Amplification of Symbols

by Harry Prochaska

Table of Contents

A Portrait of Harry Prochaska

by Michael Flanagin, Ph.D.

I first met Harry Prochaska twenty-five years ago when he accompanied his friend Richard Stein, a San Francisco Jungian analyst, as a guest lecturer in the latter's graduate course, *Jungian Psychotherapy*. He arrived with a carousel of slides from an archive housed in the San Francisco Jung Institute that he called ARAS, which Richard wanted us to learn about as a way to understand the role of amplification in Jungian practice. The mysteries of archetypal symbolism evidently were more intelligible if seen with one's eyes than fathomed with one's mind, but for all that, his array of images from alchemy, Hindu temples, ancient Greek myths, and modern art excited as many questions as they answered. To my mind, this was the most interesting part of the course, the heart of Jungian psychology-images that made one feel that one has come home, or found one's own path. And the elderly man who was custodian of this curious parade of carefully selected images played a welcoming role in drawing me closer to this collection, and using it to gain an understanding of how the deepest secrets of our nature can only be portrayed in symbols, and always have been. I think any vague aspiration to become a clinician myself expired that night: archetypal symbolism was what I had been seeking right along and here was a mentor who dwelt in its midst. I learned later he was a retired professor of humanities, a father of three sons, a man educated in all the arts, especially music, which he played delicately on a harpsichord with hands that seemed too large for a baroque keyboard, but which he shifted about with an allegro sensitivity.

After that night, I remained intrigued by this unforgettable presentation, and when the time came to embark on my doctoral dissertation on archetypal symbolism, I made my first appointment in ARAS to ask Harry if he would consider serving on my committee. To my pleasant surprise, he consented. On my next visit, Harry recommended the serpent as the focus of my proposed dissertation. I initially stepped back from the prospect of such an unappealing topic. But Harry's wise counsel not only rewarded me in the end with the insight that we must avoid fixed interpretations of even the most ancient and perennial symbols (for the snake symbolizes multiple dynamics in the unconscious psyche and even it requires a cultural context to decipher which one is at play), but I was also given a hint into the even more valuable role of initiation in Jungian psychology that linked our work in ARAS with its extraordinary founder in San Francisco, Joseph L. Henderson. As Harry's own analyst and mentor, and author of a seminal book on initiation, Dr. Henderson's presence could be felt through the way Harry approached the symbolic questions that all visitors to ARAS brought, recognizing that they were more than academic inquiries. He understood that archetypes can unfold within us to initiate us to levels of inner life in keeping with our ultimate nature and he offered a humane manner to soften the unsettling power such weighty transformations can bring to our everyday lives.

Visiting ARAS for the first time made me marvel at how many symbolic "bits of information" could be stored in a single metal case of photographic slides along with the compact files of folders that amplified them, just as I marveled at how much anecdotal detail Harry stored beneath his gleaming forehead, fringed with snow-white hair, and just as we all marveled in those years to learn that the entire archive, and therefore the

main visual history of human symbolism, could be stored on a single compact disk the size of a coffee-table coaster. Good tempered even when busy with deadlines, Harry also shared amusing dreams about the entire contents of the archive spilling down on him like the deck of cards in Alice in Wonderland. And there is something amusing, ultimately, about organizing the immense productivity of the archetypal imagination from Paleolithic artifacts to Picasso in orderly cultural categories and under the motifs by which images are catalogued in the archive, as the following selection from his book demonstrates so well. His book is deceptively short, but only as I prepared its index did I realize how much cultural symbolism and psychological significance he had managed to condense into its pages. Likewise, I occasionally ponder over his sepia ink painting of a serpent that he gave me when I completed my dissertation, in which he expressed so much about the psyche in a single serpentine line: the psyche's ability to conceal itself, to spring out suddenly, to conjure multiple meanings in one ambiguous image, to warn, to teach, to tempt, to remind us...

Out of the thousands of images that ARAS has archived and interpreted (or more accurately, has provided informed material to enable users to make their own interpretations), Harry had a few of his own favorites. Such choices reveal much about our individual nature and inner life. He was particularly struck by an Egyptian relief that showed the Pharaoh Sensuret in profile gazing into the eyes of the god Ptah, who embraced him. Another (referred to in the following text) was the classical sculpture of an aged Silenus, a forest god, cradling the infant Dionysus in his arms, whom he watches over with gentle protectiveness. Both images inhabit common human postures to hint at a higher identity with a transcendent life and the impulse to guard those

coming into an awareness of it. I recall how one time Harry surprised me with the observation that he could sense in me a longing for transcendence struggling to take root somewhere. That is an uncommon remark for any of us to hear, but most of all it is a remark that could only be spoken by someone who had not only felt the restless pressure of a similar longing, but indeed, someone who had finally discovered its obscure object. As first his assistant curator and then his successor as curator in ARAS, I also recall his late attention to Navajo sandpaintings and the Chinese temples and gardens he visited with his travel companion, the San Francisco analyst, Mary Jo Spencer. Still making contributions to the archive, by that point he was well on eighty.

The last occasion I saw Harry was when he called to offer me some of his precious library volumes, as he thinned out his collection to prepare to move nearer his son. Wanting now to live more simply, he mentioned he was keeping only the bare essence- he pointed out a volume or two of Buddhist classics and Jung's autobiography *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Having recently survived an auto collision with a streetcar and a nearly fatal heart-attack, Harry was bent over and visibly aging. His appearance reminded me how in Japan the elderly are likened to the crab, with their bent backs and wisdom hidden beneath their shells. Now dressed for the task at hand in a white baker's apron hung around his neck, his spirit was undiminished. As I drove off with my stack of his books, he silently waved to me on the sidewalk with his large, eloquent hand and his unfailing smile of life-affirming kindness. It was my last encounter.

In his final year or two, Harry lived somewhat farther from the archive and many

months went by without my seeing him or hearing from him. One day in winter, I became recurrently aware of his presence, first in the form of a flood of memories that broke into my prosaic tasks, then culminated the next day in a fantasy of actually *being* Harry, or inhabiting him somehow, as if his presence coincided with my own in the odd way inner events defy physical reason. The telephone rang with a call from the Executive Director of the Jung Institute, Stephen Manning, kindly informing me that Harry had died a couple of days earlier. The demanding fantasies ceased, replaced by retrospection, but I was grateful for the days between his death and my notification of it, so I could ponder one last time Harry's anchor in transcendental life, and his generous way of communicating out of it-if I chose to look at this curious episode that way. Enriched by our long association in the archive, I did choose to look at it in a way that favored meaning over spurious coincidence. It made me recall the extraordinary passage with which his mentor, Joseph Henderson, closes his *Thresholds of Initiation*: "All deeply committed individual religious men maintain that [initiation] goes on periodically throughout life and into death, with no end in sight."

Images of the Divine Child

Mythologies are stories of the birth and childhood of gods, of the exploits and encounters with each other and their excursions in the human world. Even when these stories center around a single god or goddess, they do not comprise a biography; they are not chronological narrative. Instead, they relate a manifestation of a god and his interactions with other beings of the cosmos. Carl Kerényi writes: "The gods are so 'original' that a new world is always born with a new god -- a new epoch or a new aspect of the world. They are 'there,' not only in the beginning when they themselves originated, and not only in the periodic repetitions of that first origination, i.e., cosmic reappearances and representations on festal occasions. Though they are present all the time, the mythologems which unfold in narrative form what is contained in the figures of the gods are always set in a primordial time. This return to the origins and to primordiality is a basic feature of every mythology."[1]

A particular aspect of this "primordiality" becomes concentrated in the appearance of the god as divine child and since this is a psychic genesis, everything must happen non-empirically, e.g. by a virgin birth, a miraculous conception or birth from unnatural organs. "The motives of 'insignificance,' exposure, abandonment, danger, etc., try to show how precarious is the possibility of psychic wholeness, that is, the enormous difficulty to be met with in attaining this 'highest good.'"[2] These stories show the god in the "full perfection of his power and outward form."[3]

The stories of the birth of Hermes and his exploits as a child serve as fine examples of

the essence of the god (or a particular power) at his beginning to be retold many times over in many other situations. Maia and Zeus conceived Hermes, in the deepest night when heavy sleep had overtaken Hera protecting them from her jealousy. Hermes was born at dawn, and by evening had stolen the herd of cattle which belonged to his brother, Apollo.

The mythical birth of the divine child takes place in many different places under many different conditions. The boundless waters are one such place for water is the primordial source of all things. Eros and Dionysus are often seen riding astride a dolphin (Figures 1, 2 and 3), [Dolphins are so named because of their uterine shape.]

Figures 1, 2, and 3

Once we remember that Aphrodite was born of the seafoam when the genitals of the castrated Ouranous landed in the water, we can see the movement of the image in some stories in which Aphrodite is the mother of Eros. Aphrodite, as beauty, is the divine

child who emerges in full flower from the sea of the Unconscious and gives birth to Love. This springtime myth appears with freshness and delight in frescoes at Pompei where Aphrodite, nude, wearing a necklace and anklets and bracelets, lies on a scallop shell resting on her right arm.

Figure 4

She is lead by a child on a dolphin carrying a staff and followed by another winged child. [The posture has been repeated in paintings by Giorgione, Titian and Manet.] In Botticelli's Birth of Venus she stands on the scallop shell washed into shore with the spring breeze blowing her hair about her graceful nude body.

Figure 5

In the Judaic tradition Moses is the divine child who is hidden in the bulrushes to escape the threat of death. Thus, he is miraculously born from water when he is discovered by the daughter of the Pharaoh and her maids and will be raised as a prince of the royal household (Figure 6).

Figure 6

The water symbolism continues in the rite of baptism for it is a second birth. It signifies a union of the elements in the experience of the divine child. If sired by the air of spirit, born from earth, and carrying the fire of redemption, the water as the maternal element of the unconscious contains the child. The bathing of the infant Christ (an early baptism) has been a favorite theme of Christian painters. A Buddhist example of the same theme is in a silk banner from Kansu province in China, dated in the 8th-9th century. It shows the infant Gautama standing. In front of him are the six lotus blossoms of purity which sprang from his first steps and below we see him in his first bath. The scene is guarded above by dragons as the power of Heaven (Figure 7), as the Christian parallels are guarded by the heavenly host (Figures 8, 9, and 10).

Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

Figure 10

Geographical sites can become the sacred birthplace of the divine child for in this way Earth herself becomes the womb. In these circumstances what we often see is a birth, hidden from the world, in remote, unknown places.

When Kore returns after her abduction and rape by Hades, she is born from the womb of earth. Kore's return was pictured often in Greek art. A late, red-figured Attic vase from 350 BC shows Kore's head and shoulders emerging from the ground with satyrs chopping the ground of each side to free her (Figure 11). Satyrs as mythical creatures from the world of nature restate the spring theme of this mythical event. An earlier vase with black figures from 500 BC show bearded male figures beating the ground, as though to summon her from the underworld (Figure 12).

Figure 11

Figure 12

Erich Neumann writes that Kore herself is transformed as well as her childbearing for "the son is a very special son, namely the luminous son, the "divine child." Neumann compares this son to "Agni, the Indian fire god,... 'he who swells the mother (the fire board),' and everywhere the meaning of light and fire is attributed to the divine son, down to Christ who says: 'He that is near me is near the fire,' and 'Cleave the wood and I am there.'"[4]

Many specific caves and sites in Crete are identified as the birthplace of Zeus or it is told sometimes that he was born on the open mountainside. Apollo and Artemis were born in an open field because Hera, in of her jealousy, sent Leto, their mother wandering. No one dared give her rest or haven until Poseidon chained an island for her and there the delivery of the twins took place. In one version of the myth, Artemis was born first and assisted her mother with the delivery of the second twin, hence the association of Artemis with childbirth and the natural world of animals.

In the Mithraic tradition, Mithras, the savior was born from the earth as shown in a number of Roman reliefs (Figures 13 and 14). His birth from rock and stone was celebrated in Rome on December 25 as *genitor luminis, petra genetrix*, i.e., the spark which comes from the stone when struck, a precursor of the stone as the *prima materium*, the philosopher's stone which is the beginning of the alchemical process and the culmination of the "work."

Figure 12

Figure 13

The birth of the son is most familiar in Christian cultures in paintings of the Nativity of Christ. A mosaic from the Capella Palantina in Palermo shows the Mother, and the Child in swaddling clothes, in a jagged cave in the upper center of the painting surrounded by the animals and the visitors and the heavenly host. Below to the right we see the Child being bathed by two women (Figures 15 and 16).

In a tradition far removed in time and place, a Navajo Sandpainting pictures the hero of the legend clothed in flint armor surrounded by plants as he comes through "the place of emergence," the *sisapu*, the navel of the earth into this fourth world, from the three

worlds below. This is seen in the Sandpainting as a circle in the center with the plants around it in the four cardinal directions.

Figure 15

Figure 16

The recurrent image of the birth from the earth emphasizes, perhaps, the chthonic element in the divine incarnation so that the child image is not wholly spirit, a counter

to the radical separation of good and evil exemplified by much Western thinking.

Other stories tell of miraculous births in the natural world. A 10th century illustration for Ovid's Metamorphoses, shows Myrra changing into a tree and Lucina, after splitting open the trunk of the tree, delivering the child Adonis with assistance from six nymphs (Figure 17).

Figure 17

A 6th century BC Greek terra cotta shows a youthful god holding a caduceus standing on the calyx of a flower (Figure 18).

Figure 18

Another example comes from Egyptian mythology in a drawing of Hathor embodied as a tree suckling the Pharaoh (Figures 19 and 20). Her shade protects him and her fruit sustains him.

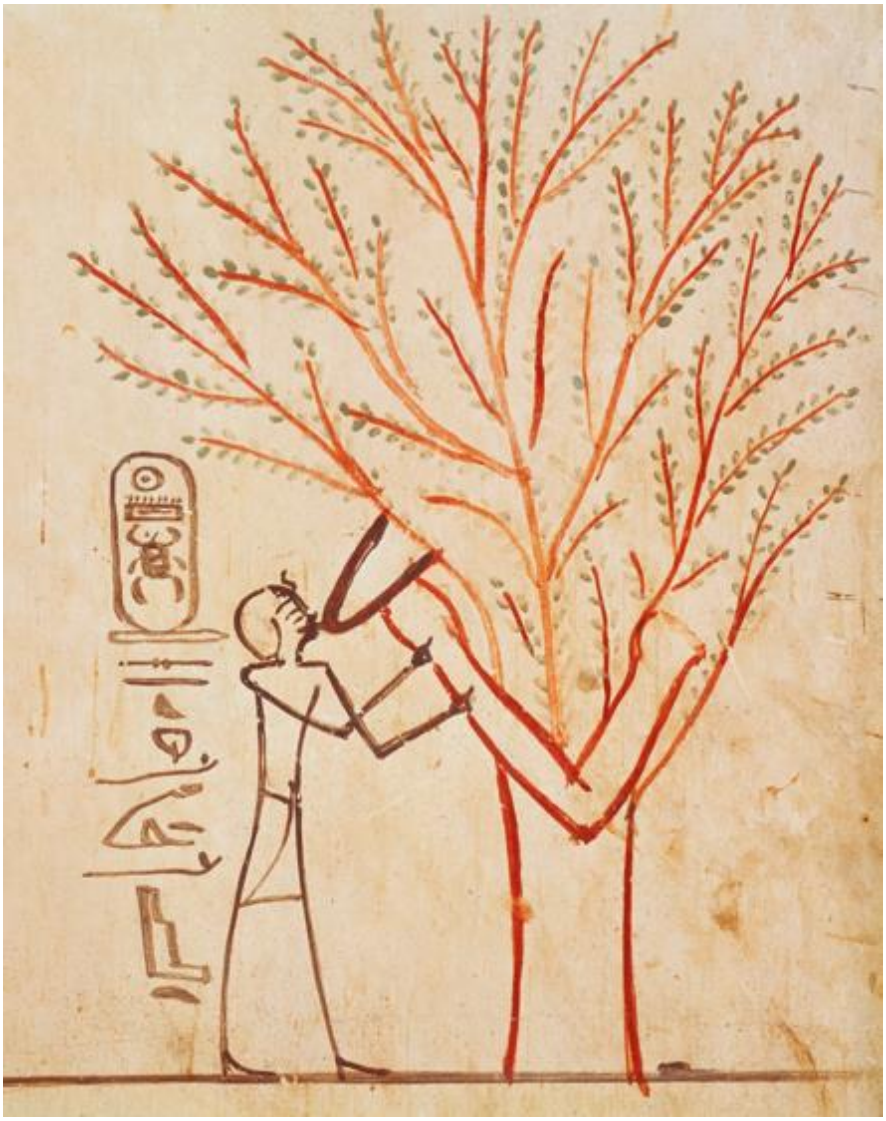


Figure 19

The advent of the Divine Child is not always a welcome event for it is a call to a new beginning, saying, in the words of Rilke, "You must change your life."[5] Men resist this command choosing instead to destroy the newborn child. A miraculous birth hidden from sight is no guarantee of survival.

