Houses of God

and

Houses of Men

Fred-Olav Sørensen

Foreword

There is considerable poetic content in the houses of God and the houses of men that you find by roaming around in villages in Europe. In this book, I have reproduced images of such houses that I have seen when roaming around in villages in Ireland and in Burgundy, two regions with considerable cultural history. Pictures from some other regions are also included. Along with these images, which are all from my own camera, I have joined texts that have inspired me, where mythology and symbolism have a dominant role. The book is conceived as a random walk between buildings and texts that have caught my imagination, both esthetically and poetically. These are buildings and texts that have made my mind wander in unforeseen directions.

The texts I have used are taken mainly from two sources. Firstly, I have relied extensively on Joseph Campbell's monumental work "The Masks of God". I have concentrated in particular on the fourth volume of this work: "Creative Mythology". Secondly, I have used texts from "The Book of Symbols". Other texts have also been used, and they are all referred to in the bibliography when they appear. However, The Masks of God and The Book of Symbols are the two main sources of the texts used alongside the pictures I have taken.

The texts have been picked out freely from these works, and put together as I have seen fit. They are, nevertheless, not to be considered of my creation, but entirely the creation of the authors from whom I have taken these texts. I am, however, responsible for the way in which – and the context in which - the texts appear in this book.

It has been great fun to assemble these images and texts, and I have done it only for fun – not for profit. This book can be read free of charge. Should you wish to reproduce it or use it in other ways, I would need to be consulted before that is done.

Fred-Olav Sørensen

Oslo, April 2018.

The dialogue in myth of East and West:

The myth of Eternal Return, which has been basic to Oriental life, displays an order of fixed forms that appear and reappear through all time. There is nothing to be gained, either for the universe or for man, through individual originality and effort. The first duty of the individual is to play his given role, without resistance and without fault. He identifies his consciousness with the inhabiting principle of the whole.

The dreamlike spell of this contemplative, metaphysically oriented tradition carries into modern times an image of incalculable age, where the basic myth is of a dreamlike age of the beginning, when there was neither death nor birth. When death arrived, through a murder committed, the self-consuming thing that is life, which lives on life, began its interminable course. Creatures

come into being, live on the death of others, die and become the food of others. The individual matters no more than a fallen leaf.

In the mythogenetic zone of the Near East, a new mythology arose around three thousand years ago, pointing to a development away from the earlier static view of returning cycles. The world no longer was to be known as a mere showing in time of the paradigms of eternity, but as a field of unprecedented cosmic conflict between two powers, one light (good) and one dark (evil). This outlook, in its earliest version coming from the Persian Zoroaster, placed a duty on each man – although himself a compound of good and evil – to elect voluntarily to engage in the battle to promote light.

This supplied a formula for the reorientation of the human spirit, placing on man an autonomous responsibility for the renovation of the universe in God's name. The first historic manifestation of the force of this new mythic view was in the Achaemenian empire of Cyrus the Great around 550 B.C. The second manifestation of this force was in the Hebrew application of this message to themselves; the next was in the world mission of Christianity; and the fourth, in that of Islam.

Two completely opposed mythologies of the destiny and virtue of man, therefore, have come together in the modern world. From Iran and westward, wise men have partaken of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, whereas those of the other side of that cultural divide, in India and the Far East, have relished the fruit of eternal life.

See (1) in the bibliography.

Cultural and symbolic factors play a strong role in shaping social dominance. Those who are in a position to define the prevailing social rules of human behavior and achievement, are also in a position to make sure that their own preferences and their own qualifications will prevail as measures of social success. This power to define is, once it is used actively for the attainment of social and political power, called <u>symbolic violence</u> by professor Pierre Bourdieu. He defines symbolic violence as the capacity to ascribe relative social value to symbolic behavior and to legitimize certain types of behavior as opposed to other types of behavior.

He divides the social world into <u>fields</u> (French: champs), like the fields of art, fashion, media, sports, academia or politics. These fields have their own respective social rules of behavior and their own criteria for success or failure. They have their own hierarchies and their own dynamics, and the persons who are within these fields or who try to enter them are in a constant state of

social competition – with the aim of improving their relative position in the field's ranking system.

The participants in each field possess a certain capital which they can make use of to further their aims in the field. In this context, we can (following Bourdieu's reasoning) distinguish between economic capital, cultural capital and social capital. The economic capital consists of all forms of economic capital, whether in the form of financial assets, real estate or other forms of assets. Cultural capital consists of all cultural resources, either in the form of internalized resources (know-how, competence, manner of speech, manner of clothing and behaviour, etc), objects (cultural objects, for instance like those contained in museums) or institutionalized resources (diplomas, titles, etc.). Social capital designates all types of resources that are linked to possession of networks, the quality of those networks, and the degree to which the individual is accepted and respected in these networks. An additional notion of capital is symbolic capital, which designates those parts of the other three forms of capital that are particularly recognized as having a high status in society (cf. the distinction between "old" money and "new" money as regards economic capital, or the status of the school you have graduated from as regards cultural capital).

See (2)

Why should it be that whenever men have looked for something solid on which to found their lives, they have chosen not the facts in which the world abounds, but the myths of an immemorial imagination – preferring even to make life a hell for themselves and their neighbors, in the name of some violent god, instead of accepting gracefully the bounty the world affords?

And though many who bow with closed eyes in the sanctuaries of their own tradition rationally scrutinize and disqualify the sacrament of others, a comparison reveals that all have been built from one fund of mythological motifs – variously selected, organized, interpreted, and ritualized according to local need.

Such themes as the fire theft, deluge, land of the dead, virgin birth, and resurrected hero have a worldwide distribution – appearing everywhere in new combinations while remaining only a few and always the same.

By looking into this, we can get an image of a fundamental unity in the spiritual history of mankind.

See (3)

The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard compared geniuses to a thunderstorm:

“Geniuses are like a thunderstorm: they go against the wind, terrify people, clear the air.

The established order has invented various lightning rods. And it succeeded. Yes, it certainly did succeed; it succeeded in making the <u>next</u> thunderstorm all the more serious.”

See (5)

Your life is made up of personal preoccupations, conditioned by the nature of your surroundings, and directed by the purposes to which you concentrate your attention.

How is your freedom limited? By mental blockages within yourself? By forces outside of yourself? How do you face your desire for freedom?

You need, to survive, food, clothes and shelter. Your basic needs, to survive, may be very small. What and who defines your needs? How is your life conditioned by activities directed towards meeting your needs?

Is all your time eaten up by your efforts to increase your financial, social and cultural capital?

What kinds of alternatives do you think you have when choosing how to spend your time?

See (6)

Michel de Montaigne, a French wise man who lived from 1533 to 1592, has written a work named “The Essays”. This is a thorough work of reflections on his life’s experiences, and it is not possible to do this work justice by a few references to it. However, I will offer a few short hand points that give you a taste of what it is all about:

Pope Bonifacius VIII entered, it is said, into his functions as a fox, behaved like a lion, and died like a dog

Emperor Augustus escapes the judgment of those who think that people should behave with consistency, because there is in this man variety of actions so obvious, sudden and continuous, all along his life, that he has risen above the most arduous judges

The confusion in the order and measure of sins is dangerous. Everybody gives more weight to the sins of others, and less weight to their own

When the force of the wine has penetrated us, weight comes into our limbs, our legs weaken, the tongue becomes unclear, the spirit foggy, the eye vague; there remains only shouts, hickups and quarrels. (Lucretius)

Accused of having with a light heart destroyed a nest of sparrows and killed the small birds, he said that he was right in doing this because these birds continually accused him falsely of having killed his father. The revengeful fury of the conscience was serving as punishment.

Who ever saw old age which did not revere the past and incriminate the present, accusing the world and the habits of men for their misery and sorrow.

Our appetite disdains and passes by what it has on hand, and runs after what it does not have

To refuse us something is to make us want it.

Fortune is vain and frivolous. She glorifies some and leaves others in the shadows, more according to her whims and less according to merits.

Memory is a tool of great service; without it judgment would have great trouble in doing its job.

Constancy and attachment to your aims is difficult if you abandon your own nature and start imitating others.

In the almost perfectly protected, readily defended valley of the Nile, with the sea to the north and deserts to the east, west, and south, the ruling dynasties remained in power, for the most part, over long periods and with no interference from without – save in the century of Hyksos rule, when a mixed horde of Asiatic aliens, equipped with the war chariot and compound bow, shattered the northeast frontier and took possession, in the period 1670 – 1570 B.C. "They ruled without Re and did not act by divine command," declared Queen Hatshepsut (1486 – 1468 B.C.), when those whom the gods abominate had been made distant and the earth had carried off their footprints. New protective imperial outposts for Egypt then were established deep within Asia, as far north as Syria. While the people of the Nile returned to their own old ways of toil, peace, and prosperity under maat, the influence of their thought and civilization spread abroad.

(See (1), The Cities of Men)

Carl Gustav Jung's unique approach to psychology was influential in countercultural movements in Europe and the United States in the 1960s. He has emphasized understanding the psyche through exploring the worlds of dreams, art, mythology, world religion and philosophy. Although he was a theoretical psychologist and practicing clinician, much of his life's work was spent exploring other realms, including Eastern and Western philosophy, alchemy, astrology, sociology, as well as literature and the arts. Among his most notable ideas are the concept of the Jungian archetype and the collective unconscious.

Jung emphasized the importance of balance and harmony. He cautioned that modern humans rely too heavily on science and logic and would benefit from integrating spirituality and appreciation of the unconscious realm. Integrating the opposites, the conscious and the unconscious, while still maintaining their relative autonomy, is necessary for a person to become whole. Many psychological concepts were first introduced by Jung. Among these, the

archetype and the collective unconscious are particularly notable.

The archetype (cf. Wikipedia) is a universally understood symbol or term or pattern of behaviour – a prototype upon which others are developed. In psychology, an archetype is a model of a person, personality, or behaviour. In philosophy, archetypes have since Plato referred to ideal forms of the perceived or sensible objects or types. In the analysis of personality, the term archetype often refers to:

1. **A stereotype – a personality observed many times, and simplified when described.**

2. **An epitome – a personality type exemplified, especially the "greatest" such example.**

Archetypes have been present in folklore and literature for thousands of years, including prehistoric artwork. Jung's use of archetypes to illuminate personality and literature was based on his assumption of the existence of innate, universal forms of ideas that channel experiences and emotions, resulting in recognizable and typical patterns of behavior with certain probable outcomes. Archetypes are to him important in both ancient mythology and modern narratives. A group of memories and interpretations associated with an archetype is termed a complex.

Jung outlined five main archetypes:

1. **The Self, the regulating center of the psyche and facilitator of individuation.**

2. **The Shadow, the opposite of the ego image, often containing qualities with which the ego does not identify, but which it possesses nonetheless.**

3. **The Anima, the feminine image in a man's psyche, or**

4. **The Animus, the masculine image in a woman's psyche.**

5. The <u>Persona</u>, the image we present to the world, usually protecting the Ego from negative images (like a mask), and considered another of the "sub-personalities" (the complexes).

See (4)

Would it be cowardly to beat the enemy by letting him pass?

The Persian emperor Darius criticized the Scythians for always receding from him, thus avoiding confrontation. To this, Indathyrses – the Scythian king – replied that it was not because of fear of him, nor any living man, but that this was the way of his nation - having no cultivated land, no city, no house to defend, nor fear that the enemy could profit from entering their land. But if Darius was so eager to fight, he could try to approach their ancient tombs, and then he would find his opponent.

Taken from Michel de Montaigne (1533 – 1592), Essays (op.cit), Book 1.

Before the violent entry of the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age nomadic Aryan cattle-herders from the north and Semitic sheep- and goat-herders from the south into the old cult sites of the ancient world, there had prevailed in that world an essentially organic, vegetal, non-heroic view of the nature and necessities of life.

In the older mother myths and rites the light and darker aspects of the mixed thing that is life had been honored equally and together, whereas in the later, male-oriented, patriarchal myths, all that is good and noble was attributed to the new, heroic master gods, leaving to the native nature powers the character only of darkness – to which, also, a negative moral judgment now was added.

The social as well as mythic orders of the two contrasting ways of life were opposed. Where the goddess had been venerated as the giver and supporter of life as well as consumer of the dead, women as her representatives had been accorded a paramount position in society as well as in cult. Opposed to this, without compromise, is the order of the Patriarchy, with an ardor of righteous eloquence and fury of fire and sword. Hence, the early Iron Age literatures of both Aryan Greece and Rome and of the neighboring Semitic Levant are alive with variants of the conquests by a shining hero of the dark and – for one reason or another – disparaged monster of the earlier order. The chief biblical example was Yahweh's victory over the serpent of the cosmic sea, Leviathan. The counterpart for the Greeks was the victory of Zeus over Typhon, the youngest child of Gaea, the goddess Earth – by which deed the reign of the patriarchal gods of Mount Olympus was secured over the earlier titans of the great goddess mother. The parallel of these victories to each other, and to that of Indra, king of the Vedic pantheon, over the cosmic serpent Vritra, is obvious.

See (1), The Age of the Goddess, The Serpent's Bride, Occidental Mythology

Certain exclusively Occidental complications result from the fact that, where two such contradictory final terms as God and Man stand against each other, the individual cannot attach his allegiance wholly to both. On the one hand, as in the Book of Job, he may renounce his human judgment in the face of what he takes to be the majesty of God: "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?". Or, on the other hand, as in the manner of the Greeks, he may stand by his human values and judge, according to these, the character of his gods. The first type of piety we term religious and recognize in all traditions of the Levant: Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The other we term, in the broadest sense, humanistic, and recognize in the native mythologies of Europe: the Greek, Roman, Celtic and Germanic.

By and large, the recent history of Occidental mythology be described in terms of a grandiose interplay of these two contrary pieties.

See (1), The Age of the Goddess, Occidental Mythology.

Towards the close of the Age of Bronze and, more strongly, with the dawn of the Age of Iron (about 1250 B.C. in the Levant), the old cosmology and mythologies of the goddess mother were radically transformed, reinterpreted, and in large measure even suppressed, by those suddenly intrusive patriarchal warrior tribesmen whose traditions have come down to us chiefly in the Old and New Testaments and in the myths of Greece. Two extensive geographical matrices were the source lands of these insurgent warrior waves: for the Semites, the Syro-Arabian deserts, where, as ranging nomads, they herded sheep and goats and later mastered the camel; and, for the Hellenic-Aryan stems, the broad plains of Europe and south Russia, where they had grazed their herds of cattle and early mastered the horse.

See (1), The Age of the Goddess, Occidental Mythology

Ancient Sumer, around 2500 B.C., shows us terra cotta motives with the ever-dying, ever-living lunar bull, consumed through all time by the lion-headed solar eagle. The victim has fiery signs of divine power flashing from his four limbs; a calmly beatific smile radiates from his human countenance, framed by a square beard that is characteristic in archaic Egyptian as well as Sumerian art of those lordly beasts. Usually the serpent or the bull are symbolic of the power that fecundates the earth.

A terra cotta plaque in the University Museum in Philadelphia shows such a bull with the right foreleg placed squarely on the center of a mound symbolic of the cosmic holy mountain, which, as we know from numerous texts, is the body of the Goddess Earth. In this plaque, a prominent device resembling the Cretan “horns of consecration” marks the field of contact between the receptive earth and bestowing god, whose leg and foot are thrust to its center to form with it a sort of trident: and the god, in this view, is above, for

it is from the moon above, as it wanes, consumed by the light of the sun, that the life-restoring dews and fertilizing rain descend.

See (1), op.cit.

Just as in the past each civilization was the vehicle of its own mythology, developing in character as its myth became progressively interpreted, analyzed, and elucidated by its leading minds, so in this modern world – where the application of science to the fields of practical life has now dissolved all cultural horizons, so as no separate civilization can ever develop again – each individual is the center of a mythology of his own, of which his own intelligible character is the Incarnate God, so to say, whom his empirically questing consciousness is to find. The aphorism of Delphi, "Know thyself", is the motto. And not Rome, not Mecca, not Jerusalem, Sinai, or

Benares, but each and every "thou" on earth is the center of this world, whose center is everywhere.

See (1) Creative Mythology, Experience and Authority

But of course, on the other hand, for those who can still contrive to live within the fold of a traditional mythology of some kind, protection is still afforded against the dangers of an individual life; and for many the possibility of adhering in this way to established formulas is a birthright they rightly cherish, since it will contribute meaning and nobility to their unadventured lives, from birth to marriage and its duties and, with the gradual failure of powers, a peaceful passage of the last gate.

However, for those to whom such living would be not life, but anticipated death, the mountains that to others appear to be of stone are recognized as of the mist of dream, and precisely between their God and Devil, heaven and hell, white and black, the man of heart walks through. Out beyond those walls, in the uncharted forest night, where the terrible wind of God blows directly on the questing undefended soul, tangled ways may lead to madness. They may also lead, however, as one of the greatest poets of the Middle Ages tells, to "all those things that go to make heaven on earth".

See (1) op.cit.

Think, that in our present world with all its sciences and machines, megalopolitan populations, penetrations of space and time, so different (it would seem) from the God-filled world of the Middle Ages, young people still exist who are facing in their minds the same spiritual adventure as the thirteen century spirits.

There is the coincidence (in two contemporaries) of James Joyce (1882 – 1941) and Thomas Mann (1875 – 1955), proceeding each along his own path, ignoring the other's work, yet marking, in measured pace, the same stages, date by date; as follows:

First, in the Buddenbrooks (1902) and Tonio Kröger (1903) of Thomas Mann, Stephen Hero (1903) and Portrait of the artist as a Young Man (1916) of James Joyce: accounts of the separation of a youth from the social nexus of his birth to strive to realize a social destiny.

Next, in the Magic Mountain (1924) and Ulysses (1922), two accounts and quests through all the mixed conditions of a modern civilization for an informing principle substantial to existence.

Then, in the tetralogy of Joseph and his brothers (1933 – 1943) and Finnegans Wake (1939), both novelists both novelists dropped completely into the well and seas of myth, so that, whereas in the earlier great novels the mythological themes had resounded as memories and echoes, here mythology itself became the text. So, these mighty mythic novels sprang from the infinite sources of history itself.

See (1), op.cit.

Like the other legends of Arthurian romance, that of Tristan and Isolt had been distilled from a compound of themes derived from pagan Celtic myth, transformed and retold as of Christian knighthood. The Celtic hero, as though moved by an infallible natural grace, follows without fear the urges of his heart. And though these may promise only sorrow and pain, danger and disaster, when followed for themselves alone – without thought or care for consequence – they can be felt to communicate to life, if not the radiance of eternal life, at least integrity and truth.

Arthurian romance suggested to those with ears to hear that there was in corruptible nature a virtue, after all, without which life lacked incorruptible nobility. It delivered this interesting message, which had been known for eons to the greater part of mankind, simply by clothing Celtic gods and heroes, heroines and goddesses, in the guise of Christian knights and damsels. Hence the challenge in these romances to the Church.

See (1), op.cit.

The twelfth and thirteen centuries, studied in the pure light of political economy, were insane. These were the words of Henry Adams in his work on communal creative life in the cathedral building age, “Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres”.

According to statistics, in the single century between 1170 and 1270, the French built eighty cathedrals and nearly five hundred churches of the cathedral class. The same level of activity had been going on since the year 1000, and almost every parish in France had rebuilt its church in stone. The share of the communities’ capital invested in the Virgin cannot be fixed, any more than the total sum given to religious objects between 1000 and 1300. In a spiritual and artistic sense it was almost the whole, and expressed an intensity of conviction never again reached by any passion.

We have found, however, that a number of other initial developments in the unfolding of great civilizations also were marked with signs of insanity – as seen by the pyramids or the Royal Tombs of Ur in Mesopotamia. Civilization, seriously regarded, cannot be described in economic terms. In their peak

periods, civilizations are mythologically inspired, like youth. The leading practical function of religious or mythological education is to infect the young with the madness of their elders – or, in sociological terms, to communicate to its individuals the "system of sentiments" on which the group depends for its survival as a unit.

See (1), op.cit.

As Oswald Spengler has noticed, the world of purity, light and utter beauty of the soul of the Virgin Mother Mary would have been unimaginable without the counter-idea, inseparable from it, of Hell, "an idea" that, according to Spengler, constitutes one of the maxima of the Gothic. It is not possible to exaggerate either the grandeur of this forceful, insistent picture or the depth of sincerity with which it was believed in. The Mary-myths and the Devil-myths formed themselves side by side, neither possible without the other. Disbelief in either of them was deadly sin. There was a Mary-cult of prayer,

and a Devil-cult of spells and exorcisms. Man walked continuously on the thin crust of a bottomless pit…

That is the Gothic mythic base out of which came the cathedral, the crusader, the deep and spiritual painting, the mysticism. In its shadow flowered that profound Gothic blissfulness of which today we cannot even form an idea.

Op.cit (1)

James Joyce, in "A portrait of the Artist as a Young Man", has provided an unforgettable reproduction of the standard Jesuit hell sermon. It is against the backdrop of such a nightmare that the loves of Isolt and Guinevere, and of the actual women of the age of the cathedrals, must be understood. Marriage in the Middle Ages was an affair largely of convenience. Girls betrothed in childhood for social, economic or political ends, were married very young. This was often to much older men, who invariably took their property rights in the women they had married very seriously. They might be

away for years on Crusade, but the wife was to remain inviolate – if necessary by assistance of an iron girdle of chastity. The Church sanctified these sordid property rights, furthermore, with all the weight of Hell, Heaven, eternity, and the coming of Christ in glory on the day of judgment.

Against all this, the wakening of a woman's heart to love was in the Middle Ages a grave and really terrible disaster. Not only for herself, for whom toture and fire were in prospect, but also for her lover – not only in the present, but also for the eternity.

Op.cit.(1)

We witness evidence of an unbroken, though variously modified, aristocratic tradition of mystically toned erotic lore, extending from India not only eastward as far as to Lady Murasaki's sentimental Fujiwara court in Kyoto, but also westward into Europe, at the time of the adventure of Abelard and Heloise. This was the time, almost a thousand years ago, when the songs and

the poetry of the troubadours were echoes from the gardens of Granada, Tripoli, Baghdad and Kashmir.

Op.cit. (1)

In the words of Nietzsche: “A new pride, my Ego taught me, and I teach it now to men: no longer to stick one’s head in the sand of celestial things, but to carry it freely, an earthly head that gives meaning to the earth!”

Something similar may seem to be intended in some of the advanced mystical writings of Japan; the lines, for instance, of the eighteen-century Zen master Hakuin (1685 – 1768):

Not knowing how near the Truth is

People seek it far away: what a pity!

