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JOSEPH CAMPBELL®

E-SINGLE



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# **The Symbol without Meaning**

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COLLECTED WORKS

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JOSEPH CAMPBELL®

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# *THE SYMBOL WITHOUT MEANING*

by

**JOSEPH CAMPBELL**

AN E-SINGLE

From *The Flight of the Wild Gander*



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## EBOOK SHORT:

### Belief and Power in Myth

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# THE COLLECTED WORKS OF JOSEPH CAMPBELL

**A**t his death in 1987, Joseph Campbell left a significant body of published work that explored his lifelong passion, the complex of universal myths and symbols that he called “Mankind’s one great story.” He also left, however, a large volume of unreleased work: uncollected articles, notes, letters, and diaries, as well as audio- and videotape-recorded lectures.

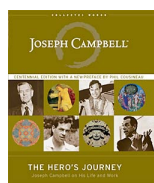
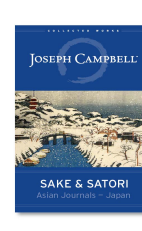
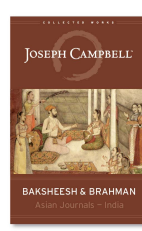
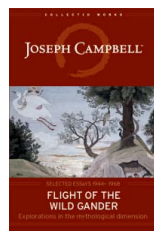
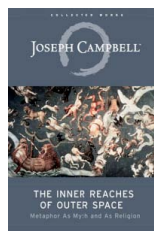
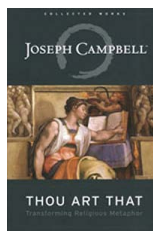
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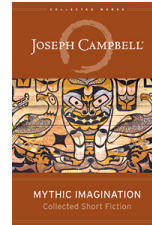
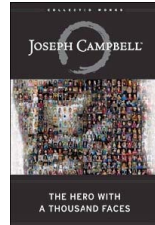
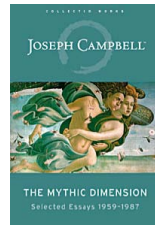
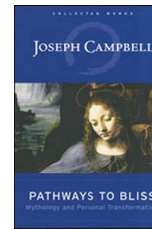
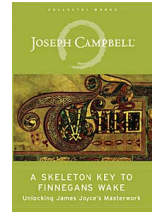
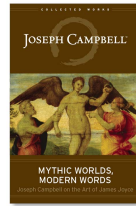
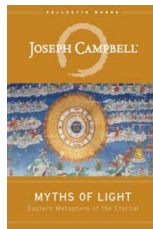
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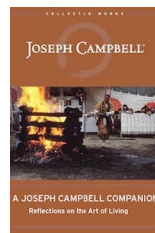
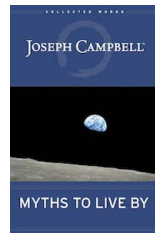
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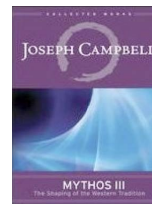
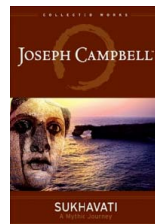
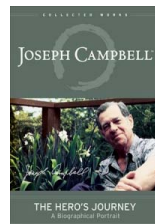




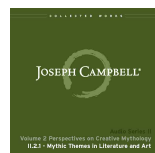
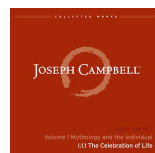
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# *THE SYMBOL WITHOUT MEANING*



*Figure 1 - Buddha with Swastika (bronze, China, twentieth century A.D.)*



# I - THE IMPACT OF MODERN SCIENCE

IT WAS BERTRAND RUSSELL, AS I RECALL, who once told a New York audience that all Americans believe the world was created in 1492 and redeemed in 1776. The cultural conditioning of an American, then, may account for the history and theory of mythological symbols that I am about to offer in this chapter. However, since one of the main themes of my subject is to be that of the provincial character of *all* that we are prone to regard as universal, we may let the presentation itself stand as an illustration of its own thesis.

I cannot forget that for many centuries the vast majority of the great as well as minor thinkers of Europe believed that the world was created about 4004 B.C. and redeemed in the first century A.D.; that Cain, the eldest son of the first human couple, was the first agriculturalist, the first murderer, and the first builder of cities; that the Creator of the Universe once held in particular regard a certain tribe of Near Eastern nomads, for whom he parted the waters of the Red Sea and to whom he communicated, in person, his program for the human race; and that, because of the failure of this people to recognize himself when he then became incarnate among them as the son of one of their daughters, the Creator of the Universe transferred his attention to the northern shores of the Mediterranean: to Italy, Spain, and France, to Switzerland, Germany, and England, to Holland and Scandinavia, and for a while, also, to the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

I am quite ready to admit, therefore, that it does seem to me that when the prows of Columbus's three brave little ships (the *Santa Maria* was a vessel of only one hundred tons, the *Pinta* a caravel of fifty, and the *Niña* a mere forty tons)—when the prows of these three nutshells cut through the world-encircling Uroboros, Ocean, the mythological age of European thought was dealt a lethal blow and the modern age of global thinking, adventurous experiment, and empirical demonstration inaugurated.



Hardly two centuries earlier, Saint Thomas Aquinas had sought to show, by reasonable argument, that the garden of paradise from which Adam and Eve had been expelled was an actual region of this physical earth, still somewhere to be found. “The situation of paradise,” he had written, “is shut off from the habitable world by mountains, or seas, or some torrid region, which cannot be crossed; and so people who have written about topography make no mention of it.”<sup>(1)</sup> The Venerable Bede, five and a half centuries before, had sensibly suggested that paradise could not be a corporeal place but must be entirely spiritual; <sup>(2)</sup> Augustine, however, had already rejected such a notion, maintaining that paradise was, and is, both spiritual *and* corporeal; <sup>(3)</sup> and it was to Augustine’s view that Aquinas brought support. “For whatever Scripture tells us about paradise,” he wrote, “is set down as a matter of history; and wherever Scripture makes use of this method, we must hold to the historical truth of the narrative as a foundation of whatever spiritual explanation we may offer.” <sup>(4)</sup>

Dante, it will be recalled, placed paradise on the summit of the mountain of purgatory, which his century situated in the middle of an imagined ocean covering the whole of the southern hemisphere; and Columbus shared this mythological image. The earth, wrote Columbus, is shaped “like a pear, of which one part is round, but the other, where the



Figure 2 - Dante before Mt. Purgatory

stalk comes, elongated;” or “like a very round ball, on one part of which there is a protuberance, like a woman’s nipple.” <sup>(5)</sup> The protuberance was to be found, Columbus believed, in the south; and on his third voyage, when his vessels sailed more rapidly northward than southward, he believed this showed that they had begun to go downhill. And he was the more convinced of his error, since, some weeks earlier, at the southern reach of his voyage, when he had sailed between the island of Trinidad and the mainland of South America, the volume of fresh water pouring

into the ocean from the mighty Orinoco, “the roar, as of thunder” that occurred where the river met the sea, and the height of the waves, which nearly wrecked his ships, had assured him that so great a volume of fresh water could have had its origin only in one of the four rivers of paradise, and that he had at last, therefore, attained to the stalk end of the pear. <sup>(6)</sup> Sailing north, he was leaving paradise behind.

Columbus died without knowing that he had actually delivered the first of a series of blows that were presently to annihilate every image, not only of an earthly, but even of a celestial paradise. In 1497, Vasco da Gama rounded South Africa, and in 1520, Magellan, South America: the torrid region and the seas were crossed, and no paradise found. In 1543, Copernicus published his exposition of the heliocentric universe, and some sixty years later, Galileo commenced his celestial researches with a telescope. And, as we know, these researches led immediately to the condemnation of the new cosmology by the Holy Inquisition.

Whereas you, Galileo, [wrote the holy fathers] son of the late Vincenzo Galilei, of Florence, aged seventy years, were denounced in 1615, to this Holy Office, for holding as true a false doctrine taught by many, namely, that the sun is immovable in the center of the world, and that the earth moves, and also with a diurnal motion; also, for having pupils whom you instructed in the same opinions; also for maintaining a correspondence on the same with some German mathematicians; also, for publishing certain letters on the sun-spots, in which you developed the same doctrine as true; also, for answering the objections which were continually produced from the Holy Scriptures, by glozing the said Scriptures according to your own meaning; and whereas thereupon was produced the copy of a writing, in form of a letter professedly written by you to a person formerly your pupil, in which, following the hypothesis of Copernicus, you include several propositions contrary to the true sense and authority of the Holy Scriptures; therefore (this Holy Tribunal being desirous of providing against the disorder and mischief which were thence proceeding and increasing to the detriment of the Holy Faith) by the desire of his Holiness and of the Most Eminent Lords, Cardinals of this supreme and universal Inquisition, the two propositions of the stability of the sun, and the motion of the earth, were qualified by the Theological Qualifiers as follows:

*The proposition that the sun is in the center of the world and immovable from its place is absurd, philosophically false, and formally heretical; because it is expressly contrary to Holy Scriptures.*

*The proposition that the earth is not the center of the world, nor immovable, but that it moves, and also with a diurnal action, is also absurd, philosophically false, and, theologically considered, at least erroneous in faith.*

Therefore...invoking the most holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His Most Glorious Virgin Mother Mary, We pronounce this Our final sentence...: We pronounce, judge, and declare, that you, the said Galileo...have rendered yourself vehemently suspected by this Holy Office of heresy, that is of having believed and held the doctrine (which is false and contrary to the Holy and Divine Scriptures) that the sun is the center of the world, and that it does not move from east to west, and that the earth does move, and is not the center of the world; also, that an opinion can be held and supported as probable, after it has been declared and finally decreed contrary to the Holy Scripture, and, consequently, that you have incurred all the censures and penalties enjoined and promulgated in the sacred canons and other general and particular constituents against delinquents of this description. From which it is Our pleasure that you be absolved, provided that with a sincere heart and unfeigned faith, in Our presence, you abjure, curse, and detest, the said errors and heresies, and every other error and heresy contrary to the Catholic and Apostolic Church of Rome.... (7)

Three brief centuries later, and even the sun (which, in the words of Copernicus's English translator, Thomas Digges, "like a king in the midst of al raigneth and geeveth lawes of motion to ye rest") has been dethroned. The great telescopes of America have shown the Milky Way system, of which our sun is but one member, to be a lens-shaped collection of some 400 billion stars, with our sun, a minor star, out toward the rim—its distance from the center of the galaxy being about 26,000 light-years (that is to say, a distance that light, going at the rate of approximately 6,000 billion miles a year, would require 26,000 years to traverse). Moreover, it has been found that our entire galaxy is spinning around its center at such a speed as would bring our sun through one full circuit in approximately 200 million years. Nor is our galaxy the only galaxy in existence. Photographic surveys of the skies, made from the Mount Wilson observatory in California, have shown that galaxies tend to cluster in groups of over a thousand, in supergalaxies. Many supergalaxies have been identified. And this discovery has suggested to some the notion

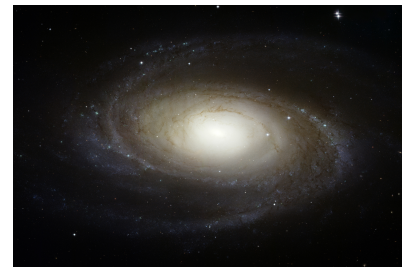


Figure 3 - Spiral  
Galaxy M81

that our own galaxy may be an outrider in one such supergalaxy, just as the sun that once was “like a king in the midst of al” was presently found to be an outrider of the Milky Way.

I shall not go on with this story, but simply ask—by way of introducing at this point one of the main questions of this subject: How, in the way of reason, is any mind confronted with this new image of the universe to understand, interpret, evaluate, or make any use whatsoever of the mythological cosmology of Holy Writ—or of any other of the many archaic traditions still asserting their superstitious claims in the modern world? Luther brayed at Copernicus, naming him “an ass who wants to pervert the whole art of astronomy and deny what is said in the Book of Joshua, only to make a show of ingenuity and attract attention”; while his Holiness, the Pope, and the most eminent cardinals of the universal Inquisition, as we have just seen, decreed that the actual form and state of the universe is false and contrary to the Holy Scriptures. Can it not now be said, then, on the word of these competent doctors, that since what then was thought to be false is proven true, what then was deemed to be true is proven false, absurd, and philosophically erroneous, because it is expressly contrary to the facts?



What is the modern mind to make of the pious belief, confirmed as dogma two decades ago and reconfirmed in the Credo of Pope Paul VI, June 30, 1968, of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary? Is one to imagine a human body rising from this earth, to pass beyond the bounds of our solar system, beyond the bounds, then, of the Milky Way, beyond the bounds, next, of our supergalaxy, and beyond the bounds even of what may lie beyond that? If so, then—please!—at what velocity is this body moving? For it must still be in flight! Having been launched less than two millennia ago, even if traveling at the speed of light (which for a physical body is impossible), both the body of our Lord Jesus Christ (which began its own ascent some fifteen years earlier) and that of His

*Figure 4 - The  
Ascension of Mary  
"The Blessed  
Virgin, the  
immaculate, was at  
the end of her  
earthly life raised  
body and soul to  
heavenly glory and  
likened to her risen  
Son in anticipation  
of the future lot of  
all the just."—Pope  
Paul VI <sup>(8)</sup>*

Most Glorious Virgin Mother Mary, would now be only some two thousand light-years away—not yet beyond the horizon of the Milky Way. The image is ridiculous. We have to ask, therefore, whether any meaning, spiritual or otherwise, can possibly inhere in such a figure today. Originally conceived when it could have been thought, literally, that Joshua stopped the sun and that God in his heaven dwelt but a short

way beyond the orbit of Saturn, a figure of this kind imposes on the modern mind a feat of interpretation far more sophisticated than anything demanded of the faithful in the Middle Ages. And it is obvious, furthermore, that this problem touches not only Catholic Christianity but every one of the great traditions; for it cannot be denied that even though some may now be symbolically re-interpreted by those who wish to retain them (pouring very new wine into very old bottles), in the days when they were brought into being as images of the highest truth, they were always literally as well as symbolically understood; or, to use the terms of Saint Augustine, corporeally as well as spiritually. Moreover, they always guaranteed to their believers a spiritual superiority over the other peoples of the earth—and we may well ask whether in our world today there still is room for such dangerous nonsense.

Let us ask, therefore: What can the value or meaning be of a mythological notion which, in the light of modern science, must be said to be erroneous, philosophically false, absurd, or even formally insane? The first answer suggested will no doubt be the one that, in the course of the past century, has been offered many times by our leading thinkers. The value, namely, is to be studied rather as a function of psychology and sociology than as a refuted system of positivistic science, rather in terms of certain effects worked by the symbols on the character of the individual and the structure of society than in terms of their obvious incongruity as an image of the cosmos. Their value, in other words, is not that of science but that of art: and just as art may be studied psychologically, as symbolic or symptomatic of the strains and structures of the psyche, so may the archetypes of myth, fairy tale, archaic philosophy, cosmology, and metaphysics.



This is the point of view that Professor Rudolf Carnap has presented in the chapter “The Rejection of Metaphysics,” in his University of London lectures, *Philosophy and Logical Syntax*, which were published in 1935. There he states that metaphysical propositions “are neither true nor false, but expressive.” They are like music, or like lyric poems, or like laughter. And yet, he states, they *pretend* to be representative. They *pretend* to have theoretical value—and therewith, not only is the reader or hearer deceived but the metaphysician also. “The metaphysician believes,” wrote Dr. Carnap, “that in his metaphysical treatise he has asserted something, and he is led by this into argument and polemics against the propositions of some other metaphysician. A poet, however, does not assert that the verses of another are wrong or erroneous; he usually contents himself with calling them bad.” (9)

C. G. Jung, in many passages, has drawn a distinction between the terms “sign” and “symbol,” as he employs them. The first, the sign, is a reference to some concept or object, definitely known; the second, the symbol, is the best possible figure by which allusion may be made to something relatively unknown. The symbol does not aim at being a reproduction, nor can its meaning be more adequately or lucidly rendered in other terms. Indeed, when a symbol is allegorically translated and the unknown factor in its reference rejected, it is dead. (10)

I believe we may say that, in general, the symbols of science and of symbolic logic are, in this sense, signs; and the figures of art, in this sense, symbols.

In Indian philosophy two terms occur that are the counterparts of sign and symbol as here interpreted. The first, *pratyakṣa* (from *prati*, meaning “near to, over against,” plus *akṣa*, “the eye”: “over against, or apparent, to the eye”) refers to the sensible, obvious, evident, immediate field, perceptible to the senses. This field described as that of waking consciousness. Here subject and object are separate from each other, and the phenomena observed are of “gross matter,” while the logic of the relationship of things and concepts to each other can be expressed largely in Euclidean or Aristotelian terms: A is not not-A; two objects cannot occupy the same place at the same time. In modern physics, of course, those obvious rules have begun to blur at the edges, so that scientific and

logical formulae now exhibit some of the qualities of art. But the *referianda* of these modern formulae are invisible to the eye, and are composed, furthermore, not of “gross matter,” but of what the Indians call “subtle matter.” Hence they would seem to pertain, actually, to the field of the second term.