The Greek stories of Ouranous and Kronos consuming their own children are monstrous

visualizations of the terror of threatened change. Nothing portrays such consuming madness and horror equal to Goya's painting of Kronos eating the child (Figure 21). In order to save Zeus from such an early fate, Rhea orders the Kouretes to make a great noise with their war dance so that Father Kronos would not hear the cry of the newborn. Drawings from a Roman panel shows the noisy young men dancing with shields and swords over their heads with the infant Zeus on the ground. Rhea substitutes a stone for Kronos and this divine child is not consumed by his father.

Figure 21

The early life of Dionysus is equally precarious for the Titans tore him apart, preparing to eat him but the lightning bolts of Zeus defeated their plan. Zeus then handed the infant over to Hermes who took him to Ino to nurse him. In another version Hermes takes him to Zeus who encloses the child in his thigh to be born when his time has come.

A 10th century version of the Christian story of the Slaughter of the Innocents reveals the fear which the birth of the Divine Child engenders, as Herod stand to the left while his soldiers attack the children in the center of the painting and the mothers lament outside the city walls (Figure 22).

Figure 22

Jesus, the Christ Child, is saved because Joseph, acting on the warning of the angel in a dream, take Mary and child into Egypt. A Romanesque bronze relief from the doors of the Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Novgorod shows Mary holding the Child, each in erect iconic postures sitting on a mule led by Joseph. Another representation of the same incident painted by the Brothers Limbourg for the Duc de Berry shows a patient, furry mule with the Mother and Child and angels around them (Figures 23 and 24).

Figure 23

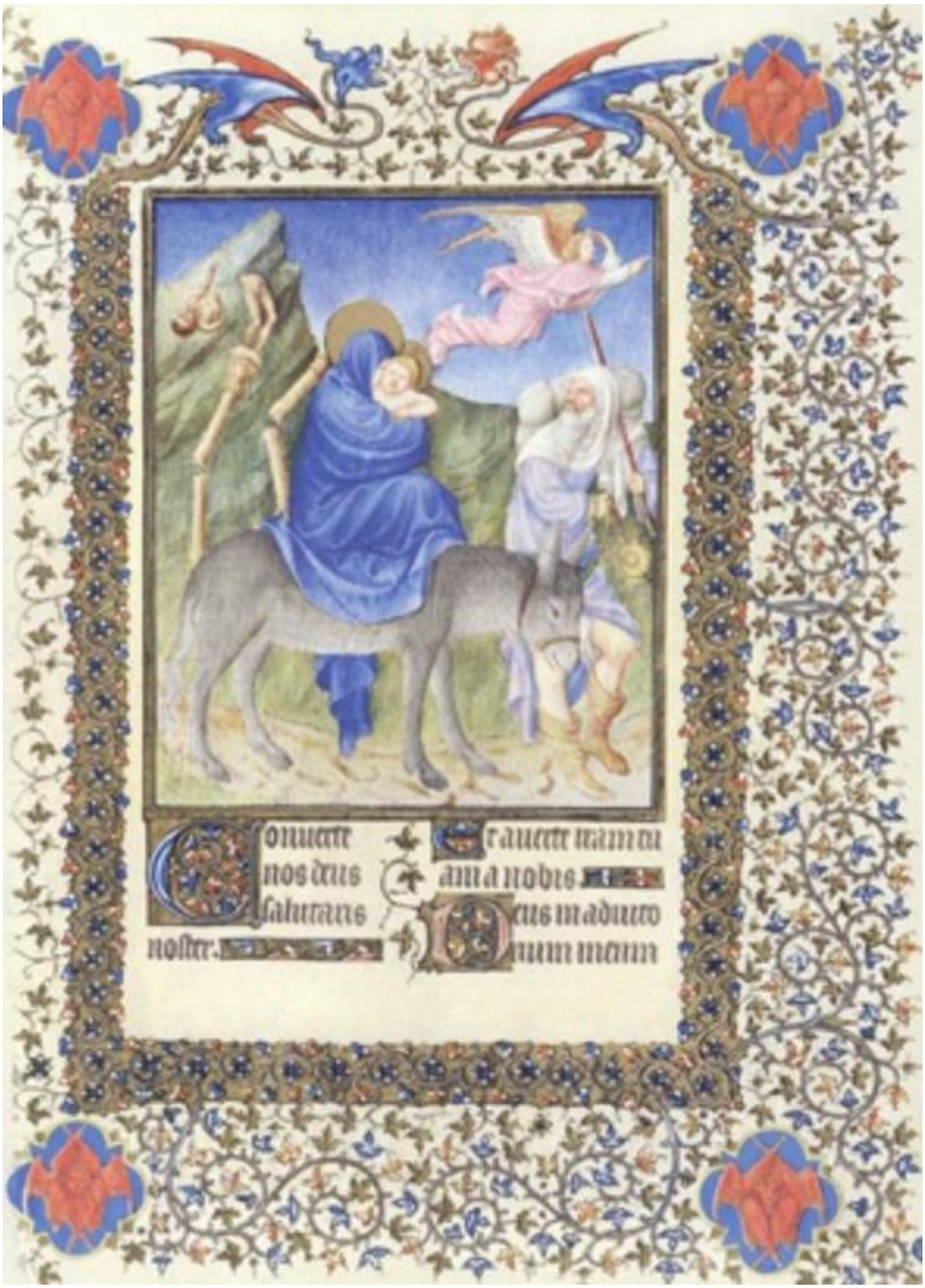

Conuertere nos deus salutaris noster.
Et auerte iram tuam a nobis
Deus in adiutorium

Figure 24

Another Christian story in the book of Revelation is paradigmatic of the miraculous birth of the Child for he is threatened by the monster until he is taken up into heaven. Illustrations show the six-headed dragon waiting for the delivery while the woman and child are in a circle of flames. To the right an angel takes the child out of reach of the dragon into the heavenly world (Figures 25 and 26).

Figure 25

We can find the quintessential characteristics of the divine child in Indian mythology most clearly in the stories of Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu. The new-born infant is taken from his mother and raised by cowherds so that Kansa, the frightened king could not reach him before his own prophesied death.

We see the pattern of imminent, early death threatening the divine child, and he escapes this outcome by hiding in his early years from this potential destruction of his mission.

Figure 26

But as the child survives his precarious beginnings, he is noticed by his exploits, sometimes in the trickster mode. A Greek vase painting shows a group of nymphs hiding the child Hermes from the wrath of his brother after he had stolen the cattle which belonged to Apollo. He appeased Apollo by giving him the lyre which he had already invented to accompany his own songs. By this gift Apollo becomes associated with music even though Hermes made the first lyre. Hermes, the trickster, is the god of thieves and deception, as well as the messenger and envoy of Zeus. "His impudence proves to be a conscious return of the offspring to his source. Indeed, Hermes' impudence is the

consciousness of his own origin and reason for being."[6] The association of trickery, thievery and love is an old one, and associated with Hermes; he is unpredictable, mercurial.

Eros is closely related by nature to Hermes. Greek mythology always preserved Eros in his child-form, and the mythologem of the primordial child was also referred to him. He is pictured as a child, even an irresponsible child shooting his dart with mischievous delight. No one could escape from his power; even the mighty Zeus became victim of the power of Eros.

While Eros and Krishna are always the young god, the focus of the Krishna stories is different from those of Eros, for Krishna loves his devotees and satisfies them with his presence. In contrast Eros is the god who engenders love in others for good or ill without coming into a relationship with them except for the tale of Cupid and Psyche.

As a child Krishna was a delight and a mischief-maker. He accomplished many extraordinary feats contesting with the gods themselves sometimes. He subdues the giant snake, Kaliya, and dances on his head, with a step as light as a feather for the presence of the god himself controls the evil one.[7] He inspires the affection of all the gopis (the cowherd girls) who so grieved at his preference for Radha that manifested himself to each of the gopis and dances with each of them and loved them. One story tells of a man who found Krishna so attractive that he prayed to be reborn as a woman in his next lifetime so that Krishna could satisfy him.

Figure 27

A series of Roman terra cotta friezes show the infant Dionysus growing out of the roots of a grapevine which establishes his relationship to intoxication. His devotees tramping out the grapes welcome the little god.[8] In the view of Jane Harrison, "Dionysus by his tree shape and bull-shape is clearly shown to be not merely a spirit of intoxication, but rather a primitive nature god laid hold of, informed by a spirit of intoxication. Demeter and Kore are nature goddesses. They have their uprisings and down-goings but to the end they remain sedate and orderly. Dionysus is, as it were, the male correlate of Kore, but changed, transformed by the new element of intoxication and orgy (Figure 27).[9]

The association of Dionysus with Iakchos in the Eleusinian Mysteries preserved his relation to fire and light. "In Athens the procession in which a statue of the torch-bearing Iakchos was borne was held at the end of the *opora*; it ushered in the Great Mysteries of Eleusis, in which, at the time of the harvest, a Divine Child was born in the underworld. The loudly invoked Iakchos was the 'light-bringing star of the nocturnal mysteries'."[10]

Kerényi continues by saying that the familiar classical form of Greek religion, the world-order of Zeus, shows the youth more often than the infant as the manifestation of the Divine Child. This is seen in a low relief of Demeter and Kore with Triptolemus (Figure 28). When Triptolemus is equated with the spring wheat, the agricultural origins of the three images seem obvious, for when spring returns to earth, the new wheat sprouts. In Mayan mythology the ideal of masculine beauty is Yum Kaax, the young corn god.[11] Christ teaching in the temple as a twelve-year-old child also refers to this tradition. A 15th century Renaissance painting by Butinone shows the young Christ standing of a spiraled dais lecturing the elders.

Figure 28

Mithras was pictured in the physical perfection of a fifteen-year old youth, and the Indian gods were portrayed in the splendor of sixteen year old figures, since that was considered the age of physical perfection and the gods are perfect.[12] Horus is portrayed as a nude, youthful sovereign on the Metternich Stele where he strides forward carrying a snake, a scorpion and an oryx in his right hand and a snake, a scorpion and a lion in his left hand with arms extended (Figure 29).

Figure 29

In some Byzantine mosaics, such as those in the Arian baptistery at Ravenna, Christ appears as a youth at his baptism by St. John the Baptist (Figure 30).

Figure 30

On the episcopal throne of Archbishop Maximan (Figures 31 and 32), Christ appears more as a child than as a mature man in his early thirties. When the gods are depicted as "beardless" in those forms like the dolphin-riding figures or a young Apollonian figure it speaks of the physical perfection and boundless energy symbolized by youth.

Figure 31

Figure 32

The representations of Zeus and Ganymede very widely in their imagery and formal details. In one, a 5th century BC statue, a young bearded Zeus strides ahead with Ganymede as a child under his arm (Figure 33), and a relief on a mirror, also 5th century BD, shows Zeus as an eagle carrying a slender youth to Olympus (Figure 34). These stories have been given at least three different interpretations: they have provided a sanction for Greek homosexuality, they have been interpreted as the soul taken up by God, or they can be seen as the integration of the mature masculinity with the figure of the child. In the birth of the son, the mother experiences the wholly other, but in the son the father finds an extension of himself similar to the Demeter-Kore relationship of women. With the re-discovery of the world of women in the late 20th century, much has been written about the need for men to relate to their feminine side. The myth of Zeus and Ganymede suggests another solution to those overly rigid aspects of the patriarchal world which descend into the senex side. That solution is to find again the child, to

relate to that inner child who has been swallowed by Kronos, time, and the demands of the external collective world. The hero in acting out his conquests has had no time to play; Circe can bewitch him or he can dally in the land of the lotus-eaters only to his destruction. However, once the dragon has been slain, the primordial parents separated and the masculine world achieved, the child can rescue the mature man from the one-sidedness of success and worldly accomplishments.

Figure 34

The primordial figure of the child presents manifold aspects of the "child" as an inner image. It never refers to and can never refer to any specific human child, but rather to those inner experiences of the child which constantly reappear in various guises in

different times and places. Kerényi speaks of the Primordial Child as a monotone which "consists of all notes at once" and then "develops first and foremost into its polar opposite -- Zeus. For the 'biggest boy' of the Cretan hymn is the summation and epitome of all the undifferentiated possibilities as well as of all those that are realized in the pure forms of the gods." Thus it is that "Zeus stands closest to the Primordial Child" since "one pole always implies the possibilities of the other and, together with it, forms a higher unity, as is here the case with child Zeus and Zeus the Father."[13]

When the infant appears with a mature masculine figure a shift in emphasis occurs. When the bearded Silenius with leaves and vines in his hair is looking affectionately at the infant Dionysus in his arms and offers him to the nymphs for their adoration, he is displaying a new power in the world (Figure 35). St. Christopher holding the Christ child on his right shoulder crossing a river, protects a new hope for the world (Figure 36). And when Pan is abandoned by his mother and nurse, he is taken by his father, Hermes, to Olympus, wrapped in a hare's skin (Figure 37). The child represents life in its potentiality and since no one lives out the totality of possibilities, the image of the child at a later stage of development brings a sense of the freshness of new and unknown beginnings.

Figure 37

C.G. Jung writes that: "The child is the potential future" and when the child-motif appears to an individual it usually is an "anticipation of future developments, even though at first sight it may seem to be a retrospective configuration. Life is a flux, a flow in the future, and not a stoppage or backwash. It is therefore not surprising that so many of the mythological saviors are child-gods.[14]

"Sometimes the 'child' looks more like a *child*-god," and "by nature wholly supernatural." Sometimes he is "more like a young *hero*" whose "nature is human but raised to the limits of the supernatural -- he is 'semi-divine.'" When the god appears in close association with a symbolic animal, he personifies the collective unconscious

"which is not yet integrated in a human being." The supernatural quality of the hero includes human nature and thus represents a synthesis of human consciousness with the unconscious which is not yet humanized, hence 'divine.' "Consequently he signifies a potential anticipation of an individuation approaching wholeness."[15]

"Psychologically speaking... the 'child' symbolizes the pre-conscious and the post-conscious nature of man. His pre-conscious nature is the unconscious state of early childhood; his post-conscious nature is an anticipation by analogy of life after death. In this idea the all-embracing nature of psychic wholeness is expressed. Wholeness is never comprised within the compass of the conscious mind -- it includes the indefinite and indefinable extent of the unconscious as well. Wholeness, as a matter of empirical fact, is therefore of immeasurable extent, older and younger than consciousness and enfolding it in time and space. This is not speculation, but an immediate psychic experience... The child has a psychic life before it had consciousness."[16]

1998

Notes

1. Kerényi, "Prolegomena" from Jung, & Kerényi, Essays on a Science of Mythology, p.9
2. Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype" from Essays on a Science of Mythology, p.117

3. Kerényi, "The Primordial Child in Primordial Times" from Jung, & Kerényi, *op. cit.*, p.35
4. Neumann, The Great Mother, p.308
5. Rilke, "Archaic Torso of Apollo (Archaïscher Torso Apollos)"
6. Kerényi, Hermes, p.30
7. Pal, The Sensuous Immortals, p.181
8. Kerényi, Dionysus: Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life, p.271
9. Harrison, Prolegomena to Greek Religion, p.435; ARAS: 3Ja.007
10. Kerényi, *op. cit.* p.78
11. ARAS: 8Bb.200; Neumann gives Xipe in Axtec mythology as another example, The Great Mother, p.322
12. Pal, *op. cit.*, "the supple body of a perfect yogi provided the sculpture with the ideal form for his job... youthfulness is regarded as an essential feature." p.13
13. Kerényi, "The Primordial Child in Primordial Times" in Essays on a Science of Mythology, p.92
14. Jung, *op. cit.*, p.115
15. *ibid.*, p.117
16. *ibid.*, p.134

Introduction / Using ARAS: The Symbolism of the Cross

originally printed in **Journal of Analytical Psychology** 1984, Vol. 29, Pages 101-111

Introduction

The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism (ARAS) is a collection of 14,000 photographs of works of art and other human artifacts collected for the archetypal references within the symbolic content of the images. The photograph is accompanied by a text describing the visual detail of the item, its origin and historical context and possible interpretations of the symbol where that is possible and appropriate. In most instances, the Archive also has a slide of the item, many in colour. Each item is also cross-indexed by the various visual components which constitute the image, hence an alchemical couple will appear in the subject index as King and Queen, Sol and Luna, Sun, Moon, gold, silver, union.

