far-reaching implications. Marx and Freud, whose ideas still dominate the contemporary world, were limited by the materialistic and rationalistic biases of eighteenth-century philosophy and science. These biases are largely responsible for the dogmatic and monochromatic tone of their theories and their practical application. Jung, on the other hand, belongs to the twentieth century. He was forced to recognize the relativity, indeterminacy, interchangeability, and synchronicity of matter and energy. As a result, his theories are neither simple nor dogmatic. Intellectually, they call for the ability to think in terms of paradox or antinomy, while emotionally, they require the willingness and the patience to sustain a tension of opposites. Neither operation is a satisfying exercise for the dualistically disposed psyche of the Western man.

Jung spans the end of an era and the beginning of another. He was aware of his unique role and pivotal position. In his autobiography he writes that, as time went on, he realized that during his confrontation with the unconscious "there were things in the images which concerned not only myself, but many others also. It was then that I ceased to belong to myself alone, ceased to have the right to do so. From then on, my life belonged to the generality." (*Memories*, p. 192.) In 1928, the noted sinologist, Richard Wilhelm, sent Jung a manuscript of *The Secret of the Golden Flower* — a thousand-year-old text on the yellow castle, the germ of the immortal body — just as Jung had finished painting a picture of a golden castle that felt to him somehow Chinese. In remembrance of this "coincidence," and of its more general meaning, he wrote at the bottom of the picture: "The Catholic Church and the Protestants and those hidden in secret. *Aeon finitus* — the age is ended."

V. Walter Odajnyk is a practicing analyst in New York City, a graduate of the C.G. Jung Institute, Zürich, and the author of Marxism and Existentialism *(Doubleday Anchor Books, 1965) and of* Jung and Politics: The Political and Social Ideas of C.G. Jung (New York University Press, 1976).

FULL CIRCLE *(Continued from page 5)*

granted, but which could remain a question rather than a conclusion.

In past issues you have dealt with a great many very interesting and essential topics. However, you have been remiss in devoting an issue to the spirituality of women. The subject has been touched upon, but rather obliquely.

According to Eliade, in *Myth and Reality*, Man is what he is because "a series of events took place *ab origine*." What of Woman? I feel that before Woman can become liberated in the fullest sense of the word, she and her sisters must return to their historical and mythical origins.

Merlin Stone, in her fascinating book, *When God was a Woman*, deals with a great many of the historical and mythical events which have shaped Woman's life. There was apparently a time in the distant past when the creation myth was told from a feminine perspective, when a Great Mother was the supreme deity and "Our Mother in Heaven" was prayed to rather than "Our Father." It was a time when a woman was worshiped as the sun, rather than as an impure moon borrowing its splendor from a masculine sun.

Because this aspect of mythology has been forgotten, or at least somewhat neglected, it seems that it would be appropriate for PARABOLA, in its quest for myth and meaning, to devote an issue to the Origin of Woman and liberate us from the short memory of patriarchal religion.

— Nikki Niemann
Pierre, SD

We are proud to reprint the following from a recent letter from Joseph Campbell:

And by the way...let me say that my admiration for the work that you people are doing increases with each issue of PARABOLA. When people write to me to ask how to begin the study of mythology, I tell them to subscribe to your magazine. Congratulations — and thanks from us all.

— Joseph Campbell
New York City

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Page 107 *The Assembly of the Virgin* (det.), Moscow School, ca. 1560; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, lent by the State Museums of the Moscow Kremlin.

PROFILES

Frederick Franck, a Dutch-born author and artist, holds doctorates in Fine Arts, Medicine, 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. Dr. Franck is a Consulting Editor to PARABOLA.

Richard Lewis is a teacher, poet, editor and at present the director of the Touchstone Center in New York City. His published anthologies include: *Out of the Earth I Sing, The Way of Silence, Miracles* and *Journeys*. He is completing *The Luminous Landscape*, a book on Chinese landscape painting and poetry for Doubleday. Most recently, his children's theater pieces have been performed at the American Museum of Natural History.

Lobsang Lhalungpa was born in Lhasa, Tibet. He studied at the Losayling College of Dreipung Monastery and took advanced studies with eminent Lamas of various orders. He directed the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Cultural Institute and has taught Tibetan language and the Buddhist classics at the University of British Columbia. His translation of *The Life of Milarepa* was published in 1977 (E.P. Dutton), and he has recently completed work on the *Mahamudra*. Mr. Lhalungpa is a Consulting Editor to PARABOLA.

John Loudon is a Contributing Editor to PARABOLA. Currently the New York editor of Harper & Row's San Francisco-based Religious/General Books division, he has an M.A. in Bible Languages and Literature from the University of Toronto and did his doctoral work in Philosophy of Religion at Claremont Graduate School. He was a Senior Contributor to *Kirkus Reviews* and the original editor of PARABOLA.

Lynda Sexson teaches Religious Studies at Montana State University. Her doctoral dissertation, "The Feminine and the Fool, the Tarot in the Early Renaissance," is being completed at Syracuse University. She was director of "Eclipse '79," a cross-cultural celebration of this year's solar eclipse, which took place in Montana. She is currently organizing a new magazine, *Corona*.

Don C. Talayesva was born in 1890 at the Hopi settlement of Oraibi, Arizona. He began to write his remarkable autobiography, *Sun Chief* (first published by Yale University Press in 1942 and now in its 17th printing), in 1938 under the direction of anthropologists who were collecting case histories for field research. He moved further and further away from Hopi society in his later years and eventually converted to Christianity under the guidance of an adopted white daughter. The latest information we could obtain is that he is living in a nursing home in Phoenix; friends who have met with him recently report that he still tells the Hopi stories.

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