This very earth is the Lotus Land of Purity

And this body is the body of the Buddha

However, even there, in the youngest nation of the great East, the ideal – even in the Zen monasteries – is to follow rules of discipline handed down from the masters of the past for the realization of specified spiritual ends. In the Europe of the new mythology of self-discovery and self-reliance that was coming into being in the century of Heloise a thousand years ago, (outside the Church, outside the monastery), neither rules nor aims were foreknown. The mind entered the wood, so to say, where it was thickest, in true adventure. Abelard had been for Heloise such a determinant, but instead – alas for them both – he clung to his past, his sacraments, heaven and Hell, and all was lost.

The Will to Life, as opposed to obedience and renunciation, emerged as the tension that faces everone – even today.

Op.cit.(1)

Schopenhauer says that the concept of the will is the one, among all possible concepts, that does not derive from the observation of phenomena, not fro mere visual knowledge, but comes from inside, emerges from the immediate consciousness of each one of us, in which each is directly aware of his own individuality in terms of his own existence; here the knower and the known are the same. With that, the veil of delusion dissolves and the realization is immediate that "we are all", as Schopenhauer says, "one and the same single Being". And the sentiment proper to this selfless realization is compassion, as compared to the Indian notion of moksa, derived from Buddhism.

Op.cit.(1)

Biologically, the animal function of the eyes is to be on the watch for things in the field of space and time that might be a) desirable or b) dangerous. They are the scouts of an alimentary canal, inquiring, "Can I eat that, or will that

eat me?" When functioning on this zoological-economic-political level of concern, even the organs of higher knowledge are in the service only of the will to live. And yet, in some men knowledge can break free of this servitude, release itself from such bondage, and stand free. For it is possible, in certain circumstances, to dissociate the act of seeing from the will of the individual to live. It is possible to view an object not in terms of its relationship to the well-being of the viewer, the subject, but in its own being, in and for itself.

Op.cit. (1)

Science, Schopenhauer declares, is concerned with the laws of cause and effect, which are not the object of art. Mathematics is concerned with the conditions of space and time: these conditions are not the object of art. History is concerned with motivation: motivation is not the object of art. Art is informed by the contemplation of the object in its character as "idea": not as a "concept", abstracted by the intellect, but as a thing regarded in and for itself, dissociated from the temporal flow of causal laws.

The challenge is to live simultaneously with two views of the world, that of art and that of the will.

Op.cit.(1)

The best things cannot be told, the second best are misunderstood. After that comes civilized conversation; after that, mass indoctrination; after that intercultural exchange. And so, proceeding, we come to the problem of communication: the opening, that is to say, of one's own truth and depth to the depth and truth of another in such a way as to establish an authentic community of existence.

The socially authorized mythologies and cults of the classical and medieval as well as various primitive and Oriental traditions were intended, and commonly functioned, to inculcate belief. In some instances their effectiveness was such that they determined the form and content of the

most profound personal experiences. No one has yet reported of a Buddhist munk surprised by a vision of Christ, nor a Christian nun by the Buddha.

Today, it is everywhere the collective mythology itself that is going to pieces, leaving the individual to be a light unto himself.

There is dawning upon many a new and painful realization of the depth to which the imprints, stereotypes, and archetypes of the social sphere determine our personal sentiments, deeds, thoughts, and even capacities for experience.

Op.cit.(1)

We count Greek philosophy and Roman law, as well as the modern concept of the secular state, as the great milestones of this release of man from the grip

of his own nightmare of a past. The modern center of supreme concern has shifted from the social order as an end to the individual.

A throwback to archaic times and ideals has lately appeared, however, in that vast Eurasian empire of modernized Byzantine despotism (bounded by machine guns turned inward on its own imprisoned population) where the scientific brainwash now has replaced the catechism and confessional.

Two great difficulties confront the questing individual. The first is the difficulty of breaking through and beyond the system of delusion impressed upon and built into his very nerves by the forces – at once moral and linguistic – of his youth. The imprintings of our parish are with us, tattooed on the inside of our skins. In accord with the Chinese Tao Te Ching, it will be a matter of returning to "the uncarved block". The second difficulty arises of establishing some kind of life in terms not of the old "collective faith", but of one's own. The really private experiences do not occur until these categories are dissolved.

Op.cit. (1)

In the case of the absolute hermit no communication is either attempted or desired; he rests in the state of Nietzsche's "one alone". In the case of a shared seizure of love (Nietzsche's case of "two alone") an immediately intelligible secret language of signs and words comes into being, fro which the world is automatically excluded.

And comparably, in a larger context, where a team, a company, a tribe, or a people shares significant common experiences, a language inevitably comes into being that is, in depth, unintelligible to outsiders, even where its rational or pragmatic import may seem to be obvious and translatable.

In his work "Primitive Mythology" Joseph Campbell has employed the term "mythogenetic zone" to designate any geographical area in which such a language of mythic symbols and related rites can be shown to have sprung into being. However, when the forms of the rites and symbols are then diffused to other zones, or passed on to later generations no longer participating in the earlier experience, they lose depth, lose sense, lose heart.

Op.cit. (1)

Professor E.R. Curtius states in his study "European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages": The Middle Ages had their own view of antiquity.

No less in philosophy and science than in literature and art, the authority of the Greco-Roman heritage throughout even the "dark" period from the fifth to the eleventh centuries was such that Dr. Curtius could write of a single Classical European tradition extending without break from Homer to Goethe. It was carried by way of two interacting streams. One, above ground, was of the poets and philosophers, grammarians, scientists, and historians, openly read and taught in the schools. The other, more secret, beneath ground, was of the mystery cults which in the late Roman centuries had flourished throughout the classical world, from India and the Upper Nile to the Celtic British Isles.

In the course of the long five centuries of the Roman occupation of Gaul and Britain (c. 50 B.C. to c. 450 A.D.), the myths and rituals of the Hellenistic mysteries were not only carried to those colonies but associated syncretically with appropriate local gods.

Op.cit. (1)

In the "Divina Commedia", Dante's termination of the guiding power of the pagans at the summit of Mount Purgatory, The Earthly Paradise, accords with the formula of Thomas Aquinas, whereby reason may lead, as it led the ancients, to the summit of earthly virtue, but only faith and supernatural grace (personified in Beatrice) can lead beyond reason to the seat of God.

However, as we regard with Dante the features of this god in the aspect of trinity, we are lead to a further observation. In the Christian doctrine of the three divine persons in one divine substance, what we actually have is a

transposition of the symbolism of the Graces three and Hyperborean Apollo into a mythological order of exclusively masculine masks of God. This accords well enough with the patriarchal spirit of the Old Testament but unbalances radically the symbolic, and therefore spiritual, connotations not only of sex and the sexes, but also of all nature.

In the patriarchal revision of the old heterosexual symbology, the Son corresponds to the downgoing Grace; the Holy Ghost, to the returning; the Father, to the all-bounding Grace; and the One Substance, to the light of the Apollonian mind.

Op.cit. (1)

Throughout the history of the Christian cult, the liability of its historicized symbols to reinterpretation in some general mythological sense has been a constant danger. Reciprocally, the susceptibility of the Greek – and even

Buddhist, Hindu, Navaho and Aztec mythologies – to readings approximatively Christian has also been a threat. Advantage of this has recently been taken by T.S.Eliot in his "Four Quartets", James Joyce in his "Finnegan's Wake", and Thomas Mann in "Joseph and his Brothers".

Many artists of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, likewise, took advantage of these possibilities. In fact, this possibility and the knowledge of it can be viewed as a secret stream, below ground, of our classical heritage of symbolic communication.

Op.cit.

A central part of our classical endowment is given in Professor Curtius's summation of the meaning to the Middle Ages of those six great names whom Dante met as he was led along his way:

“*Homer*, the illustrious progenitor, was hardly more than a great name in the Middle Ages. For medieval Antiquity is Latin Antiquity. But the name had to be named. Without Homer, there would have been no Aeneid; without Odysseus’s descent into Hades, no Virgilian journey to the other world; without the latter, no Divina Commedia.

To the whole of late Antiquity , as to the whole of the Middle Ages, Virgil is what he is for Dante: “l’altissima poeta”. Next to him stands *Horace,* as the representative of Roman satire. This the Middle Ages regarded as wholesome sermonizing on manners and morals, and it found many imitators from the twelfth century onwards.

Whatever else it may be, Dante’s Commedia is also a denunciation of his times. *Ovid,* however, wore a different face for the Middle Ages than he does for us. In the beginning of the Metamorphoses, the twelfth century found a cosmogony and a cosmology which were in harmony with contemporary Platonism. But the Metamorphoses were also a repertory of mythology as exciting as a romance. Who was Phaeton? Lycaon? Procne? Arachne? Ovid was the Who’s Who for a thousand such questions. One had to know the Matamorphoses, otherwise one could not understand Latin poetry.

Furthermore, all these mythological stories had an allegorical meaning. So Ovid was also a trearury of morality. Dante embellishes episodes of the Inferno with transformations intended to outdo Ovid, as he outdoes Lucan’s Terribilita. *Lucan* was the virtuoso of horror and turgid pathos, but he was also versed in the underworld and its witchcraft. In addition he was the source book for the Roman Civil war, the panegyrist of the austere Cato of Utica whom Dante places as the guardian at the foot of the Mount of Purgatory.

***Statius,* finally, was the bard of the Theban War, and his epic closes with homage to the divine Aeneid. The “Tale of Thebes” was a favorite book in the Middle Ages, as popular as the Arthurian romances. It contained dramatic episodes, arresting characters. Oedipus, Amphiaraus, Capaneus, Hypsipyle, the infant Archemorus – the dramatic personae of the Thebais are constantly referred to in the Commedia.**

Dante's meeting with the *bella scuola* seals the reception of the Latin epic into the Christian cosmological poem. This embraces an ideal space, in which a niche is left free for Homer, but in which all the great figures of the West are likewise assembled (Augustus, Trajan, Justinian); the Church Fathers; the masters of the seven liberal arts; the luminaries of philosophy; the founders of monastic orders; the mystics. But the realm of these founders, organizers, teachers, and saints was to be found only in one historic complex of European culture: in the Latin Middle Ages. There lie the roots of the Divina Commedia.

The Latin Middle Ages is the crumbling Roman road from the antique to the modern world."

Op.cit.

Let us now turn our thoughts to that fund of native North European lore which in the twelfth and thirteen centuries became suddenly with marvelous

effect the chief inspiration of the golden age of courtly romance. Classical as well as Christian strains, together with Islamic, had already been threaded through the legends. In the Celtic sphere, the Gallo-Roman altars testify to the classical influence, while for the Germans there is the old runic script, developed from the Greek. In the first centuries A.D. these passed from the Hellenized Gothic provinces northwest of the Black Sea, up the Danube and down the Elbe, to Scandinavia and England.

Perhaps the most suggestive revelation yet disclosed of what one authority has called the "highly cosmopolitan culture" of the old Germanic courts is to be seen in the Sutton Hoo ship-burial that in 1939 was unearthed in Suffolk, on the river Deben, six miles inland from the sea.

Op.cit.

As early as the fifth century A.D. related tribes of Huns struck simultaneously into Europe, India, and China. A dynasty of vigorous Tibetan kings was expanding its inner Asian conquests and influence from the period of Song-tsen Gam-po (c.630) to the death of Ral-pa-chen (c.838). Nestorian as well as Manichaean monasteries were on the caravan ways to China itself until the reign of the fanatic Emperor Wu-tsung (r. 841 – 846). There is, for instance, a more than incidental similarity between the myths and legends of the Iron Age Celts and Iron Age Japan - the dates of the earliest Japanese collections, the Kojiki and Ni-hongi, being 712 and 720 A.D.

Op.cit.

The Irish monks were scholars as well as missionairies; their schools were famous, and they taught their converts the best that had remained of the classical letters. The result was that England came to lead the world in

humane letters. When Charlemagne (r. 768 – 814) looked about for a scholar to direct his palace school and combat heresy, he chose, not a Continental scholar, but the celebrated Alcuin (735 – 804), a product of the Cathedral school at York.

However, in the world at large, the actual leadership in letters at that time was in India and Tang China, with Baghdad and Cordoba soon to come. Or, as Oswald Spengler states:

"In Charles the Great what we see is a compound of primitive spirituality on the point of its awakening mingled with a superimposed type of late intellectuality. Regarding certain features of his reign, one could speak of him as the Caliph of Frankistan, but he is, on the other hand, still the chieftain of a German tribe. And it is in the combination of these two strains that his symbolic value lies – as, likewise, that of the form of his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, which is no longer a mosque but not yet a cathedral."

Op.cit.

The Celts, like the Germans, were patriarchal Aryans; however, with their westwards drive into Gaul and the British Isles in the first millennium B.C., they entered the old Bronze Age sphere of the Great Goddess and her killed and resurrected son, whose cult of the seasonal round and rebirth were soon combined with their own.

The pre-Celtic megalithic style, which was contemporary in the British Isles with Minoan Crete and Troy, its creative center in the West being southern Spain, was a reflex of the Bronze Age of Mesopotamia, Egypt and the pre-Homeric Aegean.

As there, so here, the chief divinity was the goddess of many forms and names, whose son and spouse was the ever-living, killed and resurrected lord of immortality: Tammuz, Adonis, Attis,..

Op.cit.

When the Roman Catholic priest Professor Miguel Asín y Palacios, in his pioneering work, published in Madrid in 1919, demonstrated with massif proof the great extent to which Dante and his circle had been moved by Moslem inspiration, it came as a shock to the world of Dante scholarship.

The analogies shown by the author to exist between the Divine Comedy and Islam are so numerous and of such a nature as to be disquieting to the mind of the reader, who is forced to picture himself the great epic of Christianity as enthroned in the world of Moslem mysticism, as if in a mosque that were closed to Islam and consecrated to Christian worship.

As father Asín states in his conclusion:

"It is inconceivable that Dante, leading a life of such mental activity, should have been ignorant of Moslem culture, which at the time was all-pervading; that he should not have felt the attraction of a science that was drawing men of learning to the court of Toledo from every part of Christian Europe, and of

a literature, the influence of which was paramount in the Europe of that time, introducing there the novels, fables, and proverbs of the Orient as well as works of science and apologetics. The prestige enjoyed by Islam was largely due to the Moslem victories over the Crusaders. Roger Bacon, a contemporary of Dante, attributed the defeats of the Christians precisely to their ignorance of the Semitic languages and applied science, of which the Moslems were masters. In another field of learning, Albertus Magnus, the founder of scholasticism, agreed with Bacon on the superiority of the Arab philosophers; and Raímon Lull even recommended the imitation of Moslem methods in popular preaching."

Op.cit.

The light of Hellenistic learning had been quenched for Europe when, in the year 529, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian ordered the schools of pagan

philosophy closed in Athens. The only remaining repositories of Greek philosophy and science then were Sassanian Persia, Gupta India, and Ireland, the only flickering candle in the West.

However, the Arabs who in the name of Mohammed conquered Persia in 641 cared nothing for either philosophy or science. Their Prophet had died in 632. His immediate successors, the "orthodox" caliphs, retained control of the spreading empire until 661, when a rival Meccan house, the Ummayads, usurped the caliphate. These ruled until 750, when their fourteenth caliph was murdered, and the victors now were Persians, the Abbasids.

In contrast to the leaders of the earlier two caliphates, the Abbasids were such discriminating patrons of philosophy, science, and the arts that Baghdad, their young capital (750 – 1258), became within a few decades the most important seat of classical learning in the world.

Op.cit.(1)

According to its own poets, Baghdad then was an earthly paradise of learning, ease, and grace, where, to use their own expressions, the ground was irrigated with rose water and the dust of the ground was musk, flowers and verdure overhung the ways and the air was perpetually sweet with the many-voiced song of birds; while the chip of lutes, the dulcet warble of flutes, and the silver sound of houris rose and fell in harmonious cadence from every window of the streets of palaces that stood in vast succession amid gardens and orchards gifted with eternal verdure.

The works of Aristotle, Hippocrates, Galen, Euclid, Archimedes, Ptolemy, and Plotinus were translated here into Arabic. Poets and musicians, mathematicians, astronomers, geographers, jurisprudents, philosophers, and historians carried forward the labors of a civilized humanity, to which contributions were coming, as well, from India and China.

For these were also the golden years of the Great East; the centuries of Tang and Sung in China (618 – 1279); Nara, Heian, and Kamakura in Japan (710 – 1392); Angkor in Cambodia (800 – 1250); and in India the timeless temple art of the Chalukya and Rashtrakuta, Pala, Sena and Ganga, Pallava, Chola, Hoyshala, and Pandya kings (550 – 1350)

In all the world of Europe and Asia there were then but four essential languages of learning, science, and religion: in the Levant, Arabic; Latin in Europe; Sanskrit in the Indian sphere; and Chinese in the Far East. And learning and insight flowed slowly, but constantly between these cultures.

Op.cit. (1)

It was not until the early twelfth century that European men of learning themselves undertook seriously, in a really significant way, to bring back to Europe from the gardens of Baghdad the bounty that in Justinian's day (when he closed the school of Athens) had been forfeited to Asia.

In the year 1143 Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, on a visit to his order's Spanish monasteries, met the bishop of that city, Ramon of Sauvetat (1126 – 1151), whose scholars were at work translating from Arabic not only the writings of the Greeks, but also both the commentaries on those writings and the independent works of the Arabs through whose hands the legacy had passed. To Gerard of Cremona (1114 – 1187), for example, the most famous of the scholars in Toledo at that time, there are credited no less than seventy substantial titles, many of vast extent.

Op.cit. (1)

Shall we be surprised to find, then, on the levels of folklore and romance, that in turning from the popular "One Thousand Nights and One Night" of Islam to the legends of King Arthur, we have moved only from one room to another of the same enchanted palace? The prominence in both these neighboring traditions of a type of tale of enchantment and disenchantment, that on the European side is represented by the legends of the Grail, is of greatest interest.

The whole Orient was contributing largely to that twelfth- and thirteenth-century wakening and nourishing of the European imagination which was to lead in the next three centuries to the dawn of a new and spectacular age, the Renaissance.

Op.cit. (1)

Materials carried from any time past to a time present, or from one culture to another, shed their values at the culture portal and thereafter become mere curiosities, or undergo a sea change through a process of creative misunderstanding.

One example is the transformation of the cult of Amor as it passed from the Moorish "tarab-adors" to the troubadours of Provence. The massive influence of Rome on the Gupta flowering in India, as cited by Dr. Hermann Goetz, is a case in point:

"Though so many novel ideas, techniques and types were absorbed that practically a quite new and most important chapter of Indian art was opened, they were never taken over "en bloc". Everything was broken up, translated into Indian concepts and reconstructed on Indian principles."

For the shaping force of a civilization is "lived experience" and, as Oswald Spengler has demonstrated, the manner of this inwardness differs not only in

differing civilizations, but also in the differing periods of a single civilization. It is not a function of any "influence" from without, no matter how great or inspiring. Consequently, when historians confine their attention to tracing the mapping of such "influences", without due regard to the inward assimilating and reshaping force of the local, destiny-making readiness for life, their works inevitably founder in secondary details. Spengler's critical point is: it is not products that "influence", but creators that "absorb".

A an example one can easily be mislead when assuming that because the words of two traditions are matched in bilingual dictionaries, the experiences to which they refer must be the same.

Op.cit.

What in general passes for the schoolbook history of thought is largely a sort of theater of Sir Imponderables elaborately refuting their own

misinterpretations of each other. So it was when Aristophanes wrote his comedy “The Clouds”. So it is today. And so it was in that great period, as well, of the reception by the master minds of Europe of the legacy of Islam.

The centerpiece of this ponderously served up medieval comedy of confusion was a duel of balloons on the splintery stage of Sorbonne by the matched champions, respectively, of the “double” and “single” truth: the double truth being a doctrine attributed in error to the great imam and philosopher of Cordoba, Averroes (ibn-Rushd, 1126 – 1198), which held that what is true according to reason may be untrue according to faith, and vice versa. The single truth doctrine charged that the truths of reason and religion were to be reconciled philosophically as one.

The leading spokesman for the former view at the University of Paris was the brilliant Swedish Averroist, Siger of Brabant (c.1260), allied with whom, as contemporaires and followers, were chiefly Boethius of Sweden (c.1270), Martin of Denmark (d.1304), John of Jandun (d.1328), and Marsilius of Padua (d.1336 or 1343).

The mightiest champion of the doctrine of the single truth, on the other hand, was the Italian Dominican Thomas Aquinas (1225? – 1274), who, while contending directly with Siger, was at the same time salting his paragraphs with syllogistic refutations of the Arabs Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes. From these Arabs Aquinas had received not only his knowledge of Aristotle, but also his leading idea and method of reconciling, in “Summa Theologica”, reason with revelation and philosophy and faith.

Siger, who supposed he was following Averroes, was saying just the opposite, while Aquinas, who thought he was contending with the Moor, was saying the same. In the century of the battle itself there were so many shadows in play about the stage that the verbal strokes were falling as frequently on air as on heads, and then as frequently on the wrong as on the right; so that in retrospect the whole controversy has much the air of an “opéra bouffe”.

Op.cit. (1)

What had been actually said by Averroes was that, although philosophy and revelation (in his case, of course, the Koran) may on certain points <u>appear</u> to differ, they can and must be reconciled. This can be seen in his treatise on "What There Is of Connections between Religion and Philosophy".

This is the <u>actual</u> Averroist doctrine of the double truth. Ironically, it is the same, essentially, as the view of Thomas Aquinas, not of Siger of Brabant. As Father Miguel Asín y Palacios, who disclosed Dante's debt to Islam, said in his "The Averroist Theology of Saint Thomas of Aquino":

"Averroes' religious thinking, studied in itself, in contrast with that of the Latin Averroists and compared with that of Saint Thomas, appears on the whole to be analogous rather to the latter: analogous in its attitude, its general point of view, in its ideas and illustrations, and at times even in its words. That is the conclusion forced upon one after an attentive examination of parallel passages."

Averroes classified people according to three categories:

1.The demonstrative class, which is capable of strict reasoning and demonstration according to Aristotle's laws of logic.

2.The dialectical class, which is satisfied with the plausible opinions general to thoughtful people.

3.The rhetorical class, who are persuaded simply by what they are told and whose views cannot stand up to criticism.

It is to the last and to the second, according to the view of Averroes, that the apparent readings of Scripture are addressed, not so much for their enlightenment as for their moral control and improvement.

Op.cit. (1)

It is most amazing, says Joseph Campbell. The doctrine of the dual truth of Siger of Brabant, the Swedish Averroist, was by the Church officially condemned and Siger himself perhaps put tot death. Thomas Aquinas refuted both Siger and Averroes, in his "Summa contra gentiles" as well as in a special treatise "On the Unity of the Intellect against the Averroists". Yet in Dante's "Paradiso", at the station of the sun – the place of those learned in theology – whom do we find, luminously at peace and comfortably at hoe as the great Saint Thomas himself, but Siger of Brabant, who, in the words of Dante's guide, had "syllogized individuous truths"! Averroes, meanwhile, sits in Limbo, in the idyllic first circle of Hell, with his fellow Musulman Avicenna, chatting with their idol Aristotle, and with Socrates and Plato, Democritus, Diogenes, Anaxagoras and Thales, Empedocles and Heraclitus, Zeno, Dioscorides, Orpheus, Tully and Linus, Seneca, Euclid, Ptolemy and Galen. But one searches in vain for the name of Dante's own Islamic precursor and poetic model, Ibnu'l – 'Arabi, while both Mohammed and his cousin Ali, hideously mangled, are in the eighth circle of Hell.