While the informing point of view of ARAS is that of analytical psychology, the objective data presented in the descriptions open the archive to users other than therapists and their patients. These two groups find abundant material for the interpretation of symbols in dreams, active imagination, and other facets of analytical work. The Archive has also been used by a theatre director looking for ideas for sets and costumes, by an artist developing a survey of masks throughout world history, by a theologian looking for an androgynous figure of Christ, and by an analyst using slides for a lecture on

feminine images. These examples illustrate the variety of interests which lead people to use ARAS.

The cross-indexing by theme makes possible comparisons across temporal and cultural boundaries, and the collection will be enriched as a wider range of cultural examples are made available. A generous grant from Mr. Bingham's Trust for Charity will make possible the completion of the basic sections of the Archive within five years.

ARAS derives its origin from the collection of pictures which Olga Froebe had assembled as part of the Eranos conferences which she sponsored at Ascona, Switzerland. In 1956 she presented the Eranos Archive to the Warburg Institute in London and photographic copies were made for the Jung Institute in Zurich and for the Jung Foundation in New York. The New York set became the starting point for ARAS.

The 4,000 photographs from the original Eranos collection were expanded by another thousand collected by Jung, 800 from Jolande Jacobi, and 1,500 added by Jessie Fraser, the first director of the ARAS project (FRASER 3). All the illustrations used by Erich Neumann in *The Great Mother* and those collected by Dorothy Newman for her exhibit, 'The Heroic Encounter', are a part of ARAS as well.

The cross-indexing by theme makes possible comparisons across temporal and cultural boundaries, and the collection will be enriched as a wider range of cultural examples are made available. A generous grant from Mr. Bingham's Trust for Charity will make possible the completion of the basic sections of the Archive within five years.

ARAS derives its origin from the collection of pictures which Olga Froebe had assembled as part of the Eranos conferences which she sponsored at Ascona, Switzerland. In 1956 she presented the Eranos Archive to the Warburg Institute in London and photographic copies were made for the Jung Institute in Zurich and for the Jung Foundation in New York. The New York set became the starting point for ARAS.

The 4,000 photographs from the original Eranos collection were expanded by another thousand collected by Jung, 800 from Jolande Jacobi, and 1,500 added by Jessie Fraser, the first director of the ARAS project (FRASER 3). All the illustrations used by Erich Neumann in *The Great Mother* and those collected by Dorothy Newman for her exhibit, 'The Heroic Encounter', are a part of ARAS as well.

The recurrence of images from widely diverse areas of time and space offer verification of Jung's theory of the collective unconscious, and the variations in the presentation of a given theme form one historic moment to another manifest the cultural configurations which may condition the appearance of the underlying archetype.

The organisation of the material makes it possible for each individual user to make his own associations with a symbol form one time and place and its relation to another one from another time and place. The Archive does not develop pre-packages analyses of any given symbol.

Using ARAS: The Symbolism of the Cross

To demonstrate to readers how material from ARAS can be used in a written paper for the amplification of a particular symbol, as compared with the perhaps easier method of presenting it with slides and speaking about it, the following section of the paper has been adapted from a lecture originally given in San Francisco in March, 1982. Some additional descriptions of the slides I used on that occasion have been added so as to give readers a sense of the visual material.

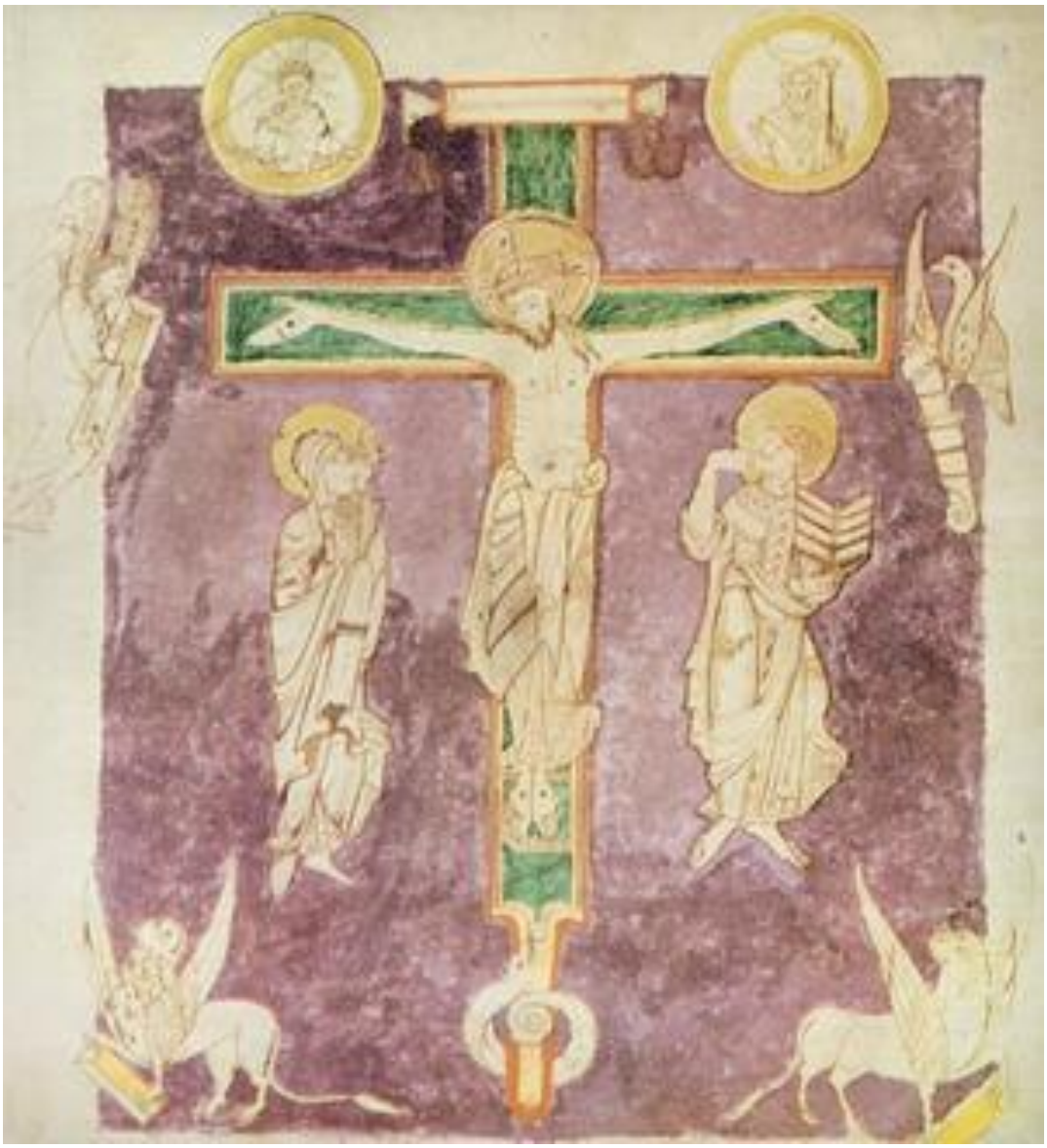
Symbol amplification is the elaboration of the historical and cultural matrices of a symbol and its variant forms so that one develops a larger sense of it polyvalencies. This process is different from subjective association. Association stems from one's personal biography projected on to the symbol. In this process symbolic meaning may be legitimately and absolutely personal, carrying a value which no one else share. Amplification, however, leads to significant clues which lie in one's cultural unconscious and in the collective unconscious, for each of us is born into a culture as well as into a family. These meanings come to us through the mother's milk and the air we breathe, so to speak. Amplification and association are parallel pathways to symbolic meaning. 'The essential problem is to know what is revealed to us not by any particular version of a symbol, but by the whole of the symbolism' (ELIADE 2, p. 160).

In his book, *The Symbolism of the Cross*, René Guénon observes that 'Christianity, in its outward and generally known aspect, seems to have lost sight of the symbolic aspect of the cross and to regard it only as a sign of a historical event; these views are not

incompatible, but the second is derived from the first.' (GUÉNON 5, p.xi). Mircea Eliade makes a similar comment in his book, The Rites and Symbols of Initiation. In what follows I seek to show some of the archaic and widespread uses of the cross as a symbol.

As a starting point Suzanne Langer distinguishes the 'meaning' of logically discursive language from the 'import' of a work of art. Import results from the total impact of the work as a whole, not from the sequential accumulation of its constituent parts, hence the total experience of a work of art always carries something more than, and something different from, what can be analysed by linear discussion. The whole is more than a sum of its parts (LANGER 7).

Thus, even within the limited perspective of an historic even, one should not assume that all representations of the crucifixion carry the same import for each one has its own inner content even though visual details may be similar. Ben Shahn defines form as the shape of content. The content is the inner, unified vision which evokes an emotional, feeling response in the viewer, and is something more than illustrative representation.

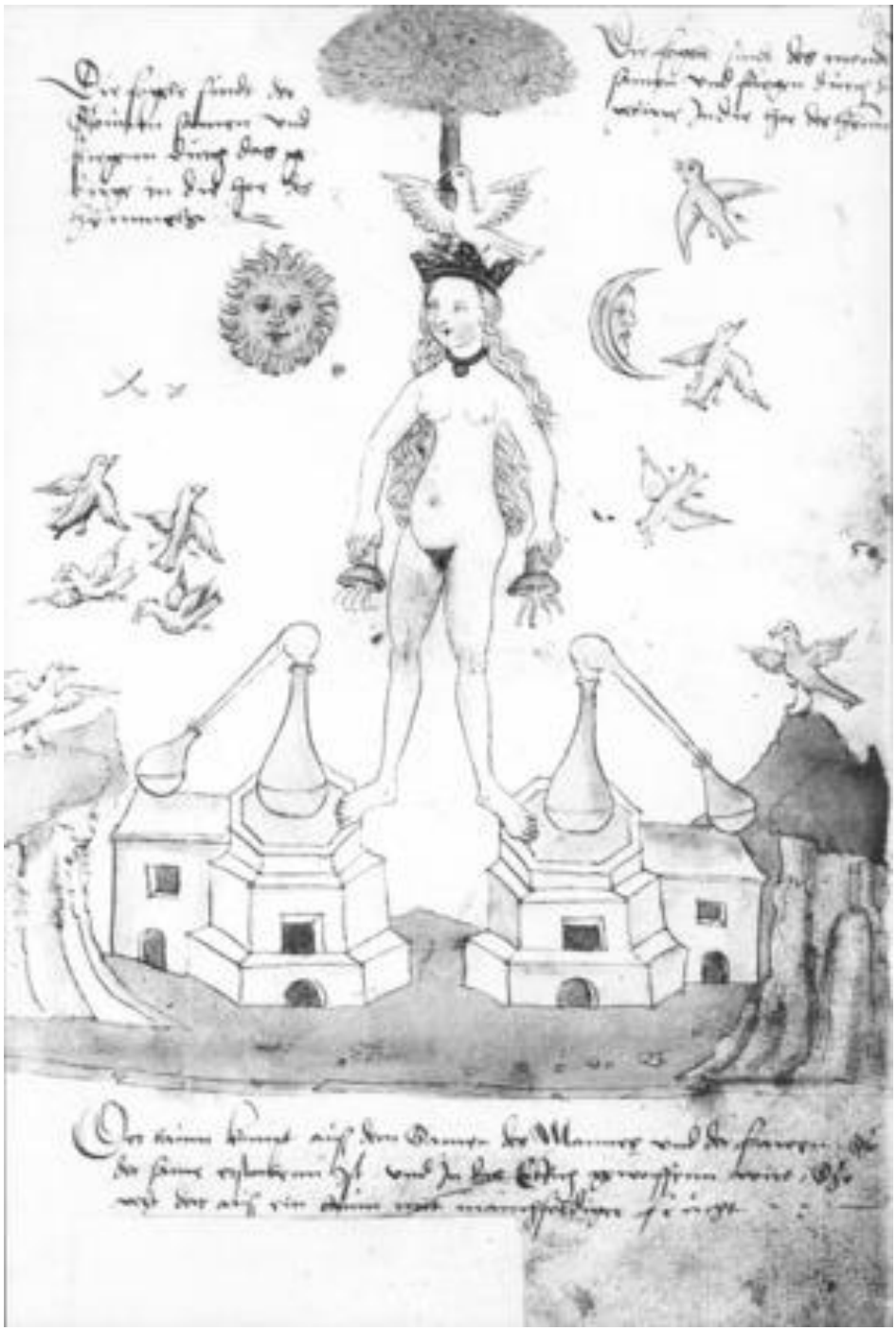


An eleventh-century painting from a French psalter presents Christ Triumphant, that is, crowned, with his eyes open, on a green cross against a pink background with the four apostles in the four corners, Matthew on the left, John as the eagle on the right, Mark as the lion and Luke as the ox in the lower corners. This mandalic form puts Christ Triumphant in the centre (5Dk.060,). ...

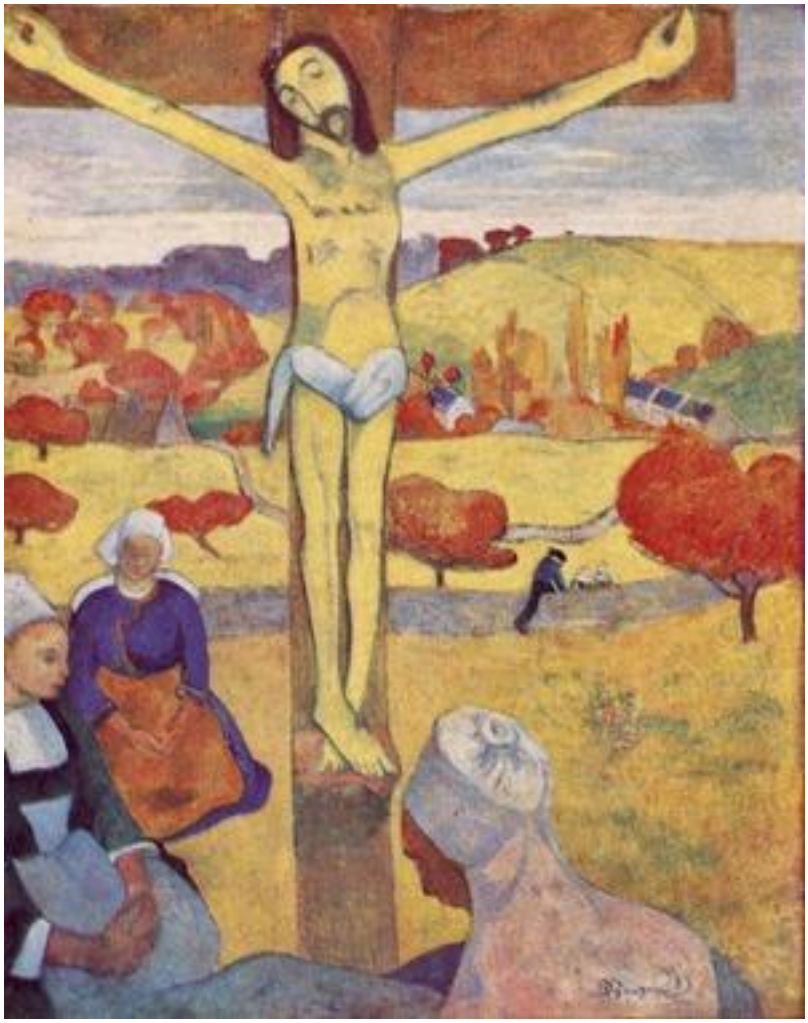
A twelfth-century Catalan wooden crucifix again shows Christ Triumphant but this time positioned on the framework of the cross. Even with the longer extension above the head and the short extensions beyond the hands and feet, the body itself *is* the cross (5Dc.031,a). I will come back to this question of the body as the cross at the conclusion for we can then see better Guénon's view that a metaphysical understanding of the cross expands its Christian interpretations.

A very different response is elicited from an illustration for the *Book of Hours* of the Duc de Berry. Here the crucifix is raised high above the soldiers and populace milling below. In an arc about the head of Christ, God is looking in the event, thus placing the crucifixion about the daily human flux in a divinely approved plan (5Fk.092,).

One cannot find a sharper contrast than that of Mathias Grünewald in the scene from his Isenheim altarpiece (5Ga.052,). In it the tortured, twisted, agonised and bloody body is on a roughly-hewn wooden cross only slightly about the witnesses, the Virgin Mary collapsed in the arms of St. John, and John the Baptist on the right pointing towards the figure on the cross. The lamb with a cross in its mouth at the feet of John the Baptist confirms the sacrificial import of this presentation.



A certain painting by Cranach the Elder may be heretical to traditional Christian theology for it places the Virgin and St. John in the centre of the painting with the figure of Christ on the cross to the right and the two thieves to the left (5G0.020,). Here the central event is not the crucifixion itself, but rather the human reaction to it.