This second term—which would be a counterpart of Jung’s “symbolic”—is *parokṣa* (again from *akṣa*, meaning “eye,” but now with the prefix *paras*: “beyond, far away, higher than”; so that the meaning is “beyond the reach of the eye”). For the references of a *parokṣa* vocabulary are not immediately perceptible to waking consciousness. They are, rather, like Platonic ideas, purely intelligible, spiritual, or esoteric. They are said to be *adhidaivata*, “divine,” or “angelic.” But they are perceived by the saints and sages in vision, and so are said to pertain to the field of “dreaming.”

The phantasmagorias of dream and vision are of “subtle matter.” Extremely fluent and mercurial, they are not illuminated, like gross objects, from without, but are self-luminous. Moreover, their logic is not that of Aristotle. In dream, we all know, the subject and object are not separate from each other—though they seem so to the dreamer—but identical; and two or more objects, furthermore, not only can but always do occupy the same place at the same time. The images, that is to say, are polysynthetic and polysemantic—and, I might add, in both aspects inexhaustible when analyzed from the standpoint of waking consciousness. The law of this sphere is well epitomized in Lévy-Bruhl’s term *participation mystique*, which is frequently cited by Jung. In the Orient, the realms of the gods and demons, the heavens, purgatories, and hells, are assigned to this sphere and are of subtle matter. They are the macrocosmic counterpart of the microcosmic images of dream. But since we do not encounter on this level the sort of clear distinction between A and not-A that is proper to the field of waking consciousness, micro- and macrocosm on this level are not as different as they seem, and all the gods, therefore, all the powers of heaven and hell, are within us.

The references of religious art in the Orient—in contrast to the West—are, almost always, not to the phenomenology of waking consciousness but to that of dream; hence the findings of modern science do not as greatly trouble Hinduism and Buddhism as they trouble



Christianity and Judaism, where all the symbols have been taught and read as signs. Nevertheless, even in the Orient there is thought to be a real and necessary correspondence between the phenomenology of dream consciousness and that of waking. Micro- and macrocosm, which in dream may be experienced as identical, when we are awake are to be recognized as *anurūpam*, “in the image of each other.” <sup>(11)</sup> In fact, I am sure that it can be said, without exception, that wherever a system of mythological symbols is alive and fully operative, it unites in a single, cohesive order, all phenomena both of the corporeal—“directly obvious” (*pratyakṣa*)—sphere of waking consciousness, and of the spiritual-metaphysical, occult, purely intelligible (*parokṣa*) sphere of dream. Hence an imprecise fusion of sign and symbol, fact and fancy, is characteristic of the entire range and history of the archaic cultures; and we may well say, consequently, that one of the chief philosophical effects of the crisis represented by my crucial date 1492 was that of the fracturing of this vague mythological order: the drawing of a distinct dividing plane between the world of dream consciousness and that of waking, together with a radical shift of the commitment of the waking intellect from the logic of the former to that of the latter. This we term the scientific revolution—which is still in progress; and it is amounting, indeed, to the creation of a new world—or, to use a mythological image, to a separation of heaven and earth.

Mythological cosmologies, it now must be recognized, do not correspond to the world of gross facts but are functions of dream and vision; and therefore, the meanings (if any) inherent in or implied by the propositions of theology and metaphysics are not to be sought at the other end of either the microscope or the telescope. They are not verifiable through any science of physical research but belong, rather, to the science of the psyche—and here, as we know, considerable progress has already been made toward a reconstruction of our understanding of their terms.

Indeed, for some, this ancient lore, now interpreted psychologically instead of cosmologically, has actually seemed to restore the old religions to their former place both in the center and around the bounding horizon of the sphere of the human spirit, as representing not merely a passing phase in the history of the evolution of consciousness but a permanent

spiritual legacy, symbolic of the very structure of the psyche. The Assumption of the Virgin and the Ascension of her Divine Son (who was, and is forever, both true God and true Man) may now be sensitively glozed in a manner that would have brought us all to the stake a mere three centuries ago; and on the groundswell of this fortunate heresy (*O felix culpa!*) the ship of the “City of God” is lifted off the rocks and carried powerfully on its way.

But now, let us ask, very calmly, objectively, and honestly: Is it true that these discredited cosmological dogmas, which are now returning to us as psychological symbols—is it true that all these archaic propositions, which have been disqualified, from top to bottom, as representations of the macrocosm—can now be safely restored to favor as a universal revelation of the microcosm? Are these forms—these sacred *mandalas*, icons, and *yantras*, these gods who sit about the world, hand down their moral edicts, or come down to man as incarnations and fly back to heaven again—are these actually the symbolic guardians of some kind of natural or supernatural Law, qualifying the meaning and destiny of man; bounding, binding, and yet guiding him to his proper end? Do they have meaning, that is to say, as microcosmic universals—and hence, perhaps, finally, in some mysterious manner, as macrocosmic universals, after all? Or must we judge them, rather, as functions merely of a certain phase or form of human culture—not of universal psychological validity but sociologically determined? In the latter event, like the carapace of a crayfish or cocoon of a butterfly that has been cracked, sloughed off, and left behind, they too have been cracked (for they were certainly cracked in 1492) and should now be left behind.

## THE MYTHIC FORMS OF ARCHAIC CIVILIZATION

One of the most interesting and important of the many critical developments that have taken place in the field of archaeological research in recent decades has been that of the steady progress of excavations in the Near East, which have now begun to bring into clear focus the chief centers of origin and the main paths of diffusion of the earliest Neolithic culture forms. To present very briefly the main result of this work pertinent to our present theme, let me commence by saying that the arts of grain agriculture and stock breeding, which are the basic forms of economy on which all of the high cultures of the world are based, now appear to have been developed in the Near East, commencing about 9000 B.C., and to have spread eastward and westward from this center in a broad band, displacing the earlier, much more precariously supported hunting and food-collecting cultures, until both the Pacific coast of Asia and the Atlantic coasts of Europe and Africa were reached about 3500 B.C. Meanwhile, in the nuclear zone from which this diffusion had originated, a further development was accomplished, and both the mythological and the technological effects of this continuing development were subsequently diffused along the ways already blazed—until, again, the coasts were attained.

That is to say: the transformation of society from a food-collecting, hunting, and root-gathering structure to an agrarian, stock-breeding, food-producing one, took place, specifically and uniquely, in a certain definite region of the globe, at a certain definite time. And the development from this center of all the basic arts and myths of the agriculturally based archaic civilizations can be described in four great stages, briefly as follows:

### [a] The Proto-Neolithic: From c. 9000 B.C.

Stage one, which we may term the *Proto-Neolithic*, is represented by an assemblage of artifacts discovered in the middle twenties by Dr. Dorothy Garrod at the so-called Mount Carmel caves in Palestine. <sup>(12)</sup> Similar artifacts have since been found as far south as to Helwan, in Egypt, as far north as to Beirut and Yabrud, and as far east as to the Kurdish hills of Iraq. The industry is known to archaeology as the Natufian and has been variously assigned by differing scholars to dates as far apart as c. 9000 and c. 4500 B.C. <sup>(13)</sup> What the evidence suggests is a congeries of hunting tribes, not yet dwelling in fixed villages, yet supplementing their food supply with some variety of grainlike grass; for sickle-blades of stone have been found among the

remains, and these suggest a harvest. Many bones of the pig, goat, sheep, ox, and an equid of some sort let us know, furthermore, that even if the Natufians were not yet domesticating, they were nevertheless slaughtering the same beasts that would later constitute the basic barnyard stock of all the higher cultures. Their style of life, then, was transitional, and let us mark the date. Mankind had inhabited this planet already for nearly two million years, yet here, not twelve thousand years ago, is the first hint even of the beginnings of a turn to agriculture.

**[b] The Basal-Neolithic: from c. 7500–4500 B.C.**

Stage two in the development of village farming in the Near East, which I have termed in *The Masks of God* the *Basal Neolithic* and there dated c. 5500–4500 B.C., has been so greatly expanded by the archaeology of the last ten years that its dates must now be assigned to c. 7500–4500 B.C., and within this span as many as three distinct substages have been identified.

**Substage 1. Aceramic Neolithic: from c. 7500 B.C.** The earliest of these substages, the *Pre-Pottery* or *Aceramic Neolithic*, was first disclosed and registered by Dr. Kathleen Kenyon in the lowest strata of the ancient mound of Jericho, in Palestine; and Dr. James Mellaart, in southern Turkey, on the Anatolian plain, has since discovered an impressive series of sites of equivalent age. According to Dr. Kenyon, the earliest settlers at the great spring of Jericho were Natufians who built there a sanctuary of some kind that was subsequently burned down, leaving a charcoal deposit that has been dated by the Carbon-14 method at 7800 B.C.  $\pm$  210 years. The fragile shelters of these Proto-Neolithic hunters gave place presently to houses built of plano-convex bricks (bricks with a flat base and curved top), the round or curvilinear forms of the little buildings imitating the earlier primitive huts. In time this settlement—known as *Pre-Pottery Neolithic A Jericho*—was protected by a town wall of stone, some twelve feet high and six feet six inches wide, with an associated stone watch tower rising to a height of at least thirty feet, suggesting that somewhere on the horizon there were enemies.

“It looks,” Dr. Kenyon writes, “as though there were two lines of development. One Lower Natufian group settled down at Jericho, and it is surely to be presumed that other groups established settlements in comparable positions....But the cousins of the settled groups, living mainly in the hills, in areas less favorable for agriculture, continued in a Mesolithic way of life, still

living as hunters and food-gatherers. The caves and shelters in which they lived have produced the implements which have been classified as Middle and Upper Natufian.” <sup>(14)</sup> And this, then, accounts for the great spread of differing dates for the Natufians suggested by earlier scholars.

Somewhere about 7000 B.C. this earliest settlement at Jericho was deserted and its site appropriated by a people of another culture, building houses of a different type, to which the name *Pre-Pottery Neolithic B Jericho* has been assigned. And these may have been the enemies foreseen. Their buildings were of another, more highly evolved type. “The newcomers arrived,” Dr. Kenyon states, “with this architecture fully developed.” <sup>(15)</sup> The houses were not circular but rectangular, built of bricks of another shape, and with several rooms, having hard lime-plaster floors, reddish or cream colored and finished with a high burnish. The same kind of floors and rectangular dwellings have now been found in the Anatolian sites of Hacilar and Çatal Hüyük, where they are of an earlier date than at Jericho; and not only the architecture, but the evidences of religion, too, provide, as the excavator James Mellaart has pointed out, “an unmistakable link” between the Pre-Pottery levels at Hacilar (which he dates between c. 7000 and c. 6000 B.C.) and the Pre-Pottery B phase of Jericho (which he places c. 6500–5500 B.C.). <sup>(16)</sup>

The principal shared religious feature of Jericho and the Anatolian sites was an unmistakable skull cult. In the Pre-Pottery levels at Hacilar, “human skulls, propped up with stones on the floors of many houses and at the corners of the hearths, indicate,” according to Dr. Mellaart, “that the inhabitants practiced an ancestor cult, preserving heads to protect the homes.” <sup>(17)</sup> And in Pre-Pottery B Jericho, not only were skulls set up the same way, but a number were found that had been lightly covered with plaster shaped to the likeness of human features, the eyes being of inset shells. <sup>(18)</sup>

So much, then, for the first substage of the Basal Neolithic.

*Substage 2. Ceramic Neolithic: from c. 6500 B.C.* The second substage appeared at Çatal Hüyük, abruptly, at an astonishingly early date, and has been termed the Pottery or Ceramic Neolithic. “At Çatal Hüyük,” states Dr. Mellaart, “we can actually study the transition from an aceramic Neolithic with baskets and wooden vessels to a ceramic Neolithic with the first Pottery.” <sup>(19)</sup> The deeper levels of this large and luxurious town site have not yet been investigated systematically, but a probe to Level XIII has revealed the presence of pottery already at that depth, roughly 6500 B.C. And with the

pottery, there has come to view an astonishing display of religious imagery in the wall paintings, mother-goddess statuettes, bucrania, etc., of some forty or more richly decorated shrines, which have advanced by some two thousand years our knowledge of the backgrounds of the great mother-goddess myths and cults of the ancient world.



*Figure 5. Goddess giving birth (terracotta, Turkey, c. 5800 B.C.)*

Figure 5 <sup>(20)</sup> shows a figurine that was found at Level II (c. 5800 B.C.), in a grain bin, showing the goddess supported by leopards and giving birth to a child, whereas in Figure 6, <sup>(21)</sup> from a shrine at Level VI (c. 5950 B.C.), she is shown giving birth to a bull.

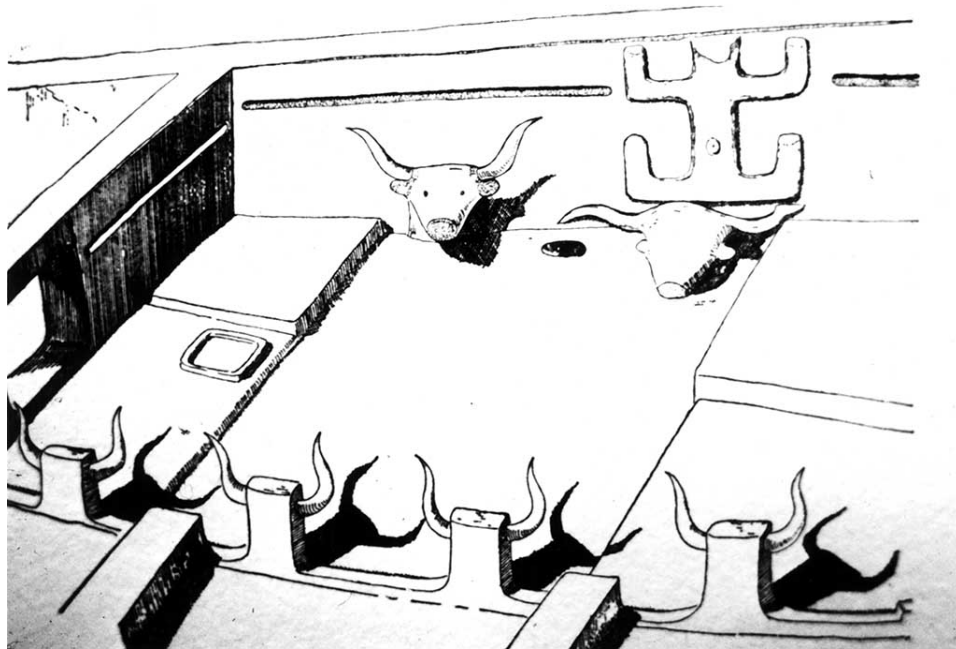


Figure 6. Goddess giving birth to a bull; Çatal Hüyük (artist's reconstruction, Turkey, c. 5950 B.C.

It is recalled that Osiris, Tammuz, Dionysus, and many other great divinities symbolic of a resurrection beyond death, were in later centuries identified with the moon bull, who was both the child and the consort of the cosmic goddess. The Pharaoh, identified in death with Osiris, was called, for example, “the bull of his own mother.” <sup>(22)</sup> Taken back to the universal mother in death, he became, as it were, the seed of his own rebirth: like the moon that dies each month into the sun, to become in three days reborn. “The male,” declares Mellaart, discussing his finds at Çatal Hüyük, “appears either as husband or as son.” <sup>(23)</sup> And indeed, again from Level VI there is an interesting dual figure, showing the goddess back-to-back with herself: in one character embraced by an adult male and in the other holding a child. <sup>(24)</sup>



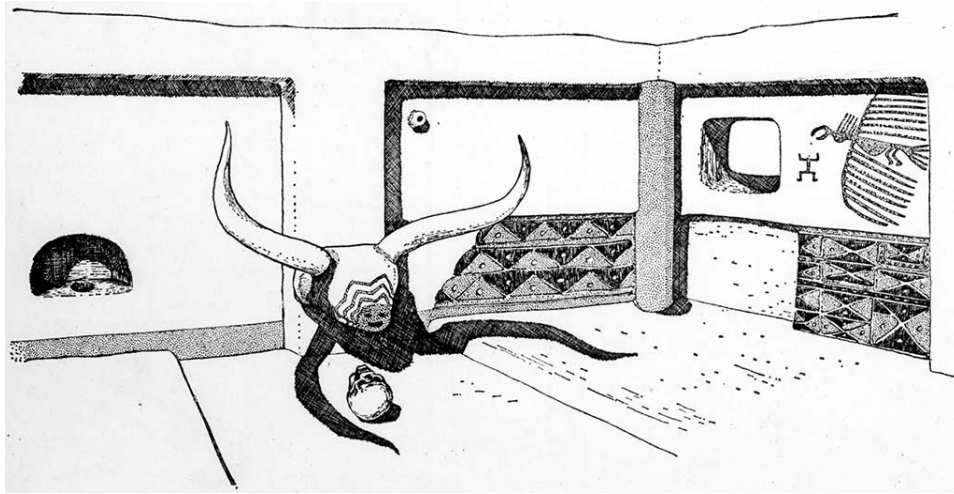


Figure 7. "Second Vulture Shrine"; Çatal Hüyük (artist's reconstruction with human skulls as found, Turkey, c. 5950 B.C.