Op.cit. (1)

Essentially, the reasoning and practices of the Gnostic ascetics were like those of the Jains of India. Here too a strict dualism was posited of spirit and non-spirit, and a graded regimen undertaken of renunciative vows to clear the spiritual element of contamination by the material.

It may be recalled that already in Alexander's time the ascetic feats and theories of India's yogis became known to the marveling Greeks. Tides of Indian lore were flowing westward as well as classical flowing east. More than a few competent scholars have remarked that the Neoplatonism of such a mystic as Plotinus shares practically all of its essential points with the Sankhya of Kapila. And like the forests of India with their hermit groves, so the Levantine deserts of the second, third and fourth centuries A.D. were infested with spiritual athletes, striving to separate their souls from the glories and riches of this world.

The indestructible Saint Anthony (251 – 356!?!) is the model of the approved version of that life-negating mentality, and through the monks of the Middle

Ages, on into modern times, there has been a continuation of its course – referred back to the words and example of Christ: "If you would be perfect, go sell what you possess and give to the poor…and come follow me."

The renunciatory movement passed from the Gnostics of the Near East to the new Manichaean religion of Persia which had been founded by the prophet Mani a century earlier (216? – 276? A.D.), under the patronage and protection of the liberal-minded Sassanian King Shapur I (r. 241 – 272). Mani had preached a syncretic doctrine combining Buddhist, Zoroastrian, and Christian ideas, wherein the Old Testament Creator was identified with the Zoroastrian power of darkness and deception, Angra Mainyu, and these two, in turn, with the Buddhist principle of delusion.

Mani correlated both the Christian and the Zoroastrian prophesies of a literal end of the world with the purely psychological Buddhist doctrine of illumination as the end of delusion.

Mani's protector, Shapur I, died in the year 272, and the orthodox Magian clergy thereupon contrived to have the prophet martyred. Mani's doctrine of the fall of light into darkness and of the way of its return from bondage to its source and true being in purity, spread both eastward into China (where it survived until the years of the anti-Buddhist, anti-foreign purges of the Emperor Wu-tsung, 842 – 844) and westward into the now Christian Roman Empire, where it again met persecution. Saint Augustine (354 – 430) was a Manichaean for nine critical years before accepting the Christian faith of his mother, Saint Monica, and composing then his dualistic masterwork "The City of God".

Op.cit. (1)

At the climax of the European Middle Ages – the very century of the great Crusades, the Troubadours, Arthurian romance, and the burgeoning of cathedrals that Henry Adams called the moment of the apogee of European Christian unity, when the movement from unity to multiplicity began – there was such an outbreak of Manichaean, Gnostic, and other heresies throughout Europe, though most conspicuously in southern France, that finally Pope Innocent III (r. 1198 – 1216), to protect the hegemony of Rome, let loose a version of the scourge of God, in his Albigensian Crusade, that left not only the south of France a desert, but the Gothic Church a cracked shell. The revolts were largely – though not all – of a strongly reformatory trend; for the vices of the higher clergy had become to such an extent notorious that Innocent himself criticized the clergy strongly.

The two leading reformatory movements were of the Waldensians and the Albigensians. The former were Christians, but strongly anti-papal, rejecting all

clerical practices that lacked New Testament authority; the latter were ascetic, reaching back to the purity and simplicity of the Christian origins.

Op.cit. (1)

The cathedral and temple forms that arose in the West and in India from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries were comparable in many fundamental features.

The earliest appearances of this style of religious art and architecture in India date – significantly – from the Gupta period, the reign of Chandragupta II (r. 378 – 414), whose dates include those of the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius the Great (r. 379 – 395), whose anti-pagan edicts initiated an exodus of intellectuals on all levels – priests, philosophers, scientists, and artists – eastward into Persia and India.

A golden age of Hindu and Buddhist art, literature, and temple architecture dawned, which from the fifth to mid-thirteen centuries displayed many of those forms of mythology and worship that were being suppressed during the same centuries in the West.

Op.cit. (1)

A point to be remarked in the Albigensian charge is that, whereas according to the Gnostic-Manichaean view nature is corrupt and the lure of the senses to be repudiated, in the poetry of the troubadours, in the Tristan story, and in Gottfried's work above all, nature in its noblest moment – the realization of love – is an end and glory I itself. The senses, ennobled and refined by courtesy and art, temperance, loyalty and courage, are the guides to this realization.

Like a flower potential in its seed, the blossom of the realization of love is potential in every heart (or, at least in every noble heart) and requires only proper cultivation to be fostered to maturity. Hence, if the courtly cult of amor is to be cataloged according to its heresy, it should be indexed rather as Pelagian than as Gnostic or Manichaean, for Pelagius and his followers absolutely rejected the doctrine of our inheritance of the sin of Adam and Eve. They taught that we have finally no need of supernatural grace, since our nature itself is full of grace; no need of a miraculous redemption, but only of awakening and maturation; and that, though the Christian is advantaged by the model and teaching of Christ, every man is finally (and must be) the author and means of his own fulfilment. In the lyrics of the troubadours we hear little or nothing of the fall and corruption either of the senses or of the world.

Op.cit. (1)

Now it is a matter of no small moment that in the period of this idyllic poetry the world of harsh reality should have been about as dangerous and unlikely a domicile for <u>amor</u> as the nightmare of history has ever produced. We have mentioned the devastation of southern France. The whole of Central Europe likewise was in a state of hideous turmoil.

With the death in the year 1197 of the Hohenstaufen Emperor Henry VI, surnamed the Cruel, the crown of the Holy Roman Empire had fallen to the ground and was rolling like a fumbled football for anyone to retrieve. And the armies battling to possess it – on one hand, of the allied English, papal, and Guelph contenders, and, on the other, of the German princes and incumbent Philip of Swabia – were everywhere pillaging towns and villages, devastating whole provinces, perpetrating the most brutal and revolting crimes.

This continued until about 1220, when the brilliant young nephew of the murdered Philip, Frederick II (1194 – 1250), was finally crowned Emperor in Saint Peter's by a reluctant and uneasy Pope.

Op.cit. (1)

The three exclamations "O merciful, O kind, O sweet Virgin Mary!" were uttered by Abelard's exact contemporary and dangerous challenger in debate, the mighty Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1091 – 1153), to whom Dante, in the Commedia, assigns the loftiest possible station, at the very feet of God. Throughout his lifetime this passionate preacher of transcendental euphoria strained every metaphor in the book of love to elevate the eyes of men from the visible women of this earth to the glorified form of that crowned Virgin Mother above, who is the Queen of Angels and of Saints – and Dante, in due time, followed suit.

However, the troubadours, minnesingers and epic poets of the century, in their celebration of amor, remained in Nietzsche's sense "true to this earth", this vale of tears where the devil roams for the ruin of souls. For in their view, not heaven but this blossoming earth was to be recognized as the true domain of love, as it is of life, and the corruption ruinous of love was not of

nature (of which love is the very heart) but of society, both lay and ecclesiastical.

Op.cit. (1)

In the Tristan romance King Mark is in the role of the jealous spouse; and his royal estate, Tintagel, with its elegant princely court, stands for the values of the day world – history, society, knightly honor, deeds, career and fame, chivalry and friendship, - in absolute opposition to the grotto of the timeless goddess Minne, which is the order of enduring nature, in the forest where the birds still sing.

Set apart from all spheres of historic change, the Venus Mountain with its crystalline bed has been entered by lovers through all ages, from every order of life. Its seat is in the heart of nature – nature without and within – which two are the same. And its virtue, so, is of the species, not of this particular

culture, nor of that: Veda, Bible, or Koran; but of man pristine in the universe. This is something, however, that in this vale of tears is never to be seen, since we are each brought up in the ethnic sphere of this or that particular culture.

The immanent yet lost – but not forgotten – realm within us all is in Celtic Mythology and folklore allegorized variously as the Land below Waves, the Land of Youth, the Fairy Hills, and in Arthurian romance, that Never Never Land of the Lady of the Lake where Lancelot du Lac was fostered and from which Arthur received his sword Excalibur.

Op.cit. (1)

In such a romance as that of Tristan and Isolt, resting on symbolic, mythological forms, the sense communicated is of the force of destiny in the shaping of a life.

As Schopenhauer suggests, the apparent plan of the course of a life might be explained, to some extent, as founded on the unchangeability and continuity of inborn character, as a consequence of which the individual is being continually brought back to the one track. Each recognizes so certainly and immediately whatever is appropriate to his own character that, as a rule, he hardly ever brings it into reflective consciousness, but directly acts, as it where, on instinct.

Consider Jean Paul Sartre's complaint that he "finds it extremely embarrassing that God does not exist; for there disappears with Him all possibility of finding values in an intelligible heaven… Everything is indeed permitted if god does not exist, and man is in consequence forlorn; for he cannot find anything to depend upon either within or outside himself….We are left alone, without excuse. That is what I mean when I say that man is condemned to be free."

At the opposite pole in dealing with the challenge of freedom, stands Søren Kierkegaard (1813 – 1855): "The most tremendous thing that has been granted to man is: the choice, freedom. And if you desire to save it and preserve it there is only one way: in the very same second unconditionally and in complete resignation to give it back to God, and yourself with it….You have freedom of choice, you say, and still you have not chosen God. Then you will grow ill, freedom of choice will become your <u>idée fixe</u>, till at last you will be like the rich man who imagines that he is poor, and will die of want…There is a God; his will is made known to me in Holy Scripture and in my conscience.."

Between these two contending camps, there are those of a less dogmatic cast who, like Schopenhauer, state that decisive answers are the last thing to express: "Is a complete misadjustment possible between the character and the fate of an individual? Or is every destiny on the whole appropriate to the character that bears it? Or, finally, is there some inexplicable, secret determinator, comparable to the author of a drama, that always joins the two appropriately, one to the other? This is exactly the point at which we are in the dark. And in the meantime we go on imagining ourselves to be, at every moment, the masters of our own deeds."

Op.cit. (1)

The ancients never tire of insisting, in verse and in prose, on the power of fate and the comparative impotence of man. One can see everywhere that this was their overpowering conviction, and that they suspected more secret, deep continuity in things than is evident on the clearly empirical surface.

This whole enigmatic circumstance is a consequence of the fact that our deeds are inevitably the product of two factors: one, our intelligible character, which stands unchangeably established, yet becomes known to us only gradually; and two, our motivations, which come to us from without, are supplied inevitably from the tides of world event. Finally, our ego judges the resultant event. In its role as the mere subject of knowledge, however, it is

distinct from both character and motivation and so it is no more than the critical observer of their effects. No wonder it sometimes marvels!

Op.cit. (1)

In the context of the Tristan legend, the symbolic forms and motifs through which the intimation is communicated of a moving destiny and alien power were derived from the pagan Celtic lore of Ireland, Cornwall and Wales. Inherent in them was the old generally pagan message of the immanent divinity of all things. The Celtic myths and legends are full of tales of the singers and harpers of the fairy hills whose music has the power to enchant and to move the world.

Hermes, who according to Greek mythology fashioned the lyre, was born in a cave of a night-sky nymph named Maia. At dawn, toddling forth from his cradle before noon, had chanced – or had seemed to chance – at the entrance

of the cave upon a tortoise (an early animal symbol of the universe). He broke it up and fashioned it into a lyre, to which at noon he beautifully sang. That evening he stole Apollo's cattle, and to appease the god gave him the lyre, which Apollo passed to his own son Orpheus. As we know, the sound of that lyre in Orpheus' hands stilled the animals of the wilderness, moved trees and rocks, and even charmed the lord of the netherworld when the lover descended alive to the abyss to recover Eurydice, his lost bride.

The ultimate roots of the tree of Celtic folklore and mythology rest deep in that megalithic culture stratum of Western Europe that was contemporary and in trade contact with the pre-Hellenic seafaring civilizations of Crete and Mycenae of which Poseidon was a mighty god, and from which the basically non-Homeric, Dionysian-Orphic strains of classical myth and ritual derived. There is therefore an actual, archaeologically documented, family relationship to be recognized between the mythic harpists of the Celtic otherworld and those of the Orphic and Gnostic mysteries.

Op.cit. (1)

The Indian god who is equivalent to Poseidon, and to the Irish sea-god Manannan, is Shiva, who bears in his right hand the trident and in the Christian version of the netherworld is the Devil. He is known as the "Lord of Beasts, also the "Player of the Lyre". He is, moreover, a phallic god and, as lord of the lingam-yoni symbol, often showed united in one body with his goddess, she the left side, he the right. Gottfried's metaphor of Tritan-Isolt as the two whose being is one is thus in India a familiar icon of the mystery of non-duality. Hermes, too, is both lord of the phallus and male and female at once. The word "hermaphrodite" (Hermes-Aphrodite) points to this secret of his nature.

With the goddess Aphrodite, of course, the inevitable associate is her child, the winged huntsman with his very dangerous bow; Roman Cupid, Greek Eros – the boy on the dolphin. Aphrodite too was born of the sea. And she is the consort of the ever-dying, ever-reborn god gored by the boar, whose celestial sign is the waning and waxing moon: the lord of the magic of night. Tristan,

master of the arts of the hunt, as well as of music and all tongues, carried with him to Cornwall the powers of these gods. Going back to pre-Celtic times, Tristan was a Pictish king of a Bronze Age matrilineal folk, whereas Isolt was a legendary daughter of Pre-Celtic Ireland, of the breed of Queen Meave – likewise of a matriarchal line.

Op.cit. (1)

Nietzsche wrote, in "The Birth of Tragedy", of music – on one hand – and stage characters – on the other – as representing respectively the spheres of the universal and particular, with the myth, the Dionysian legend, joining the two. The myth, Nietzsche thus saw, is the Apollonian display of what Joyce was to call the grave and constant in human sufferings: a vision of enduring forms midway between the passing figures of day and the night of dreamless sleep. (Does this, maybe, link up to Plato's Ideas from the tale of the cave?)

Thus mythology and the psychology of dream are recognized as related, even identical. In Freud too (whose psychological root-research and depth science were anticipated in grand style by Nietzsche), the interest in mythology, in the primitive and pre-cultural aspects of humanity, was in the closest manner bound to his psychological interest. Thomas Mann's monogram contains a lyre, the sign of his identification with the tradition wherein music, myth, and depth psychology are one.

Op.cit.

The main lines of Thomas Mann's "The Magic Mountain" are simple enough: a young man fares to an Alpine sanatorium for a visit of three weeks, develops there a fever, and instead of three weeks, spends an aeon of seven years, returning to his homeland only when the First World War breaks out, to serve voluntarily his country's flag.

The adventure conforms, in both structure and sense, to a traditional "rite de passage", or mythological hero adventure, the archetypical course of which universally follows a pattern of three stages: <u>separation, initiation, return</u>. In "The Magic Mountain" the absolutely indispensable break from the world of the common day – from those duties, thoughts, feelings, and highest concerns "common to all men" which are dictated not by one's own experiences and discoveries but by others – is represented directly at the opening, in the steep climb of the narrow-gauge Alpine train to its almost inaccessible destination aloft.

Mann compares the sealed-off situation of his hero in the sanatorium with that of the primal matter in the alchemist's "vas Hermeticum", undergoing fermentation for sublimation into philosophical gold. Thus, in Mann's ostensibly naturalistic novel, as in Joyce's of approximatively the same date ("Ulysses", 1922; "The Magic Mountain", 1924), there is an intended, scrupulously controlled opening downward of associations to the timeless, "grave and constant" archetypes of myth. In each instance, furthermore, the authors' subsequent work ("Finnegan's wake", 1939; "Joseph and His Brothers", 1933 – 1943) dropped into the sphere of myth altogether.

Op.cit. (1)

James Joyce had been born a Catholic; Thomas Mann a Protestant. Both had broken from their family spheres of belief in the ways fictionalized in their first novels and short stories ("Stephen Hero", 1903, and "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man", 1916; "Buddenbrooks", 1902 and "Tonio Kröger", 1903). Each then cleared the way for himself – along parallel courses, at about the same pace, date for date – to an art of the most sophisticated psychologico-mythological ambiguities.

Mann developed his position toward myth from Luther and Goethe, Schopenhauer, Wagner, and Nietzsche. Joyce, on the other hand, from the Middle Ages, Dante and Aquinas, Shakespeare, Blake, and then Ibsen. Consequently, although they were indeed on parallel courses, there were great differences between them in approach and aim as well as background, and with significant contrasts in result.

Op.cit. (1)

Carl Jung has well described the contrast of the Catholic and Protestant psychological states in relation to their understanding of symbols:

“The history of Protestantism has been one of chronic iconoclasm. One wall after another fell. And the work of destruction was not too difficult once the authority of the Church had been shattered. We all know how, in large things as in small, in general as well as in particular, piece after piece collapsed, and how the alarming poverty of symbols that is now the condition of our life came about. With that the power of the Church has vanished too – a fortress robbed of its bastions and casemates, a house whose walls have been plucked away, exposed to all the winds of the world and to all dangers.

Although this is, properly speaking, a lamentable collapse that offends our sense of history, the disintegration of Protestantism into nearly four hundred denominations is yet a sure sign that the restlessness continues. The Protestant is cast out into a state of defenselessness that might well make the natural man shudder. His enlightened consciousness, of course, refuses to

take cognizance of this fact, and is quietly looking elsewhere for what has been lost to Europe. We seek the effective images, the thought-forms that satisfy the restlessness of heart and mind and we find the treasures of the East…..

Shall we be able to put on, like a new suit of clothes, readymade symbols grown on foreign soil, saturated with foreign blood, spoken in a foreign tongue, nourished by a foreign culture, interwoven with foreign history, and so resemble a beggar who wraps himself in kingly raiment, a king who disguises himself as a beggar? No doubt this is possible. Or is there something in ourselves that commands us to go in for no mummeries, but perhaps even to sow our garments ourselves?

I am convinced (Jung continues) that the growing impoverishment of symbols has a meaning. It is a development that has an inner consistency. Everything that we have not thought about, and that has therefore been deprived of a meaningful connection with our developing consciousness, has got lost. If we now try to cover our nakedness with gorgeous trappings of the East, as theosophists do, we would be playing our own history false. A man does not sink down to beggary only to pose afterwards as an Indian potentate.

It seems to me that it would be far better stoutly to avow our spiritual poverty, our symbol-lessness, instead of feigning a legacy to which we are not legitimate heirs at all. We are, surely, the rightful heirs of Christian symbolism, but somehow we have squandered this heritage. We have let the house our fathers built fall into decay, and now we try to break into Oriental palaces that our fathers never knew.

Anyone who has lost the historical symbols and cannot be satisfied with substitutes is certainly in a very difficult position today; before him there yawns the void, and he turns away from it in horror. What is worse, the vacuum gets filled with absurd political and social ideas, which one and all are distinguished by their spiritual bleakness. But if he cannot get along with those pedantic dogmatisms, he sees himself forced to be serious for once with his alleged trust in God, though it usually turns out that his fear of things going wrong if he did so is even more persuasive.

This fear is far from unjustified, for where God is closest the danger seems greatest. It is dangerous to avow spiritual poverty, for the poor man has desires, and whoever has desires calls down some fatality on himself. A Swiss proverb puts it drastically: "Behind every rich man stands a devil, and behind every poor man stands two."

Just as in Christianity the vow of worldly poverty turned the mind away from the riches of this earth, so spiritual poverty seeks to renounce the false riches of the spirit in order to withdraw not only form the sorry remnants – which today call themselves the Protestant Church – of a great past, but also from all the allurements of the odorous East; in order, finally, to dwell with itself alone, where, in the cold light of consciousness, the blank barrenness of the world reaches to the very stars.

We have inherited this poverty from our fathers…."

Op.cit.

The plight of the Catholic, on the other hand, is today the opposite. For he is not deprived; he is overladen with symbols which have been built into his very nerves but have no relevance to modern life. If he has luck (shall we call it luck?), he may live to the end encapsuled in his Nicene Creed (of the date 325 A.D.) and die, so to say, as yet unborn from the womb of Holy Mother Church. But if the walls of his Church break apart, ha faces a problem.

His problem then is either to liquidate in himself the structuring mythology of his life, or else somehow to unbind its archetypal symbols from their Christian, pseudo-historic references and restore to them their primary force and value as mythological-psychological universals – which in fact has been the typical effort of unorthodox Catholic thinkers in the West ever since the military victory of Constantine and the enforcement, then, by Theodosius the Great (r. 379 – 395 A.D.) of one incredible credo for the Western world.

Dogma (states Jung) take the place of the collective unconscious by formulating its contents on a grand scale. Mankind has never lacked powerful images to lend magical aid against all the uncanny things that live in the depths of the psyche. The iconoclasm of the Reformation, however, quite literally made a breach in the protective wall of sacred images. When man starts thinking about them, he does so with the help of what he calls "reason" – which is nothing more than the sum-total of all his prejudices and myopic views.

The structure of any completely unfolded, well-considered mythological system – be it Byzantine or Gothic, Hindu, Buddhist, Polynesian, or Navaho – is harmoniously beautiful and of Apollonian clarity, and at the same time fully electrified with experienced (though not necessarily rationalized) life significance and radiance. A dissociation between the inward, sense-giving structure and the outward context of life, sets in motion a regenerating interplay between inward symbolic imagery and outward literal fact – a search for an attitude to life.

Op.cit. (1)

As the proclaimed antagonist of instinct and the self-appointed corrector of those unconsidered modes of life that are inspired not by intellect but by impulse, Socratic man appears and becomes dominant at the end, not the beginning, of a culture.

Oswald Spengler, in the "Decline of the West" (1923), following Nietzsche in this observation, compared the courses of eight high culture histories (Egyptian, Sumero-Babylonian, Greco-Roman, Indian, Chinese, Maya-Aztec, Levantine, and West-European, and demonstrated that in each of these great superindividual life courses a moment did indeed inevitably arise when the critical-intellectual faculties gained ascendancy over the lyric-instinctual, at which point a brief period of enlightened creativity unfolded that always ended, however, in exhaustion, sterility, and mechanical repetition.

Goethe (who, with Nietzsche, was Spengler's leading inspiration, as he was also Thomas Mann's) outlined, in a brief study called "Epochs of the Spirit" (1817), a sequence of four stages to all culture cycles, summarized as follows:

Stage 1: Poetic, characterized by Folk belief, Instinct, Heart and Imagination;

Stage 2: Theological, characterized by Idealizing and Exaltation, Holiness combined with Reason;

Stage 3: Philosophy, characterized by Clarifying, Devaluation, Wisdom and Understanding;

Stage 4: Prose, characterized by Dissolution in Banality, Vulgarization and Sensuality.