Paul Gauguin's 'Yellow Christ', inspired by an early crucifix in Brittany, places the crucifix in a field in a field with peasant women kneeling or working below it as part of the daily experience of these people (5Ja.008,).

Salvador Dali's 'Christ of St. John of the Cross' probably referred to a specific passage in the writings of the saint. It shows a large cross floating in space with the head and shoulders and outstretched arms of Christ on the horizontal and the feet and the foot of the cross extending far into vertical presentations. It appears lighted from outside the painting for the exquisitely modeled head and shoulders glow with a russet, golden light reflected from the body. Below, a lake with a boat on the near side and mountains with light behind them on the far side, are drawn from a different point of view. The double perspective suggests that we cannot perceive the celestial event and the daily facts from a single standpoint.

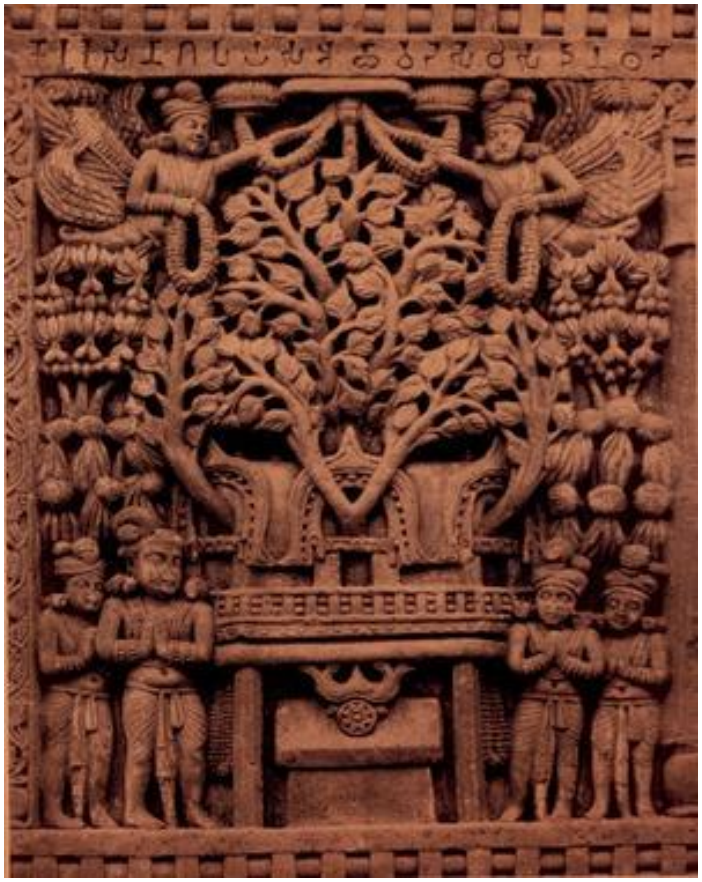
Each of these seven presentations of the crucifixion carries its own unique import, each different from the others. All symbols have a plurality of meaning, and hence no single interpretation included all the configurations which surround a symbol. The seven crucifixions illustrate one form of amplification using art forms; and if we turn from the Christian use of the cross to its older and more widespread representations, we discover inter-relationships of symbols which extend our understanding. Crucifixion was a form of Roman execution reserved for the lowest criminals. The fact that the cross became for the Christian world a symbol of triumph and transcendence moves it beyond a reference only to an historical event, to its wider connotations within traditional symbolism, which, as Guénon observes, provides the matrix within which the shift of meaning could occur.

A relief from the choir stall in the chapel of the castle Valere shows Christ on the trunk of a grapevine with bunches of grapes around him so that the blood and the wine become synonymous (5Gc.014,). This presentation of the cross as a tree is not unusual and occurs often in Christian iconography. Indeed, in my first example, the greenness of the cross relates it to a growing tree.

William Blake's painting of Christ crucified on a tree is one example of this recurrent theme in Christian art (5Jv.037,).

This tree is the Tree of Life and for Christianity is derived from the Old Testament and early middle eastern sources. A murla from the synagogue at Dura Europus shows a tree growing from the Torah niche (3Ta.019,a). A midrash, later than the mural, describes the Tree of Life in Eden on which the righteous souls ascend and descend between Eden and Heaven, Gershom Sholem writes that the Tree of the Sefiroth represents God in his ten potencies for the trunk and branches of the theogonic and cosmogonic tree extend His energies to wider and wider spheres (Sholem 9, p.102). From the roots of the Tree of Life the four rivers of Eden flow in the four cardinal directions forming a horizontal cross.

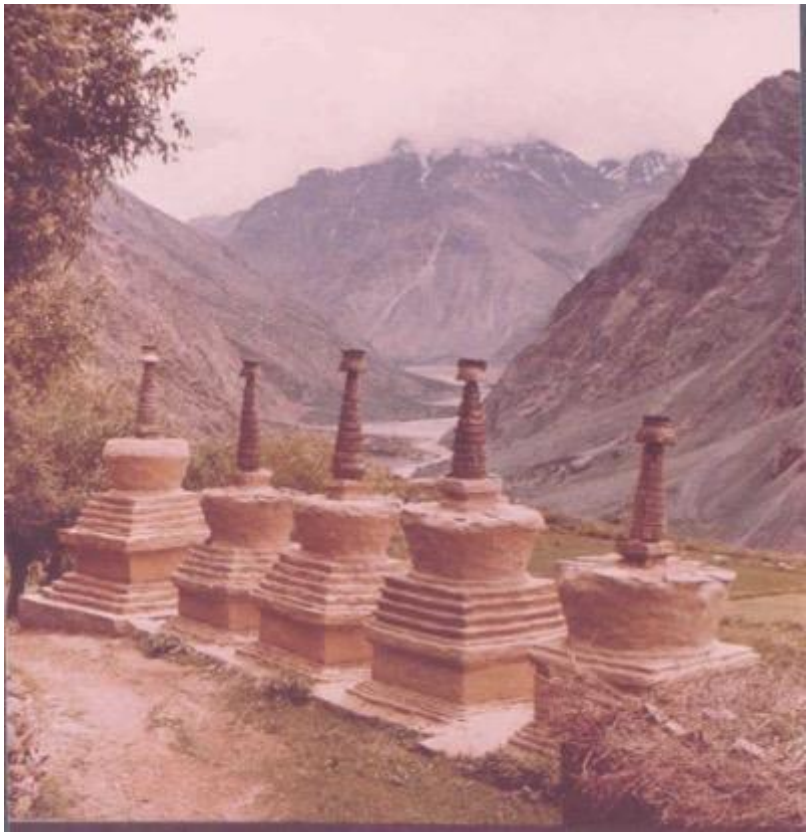
The Kabbalistic myth of the banishment of the Shekinah from the Godhead represents the separation of the Tree of Life from the Tree of Knowledge (*Ibid.*, p. 108). The Sefirothic Tree in its ternary form showed the Tree of Life in the centre with the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil on either side, sometimes with common roots. (This tradition survives in Christian art for Christ is on the tree of life between the two thieves.)



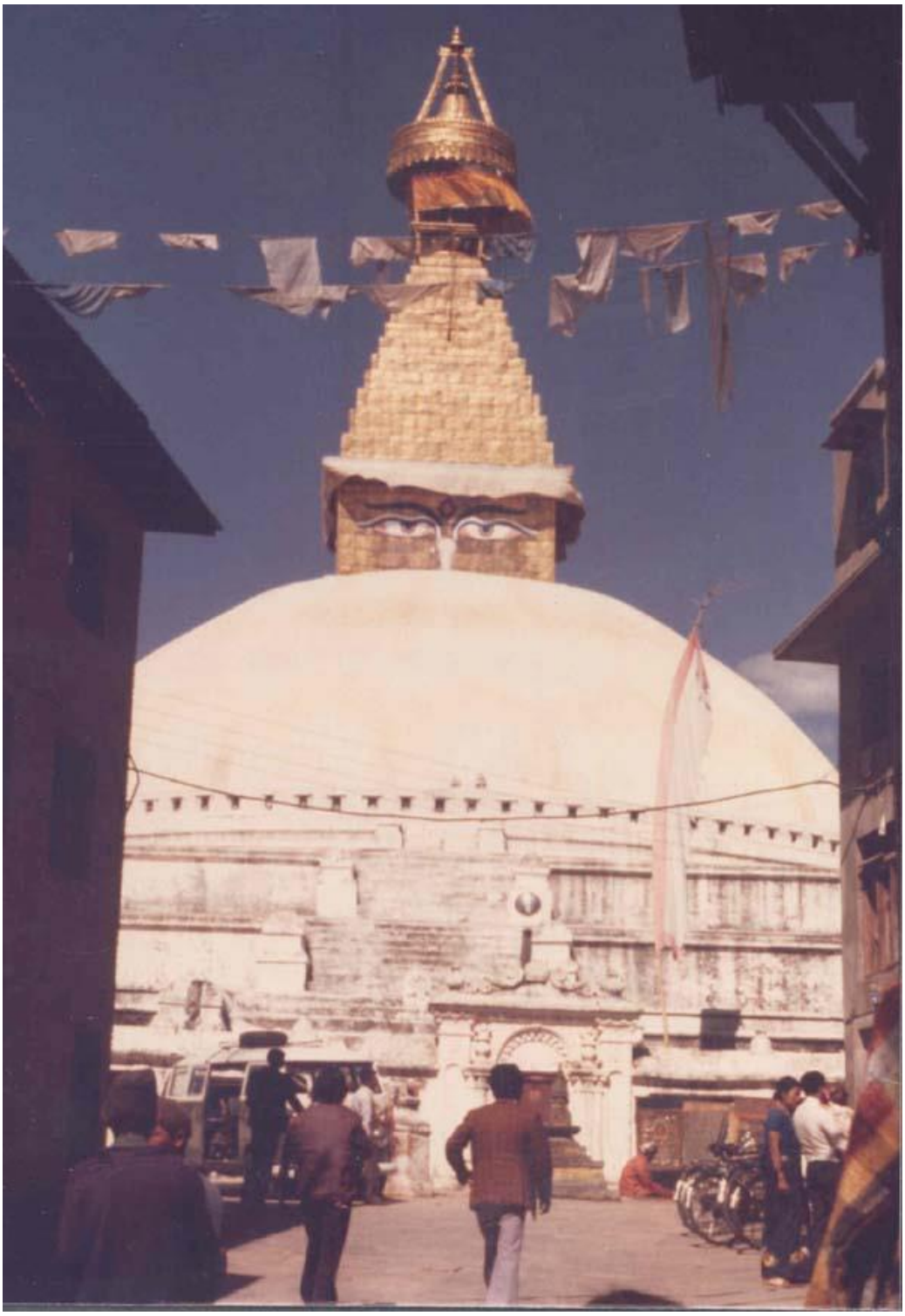
In India tree worship predated Buddhism but was reinforced by Sakyamuni's enlightenment under the Bodhi tree (7Af.010,). From pre-Buddhist times Brahman was visioned as a great green tree, rooted in the dark ground of the Godhead and manifested in the cosmos. We experience this as an inverted tree because we see only the reflection, as though across a lake, rather than Brahman himself (COOMARASWAMY 1, p. 395n).

The world tree is always localised (*Ibid.*, p. 386). For Scandinavians Yggdrasil, the primordial oak, provided the shaft uniting the three worlds (4Fd.028,b). For Dante the tree was an apple, a birch in Siberia, or as in Jack and the Beanstalk.

The alchemical tree bears the golden fruit of wisdom and, in the *Splendor Solis*, has a crown at its base and the four rivers flowing from it, repeating the Hebraic image (5Go.126,b).

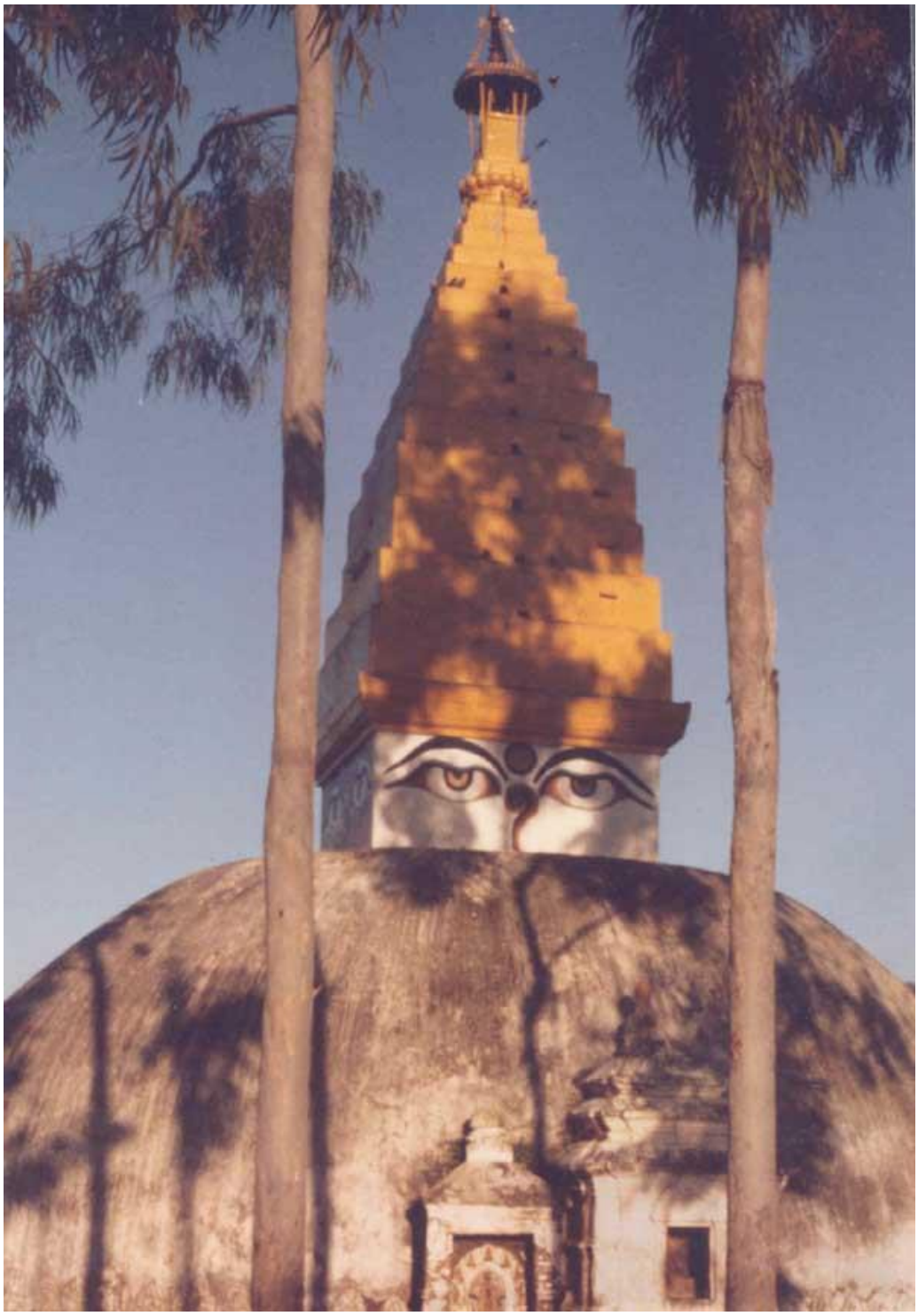


The Tree of Life is the Axis Mundi, the centre of the cosmos, with various forms in many cultures. The totem poles of the North-west coast Indians of British Columbia and Alaska are the pillars on which the shamans move between the worlds aided by their tutelary spirits which are carved in relief on the poles (VASTAKOS 10). The stupas of the Buddhist countries are reliquaries representing the planes of reality. They are three-dimensional mandalas. These may be small roadside shrines (7Ja.027)...