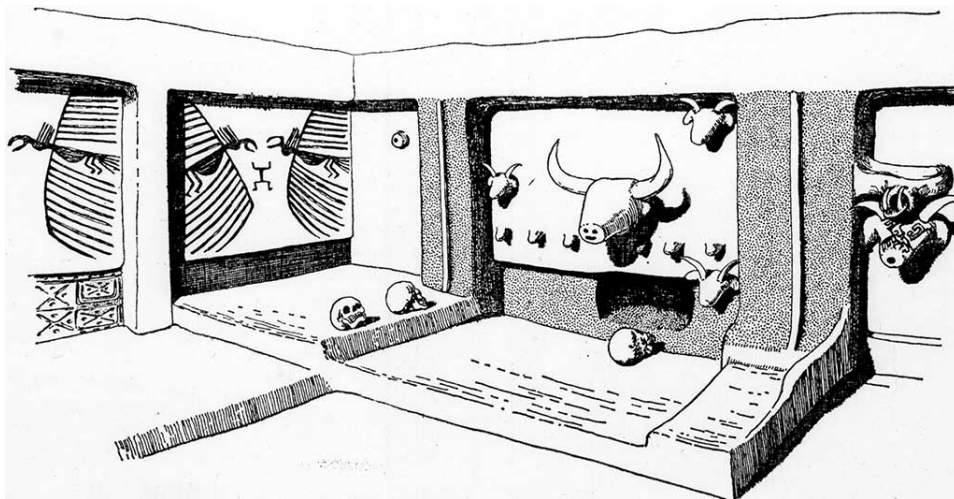


Figure 7 <sup>(25)</sup> presents a reconstructed view of three walls—west, north, and east—of the so-called Second Vulture Shrine of Level VII, c. 6200 B.C., and of the greatest interest here, in the light of what we have learned of the Pre-Pottery skull cult, are the four human skulls ceremonially disposed: one beneath the mighty bucranium of the west wall, two on the northeast corner platform beneath a stylized female breast, and one more, beneath an arrangement of three rams' heads, a bucranium, and a row of six stylized female breasts. The entire north wall is decorated with paintings of vultures attacking headless human bodies, while on the southernmost panel of the long east wall there is what Dr. Mellaart describes as "a large ram's head with actual horns and painted with a bold meander pattern...beneath a bold clay

horn from which a single breast protrudes. Out of the open breast springs the lower jaw of a gigantic boar.”<sup>(26)</sup> Nor is this the only shrine at this site where the lower jaws of boars are contained within models of the female breast.<sup>(27)</sup> Fox and weasel skulls have been used in this way as well. And there is a shrine on Level VI where the heads of two Griffin vultures are sealed within a pair of breasts, with the beaks protruding from the open red-painted nipples.<sup>(28)</sup> The idea suggested would seem to be of a mother who eats back the lives she has nourished—the mother to whom the dead are returned for rebirth. “Contrasting symbols of life and death,” states Dr. Mellaart, “are a constant feature of Çatal Hüyük.”<sup>(29)</sup>

*Substage 3. Early Chalcolithic: from c. 5500 B.C.* The third and final substage, then, of the Basal Neolithic, as it has been brought to light from the mounds of the Anatolian Plain, is termed (for this area) the *Early Chalcolithic*, since there have been found among the remains a few artifacts of metal. The beginnings of metallurgy, specifically the smelting and working of copper and lead into beads, tubes, and other trinkets, are already evident at Çatal Hüyük as early as Level IX, c. 6300 B.C.<sup>(30)</sup> (which is the earliest date for the knowledge of metals yet registered anywhere on earth). However, it is not until nearly a millennium later, c. 5500 B.C., that metal tools become numerous enough (though still relatively unimportant) to warrant the recognition of a “copper-stone” (Chalcolithic) phase of this Basal Neolithic development. Dr. Mellaart has been able to mark in detail a gradual progression from Ceramic Neolithic to Early Chalcolithic particularly well at Hacilar, where, as he declares, “the first copper implements appear, and with them painted pottery in force.” “The truly superb pottery of this period developed,” he continues, “out of the late Neolithic, some still in monochrome but most of it gaily painted in red or cream. Geometric patterns, many derived from textiles or woven mats, prevailed in the early phases of the period; later [c. 5200–5000 B.C.] the patterns took on bold curves, the so-called fantastic style.”<sup>(31)</sup>

And a somewhat surprising observation touching the art styles of the Neolithic female figurines can also be made at this point. For, whereas those of the earlier Ceramic Neolithic had been naturalistic and lifelike, giving us, as Mellaart declares, “for the first time in Near Eastern prehistory, a reliable picture of what late Neolithic woman looked like”<sup>(32)</sup> those of this early Chalcolithic period (c. 5500–4500 B.C.) are “conventionalized fertility

symbols.” And as time goes on, the figurines become more and more stylized and unlikelike.

**[c] The High Neolithic: c. 4500–3500 b.c. (Middle and Late Chalcolithic)**

And so we are brought to the next great stage in the evolution of civilization, which I have termed in *The Masks of God* the High Neolithic: 4500–3500 B.C.: that of the beautiful, geometrically conceived, painted ceramic wares of Halaf, Samarra, and Obeid, which has also been called the *Middle and Late Chalcolithic*.

Dr. Kenyon explains:

The difficulty in deciding where to place the transition from the Neolithic to the Chalcolithic is reflected in the existing confusion in nomenclature. Sometimes the one and sometimes the other name is given to allied groups. The transition is in fact a gradual one. The dawn of the new era is not marked by the sudden appearance of copper implements on a site, but by the gradual breakdown of isolation and the resultant spreading of ideas and cultures over a considerable area. In Palestine, in fact, as far as our evidence goes, metal seems to have played a relatively small part among the materials employed until quite a late date, about the end of the third millennium. But in spite of this, the change in outlook is reflected in the gradual growth of widespread cultures, and the eventual amalgamation of isolated groups into a cultural whole.

In the northern part of the Fertile Crescent, this stage is marked by the appearance of a widespread culture, called Halafian, after Tell Halaf in northern Iraq where it was first found. Site after site, from Mesopotamia across to the Mediterranean coast, has shown that after the stage of the Neolithic villages with all their diverse ways of life, a remarkably similar economy appears, with, as a characteristic feature, a type of pottery with geometric decoration in red on a light background. This is usually dated to the late fifth millennium.

(33)

The arts of carpentry and house building, weaving, ceramic crafts, and even metallurgy have been added to the sum of human skills. An imposing mythology—to be echoed through all subsequent high traditions to the present—has been articulated in a well-developed constellation of iconographic arts, which in the rendition of certain themes were already losing immediacy and devolving into abstractions. Settled village life based on a barnyard economy is now, throughout the nuclear Near East, a firmly established pattern, the grains being chiefly wheat and barley, and the animals, the pig, goat, sheep, and ox (the dog having already joined the human family as early, perhaps, as about 15,000 B.C., as an aid and companion of hunters of the late Paleolithic). And society, apparently, has already become differentiated, with specialist craftsmen producing articles of luxury, a special priestly order of some kind, and possibly also governing

authorities: as Dr. Kenyon has observed, already at the level of Pre-Pottery A Jericho, “the evidence that there was an efficient communal organization is to be seen in the great defensive system” (34) the great wall and tower of stone.

Then suddenly—quite suddenly—in the highly styled, painted ceramic wares of the High Neolithic (Middle and Late Chalcolithic) towns, c. 4500 B.C., a totally new concept of art becomes apparent in the very beautiful, strictly balanced, circular organizations of abstract aesthetic forms applied to the decoration of vessels of all kinds.

In the earlier, Paleolithic art of the great caves of southern France and northern Spain, which are now being dated c. 30,000–c. 9000 B.C., (35) we do *not* find evidence of a concept of *geometrical* organization. Professor André Leroi-Gourhan has recently demonstrated that the positioning of the figures engraved and painted on the walls of the caves was not at all haphazard but strictly ordered by a mythology in which the form of the cave itself participated. “The cavern,” he states, “is truly, as it were, an organized world.” (36) And he compares the organization to that of a cathedral. What images are normally at the entrance? What, halfway down the nave? What in the apse, the Lady Chapel? What and where is the high altar? etc.

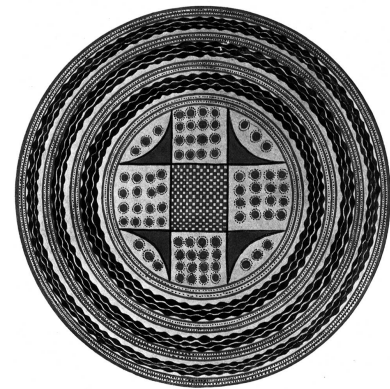


Figure 8. Geometric design; Halaf (terracotta and polychrome glaze, Iraq, c. 4000 B.C.)

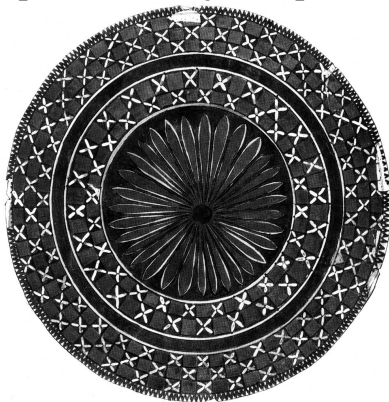


Figure 9. Geometric design; Halaf (terracotta and polychrome glaze, Iraq, c. 4000 B.C.)

The organization, that is to say, is mythological and three-dimensional—architectural, as it were; and the figures are, for the most part, beautifully alive. We do not find anywhere in this cave art aesthetically conceived signs and abstractions, symmetrically arranged in a closed, geometrically organized, two-dimensional aesthetic field—no mandalas or anything of the kind. In fact, the painted or incised surfaces of the cave walls are so little regarded as fields of aesthetic interest in themselves that the animals frequently overlap each other in great tangles. (37)

Nor do we find anything like an aesthetic organization of the field in the works surviving to us from the later, terminal stages of the Paleolithic, where

many of the petroglyphs have lost the earlier impressionistic beauty and precision and some have even deteriorated into mere geometric scrawls or abstractions. On certain flat, painted pebbles that have been found in what apparently were religious sanctuaries, geometrical symbols appear: the cross, the circle with a dot in the center, a line with a dot on either side, stripes, meanders, and something resembling the letter E. <sup>(38)</sup> Yet we do not find, even in this late stage of the hunting period, anything that could be termed a geometrical organization—anything suggesting the concept of a definitely circumscribed field in which a number of disparate elements are united and fused into one aesthetic whole by a rhythm of beauty. Whereas suddenly, in the period of the High Neolithic towns, there breaks into view, from a number of centers, an elegant display of the most gracefully and tastefully organized mandalas—in the painted ceramic wares of the so-called Halaf and Samarra styles (Figures 2?, 10?, and 11?). <sup>(39)</sup>

And so now—returning to the argument of the first part of this chapter—we have to ask ourselves whether it can be properly claimed that these geometrical forms, which have become the commonplaces of our modern psychological discussion of archetypal symbols, actually do represent basal structures of the human psyche, or may not, rather, be functioned only of a certain type or phase of social development incidental to the history of a limited portion of the race.

The question is one of considerable moment; for on it depends our whole interpretation of the so-called “spiritual,” “divine,” “esoteric,” or “mystical,” *parokṣa* references of our psychological vocabulary. Yet, as far as I know, it has not been systematically studied. What I should like to propose, therefore, is a preliminary hypothesis: an idea that occurred to me some years ago, during the course of a comparative study of the myths and art of certain living hunting races with those of the archaic Near East.



## THE NEOLITHIC-PALEOLITHIC CONTRAST

To begin with, then, let me call attention to the fact that among hunting peoples the young male adult, or even the normal youngster of ten or twelve, is a more or less competent master of the entire technological inheritance of his culture. The late Dr. Géza Róheim remarked on this, with reference to the hunting peoples of Australia. In one of his last publications he wrote:

I shall never forget the Pijentara children, who, at the age of eight or ten, went roaming about the desert and were practically self-supporting. A boy, with his keen eyes and spear, can catch what he needs in small fry and keep going from morning until evening. Even an adult male cannot do very much more. The outstanding characteristic of primitive economics is the absence of a true differentiation of labor. An incipient or rudimentary division of labor may exist along sexual or age lines, and there may be some incipient and part-time specialization in matters of ritual and magic. But true specialization is lacking. This means that every individual is technically a master of the whole culture or, where certain modest qualifications are necessary, of almost the whole culture. In other words, each individual is really self-reliant and grown up.

We however do not grow up as simply as that. If the testimony of anthropology indicates anything, it shows that primitive man is free, untrammelled, and truly self-reliant in comparison with Medieval or Modern Man. <sup>(40)</sup>

It was this remark of Dr. Róheim's that seemed to me to offer the clue to the interpretation of the sudden appearance of the mandala, and of other geometrical organizations of enclosed fields, after the passing of the hunting age and with the development of the agricultural. For, whereas in the camps of the hunters the community was constituted of a group of practically equivalent individuals, each in adequate control of the whole inheritance, in the larger, more greatly differentiated communities that developed when agriculture and stock breeding had made for a settled, more richly articulated social structure, adulthood consisted in acquiring, first, a certain special art or skill, and then, the ability to support or sustain the resultant tension—a psychological and sociological tension—between oneself (as merely a fraction of a larger whole) and others of totally different training, powers, and ideals, who constituted the other necessary organs of the body social.

The problem of existing as a mere fraction instead of as a whole imposes certain stresses on the psyche which no primitive hunter ever had to endure, and consequently the symbols giving structure and support to the development of the primitive hunter's psychological balance were radically different from those that arose in the settled villages, in the Basal and High Neolithic, and which have been inherited from that age and continued into the

present by all the high civilizations of the world. Furthermore, by far the greatest number of the so-called primitive peoples today are not actually primitive in their culture, but regressed—regressed Neolithic, regressed Bronze, or even regressed Iron Age culture provinces. For example, even the pigmoid negritos of the Andaman Islands, who are certainly among the most primitive peoples now living on Earth, cannot be studied simply as primitives; for there is a good deal of evidence, not only in their kitchen middens, which have been piling up for thousands of years, but also in their myths and folkways, of important cultural influences which arrived from the southeast Asian mainland, beginning perhaps three or four thousand years ago, and which brought to them not only pottery and the pig but also a new method of cooking and even the art of smoking pipes. They have, besides, an extremely beautiful type of bow, which is not, by any means, a primitive weapon, but one that appears only as late as the Mesolithic—that is to say, in the culture period just preceding that of the dawn of the arts of food cultivation. <sup>(41)</sup>

Now it should certainly not be necessary to point out that one cannot safely draw conclusions concerning the typology and archetypology of the human psyche in general from any body of evidence, no matter how abundant, that has been gathered almost exclusively from one province—even though a very great one: the province, namely, of the range and influence of the food-producing, settled villages, towns, and cities of the comparatively brief Neolithic and post-Neolithic era of the human race. When it is recalled—as already remarked—that the earliest evidences of man in this world date from the neighborhood of two million years ago, and that the period during which he has been an agriculturalist embraces no more than some ten thousand (a segment, that is to say, of less than one half of one per cent of the known arc), and when it is considered, further, that this physical body of ours, of which our psyche is a function, evolved under the conditions not of agriculture but of the hunt—then perhaps it may be asked whether this whole history and mythology of the earth-rooted, walled town or village, with its temple tower in the center, lifting the goddess earth to her divine connubium with the all-father of the overarching fertilizing sky, is not, perhaps, only a highly specialized formula, not normal to the psyche of the species, but rather, an effect of the tensions, fears, and expectations generated in a society based on an agricultural economy. And we may ask, also, then, whether today, when that economy is giving way to one based on industry,



and the cosmological image commensurate with an agricultural horizon has been shattered for us forever—whether today, in this next great age of transformation, the images generated in that earlier period of crisis still are of use, and if so for whom, and why?

It was during the Basal Neolithic, Substage 2, in the phase now known as Ceramic Neolithic (identified at Çatal Hüyük c. 6500 B.C.), that the earliest of those Neolithic mother-goddess figurines appear that mark, throughout the world, the dawn of an order of myths and rites relative specifically to the generative and nourishing, “female” powers of the tilled earth. But there is also a much earlier series of naked figurines, of the type of the Paleolithic Venus of Willendorf, from the period of the art of the hunters of the great French and Spanish caves. And there is an extremely perplexing question connected with the history of that series; for it has been observed that, although their cult seems to have extended all the way from the Pyrenees to Lake Baikal in Siberia, the period of their florescence was comparatively brief. As the art of painting developed and the beautiful animal forms took possession of the walls of the great caves, the carving of the figurines was discontinued. Furthermore, whenever human forms do appear among the painted animals, they are of masculine shamans, the representation of the human female having practically ceased. And so we have to understand that there were two quite distinct orders of culture in which female figurines played a preponderant role in the symbolism of magic and religion, and that these now appear to have been separated by a span of at least ten thousand years.