Op.cit. (1)

As Goethe states the problem:

"The man of understanding tries to appropriate everything imaginable to his own sphere of clarity and even to interpret reasonably the most mysterious

phenomena. Popular and ecclesiastical beliefs, consequently, are not rejected. Behind them a comprehensible, worthy, useful component is assumed, its meaning is sought, the particular is transformed into the general, and from everything national, regional, and even individual, something valid for mankind as a whole is extracted. We cannot deny to this epoch the credit of a noble, pure, and wise endeavor; however, its appeal is rather to the unique, highly talented individual than to an entire folk.

For, no sooner does this type of thought become general than the final epoch immediately follows, which we may term the prosaic, since it has no interest in humanizing the heritage from earlier periods, adapting it to a clarified human understanding and to general domestic usage, but drags even the most venerable out into the light of common day and in this way destroys completely all solemn feelings, popular and ecclesiastical, and even the beliefs of the enlightened understanding itself – which might yet suspect behind what is exceptional some respectable context of associations.

This epoch cannot last long. Human need, aggravated by the course of history, leaps backward over intelligent leadership, confuses priestly, folk, and primitive beliefs, grabs now here, now there, at traditions, submerges itself into mysteries, sets fairytales into the place of poetry, and elevates these to articles of beliefs. Instead of intelligently instructing and quietly influencing, people now strew seeds and weeds together indiscriminately on all sides; no central point is offered any more on which to concentrate, but every-odd individual steps forward as a leader and teacher, and gives forth his perfect folly as a perfected whole."

Op.cit. (1)

A totally new situation developed in the suddenly flowering village world of the Nuclear Near East, immediately following the introduction of the arts of grain agriculture and stock-breeding, around 7500 B.C. No longer forced to forage for their food, people settled in established villages, the number and size of which grew; and when the richly fertile mudlands of the lower Tigris-Euphrates were entered around 4000 B.C., the rate of increase accelerated.

Villages became towns; towns cities; the first cities in the history of the world. And no longer were the functioning social units simple groups, of the order of large families, but compound, complexly functioning organisms of various specialized classes: tillers of the soil, tradespeople, governors and the governed, craftsmen of various kinds, and professional priests.

And as we have seen, it was precisely at this point of space and time, in the Near East, and specifically Sumer, around 3500 – 3000 B.C., that the evidence first appears among the ruins of those earliest city-states – Kish, Uruk, Ur, Lagash, Larsa, and the rest – first, of a disciplined social order imposed from

above by force, and next, of deliberate expeditions of military conquest against neighbors: not the mere annihilation raids of one tribe or village horde against another, in a spirit of plunder, malice, or revenge, but deliberately progressed campaigns of systematic conquest and subjugation. In the words of the Orientalist, Professor Hans Heinrich Schaeder (1896 – 1957) it was here that the world-historical process entered its phase of the programmatic exercise of power by men over men.

Op.cit. (1)

It has been the chief concern of all these power groups, in their interpretation, formulation, and enforcement then of their rites, not so much to foster the growth of young individuals to maturity as to validate supernaturally, and so render religiously unchallengeable, their own otherwise questionable authority.

Whether as dynasty, as tribe, or as churchly sect, the timeless symbols, taken over and recombined, are applied systematically, and with full intent, to the aims of subjugation through indoctrination. A "faith", as it is called, is proposed for belief.

The Waste Land is any world in which force and not love, indoctrination, not education, authority, not experience, prevail in the ordering of lives. The wicked thing about both the little and the great "collective faiths", prehistoric and historic, is that they all, without exception, pretend to hold encompassed in their ritualized mythologies all of the truth ever to be known.

Op.cit. (1)

The culture, which in its origin, in its own moment of genuineness was simple, becomes complicated. And this complicating of the inherited culture thickens

the screen between man's self and the things that surround him. Man's self is swallowed up by his cultured, conventional, social self.

There is no doubt that in the twelfth and thirteen centuries a major threshold of cultural change had been attained. The aims of the Christian conquest of Europe had been accomplished – largely by force; the power of the papacy was at its height; the crusades were in full career. And yet, from every side sounds and alarms of heresy were beginning to arise and to spread. The whole structure was cracking. For the cathedral of God's love, the Church, and the chalice of his divine blood – the vas of his self-giving on its altar – had been turned frankly and openly to sheer force.

But there was a new strong wine in ferment. Like cells released from an organism in decay, individuals, unbound, spontaneously transferred allegiances to new, unforeseen combinations. Hence, there has now spread throughout the Christian world a desolating sense not only of no divinity within (mythic dissociation), but also of no participation in divinity without (social identification dissolved); that is the mythological base of the Waste Land of the modern soul, or, as it is being called these days, our "alienation".

The sense of desolation is experienced on two levels: first the social, in a loss of identification with any spiritually compelling, structuring group; and, beyond that, the metaphysical, in a loss of any sense either of identity or of relationship with a dimension of experience, being and rapture any more awesome than that provided by an empirically classifiable conglomerate of self-enclosed, separate, mutually irritating organisms held together only by lust (crude or sublimated) and fear (of pain and death or of boredom).

Op.cit. (1)

The actual nuclear problem was already present, and recognized by many, at the very peak of that great period of burgeoning French cathedrals (1150 – 1250) which Henry Adams characterized as representing the highest concentration of moral fervor in the history of the West.

As the ravaged lives of Abelard and Heloise already had foretold as early as the first years of the twelfth century, neither human love nor human reason could much longer support the imposed irrational ordeals of an imported mythic order, out of touch with every movement of the native mind, as well as heart, and held in force only by a reign of terror. The mighty image from Asia had begun to crack, disintegrate, and go asunder.

The trend to accept the judgment of one's own experience against the authority of Scripture and the Church was emerging. The real greatness of Abelard, where he stands in majesty unsurpassed in his time, as Heloise was in the courage of her heart, was in the kingdom, rather, of reason. For it is from the period of his sensational lectures in Paris, the first years of the

twelfth century, that the beginning is dated of the end of the reign in Europe of that order of unreason, unreasoning submission to the dicta of authority.

Abelard, in his thirties, still a student under Anselm of Laon, had shocked his fellows by suggesting that one should be able to study scripture for oneself, and at their urging demonstrated his point by giving, without previous training, a series of lectures on Ezekiel that proved more popular than the master's – for which indiscretion he was expelled. In Paris, he resumed the lectures, and the fame that there accrued to him as philosopher and theologian, poet and musician (a veritable Tristan of Brittany incarnate) gained for him – alas for both! – his Heloise and their destiny of calamity.

Op.cit. (1)

The most dangerous part of Abelard's message, both for the faith which he held sincerely, and for his own personal safety, lay in his conviction that a

knowledge of God can be attained by reason – as it had been by the Greeks – and that such knowledge, consequently, is not confined to the Christian world. The doctors of the Church should be read, not with the necessity to believe, but with liberty to judge. "By doubting, we are led to inquire, by inquiry we perceive the truth", he wrote; and of those who argued that we are not to reason in matters of faith, he asked, with a cut that could not be answered:

"How, then, is the faith of any people, however false, to be refuted, though it may have arrived at such a pitch of blindness as to confess some idol to be the creator both of heaven and of earth? As, according to your own admission, you cannot reason upon matters of faith, you have no right to attack others upon a matter with regard to which you think you ought yourself to be unassailed."

Abelard was harried from pillar to post for his views, driven throughout his mutilated life from one monastic haven to another.

Op.cit. (1)

The schoolrooms in Paris in which Abelard had lectured became, within a generation, largely through his influence, the leading university of Europe. It was chiefly there that the great scholastic movement came into being, of which Thomas Aquinas (through his Summa Theologica) was to be the culminating master.

The optimistic aim of this movement had been to prove that Greek philosophy and biblical supernaturalism, reason and revelation, are not absolutely incompatible, but as far as reason reaches, in accord; revelation extending, however, beyond.

Dante, in his Divina Commedia, half a century after Aquina's Summa, represented the logic of this hierarchy of truths – natural and supernatural, reasonable and revealed – in his imagery of the two guides of his soul, Virgil and Beatrice.

Not all, however, nor even a majority, of the creative spirits of those centuries, striving to bring Moses, Paul, and Aristotle to their knees together before the tabernacle of the consecrated Host, were found by the authorities to be facing in the right direction.

On January 18, 1277, therefore, three years after Aquinas's death, Pope John XXI wrote to the Bishop of Paris, Etienne Tempier, to ascertain the number, nature and sources of the reported "errors" then being circulated in his precinct; and on March 7 of the same fateful year the bishop, accordingly, issued a stunning condemnation of no less than two hundred and nineteen philosophical propositions, which delivered the coup de grâce to philosophy as an exercise within the sanctuary of the Church. A few days later the Archbishop of Canterbury endorsed this so-called Condemnation of 1277, and on April 28 a second letter of Pope John prescribed measures for its implementation.

The condemnation of 1277 is a landmark in the history of medieval philosophy and theology. Instead of carrying on its effort to conquer philosophy by renovating it, scholasticism acted on the defensive. At that very moment, its golden age came to an end.

Op.cit. (1)

The passage of literary matter in the Middle Ages from India to Europe was considerable. An Arabic translation of the Sanskrit "Panchatantra", made in the eighth century, was carried into Syriac in the tenth, Greek in the eleventh, old Spanish, Hebrew, and Latin in the middle and late thirteenth. The image of a spoked wheel symbolic of the turning world is attested for India already about 700 B.C. in the Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads: "Even as the spokes of a wheel are held fast in the hug, so is all this on prana, the life-breath".

Clearly, the authors of these words were familiar with the spoked wheel of the Aryan war chariot, which first appeared in the world in the early second millennium B.C. A very much earlier form, however, long antedating the invention even of the old Sumerian solid wheel (around 3000 B.C.), was the almost universally known swastika, of which we have at least one example from the late Paleolithic period, as early, perhaps as about 18000 B.C.

From what we know of the temper of early cultures, it is safe to assume that the myths, rites, and philosophies first associated with these symbols were rather positive than negative in their address to the pains and pleasures of existence. However, in the period of Pythagoras in Greece (about 582 – 500 B.C.) and the Buddha in India (563 – 483 B.C.), there occurred what Joseph Campbell called the Great Reversal. Life became known as a fiery vortex of delusion, desire, violence, and death, a burning waste.

Op.cit. (1)

As the king of a late Bronze Age people of Thessaly, the Lapithai, Ixion had been a god king, symbolic of that cosmic Person who is celebrated as that one in whom all parts of the world are made fast, like spokes in the hub of a wheel; and he is here being punished by Zeus for two crimes, the first, of violence (the murder of his father in law), and the second, of lust (an attempt

to ravish the goddess Hera): i.e. the same two compulsions of desire and aggression recognized in Hindu and Buddhist thought (as well as in modern depth psychology) as the creative powers of the world illusion – which hold the world together and were overcome by the Buddha in his victory over the great lord of life named Lust and Death (kama-mara), beneath the Bodhi-tree, at the hub of the wheel of the world (the axis mundi).

The legend of Ixion is cited by Pindar (522 – 448? B.C.) in a victory ode to the winner of a chariot race. Five centuries later Virgil (70 – 19 B.C.) refers to it in the Aeneid, by which time, however, the scene of the suffering has been transferred to the underworld, where it is placed also by Ovid (43 B.C. – 17 A.D.) in the Metamorphoses. And down there, together with Ixios, are a number of other tortured characters, all symbolic, one way or another, of the agony of life: Tityos, with his vitals being torn forever by a vulture; Tantalus, tortured with thirst, teased by a water he cannot reach; and Sisyphus, shoving his huge boulder up a hill, down which it is again to roll – each tortured thus forever.

Op.cit. (1)

In the classic, popular view of these pains, they are punishments for crimes. However, as the existentialist Albert Camus, in his "Essay on the absurd", <u>The Myth of Sisyphus</u>, remarks: such figures are figures of life. The illuminated common man lives normally in hope: the belief that his labor will lead to something, or at least the knowledge that in death his pains will end. Sisyphus knows, however, that the labor of getting his great rock up the hill is to end with its rolling down again; and, since he is immortal, the absurdity of this unexhilarating grim labor will last – forever.

Sisyphus (writes Camus) watches while the stone, in a few minutes, rolls down to that lower field again, from which he is going to have to push it up, once more, to the top. And he goes down again to the plain. It is during his return, that pause, that Sisyphus interests me. A face that toils so close to stone is itself already stone. I see that man going down again with heavy but steady tread, to the torment of which he will know no end. This hour, which is like a breath of relief and returns as surely as his woe, is the hour of

consciousness. At each of these moments, when he leaves the heigths, and makes his way, step by step, toward the retreats of the gods, he is superior to his destiny stronger than his rock.

If this myth, then, is tragic (Camus goes on to say), it is because its hero is conscious. For where, in fact, would the agony be, if at each step he were sustained by hope of success? The laboring man of today works every day of his life at the same tasks, and that destiny is no less absurd. However, it is not tragic, save in those uncommon moments when it becomes conscious. Sisyphus, impotent and rebellious, the proletarian of the gods, knows the whole extent of his miserable condition. It is of this that he thinks at the time of his descent. And yet, this foreknowledge, which was to have been his torment, simultaneously crowns his victory: there is no destiny that is not overcome by disdain.

In a man's attachment to his life, there is something stronger than all the miseries of the world.

Op.cit. (1)

The question as to meaning, to be asked by the young hero of the Grail quest when he beholds the rites of the Grail Castle, is the same, essentially, as that asked by the hero of the Panchatantra fable, and its effect also is the same: the release of the sufferer from his pain and the transfer of his role to the questioner. These questions are at root the same as Hamlet's "To be, or not to be" since their concern is to learn the meaning of a circumstance thus come – to which there is no answer.

Nietzsche, in "The Birth of Tragedy", wrote of what he termed the "Hamlet condition" of the one whose realization of the primal precondition of life ("All life is sorrowful") has undercut his will to live. The problem of the Grail hero will therefore be: to ask the question relieving the Maimed King in such a way as to inherit his role without the wound. The Maimed King's wound and the agony of the revolving wheel are equivalent symbols of the knowledge of the anguish of existence as a function not merely of this or that contingency, but of being.

The common man, in pain, believes that by altering his circumstances he might achieve a state free of pain: his world being of those who want only to "bathe in bliss". Socratic man too believed that life can be trimmed somehow to reason. Hamlet learned, however, that his world, at least, had something at the heart of it that was rotten and, like Oedipus who read the riddle of the Sphinx ("What is man?"), became maimed. Oedipus, self-blinded, is equivalent to the Maimed King – and, as Freud contended, all of us are Oedipus. For this there is no cure. However, as Camus points out, Oedipus, like Sisyphus, came through his experiences of his maimed life to the realization that all is well.

Op.cit. (1)

Parzival's denunciation of God – or what he took to be God: that Universal King reported to him by his mother – marks a deep break in the spiritual life

not only of this Christian Hero, but also of the Gothic age itself and thereby Western man. In Joyce's "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" the same break is represented in essentially the same terms; for in each of these Catholic biographies (eight centuries apart), the hero's self-realization required a rejection first of his mother's mythology of God, the authorized, contemporary ecclesiastical mask, and a confrontation, then, directly with the void wherein, as Nietzsche tells, the dragon "Thou shalt" is to be slain: the void of Parzival's exit to the wilderness and of Stephen's alienation from home, and his brooding, in "Ulysses", on the mystery deeper than sea.

The local, provincial Roman Catholic inflections of what are actually archetypical, universal mythic images of spiritual transformation are, in both works, opened outward, to combine with their non-Christian, pagan, primitive and Oriental counterparts, They become thereby transformed into nonsectarian, nonecclesiastical, psychologically (as opposed to theologically) significant symbols.

Op.cit. (1)

In the Castle of the Grail, where Celtic, Oriental, alchemical, and Christian features are combined in a communion ritual of unorthodox form and sense, the young hero's spiritual test is to forget himself, his ego and its goals, and to participate with sympathy in the anguish of another life.

However, Pazival's mind on that occasion was on himself and his social reputation. The Round Table stands in this context for the social order of the priod of which it was the summit and consummation. Parzival's concern for his reputation as one worthy of that circle was his motive for holding his tongue when his own better nature was actually pressing him to speak. In the light of his conscious notion of himself as a knight worthy of the name, just hailed as the greatest in the world, one can understand his shock and resentment at the sharp judgments of the Loathly Damsel and Sigune.

However, the Loathly Damsel and Sigune were the messengers of a deeper sphere of values and possibilities than was yet known, even sensed by his socially conscious mind; they were of the sphere not of the Round Table but

of the Castle of the Grail. Parzival's decision to act in that intelligible sphere, not according to the dictates of his nature but in terms of what people would think, broke the line of his integrity.

The figure of the Loathly Damsel is comparable, and perhaps related, to that Zoroastrian "Spirit of the Way" who meets the soul at the death on the Chinvat Bridge to the Persian yonder world. Those of wicked life see her ugly; those of unsullied virtue, most fair. The Loathly Damsel or Ugly Bride is a well-known figure in Celtic fairy tale and legend. One of her manifestations in the Irish folktale of the daughter of the King of the Land of Youth, who was cursed with the head of a pig, but when boldly kissed became beautiful and bestowed on her savior the kingship of her timeless realm.

The Kingdom of the Grail is such a land: to be achieved only by one capable of transcending the painted wall of space-time with its foul and fair, good and evil, true and false display of the names and forms of merely phenomenal pairs of opposites. The transformation of the fairy bride and the sovereignty that she bestows are, finally, of one's own heart in fulfillment. Parzival's ambitions in the world needed to be harmonized with his interior life, his "intelligible character" (in Schopenhauer's term).

Op.cit. (1)

In the days when the legend of the Castle of the Grail took form, the Abbot Joachim of Floris (about 1145 – 1202) was publishing those prophesies over which James Joyce's hero Stephen Dedalus pored as a boy in "in the stagnant bay of Marsh's library", according to which there were to be, in all, three stages of humanity.

The first stage, following a dark preludium from the time of Adam to Moses, the "Age of the Father" (of Mosaic Law). The second stage, the "Age of the Son" (the Gospel and the Church). The third, to commence about the year 1260, the "Age of the Holy Spirit", when the authority of Rome was to dissolve and the world become an earthly Paradise of saints communing directly with God. Saint Francis (1186 – 1226) was a prominent figure of this time, and was thought by many to have marked the start of Joachim's third stage, through the founding of his order of friars.

This was to be a new age, of neither a chosen people nor an authorized church, but of authentic individuals, fulfilled right here on earth in truth, loyalty and love.

In Parzival the boon is to be the inauguration of a new age of the human spirit: of <u>secular</u> spirituality, sustained by self-responsible individuals acting not in terms of general laws supposed to represent the will or way of some personal god or impersonal eternity, but each in terms of his own realization of worth. Such an idea was distinctly and uniquely European.

Op.cit. (1)

Thomas Mann, in a speech delivered in Vienna om the occasion of Freud's eightieth birthday, May 6, 1936, discoursed on both the psychology and the mystery of personifications of fate:

“As in a dream it is our own will which unconsciously appears as inexorable objective destiny, everything in it proceeding out of ourselves and each of us being the secret theater-manager of his own dream; …we are actually ourselves bringing about what seems to be happening to us.”

Mann then quoted the words of Jung in his introduction to “The Tibetan Book of the Dead”: “It is so much more straightforward, more dramatic, impressive, and therefore more convincing, to see how things happen to me, than to observe how I make them happen.”

“The giver of all given conditions resides in ourselves,” declared Mann, again quoting Jung. “All phenomena merely arise from false notions in the mind,” the Buddhist sage Ashvaghosha had said two thousand years before; and Schopenhauer: “life accompanies the will as inseparably as the shadow accompanies the body, and if will exists, so will life, the world, exist.”

This correlation between will and appearance, readiness and experience, subjectivity and object – as in dream – is exactly what gives to mythic tales their quality of revelation.

Op.cit. (1)

Gawain is the basic Arthurian knight, in both his character and his adventures the closest to the Celtic sphere. Gringuljete, his horse, like many other fairy beast, was white with shining red ears and his sword Excalibur (which had been conferred on him when Arthur dubbed him knight) flashed, when drawn from its sheath, like lightning.

The knight himself increased in strength every day until noon, like the sun, after which his fighting powers declined; whence it was customary at Arthur's court, in deference to Gawain, to hold tournaments in the morning hours. "Apparently", as Heinrich Zimmer has remarked, "the knight was a solar god, masquerading under medieval armament, doomed, as ever, to expire every twilight and pass into the "Land of No Return". Like Osiris, he there became the king, the sun, of the netherworld, but, like the rolling solar disk, traversed and broke free from "the great below", to reappear reborn in the east as the orb of the new day. As in the words of professor Loomis: "That Gawain is a

counterpart of Cuchullin is one of the commonplaces of Arthurian scholarship".

In the oral, creative period of Arthurian romance – from, say, the time of the Norman Conquest to that of the Tristan of Thomas of Britain (1066 – 1160) – Sir Gawain was almost certainly the champion of that basic adventure later assigned to practically every hero of the century, the rescue of a harassed chatelaine from either an assault upon her own castle (Gahmuret and the Black Queen of Zazamanc, Parzival and Condawiramurs) or abduction to another (Lancelot's rescue of Guinevere from the castle of Meleagant).

The other great Celtic hero deed (also assigned to Lancelot) of running off with another man's wife came into Arthurian romance through Tristan, whose own court, however, was of his uncle Mark, who had horse's ears – possibly red. Arthur and his nephew Gawain, Mark and his nephew Tristan, stand for separate strains of invention, adapting related Celtic mythic themes to the modes of the French, Provencal and Norman twelfth century courts.

These embodied the whole magical world to come of Arthurian romance: the youthful dream, holding all the symbols of destiny, of the waking modern Occidental soul. Inquiring into the history and conditions of the coming-to manifestation of the mythic forms specific to modern man, we may term it the mythogenetic moment.

Op.cit. (1)

Freud, in his “Moses and Monotheism”, finds a like mythogenetic moment in the background of the desert years of the Jews, when (as he believed he had shown) they slew their Egyptian master, Moses, an event which, according to his view, occurred some time between 1350 and 1310 B.C. The catastrophe was followed by a period of forgetting, “latency”, or incubation, of which the counterpart in the classical development would have fallen between the time of the Dorian attacks upon Pylos, Thebes, and Troy (around 1250 – 1150 B.C.), and their literary transformation in the epics (around 850 – 650 B.C.).