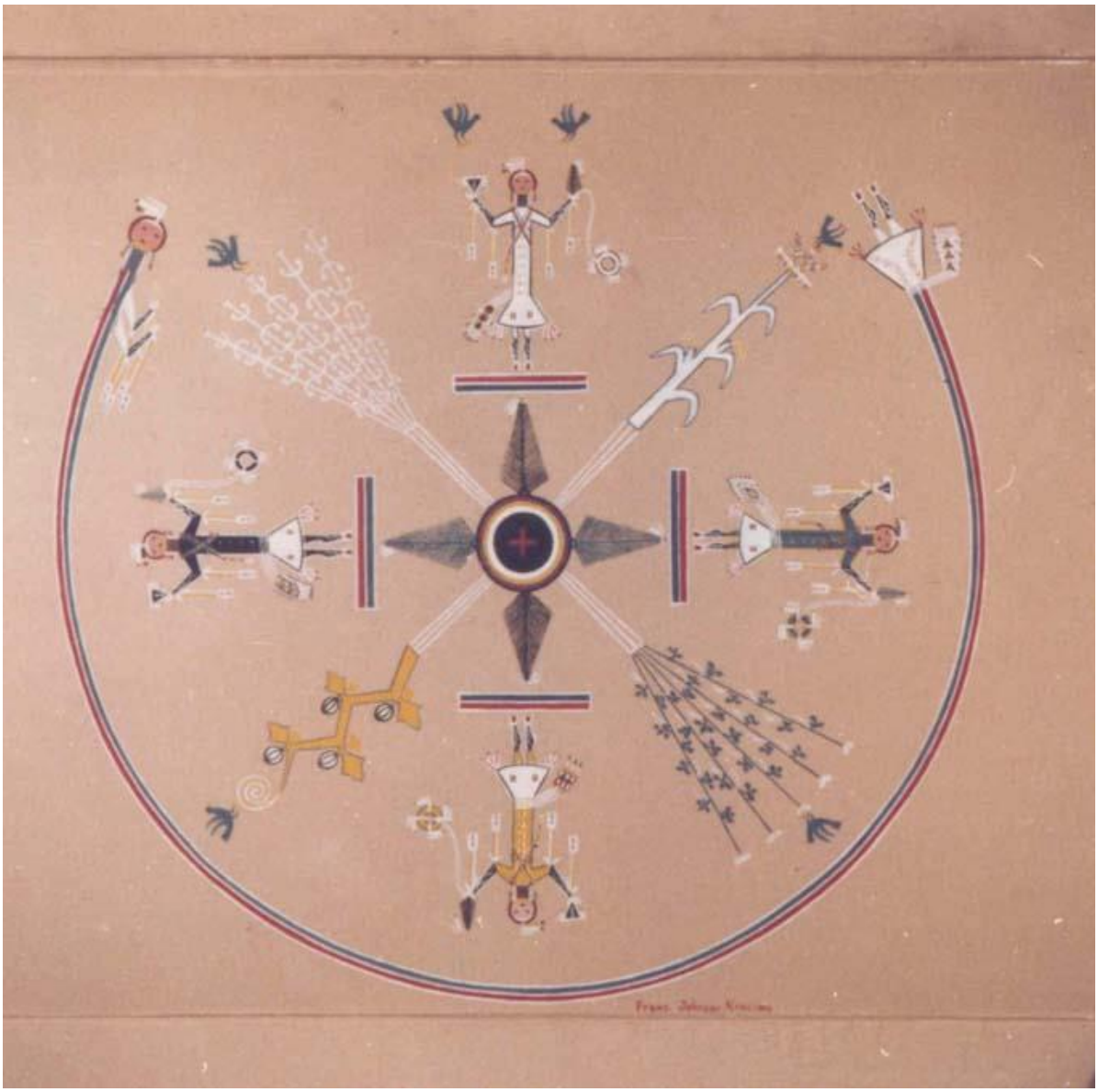


.. or reach the dimensions of the giant stupa of Bodnath outside Kathmandu

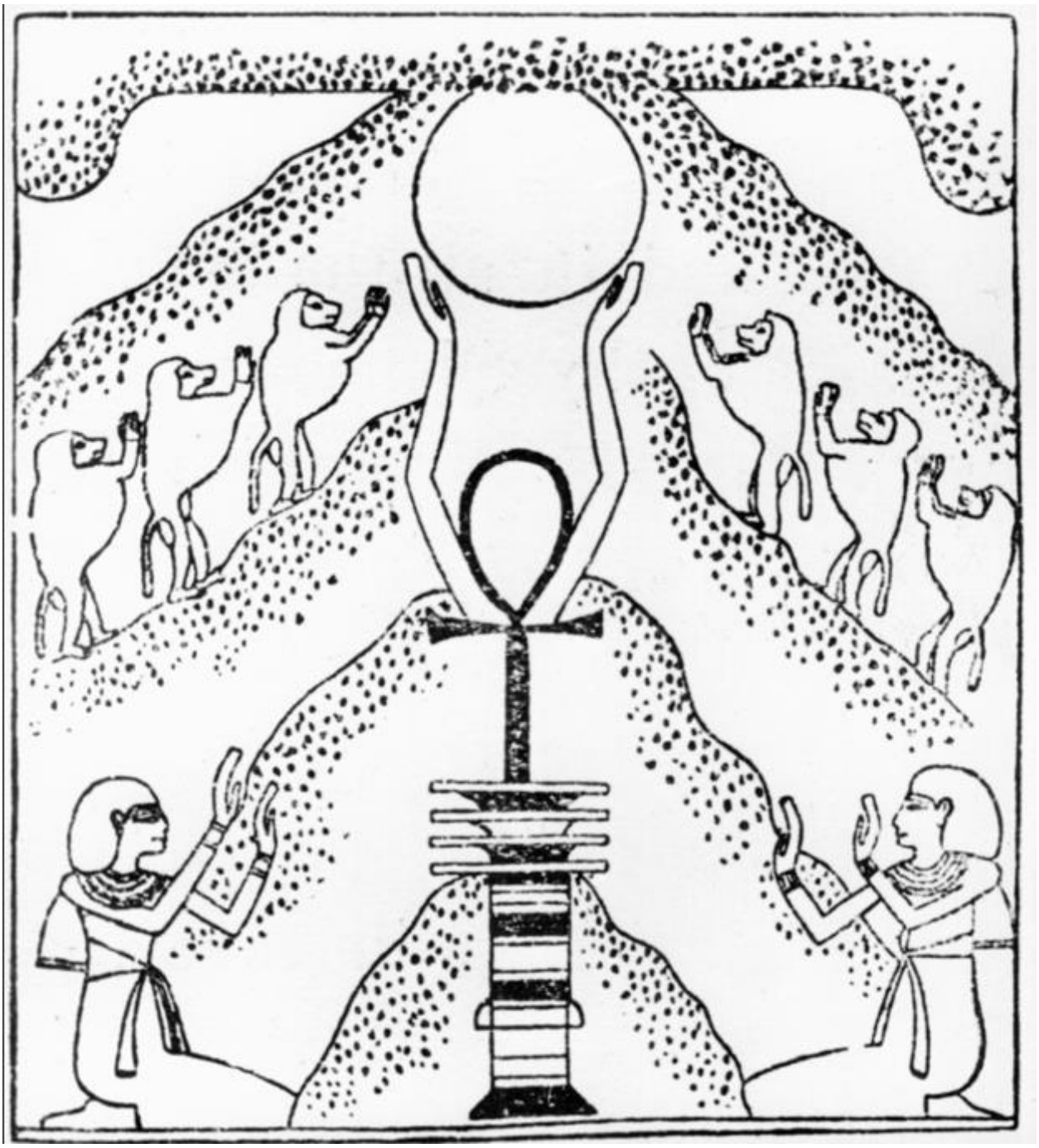
(7Ha.001a). ...



... A Nepalese stupa may have the all-seeing eye of Buddha facing in the four cardinal directions making it the centre of a cross (7Ha.003). ...



In a Navaho sand painting fir trees around the sacred pool mark the place of emergence where mankind came from below into this fourth world after his journeys in the three worlds below (8Ca.001).

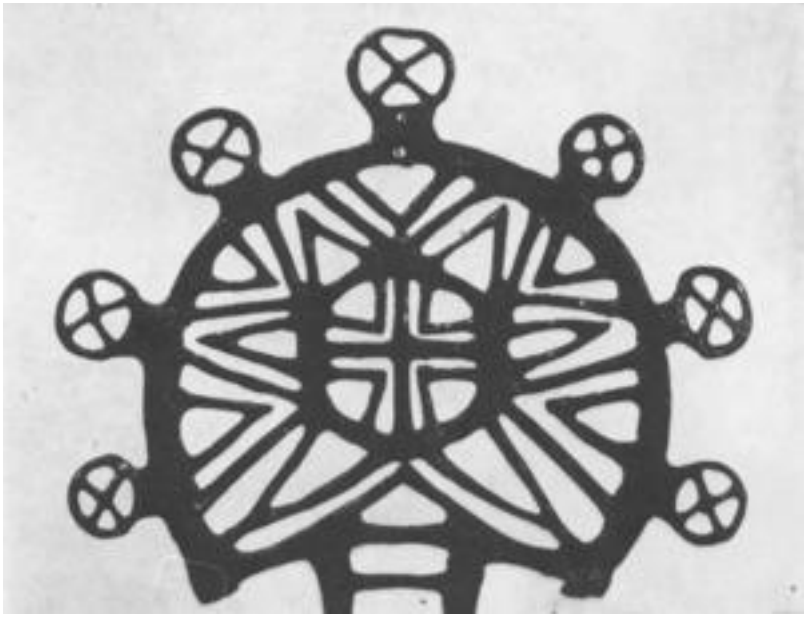


The Egyptian *djed* pillar represents the planes of existence and is sometimes seen as the spinal cord of Osiris, hence every individual becomes a cosmic centre. One example shows the pillar topped with the ankh so that the dismembered Osiris is joined with the sign of eternal life (2Ak.158,).

If we turn the cross flat, on a horizontal plane, we discover another set of symbols related to our central theme. We now have a centre extending in the four cardinal directions, a symbol of five, the *quinta essentia* of alchemy. It also becomes an intersection and the Greeks marked crossroads with the ithyphallic herm because in these places, at these moments, the latent, creative possibilities lie (3Ja.080,). One needs repeatedly to determine whether the symbol formed represents an intersection between axes or whether it is a central point from which the unmanifested is externalised in the radii extending from it. This problem of determining the visual intent of any image is crucial to understanding its significant application to the configuration of events to which it may relate.

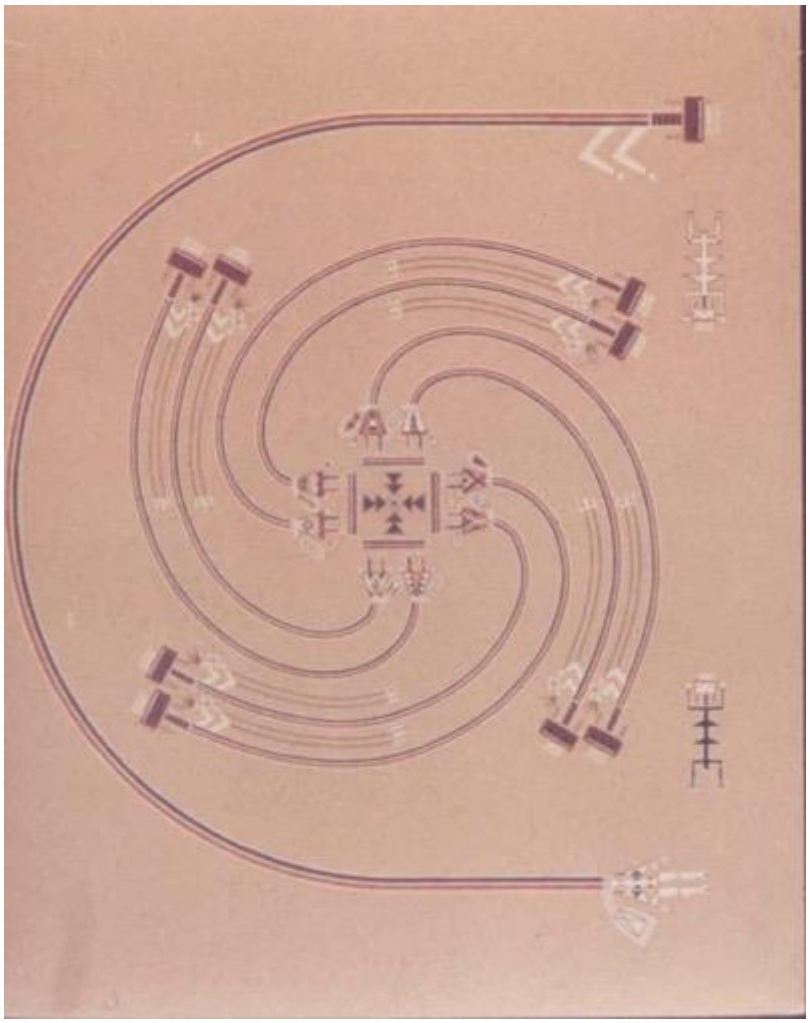
For instance, the symbolism of weaving is derived from the horizontal cross. Guénon describes the warp as the 'immutable principial elements' and the to and fro movements of the shuttle represent the weft, the 'variable contingent elements' (GUÉNON 5). Manifestation takes place at the point of their intersection. The symbolism of weaving lies deep in the imagery of our language: a man picks up the threads of his life, he is caught in a net, a web, and the total pattern of his individual life or of the social structure becomes a fabric or a tapestry. An illustration for the *Book of Hours* for Catherine of Cleves shows Mary at a look (5Fk.132,).

A Buddha image has his left hand and foot webbed showing thus the meeting and crossing of the strands of life (7Ak.025,). In Greek mythology the first Fate chose the threads of the individual life, the second Fate measured the length of the cord, and the third Fate cut it.



When the horizontal cross turns as extensions from a centre, a swastika emerges, on of the oldest of all symbols. It occurs in Anatolia in 2300 B.C. in Alaca-Huyuk (2Dc.008,a & 2Dc.008,b). It may represent the sun in the centre with satellites moving around it. The movement to right or left may symbolise the rising or setting of the sun.

A Babylonian swastika from the eighteenth century B.C. is formed by four males joining hands representing perhaps the cyclical movement of life (2Bh.808,).



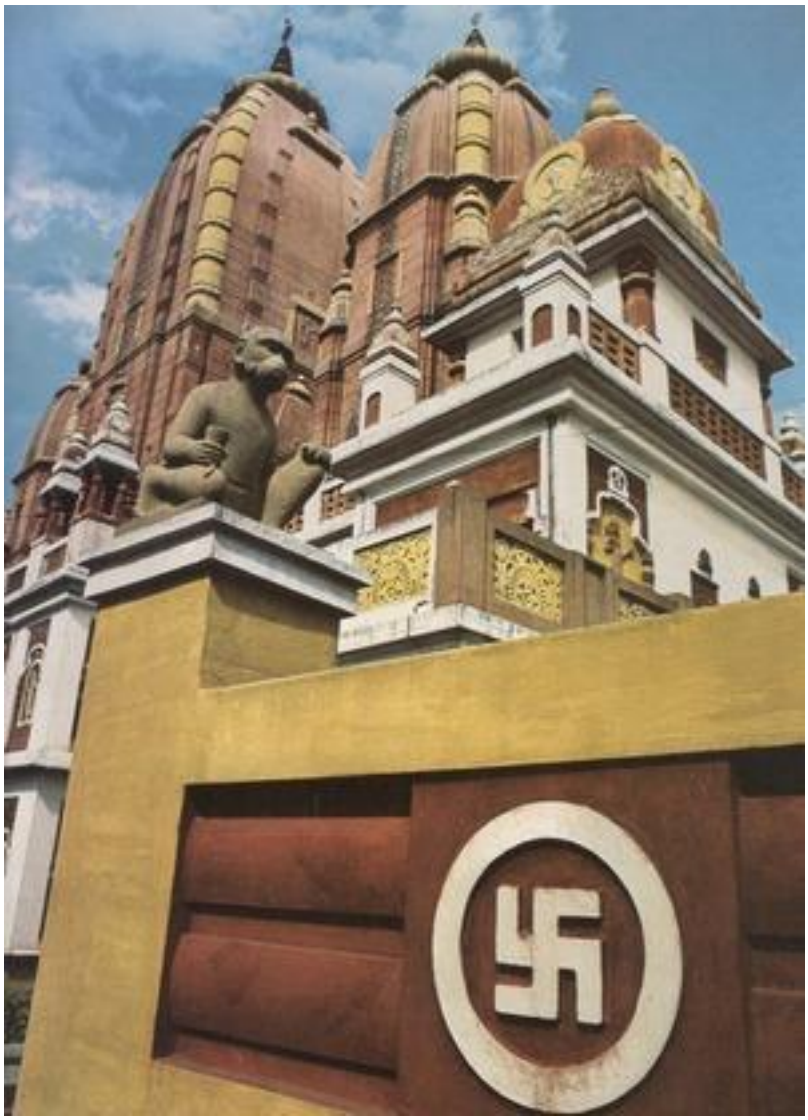
When Thor the Thunderer throws his hammer to generate storms and lightning, the revolving movement generates a swastika. When the Yeiis of the Navaho, Winter and Dark Thunder, are angry, they whirl on their log seats causing winter storms, but when the Yeiis are in a beneficent mood, they whirl on rainbows of colour and light (8Ca.033).