*Figure 10. Earliest known swastika; front view on left, side view on right (carved ivory, Ukraine, c. 10,000 B.C.)*

We find certain symbols in the centers of the High Neolithic mandalas, and these have remained characteristic of such organizations to the very present. In the Samarra ware, for example, we discover the earliest known association of the swastika with the mandala—in fact, there is only one earlier known occurrence of the swastika anywhere, and that is on the wings of a flying bird, carved of mammoth ivory (Figure 10), found in a late Paleolithic site, not far from Kiev.

Frequently, in the Samarra ware, the swastika appears in the sinister form, with the angled arms pointing leftward, and this may or may not be a significant fact. We also find the Maltese cross in the centers of these early mandalas—occasionally modified in such a way as to suggest stylized animal forms, as though the beasts were emerging from the whirling arms (Figure 11). In several examples the stylized forms of women appear, with their feet or heads coming together in the middle of the mandala, to constellate a star. Such mandalas are usually fourfold in design, but occasionally fivefold, sixfold, or eightfold. Or again, the forms of four gazelles may

circumambulate a tree. Some of the designs show lovely wading birds catching fish. <sup>(42)</sup>

The archaeological site after which this superb series of decorated vessels has been named—Samarra—is located in Iraq, on the river Tigris, some twenty miles above Baghdad; and the area over which the ware has been diffused extends northward to Nineveh, southward to the head of the Persian Gulf, and eastward, across Iran, as far as to the border of Afghanistan. The Halaf ware, on

the other hand, is scattered through an area northwestward of this, with its chief center in northern Syria, just south of the so-called Taurus, or Bull, Mountains of Anatolia (neighboring Çatal Hüyük and Hacilar), whence the river Euphrates and its tributaries descend from the foothills to the plain. And what is most remarkable is the prominence in this beautifully decorated ware of the bull's head (the bucranium, as at Çatal Hüyük), viewed from before and with great curving horns. The form is depicted both naturalistically and in various stylized, very graceful designs. Another prominent device in this series is the double ax, which in later Cretan art is the sign and weapon of the goddess. Once again we find the Maltese cross, as in Samarra, but—significantly, perhaps—no swastika, nor those graceful gazelle designs. Furthermore, in association with the female statuettes (which are numerous in this context) we find clay figures of the dove, as well as of the pig, cow, humped ox, sheep, and goat. <sup>(43)</sup> One charming pottery fragment represents the goddess standing between two goats rampant—that on her left, a male, the other, a female giving suck to a young kid. <sup>(44)</sup> And all these symbols are associated in this Halafian culture complex with the so-called beehive tomb.

Now this, precisely, is the complex that not only appeared a millennium later in Crete <sup>(45)</sup> but also was carried from there by sea, through the Gates of Hercules, north to the British Isles and south to the Gold Coast, Nigeria, and the Congo. It is, in fact, the basic complex, also, of the Mycenaean culture, from which the Greeks, and therewith ourselves, derived so many symbols.



Figure 11. Samarra-ware (terracotta, Iraq, c. 4000 B.C.)

And when the cult of the dead and resurrected moon god was carried from Syria to the Nile Delta in the fourth or third millennium B.C., these symbols went with it. Indeed, I believe that we may claim, with a very high degree of certainty, that in this Halafian symbology of the bull and the goddess, the dove and the double ax, we have at once a continuation of the mythological tradition already announced, two thousand years before, in the chapels of Çatal Hüyük, and a halfway station of that continuing tradition toward its culmination in the great historical religions of Ishtar and Tammuz, Isis and Osiris, Venus and Adonis, Mary and Jesus. From the Taurus Mountains, the mountains of the bull god, who must already have been identified with the horned moon, which dies and is resurrected, the cult was diffused with the art of cattle-breeding itself, practically to the ends of the earth; and we celebrate the mystery of that mythological death and resurrection to this day, as a promise of our own eternity. The immanence, then, of eternity in the passages of time would be the meaning, or reference, of this archaic mystery play. But what is eternity and what time? And why in the image of the bull, or of the moon?

**[d] The Hieratic City State: c. 3500–2500 B.C.**

Stage Four in the development in the Near East of the agriculturally based civilization from which all the high cultures of the world have been derived took place about 3500 B.C. Half a millennium earlier, c. 4000 B.C. (the date assigned in the Book of Genesis to the creation of the world), a number of the Neolithic villages had begun to assume the size and function of market towns and there had been, furthermore, an expansion of the Chalcolithic culture area southward into the mud flats of riverine Mesopotamia. That was the period in which the really great and still mysterious race of the Sumerians first appeared on the scene, to establish in the torrid Tigris and Euphrates delta flats those sites that were to become, by c. 3500 B.C., the kingly cities of Ur, Kish, Lagash, Eridu, Sippar, Shuruppak, Nippur, and Erech. The only natural resources in that land were mud and reeds. Wood and stone had to be imported from the north. But the mud was fertile, and the fertility was annually refreshed. Furthermore, the mud could be fashioned into sun-dried bricks that could be used for the construction of temples—which now appear for the first time in the history of the world, their form being of the ziggurat in its earliest stage: a little height, artificially constructed, supporting a chapel

for the ritual of the world-generating union of the earth goddess with a god of the sky. And if we may judge from the evidence of the following centuries, the queen or princess of each city was in these earliest days identified with the goddess, and the king, her spouse, with the god.

During the course of the fourth millennium B.C. the temples in these riverine towns increased in size and importance, becoming the economic as well as the religious and political centers of the growing communities. And then, at a date that can now be almost precisely fixed at 3200 B.C. (the period of the archaeological stratum known as Uruk B), there appeared in this little Sumerian mud-garden—as though the flowers of its tiny cities were suddenly bursting into bloom—the whole cultural syndrome that has, ever since, constituted the ground base of the high civilizations of the world. This, the fourth and culminating stage of the development that I am here tracing, we may term that of the *hieratic city state*.

But let us pause, to repeat: We have named the Proto-Neolithic period of the Natufians, c. 9000 B.C., where the first signs of an incipient grain agriculture appear; the Basal Neolithic of the Aceramic, Ceramic, and Early Chalcolithic villages, c. 7500–4500 B.C., when the mother goddess of an already well-established peasantry makes her first dramatic appearance; then the High Neolithic (Middle and Late Chalcolithic) of the Halaf and Samarra painted wares, c. 4500 B.C., when the abstract concept of a geometrically organized aesthetic field first appears and the late Neolithic market towns begin to elevate temple towers; and now, finally, we have come to an epochal date c. 3200 B.C., when, suddenly, at precisely that geographical point where the rivers Tigris and Euphrates reach the Persian Gulf, the wonderful culture-flower comes to blossom of the hieratic city state. <sup>(46)</sup>

The whole city now (not simply the temple area) is conceived as an imitation on earth of the celestial order—a sociological middle cosmos, or mesocosm, between the macrocosm of the universe and the microcosm of the individual, making visible their essential form: with the king in the center (either as sun or as moon, according to the local cult) and an organization of the walled city, in the manner of a mandala, about the central sanctum of the palace and the ziggurat; and with a mathematically structured calendar, furthermore, to regulate the seasons of the city's life according to the passages of the sun and moon among the stars; as well as a highly developed system of ritual arts, including an art of rendering audible to human ears the harmony of the visible celestial spheres. It is at this moment that the art of

writing first appears in the world, and that literately documented history begins. It is at this moment that the wheel appears. And we have also evidence that the two numerical systems that are still normally employed throughout the civilized world had just been developed, namely, the decimal and the sexagesimal: the former used for business accounts in the offices of the temple compounds, where the grain was stored that had been collected in taxes, and the latter used for the ritualistic measuring of space and time: three hundred and sixty degrees still represent the circumference of the circle—that is to say, the mandala of space; while three hundred and sixty days, plus five, mark the measurement of the mandala of time, the cycle of the year. And those five intercalated days—which represent the opening through which spiritual energy flows into the sphere of time from the pleroma of eternity, and which, consequently, are days of feast and festival—correspond in the temporal mandala to that mystical point in the center of the spatial mandala which is the sanctuary of the temple, where the earthly and heavenly powers join. The four sides of the temple tower, oriented to the four points of the compass, come together at this fifth point, where the energy of the pleroma enters time—and so once again we have the number five added to three hundred and sixty to symbolize the mystery of the immanence of eternity in time.

This temple tower, of course, and the hieratically organized little city surrounding it, where everyone plays his role according to a celestially inspired divine plan, is the model of paradise that we find not only in the Hindu-Buddhist imagery of Mount Sumeru, the Greek Olympus, and the Aztec Temples of the Sun, but also in Dante's Earthly Paradise, for which Columbus went in search, and in the Biblical image of Eden, from which the medieval concept was developed, and which—according to the date that you will find in the marginal notes of your Bible—would have been created just about at the time of the founding of the first Sumerian towns: 4004 B.C.

It appears, in short, to have been demonstrated in a manner hardly to be doubted, that the idea of the hieratic city state, conceived as a mesocosm, or sociological imitation of the celestial order, first emerged as a paradigm in the little cities of Sumer, c. 3200 B.C., and was then disseminated westward and eastward, along the ways already blazed by the earlier Neolithic. The wonderful, life-organizing assemblage of ideas and principles—including those of writing, mathematics, and calendrical astronomy—reached the Nile



and inspired the civilization of the First Dynasty of Egypt, c. 2800 B.C.; reached Crete, on one hand, and, on the other, the Indus Valley, c. 2600 B.C.; Shang China, c. 1500 B.C.; and finally, Peru and Middle America—from China, by way of the Pacific?—possibly as early as c. 1000 B.C.<sup>47</sup> We have, therefore, to recognize what now appears to be the demonstrated and documented fact that all of the high civilizations of the world are, finally, but so many variants and developments of a single marvelous monad of mythological inspiration—and that, whereas the history and prehistory of the human race covers some one million seven hundred and fifty thousand years, this monad was constellated and brought into a living form in the mud flats and among the reeds of Mesopotamia hardly more than five thousand years ago.

If we now should attempt to put into words the sense or meaning of this monad, the sense or character of the realization that appears to have precipitated with such force this image of man's destiny as an organ participating in the organism of the universe, we might say that the psychological requirement already noted for a coordinating principle, to bring the parts of a differentiated social body into an orderly relationship to each other and simultaneously to suggest the play through all of a higher, all-suffusing, all-informing principle or energy—this profoundly felt psychological as well as sociological requirement—must have been fulfilled with the recognition, some time in the fourth millennium B.C., of the orderly round-dance of the five visible planets and the sun and moon through the constellations of the zodiac. And this celestial order was to become for all the civilizations and philosophers of the world the model of the revelation of destiny. In the words of Plato: "The motions akin to the divine part in us are the thoughts and revolutions of the universe; these, therefore, every man should follow, and correcting those circuits in the head that were deranged at birth, by learning to know the harmonies and revolutions of the world, he should bring the intelligent part, according to its pristine nature, into the likeness of that which intelligence discerns, and thereby win the fulfillment of the best in life set by the gods before mankind both for this present time and for the life to come." <sup>(48)</sup> The Egyptian term for this order was Ma'at, in India it is Dharma, and in China Tao. And if we now should attempt to epitomize in a sentence the sense or meaning of all the myths and rituals that have sprung from this conception of a universal order, we might say that they are its structuring agents, functioning to bring the human order into accord with the

celestial. “Thy will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.” The myths and rites constellate a mesocosm—a mediating, middle cosmos, through which the microcosm of the individual is brought into relation to the macrocosm of the universe. And this mesocosm is the entire context of the body social, which is thus a kind of living poem, hymn, or icon, of mud and reeds, and of flesh and blood, and of dreams, fashioned into the art form of the hieratic city state. Life on earth is to mirror, as nearly perfectly as possible in human bodies, the almost hidden—yet now discovered—order of the pageant of the spheres. This pageant is what has shaped the mesocosm, the middle, sociological cosmos of the City; and the patterns of this mesocosm are what, then, have shaped the soul. Art and custom shape the soul: art lived—as ritual.

### **PROBLEM OF THE NEW SYMBOL EMERGENT**

But then the soul—this microcosm, made identical in form with a supposed order of the macrocosm, must be an engram, something impressed or engraved, and not congenital. As already noticed: man, at birth, is not yet fully man; nor does he become man through a merely physical, biological development.\* The child, as already remarked, grows and develops for a length of years that in most mammals would constitute a lifetime, and during this period is shaped in its growth by the local social order. To repeat the words of Adolf Portmann: “Man is the incomplete creature, whose completion is effected by a historically determined tradition.” (48) So that each of us is but a part, a fragment or inflection, of what he might have been. And we can understand, in the light of this truth, the command of the Zen master, addressed to the candidate who would obtain release from the system of engraved ideas that had become for him his soul: “Show me the face that you had before you were born!” (49) or the question of the Hindu guru: “Where are you between two thoughts?” (50)

C. G. Jung has pointed out, in one of his numerous discussions of modern mandalas, that whereas in the traditional but now archaic forms the central figure was a god, “now,” as he declares, “the prisoner, or the well-protected dweller in the mandala, does not seem to be a god, in as much as the symbols used, stars, for instance, crosses, globes, and so on, do not mean a god, but rather an apparently most important part of the human personality. One might also say that Man himself, or at least his innermost soul, was the prisoner of the protected inhabitant of the mandala....It is evident,” he then continues, “that in the modern mandala, Man—the complete Man—has replaced the deity.” “This replacement,” he declares again, “is a natural and

spontaneous occurrence, and it is always essentially unconscious.” (51) And once again: “A modern mandala is an involuntary confession of a peculiar mental condition. There is no deity in the mandala, and there is also no submission or reconciliation to a deity. The place of the deity seems to be taken by the wholeness of Man.” (52)

One cannot but think of the words of Paracelsus: “I under God in his office, God under me in mine.” (53)

For the great word and theme of the Renaissance, *humanitas*, appears, at last, in our day, to have broken the celestial enchantment that enthralled mankind for six thousand years, and to be offering, now, a new Alpha and Omega: a new image, a new engram, for the center of our mandala. However, before committing ourselves abjectly to this image—as formerly to the image of God—let us pause to ask (at this precious moment between two engrams!) whether it is not possible to penetrate to that void “between two thoughts” from which the symbols come, and attain thereby to some sort of independence from the qualification of the current century. For we cannot forget the distinction between sign and symbol defined by Dr. Jung: the sign is a reference to something known; the symbol is a figure by which allusion is made to an unknown. It is, then, into the unknown, beyond both the image of God and the image of Man, that we must venture to find the ultimate ground of all these guiding and protecting, edifying yet imprisoning, names and forms.

Let us now, therefore, dig below the geometrically composed floor of the Neolithic walled town and search the mystery of the Paleolithic cave—where Man, if we may judge from the observation of Dr. Róheim, was free, untrammled, truly self-reliant, and grown up.

## II—THE SHAMAN AND THE PRIEST



*Figure 12. Hopi priest conducting a snake ceremony (photograph, New Mexico, 1905)*

**T**his challenge can be approached, I have found, through a legend from that part of the United States still called the “Indian country”; where it is still possible to visit hunting tribes only recently influenced by the Neolithic maize culture stemming from Mexico and Central America.

Contrasting patterns appear in North America according to whether tribes are hunters or planters. The hunters emphasize in their religious life the individual fast, for the gaining of visions. The boy of twelve or thirteen is left by his father in some lonesome place, with a little fire to keep the beasts away, and there he fasts and prays, four days or more, until some spiritual visitant comes in dream, in human or animal form, to speak to him and give him power. His later career will be determined by this vision; for his familiar may confer the power to cure people, as a shaman, to attract and slaughter animals, or to become a warrior. And if the benefits gained are not sufficient for the young man’s ambition, he may fast again, as often as he likes. An old Crow Indian, named One Blue Bead, told of such a fast. “When I was a boy,” he said, “I was poor. I saw war parties come back with leaders in front and having a procession. I used to envy them and I made up my mind to fast and become like them. When I saw the vision I got what I had longed for....I killed eight enemies.” <sup>(54)</sup> If a man has bad luck, he knows that his gift of supernatural power simply is insufficient; while, on the other hand, the great shamans and war leaders have acquired power in abundance from their visionary fasts. Perhaps they have chopped off and offered their finger joints. Such offerings were common among the Indians of the plains, on some of whose old hands there remained only fingers and joints enough to enable them to notch an arrow and draw the bow.

Whereas, among the planting tribes—the Hopi, Zuni, and other pueblo dwellers—life is organized around the rich and complex ceremonies of their Masked Gods. These are elaborate rites in which the entire community participates, scheduled according to a religious calendar, and conducted by societies of trained priests. As Dr. Ruth Benedict observed in her *Patterns of Culture*: “No field of activity competes with ritual for foremost place in their attention. Probably most grown men among the western Pueblos give to it the greater part of their

waking life. It requires the memorizing of an amount of word-perfect ritual that our less trained minds find staggering, and the performance of neatly dovetailed ceremonies that are chartered by the calendar and complexly interlock all the different cults and the governing body in endless formal procedure.” <sup>(55)</sup> In such a society there is little room for individual play. There is a rigid relationship not only of the individual to his fellows but also of village life to the calendric cycle; for the planters are intensely aware of their dependency upon the gods of the elements. One short period of too much or too little rain, at the critical moment, and a whole year of labor results in famine. For the hunter—hunter’s luck is a very different thing.