Freud compared such moments in histories of peoples to those earliest years of childhood when the crucial imprintings occur that determine the imagery and structuring themes of our dreams: the imagery, as Jung would say, of the <u>personal</u> unconscious, based on one’s <u>personal</u> biography, through which the “grave and constant” themes of the inevitable common human destiny of growth, spiritual conflict, initiations, maturation, failure of powers, and passing, will in the individual case be inflected, interpreted and expressed.

Specifically, in relation to Arthurian romance, the precipitating catastrophe was the conquest of Christian Britain by the pagan Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, around 450 – 550 A.D. The Romans, after an occupation of four centuries, had just withdrawn. The undefended population was being harried from the north by the untamed Picts and Scots. King Vortigern of the Britons sent a cry for help to the Saxons, who, arriving under Hengest and Horsa, received a grant of land in Kent, and thence, in due time, launched their own campaign of conquest.

Arthur, apparently, was a native Briton who distinguished himself in a series of battles in the early sixth century and for a time represented the last hope of the Celtic Christian cause. The chronicle of a Welsh cleric of that time, Gildas (516? – 570), mentions a great battle at Mount Badon (in Dorset) on the day of the chronicler's birth; and in a later work (796), "Historica Britonum", by another Welsh cleric (Nennius), the name of Arthur is celebrated in connection with the same event.

Op.cit. (1)

Already in Nennius's chronicle there is evidence of an oral folk tradition rising through the Celtic "mythogenetic zone" (Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland), having as a leading theme the so-called "hope of the Britons" for a second coming of Arthur. "Originally", states Professor Loomis of King Arthur, "he was the historic champion of the Britons in their desperate struggle with the Saxons. Popular tradition came to associate his name with cairns and cromlechs, Roman ruins and crumbling castles.

He survived in the isle of Avalon or in the deep recesses of Mount Etna or in the caverns of the Welsh hills. The Cornish and Breton folk regarded him as a Messiah and awaited the day when he would return to recover their ancestral home from the Saxons.

With the Norman conquest of England, a new era dawned for Celtic bards. The Anglo-Saxon kings and courts were displaced, and a French-speaking aristocracy with strong Continental connections offered new stages and new audiences to the bards and fabulators of the older natives of the British Isles.

These were disciplined creative and performing artists, trained in the mythopoetic craftsmanship of the old Druidic Filid, which included, besides a knowledge by memory of all the basic Celtic myths, practice and facility in the arts of improvisation.

And it was these consciously creative master entertainers who, in the brief span of years between the Norman conquest of England and Bréri's appearance in the southern court of Count William of Poitiers, established along traditionally Celtic mythic lines the new European secular mythology of King Arthur and his questing Knights – of whom chivalrous Gawain was, throughout this period, the chief inheritor of such roles of fame as in the elder Celtic sphere had been assigned to the chariot-fighter Cuchullin.

Op.cit. (1)

The bards and fabulators of this time were traditionally trained master craftsmen, composing and manipulating the new pseudo-historical materials according to the inherited mythopoetic principles of a tradition long anteceding the cuts and blows of the period around 450 B.C. A world of new horizons, a new world that had to be entered, and with the mind as well as heart had to be brought into accord.

With this we have been carried fully from the oral stages to the great culminating century of Arthurian invention in roughly four stages of literary development:

1. **Anglo – Norman patriotic epics: 1137 – 1205**
2. **French courtly romances: 1160 – 1230**
3. **Religious legends of the Grail: 1180 – 1230**
4. **German biographic epics: 1200 – 1215**

Through his epochal work <u>Historia</u> (1136) Geoffrey of Monmouth did the same for Anglo - Welsh – Norman – Breton culture as the Roman poet Virgil did with his <u>Aeneid</u>. The Aeneid made the Roman Empire glorious and commended it to the intellect and imagination of the world by claiming for its founders the blood of the heroes of Troy, transforming an exiled Trojan prince into a national Roman hero.

In France, where the figure of Charlemagne had already inspired beloved national epos, Arthur as a king held small appeal. Interest shifted to his knights. And it was the court poet, Chrétien de Troyes (active in the period around 1160 – 1190), at the court of Queen Eleanor's daughter – Countess Marie de Champagne – who first put in writing the image of Arthur's court court with its Round Table. This functioned as a base from which his model knights set forth, and back to which they returned when all was done.

By Chrétien's time there was a floating body of Celtic lore available in French, both in oral and in written form, from which the poets of the age were deriving masterworks of poetic romance that stand at the headwaters of our modern creative tradition. Back of all lay Celtic myth. Next, as a consequence of historic crises, new names and personalities – Arthur, Gawain, Tristan, Mark, etc – became the focal centers around which a new folk tradition developed.

This folk tradition renewed the timeless archetypes of old: the well-known Celtic mythic and legendary patterns of hero birth and death, tragic loves and magical deeds.

Let us turn now to the third phase wherein the Grail became the vessel of the Last Supper. Over what formerly had been Celtic magic, the baptismal waters of the Church were poured, and caldrons became chalices: where Manannan Mac Lir had served the ale of immortality and the flesh of a swine that, killed today, were alive again tomorrow, Christ arrived to serve the wine of his blood and the meat of his immortal flesh. The religious legends of the Grail derive from four main works of the time: a) Joseph d'Arimathie, b) The History of the Holy Grail (L'Estoire del Saint Graal), c) the Books of Lancelot, and d) The Quest of the Holy Grail (La queste del Saint Graal).

These four, interlacing works, form the base of the third phase mentioned above, and are at the origin of the rich literature that followed.

The fourth sphere of development from the matter of King Arthur took place with the German biographical epics, around 1200 – 1215. The sense to which the matter was here applied was neither political (as in the first phase), nor of courtly ideals and manners (as in the second phase), not sacramental-eccelsiastical-ascetic (as in the third phase), but psychological in the modern sense of treating of spiritual initiations generally available in this world and inevitable to anyone seriously sensitive to his own unfolding realizations of the mystery – and impulse – of existence. Here we encounter individual biographies of the heroes, the first sheerly individualistic mythology in the history of the human race: a mythology of quest inwardly motivated – directed from within – where there is no authorized way or guru to be followed or obeyed, but where, for each, all ways already found, known and proven, are wrong ways, since they are not his own.

The Grail is the symbol of supreme spiritual value. It is attained, however, not by renouncing the world or even current social custom, but on the contrary, by participation with every ounce of one's force in the century's order of life in the way or ways dictated by one's own uncorrupted heart: what the mystics call the Inner Voice.

Op. cit. (1)

"Whereas you, Galileo, son of the late Vincenzio Galilei, of Florence, aged seventy years, were denounced in 1615, to this Holy Office, for holding as true a false doctrine taught by many, namely that the sun is immovable in the center of the world, and that thte earth moves, also with a diurnal motion,……

Therefore…, invoking the most holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ and of His Most Glorious Mother Mary,…. We pronounce, judge, and declare, that you, the said Galileo…. have rendered yourself vehemently suspected by this Holy Office of heresy…"

This judgment by the Church is dated 1630 A.D., midway between Dante and James Joyce, and it can be seen to mark the termination of an age of mythic thought that opened in the Near East about 7500 B.C.

From the development of the arts of agriculture and stockbreeding in the Near East, all the Monumental high cultures arose – whether in Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Aegean; India, China, and the New World; classical Greece and Rome; the Magian-Byzantine-Mohammedan Levant; or, finally, Gothic Europe, where, in the period of Heloise and Abelard, the Grail and Tristan poets, Joachim of Floris, Eckhart, Dante and Cusanus, the beginnings of the next great stage in the evolution of consciousness appeared.

It was perhaps no mere accident, but historically symbolic, that, at the very time when Galileo was on trial, the individualist Roger Williams (1604 – 1684) sailed away from England to the New World, arrived in Boston in February 1631, and, when banished by the Massachusetts court for expressing and teaching his opinion that the power of a state cannot properly claim jurisdiction over the consciences of men (moreover, that the king's patent to the colonists conveyed no just title to the land, which should have been bought from its rightful owners, namely the Indians), departed and with four companions founded, in June 1636, on purchased land from the Naragansett sachems Canonicus and Miantonomo, as a "shelter for persons distressed for conscience", the first secular state in history, terming himself in religion a "Seeker", and naming his city, in thanks for God's merciful providence to him in his distress, Providence.

The immediate danger to the faith lay in the astonishingly rapid development, even in the period of Aquinas, of an attitude of independent inquiry in fields that for centuries had been allowed to rest about as Aristotle had left them.

Op.cit. (1)

With the rapid increase of heresy throughout Europe from 1250 to 1650, together with the knowledge and works of science, the guardians of the authority of Rome and the Scripture were seized with a passion of anxiety that released throughout the Christian world a reign of terror matched in history only by the mass liquidations of the modern tyrant states.

In the year 1233 the Inquisition had been established and assigned to the Dominicans by Gregory IX (reigned 1227 – 1241). In 1250 Frederic II, the principal antagonist and restrainer of the papacy, died. Two years later, May 15, 1252, Innocent IV (reigned 1243 – 1254), in his bull <u>Ad extirpanda</u>, authorized the secular authorities to use torture in the scouting out of both heresy and sorcery. Alexander IV (reigned 1254 – 1261) four years later extended this privilege to the clergy.

As the one rational Christian of the day, the very learned Erasmus, remarked in his timely work <u>In Praise of Folly</u>: "The Christian religion seems to have some relation to Folly and no alliance at all with wisdom." And again: "There

are none more silly, or nearer their wits' end, than those too superstitiously religious."

The Protestant legend of the magician Faust who sold his soul to Satan was conceived and born of this madness. Historically, Doctor Johann Faust (1480? – 1540?) was a contemporary of Erasmus (1466 – 1536), Luther (1483 – 1546), Zwingli (1484 – 1531), Melanchthon (1497 – 1560), Calvin (1509 – 1564), and Henry VIII (reigned 1509 – 1547), besides the alchemist Paracelsus (1493 – 1541) and the rollicking monk Rabelais (1495 – 1553). The earliest reference to Faust is in a letter, August 20, 1507, from the Abbot Johann Tritheim (who was himself reputed to be a magician in league with Satan) to the mathematician Johann Windung, wherein Faust is named simply a fool, vain babbler, and mountebank fit to be whipped. Another contemporary ranks Faust with Paracelsus as a "wicked, cheating, unlearned" doctor.

However, it was a Protestant pastor in Basel, Johann Gast (died 1572), who in his Sermones convivales (Basel, 1543) first definitely credited Faust with supernatural gifts derived from the Devil, by whom he was ultimately carried off; the performing horse and dog by which he had been accompanied on his rounds having been his familiar evil spirits. "The wretch came to an end in a terrible manner", wrote Pastor Gast; "for the Devil strangled him. His dead body lay constantly on its face on the bier, although it had been five times turned upward." Another witness, Johann Weiher, body physician to the duke of Cleves, described Faust as a drunken vagabond who had studied magic at Cracow and practiced "this beautiful art shamelessly up and down Germany, with unspeakable deceit, many lies and great effect". The legend set going by pastor Gast soon gained in all Protestant lands almost infinite popularity. Ballads, dramas, and puppet plays appeared, as well as a proliferation of Faust books.

Op.cit. (1)

In the play by Christopher Marlowe (1564 – 1593), The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, although the biographical and anecdotical elements are retained, the moral is totally transformed – from the Reformation, one might say, to the Renaissance. For along with the rise in these centuries of a respect for experience and reason there had been unfolding (and not in Italy alone) this new appreciation of the loveliness of this world and the arts of its celebration.

These arts had, even while Luther was hurling his ink at Devils and the Papal See, come to culmination in the masterworks of Leonardo (1452 – 1519), Dürer (1471 – 1528), Michelangelo (1475 – 1564), Raphael (1483 – 1520), and Titian (1477 – 1576). Already in the period from Buridan to Cusanus – (about 1350 – 1450) – the Renaissance of delight in this world had begun to refute, in its own immediate way, the Gothic system of disparagement.

Petrarch (1304 – 1374), directly following Dante (1265 – 1321) and Giotto (1272 – 1336), is the pivotal figure of this inversion. Next follow Boccaccio

(1313 – 1375) in Italy, Deguilleville (flourished 1330 – 1335) in France, and in England Geoffrey Chaucer (1340? – 1400), in whose Canterbury Tales the wakening interest in portraiture, the features, character, motives and delights of living individuals, comes to the foreground, and the Middle Ages echoes only in their words, the folklore, saints' tales, fabliaux, and romances that they recount to each other for entertainment. It is as though the plane of serious interest had shifted from the mysteries within the alchemical vas to the lives of the alchemists themselves.

And so, too, in the visual arts. The symbolic personages of the Christian mythology, of the Fall by the Tree and Redemption by a Savior on Holy Rood, began to assume, more and more distinctly, the weight and tangibility of this physical world. Even the sensuous values of their garments acquired significance, and their settings in landscapes or in buildings became more and more fields of interest in themselves. Many an "Adoration of the Virgin" or "Baptism of Christ" is but an occasion for an interesting arrangement of superb portraits – not of saints, but of Renaissance Florentines.

Where the mythological theme is stressed, as it is in Titian's eloquent rendition of "The Fall of Man", now in the Prado, the interpretation is of the human moment – rendering a sense at once of the tragical and beautifully necessary mystery of man, woman, death, and birth, in the joys and sorrows of this world.

Op.cit. (1)

Only Angelico (1387 – 1455) retained in his work that sense of a distinction between what the Indians call the "subtle matter" of mythological forms and the "gross matter" of this earth. So that when, in the reformed spirit of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, after the Council of Trent (1545 – 1563), an attempt was made to render mythic themes in relation again to Heaven – as, for example, in "The Immaculate Conception" by Murillo (1618 – 1682), also in the Prado – the result was of neither Gothic nor Renaissance sincerity but Baroque sentimentality.

For see what had taken place! By about 1440 the art of printing from movable type had been invented, and, from his press at Mainz, Johann Gutenberg produced in 1454 and 1455 the first dated printed documents, some letters of indulgence made from type casts in a mold; then in 1456 the so-called Mazarin Bible (named from a copy in the library of Cardinal Mazarin (1602 – 1661). By 1464 there was a printing press in Italy, near Rome; by 1468 one in Switzerland, with Erasmus as the press corrector; by 1470 there was a press

in France, at the Sorbonne; by 1471 one in Utrecht, 1473 in Holland, 1474 Spain, 1476 Manchester (Caxton), 1539 Mexico City, and 1638 Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Already in the middle of the sixteenth century, since the new art seemed to be stimulating too much freedom of thought, repressive measures were introduced by Church and State alike (or rather, now, by churches and by states), and the quality of the work greatly declined. But in the eighteenth century a revival occurred, and the beautiful types of Caslon, Baskerville, and Bodoni were designed.

Henry Adams named the year 1600 – the year of the burning of Giordano Bruno – as marking the watershed of the passage from the "religious" to the "mechanical" age of mankind (cf. also our earlier similar reference to the condemnation of Galileo). Adams notes that the leading spirits of the transit actually did not realize what, in their pursuit of truth, they were doing to the armature of faith.

Op.cit. (1)

The first function of a living mythology, the properly religious function, in the sense of Rudolf Otto's definition in "The Idea of the Holy", is to waken and maintain in the individual an experience of awe, humility, and respect, in recognition of that ultimate mystery, transcending names and forms, "from which", as we read in the Upanishads, "words turn back". In the modern world, outside of the synagogues, churches and mosques, this humility has been restored. The claims of authority and illusion of special endowment, special privilege, and divine favor of these faiths have exploded (and still cause explosions!).

The second function of a mythology is to render a cosmology, an image of the universe. For this, today, we turn not to archaic religious texts, but to science. Even the briefest, most elementary review of the main crises in the modern transformation of the image of the universe suffices to remind us of the fact-world that now has to be recognized, appropriated, and assimilated by the mythopoetic imagination. Copernicus' publication in 1543 of his exposition of

the heliocentric universe created the first major conflict of science with the Holy Scripture, followed some sixty years later by Galileo's celestial researches.

The third function of mythology is in the validation and maintenance of an established order. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, followed by Sartre, maintained that the individual has to make his own choices, and take responsibility for them. The dragon "Thou Shalt!" has been slain, and the individual in now on his own. Individuality and collective faiths are still in great conflict among us, and freedom to choose is not a universally recognized right (or obligation!), but the psychological challenges witnessed among individuals around the world, show us how Nietzsche's demons are alive and kicking today.

The fourth function of mythology is the centering and harmonization of the individual, which in traditional systems was supposed to follow upon the giving of oneself, even giving up of oneself altogether, to some or another of the authorities Nietzsche tried to swipe away. The modern world is full of survivals of these reactionary systems, in particular those of Levantine origin.

As Loren Eiseley states: "The group ethic as distinct from personal ethic is faceless and obscure. It is whatever its leaders choose it to mean; it destroys the innocent and justifies the act in terms of the future. There is no way by which Utopias – or the lost Garden itself – can be brought out of the future and presented to man. Neither can he go forward to such a destiny. Since in the world of time every man lives but one life, it is in himself that he must search for the secret of the Garden."

Op.cit. (1)

Traditionally the idea of an absolute ontological distinction between God and man – or, between gods and men, divinity and nature – first became an important social and psychological force in the Near East, specifically Akkad, in the period of the first Semitic kings, about 2500 B.C.

Before the Akkadians rose to power it was the older, Neolithic and Bronze Age mythologies of the Goddess Mother of the universe - in whom all things have their being, gods and men, plants, animals and inanimate objects alike, and whose cosmic body itself is the enclosing sphere of space-time within which all experience, all knowledge, is enclosed – that men placed themselves in.

These mythologies were suppressed and set aside in favor of those male-oriented, patriarchal mythologies of thunder-hurling warrior gods by the time a thousand years had passed after the Semitic kings had arrived. By 1500 B.C., at the time the Aryans arrived, these patriarchal mythologies had become the dominant mythologies of the Near East.

The Aryan warrior herdsmen, driving downward from the north into Anatolia, Greece, and the Aegean isles, as well as west to the Atlantic, were also patriarchal in custom, worshiping gods of thunder and war. In contrast to the Semites, however, they never ranked ancestral tribal gods above the gods of nature, or separated divinity from nature. Whereas among the Semites in their desert homeland, where nature – Mother Nature – had little or nothing to give and life depended largely on the order and solidarity of the group, all faith was placed in whatever god was locally recognized as patron-father of the tribe.

Op.cit. (1)

"All Semitic tribes", declares one distinguished authority in this field, the late Professor S.H.Langdon of Oxford, "appear to have started with a single tribal deity whom they regard as the divine creator of his people". The laws by

which men lived, therefore, were not the laws of nature, universally revealed, but of this little tribe or that, each special to itself and derived from its own mythological father.

The outstanding themes of this Syro-Arabian desert mythology may be summarized as containing the following features:

1. **Mythic dissociation: God is transcendent in the theological sense, and the earth and spheres are in themselves not divine.**
2. **The notion of a special revelation from the tribal father-god to this group.**
3. **A resulting communal religion inherently exclusive, either as in Judaism, of a racial group, or, as in Christianity and Islam, creedal, for and of those alone who, professing the faith, participate in its rites.**
4. **Since women were of the order rather of nature than of the law, they did not function as clergy in these religions. The idea of a goddess superior, or even equal, to the authorized god was inconceivable.**
5. **The myths fundamental to each tribal heritage were interpreted historically, not symbolically.**

In the earlier Bronze Age order, on the other hand – which is fundamental to both India and China, as well as to Sumer, Egypt and Crete – the leading ideas were:

1. **The ultimate mystery is transcendent and immanent in all things.**
2. **The aim of religion as an experience of one's own identity.**
3. **The universe and all things within it making one order of natural law, which is everlasting, wondrous, blissful, and divine, so that the revelation to be recognized is not special to any single, super-naturally authorized folk or theology, but for all, manifest in the universe (macrocosm) and every individual heart (microcosm), as well as in the hieratic order of the state with its symbolic arts and rites (mesocosm).**
4. **Women play ritual roles, and since the universal goddess personifies the bounding power of mãyã within the field of which all forms and thoughts whatsoever (even of gods) are contained, the female power may be revered even as superior, since antecedent to the male.**

5. Since all personifications, forms, acts, and experiences make manifest the one transcendent-immanent mystery, nothing known, not even the being of any god, is substantial as known, but all are symbolic.

Op.cit. (1)

The Aryans entering Greece, Anatolia, Persia, and the Gangetic plain, around 1500 – 1250 B.C., brought with them the comparatively primitive mythologies of their patriarchal pantheons, which in creative consort with the earlier mythologies of the Universal Goddess generated in India the Vedantic, Puranic, Tantric and Buddhist doctrines and in Greece those of Homer and Hesiod, Greek tragedy and philosophy, the Mysteries, and Greek science.

Something similar appears to have occurred in China when the Shang people arrived – likewise around 1500 – 1250 B.C. – to found the first dynastic house

in that area, where formerly only a comparatively primitive high Neolithic order of village civilization had been known.

And in the Near East, where the dominant peoples were now largely Semitic (Phoenicians, Akkadians, Canaanites, Arabian, and others), comparable interactions of the female and male orders were in process. In the Hebrew sphere such interactions were resisted and from time to time severely put down. In the end the Jews – in the midst of the mixed and mixing Hellenistic world of secular science and philosophies, syncretistic mysteries, and cosmopolitan culture – retained, or rather reinvented, an exclusive tribal, desert-based mythology.

Op.cit. (1)

C.G.Jung wrote, in a paper of modern man in search of a soul:

"If it were permissible to personify the unconscious, we might call it a collective human being combining the characteristics of both sexes, transcending youth and age, birth and death, and, from having at his command a human experience of one or two million years, almost immortal. If such a being existed, he would be exalted above all temporal change; the present would mean neither more nor less to him than any year in the one-hundredth century before Christ; he would be a dreamer of age-old dreams and, owing to his immeasureable experience, would be an incomparable prognosticator. He would have lived countless times over the life of an individual, of the family, tribe and people, and he would possess the living sense of the rhythm of growth, flowering and decay."

Just so was Joyce's hero, H.C.E. ("Here Comes Everybody") in Finnegan's Wake. So too the embalmed Pharaoh in his pyramid. So each of us in the ground of his being, So Christ, the Word made Flesh.

In the way of a biological progress from infancy and dependency, through adulthood with its specific duties, on toward age and a preparation for departure – two main motives are to be recognized: first, in youth, engagement and commitment to the modes of the local culture (the ethnic motive), and, second, emotional disengagement from the role one has learned to play and reconciliation with inward self (the archetypal-individual motive).