Visually, the movement of the swastika implies the wheel, and the turning of the wheel, and is always an image for a change of conditions. A wheel is a cross contained in a circumference. The endless extensions of possibilities are confined, demarcated, around an unmoving centre. In Vedic mythology, the sun is always at the centre, not at the top, with the rays moving out in all directions (Coomaraswamy I, p.420n). The two wheels of the sun chariot of Indra, heaven and earth, are separated by the axle tree which also unites them.

One painting of the Pentecost shows individual flames around a wheel touching each of Christ's apostles (5Dk.112,).

The unmoving centre of the wheel is the vertical axis of the cross, the axis mundi, the centre of the world. The potter shapes his bowl at the unmoving centre of the wheel. The vertical axis is the spindle which unites the planes of existence. Once we think of the horizontal axes as a plane pierced by the vertical axis, we have visualised a three-dimensional cross, the symbolism of seven as completeness, totality. The horizontal bar of the cross the represents a given plane of existence with an indefinite number of possibilities, the Surface of the Water in Chinese imagery, Prakriti in Indian. The vertical axis represents the hierarchy of all the degrees of existence, the Activity of Heaven in Chinese imagery, Purusha, Consciousness, which informs the activity of nature, Praktiki, in Indian imagery.

The globe is a total circumference which encloses a three-dimensional Greek cross. In the alchemical drawing of Michael Maier, a woman, whose womb is the earth itself, suckles a child at her breast (5Gs.573,). 'Earth is the nurse of heaven not because it resolves, washes and moistens the foetus, but because it coagulates, fosters and colours the latter and changes it into sap and blood' (MAIER 8).



But when the Latin cross familiar to Western Christianity is visualised three-dimensionally, it becomes the cosmic egg, as in a stone sculpture from second century India (7At.001,). In contrast to the suckling earth, the cosmic egg is the non-manifest Brahman, the undifferentiated totality. The red serpentine line on the egg, as the serpent on the Tree of Knowledge, is that potential for division and manifestation.

In going through the material, I was struck by the number of Christian crosses which soar, the aspiration for the higher, heavenly life, and the contrast presented by the settles figures of the Dhyanabuddha. The crossed legs and spread knees of the traditional meditation posture form the base of an inverted Tau cross, and the erect spine and head and asnisa, the sign of wisdom at the top of the head, provide the vertical axis, implying a downward movement to this plane of existence for its transformation (7Am.007,).

I want to return to where I started. The medieval and Renaissance drawings and diagrams of the Anthropos, the primordial man, present the human body itself as the point of intersection of the axes of the cross contained within and limited by an enclosing square or circle. The solar plexus, the innerwoven arrangement of nerves at the centre, is the point of meeting of the axes (5Ek.082,). This takes us back to the Catalan crucifix we mentioned in the beginning where the body of Christ *is* the cross. Man himself lives on the cross, is the cross, at any time, in any place; the experience may be degradation and torture, or transformation. 'There is in the unconscious an already existing wholeness, the "homo totus" of Western and the Chên-yên (true man) of

Chinese alchemy, the round primordial being who represents the greater man within, the Anthropos, who is akin to God. ... The "light" that shines at the end is the *lux moderna* of the alchemists, the new widening of consciousness, a further step in the realization of the Anthropos, and every one of these steps signifies a rebirth of the deity' (JUNG 6, pars 152, 211).

References

1. COOMARASWAMY, A.K. (1977). *Selected Papers*, Vol.1, Princeton University Press.

2. ELIADE, M. (1958). *The Rites and Symbols of Initiation*. Harper Torchbooks.

3. FRASER, J.E. (1964). 'ARAS: Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism'. *Spring*.

4. -(1977). 'Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism of the C.G. Jung Foundation (ARAS)', in *International Encyclopedia of Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Neurology*. Aesculapias.

5. GUENON, R. (1975). *The Symbolism of the Cross*. London. Luzac.

6. JUNG, C.G. (1955). *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. Coll. Wks. 14.

7. LANGER, S. (1974). *Philosophy in a New Key*. Cambridge. Harvard University Press.

8. MAIER, M. (1618), *Atalanta Fugiens*. Kassel-Wilhelmshohe. Barenreiter Verlag, 1964.

9. SHOLEM, G. (1965). *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism*. New York. Shocken Books.

10. VASTAKOS, J.M. (1973/74). 'The Shamanic Tree of Life' in *Stones, Bones and Skin: Ritual and Shamanic Art*. Arts Canada.

The Purpose of Amplification

The birth of a child, the death of a parent are occasions which activate the archetypal substrata which support our common lives. To recognize universal themes when we go through such initiatory experiences grounds us in a process larger than these personal events; they give consolation in moments of crisis as well as support in the daily repetition of the ordinary events of livings. We are thrown into the vortex of the human process; we, ourselves, becomes events in human history, perhaps anonymous, but none the less essential to its evolution in a particular time and place. These events take us beyond the personal into the great chain of being of which we are a part. The positive accomplishments and the negative aberrations are parts of the evolutionary process and we must accept them all as factors in the equation. One reason, beyond pure human sympathy, that child abuse may evoke such outrage is that it is racial suicide, for we are the agents of the renewal of the race, and the violation and sacrifice of a child is an obscene denial of one's responsibility in the process.

These initiatory events are preserved and recalled in the symbolic structure of our psyches. Such structures are configurations of images precipitated from the unconscious by the feeling and affect associated with such events, those encounters with other persons and with institutions which are the part and parcel of the minutes and hours of the passing days.

For many people such configurations are derived unconsciously from the cultural and religious institutions in which they live; they may not be aware of the generating energy

and feelings which the symbols both preserve and evoke, nor of their sources in the cultural and collective unconscious. As each person becomes more aware of those symbols which have numinosity for him, he can begin to recognize which of them evolve from his own personal associations with occasions and persons, and which arise from the deeper layers of the psyche. Since an archetype itself exists within the unconscious, it is unconscious also. As we know about electricity only from its manifestations, so we only know of archetypes from the images which they generate in dreams and in our mental and physical behavior patterns. An increase in energy around a configuration of events and our reaction to it provide clues for us to recognize that an archetype has been touched. It is all too easy, because of the immediate power of an event to be caught in the moment and to believe it as a total statement of reality. If, however, we can recognize the moment as only one manifestation in a specific form, we can relate it to similarly generated moments for other persons in other times and places. The archetypal patter, the underlying energy then becomes visible and recognizable. An Archetype (a pattern of energy) crystallizes out of the unconscious. The patterns are expressed in symbols and by amplification of those symbols we can find the layers of meaning which every symbol carries. Because of this layering a symbol always carries connotative values; it is not a one to one equivalent.

C.G. Jung writes "Every interpretation necessarily remains an 'as-if.' The ultimate core of meaning may be circumscribed, but not described."[1] "An archetypal content expresses itself, first and foremost, in metaphors. If such a content should speak of the sun and identify with it the lion, the king, the hoard of gold guarded by the dragon, or the power that makes for the life and health of man, it is neither the one thing nor the other, but the unknown third thing that finds more or less adequate expression in all these similes, yet-- to the perpetual vexation of the intellect-- remains unknown and not to be fitted into a formula."[2]

Jung's example of identifying the sun with the lion, the king, the hoard of gold guarded by the dragon, speaks directly to the process of amplification. By finding these parallels as they occur in different times and different cultures, we come to know what the sun has meant in different phases of human history and from that accumulation of detail begin to sense something of the shape and nature of that central unconscious core to which all of these might refer. Jung describes amplification as a logical principle, adopting the method of the philologist, that is, finding parallels in a variety of texts which then establish meaning.[3] "The most remarkable thing about this method, I felt, was that it did not involve a reduction *in primam figuram*, but rather a synthesis...[not] a reduction of conscious contents to their simplest denominator, as this would be the direct road to the primordial images which I said previously was unimaginable; they make their appearance only in the course of amplification."[4]

In referring to symbols used by 14th century alchemists, Jung writes: "It is not surprising that the adepts piled up vast numbers of synonyms to express the mysterious nature of the substances. Like all numinous contents, they have a tendency to self-amplification, that is to say, they form the nuclei for an aggregation of synonyms."[5]

A symbol can be an agent of transformation in the human psyche. When one mediates on a symbol or an image, particular resonances are evoked from our personal associations with the symbol, as well as the cultural context from which we view the image. By definition an image which functions symbolically is never totally available through explication, for its particular numinosity is related to the connotative values

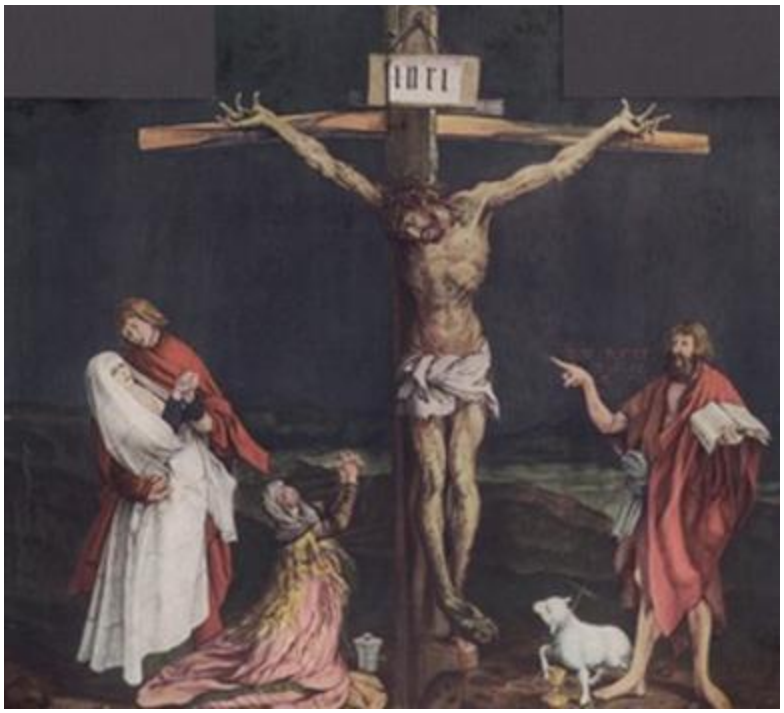
which it holds within a culture or within a pattern of personal associations. While some of these connotations can be named, its value is often related to those half-recognized or unconscious valences which it holds for us, some of which are unnamable. Sometimes statements which are symbolic in content are interpreted as restricted, literal statements of facts. In thinking of "penis envy" or "the return to the mother" literally as specific desires, one settles on a scale of equivalents which rigidly restricts the interpretation of various behaviors into rigid prescriptions, rather than opening interpretation to a wider range of psychic meanings. "...the mythological idea of the child is emphatically not a copy of the empirical child but a *symbol* clearly recognizable as such: it is wonder- child, a divine child, begotten, born and brought up in quite extraordinary circumstances, and not-- this is the point-- a human child. Its deeds are as miraculous or monstrous as its nature and physical constitution."[6]

The personal references in a dream may relate to actual persons and outer events, but often the persons represent aspects of the psyche that are a metaphorical reference to cultural and archetypal aspects behind persons and events. It is here that amplification gives range to meaning. Lady Mac Beth's obsessive handwashing is her attempt to wash away the murder, to return the world as it was, to recreate the world in its original purity. Rite and ritual are metaphorical because they "recreate" the original events.

Symbol amplification is the elaboration of the historical and cultural matrices of a symbol in its variant forms so that one develops a larger sense of its polyvalences. This process is different from subjective association. Association stems from one's personal biography projected on to the symbol. In this process symbolic meaning may be legitimately and absolutely personal, carrying a value which no one else shares nor needs to share. Amplification, however, leads to significant clues which lie in the cultural unconscious. for each of us is born into a culture as well as into a family. These meanings come to us through the mother's milk and the air we breathe, so to speak. Amplification and association are parallel pathways to symbolic meaning. "The Essential problem is to know what is revealed to us not by any particular version of a symbol, but by the whole of the symbolism."[7] Amplification is looking for those specifics which emerge from the flux of the living process as found in the cultural histories of mankind.

By looking at a symbol in its original cultural setting and with cross-cultural equivalents one can find a wider range of associations which enrich the symbolic experience. While every person is unique, it is also true that every person is born into a culture and an historical period which continually effect the events in one's life and the way one experiences them. Thus, amplification of an image provides a wider, enriched context from which to view those symbols which are important to one's personal psychic structure and its continuing development.

It may be useful when considering the meaning of an archetypal symbol to look at it as one might look at a work of art. Suzanne Langer contrasts the information and its organization embodied in discursive language from the "import" of a work of art, its gestalt. Import results from the impact of the work as a whole, not from the sequential accumulation of its constituent parts. The total experience of a work of art always carries something more then, and something different from, what can be analyzed by linear discussion. The whole is more than a sum of its parts.[8]



We compared earlier several paintings of the Crucifixion of Christ. While two of these have a common pictorial content within the traditions of Western painting and Catholic Christianity, their import is different. Christ in the Perugino Crucifixion rises serenely above the Italian spring landscape in the background, while in the Grünewald version from the Isenheim Altar the tortured, twisted body agonizes on the roughly hewn cross. The iconographic details are identical: Christ on the cross in the center of the composition with Mary on the right and John on the left but the affective responses elicited are markedly different. The Grünewald symbolizes the "suffering lamb of God" while the Perugino anticipates the transcendent glory of the resurrection. Totally different is the Christ of St John of the Cross by Salvador Dali. With superb draughtmanship and a projection of deep space, Dali's Christ floats on the cross in the space above the Sea of Galilee, a reference certainly to the ecstatic vision of the Spanish mystic. The import of each of these carries its unique meaning.

Another such illustration is found in the gaunt, emaciated figures of some Gandharan statues of the Buddha in contrast to the well-fleshed figures sitting in serene bliss. Again the iconographic details are identical: the Buddha sitting cross-legged on the floor or a lotus with the right hand touching the earth, and the open left hand, palm up, sometimes holding a bowl. The first speaks of discipline and sacrifice on the road to enlightenment (and also the extreme asceticism which Gautama put aside for the "middle way"), and the second of the peace of spiritual understanding.

What Langer has to say about a work of art applies equally well to symbols. Langer uses the word art in its wider sense and not as an a synonym for painting or visual arts alone; and while, for most persons, the first impulse is to describe a symbol as a visual form, (even poetic metaphors are often visually derived) a symbol can occur in other sensory modes as well. In rite and ritual, as well as dance, distinct movement patterns carry

specific symbolic meanings. The rise and fall of a melodic line can evoke a symbolic form, even as the regular rhythm of a waltz evokes responses different from that of banjo picking for a tap dance. From the perspective of a painter Ben Shahn defines form as the shape of content.[9] The content is the inner, unified experience of the creative artist which calls forth emotional, feeling responses in the viewer. It is something more than an illustrative representation. The symbol also carries the inner, unified vision which is its essential content.

Erich Neumann writes, "Images and symbols have the advantage over paradoxical philosophical formulations of infinite unity and imaged wholeness, in that their unity can be seen and grasped as a unity in one glance."[10] We can see contradictory points of view all together at once which become sequential when we talk about them; they exist as a totality rather than a set of discursive ideas. For instance, if we look at the image of fire: fire is destructive, fire is violent, but fire is also warming, fire is inspiring. It is all these at once; they are all true and all the possibilities exist together; the image presents all of them. One does not need to be a pyromaniac to recognize that a building burning or a forest fire is exciting, violent, destructive and, at the same time, beautiful. The power of a symbol lies in its multi-valued expression of human experience in its dynamic reality. Carl Kerényi writes that "Human experience does not always give rise immediately to ideas. It can be reflected in images or words without the mediation of ideas. Man reacted inwardly to his experience before he became a thinker. Prephilosophical insights and reactions to experience are taken over and further developed by thought, and this process is reflected in language...Language itself can be wise and draw distinctions through which experience is raised to consciousness and

made into a pre-philosophical wisdom common to all those who speak that language."[11]

One of the evolutionary phases of our culture in the late 20th century may be the emergence of a distinctly feminine point of view which gives us new vantages. It extends the viewpoints of men as well as making women more conscious of their place and position in western culture and the problems which then appear for men as well as for women. Sometimes the problems raised by such discussions finally become genuine human problems rather than gender-specific problems.

When we consider a specifically feminine perspective within the totality of western culture, another kind of amplification becomes available. In her opening definitions, Annis Pratt is clear that literature studies archetypal *images* since the archetype itself exists in the unconscious, and so the presentation varies with the cultural bias of the story teller. She writes that Jung says "...that a single archetype can be subject to a variety of perceptions, not only from culture to culture but even within a given culture or the mind of a single individual. Archetypes thus constitute images, symbols, and narrative patterns that differ from stereotypes in being complex variables, subject to variations in perception."[12]

She observes that interpretations of the myth of Apollo and Daphne could vary. "A medieval Christian would make Apollo an embodiment of sin and canonize Daphne for purity or, conversely, blame her for tempting him to his downfall. Norman Mailer would be more likely to color the scene... cheering Apollo on and hinting that Daphne should relax and enjoy his assault. Doris Lessing, on the other hand, would be more interested in Daphne's state of mind and more likely to savage Apollo for his crassness. this tendency of archetypes to vary in interpretation from culture to culture and author to

author makes the archetypal critic's task complex. She must also be very careful to avoid letting her own situation and biases distort her interpretations."[13]

As a base for her study of women's literature, Pratt again quotes Jung. "'It is a foregone conclusion among the initiated,' wrote Jung of himself and of his followers, 'that men understand nothing of women's psychology as it actually is, but it is astonishing to find that women do not know themselves.'"