We may sharpen this contrast by comparing the priest and the shaman. The priest is the socially initiated, ceremonially inducted member of a recognized religious organization, where he holds a certain rank and functions as the tenant of an office that was held by others before him, while the shaman is one who, as a consequence of a personal psychological crisis, has gained a certain power of his own. The spiritual visitants who came to him in vision had never been seen before by any other; they were his particular familiars and protectors. The Masked Gods of the Pueblos, on the other hand, the corn-gods and the cloud-gods, served by societies

of strictly organized and very orderly priests, are the well-known patrons of the entire village, and have been prayed to and represented in the ceremonial dances since time out of mind.

The legend that I wish to recall is the origin legend of the Jicarilla Apache tribe of New Mexico. Originally a hunting people, they entered the area of the maize-growing Pueblos in the fourteenth century A.D. and assimilated the local Neolithic ceremonial lore. <sup>(56)</sup> The legend is long, but I shall summarize and bring us quickly to the point.

“In the beginning,” we are told, <sup>(57)</sup> “nothing was here where the world now stands: no earth—nothing but Darkness, Water, and Cyclone. There were no people living. Only the Hactcin existed. It was a lonely place.”

The Hactcin—the Apache counterparts of the Masked Gods of the Pueblo villages—are personifications of the powers that support the



spectacle of nature. They created, first the Earth Mother and Sky Father, then the animals and birds, and finally man and woman. Throughout the first ages it was dark, but presently the Hactcin produced the sun and moon, which then moved from north to south.

And so now, the legend goes on to say, “there were all kinds of shamans among the people—men and women who claimed to have power from all sorts of things. These shamans saw the sun going from north to south and began to talk. One said: ‘I made the sun.’ Another: ‘No, I did.’ They commenced quarreling, and the Hactcin ordered them not to talk like that. But they kept making claims and fighting. One said: ‘I think I’ll make the sun stop overhead, so that there will be no night. But no, I guess I’ll let it go. We need some time to rest and sleep.’ Another said: ‘Perhaps I’ll get rid of the moon. We really don’t require any light at night.’ But the sun rose the second day and the birds and animals were happy. The next day it was the same. When noon of the fourth day came, however,

and the shamans, in spite of what the Hactcin had told them, continued to talk, there was an eclipse. The sun went right up through a hole overhead and the moon followed, and that is why we have eclipses today.

“One of the Hactcin said: ‘All right, you people; you say you have power. Now bring back the sun.’”

“So they all lined up: in one line were the shamans, and in another all the birds and animals. The shamans commenced to perform. They showed everything they knew. Some would sit singing and then disappear into the earth, leaving only their eyes sticking out; then return. But this did not bring back the sun. It was only to show that they had power. Some swallowed arrows, which came out of their flesh at their stomachs.

Some swallowed feathers; some swallowed whole spruce trees and spat them up again. But they were still without the sun and the moon.

“The Hactcin said: ‘All you people are doing pretty well, but I don’t think you are bringing back the sun. Your time is up.’ He turned to the birds and animals. ‘All right,’ he said, ‘now it is your turn.’

“They all began to speak to each other politely, as though they were brothers-in-law; but the Hactcin said: ‘You must do something more than speak to each other in that polite way. Get up and do something with your power and make the sun come back.’

“The grasshopper was the first to try. He stretched out his hand to the four directions, and when he brought it back he was holding bread. The deer stretched out his hand to the four directions, and when he brought it back he was holding yucca fruit. The bear produced chokecherries in the same way, and the ground hog, berries, the chipmunk, strawberries, the turkey, maize, and so it went with all. But though the Hactcin were pleased with these gifts, the people were still without the sun and moon.

“Thereupon, the Hactcin themselves began to do something. They sent for Thunder of four colors from the four directions, and these thunders brought clouds of four colors, from which rain fell. Then sending for the Rainbow, to make it beautiful while the seeds were planted that the people had produced, the Hactcin made a sand painting with four little colored mounds in a row, into which they put the seeds. The birds and animals sang, and presently the little mounds began to grow, the seeds began to sprout and the four mounds of colored earth merged and became one mountain, which continued to rise.

“The Hactcin then selected twelve shamans who had been particularly spectacular in their magical performances, and painting six of them blue all over, to represent the summer season, and six white, to represent the winter, called them Tsanati: and that was the origin of the Tsanati dance

society of the Jicarilla Apache. After that the Hactcin made six Clowns, painting them white with four black horizontal bands, one across the face, one across the chest, one across the upper leg and one across the lower. The Tsanati and the Clowns then joined the people in their dance, to make the mountain grow.” (58)

Do you see what has happened to the shamans? They have been discredited in their individualistic, Paleolithic style of magical practice and given a place in the social mandala of a seed-planting, food-growing community, as one contributing unit in a larger whole. The episode represents the victory of the principle of a socially anointed priesthood over the highly dangerous and unpredictable force of individual endowment. And the teller of the Jicarilla Apache story himself explained the necessity for incorporating the shamans in the ceremonial system.

“These people,” he said, “had ceremonies of their own which they derived from various sources, from animals, from fire, from the turkey, from frogs, and from other things. They could not be left out. They had power, and they had to help too.” (59)

I do not know of any myth that represents more clearly than this the crisis that must have faced the societies of the Old World when the Neolithic order began to make its power felt in a gradual conquest of the most habitable portions of the earth. The situation in New Mexico and Arizona at the period of the discovery of America was, culturally, much like that which must have prevailed in the Near and Middle East, and in Europe, from the fourth to second millenniums B.C., when the rigid patterns proper to an orderly settlement were being imposed on peoples used to the freedom and vicissitudes of the hunt. And there is an important parallel to be noted between this contrast of the wild, quarrelsome, dangerous shamans and the people, who were so polite to each other that they were like brothers-in-law, and that of the titans and gods, devils and angels, asuras and devas, in the numerous agriculturally based traditions of Asia and Europe. In the Hindu Puranas there is a well-known myth of the gods and demons cooperating under the supervision of the two supreme deities, Viṣṇu and Śiva, to churn the Milky Ocean for its butter. They took the World Mountain as a churning-stick and the World Serpent as a twirling-rope, and wrapped the serpent around the mountain. Then, the gods taking hold of the head end of the snake and the demons of the tail, while Viṣṇu supported the World Mountain, they churned for a thousand years and produced in the end the Butter of Immortality. (60) It is almost impossible not to think of this myth when reading of the efforts of the quarrelsome shamans and orderly people, under the supervision of the Apache Hactcin, to make the World Mountain grow and carry them to the world of light.

The Tsanati and Clowns, we are told, joined the people in their dance, and the mountain grew, until its top nearly reached the hole through which the sun and moon had disappeared; and it remained, then, only to construct four ladders of light of the four colors, up which the people could ascend to the surface of this our present earth. The six Clowns went ahead with magical whips to chase disease away and were

followed by the Hactcin, and then the Tسانati came, after whom, the people and animals. “And when they came up onto this earth,” said the teller of the story, “it was just like a child being born from its mother. The place of emergence is the womb of the earth.” (61)

## THE WILD GANDER

The highest concern of all of the mythologies, ceremonials, ethical systems, and social organizations of the agriculturally based societies has ever been that of suppressing the manifestations of individualism; and this has been generally achieved by compelling or persuading people to identify themselves not with their own interests, intuitions, or modes of experience, but with archetypes of behavior and systems of sentiment developed and maintained in the public domain. For example, in India the ideal of Dharma is that of an unconditional submission to the archetypes of caste—these being functions of the social order, rationalized for the individual by way of a theory of graded incarnations, through many lifetimes, from caste to caste. The sternest expression of this ideal is implied in the word “suttee” (*satī*), which is the feminine form of the verbal root *sat*, “to be.” A suttee is a woman who is something: namely, an archetypal wife. She has suppressed every impulse to become an autonomous individual, even to that final extent of throwing herself on her husband’s funeral pyre. For in the archaic Orient, every act well performed is an act of suttee—a burning out, purging out, of ego.

In the Occident, too, ego has been regarded as the province of the devil. The Titans conquered by the Olympians were incarnations of this principle, just as the demons were in India—and we know how they were chained and imprisoned beneath mountains. A similar fate was accorded, in the Germanic tradition, to the giants and dwarfs, the Fenris Wolf, the Midgard Serpent, and the dog Garm. However, the day will come, we are warned, when their chains will drop away, and that day will be the Weird of the Gods, Ragnarök. Then shall nothing be without fear in Heaven or on Earth. (62)

But that day has already come—indeed, has been here since 1492, when the mandala broke that had been fashioned six thousand years before, in the period of the Halaf and Samarra bowls. Aeschylus, in *Prometheus Bound*, represented the spirit of the Titan who is now loose:

*In one round sentence, every god I hate,  
That injures me who never injured him.  
Deem not that I, to win a smile from Jove,  
Will spread a maiden smoothness o’er my soul*

*And importune the foe whom most I hate  
With womanish upliftings of the hands! (63)*

It is not by accident that Prometheus became the hero of the humanistic Enlightenment, or that, today, when the mythos of the mandala is in full dissolution, we find a symbol of the wholeness of man emerging from the dark abyss of the unconscious, where it has been chained for six thousand years. Will the mandala continue to contain this unbound Prometheus?

There have been collected from the American tribes hundreds of popular tales depicting, in various transformations, the fire-bringer, the titanic trickster-hero of the Paleolithic hunters. Among the Plains Indians his form was that of a kind of jackal, Coyote; among the forest dwellers he was the Great Hare (some of whose adventures have been attributed by the Negroes of America to an African rabbit-hero, whom we meet in the tales of Br'er Rabbit); among the tribes of the Northwest Coast he was the Raven. The closest counterpart in the myths of Europe would be the mischief-maker Loki, who at the time of Ragnarök will be the leader of the hosts of Hel. Coyote, Raven, the Master Hare—or Old Man, as he is called when he appears in a fully human form—is a lecherous fool as well as an extremely clever and cruel deceiver; but he is also the creator of mankind and shaper of the world. It is hardly proper to call such a figure a god, or even to think of him as supernatural. He is a super-shaman. And we find his counterparts in myth and legend throughout the world, wherever shamanism has left its mark: in Oceania and Africa, as well as in Siberia and Europe.

Authorities differ as to the period of the first migrations of Paleolithic man into North America. During the glacial ages a land bridge as wide as the nation of France stretched from Siberia to Alaska, and across this, grazing animals passed (herds of horses, cattle, elephants, camels), sometimes followed by hunters. As already noted,\* tribes of men may have begun arriving as early as thirty or forty thousand B.C. However, the majority—if not all—of our present American Indian races represent much later periods of migration, extending even into the first millennium A.D.; and these were not purely Paleolithic. They appear to have stemmed, largely, from a late Paleo-Mesolithic culture platform in Siberia, in the



neighborhood of Lake Baikal, where the Yakuts and the Tungus, the Voguls and the Ostiak, live today. <sup>(64)</sup> In fact, it has been recognized that in physical race the Vogul and the Ostiak of the Yenisei River basin might be classified as Americanoid. <sup>(65)</sup>

I have already spoken briefly of the Paleolithic caves. Early in the history of the art of these imposing underground temples there appeared the famous Paleolithic female statuettes—a full twenty thousand years or so before their Neolithic counterparts, in a date range at the close of the glacial era, not much earlier, if at all, than that of the first arrivals of hunters in the New World. No Paleolithic statuettes have been found in Spain, or anywhere southward of the Pyrenees. All belong to the hunting plains that commenced north of the Pyrenees and stretched eastward, as far as to the borders of China. And in the neighborhood of Lake Baikal, at a site known as Mal'ta, some eighty-five kilometers northwestward of Irkutsk, there was a particularly important Paleolithic hunting station where no less than twenty of these statuettes have been found, associated with a number of figures of flying geese—all carved in mammoth ivory (or, according to one authority, in bone). <sup>(66)</sup>

Thus it appears that in the last great period of the Paleolithic hunt there was a cultural continuum extending from the Pyrenees to Lake Baikal, whence much of the culture, as well as some of the racial strains, of the hunting tribes of North America were derived during the millenniums following the close of the Paleolithic. A significant continuity, that is to say, appears to have been established, extending in time and space from the Upper Paleolithic of Europe to the final twilight of the Great Hunt in the North American Plains. In its various provinces this tradition absorbed influences both from the local landscape and from neighboring Neolithic and post-Neolithic cultures. Nevertheless, there is a persistent syndrome of motifs that can be readily identified throughout, which is clearly that of a hunting, and not of a settled, planting system of societies. And one of its most persistent features is the association of the shamanistic trance with the flight of a bird. The hawk and eagle, wild gander and duck appear to be common throughout the range; but locally, other birds may appear: the owl and vulture, for example, the raven,

magpie, or woodpecker—the last-named, because of the flash of red on its head, being frequently the chief hero of the fire-theft.

As Professor Mircea Eliade has shown in an exhaustive study of the subject, <sup>(67)</sup> the main talent of the shaman is that of throwing himself into a trance at will. The rhythms of the shaman's drum, like the rhythms of the Indo-Aryan Vedic hymns, are conceived as wings, the wings of spiritual transport: they simultaneously elevate the shaman's spirit and conjure his familiars. And it is while in this trance that he performs his miraculous deeds. While in this trance he is flying as a bird to the upper world, or descending as a reindeer, bull, or bear to the world beneath. Among the Buriat, the animal or bird that protects the shaman is called *khubilgan*, meaning "metamorphosis," from the verb *khubilku*, "to change oneself, to take another form." <sup>(68)</sup> The early Russian missionaries and voyagers in Siberia in the first part of the eighteenth century noted that the shamans spoke to their spirits in a strange, squeaky voice. <sup>(69)</sup> They also found among the tribes numerous images of geese with extended wings, sometimes of brass. <sup>(70)</sup> And here we are reminded that in Mal'ta, that Paleolithic hunting station where no less than twenty female figurines have been discovered, a number of flying geese or ducks were also found, carved, like the figurines, in mammoth ivory. Flying birds, in fact, have been found in many Paleolithic stations; and on the under-wings of one example, as I have already remarked, there appears the earliest swastika of which we have record.\* Like the swastikas on the much later Samarra ware of the High Neolithic, this one is in the sinister form, whirling to the left—the form that Dr. Jung has suggested would normally symbolize a regressive process: such a process, perhaps, as the shaman flight. And we must remember, also, that in the Paleolithic cavern of Lascaux, there is a shaman depicted, lying in trance, wearing a bird mask and with the figure of a bird perched on a staff beside him.\* The shamans of Siberia wear such bird costumes to this day, and many are believed to have been conceived by their mothers from the descent of a bird.

In many lands the soul has been pictured as a bird, and birds commonly appear as spiritual messengers: angels are modified birds. But the bird of the shaman is one of particular character and power, endowing him with an ability to fly in trance beyond all bounds of life, and yet

return. “Up above there is a certain tree,” said a shaman of the Tungus, who was questioned at his home on the Lower Tunguska River in the spring of 1925. “There the souls of the shamans are reared before they attain their powers. On the boughs of this tree are nests in which the souls of the shamans lie and are attended. The name of the tree is ‘Tuuru.’ The higher the nest is placed in this tree, the stronger will the shaman be who is raised in it, the more will he know, and the farther will he see.” <sup>(71)</sup> The shaman, then, is not only a familiar denizen, but even the favored scion, of those realms of power that are invisible to our normal waking consciousness, which all may visit briefly in vision, but through which he roams, a master.

We have observed that the birds found at Mal’ta and in the other Paleolithic stations are ducks and water birds, wild geese and ganders; and I have tried to suggest something, also, of the rich context of associations linking the figure of the bird to the spiritual flight of the shaman, as well as that linking the figure of the trickster-hero, the titan fire-bringer and demonic enemy of the gods, to the Paleolithic context of shamanism. Let me now add that the Hindu master yogis, who in their trance states go beyond all the pales of thought, are known as *haṃsas* and *paramahaṃsas*: “wild ganders” and “supreme wild ganders.” In the imagery of traditional Hinduism, the wild gander is symbolic of *brahman-ātman*, the ultimate, transcendent yet immanent ground of all being, with which the yogi succeeds in identifying his consciousness, thus passing from the sphere of waking consciousness, where A is not not-A, passing even beyond dream, where all things shine of their own light, to the nonconditioned, nondual state “between two thoughts,” where the subject-object polarity is completely transcended and the distinction even between life and death dissolved.

But before pursuing this developing flight, we must pause for a moment to regard again our problem of the nature and function of the symbol.