In India these two ends served in the course of the classical order of a lifetime by dividing the life in two; the first half to be lived in the village and the second in the forest. Each half was, in turn, divided in two; the first part of each a preparation for the second, as follows:

1. **As student, practicing obedience, learning the skills and duties of one's caste (antevãsin).**
2. **As a responsible householder in marriage, fulfilling without question all of one's caste duties (grhastia).**
3. **In middle life, departure to the forest, to undertake seriously meditation (vanaprastha).**

4. **Achievement of the goal of life (moksa: “release” from the will to live) and aimless wandering thereafter, as a rootless, lifeless mendicant until the body finally “drops off”.**

Op. cit. (1)

In the West, on the other hand, we have an altogether different classical view, for which Dante’s formulation of his own ideal of the four stages of life may be taken as an example:

1. **Adolescence, the first stage, extends to the age of twenty-five. Its virtues are four: obedience, sweetness, sensitiveness to shame, and grace of body. The aim of this period is increase, and its season is spring.**

2. **Manhood, from twenty-five to forty-five, Its proper virtues are: temperance, courage, love, courtesy, and loyalty. Its aim is achievement and its season summer.**
3. **Age, from forty-five to seventy. Its virtues are prudence, justice, generosity, and affability. Its aim is usefulness, bestowal, enlightening not only ourselves, but others. Its season is autumn.**
4. **Decrepitude, where the noble soul does two things: "she returns to God, as to that port whence she departed when she came to enter upon the sea of this life", and, "she blesses the voyage she has made…as the good sailor, when he draws near to the port, lowers his sails, and gently with mild impulse enters into it, so ought we to lower the sails of our worldly activities and turn to God with all our purpose and heart; so that we may come to that port with all sweetness and all peace."**

Op.cit. (1)

Freud was concerned in his science primarily with pathology. He read the symbols of dream allegorically, as masked references to the psychological shocks sustained in infancy by the dreamer, chiefly in relation to parental figures; and in turning from dreams to mythologies, he diagnosed these, accordingly, as symptomatic of equivalent shocks in the formative past of the peoples to whom the myths in question appertained.

Jung, on the other hand, gives stress in his interpretations of both dreams and myth not so much to history and biography as to biology and those initiations into the nature and sense of existence that all, in the course of a lifetime, must endure:

"According to my view", states Jung, "the unconscious falls into two parts which should be sharply distinguished from one another. One of them is the personal unconscious; it includes all those psychic contents which have been forgotten during the course of the individual's life. In addition it contains all subliminal impressions or perceptions which have too little energy to reach consciousness. To these we must add unconscious combinations of ideas that are too feeble and too indistinct to cross over the threshold. Finally, the personal unconscious contains all psychic contents that are incompatible with the conscious attitude.

The other part of the unconscious is what I call the impersonal or collective unconscious. As the name indicates, its contents are not personal, but collective; that is, they do not belong to one individual alone but to a whole group of individuals, and generally to a whole nation, or even to the whole of mankind. These contents are not acquired during the individual's lifetime but are products of innate forms and instincts. Although the child possesses no inborn ideas, it nevertheless has a highly developed brain which functions in a quite definite way. This brain is inherited from its ancestors; it is a deposit of the psychic function of the whole human race. The child therefore brings with it an organ ready to function in the same way that it has functioned throughout human history. In the brain the instincts are performed, and so are the primordial images which have always been the basis of man's thinking – the whole treasure-house mythological motifs…" Jung used the terms

"archetype" and "primordial mages" interchangeably, to designate those formative powers of the psyche.

Op.cit. (1)

Adolf Bastian (1825 – 1905) coined the term "ethnic ideas" for the local, historic transformations of the archetypes, and the term "elementary ideas" for the archetypes themselves.

Whether as a reflex a) the natural environment, b) historic tribal or national life, c) the family triangle of Mother, Father, and Child, or d) the inevitable biological course of human maturation and aging, together with what James Joyce termed "the grave and constant in human suffering" – to what Joseph Campbell added "in human joy" – it is clear that the actual images and

emphases of any mythological or dream system must be derived from local experience, while the "archetypes", the "elementary ideas", the "roles" that the local images serve, must be of an order antecedent to experience.

The existence of instincts can no more be proved than the existence of archetypes, so long as they do not manifest themselves concretely, but they are nevertheless important concepts for navigation in our search for understanding of the psyche.

Op.cit. (1)

Nose almost touches nose in a mystical sharing of breath between god and king. With his right hand, the pharaoh, Sesostris I, wearing the pleated royal head-dress, touches the head of the creator god Ptah. Responding, the deity, mummiform to signify his immortality, embraces the king and breathes into him life, stability, prosperity and health, "all joy".

Breath animates the clay of our being. It is the lusty cry of the newborn, and the essence of wind, spirit, muse, sound. Our feeling states manifest in changes of breath, from the panicky shortness of breath to the sighs “too deep for words” of intense sorrow. Breath carries other things like disease, harsh words and rank odors. Everything “breathes”.

“The Tao is the breath that never dies. It is a Mother to All Creation, says the Tao Te Ching. Classical Greece perceived breath as something vaporous within, dewlike, sometimes visible, blending and interacting with the air.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos: Breath.

How we long to achieve the growth the tree fosters in itself, the reach and rootage, the sturdiness and balance between high and low, the way it meets each season, holding its ground, spare or blooming.

Every sort of creature nestles in the tree's sheltering, motherly branches, hides in her hollows and is fed by her substance. Our hominid ancestors were arboreal, only descending when ice ages shrank the primal forests, and the dexterity of our hands and strength of our limbs developed in our climbing and swinging from trees. We and the tree seem alike, upright in the trunk, long-armed, slender-fingered, toeing the earth.

In myths, humans are sometimes transformed into trees, and the sighing of the tree and its resinous tears are both tree-like and human and speak of endurance, entanglement, and also fixation. As we have a soul, so it seems there is an animating spirit in the tree that we have imagined as a snake, a bird, or a genie in a bottle buried at the roots. The tree shows us how, from a tiny, bare seed of potential, the self can come into existence, centered and contained, around which occur incessant processes of metabolism, multiplying, perishing and self-renewal.

See (7), Plant World: Tree.

How eerie a snake can seem. It smells with its flickering forked tongue. It hears through its skin and is particularly sensitive to low-frequency vibrations and tremblings of the earth, linking it with secret, subterranean, oracular mysteries of knowledge. The snake sees through lidless eyes covered by a transparent scale, never blinking, evoking a supernatural vigilance, like the cobra protectingly encircling the brow of the Egyptian pharaoh, or the eye of the unconscious psyche that sees where consciousness cannot, or the mesmerizing eye of the legendary hero, or the unflinching eye of death.

When the snake withdraws to shed its skin, signifying renewal, rebirth and immortality, the eye scale becomes milky, sometimes taking on an ethereal, misty blue cast as though the serpent is entering a meditative state and has access to wisdom beyond ours.

The underworld realm of the dead that snakes mythically inhabit is also the fecund ground from which new life emerges, a place of healing, initiation and revelation, dominion of the ancient Great Goddess.

See (7), Animal World, Primordial Creatures: Snake.

While Judaism and Hinduism tend to avoid bone symbolism on the grounds that anything associated with death pollutes, Christianity and Buddhism engage the image of bone as the immortal part of a person. For both, this is concretized in belief in the healing, life-giving potency of particular bones. Thus, Saint Peter's Basilica and Saint Paul's Church in Rome were built over the hallowed bones of their namesakes. In India, the cremated ashes and bone fragments of the Buddha were contained and venerated in reliquary structures, or stupas, which pilgrims visited in order to participate in the essence of the Awakened One dwelling in the bones.

Similarly, in African Gabon culture, funeral rites for a valued ancestor include exposure of the corpse until only the hard white bones remain, fragments of which are gathered in a bundle guarded by a carved sacred figurine and placed in a special hut. Here, the ancestral spirits residing in the bones are accessible for consultation.

Evoking psyche's archetypal structure of ancestral experience that supports the personality and transcends space and time, bones are also where the mythic reanimation of a dead person must begin. As part of arctic shamanistic initiations, for example, the apprentice "dies" in a dream, vision or trance and is dismembered, the bones cleaned and the flesh scraped. The skeleton is then reconstituted to support a new, shamanic embodiment that has the durability to mediate between personal and transpersonal realms.

Polar hunting peoples also avoid breaking the bones of slain game animals; rather, the bones are buried in anatomical order, ensuring the animal's forgiveness, reconstitution in the spirit world and willingness to be killed in future incarnations.

The symbol of the "skull and crossbones", consisting of the cranium and two crossed femurs (the longest and strongest bones in the body), came to warn of death on bottles of poison or on flags of pirate ships, yet the image probably originated as a symbol of eternal life.

See (7), Human World, Human Body: Bone.

Quetzalcoatl, a serpent ("coatl") feathered with the iridescent green plumes of the quetzal bird of tropical Central America, winds its way like a bright thread through almost 1500 years of Mesoamerican history. Through the rise and vanishing of empires, great migrations and conquests, the sacred image was carried and reimagined as new civilizations arose, gaining new meanings yet maintaining its form and its benevolence. The image of Quetzalcoatl married the snake and the bird, earth and heaven, the devouring, germinating powers of earth and the fertilizing, ordering powers of the sky.

The earliest images of Quetzalcoatl link this green dragon with the fertility of the plant world and the springtime, when the earth, like the snake's scales, is covered with feathery green. The earth was feathered with sprouting cornstalks, which miraculously sprang from seeds placed in the cold dark ground. The earth's great maw was thought to swallow seeds, and also to devour the setting sun and the stars, yet they returned as corn and other food-giving plants, and as the sun at daybreak and the rising stars. Ensuring

this miracle of new life arising from death required continuing blood sacrifice to the underworld powers. Quetzalcoatl is an image of the divine incarnated in temporal life-forms, delivering and suffering birth and death.

Later civilizations combined new meanings with the image of the plumed serpent. He became the wind god of earlier traditions and was known as the fertilizing wind that sweeps before the rains. In the later cultures Quetzalcoatl also became one with the planet Venus, which had long been a wonder to Mesoamerican astronomers for its periodic disappearances from the earth's view, "dying", and returning now as morning, now as evening star.

Now empowered with the forces of earth and sky, fertility, rain and the luminous star, the plumed serpent became an image, like the mighty dragons of eastern mythology, of the power and majesty implicit in the joining of opposites of heaven and earth. His image became the emblem of king, emperor, and high priest – carved into great temple columns and undulating around the walls of palaces.

See (7), Spirit World, Mythical Beings: Quetzalcoatl.

Thank goodness for the moon's inconstancy – the loveliness, the fearsomeness, the portentuousness of its measured concealments and revealments; the apportioned variability of its shadow and light. How reassuring the cadence of lunar time, its allowances for increase and necessary diminishment. How potent the nocturnal predominance of the moon and of the particular mode of consciousness we think of as "lunar". How myriad are the moon's enchantments: the way that objects and spaces, ordinary by day, assume a cool essentially under moonlight; the way the moon will reflect itself in a river, and in the innumerable mental, emotional, and physical liquidities of living beings. The way that ocean and sea are "kneaded by the moon"; how it soothes, as "nurse of the dew", the fiery excesses of the sun. The way the moon "hangs in the vacant, wide constellations"; how its resplendent currencies can incite to creative, spiritual, magical, sexual, prophetic and lunatic disposition.

The celestial body nearest to Earth, the moon's kinship with the planet is evident in the dominions of the ancient lunar deities. Embodied in the progenerative "Bull of Heaven", or in the cow-headed Hathor, whose milk nourishes the world, in Nana-Sin the celestial physician, or black-cloaked Isis, whose "misty radiance nurses the happy seeds under the soil", the moon presides over conception, pregnancy and birth, over the agricultural cycles of sowing and reaping, over every kind of coming into being.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos: Moon.

Olive trees perpetually renew themselves from their roots. The olive was the tree of life for the ancient peoples of Greece and Rome, the Biblical Hebrews and the Muslims. Its fruit, its oil and its wood provided food, light, medicine, fuel and building materials. Evergreen olive branches, their leaves green on one side and silvery gray on the other so that they shimmered in the sun,

crowned brides, war heroes and athletic victors who embodied the immortals. Olive oil anointed kings, holy objects for ritual and sacred spaces, and lighted the lamps of home and temple for centuries. Those who approached the Asclepian sanctuary of healing at Epidaurus came "crowned with the wreath of the pure olive", signifying transcendence of destructive forces and rebirth.

Before going to Crete to slay the Minotaur, the legendary Theseus dedicated to Apollo an offering with branches from the holy olive tree on the Acropolis. Olive garlands and branches were common in the worship of Zeus and at the Panathenaea, the games honoring Athena, warrior-goddess of the city-state.

See (7), Plant World, Trees: Olive Tree.

Quintessential saviors of the shipwrecked and drowning, dolphins are the nimble "sea-people" who can be relied upon to buoy us up and carry us back

to shore, protect us from marine marauders, keep us company in our long passages through treacherous channels and, if we're lucky , escort our ships out of trouble before they founder in the first place. The reason for wild dolphins' long history of beneficence toward us is a mystery, but their role as our rescuers from imminent submergence is attested in outer reality as well as in our dreams.

There is something suggestive in the similarity of the Greek words for dolphin (delphis) and for womb or uterus (delphys). Just as the goddess Aphrodite is born from the surf and often shown on the back of a dolphin, the streamlined creatures who are so conspicuously attuned with their marine world are emissaries of the womb of ocean, where all life arose and to which the whales, rare among mammals, returned to live after having spent some evolutionary time as earth dwellers.

See (7), Animal World, Water Creatures: Dolphin

Subject to the stern law of gravity, everything the world falls: snow, rain, leaves, unsteady toddlers. In our dreams, myths and fairy tales we fall from walls, trees, towers, airplanes, from the chariot of the sun and from heaven itself. We wish to rise, we yearn to fly; we fear falling. Perhaps we fear that, like Humpty Dumpty, we could never be mended if we should fall.

Falling is not something normally sought for. Out of control, we are catapulted into a new state. Even slumbering is “falling asleep”. Mysterious birth contractions forced us all out of the comfort of the womb as we fell into life. Unknown inner forces throw us about as we fall in love. At times, like Rapunzel in her tower, we know that our life is an imprisonment and the fall is a release, if a painful one. More often, though, the fall feels like a loss and a divine punishment, and our myths picture it, like Adam and Eve’s loss of Paradise, as a result of disobedience.

We fall when we are above the ground, on head trips, above our natural human state. Getting up too high is risky. The view and the perspectives are thrilling. We start to believe that we are more than we are – more special, wiser, more powerful, more important. Then the danger of falling looms. The angel Lucifer who rebelled against God’s authority and was thrown out of heaven is an image of this. Pride, we say, goes before a fall. Humility is safer. Our religions tell us to fall to our knees or to the floor of the mosque, acknowledging powers greater than ourselves.

See (7), Human World, Movement and Expression: Falling.

The mandala is one of the best known symbols associated with Tantric Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhist literature speaks of three closely interwoven levels, the so-called outer, inner and alternate mandala. The outer mandala comprises the outward appearances of the whole human environment, i.e. the universe. The inner mandala is made up of those who live in this environment, human beings. They correspond exactly in composition, construction and inner periodicity to the outer mandala. The alternate mandala is the teaching of these analogies and correlations as well as the resulting yoga practices.

Mandalas can be two-dimensional or three-dimensional and may be constructed out of a range of materials including paper, pigments, metal, cloth and even colored powder. Mandalas may also serve a variety of functions as contemplative aids in visualization meditation, as instructed tools, as ritual objects and even as protective talismans, to name just a few.

Almost all mandalas (Tibetan: dkyil-'khor) familiar today display one or more concentric circles ('khor) in the center (dkyil). About a round, central disk, in the middle of which there sits or stands a deity – sometimes with a partner – an even number of deities are set in an additional circle. These figures are the assembly or entourage of the central deity of the mandala.

In the great majority of mandalas the innermost sacral area is surrounded by a square. This is none other than a building or the ground plan of a palace. In its structure, the mandala palace recalls the religious architecture of India. The Indian temple offers an image of the world, a complete imago mundi. In drawing the basic lines of a Tantric Buddhist mandala these classical Indian instructions are still followed today. Because of its perfect form and content the mandala serves as a frequent model for temples and monasteries in the Himalayas and Tibet, but also the Borobudur in Indonesia has a clear mandala structure. Each sidewall of the palace corresponds to one of the cardinal directions and displays its characteristic color. The center is considered to be the fifth cardinal point.

See (7), Spirit World, Rituals and Sacred Systems: Mandala.

Ancient and primal, the ocean is our mother of mothers, the Great Round within whose fluid containment life began and from whose fertile precincts the first bold pioneers settled out upon the sand. For eons her “wild and clear call” has summoned poet and Argonaut, contemplative and castaway to the “dark glory” of her nurturing, mysterious reaches.

You can be lulled like a cosmic child in the cradle of her shoals, just as the ego surrenders to the universal mergence of sleep and dream. You can be lifted on a rearing whitecap, or borne on a wave of creative inspiration, and be carried shoreward with transporting exhilaration. You can be cleansed by the arctic ice of her impersonal majesty, baptized in the radiations of her phosphorescent fire. Just as her innumerable progeny, flashing their lamps now here, now there, will light your way over her darkness, so on the mythic night sea journey, the glittering, intuitive, “living lights” in the psyche will help negotiate the depths.

We are droplets in the vast liquidity of the sea, and just as the ocean can swallow whole our titanic ships and airplanes, so our little vessels of human consciousness are liable to engulfment by the deepest waters of the psyche. Its vital energies can loom like mythical sea monsters: sucking us up, spitting us out, dismembering us. The churning of its abyss can activate archetypal epicenters of potentially shattering force. Shipwrecked by the elemental dynamism of emotional storm waves, we sink into a bottomless, cold, sepulchral gloom that no ray of sunlight can penetrate. The teeming abundance at the ocean's sunlit surfaces can detonate a pandemonium of competing appetites.

See (7) Creation and Cosmos, Water: Ocean.

A garden begins with the intimacy of a hand touching the earth, sifting and turning the soil, scattering seed or burying tubers, absently plucking one form

of vegetation to give breathing space to another. We plant, tend and nourish gardens, gather and prune them, all the while negotiating the claims of nature's forces. We must be observant, mindful of the garden's needs. The garden expresses fusion, secrets, changeability, possibility and an "exchange between the self and the atmosphere".

Gardens, in turn provide us with food, herbs, and medicinals. They nurture us with the fragrance of flowers, soil, mulch and compost, the vividness of colors and shapes, the interplay of the elements, the presence of songbirds, small animals, humming insects and stirrings in the dark.

Most often gardens are set apart from the pressures of ordinary life for pleasure and contemplation. In many languages the word for garden signifies enclosure, bringing to mind walled gardens, secret gardens or mythical gardens – hidden, supernatural worlds transcending time and disorder. The garden paradise is the imagined locus of our beginning and end, the original matrix and mandala of life, fed by underground sources of living waters.

The Garden of Eden, the Elysian Fields, the Pure Land or Western Paradise of Buddhism, the Garden of the Hesperides where Zeus and Hera were wedded are all enclosed paradisial garden worlds whose inhabitants are divinely protected. The paradisial garden variously reflects our fantasies of an idealized inner space of potential wholeness and hidden design, or a preconscious state of innocence and harmony.

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Garden.

From ancient times the butterfly, psyche, has signified not only the mystery of physical metamorphoses, but also the loveliest transmutations of the soul.

There are more than a hundred thousand known species of butterflies and moths. All over the world the beauty of the butterfly, its winged nature and breathtaking release from a pupal cocoon have symbolized the soul reborn out of chrysalislike containment. The butterfly is one of our most poetic images of psyche's self-renewal beyond even traumatic endings.

Australian aboriginies imagined butterflies as returning souls that entered the afterlife in the form of earthbound caterpillars. To the Aztecs butterflies represented the heroic souls of sacrificed enemy warriors or of women who died in childbirth. Emblematic of their doomed suffering was the goddess Itzpapalotl, a star deity depicted as a butterfly surrounded by stone knives and associated with the eclipse of the sun. In the East, the quiescent but transforming pupa has seemed a model of "spiritual evolution through serene contemplation".

See (7), Animal World, Arachnids and Insects: Butterfly/Moth.

A bird – the weaver of nests – is perched in a tree opposite a serene Mayan weaver, perhaps the moon goddess Ixchtel herself. A simple back-strap loom made of two branches join tree and woman as she uses her body to hold the proper tension.In many cultures the upper crossbeam of the loom is called the "beam of heaven", the bottom representing the earth, as if in between the world is being woven into creation.

In early myth Ixchtel was a spider, drawing the thread from her own body, and it was from her that humans learned the craft of weaving. Each morning her webs appear on earth, as magical as the drops of dew that cover them. When the Zuni see a beautiful piece of weaving they say, "Did you touch the spider's web?".

In all myth, the art of weaving originated in the divine world and this is why some small mistake must be woven into the pattern, to remind us of the imperfection in all created life. Arachne, an unfortunate young weaver, learned this the hard way as she eventually was turned into a spider as punishment after winning a contest over Athena, the Greek goddess who taught humans weaving and all crafts. Arachnids, the family of spiders, still bear her name.

See (7), Human World, Fundamentals of Work and Society: Weaving/Spinning.

The jackals seen prowling at twilight and sniffing at bones around ancient Egyptian necropolises provided a natural source for the image of the god Anubis, the jackal-headed psychopomp of the dead and overseer of Egypt's

nearly 4000 years long experiment in human mummification. Anubis may derive his name from the bandages that were wrapped around mummies like the horizon wrapped around the visible world – the threshold to the invisible land of the dead in the west where the sun sank into the underworld. Here Osiris ruled; to survive in his blessed realm, the physical body itself had to be preserved just as the body of Osiris had been preserved in ancient myths. Failure to do so doomed the deceased to annihilation.

The prehistoric inhabitants of the Nile valley had long observed that the desert naturally preserved the dead, virtually petrifying their skin and bones after three quarters of a corpse's weight was absorbed as water into into the Sahara's dry sand and heated air. But after the corpses of royalty and aristocrats came to be entombed in coffins, their recognizable features were dissolved into putrefaction, horrifying the Egyptians who believed that for the departed *ba* soul to return to reanimate the body, it must be able to recognize its own physical counterpart. Thus, mummification – a seventy day procedure developed to preserve the appearance of the deceased – came into practice.

The desire to preserve the human body after death was not confined to ancient Egyptians. In China and Incan Peru, as well as in the Old Testament and certain Buddhist sects, traces of this practice are seen. Symbolically, mummification suggests a preparation for psychic rebirth. The ego's former way of being, its sovereign strivings mortified, has been rendered inanimate and immobilized. A delicate psychic process begins, a synthesizing of old and new, visible and invisible, light and darkness, conscious and unconscious. It is a deeply introverted state in which occurs the coherent re-membering of things informed by unconscious energies and yielding, ultimately, to the "breath" of a reconfigured engagement with life.