Pratt then quotes from Jung's introduction to Esther Harding's book, *Women's Mysteries*, where he says that "in this book it becomes clear that woman also possesses a peculiar spirituality very strange to man. Without knowledge of the unconscious this new point of view, so essential to the psychology of woman, could never have been brought out in such completeness." Looking back to the cultures in which goddesses were revered as the sole powers of fertility and agriculture, Pratt unearths a set of characteristics that deviate significantly from Western gender norms and, in the process, describes archetypes that crop up as subversive elements in a wide sample of women's novels.[14] Part of that sample includes novels written from an explicit lesbian point of view.

In her discussion of the Demeter-Kore myths she finds that these have "particular importance to women, uniting the feminine generations. The psychological effect of participating in the Eleusian mysteries, suggests Carl Jung, is to 'extend feminine consciousness…An experience of this kind gives the individual a place and meaning in the life of the generations, so that all unnecessary obstacles are cleared out of the way of the life-stream that is to flow through her. At the same time the individual is rescued from her isolation and restored to wholeness. All ritual preoccupation with archetypes ultimately has this aim and result.'"[15] Then Pratt says: "When we add to all this the fact that feminine archetypes of selfhood have been lost from culture and even consciousness for hundreds of years, we can understand why images and symbols appear as fragments in women's fiction, encoded indices of a forgotten language, barely decipherable hieroglyphs."[16]

I would rephrase this sentence to say that what has been lost are archetypal *images* of the Self as feminine. However, such images do survive in Western culture in the Byzantine mosaics of Mary as the Mother of God. It also appears in paintings of the Virgin and Saint Anne. In the paintings by Leonardo and Massacio, Saint Anne seems more like a visualization of the Self as feminine than an image of the Great Mother, as suggested by Neumann. In Leonardo's the figure of Saint Anne stands behind the Virgin

and Child looking over the shoulder of the Virgin or whispering in her ear, whereas, in Massacio, Saint Anne encircles them within her body and cloak. Such elaborations do amplify an image beyond its first apparent context and associations giving a wider context of meaning.

In terms of the concerns expressed above, such images seem available in “mainstream” culture only within the traditions and definitions of collective Christian value. The paintings of Mary Cassatt in the 19th century carry further the archetypal relationship of mother and child but in a secular setting. However, those arenas of realization and action are not wide enough to include all women.

Recognizing a wider amplitude in the vibrancy of a numinous image may lead one outside the conventional norms. Stories have it that Michelangelo locked the doors of the Sistine Chapel to papal inspection because of reports to him that Pope Julian was troubled by naked figures being painted on the ceiling of that holy place. The question of possible homosexual content in Michelangelo's work has been addressed from time to

time. Renaissance paintings of the Martyrdom of St Sebastian are cited as examples of the homosexual vision of the make figure being treated in a context culturally acceptable to the times. We have referred earlier to interpretations of the Zeus-Ganymede image. Relating to a homosexual vision and treatment of a symbol may extend the comprehension of inner experience into unknown dimensions of the psyche and open up a wider emotive vocabulary of expression, so to speak. For a man, loving the inner child as a male child (children are not asexual) may help him integrate young male energy as an operational function of the psyche. Loving the inner child as a female child may help relate a man to a youthful aspect of his anima. Since inner images are polyvalent, it may be one aspect at one time, and another on a different occasion. Susan Sontag once argued that we did not need another hermeneutics of art; what we need is an erotics of art; we need to fall in love with it.[17] When one acknowledges an inner feeling, one need not automatically externalize it in outer events.

Perceptions shared between subcultures expand our horizons, but an enormous leap of understanding comes when we can move, even slightly, outside our own frames of reference. Cross-cultural amplification takes us outside the biases of the culture which have been a formative influence for us individually. Such imaginative acts challenge basic cultural assumptions of which we are unconscious because the culture at large is unconscious of the assumptions on which its life is predicated.

In his opening chapters of a comparative study of the classic Chinese novel, The Dream of the Red Chamber, Andrew Plaks[18] makes some very interesting statements which challenge assumptions in western thinking which are related to literary forms and

mythical material and to the psychological assumptions which underlie literature.

After observing that both native and foreign readers of The Dream of the Red Chamber gain the impression that they have obtained a comprehensive view of the entire civilization of Imperial China, Plaks goes on to speak of archetypes as "patterns of more generalized structure, since it is only in this subsurface level that we can perceive a common ground within the widely varying details of religious belief, historical event, social milieu, and natural environment...that occur over a span of millennia. Just as the spectrum of colors in painting and the tonal scales in music provide internal orders within the materials of artistic creation, so do archetypes of literary structure provide the ground of coherence..." He adds "that the sort of structural patterns we are talking about are nothing more than the cultural preferences shaped by a given tradition during the course of its literary history."[19] In the terminology we have used earlier, these structural patterns develop out of the cultural unconscious.

Plaks then goes on to discuss the dependence of Western mythology on narrative sequence, a highly provocative idea for me, since it brings into question my assumption that it could not be otherwise. We learn our mythology from stories of the gods in which they interact with each other and intervene in human events. Their behavior tell of their characteristics which in turn reveal their natures and powers. They are defined by their action as are the protagonists in Western fiction. Plaks speaks of the use of the Aristotelian term "mythos" as referring to "units of narrative shape." Narrative mythos may be valid in the Western tradition but non-Western cultures may communicate their myths in other ways for "Mythical figures appear only occasionally in later Chinese

writings and almost never is a full recapitulation or reinterpretation of their deeds..." Myth is not "an organized system in its own right" because "it is treated as an integral part of human knowledge rather than a subdivision roped off by the attribution of divinity."[20]

However Plaks warns that one must be "extremely cautious" in saying that the Chinese have no creation myth because "the question of cosmogony turns back upon the possibility of an absolute standard of judgment in human affairs" the ultimate accountability of man for his actions." He points to "the conception of Heaven in early Chinese texts -- for all its impersonality and spontaneity -- as a backdrop of moral order against which to judge the deeds of mortal men."[21]

When Chinese texts do refer to mythical figures, events are merely listed. A story line is not developed and figures are described in terms of their ultimate positions rather than related biographical events. Characters are not developed through their personal evolution as in Western fiction. Rather the reader and the characters themselves discover the central core of their being as they strip off the outer layers of personality.[22] Mary Jo Spencer observed that one could hazard a guess that this relates to the concept of the "Buddha nature which existed from the beginning."[23]

By contrast Western literature retells in its literature stories of mythical figures such as Prometheus, Orpheus, and Adam "in order to relive the experiences associated with

their names. Whether their actions are frustrated, fulfilled, or visited by dire consequences, it is what they do, rather than what they are, which reverberates through Western literary history."[24]

Plaks then contrasts the archetypal situations schematized in the hexagram commentaries of the I Ching, with the same problem of phenomenological metamorphosis tak[ing] the form of a mythological compendium. The dying god images of the Tammuz-Adonis-Osiris-Jesus myths relate to seasonal change. Plaks continues, "the tendency towards unilinear narrative treatment of the figures of Mediterranean mythology [are] a reflection of the centrality of syntactic logic, and hence dialectical progression, to many of the most abiding forms of Western Civilization."[25]

In later Chinese literature Plaks finds the non-narrative use of mythical material "in the fact that allusions to mythological figures generally refer to a specific quality or relation associated with them, rather than to any of the details of their deeds... The case of Yü is perhaps most instructive, since his Herculean labors are almost never presented as anything resembling epic struggle.."[26]

By analyzing the formal characteristics of the yin-yang symbol which is pervasive through Chinese literature, Plaks finds two persistent characteristics: the first is "complementary bipolarity" which means that "the apprehension of experience as realized in terms of the relative presence or absence of opposites rather than absolute states" and the second is "the fact that phenomenological change is conceived of in terms of regular ceaseless alternation towards and away from the hypothetical poles of each duality. This alternation may perhaps be termed 'cyclical' in the sense of recurrence within a closed system, but the notion of circularity should not be allowed to obscure its essentially bipolar form."[27]

Plaks then makes clear that he is not classifying "the human race into two categories of mental activity." Rather he is classifying the preferred cultural forms of two traditions as they have been shaped by their cultural histories. "It is not the mythical materials themselves that lead us to such general conclusions, but how these materials are used in shaping a cultural mainstream."[28]

Archetypes themselves, as far as we can know them through manifested forms, exist in the collective unconscious in abstract, undifferentiated forms. The birth-death-resurrection narrative has been accepted as one of those archetypal patterns. The discussion by Arthur Plaks suggests that this linear sequence of events arises from the cultural unconscious of the West in contrast to the circular movements of change and renewal expressed in Chinese culture by the I Ching, one example known to many Westerners. Behind the narrative of death and resurrection in the West and the circular movement of the hexagrams in China lie an archetype about "change and renewal." The birth-death-resurrection sequence is an image specific to Western culture. Amplification in this instance then, considers structure as well as content, and thus broadens the material for the amplification process.

This unexpected dimension illustrates well the values which lie within the technique and process of amplification. By pursuing a symbol through many cultural variations and now, considering its structural form, we are led into perceptions and connections previously unconscious to us. These are like overlays of transparencies which make evident the interconnections which increase the dimensionality of the symbol. It glows for us as we partake of its numinous history in times and places unfamiliar to us. Certainly one goal of analytical psychology has always been to bring more and more of the contents of the psyche into consciousness. Perhaps from shared assumptions this is one of the goals of life itself in both its personal and collective evolution.

1990/1998

Notes

1. Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 9i, p.265
2. Jung, CW, V. 9i, p. 267
3. Jung, CW, V. 18, p.84
4. Jung, CW, V. 8, p.403
5. Jung, CW, V. 14, par458
6. Jung, CW, V. 9i, p. 161
7. Eliade, The Rites and Symbols of Initiation, p. 160
8. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key
9. Shahn, Form, The Shape of Content
10. Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, p.11
11. Kerényi, Zeus and Hera, p.xiv
12. Pratt, Archetypal Themes in Women's Fiction, p.3
13. ibid., p.5
14. ibid., p.9
15. ibid., p.170
16. ibid., p.11
17. Sontag, On Interpretation, p.
18. Plaks, Archetype and Allegory in The Dream of the Red Chamber
19. ibid., p.12
20. ibid., p.16
21. ibid., p.18
22. ibid., p.21

23. An observation a 4:00 a.m. over vodka: “in vino veritas”

24. Plaks, op.cit., p.24

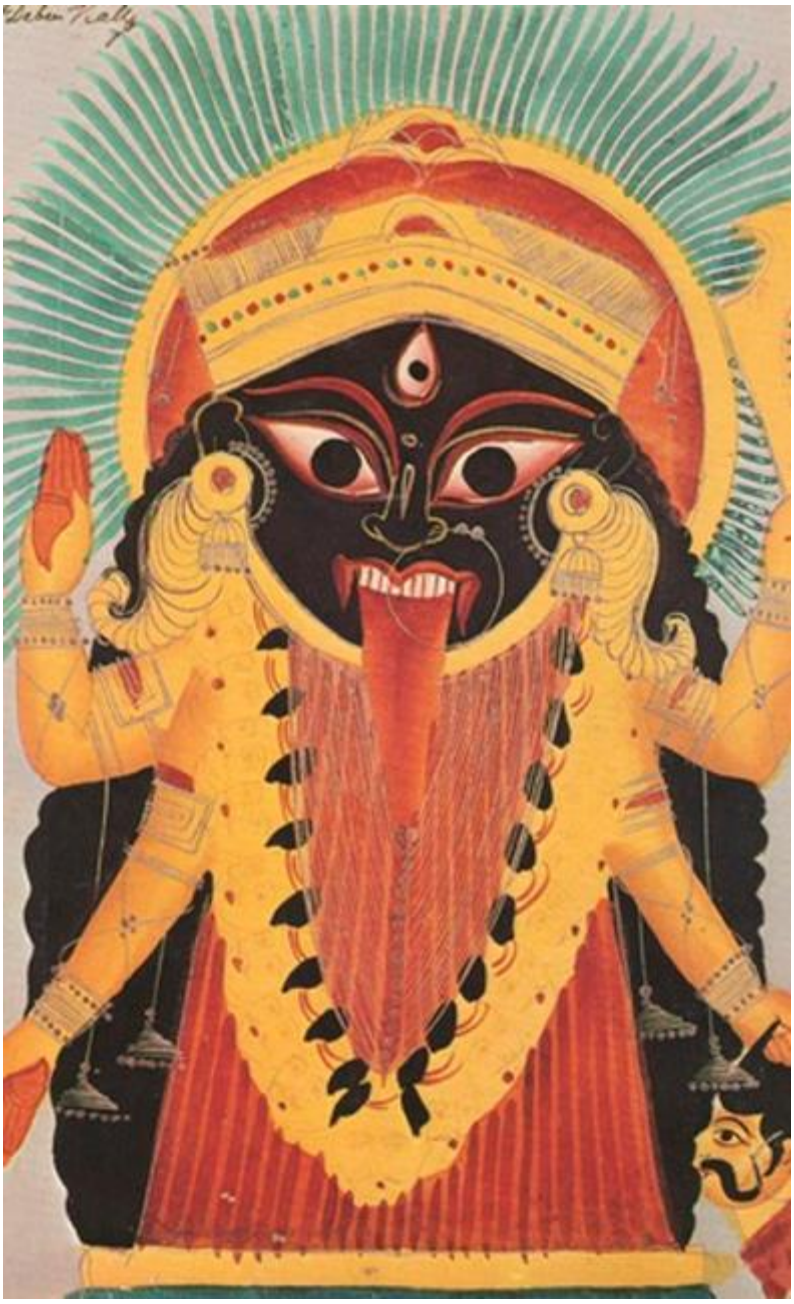
25. ibid., p.23

26. ibid., p.25

27. ibid., p.45

28. ibid., p.25

The Wrath of Kali



I was glued to the TV and radio at the end of April and early May of 1992 watching the riots in Los Angeles spread to other cities in the United States as protests against the acquittal of the police officers in the Rodney King beating. This had happened to me

before: once when Hitler marched in Czechoslovakia, and again with the assassination and funeral of John F. Kennedy. I remember the enormous relief when a station would play a Requiem Mass. Their mass was a symbolic structure which contained the feelings of loss.

At one point, looking at the charred, empty buildings in Los Angeles, the smashed windows, the glass and litter, and people running and shouting, I saw the wrath of Kali. Shakti and Kali are the manifest energy of the Great God Shiva. Without them, he would remain in his self-contained consciousness apart from the world. Shakti is Shiva's creative energy and, because what is created comes to an end, Kali, Time, is Shiva's destructive energy in the cycles of becoming and passing away. At the time I was also reading quotations from the Puranas, Indian texts which date back through the millennia but which sound immediately descriptive of events in recent decades.

SHIVA

Shiva Nataraja in Lord of the Dance. By the stamping of his foot and the beating of his drum, he brings the worlds into existence. We know him by the whirl of events around us, by the tides of emotion within us, and we feel him in the pulse of the blood coursing through our veins. At the completion of the cycle, he withdraws into himself. All action ceases; he is the Lord of Death and Dissolution. The images of Shiva Nataraja typically "represent Shiva dancing, having four hands, with braided and jeweled hair of which the lower locks are whirling in the dance. In His hair may be seen a wreathing cobra, a skull, and the mermaid of Ganga; upon it rests the crescent moon, and it is crowned with a

wreath of Cassia leaves. In His right ear He wears a man's earring, a woman's in his left; He is adorned with necklaces and armlets, a jeweled belt, anklets and bracelets, finger and toe rings. The chief part of His dress consists of tightly fitting breeches, and He wears also a fluttering scarf and a sacred thread."