## MYTHOLOGIES OF ENGAGEMENT AND DISENGAGEMENT

Two contrasting functions of the religious symbol can now be distinguished. The first is of reference and engagement; the second, disengagement, transport, and metamorphosis. The first is illustrated by the social mandala of the hieratic city state, which engages every member in a context of experienced significance, relating him as a part to a whole. An equivalent illustration would be the medieval mandala of the Church Militant, Suffering, and Triumphant. The significance, or ultimate ground, of such a symbol is unquestioned. Like a successful work of art, it is an end in itself, communicating to the mind beholding it a sense of felicity, and to the life engaged in it a sense of meaning. As Dr. Jung has said, the symbol, in contrast to the sign, is “the best possible designation or formula for something relatively unknown, yet recognized to be present, or required.” <sup>(72)</sup> When, then, the symbol is functioning for engagement, the cognitive faculties are held fascinated by and bound to the symbol itself, and are thus simultaneously informed by and protected from the unknown. But when the symbol is functioning for disengagement, transport, and metamorphosis, it becomes a catapult, to be left behind. There is an illuminating representation of the symbol functioning in this manner, in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad:

*The syllable AUM is the bow; the arrow is the soul:  
Brahman is said to be the target.  
Undistractedly [meditating on AUM], one is to hit the mark.  
One is to become joined to the target, like an arrow.* <sup>(73)</sup>

The rhythm of the shaman’s drum is the syllable AUM; his trance is the bird-flight of the feathered arrow. His mind, disengaged from the protection of the symbol, is to meet directly the *mysterium tremendum* of the unknown.

But the unknown is of two degrees. There are (1) the relatively unknown, and (2) the absolutely unknowable. The relatively unknown may be said to be represented, psychologically, by the contents of the unconscious; sociologically, by the dynamics of history; and cosmologically, by the forces of the universe. This is the unknown to which reference is made by the term *parokṣa*, discussed above,\* meaning

“beyond or higher than the reach of the eye.” The references of a *parokṣa* vocabulary are not immediately perceptible to waking consciousness. They have been said to be *adhidaivata*, “angelic,” or “divine.” They are perceived by saints and sages in vision, and so are said to pertain to the field of “dreaming.” But in the modern world, we have come to talk and think about such things in a very different way from the sages of the past. Aquinas was correct when he maintained that the Scriptures should be found true on both the corporeal and the spiritual levels. At the time of their formulation they were thought to be corporeally true, and their spiritual truth inhered in the corporeal world of their depiction. Today that corporeal world has vanished and another has taken its place: correlatively, that spiritual world has vanished and another has taken, or is taking, its place. But no living system of symbols functioning for engagement can survive when it has lost contact with the actual conscious and unconscious worlds of its society—when its references to the field of waking consciousness have been refuted and its notices to the seats of motivation are no longer felt. Like the signs referring to the known, so the symbols referring to the relatively unknown are functions of the knowledge of the time.

But there is another degree or category of the unknown, which is that understood to lie beyond even the highest references of a *parokṣa*, mystical, esoteric, “spiritual” or “angelic” vocabulary. “The Tao that can be named is not the true Tao,” wrote Lao-tzu at the opening of his *Tao Teh Ching*.<sup>(74)</sup> “For then alone,” wrote Aquinas, “then alone do we know God truly, when we believe that he is far above all that man can possibly think of God.”<sup>(75)</sup> And we have heard the words of the Kena Upaniṣad:

*It is other, indeed, than the known  
And, moreover, above the unknown.*<sup>(76)</sup>

This is the category or degree of the unknown to which all of the high mythologies and high religions are ultimately directed. It is recognized, however, to be absolutely ineffable, a plenum of unknowability, inexhaustible in its dark; and toward it two attitudes have been fostered. The first is that of absolute terror, submission, or, as we say, piety. One does not seek to penetrate, for that would be *hybris*: one

remains with its symbol, as the only possible medium of relationship. This is the case of the Church Suffering, Militant, and Triumphant. But the second attitude is that of the mystic whose soul would become an arrow, and in this case the symbol functions only for disengagement. The Sanskrit term is *mokṣa*, “release.” And whereas the symbol functioning for engagement had to remain convincing on the levels of both corporeal and spiritual reference, that functioning for disengagement need refer to neither. Its function is simply to propel the soul.

“Before the moment when I commenced to shamanize,” said the old shaman of the Tungus whom I have already quoted, “I lay sick for an entire year. I became a shaman at the age of fifteen. The sickness that forced me to become a shaman showed itself in a swelling of my body and frequent fainting spells.\* When I began to sing, the sickness usually disappeared.” And then he told of the visions that he experienced in his period of sickness. “My ancestors appeared to me and began to shamanize. They stood me up like a block of wood and shot at me with their bows until I lost consciousness. They cut up my flesh, they separated my bones and counted them, and they ate my flesh raw. When they counted my bones they found that there was one too many. Had there not been enough I should not have been able to become a shaman. While they were accomplishing this rite, I, for a whole summer, ate and drank nothing. At the end the shaman priests drank the blood of a reindeer and gave some to me, also, to drink. After these events, a shaman has less blood and looks pale.”

“The same thing happens to every Tungus shaman,” the old man went on to say. “Only when his shaman ancestors have cut up his body in this manner and separated his bones can he begin to practice.” (77)

The Tungus shaman’s bow did not have the power of that of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, by any means; for it sent the arrow of his soul only as far as to the sphere of his ancestors in the unconscious, the *relatively* unknown. Worthy of note in this fantasy, however, is the Paleolithic trait of not assigning any universal, cosmic significance to the individual vision. The spiritual powers encountered were the shaman’s ancestors, merely, and the reference was to himself.



But, as we have seen in the Jicarilla Apache myth, this strongly individual orientation became archaic and disruptive, titanic and demonic, once the Neolithic organization of the universe around one power center had been effected. We must now, therefore, attempt to develop our view of the symbol functioning for disengagement under the ban of this constraint—that is to say, within the pale of the mandala itself. And I propose to do this through a brief—necessarily schematic—sketch of the evolution of the ideals and attitudes toward society of the Asian yogi.

## THE FLIGHT BETWEEN TWO THOUGHTS



*Figure 13. Amida-bosatsu with counter-clockwise swastika (bronze, Japan, thirteenth century A.D.)*

This is not an arbitrary choice of illustration, but justified by a number of considerations. The first and most important, I should say, is that in the Orient there is a richly documented history of spiritual disengagement dating from the period of the earliest Indian Upanishads; which is to say, since the eighth century B.C. The second is that throughout that long history, the linkage of the techniques and experiences of yoga to their base in the shamanistic trance-tradition remained so firm that when Buddhism went northward into Tibet and Mongolia it readily fused with the local Bon religions in which shamanistic magic played a central role. In fact, the word *shaman* itself, which is from the language of the Siberian Tungus, has been thought by some to be derived from the Sanskrit *śamana*, meaning “monk,” “yogi,” or “ascetic.” <sup>(78)</sup> The legendary biography of the eleventh-century Tibetan sage Milarepa supplies evidence enough of the close connection; <sup>(79)</sup> while to this day, in certain Buddhist sects of Japan, shamanistic magic is still practiced as a department of religion. Let us not forget, furthermore, that, engraved on the chest of the meditating Buddha in the Far East, the counterclockwise swastika frequently appears (Figure 13), which, as we have seen, made its first appearance on the wings of a Paleolithic flying bird (Figure 10). (I believe it safe to say that in a region as open as medieval China to influences from that classical centers of late Paleolithic shamanism,

the denotation of this sign cannot have changed.) And then, finally, my third reason for choosing this context to illustrate the reaction of the titan spirit to the restrictions and archetypes of the hieratic state is that in Asia these restrictions were never relaxed. The force of the ideals of the archaic caste system, for example, remains tremendous in India to the very present. And so here we still have before us, in full force, an unrelenting continuation of the vehement dialogue that has been carried on for millenniums between the priestly guardians of the social archetypology and the fearless masters of *mokṣa* “release.”

During the course of this grandiose dialogue, four distinct stages can be noted in the transformation of the character of the shamanistic titan. The first, as we have already seen, was that of the shaman as titan-demon, overthrower of the gods. The great Indian *asuras* are figures of this sort. They engage in austerities in the forest, but their aim is not to achieve illumination. It is to gain magical powers and then to apply these to the attainment of their own earthly ends. They are depicted in the mythological tales of India as subjecting themselves to the most rigorous ordeals possible, and through these compelling even the highest gods to submit to their will. But the highest gods, fortunately for the cosmic order, always have a trick or two in reserve, so that in the end the titans are deceived and overthrown.

It is clear that we have here, in a mythological rendition, essentially the same notion of the relationship of the individual will to the controls of the social and cosmic order that we find in the Greek tradition, where it is usually presented, however, in human terms. The idea of *hybris*, individual imprudence, and the necessity that fate or destiny imposes even on the gods, runs through the philosophical as well as religious thinking of all high civilizations. There is a moral law, and it must be obeyed. In the Far East the idea is represented by the Tao, the Way, the manifest course, sense, or meaning of the universe: that manifestation of inexorable laws through which all are bound together as the variously functioning organs of a single mighty organism. In India this binding principle is Dharma. The word is derived from the root *dhṛī*, meaning “to support”; for Dharma, the law, is the support of the universe, and one who knows and performs without resistance his own Dharma (*svadharma*), the duties imposed on him by the circumstances of his birth, becomes himself a support, a well-functioning organ, of the universal being. The Biblical legend of the Fall, too, is a tale of *hybris* and the fall of the titan, Man, who dared to follow his own will in contravention of the law,

imposed in this case not by the universe, but by the maker of the universe, God the Father. Man is here a child, a naughty child, locked out of doors by a stormy parent, to freeze and blister. And we know that even as late as the period of the Renaissance, when Europe, having arrived at its age of adolescence and being ready to consign this nursery tale to the past, took to its heart the term *humanitas* and dared the high adventure of leaving Father behind—we know that in this great and bold age even such a stirring titan as Michelangelo quailed before the realization of what he was doing. Faced, in the end, with the reckoning of the Last Judgment, “the final reckoning of good and evil for eternity,” as he called it, “Now,” he wrote...

*Now know I well how that fond phantasy  
Which made my soul the worshiper and thrall  
Of earthly art, is vain...* (80)

And we know well, too, how those wild titans of Shakespeare’s mighty visions shattered, one and all, on the rocks that ring the world.

The formula has been accepted throughout the civilized sphere of the agriculturally based Neolithic mandala-psyche, ringed around by the cosmic serpent, who both tempts man to dare and crucifies him when he has done so. In this phase of his history the titan is completely prisoner of the mandala; its symbols operate upon him in their own terms, both within and without. Still having a meaning for him, they press upon him from all sides, until he breaks.

The second stage or phase in the transformation of the titan is one in which he dissipates and destroys this force for himself, but for no one else. This is the victory represented in India by the forest philosophers, who rejected and despised not only the pains and pleasures of earth but equally those of hell and heaven. “The first requisite of yoga,” we read in one statement after another, “is the renunciation of the fruits of action, whether in this world or in the next.” (81) And in the classical work on the subject, the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali, we read that when the yogi has begun to make progress in the course of his world-renouncing, world-transcending austerities, “those in high places” (namely, the gods) will seek to tempt him from his purpose by seducing him with the joys of heaven. “Sir,” they will say, “will you not stay here? Will you not take rest here?”

“Thus addressed,” warns the commentator, “let the yogi ponder upon the defects of pleasure: ‘Broiled on the horrible coals of the round of rebirths and writhing in the darkness of birth and death, I have only this minute found the lamp of yoga, which makes an end of the obscurations of the “impairments”

(kleśa). The lust-born gusts of sensual things are the enemies of this lamp. How then should it be that I, who have seen its light, should be led astray by these phenomena of sense—this mere mirage—and make fuel of myself for that same old fire again of the round of rebirths, as it flares anew? Fare ye well, O ye sensual things, deceitful as dreams, to be desired only by the vile!’”

“Determined thus in purpose,” the commentary continues, “let the yogi cultivate concentration. Giving up all attachments, let him not take pride even in thinking that it is he who is being thus urgently desired even by the gods....” (82)

For those not yet ready for the high adventure, the gods surround the world and are its guardians. By those ripe, however, the same gods are experienced in dream and vision as mere names and forms (*nāmarūpam*), no more real, no less real, than the names and forms known to waking consciousness. But in deep sleep, both worlds—that of waking consciousness and that of dream and vision—are dissolved. Would it not be possible, then, to enter the sphere of deep sleep without losing consciousness and there to see the worlds dissolve—gods and dreams, and all? That is the victory of yoga. And one cannot gaze on the world, after that, with any of the fears and pieties of the virtuous citizen of the mandala, who has not yet watched God himself, together with his universe, evaporate like dew at dawn. As we read in a celebrated Buddhist text:

*Stars, darkness, a lamp, a phantom, dew, a bubble,  
A dream, a flash of lightning, or a cloud:  
Thus should one look upon the world.* (83)

Here is disengagement with a vengeance. The entire mandala of the meso-micro-macrocosm is dissolved, and the individual, having burned out of himself the so-called “impairments” (*kleśa*)—or, as we might say, the “engrams” of his culturally and biologically conditioned personal character—now experiences, through complete withdrawal, the wholeness of an absolutely uncommitted consciousness in the pristine state called *kaivalyam*, “isolation.” The universe has been rejected as a meaningless delusion, referring to nothing beyond the mirage of its own horizon, and that transcendent state has been realized which Schopenhauer celebrated at the close of his *magnum opus*, when he wrote that “to those in whom the will has

turned and denied itself, this our world, which is so real, with all its suns and milky ways—is nothing.” (84)

According to the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, the world of the state of waking consciousness is to be identified with the letter *A* of the syllable AUM; that of dream consciousness (heaven and hell, that is to say) with the letter *U*; and deep sleep (the state of the mystical union of the knower and the known, God and his world, brooding the seeds and energies of creation: which is the state symbolized in the center of the mandala) with *M*. (85) The soul is to be propelled both by and from this syllable AUM into the silence beyond and all around it: the silence out of which it rises and back into which it goes when pronounced—slowly and rhythmically pronounced, as AUM—AUM—AUM.

That silence is where we are between two thoughts.

The world, the entire universe, its god and all, has become a symbol—signifying nothing: a symbol without meaning. For to attribute meaning to any part of it would be to relax its force as a bow, and the arrow of the soul then would lodge only in the sphere of meaning—like the shaman’s soul among his ancestors, or the Christian’s among the saints and angels. The bow, in order to function as a bow and not as a snare, must have no meaning whatsoever in itself—or in any part of itself—beyond that of being an agent for disengagement—from itself: no more meaning than the impact of the doctor’s little hammer when it hits your knee, to make it jerk.

A symbol—and here I want to propose a definition—is an energy-evoking and -directing agent. When given a meaning, either corporeal or spiritual, it serves for the engagement of the energy to itself—and this may be compared to the notching of the arrow to the bowstring and drawing of the bow. When, however, all meaning is withdrawn, the symbol serves for disengagement, and the energy is dismissed—to its own end, which cannot be defined in terms of the parts of the bow. “There is no heaven, no hell, not even release,” we read in one of the texts celebrating the yogic rapture. “In short,” this text continues, “in the yogic vision there is nothing at all.” (86)

It is impossible to say when this absolute dismissal of all that the universe, god, or man, might offer began first to enchant the Indian mind; but as early as the period of the Indus Valley civilization, between 2500 and 1500 B.C., we find the figure of a three-faced divine being sitting in yoga posture, surrounded by animals (Figure 14); and it has been suggested that this must have been an early form of Śiva in the role of Pashupati, the Lord of Animals,





Figure 14. "Lord of the Animals"; Indus Valley civilization (clay seal, India, c. 2000 B.C.)

who is the archetype of the forest-dwelling yogi, smeared with ashes to indicate his death to the world and wearing living serpents for bracelets, to indicate his transcendence of the world-enveloping serpent: whereas others are bounded by it, he wears it simply as an ornament—or casts it off, at will. The ideal appears to have come to India, therefore, almost as soon as the mandala itself, and in its earliest phases would appear to have been of such an absolutely ruthless character that the aim of the yogi was no less than physical death—which was to

supervene at precisely that moment when the complete extinction within the heart of all fear and hope whatsoever had been accomplished. At that instant of the absolute stilling of the mind, the titan, perfectly balanced in the stance known as that of dismissing the body—dismissed the body; and with it the whole mandala, with all its priestly kings and kingly priests, heavens and hells, virtues and vices, devils and gods.

Something of this ideology can be felt in the Stoic philosophers of the Classical world, and in the Near East in the various Gnostic and apocalyptic movements of the time of Christ. In fact, there is too much of the spirit of this same world-disdain in the words and deeds of Christ himself to allow us to think that he was untouched by a titanism of this sort. "Let the dead bury their dead" is certainly a tidy summary of the yogi's typical view of the world. "Sell all that you have...and follow me" is the first requirement placed by the guru on the candidate for release. But there is a quality, at least in the legend of Christ, that would seem to imply something considerably more gentle than sheer titanic disdain; and this brings us to the next transformation of the titan principle in the sphere of the agricultural civilizations.

In the period of the early Upaniṣads, the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., it began to appear to some of the Indian titans that what was being sought by their fellows in isolation is to be found everywhere; that the inward

center of absolute repose, which the forest yogis were attaining by a removal of themselves from the world, actually inhabits the world as the ground of its reality. The silence is to be heard resounding even through and within the tones of AUM. A shift of perspective, therefore, is what is required; and this is not achieved by running away. Running away implies the recognition of two distinct states—that of bondage and that of release. What the yogi must realize, however, is that all distinctions whatsoever—even this one, which is a great favorite of yogis—belong to that sphere of rational logic wherein A is not not-A. The world, the gods, man, and all things, have only to be looked upon with a new eye—but *looked* upon; not shunned.