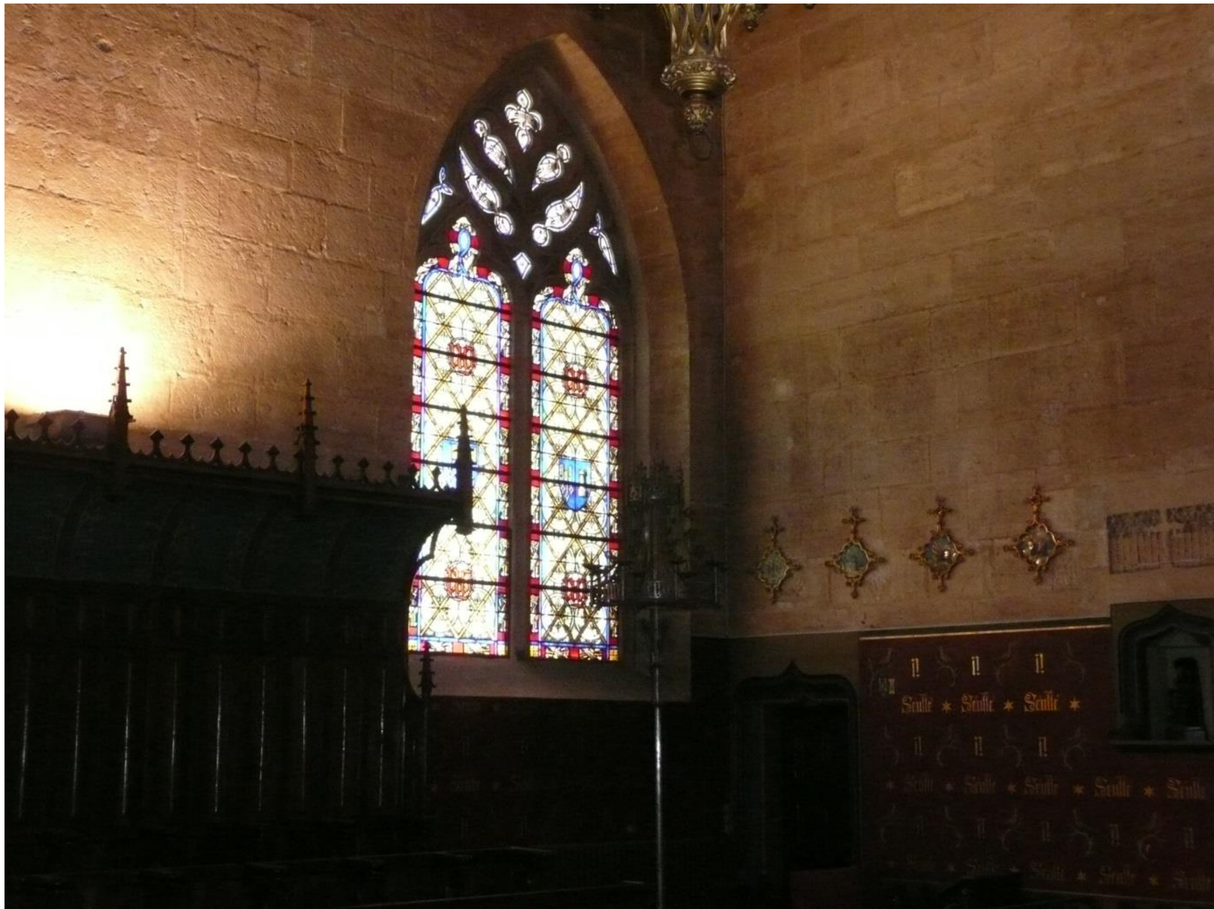
See (7), Spirit World, Sickness and Death: Mummy.

Tutankhamun's tomb contains a small ivory headrest. To ancient Egyptian eyes, this headrest pictured a vast landscape. Shu, the god of air, lifts a support for the king's head, which was imagined as the sun. On either side are lions, whose backs were thought of as mountains rising at the east and the west ends of the world. So Shu, as air, fills the space between earth and heaven, keeping the sky from falling onto the earth. As well as keeping them separate, air was a mediator between earth and sky, bringing prayers up to heaven and light and divine commands down to humankind.

Air can be descriptive of quickness of mind, imagination, ideation and abstraction, or, on the other hand, a lack of true substance or ground. Alchemically, however, air is associated positively with sublimation, the elevating of the concrete to its symbolic meaning. Air has to do with space and perspective. Egyptian Shu's original role was to separate Nut and Geb, heaven and earth, so that the discriminated forms of creation and consciousness might come into being.

Air is about relationship as opposed to identification. When the psychic environment is too "close" or suffocating, or when one is compulsively immersed, we speak of taking a breather, catching our breath, or getting some air. Paracelsus, the sixteenth century physician and alchemist, wrote that humans are composed of two kinds of life forces, the natural and "the aerial, wherein is nothing of the body". Jung translated this to mean that we experience a psychic reality as well as a physiological one. Shakespeare, writing at approximately the same time as Paracelsus, gave the name of Ariel to the mercurial agent of fantastical happenings in The Tempest.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Air – Wind and Weather: Air.



The Indian sacred lotus is a pink perennial water flower. Like other lotuses, its roots sink into the murky soil of a pond or river bottom. From there, stems rise above the water surface to present bright flowers to the sun.

In Egyptian myth, a lotus emerges out of the dark waters of the primeval sea as emblem of the spirit of life. Luminous and fragrant, disclosing, sometimes as a divine child, the sun god Re; in the form of the beautiful blue lotus of the Nile valley, it is sacred to the goddess, the womb from which golden life arises. The yearly flooding of the Nile was a repetition of this "first time" when the waters receded to reveal the first shallows out of which a lotus flower could bloom to support the sun-god.

"Mud-born" (pankaja) is a Sanscrit poetic term for the Indian lotus. As a poetic image and visual icon, the lotus symbol evokes the realization that all life, rooted in mire, nourished by decomposed matter, growing upward through a fluid and changing medium, opens radiantly into space and light. The mire and fluidity symbolize the grosser, heavier qualities of nature, including the mind's nature. The flower, beautifully multipetalled, symbolizes the array of subtler, more lucid qualities, with golden hue, the radiance of spirit, at its center.

As is typical for Hindu and Buddhist sacred images, Akshobya, Buddha Imperturbable, sits on a lotus throne and manifests spiritual luminosity. He touches the ground as his witness that the samsaric world, all that arises and passes away, does not disturb him. And yet he is not separate from it. Just as a lotus lives in a murky mud-bottomed pond, so nirvana, of which he is an image, is not apart from samsara, nor samsara from nirvana. The Sanscrit mantra of "the jewel in the lotus hum" expresses this seating of the Buddha-mind, the enlightened jewel, in the psychophysical world.

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Lotus.

The earliest known rendering of an owl is about 30 000 years old and appears on the limestone wall of the Chauvet Cave in southern France. With its ear tufts, round face and vertically barred body, the image strongly suggests the large eagle owl that was common at the time on the Eurasian continent. These owls are the greatest raptors of the night, as eagles are of the day. With large eyes evolved for acute perception in near darkness, ears that can locate the rustle of a rodent in total darkness, and wings softly feathered at the tips to be silent in flight, they quietly await their prey, descend without warning and seize it with uncanny suddenness and finality.

It is not surprising that owls have become symbols of both acute awareness – the invisible see-er in the dark, the bird of crafty skill that accompanies Athena – and of the stunning power of death: mortal terror of the stealthy visitor in the night.

In Germany and Eastern Europe, an owl alighting on a dwelling or a barn is deemed to foreshadow an imminent death, and this association extends

across most of the world, including for example, the alliance in Native American Mythology of the owl with Skeleton Man, god of death. But as often, the powers of death are also the powers of transformation, and the owl is symbolically bound to the renewal of life that is mythically implicit in death. One of the strongest of these associations is in renderings of the Great Goddess with owl features or companions. There are many such images, in pottery, sculpture and other artifacts made over a period of several millennia, both prehistoric and later.

These early connections of the owl to feminine fertility and regeneration as well as to death suggest that Athena's positive qualities as patron of both the martial and civilized arts are grounded in the older wisdom of the Goddess for whom death is as much the soil of life as darkness is the bed of day.

The ambivalence of a creature who sees and hears with superhuman talent and takes prey in the night by stealth naturally gives rise to images of mysterious power. The owl is a regular familiar of witches and the world of magic, and is illustrated often in their company. It is also a common companion to shamans, who are sometimes assisted by owls in evoking the spirits. In folklore, tribal tradition and mythology the owl's natural history invites us to imagine what lies beyond the veil of dusk.

See (7), Animal World, Birds: Owl.

The sun wheel is a version of the mythic circle of totality and its hub, or eye, the ambivalent center manifest in the fiery, seed-germinating, creative rotation of the rim. The rayed spokes of the great solar wheels of ancient cultures divide the cosmic whole into measures of time or space, the four seasons, phases of the moon, element or cardinal directions, the eight-petaled lotus, emblem of continuous renewal, the 12 months of the zodiac and their ancestral configurations and transits, the whirling of the changeable about the hub of eternity.

The wheeling of the stars around the pole sets in motion the cycles of nature and the course of a life. Or in Tibetan Buddhism the Wheel of Life portrays rebirth as the succession of different states of existence, all in the grip of the monster of impermanence. Tarot's Wheel of Fortune signifies turns of destiny, and order, extension, time and duration. In the wheel-like circulatory process of the alchemic opus is implied mystic peregrination, ascents and

descents, sublimation and coagulation, one moving into the other until synthetized at the hidden center.

Eventually bringing the heavenly wheel down to earth, humans discovered that logs or round stones could be made into sledges for moving heavy objects, that grooves and fixed axles in these primitive wheels increase their efficiency and stability. The oldest excavated wheel, from Mesopotamia, is approximately 5500 years old.

See (7), Human World, Tools and Other Objects: Wheel.

"When Gregor Samsa woke up one morning from unsettling dreams, he found himself changed in his bed into a monstrous vermin."

Thus begins Kafka's Metamorphosis, a chilling vision of modern man's transformation into a state of irreparable estrangement and alienation.

Gregor was a man whose inner being had become completely alien to him, a burden threatening his existence. This psychological rift caused a terrifying metamorphosis, a destructive transformation of the self into something totally "other", where what should house the creative imagination had become a brittle carapace, a mere façade.

Usually evoking the notion of soul's or psyche's liberation or true incarnation, the symbol of metamorphosis itself rests on an ancient vision of the essential unity of being, reflected in the multiplicity of form and structure that psyche and matter can assume.

Images of this process of transformation have themselves undergone change as in the image of a caterpillar undergoing metamorphosis into a butterfly. In early Egyptian, classical and Celtic mythology metamorphosis meant transformation by magic or sorcery, often the result of punishment, revenge or reward by the gods.

Mythology abounds with stories of gods changing other beings into humans, animals, even trees, rivers and flowers. These transformations gave shape to a variety of psychological dynamics, as in Ovid's tale of overweening pride, where the master weaver Arachne was changed into a spider by Athena as punishment for daring to challenge the goddess to a contest of skills.

Metamorphosis also depicts the personality in the process of individuation, as in the lovely story of Pygmalion and Galatea, Ovid's tale of metamorphosis wrought by love and art. In our image we see the renowned but unhappy sculptor Pygmalion, who finally fell deeply in love with his beautiful, lifelike creation, Galatea. He worshipped and adored her, but despite his talented efforts she remained just a statue. In the throes of passion and despair he prayed to the goddess Aphrodite to bring her to life. As a reward for his devotion to love and beauty, the goddess answered his prayers.

See (7), Spirit World, Soul and Psyche: Metamorphosis.

Solstice is a turning point. The sun "stops" at its zenith in the summer solstice of late June in the northern hemisphere, and at its nadir in the winter solstice of late December; it is "that curve which forms the golden swing in the sky".

In these countervailing extremes of light and darkness we see the evocation of a limit reached in the arc of a life, a mood, a capacity, or in the hegemony of consciousness or unconscious. The Midsummer Night of the summer solstice is a night of fairy magic and dream, earth's extravagant, sun-imbibed bloom and the lust and tenderness of lovers.

Since ancient times, traditional celebrations – roundels, or circular dances, feasting, the lighting of bonfires – on the summer solstice mark this longest day and yearly pinnacle of the sun's intensity. At the same time, the summer solstice signifies the reaping of the first harvest and the beginning of the sun's gradual descent into darkness. The winter solstice is the time of Saturn's dominion, of mown harvest, darkness, chill, death and the age-old presentiment of light's extinction. But the winter solstice is also the point

where the descent ends and the renascent begins; at the Saturnalia on this day, the role of master and slave were reversed, signifying the notion of direction inverted.

The winter solstice has been mythologized as the birth of the divine light in a time of great darkness, and the overcoming of death in the sun's eternal rejuvenation. In Ireland's New Grange, the winter solstice sun penetrates a long passageway to an inner room of intricate spirals and sun disks carved into cave walls to "capture" the new light, as one might grasp a flicker of hope or a spark of meaning, which changes everything.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Fire – Light and Darkness: Solstice.

The smooth, hard, rosy shell of the <u>pomme granate</u>, or "seedy apple", crowned by a golden aureole, opens up to reveal blood-red fruit and numerous seeds, the basis for the pomegranate's mythic dynamism

throughout the ancient Mediterranean. According to a Phrygian myth, a fertilized stone phallus engendered a hermaphroditic being, Agditis, who, castrated by the gods, became the goddess Cybele; from the blood of the castration sprang the first pomegranate tree. The priests of Attis, a castrated son-lover of the earth goddess, carried pomegranates in their hands or wore them heads in wreaths. Along with the fig and apple, the pomegranate is associated with the underworld and the mysteries of death, conception and rebirth of vegetation, personified by divine young men and maidens.

The pomegranate's seeds and blood-colored flesh were emblematic of this eternal renewal of the life of the world in which the human initiate might also participate. The pomegranate was sacred to Hades, who seized Persephone, the daughter of the grain goddess Demeter, into the land of the dead. When Demeter in grief withheld the grain from the earth, Zeus agreed to have Persephone returned to her mother. But, because Persephone had eaten pomegranate seeds while being in the Underworld, a compromise had to be reached with Hades, whereby Persephone must spend half of the year with him as the Queen of the Dead. During this half, Demeter's grief stops plant growth on the earth.

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Pomegranate.

The roar of regal and predatory magnificence is what makes the lion, tiger, leopard and jaguar the "Great Cats". Stalkers and ambush artists, they dispatch their prey with a single spring and bite to the neck, or if it is large bring it down under the mighty force of their rippling muscles. Their prestige is not of swiftness, but strength, and lithe elegance, lusty sensuality, sumptuous pelage. Conveying protective grace and noble authority, they have inspired everything from warrior societies and shamanic magic to some of our oldest, most commanding images of majestic divinity.

Lions are associated with gold, solar splendor, heroic survival and the sunlike magnanimity and compassion of savior and sovereign. Drawn by cave artists as early as 32 000 years ago in the Chauvet cave in southern France, groups of cave lions watch and prey over the ancient plains in striking likeness to their present-day counterparts. Living on the desert margins of Egypt, lions came to represent the sentries of the eastern (sunrise) and western (sunset) horizons and the creative energies of dissolution and becoming. The warrior

goddess Sekhmet, lioness or lioness-headed, is the watchful, sometimes raging "eye" of the sun-god Ra.

Mysterious and wraithlike, the tiger is rendered invisible in jungle, forest or high grass by its irregular body stripes, horizontal leg patterns and intricate face markings. The tiger signifies the stature and ferocity of the professional or momentary warrior, the pure capacity to spring into action at the critical time. On its black forehead markings every tiger carries a pattern identical with the Chinese character for "king". In Chinese and later Japanese traditions the tiger is a creature of mountainous ascent and descent, and evocative of the qualities of yin as west as sunset, autumn and earth. Here and not here, the tiger is like spirit or wind.

The leopard is shy and solitary, the most nocturnal of the big cats, and so elusive that the sighting of the beautiful snow leopard living at altitudes exceeding 10 000 feet, and rarely glimpsed in its natural habitat, represents the mystic god of spiritual journeys. The leopard is capable of stalking for great distances and extremely agile. Its elongated body and short, massive legs make it a nimble tree climber. It can scale up a tree 30 or 40 feet with a carcass heavier than itself in order to get out of reach of competing felines. An arboreal hunter, the leopard is associated with the magic and shape-shifting of shamans for whom the treetops were initiatory, numinous openings to the land of the spirits.

The jaguar is associated with the eclipsing of light, of consciousness undergoing encompassment by darkness and uncanny powers. Believed to den in caves, the jaguar is also linked with the underworld and its mysteries and transformations. The echo of cavernous landscapes has been associated with the voice of the jaguar and so has the bringing of fertilizing rains. In South America its hunting skills have made it "Lord of the Animals", the master of spirits.

See (7), Animal World, Wild Animals: Great Cats.

Window is a transparent threshold. It is an opening in a wall of matter that lets in air, moonlight and sunlight, the colors of the world, the dark of night. The window is where inside and outside meet and cross, bringing together two worlds and their elements. Wind rattling the windowpane. The streaking of raindrops. Passing, one sees through a window an intimate domestic scene. At the same window, another looks out with longing, lust for travel or escape.

Eyes have been called the windows of the soul and windows the eyes of a house. The "third eye" of imagination is a window on the inner world of possibility. The word window is derived from the old Icelandic vindr ("wind") and auga ("eye"). The wind-eye was originally a mere hole in the wall protected by branches or a curtain and exposed to the wind.

Windows are a framing of images resonant with psychic potency. The fairy tale "Snow White" begins in the winter with a childless queen looking out an ebony-framed window at the snow-covered ground and wishing for a child.

Ancient priestesses of ritual prostitution in honor of the goddess Astarte were often represented the image of a woman in a window. In the Middle Ages, the Virgin Mary, humbly bearing the son of God, was depicted as being receptive as a window allowing light to pass through. The icons of eastern Christianity are windows opening on the divine, a form of meditation and revelation.

By the thirteenth century, the stained glass technique made possible the creation of the great rose windows of Paris cathedrals. "Roses full of fire", brilliant with light and color, these round windows are mandalas, intimating transcendence, perfection, totality and paradisial restoration.

In ancient cultures all over the world, a window was opened at the time of death to release the soul to immortality. The "opening in the plane" that shamans experienced in trance was a window on the spirit world, a linking of visible and invisible realms.

See (7), Human World, House and Home: Window.

Ganesha, perhaps the favorite among the Hindu gods in contemporary India, is a study in contradictions. There are numerous myths of his origins and history, which – in the Indian way – include many contradictions. However, the conjunction of animal and human, of wise, mature elephant head and dwarf or toddler's human stockiness is characteristic.

In one common myth of Ganesha's origins, he is the offspring of Shiva and Parvati, but in an unusual way. Shiva, the powerful deity of both destruction and restoration, the ascetic and yet also actively erotic god whose consort is Parvati, has refused to give her the son she desires. When he is absent in ascetic retreat, Parvati makes her own son from the dirt of the earth rubbed off her body, and loves him passionately, for he is solely hers. As the boy grows up, she appoints him guardian of her private and sacred bath, and instructs him to keep out all visitors. When Shiva suddenly returns and desires to join his consort, Ganesha opposes him, angering him until in fury he beheads the youth with his sword. Parvati is so distressed that Shiva is

compelled to seek the first head he can find to restore the youth to life, and then Ganesha owes the elephant half of his being to Shiva. But his human body is so young he is no sexual threat, despite Parvati's ambiguous attraction to him.

Having had his dual origin as guardian of a threshold, Ganesha is the Lord of Beginnings, invoked at the start of every new endeavor. He is called Gatekeeper, and his image is placed at the doorways of homes and temples, mediating the realms of sacred and profane space. He is Lord of Hosts (the multitudes of Shiva's deities), the remover and the placer of obstacles.

While Ganesha is generally propitious, he must be attended with offerings, especially the sweetmeats he loves with childlike gluttony. Hearing the prayers of all, his large ears are like winnowing fans that sift out the true and essential from the false and inessential. His gifts include the head powers of the elephant – wisdom, memory, feeling – rather than those of the natural and wild body. His intelligence suits him as the deity of writers (his broken tusk is sometimes used as a pen). His vehicle (or mount) is the rat, who represents on a smaller scale Ganesha's elephant skill, for the rat makes its way through all obstacles into the security of the granary.

Ganesha's compromised body, lacking the phallic authority of adult masculinity, has probably contributed to his popularity. Though he is demanding of attention, he conveys a childlike neediness or human woundedness more than the awesome terror of a distant god.

See (7), Spirit World, Mythical Beings: Ganesha.

Fuji is the "center of the world" in a country that is 85 percent mountainous – an active volcano that is paradoxically the guardian of a nation. Originally a place for the disposal of the dead, medieval Japan's pine-covered slopes sprouted mountain shrines inhabited by yamabushi (mountain-sleepers) whose practices included ceremonial mountain climbing to absorb magical powers.

Blending indigenous Shinto with Chinese Buddhist and Taoist beliefs, these hermits meditated on the transcendent realms the mountain peaks themselves intimated. The mountain sleepers developed rituals for worshipping mountain spirits and guarding against the sudden bewitchment mountain demons. For even the most sacred of Japan's mountains, Fuji, was imagined as not only the entrance to Amida Buddha's Paradise, but also the fearful "man-hole", the volcanic vent that was the entrance to fiery hell.

The mountain is one of our very oldest images of deity, distant sky gods of thunder and rain, gods of erupting intensity, divine metallurgists fanning the

volcanic bellows of creativity. Even older, perhaps, is the mountain as the mother goddess of Asia Minor and India. The mountain is the throne from which she rules and protects, seated, immobile, eternal. Her snowmelt and rainfall stream down the mountain side, fertilizing everything. Wild animals and raptors shelter in her slopes and clefts. Rock materializes her bulk and gravity, the greatness of her thighs and breasts, her towering, gigantic, generative strength.

Gestating within the mountain's hollow, uterine interior are precious metals, an image alchemy adopted to describe the mysterious prima materia, the udifferentiated stuff we start with when we mine our depths, which gradually reveals its potential forms and values. Here, too, was evoked the dwelling of invisible, supernatural forces of potential, for the great mountain mother encompassed not only the living, but the spirits of the metals and the spirits of the dead. Epic kings like Frederick Barbarossa or the legendary Islamic martyrs, the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, were said to be slumbering, sealed inside mountains, awaiting rebirth.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Earth: Mountain.

The western European imagination associates mushrooms with mold, decay, slimy toads. “Toadstool” is the popular term for toxic mushrooms. Fantasy holds that mushrooms are to be found in witches’ brews and are the property of fairies. Or that “fairy rings” of wild mushrooms sprouting when their underground root system expands, leaving an empty center, are fairy dancing-grounds that can hold a human captive.

Generations of English-speaking children remember Alice’s classic meeting in Wonderland with the philosophical caterpillar seated on a mushroom. Alice grew taller when she nibbled a fragment from one side of it, and shorter after tasting the other side – experiences that may resonate today with that we know about mushroom hallucinations of body size.