A small drum, shaped like an hourglass in Shiva's upper right hand for the beating of rhythm symbolizes sound, "the vehicle of speech, the conveyer of revelation, tradition, incantation, magic, and divine truth." Sound is also "Ether... the primary and most subtly pervasive manifestation of the divine Substance." The upper left hand, "with a

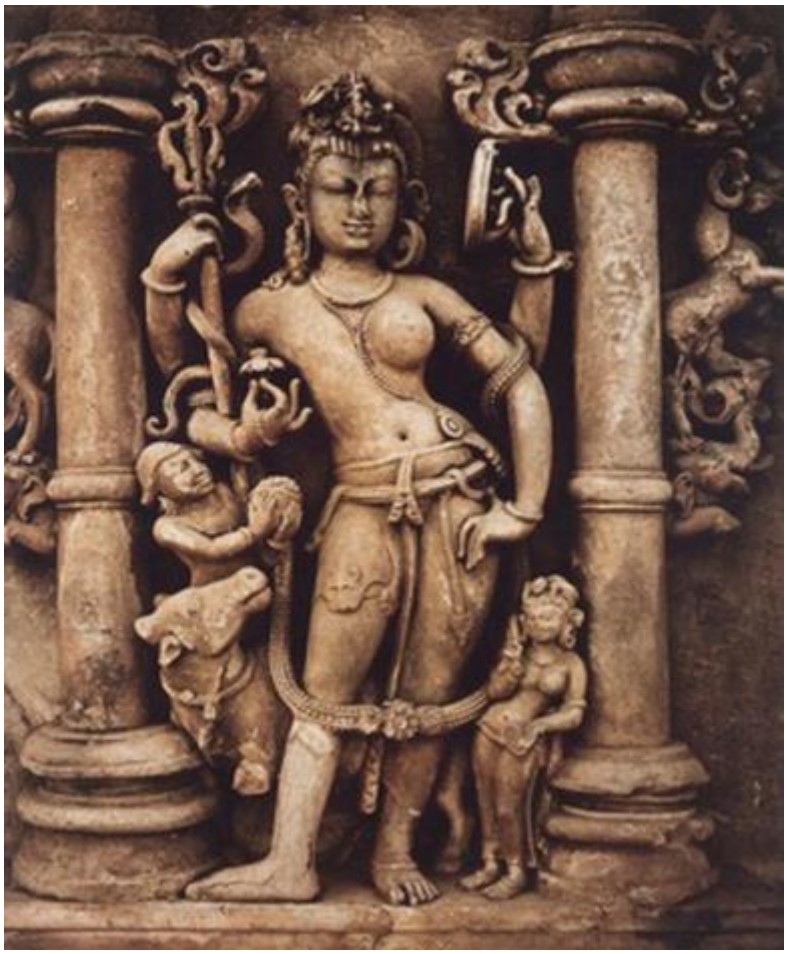
half moon posture of the fingers...bears on its palm a tongue of flame. Fire is the element of the destruction of the world... Here, then, in the balance of the hands, is illustrated a counterpoise of creation and destruction in the play of the cosmic dance." The fear-not mudra of the second right hand bestows protection, while the lower left hand points to the uplifted foot. This foot signifies Release and is the refuge on the prostrate body of the demon Forgetfulness, symbolizing man's blindness and ignorance. "Conquest of this demon lies in the attainment of true wisdom." The ring of fire which symbolizes "the vital processes of the universe and its creatures, nature's dance as moved by the god within. Simultaneously it is said to signify the energy of Wisdom, the transcendental light of knowledge of truth dancing forth from the personification of the All."

A.K. Coomaraswamy writes that, "Shiva is a destroyer and loves the burning ground. But what does He destroy? Not merely the heavens and earth at the close of a world cycle, but the fetters that bind each separate soul. Where and what is the burning ground? It is not the place where our earthly bodies are cremated, but the heart of His lovers, laid waste and desolate. The place where the ego is destroyed signifies the state where illusion and deeds are burnt away: that is the crematorium, the burning-ground where Shri Nataraja dances,..."

As Nataraja, Shiva embodies and manifests eternal energy in the five activities of: 1) creation, the pouring forth and unfolding, 2) in maintenance or duration, 3) in the destruction or taking back of created forms, 4) concealing, or veiling, the transcendental essence through appearances, 5) in bestowing grace through a manifestation of his

presence that accepts the devotee.

"Shiva is everything. According to the aspect of his divinity envisaged, he appears as one or three or five or eight or many. All these aspects are represented by various names. One thousand and eight names of Shiva are given in the Shiva Purana."



SHAKTI

Shiva is the perfect yogi in the austerity of his absorption and meditation. One story has it that nothing could move Shiva until Brahma, out of envy, manifested Shiva's inner feminine nature as Shakti, and seeing her, Shiva withdrew from his meditation and began his dance. The images of Ardhanarisvara (half-male, half-female) portray this

inner union of Shiva and Shakti - the union of substance and energy. "Shiva is the devisor of the world. In order to accomplish his plan, he requires an executive, a material force or 'energy'. Energy (Shakti) is thus his first manifestation, or complement, the issue of himself...Without the energy represented by the goddess, Shiva is like a corpse (*shava*), incapable of acting, of revealing himself, of accomplishing his ideation of the world."

Shakti is the creative energy of Shiva and Kali is the destructive energy, for disintegration and destruction are essential to the dynamic movement of the world which Shiva creates by his dancing.

KALI

Ajit Mookerjee tells of the origin of Kali in the following story:

> "Kali manifested herself for the annihilation of demonic male power in order to restore peace and equilibrium. For a long time brutal asuric (demonic) forces had been domination and oppressing the world. Even the gods were helpless and

> suffered defeat at their hands. They fled pell-mell in utter humiliation, a state hardly fit for the divine. Finally they prayed in desperation to the Daughter of the Himalayas to save gods and men alike. The gods sent forth their energy in streams of fire, and from these energies emerged the Great Goddess Durga... As the 'forceful' aspect of Durga, Kali has been dubbed 'horrific' or terrible' in masculine-biased commentaries, without understanding the episode's inner meaning."

Mookerjee continues by noting that the images of Kali in generally black because "all colours disappear in black, so all names and forms disappear in her". In Tantric rituals she is described as "garbed in space, sky-clad." Naked, she is free from all illusion. "She is full-breasted; her motherhood is a ceaseless creation. She gives birth to the cosmos parthenogenetically, as she contains the make principle within herself." She wears a garland of fifty human heads which represent the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, and also represent the fifty fundamental vibrations in the universe. She wears a girdle of human hands. Since hands are the principal instruments of work, they signify the action of karma, "thus constantly reminding us that ultimate freedom is to be attained as the fruit of karmic action." Her three eyes represent the past, present, and future. Kali has four hands (or, occasionally, two, six or eight.) One left hand holds a severed head, indicating the annihilation of ego-bound ego force, the other carries a sword to cut the thread of bondage. "One right hand gestures to dispel fear and the other exhorts to spiritual strength. In the form she is changeless. limitless primordial power, acting in the great drama, awakening the unmanifested Shiva at her feet. Many representations of Kali show her standing on the prone, inert body of Shiva. In Mahakali.. there is an

overwhelming intensity, a mighty strength, a force to shatter all obstacles. She is there for swiftness, for immediate and effective action, for the direct stroke, the frontal assault that carries everything before it... Awe-inspiring, determined and ruthless, she destroys evil force."

AGNI

As Rudra, Shiva personifies anger, and, "First among the forms of destruction come fire. Agni, the lord of fire, is thus a manifestation of Rudra...Agni is one of the most important deities of the Vedas. He is the mediator between men and gods, the protector of men and their homes, the witness of their actions, invoked on all solemn occasions.

He presides over all sacraments, all the great events of life. The shining quality of anything is the quality of Agni, hence worshipping him, man gains the brilliance of intelligence, of strength, health and beauty... He has four arms, which carry an ax, a torch, a fan, and a spoon, and sometimes also a rosary and a flaming spear (shakti). Adorned with flames, he is dressed in black... The fire of destruction, Agni's most fearful form, was born of the primeval waters and remains hidden under the sea, ever ready to destroy the world."

LOS ANGELES

In the riots of April and May of 1992 which started in Los Angeles and spread to other major cities in the United States we saw the wrath of Kali. She is the energy manifested

in such violence and destruction. The gangs were the instruments of that divine, cosmic energy. That much of the action seemed mindless is not relevant to these considerations for the human individuals were possessed by an archetypal power; they were instruments of an energy and anger much larger than themselves and their human reactions. Here we have named that energy, Kali. We recognize her, not as an image, but as the violence of destruction and the whirlwind of fire, Agni himself, racing through the buildings and smoldering in the remains.

In the thirty years since the Watts riots, no major changes in the social structure and economic climate of the inner cities have taken place. Commentators on the TV news clips, both black and white, both young and old, repeatedly talked of the absence of jobs, of basic services, of housing, grievances aggravated over recent decades. Inner city programs are necessary measures, but they are not solutions. The overt violence had to be contained, but that action does not address the sources of the rage which lie in the primordial layers of the psyche.

Under the title "Burning All Illusions Tonight," June Jordan writes in The San Francisco Bay Guardian: "Fire everywhere! Across the miasma of Los Angeles the flames lift into the night and they proliferate. They rise, explosive, from my heart. Is there horror!/ Is there heat unbearable?/ And is there light where, otherwise, we could not see ourselves? Is there an unexpected/ unpredictable colossal energy alive and burning, uncontrolled throughout America?... And white kids and Chicanos and Chicanas join them, yes! There they stand or run beside/ among these young Black men who will not bow down! They will not say, 'OK. I am nobody. I have nothing and you hate me and that's fine!"

In the same issue of the Bay Guardian, Donald Taylor writes: "I have the hardest job in America. I am a conscious Black Man. My job continually reminds me of who I am and how I fit into the 'American Dream.'... As I talk to brothers, the question was never, 'Have you ever been a victim of police brutality?' It was, 'Tell me about what happened when you were victimized.' Each one had a story to tell."

A quotation from the Vishnu Purana, an Indian scripture handed down through millennia, seems surprisingly accurate in its descriptions of the current misery: "The state leaders will no longer protect the people but through taxes, will appropriate all wealth. Farmers will give up their work of plowing and harvesting to become unskilled workers and adopt the customs of outcasts. Many will be dressed in rags, unemployed, sleeping on the ground, living like paupers. Through the fault of public authorities, many children will die. Water will be lacking, and in many regions, people will watch the sky, hoping for rain. There will be no rain; the fields will become barren; fruit will no longer have any flavor."

America will continue to disintegrate into ethnic minorities without a center unless it becomes a genuinely multi-cultural society. The central overriding value must be the valuing of differences. This may not have been the intent of the "founding fathers" who wrote the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution for a white society from western Europe, ignoring at the time both the Native American population and the African slaves in the colonies. But the waves of immigration, first from western Europe, and then from Eastern Europe, and Asia have changed unalterably the character of the

country. These historical developments have created a country unimagined in the eighteenth century. Each ethnic wave has been perceived as a threat to the existing structures of power, and indeed their presence has challenged assumptions about the nature of American society. All the time, underneath the immigration of peoples from across the seas, have been the unacknowledged Afro-American culture which dates with the arrival of the first Europeans, and the confrontation with the Native American cultures which were here from the beginning.

Another quotation from the Linga Purana seems peculiarly apt. These are not predictions of the events of 1992, but rather the accumulated experience gathered through the circumstances and compiled records of the outcome of such events. “The earth will produce plenty in some place and too little in others. Rulers will confiscate property and use it badly. They will cease to protect the people… Scholars will be in the service of mediocre, conceited and malevolent men… There will be many displaced persons, wandering from one country to another… The number of men will decrease, while that of women will increase… Men of integrity will cease to play an active role. Ready cooked food will be on sale… There will be many beggars and unemployed people. Everyone will use hard and vulgar language… The degradation of virtues and the censorship of hypocritical and moralizing puritans characterize the period of the end of the Kali Yuga… Water will be lacking and fruit scarce. Thieves will be numerous. Rapes will be frequent. Many people will be treacherous, lustful, base, and foolhardy. They will have disheveled hair. There will be many children born whose life expectancy is no more than sixteen years… People will massacre women, children, cows, and one another.”

Reading these comments seriously, we find many which apply immediately to national issues. We also find that many have global implications for the conditions which have developed beyond our national boundaries. This fact does not free us from any responsibility or concern for their outcome.

In writing of what we call the “end of the world” Alain Daniélou describes three kinds of endings: the first, induces destruction (which concerns all living beings on earth) takes place at the end of each Kalpa, the second, natural destruction is that which concerns the whole universe. It takes pl“ce when the divi”e dream which is the world ends. Matter, space, and time then cease to exist. It takes place at the end of time. The third, immediate end, refers to the liberation of the individual for whom the visible world ceases to exist. Immediate destruction therefore concerns the individual, induces destruction all living species on earth, and natural destruction the end of the universe.”

Accidental or induced destruction “concerns the human species. It takes place when the creator can no longer find any remedy apart from a total destruction of the world to put an end to the disastrous and unplanned increase in the number of living beings." These quotations from the Puranas carry the tone of the Apocalypse from the Christian Bible. Daniélou comments, “The extent to which certain men will be able to reverse the tendencies of the modern world, and rediscover ways of like and though in keeping with their true nature, will determine for how long the final days can be forestalled, or at least allow some groups of individuals to escape the cataclysm and participate in the formation of the future humanity and the new Golden Age, which should appear after the next flood. Therefore, it is not a pointless exercise for human beings to try to cut

themselves off from the modern world and rediscover the values and virtues whose rules and principles have been preserved by esoteric teachings.”

June Jordan concludes her remarks about the riots by saying, “And I believe that we must take care not to become like our enemies: I do not accept that we should fall upon a stranger, outnumber him or her, and beat and possibly k”ll our 'prey.' And I believe we must take care to distinguish between our enemies and our allies, and not confuse them or forget the difference between a maniac and a (potential) comrade… Behold the fire everywhere!”

KALI AND SHADOW

We perceive shadows from a given perspective; the angle of vision from which we see an object determines the position and length of its shadow. At high noon with the sun overhead, objects do not cast a shadow, but most of us are unable to achieve such a clear light of consciousness.

The concept of the shadow is useful when facing personal contents which emerge from

the unconscious. Projections upon persons and events determining our responses to the daily events which we encounter. Each of us must acknowledge such projections as honestly as possible and work towards their incorporation within the psyche. Implied in this point of view, is that the incorporation of a shadow response depotentiates those shadow elements and thereby decreases their power over our feelings and our behavior.

In the larger cultural and cosmic contexts Kali is a goddess in her own right. She is not the shadow of Shiva. She is his manifest energy of disintegration, dissolution, and destruction in the great cycles of being. These processes, inherent in creation itself, reorganize the structure and the content of all organic processes in their dynamic development. It we are not willing to move in the ongoing dance of Shiva, then we unconsciously invoke the dread power of Kali to inaugurate the changes which we have resisted.

A power of the magnitude of Kali cannot be incorporated within that psychic structure of a finite human being. It is too vast, too far beyond the personal and cultural shadows even though it may manifest through either or both of these dimensions. Gods are propitiated by reverence and offerings. Myths from many cultures retell the fate of mere human beings who were unconscious of the gods or who ignored the sacrifices. To revere again the might or Kali and to sacrifice the suffocating oppression in our culture may quiet her wrath.

Out of the blackness of chaos and the fire of purification may grow a more differentiated consciousness which provides education and economic opportunities to all Americans.

Solutions lie in changes of the heart, in a genuine valuing of cultural differences. This does not mean just choosing the exotic for diversion and entertainment, but hearing what it says and paying attention to the message. Rap talk is the current voice of a generation which is different from the voice of the blues. Both are the continuing monologues from a culture continuously excluded from the white power structure whose members are oblivious to the message re-iterated over generations in black spirituals, the blues and rap. Social and educational programs and economic progress are minimal requirements for change. At the same time must come a change of heart. Such a changed heart would no longer even think in terms of minorities but see, rather, a single nation rich in an inter-active cultural diversity. We were warned before and we failed. We are warned again. Are we equal to the task? Can we recognize Kali and sacrifice to her?

Notes

1. Coomaraswamy, The Dance of Shiva, p. 69
2. Zimmer, Myth and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization, p. 152-3
3. Coomarswamy, op. cit, p. 73
4. Daniélou, Hindu Polytheism, p. 191
5. Daniélou, Shiva and Dionysus, p. 76
6. Mookerjee, Kali, p. 8
7. ibid., p. 62
8. ibid., p. 61
9. Daniélou, Hindu Polytheism, p. 78

10. Jordan, "Burning All Illusions Tonight," The San Francisco Bay Guardian, May 6, 1992, p. 15
11. Taylor, "The Hardest Job in America," The San Francisco Bay Guardian, May 6, 1992, p. 17
12. Daniélou, While the Gods Play, p. 214
13. ibid., p. 212
14. ibid., p. 216
15. ibid., p. 217
16. ibid., p. 222
17. Jordan, op.cit., p. 20
18. The word "sacrifice" derives from *sacer*, sacred and *facere*, to make; hence *to sacrifice* is *to make sacred*.