*Though it is hidden in all things  
That Self shines not forth.  
Yet It is seen by subtle seers  
With superior, subtle intellect.  
As the one fire has entered the world  
And become corresponding in form to every form,  
So the one interior Self of all things  
Corresponds in form to every form, and yet is beyond.  
The inward Self of all things, the One Controller,  
Who makes his one form manifold:  
The wise who perceive Him as standing within themselves,  
They and no others, know eternal bliss. (87)*

The titanic aspect of *this* kind of knowledge becomes apparent the moment it is realized that since everything is to be experienced as an epiphany of the One Holy Power, there can be no such fundamental distinction between good and evil, holiness and vice, God and the Devil, as the lords and guardians of the mandala would have us believe. In fact (and this, in time, was to become one of the principles of the so-called “left-hand path”), to give credence to such a belief is to remain locked in the fractional state characteristic of those caught in the great trap of Reason, Virtue, and the Law. Those Tantric disciplines of illumination, where the Five Forbidden Things become the Five Good Things, rungs on the ladder of illumination, as well as the wild images of erotic orgy that abound on many of the temples of the Indian middle ages, let us know that when all is divine, all is affirmed—and with a degree of emphasis that is no less appalling to the socially grounded, readily shocked, antimystical consciousness than the ruthless world-denial of the earlier dismissers of the body.

And so again we have a discipline of disengagement; now, however, not observed through a dismissal of the signs and symbols that for others imply engagement, but through a dismissal merely of their references. Throughout the period of one's life, throughout the period of one's residence in the sphere of time, one is to go on being continually released from the bowstring. "*Bhoga is yoga!*" became the great cry: "Delight is religion!" Or again: "It is here! It is here!" And whereas for the forest philosopher every thrill of the senses was a danger, a distraction of the mind from that point of concentration through which the unmoving state was to be attained, and the first exercise of all discipline was to be *dama*, "control," "the restraint of the external organs," now, on the contrary, the *identity* of temporal experience and eternal realization, *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, has become the first principle both of philosophy and of practice. Whether in the floods of passion or in the desert of boredom, the honey-doctrine of the universal presence is to be tested for its truth, and its truth experienced in act. "In the ocean of *brahman*," we read, "filled with the nectar of Absolute Bliss, what is to be shunned and what accepted, what is there that is not myself, and what is there that is different in kind?" (88)

In the West this brand of titanism may have had its day in some of the early Gnostic cults, which apparently shocked the conventional Romans enough to give Christianity a very bad name. "Split the stick," runs a Gnostic aphorism, "and there is Jesus!" But the memories of such beliefs have been pretty well expunged from the Western record. In the period of the Renaissance, however, there was a fresh stir of such possibilities. The sense of the immanent presence of God in all things, which inspired much of the new life as well as the art that burgeoned in that period, conduced to a hardiness in experiment that tended to break the bounds not only of the astronomical and geographical orders but of the moral as well. "Sin bravely!" said Luther, *Fortiter pecca!* And he was not the only man of his age to have recognized the spiritual sense of such a command.

But we are still in a trap; for we are attached to something. We are attached to the idea of enlightenment, release from the bow, disengagement. According to these disciplines, full of striving, tumult, and ecstasy, it would still appear that there is a notable difference between the "subtle seers with subtle intellect," who "know," and those of us who are not so wise. The ultimate import of the principle of nonduality, the identity of A and not-A, that is to say, has still to be given its full due. And so, we are brought to a

fourth and final stage in the development of the titan principle within the circle of the social mandala.

What is now to be realized simply carries one step further the principle just described as that of stage three. For if *bhoga* is *yoga*, if *saṃsāra* is *nirvāṇa*, then illusion is enlightenment, engagement disengagement, and bondage is freedom. There is nothing to be done, no effort to be made; for in our very bondage we are free, and in our very striving for release we are linking ourselves the more to bondage—which is already freedom.

We are here presented with what a modern physicist would call, I believe, a “pair of aspects” system, or a principle of complementarity. According to the one mode or aspect of our experience, all things—ourselves included—are implicated in a context of space-time determinants and are bound; and yet, simultaneously, according to the other mode of our experience (which is impossible to reconcile with the first), all things—ourselves included—are freely creating themselves all the time, spontaneously arising. Professor Max Knoll discussed this double-aspect predicament in his Eranos Lecture of 1951, when he contrasted the dynamic and the structural, the energetic and the space-time, modes of description in physics and psychology. <sup>(89)</sup> In the Buddhism known as the Mahāyāna, the Great Vehicle, this same realization is rendered in the concept and ideal of the Bodhisattva: that great Savior, the reality of whose being (*sattva*) is enlightenment (*bodhi*), and who, yet, has not vanished in *nirvāṇa* but has remained in the world—which is already *nirvāṇa*—out of love and compassion for the forms of the world. The great point of this profoundly paradoxical doctrine or ideal is that we are all that Bodhisattva, simultaneously bound and free, implicated in a context of space-time determinants, yet spontaneously arising; indeed, that all things are that Bodhisattva. Let me term this stage in the development of the titan principle, therefore, that of the Realization of Universal Saviorhood. “Consider the lilies of the fields, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin!”

The meaning of release, disengagement, freedom (*mokṣa*), is no longer “escape”; the term has become a reference, rather, to a mode or aspect of our present being and sense of being. Bodhisattvahood is precisely—and merely—that nonduality which is everywhere experienced through a “pair of aspects,” and, though generally thought and said to be dual, is actually and immediately known to be not so. Let us for a moment contrast this ideal with that of Prometheus, defying Zeus, who suggests an irreconcilable dichotomy

between the principle of the free individual and that of the social and cosmological order. The realization of the Bodhisattva recognizes that any such sense of a radical dichotomy is an effect, simply, of systematic thinking. In accord with the principle of complementarity, we should say, rather, Prometheus and Zeus, I and the Father, are one.

But how can we attain to this realization, which is already ours somewhere in our being?

There is a legend that tells of the Buddha, teaching, speaking to the minds of those with ears to hear; and as he taught, his hand lifted a lotus. The only one with eyes to see was the sage Kashyapa, who, being ripe for illumination, saw the lotus. In the way of a religious or doctrinal reference, the lotus lifted by the Buddha might have been interpreted allegorically, as signifying the lotus of the world, which is our vehicle of redemption. For, as we are taught by the well-known Buddhist prayer and aspiration, “The jewel in the lotus” (OM MAṆI PADME HUM), the jewel of *nirvāṇa* is in the lotus of life. Which is to say, that, since, according to the testimony of those illuminated ones who have transcended the dualistic deceptions of the senses and logical thought, bondage and freedom are the same, this world itself, with all its pains and imperfections, is to be known as the golden lotus world of perfect purity and joy. It could certainly have been supposed that the lotus lifted in the Buddha’s hand might have been a reference to some such idea, and the reference, then, would have constituted the meaning of the symbol. But then, of course, we, as good modern logicians, ambitious for the precision of science, would have had to ask whether this proposition could be demonstrated, either by direct or by indirect verification. And failing verification, we should have had either to reject it, as representing a disproved hypothesis, or to consign it to the category of mere expression—like a poem, a cry, or a piece of music—as a pretty symptom of the Buddha’s feeling about the world, his mood or character, his sense of affinity with the world of nature, his personal charm, or what not. However, with all these referential considerations, logical propositions, psychological intuitions, and fine notions about our own exactitude, we should not yet even have begun to try to see or imagine what it was that Kashyapa saw when he saw just—that lotus.

Aldous Huxley, in his little book *The Doors of Perception*, describes the impressions he received during the course of a day when he had swallowed

four-tenths of a gram of mescaline dissolved in half a glass of water. He tells of a chair that he saw in a garden.

For what seemed an immensely long time, I gazed without knowing, even without wishing to know, what it was that confronted me. At any other time I would have seen a chair barred with alternate light and shade. Today the percept had swallowed up the concept. I was so completely absorbed in looking, so thunderstruck by what I actually saw, that I could not be aware of anything else. Where the shadows fell on the canvas upholstery, stripes of a deep but glowing indigo alternated with stripes of an incandescence so intensely bright that it was hard to believe that they could be made of anything but blue fire. Garden furniture, laths, sunlight, shadow—these were no more than names and notions, mere verbalizations, for utilitarian purposes, after the event. The event was this succession of azure furnace doors separated by gulfs of unfathomable gentian. It was inexpressibly wonderful, wonderful to the point, almost, of being terrifying. And suddenly I had an inkling of what it must feel like to be mad. <sup>(90)</sup>

Thus it was, I imagine, that Kashyapa saw the lotus in the Buddha's hand—though without such emotional affect. It was not a reference to any teaching associated with the figure of the lotus, or an expression of the character, mood, sentiments, or emotions of the Buddha. Neither was it a reference to the botanical genus of the lotus. It was simply *that* lotus: that thing which it was and no other thing: a *mysterium tremendum*—as we all are. But we are all protected from each other by our references, the engrams of those cosmic systems to which we have been educated and to which our minds immediately refer the data of the senses. Following these references, we let the concept swallow up the percept, and so reverse the process of a revelation, thus defending ourselves from experience. And yet each thing, each person, all around us, all the time, each insisting on itself as being that thing which it is and no other thing, is striving with all its might to provide an experience of—itself.

Some minds require mescaline to dissolve in them their references; others may be quelled by the hypnotizing beat of a drum or the rhythmical organization of a work of art. (For example, which of us ever looked, really, at an old pair of shoes until they were shown to us by Van Gogh?) Certain religious exercises, involving the repetition of meaningless or almost meaningless syllables, the contemplation of some design or image, or the prolonged consideration of metaphysical riddles until the mind breaks, may



be meant to effect a similar result: to lull, hypnotize, or dissolve the busy brain and release the senses. The phenomena of dream commonly impress us more strongly than those of waking life just because in sleep the brain is off guard. If it could be caught off guard when we were awake, this “directly obvious” (*pratyakṣa*) world, deprived of its varnish of meaning, would shine forth of itself. Our experience then would be *paramārtha pratyakṣa*: “in the highest manner before the eyes”; “immediate, unmitigated, perfectly direct.”

This order of experience has been described for us by the Zen masters of China and Japan, in terms that may seem a little strange and puzzling, as “the doctrine of no-mind.” However, I believe if expressed in terms more congenial to our own tradition, the experience would be recognized as one that we ourselves have had on occasion. In the simplest terms, I think we might say that when a situation or phenomenon evokes in us a *sense of existence* (instead of some reference to the possibility of an *assurance of meaning*) we have had an experience of this kind. The sense of existence evoked may be shallow or profound, more or less intense, according to our capacity or readiness; but even a brief shock (say, for example, when discovering the moon over city roofs or hearing a sharp bird cry at night) can yield an experience of the order of no-mind: that is to say, the poetical order, the order of art. When this occurs, our own reality-beyond-meaning is awakened (or perhaps better: we are awakened to our own reality-beyond-meaning), and we experience an affect that is neither thought nor feeling but an interior impact. The phenomenon, disengaged from cosmic references, has disengaged ourselves, by that principle, well known to magic, by which like conjures like. In fact, both the magic of art and the art of magic derive from and are addressed to experiences of this order. Hence the power of the meaningless syllables, the mumbo jumbo of magic, and the meaningless verbalizations of metaphysics, lyric poetry, and art interpretation. They function evocatively, not referentially; like the beat of a shaman’s drum, not like a formula of Einstein. One moment later, and we have classified the experience and may be having utterable thoughts and describable feelings about it—thoughts and feelings that are in the public domain, and they will be either sentimental or profound, according to our education. But according to our life, we have had, for an instant, a sense of existence: a moment of unevaluated, unimpeded, lyric life—antecedent to both thought and feeling; such as can never be communicated by means of empirically verifiable propositions, but only suggested by art.

And now, I think, I am ready to formulate two or three final suggestions.

The first is that since what we are now discussing is an experience not of the relatively unknown but of the absolutely unknowable, it cannot be termed “knowledge,” in the usual Occidental sense of this term. It is true that the Sanskrit terms *bodhi*, *vidyā*, and *prajna*, which refer to this range of experience, are commonly translated with such words as “knowledge, supreme knowledge, illumination, enlightenment, or wisdom”; but the history of these words in our tradition makes it impossible for them to carry the meaning intended. According to the Oriental usage, everything to which these words of ours refer is to be known as *a-vidyā*, “non-knowledge, the lack of enlightenment, ignorance, folly, delusion.” Let us accept this suggestion and recognize, then, that what is intended by art, metaphysics, magical hocus-pocus, and mystical religion, is not the knowledge of anything, not Truth, or Goodness, or Beauty, but an evocation of a sense of the absolutely unknowable. Science, on the other hand, will take care of what can be known.

Art and science, then (and here, in line with the suggestion already quoted from Professor Rudolf Carnap, I am including under the term “art” the whole vocabulary of metaphysics and religion), art and science constitute a “pair of aspects” system. The function of art is to render a *sense of existence*, not an *assurance of some meaning*: so that those who require an assurance of meaning, or who feel unsure of themselves and unsettled when they learn that the system of meaning that would support them in their living has been shattered, must surely be those who have not yet experienced profoundly, continuously, or convincingly enough, that sense of existence—of spontaneous and willing arising—which is the first and deepest characteristic of being, and which it is the province of art to waken.

What—I ask—is the meaning of a flower? And having no meaning, should the flower, then, not be?

And so, with reference, now, to our problem of the symbol, we may say that a symbol, like everything else, shows a double aspect. We must distinguish, therefore, between the “sense” and the “meaning” of the symbol. It seems to me perfectly clear that all the great and little symbolical systems of the past functioned simultaneously on three levels: the corporeal of waking consciousness, the spiritual of dream, and the ineffable of the absolutely unknowable. The term “meaning” can refer only to the first two: but these, today, are in the charge of science—which is the province, as we have said, not of symbols but of signs. The ineffable, the absolutely unknowable, can be

only sensed: and not more in the religious sanctuary, today, than elsewhere. It is of the province of art—which is not “expression” merely, or even primarily (as Professor Carnap and the other logical positivists have supposed), but a quest for, and formulation of, experience-evoking, energy-waking images: yielding what Sir Herbert Read has aptly termed “a sensuous apprehension of being.”

I will not dwell on this point any longer. I think it must be clear by now that a certain relationship is indicated here between the courage of the Paleolithic hunter in his individualism and his willingness to face unprotected the spiritual experiences available to our race. Personally—though I do not wish to make a point of this—I believe that there is a precise relationship between the format or stature of the psyche and the quantum of immediate experience that one is capable of sustaining and absorbing, and that the training and shaping of the mandala-conditioned psyche of the incomplete man of the agriculturally based societies has simply unfitted him for the reception of the full impact of any *mysterium* whatsoever. Aldous Huxley has noted that what he saw when, for once, he really saw something, was “wonderful almost to the point of being terrifying,” so that suddenly he had an inkling of what it must feel like to be mad. The mad are those who, when they have broken contact with the mode of meaning, with the integrating component of thinking consciousness, cannot again restore it—whereas the great artist, like the shaman, like the *paramahansa*, the “supreme wild gander” of the titanic yogic flight, can be carried away and return.

And so now, my second suggestion is that, today, when the mandala itself, the whole structure of meaning to which society and its guardians would attach us, is dissolving, what is required of us all, spiritually as well as corporeally, is much more the fearless self-sufficiency of our shamanistic inheritance than the timorous piety of the priest-guided Neolithic. Those of us who never dared to be titans but only obedient children, following as loyally as possible the commands of Zeus, or Yahweh, or the State, now find that the commands themselves are in a somewhat fluent condition, changing with time. For the circle has been broken—the mandala of Truth. The circle is open, and we are sailing on a sea more vast than that of Columbus. The propositions of science, which have broken the mandala, and to which we are referred for our morality, knowledge, and wisdom, do not pretend to be true in any final sense, do not pretend to be infallible, or even durable, but are merely working hypotheses, here today and gone tomorrow. There is no

guiding bird, no landfall, no Hispaniola that is not soon dissolved in further revelations of outer and inner space.

“O ye,” said Dante, at that point in his journey when, taking leave of the Earthly Paradise on the summit of the cosmic mountain in the southern ocean, he was about to set forth for the sphere of the Moon, “O ye who in a little bark, desirous to listen, have followed behind my craft which singing passes on, turn to see again your shore; put not out upon the deep; for haply losing me, ye would remain astray. The water which I take was never crossed. Minerva breathes, and Apollo guides me, and the nine Muses point out to me the Bears.” (91) But Dante, through a series of theological propositions, reached in safety the term of his voyage: the Empyrean, the River of Light, and the Celestial Rose, beyond the sphere of the Fixed Stars. And there, as he declares, he found the ultimate image confirmed to the measure of the circle, and in this high vision his desire and his will were resolved, like a wheel which is moved evenly, by the love which moves the sun and the other stars. (92)

Our circle today, however, is rather that announced two centuries later by the genius of Nicholas Cusanus, whose circumference is nowhere and whose center is everywhere: the circle of infinite radius, which is also a straight line. \* Or, to state the principle in other terms: our meaning is now the meaning that is no meaning; for no fixed term of reference can be drawn. And to support such a temporal situation, each must discover himself to be the titan—without fear of the open world.

As the researches and writings of Dr. Jung have shown us, the deep aim and problem of the maturing psyche today is to recover wholeness. But such a recovery will necessarily center us far deeper within ourselves and within the universe than any concept or image that we may hold of Man, or of *humanitas*, can possibly suggest. As the Californian poet Robinson Jeffers has declared:

*Humanity is the start of the race; I say  
Humanity is the mold to break away from, the crust to break  
through, the coal to break into fire,  
The atom to be Split. (93)*

The first stage of the process of individuation, Jung has described as one of dissolving—not re-enforcing—the individual’s identification of his personality with the claims of the collective archetypes. These, I have tried to

show, are functions, not only of the psyche, but also of the history of society, and today are in full dissolution. The scientific method has released us, intellectually, from the absolutes of the mythological ages; the divine authority of the religiously founded state has been completely dissolved, at least in the Occident; and the power-driven machine is progressively releasing human energy from the onerous physical tasks that were formerly rationalized as valuable moral disciplines: thus released, these energies constitute what Jung has termed a quantum of disposable libido—now flowing from the corporeal to the spiritual task. And this spiritual task can now be only that which I have here termed the task of art.

The epoch of the Renaissance, to which we owe in large measure the scientific vision, was at its apogee in 1492—the year of the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent as well as that of the Fall of Granada and Discovery of the New World. Leonardo da Vinci that year was forty years old, Machiavelli twenty-three, Copernicus nineteen. Moreover, by another coincidence, precisely in the year of the first battle of the American Revolution, James Watt conceived the idea of the steam condenser, to which we owe the first successfully operated power-driven machine. And so, in a sense, it is true indeed, or at least true enough, that the world in which we are now living was not only created in 1492 but redeemed in 1776.

Within the time of our lives, it is highly improbable that any solid rock will be found to which Prometheus can again be durably shackled, or against which those who are not titans will be able to lean with confidence. The creative researches and wonderful daring of our scientists today partake far more of the lion spirit of shamanism than of the piety of priest and peasant. They have shed all fear of the bounding serpent king. And if we are to match their courage, and thus participate joyfully in their world without meaning, we must allow our own spirits to become, like theirs, wild ganders, and fly in timeless, spaceless flight—like the body of the Virgin Mary—not into any fixed heaven beyond the firmament (for there is no heaven out there), but to that seat of experience, simultaneously without and within, where Prometheus and Zeus, I and the Father, the meaninglessness of the sense of existence and the meaninglessness of the meanings of the world, are one.

# The Symbol without Meaning - Notes

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 1.] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 102, Article 1, Reply 3.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 2.] Bede, *Glossa ordin.*, super Genesis 2:8 (I, 36F).

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 3.] St. Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litt.* VIII, I (PL 34, 371); also *De Civit. Dei* XIII, 21 (PL 41, 395).

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 4.] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, 102, 1.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 5.] *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus; being the journals of his First and Third, and the Letters concerning his First and Last Voyages, to which is added the Account of his Second Voyage* written by Andres Bernaldez (London: The Argonaut Press, 1930), p. 36.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 6.] *Loc. cit.*

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 7.] J. J. Fahie, *Galileo, His Life and Work* (London: John Murray, 1903), pp. 313 ff.; cited by Bertrand Russell, *The Scientific Outlook* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1931), pp. 24–32.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 8.] Rudolf Carnap, *Philosophy and Logical Syntax* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1935), pp. 30–31.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 9.] C. G. Jung, *Psychologische Typen* (Zurich: Rascher and Cie., 1921), pp. 674–85.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 10.] Cf. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art*, Chapter V, “Paroksa,” p. 129; from which I have adopted this interpretation of the Indian terms, as well as their equation with the terms “sign” and “symbol” of C. G. Jung.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 11.] D. A. F. Garrod and D. M. A. Bate, *The Stone Age of Mount Carmel* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937).

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 12.] Contrast, for example, James Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük: A Neolithic Town in Anatolia* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), pp. 17–26, and the earlier guess by Robert J. Braidwood, *Prehistoric Man* (Chicago: Chicago Natural History Museum Press, 1948, 3rd ed., 1957), p. 113.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 13.] Kathleen M. Kenyon, *Archaeology in the Holy Land* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960), p. 46.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 14.] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 15.] James Mellaart, “Hacilar: A Neolithic Village Site,” *Scientific American*, Vol. 205, No. 2 (August 1961), p. 90.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 16.] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 17.] Kenyon, *op. cit.*, pp. 51–54.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 18.] Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük: A Neolithic Town in Anatolia*, p. 22.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 19.] *Ibid.*, p. 184, Figure 52.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 20.] *Ibid.*, p. 124, Figure 37.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 21.] *The Masks of God*, Vol. II, *Oriental Mythology*, p. 53.

- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 22.] Mellaart, *Çatal Hüyük*, Caption to Plate 83.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 23.] *Ibid.*, Plate 83.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 24.] *Ibid.*, pp. 82–83, Figures 14, 15.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 25.] *Ibid.*, pp. 106–107.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 26.] *Ibid.*, Plate 27.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 27.] *Ibid.*, Plate 28.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 28.] *Ibid.*, Caption to Plates 27 and 28.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 29.] *Ibid.*, pp. 217–18.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 30.] Mellaart, “Hacilar: A Neolithic Village Site,” pp. 94–95.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 31.] *Ibid.*, p. 92.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 32.] Kenyon, *op. cit.*, pp. 68–69.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 33.] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 34.] André Leroi-Gourhan, *Les Religions de la préhistoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964), pp. 84–90.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 35.] *Ibid.*, p. 103.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 36.] Cf. Abbé H. Breuil, *Four Hundred Centuries of Cave Art* (Montignac, Dordogne: Centre d’Études et de Documentation Préhistoriques, n.d.), pp. 66, 154–57, 160–165, 168–75, 300–301, 320, 324–75, 389.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 37.] Henry Fairfield Osborn, *Men of the Old Stone Age* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 3rd ed., 1925), p. 464.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 38.] For examples of Halaf ware see the beautiful series from “the potter’s shop,” published by M. E. L. Mallowan and J. Cruikshank Rose, *Excavations at Tall Arpachiyah*, “Iraq” (British School of Archaeology in Iraq), Vol. II, Part I (1935); and for a summary survey of Samarran motifs, Robert J. and Linda S. Braidwood, Edna Tulane, and Ann L. Perkins, “New Chalcolithic Material of Samarran Type and Its Implications,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. III, No. 1 (January 1944), appendix.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 39.] Géza Róheim, *Magic and Schizophrenia* (New York: International Universities Press, 1955), pp. 50–51.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 40.] Cf. Lidio Cipriani, “Excavations in Andamanese Kitchen Middens,” *Acts of IVth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences* (Vienna, 1952), Vol. II, pp. 250–53.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 41.] Cf. Braidwood and Braidwood, Tulane and Perkins, *loc. cit.*
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 42.] Cf. Mallowan and Rose, *loc. cit.*
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 43.] V. Gordon Childe, *New Light on the Most Ancient East* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1934), p. 160, Fig. 59.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 44.] Mallowan and Rose, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–78.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 45.] The first three of these periods are described by Robert J. Braidwood as, respectively, the Era of Incipient Agriculture and Animal Domestication, the Era of Primary Village-Farming



Efficiency, and the Era of Peasant Efficiency, with Market-sized Towns and Temples (*cf.* Robert J. and Linda Braidwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 282–87, 287–309, and 288, note 19). The crisis of transition from Uruk A to Uruk B (Era of Peasant Efficiency, with Market-sized Towns and Temples, to Era of Cosmological Organization of the City State—my “High Neolithic” to “Hieratic State,” c. 3200 b.c.) will be found discussed by Speiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 24–31; Childe, *op. cit.*, Chapter VI; and von Heine-Geldern, *op. cit.*, pp. 86–87.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 46.] In the dating of this diffusion I am following, in the main, von Heine-Geldern, “Theoretical Considerations Concerning the Problem of Pre-Columbian Contacts between the Old and New World,” paper read at *Vth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences*, Philadelphia, September 1956, the chief points of which are summarized in the article already cited, “The Origin of Ancient Civilizations,” *Diogenes* 13, pp. 81–99. An earlier diffusion across the Pacific of elements of the horticultural complex (*cf. supra*, p. 14, note 2) also is probable: see, for example, Adolf E. Jensen, *Das religiöse Weltbild einer frühen Kultur*, pp. 93–125. For a general discussion of the Asiatic-American cultural continuity, *cf.* Gordon F. Ekholm, “The New Orientation toward Problems of Asiatic-American Relationships,” *New Interpretations of Aboriginal American Culture History*, 75th Anniversary Volume of the Anthropological Society of Washington (Washington, D.C., 1955), pp. 95–109.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 47.] Timaeus, 90C–D; translated by Francis MacDonald Cornford, *Plato’s Cosmology* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1952), p. 354.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 48.] Adolf Portmann, “Das Ursprungsproblem,” *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 1947,

p. 27.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 49.] D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, First Series, p. 224.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 50.] *Cf.* Sri Krishna Menon, *Atmanirvriti* (Trivandrum: Vedanta Publishers, 1952), p. 18, Par. I.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 51.] C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1938), pp. 105–106.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 52.] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 53.] Paracelsus, *Selected Writings*, ed. by Jolande Jacobi (New York: Pantheon Books, 1951); cited by Giorgio De Santillana, *The Age of Adventure* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1956), p. 194.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 54.] Robert H. Lowie, *Primitive Religion* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924), p. 7.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 55.] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1934), p. 54.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 56.] Alex D. Krieger, “New World Culture History: Anglo-America,” article in A. L. Kroeber (ed.), *Anthropology Today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 251.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 57.] Opler, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 58.] *Ibid.*, pp. 1–18, greatly abridged.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 59.] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 60.] *Rāmāyaṇa* 1.45; 7–1.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 61.] Opler, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[Back to N<sup>t</sup> 62.] *Völuspá*, 45 ff .

- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 63.] Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, lines 975–76, 1003–1006; translation by John Stuart Blackie, *The Lyrical Dramas of Aeschylus*, Everyman's Library, No. 62 (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co.; London: J. M. Dent and Son, 1906).
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 64.] Herbert J. Spinden, "First Peopling of America as a Chronological Problem," in George Grant MacCurdy, ed., *Early Man* (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1937), pp. 106–10. Spinden's rejection of the early dating was based on the evidence then available; for the later view, cf. F. H. H. Roberts, "Earliest Men in America: Their Arrival and Spread in Late Pleistocene and Post Pleistocene Times," *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 1953, pp. 255 ff.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 65.] N. N. Cheboksarov and T. A. Trofimova, "Antropologicheskoe izusheniye Mansi," *Kratie soobshchenia* II, M.K. 9, as reported by H. Field and E. Prostov, "Results of Soviet Investigations in Siberia," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 44, 1942, p. 403 n.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 66.] Franz Hancar, *op. cit.*, pp. 106–121 and Alfred Salmony, "Kunst des Aurignacien in Malta," *Ipek* (Berlin, 1931), pp. 1–6.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 67.] Mircea Eliade, *Le Chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase* (Paris: Payot, 1951); English translation by Willard R. Trask, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, The Bollingen Series LXXVI (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964).
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 68.] Uno Holmberg (Harva), *Finno-Ugric, Siberian Mythology*, "The Mythology of All Races" (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1927), Vol. IV, p. 499.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 69.] B. Munkacsi, *Vogul Népköltesi Gyűjtemény*, Vol. III, Budapest, 1893, p. 7; cited by Géza Róheim, *Hungarian and Vogul Mythology* (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1954.), p. 22.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 70.] Munkacsi, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, Part 1, 1910–1921, p. 066; cited by Róheim, *Hungarian and Vogul Mythology*, p. 30.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 71.] From G. V. Kenofontov, *Legendy i rasskazy o shamanach u. yakutov, buryat i tungusov* (Moscow, 1930), translated by Adolf Friedrich and Georg Buddruss, *Schamanengeschichten aus Sibirien* (Munich: Otto-Wilhelm-Barth-Verlag, 1955), p. 213.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 72.] Jung, *Psychologische Typen*, p. 675.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 73.] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 2.2.4.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 74.] *Tao Te Ching* 1.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 75.] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, Chapter V.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 76.] *Kena Upaniṣad*, 1.3.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 77.] Kenofontov, *op. cit.*, German translation of Friedrich and Buddruss, pp. 211–12.
- [Back to N<sup>o</sup> 78.] Cf. W. Schott, "Über den Doppelsinn des Wortes Schamane und über den tungusischen Schamanencultus am Hofe des Mendju-Kaisers," *Abhandlungen der Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1842, pp. 461–68. The derivation is rejected for lack of evidence by Professor J. A. MacCulloch (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, Vol. XI, p. 441, article "Shamanism") and the editors of *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. IX, p. 616, but accepted by the editors of *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd ed., 1937, article "shaman." The hypothetical derivation is from the Pāli *Samana* (Sanskrit *sramaṇa*) by way of the Chinese *shamen*.

- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 79.] See W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928).
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 80.] Translation by John Addington Symonds, *The Sonnets of Michael Angelo Buonarroti and Tommaso Campanella* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1878), p. 102, Sonnet LXV, "On the Brink of Death" (to Giorgio Vasari, *Giunto è già...*).
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 81.] *Vedāntasāra* 17.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 82.] *Yoga Sūtra* 3.51, Commentary. Translation by James Houghton Woods, *The Yoga-system of Patañjali* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), pp. 85–86.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 83.] *Vajracchedika* 32.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 84.] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Book IV, conclusion.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 85.] *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* 9–11.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 86.] *Aṣṭavakra Saṃhītā* 80.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 87.] *Katha Upaniṣad* 3.12; 5.9 and 12.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 88.] *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* 484.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 89.] Max Knoll, "Wandlungen der Wissenschaft in unserer Zeit," *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 1951 (Zurich: Rhein-Verlag, 1952), pp. 387 ff.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 90.] Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), pp. 53–54.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 91.] *Paradiso* II, 1 ff.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 92.] *Ibid.*, XXXIII, conclusion.
- [Back to N<sup>t</sup> 93.] Robinson Jeffers, "Roan Stallion," in *Roan Stallion, Tamar, and Other Poems* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1925), pp. 19–20.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

**W**e're very excited to bring you this short essay as part of our Ebook Short series.

Joseph Campbell was an amazingly prolific author and speaker. Though best known for his full-length books and his lectures, Campbell wrote eye-opening, thought provoking essays, some of which he gathered in the 1969 collection, *The Flight of the Wild Gander*.

This volume, however, did not exhaust his trove of short pieces. In the Joseph Campbell Foundation archives we have a huge volume of unpublished writing and lectures. JCF's primary mission is to preserve, protect, and perpetuate the work of Joseph Campbell. Since 1991, a major part of pursuing that mission has been to gather together this material into books, audio and video releases, and ebooks.

Before Campbell died, he and his editor Robert Walter (now JCF's president) created a list of projects that Campbell — then in his eighties — wanted to pursue. Some of the unpublished material has been used to create posthumous titles that spring from that list. Some, however, doesn't fit into the schema that Campbell and Walter worked out: short essays, pieces that Campbell cut out of his published work, and transcribed lectures that are of value on their own, but that don't fit the publishing program that JCF has been pursuing since its inception. Some of those pieces found a home in the collection *The Mythological Dimension*. Some have remained homeless.

We created the Ebook Short series with the hope of sharing some of his most inspiring of the essays that have been published in *The Mythological Dimension* and *The Flight of the Wild Gander*, as well as releasing some of these hidden gems.

"Belief and Power in Myth" falls into that second category. It is an unpublished article from the Joseph Campbell archives (catalogued as U49). Campbell seems originally to have written it as the foreword for Heinrich Zimmer's *The King and the Corpse* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1946, 1971), which Campbell edited after Zimmer's death. It was previously released as part of an insert in the boxed set *Mythos: The Complete Series* (Silver Spring, Maryland: Athen/Acorn Media, 2012).

If you have feedback or questions about any aspects of this book, please contact us at [ebook@jcf.org](mailto:ebook@jcf.org).

David Kudler  
Mill Valley, California  
March 15, 2013

# ABOUT JOSEPH CAMPBELL FOUNDATION

**T**he Joseph Campbell Foundation (JCF) is a not-for-profit corporation that continues the work of Joseph Campbell, exploring the fields of mythology and comparative religion. The Foundation is guided by three principal goals:

- First, the Foundation preserves, protects, and perpetuates Campbell's pioneering work. This includes cataloging and archiving his works, developing new publications based on his works, directing the sale and distribution of his published works, protecting copyrights to his works, and increasing awareness of his works by making them available in digital formats on JCF's web site ([www.jcf.org](http://www.jcf.org)).
- Second, the Foundation promotes the study of mythology and comparative religion. This involves implementing and/or supporting diverse mythological education programs, supporting and/or sponsoring events designed to increase public awareness, donating Campbell's archived works (principally to the OPUS Archives), and utilizing JCF's web site as a forum for relevant cross-cultural dialogue.
- Third, the Foundation helps individuals enrich their lives by participating in a series of programs, including our global, Internet-based Associates program, our local international network of Mythological Roundtables, and our periodic Joseph Campbell-related events and activities.



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