In pre-Hispanic cults of the sacred mushroom still alive in Mexico and Central America, special mushrooms (<u>Psilocybe</u> species) are ritually eaten for the purpose of healings, divination and producing visionary states. Mushroom stone sculptures point to ancient rituals that go as far back as 1500 B.C.

Symbolically, the mushroom evokes unexpected manifestations of what is already proliferating in invisible, vegetative dimensions. What "mushrooms" into conscious life can function to enchant, expand, alter, nourish, but also to poison.

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Mushroom.

Since Paleolithic times, human beings have made the bear an object of magico-religious veneration. Clever, curious, dexterous, the bear so like a human in appearance and character. Yet it is also wild and massive, with its broad head, extended jaws, huge teeth, shaggy coat and heavy, powerful paws with five razor-sharp claws capable of tearing its prey limb from limb.

For many peoples, this largest carnivorous land mammal, able to rise up to ten feet tall on its hind legs, has represented a sacred creature that could move between worlds, often functioning as a helper to mythic heroes. There

are stories that tell of marriages between bears and humans. Many Native American tribes saw the bear as a master healer who in using plants to support its own health taught humans about their medicinal properties.

Shamans or medicine men often dressed as bears and imitated the bear's gait in their dances to take on its healing powers, or shape-shifted into bears for their spirit journeys. To don the bearskin was to become one with a superhuman, initiating ancestor often referred to respectfully as "brother" or "grandmother".

See (7), Animal World, Wild Animals: Bear.

To the imagination, every castle seems enchanted. The castle is where the sovereign power resides and, massively walled, evokes a vessel of wonders concealed by narrow apertures and impregnable stone. Originating in Normandy, the earliest entrenched fortress (Latin castrum) or fortified village

(Latin castellum) was considerably cruder than those we see from the renaissance period centuries later.

Preceding the age of guns, the castle, like its counterpart in chess, was the means of defence, and during lengthy sieges it enclosed gardens, courtyards, chapels and stores gave refuge and provision to the surrounding populace.

The notion of the castle has developed into a mysterious structure within ourselves that won't allow the sovereign value to be assailed. Children build sand castles and fantasy castles where the innermost self can live, especially if the outer circumstances are very unfavorable. Deep, watery moats and intricate bridges regulate comings and goings and secure the castle boundaries.

The seventeenth century Christian mystic Saint Teresa of Avila compared the soul to a crystalline castle of concentric circles leading to the principal chamber at the center where God and the soul are united. She noted that many go no further than the outer walls or courtyard and fail to explore the delights of the interior rooms or who dwells in the midst of the castle.

Fairy tales and the stories of knightly romance often depict the soul as a beautiful princess or queen whose presence is the fountainlike, animating spirit of the castle. Yet the shadow aspect of the castle is that the defences that insulate can also constrain. Often the lady is spell-bound by a father-magician or threatened by a wicked step-mother, or barren, hauntd, dispirited or asleep until the knight of virtue can extricate or awaken her.

See (7), Human World, Buildings and Monuments: Castle.

The labyrinth of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame is set into the central axis of the nave in such a way that the great rose window would, if folded down, almost overlap it. One cannot approach the main altar without becoming entangled in its turnings. Between the outer, spiky, coglike shell and the scalloped petals of the central flower lie intestinelike coils, circling around and back and forth in a regular pattern which moves from quarter to quarter and then from half to half, thereby tracing a cross within the circle in the form of a mandala. The cross, symbol of the death and resurrection of Christ, leads to the center, occupied by the six-petalled flower-emblem of the Virgin Mary (to whom the cathedral is dedicated), as the feminine principle. The journey of transformation involves a discovery of that reality.

The labyrinth is an ancient symbol whose convoluted form, found naturally in seashells, animal intestines, spider webs, the meandering body of the serpent, the eddying of water, the internal structure of underground caves and the whirling galaxies of space, has always been highly suggestive to the

imagination. Spirals and meanders, precursors to the labyrinth, have been found among the cave paintings of prehistoric peoples, often incised on or near goddess figurines, carved animals, cave walls and thresholds. These labyrinthine spirals indicate the symbolic passageway from the visible realm of the human into the invisible dimension of the divine, retracing the journey souls of the dead would have taken to reenter the womb of the mother on their way to rebirth.

The themes of weaving and spinning, evident in the image of the creator god Siuhu's house, whose protectively surrounding labyrinth is woven, weblike, directly into the pattern of a basket it adorns, are congruent with the idea of the fateful unfolding of life's twists and turns. Ariadne's golden thread, which Theseus unwound along his descent to slay the Minotaur, provided the "clew" that would allow him to find his way out again.

See (7), Spirit World, Rituals and Sacred Systems: Labyrinth.

Eerily beautiful sign of conjunction, a single spot of photospheric light shining through a gap on the moon's edge appears as a brilliant gem set on a band of ghostly, subdued coronal light, the so-called "diamond effect". It occurs in a total solar eclipse seconds before the moon overlies the entire surface of the sun, casting the earth into untimely nightfall.

For our prescientific ancestors who feared the permanent extinction of the sun's vital light, the less than eight minutes spent in the 2000 mph path of the umbra (shadow) of a total eclipse must have felt like an interminable time before the sun's seemingly miraculous reappearance. The wonder of the eclipse is that the apparent size of the sun and the moon are nearly identical. This is caused by the fact that the sun's diameter is 400 times greater than the moon's and at the same time 400 times more distant. The chance capacity of the moon to eclipse the sun's glowing core while revealing its fiery corona is considered by modern astronomers as one of the most sublime sights a human can witness.

Traditional cultures everywhere, however, typically perceived the sun to be enshrouded by demonic forces as the midday breezes ceased, temperatures dropped and birds began to roost. The entire village would gather to banish the baleful effects by firing arrows at the malign spirits, frightening them of with drums or torchlight, sacrificing humpbacks or dwarfs or burying lamps underground in imitative magic.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos: Eclipse.

The Egyptian date-palm is named after the palm of the hand that its fronds resemble. The Egyptian variety pollinates at dawn, creating a mist that gave rise to the phoenix legend, the mythical bird reborn in a cloud of fire, smoke and ashes in the palm's fronds. The date-palm was sacred to the sky-goddesses Nut and Hathor, who distributed food and drink to the deceased from its fronds. Nut poured out the water of immortality, while the hanging pair of date-clusters were meant to recall the breasts of Hathor – "queen of the date-palm" – to whom the ba-soul hastened after death to drink her sacred milk.

Perhaps the Mesopotamian date-palm was the prototype of the biblical Tree of Life in Eden, as earlier Sumerian cylinder-seals suggest. Later, the palm entered the Christian story. Jubilant crowds spread palm leaves before Jesus when he made his entry into Jerusalem, an event ritualized on Palm Sunday. Legend has it that when the Holy Family fled into Egypt across the Sinai, they rested under a palm tree. When Mary could not reach the tree's fruits, Christ

commanded it to bend down, whereupon the palm revealed a hidden spring and offered them drink. In gratitude, Jesus promised that its shoots would be planted in paradise.

Similarly in the Koran, when Mary experienced the throes of childbirth by a palm tree, an angel comforted her: "Your Lord has provided a brook that runs at your feet and if you shake the trunk of this palm tree it will drop fresh ripe dates in your lap. Therefore rejoice."

Jewel-like images of the palm tree, often associated with lovers. The vertical trunk suggests the lingam, the palm leaves, spreading at the crown (and sometimes containing a beautiful woman) the yoni.

See (7), Plant World, Trees: Palm Tree.

Hundreds of millions of years are carried in the archaic form of a Galapagos turtle, the dinosaur thickness of its bowed legs and wizened skin, the rugged, intricately patterned shell, able to bear 200 times its body weight and as heavy and beautiful as stone. Dignified of bearing, paced and deliberate in its rituals, a tortoise may live to an exceptionally old age. Myths and legends depict it as earth's immense antiquity, solidity, continuity and wisdom, or in its domelike upper, and flattened lower shell, comprising the totality of the cosmos. Even the rhythms that underlie the musical nature of the universe mythically originate with the tortoise, since the Greek God Hermes fashioned the first of all lyres from a tortoise shell, and gave it as a gift to Apollo.

Like other turtles, tortoises have been around at least 225 million years. Folk etymology attributes the names "turtle" and "tortoise" to the Latin Tarturus, or underworld, conveying the sense of psyche's subterranean ground supporting all the ascending levels of life and consciousness. An Iroquois myth tells how primordial water birds bring up bits of earth and place it on the back of a tortoise floating on the surface of the sea, and the earth grows and expands with the tortoise as the supporting force of the center.

In Hinduism, the world rests on the back of a tortoise as the chthonic form of the creator and preserver Vishnu. Kashyapa, Old Tortoise Man, elder of elders, is lord and progenitor of all creatures. China imagines the tortoise as mother of all the animals. Mythic lore has associated the turtle especially with the fertility and sageness of the great goddess, the moist, shadowy, lunar qualities of yin, and the primeval waters in which all things have their beginning.

See (7), Animal World, Primordial Creatures: Turtle/Tortoise.

Besides the regal hue of spiritual and secular royalty, purple possesses in itself a whole spectrum of color. Nature offers us in its fruits and flora lavender, lilac, violet, plum, grape and eggplant. There is the purple of livid wounds and the washed purples of the sun.

Fascination with a rich, vibrant color called "purple" goes back so far in history that we are not sure what the precise hue of ancient purple really was. Probably Biblical purple, used in the clothing of Hebrew priests and in tabernacle furnishings, was what we today would call crimson. The ancient Greek purple, too, was a dark reddish color thought suitable for appeasing and honoring the dead and the fearsome gods of the underworld. Hugely admired by the Romans, a color known as "Tyrian purple" came to represent wealth, worldly position and honor, and was worn exclusively by the famous and powerful. Ultimately, by law, it could be worn only by the Caesars themselves.

Outside the Western tradition, a purple dye made from mollusks appears in other seacoast cultures, too, notably in the Tehuantepec area of southern Mexico and in Japan, where purple cloth is used by Shinto priests to enclose the most sacred objects of the temple ritual. The color was also associated with royalty and divinity in China, where it was connected with the emperor, and was a color for the Aztecs and Incas of the Americas.

In medieval times, the "precious purple tincture" was a term for the alchemists' goal, signifying the successful outcome of the work, the final union of the opposing substances – or energies – into a whole, evoking the image of majesty: "The king puts on the purple robe", they said, at the climax of the alchemic process. Jung translated the alchemic fantasy into the idea of a spectrum. At the infrared end is the dynamism of instinct. At the ultraviolet or "mystical" end is the archetypal image of the instinct, numinous and fascinating. It is through its mediation that instinct can be realized and assimilated in the service of integrity, hence the "purple robe".

Christian symbolism similarly relates purple to spiritual process and growth. It signifies martyrdom as a devoted "witnessing" and is used on the altar at penitential seasons of fasting and sober reflection such as Advent. At the same time, Christian art pictures Jesus in a purple robe at the time of the Passion, symbolizing once again a paradoxical union: the mystery of divine and human nature combined in one being. Here, as in many other symbol systems – the alchemical, the Roman, the Aztec and Incan, most sacred values are represented by purple.

See (7), Human World, Color: Purple.

Dismemberment is a mythopoetic rendering of the process of fragmentation and dissolution, which may lead to differentiation and renewal. Belonging to the family of "death mysteries", dismemberment calls forth fertility and resurrection, freeing libido by breaking down defensive structures until only the bones of the personality remain, upon which a new body is created. The magic of this process is gained by the sacrifice of finitude and stability. Surviving dismemberment initiates one into the intimacy between sacrifice and creation, suffering and transformation.

Depicted in the image of The Primordial Farmer's, Watakame's, dismemberment - development out of wholeness is a death, a dismemberment that creates as yet unknown forms of life. The myth of world creation by dismemberment of a primordial being is universal. The flesh of Icelandic Ymir became earth, his bones became rocks, teeth became gravel, skull became sky. In Greece the dismembered phallus of Ouranus created

Aphrodite, while his blood spawned the furies. In Babylonia, the hero Marduk dismembered the goddess Tiamat, and created sky and earth from her body.

The dismembered remains of sacrificial victims, an "ultimate ancestor" or the individual who stands in for him, are usually formally distributed and then buried or eaten, giving rise to the various hierarchies (from head to foot) of both "corporate" society and the "organic" cosmos. Each act of dismemberment recapitulates the Creation. When the 1000-headed-and-footed Purusa was dismembered, the parts of his body created the various castes. In Indonesia staple foods were imagined as growing from the body of a beautiful and wealthy princess, dismembered by jealous villagers.

"You are what you eat" takes on symbolic significance as the assimilation of various psychological attributes projected onto the body, which are "eaten" in order to reanimate ourselves. Divine scapegoats such as Jesus were symbolically dismembered in order to effect renewal by ingesting the "body and the blood" to save the spirit and identify it with the ideal ancestor.

See (7), Spirit World, Sickness and Death: Dismemberment.

To come upon a lake is to come upon a fluid expanse of mystery, apparently still and yet moving. At lake's edge the earth is suddenly missing, gives way to another medium and appears again at the shore beyond. Hence our word "lacuna" is derived from "lac" or lake, and signifies something omitted or missing.

The lake, for many peoples, has been a symbol of the land of the dead, a life gone missing into the fluid substance and darkness of another world. The contained reflective presence of a lake has evoked many mythical ideas. For example, the lake has been as earth's open, liquid eye at the edge of knowledge where all that is solid dissolves into a two-way mirror of the soul – a sometimes visionary, at other times hungry eye that looks up from the underworld below. Standing at water's edge and gazing out over the surface, we pause and give way to dream, reflection, imagination and illusion, to other worlds below and beyond in ourselves, making lake symbolically the entry, for good or ill, into psyche's unconscious dimensions.

Upon the surface of the lake's reflective eye, the image of earth and sky are inverted at the water's edge. The lake seems to say, "as above, so below", and turns the image of the world upside down. Similarly, the world is presented through the lens of our own eyes upside down, and perception must be "righted" by the brain to present as reality. But at the lakeside, rightness is suspended to bring forth a surreal and imaginal dimension, a "more real" space of psychic fluidity where the soul says "The world is my representation of it".

Lakes have given rise to fantasies of nymphs, seductive nixies and various water demons that live below the surface in jeweled kingdoms and may approach wandering onlookers and swimmers to pull them seductively into the deep. The Lady of the Lake of Arthurian legend was benevolent toward those of knightly virtue and commitment who respected the wisdom of the feminine waters. But as Vivienne, she was the magician Merlin's undoing, not because lacked respect for the magical dimension, but because loving it too much he was finally imprisoned in it.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Water: Lake/Pond.

Thistle is inherently discriminating. The spiny edges of its profuse leaves sting and tear like small thorns, discouraging touch. Yet the showy flower that crowns the stalk is sweetly fragrant, attracting butterflies, insects, bees and birds. Evoking one who is barbed but has a soft heart, the thistle's prickliness is associated with self-protection, impenetrability, austerity and resilience. Mythically, the thistle did not grow in the Garden of Eden; rather, the thistle and thorns appeared as a curse after the Fall, as opposed to the blessing of figs and grapes of Paradise. Indeed, farmers regard the thistle as a plague – in popular belief it is seen as a gift of the Devil.

Nevertheless, the thistle also conveys love that endures suffering and labor that endures hardship. Thistle is associated with the worldly love of Aphrodite as well as the loving compassion of the Virgin Mary. To thistle have been attributed properties of healing, cleansing and longevity. Scotland, whose national emblem is the thistle, celebrated its character in a tenth century legend. Invading Vikings, hoping to stealthily attack Staines Castle,

removed their boots. But the Scots had filled the castle's dry moat with thistles and the anguished cries of the enemy betrayed their presence.

Organically bringing sweet bloom out of rough stalk, thistle's roots are said to dispel melancholy.

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Thistle.

In ancient Egypt, the divine crocodile Sobek was revered and propitiated especially at the dangerous riverbanks, the places where the marshes concealed animals, or where difficult currents heightened the risk of shipwreck. He was mothered by the more aggressive waters of the goddess Neith. Sobek evokes chaotic pulling under, taking back, rending apart, but in

his aspect as “the Rager” personifies the Pharaoh’s capacity to obliterate enemies of the kingdom.

At the ceremony of the Weighing of the Heart of the dead, the monster Ammit, a combination of crocodile, lion and hippopotamus, swallows the heart that has failed to achieve the psychic balance pleasing to Maat, the underlying order of the universe that brings together chaos and cosmos to right proportion.

In a literal sense, crocodiles, including the alligators, caimans and gharials, are living dinosaurs, the last representatives of the group of archosaurian reptiles that once dominated the earth. Crocodiles have been around for 230 million years, and may even have been the image of the leviathan in the biblical story of Job: “Who can penetrate its double coat of mail? Who can open the doors of its face? There is terror all around its teeth.” (Job 41: 13-15).

See (7), Animal World, Primordial Creatures: Crocodile

Long ago, maybe seated in a place of honor by the fire, a tribal bard sings his epic tale of gods, heroes, wars and odysseys, accompanying himself on the lyre. Its curved, horn-shaped sides recall the bull worship of ancient Crete and evoke the engendering nature of lyric forms and poetic recitation. These open us to memory and empathy, releasing the liquid notes and deep vibrations of the heart.

The lyre was the most honored ceremonial instrument of Greece and Rome. Its cousin the harp was known to the peoples of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Europe. Mythically, the two, like many musical instruments, were perceived as objects of earthly stuff and divine invention, bringing together material and non-material realms.

The infant Hermes, trickster and thief, later the messenger of the Olympian gods, slayed a tortoise, made the lyre from its patterned shell and gave it to Apollo as a gift after stealing his cattle. The Celtic god Daghda carved his magic harp from a sacred oak, sealing in it the four seasons, laughter and sadness, darkness and light.

Angels as well as poets play harp, expressing states of bliss beyond fixed patterns and troubling oppositions. The ordered tuning of the harp's vibrating strings embodied a ladder between above and below. By the playing of his harp, David, in the Bible, soothes the "distressing spirit" of madness that possesses King Saul.

The rippling, waterlike sound of the harp intimates the soul's refreshments and the world's reanimation. Equally, the lyre was associated with solar gold and Apollonian harmony. And when Orpheus, Apollo's son, played the lyre, everything distempered was tamed, even the heaving shadows of the underworld.

See (7), Human World, Sound: Harp/Lyre

Although we do not fully understand the mysterious inner phenomena of the chakras, they are imagined to be the centers for the essential life force surrounding, permeating and emanating from within particular parts of the human body. In India, this force is called prana, in China chi; Pythagoreans called it luminous body light; and in the Middle Ages, Paracelsus spoke of illiaster, the vital force.

Chakras metabolize different kinds of energy, transmitting them to appropriate places within the auric field. Each chakra acts like a vortex of energy whirling at different rates of vibration, which range from gross (very slow) to subtle (extremely fast), depending on the specific chakras and the individual person.

Optimally, each chakra is open and moving in a clockwise direction. If chakras are congested, closed or reversed, the energy is unable to flow freely, potentially impacting well-being. There are seven major chakras, starting with the first or base chakra located at the perineum, which informs and supports

all others up to the top of the head (called the crown chakra). In addition, there are approximately 23 minor chakras located throughout the body, such as on the palm of each hand, the bottom of each foot and behind the knees. Hundreds of minuscule chakras spread throughout the body are called acupuncture points. All of them contribute to how we act intrapsychically and interpersonally with the world around us. We continually influence the chakras and are influenced by them throughout our lives through psychological efforts, physical activity, diet, meditation and quality of life.

Each major chakra can be actively engaged for the purpose of awakening greater consciousness. Colors, sounds, numbers, elements, deities and animal entities associate each chakra with its symbolic meaning. Archetypal energies manifest very differently through different chakras. The second chakra, for example, is associated with the water element, the whale or leviathan, the bladder and with impulses and urges, including the sexual. The third chakra is associated with the solar plexus, the fire element and the ram; the fourth with the heart, the element air and the leaping, light-footed antelope.

The first chakra represents the foundational basis of human existence that we share with other animals, psyche meeting soma. It is associated with the earth element and the elephant, the mass, solidity, gravity on which all else rests. If this base is jeopardized, all other chakras will be compromised and unable to function optimally.

The seventh, or crown chakra, represents the awakened psychic possibilities of self-realization, the gods conjoined. The crown chakra signifies the ultimate refinement and differentiation of expanded consciousness for an embodied human being. The slow, dark, unconscious earthy realm of the base chakra has fully evolved up through all the other chakras into the heavenly flowering of full consciousness in the crown chakra. We literally embody the potential of bringing together heaven and earth within ourselves.

See (7), Spirit World, Soul and Psyche: Chakras.

After the storm, the rainbow appears, emblem of promise. So it was in the Biblical story of the flood when the inundating waters of divine judgment abated, and so it has been ever since. Rainbow is the sign of renewal, the transmuting changes of the heart and the eros of covenant between heaven and earth.

Poets have called the rainbow "the dyes of heaven", "a glittering robe of joy" and "a celestial kaleidoscope". The Book of Revelation describes a rainbow, "like an emerald", surrounding the throne of God. Alchemy portrays the rainbow as a form of the peacock's tail of brilliant hues, alluding to the lapis that unites all qualities.

Tibetan Buddhists find in the rainbow's ephemeral translucence an intimation of the spirit transcending the nature of reality, the "rainbow body" achieved through intense, solitary meditation. Desire disappears, replaced by luminous awareness and bliss so complete that if one dies in such a state, the body itself dissolves into rainbow-colored light, leaving only hair and nails behind.

For many, however, the rainbow represents the imaginal bridge that links the visible world and all that is invisible, magical and supernatural. Fantasy peoples the rainbow's unseen perimeters with angels, fairies, and elves that guard abounding treasure, the bright gold and luminous pearls of wisdom, creativity and mercurial play.

Myth has portrayed the rainbow as the highway over which psyche's supernal emissaries bring their messages to consciousness. From the rainbow bridge the Japanese divine couple Izanagi and Izanami stir the primal sea of potential with a jeweled spoon whose droplets coalesce into living matter.

The spirits of the Hopi kachinas, or ancestors, descend from the celestial realm of the dead to the land of the living by means of the rainbow, whose earthly counterpart is the ladder descending into the kiva.

Yet the rainbow is poignantly evanescent. The Norse myth of Rangarok (the Norse parallel to the Apocalypse) depicts the rainbow bridge collapsing under the weight of the insurgent "sons of the giants" who come to destroy the earth at the end of time.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Air – Wind and Weather: Rainbow

For the Kabbalist, the Tree of Life serves, among other things, as a kind of filing system for all archetypes. How did the world arise out of nothing? How does it sustain its existence on the unfathomable depth of the void? How can we on earth make our way back to the divine? The Kabbalah provides powerful and sublime answers to these questions. Meaning "tradition" in Hebrew, it is the esoteric teaching of Judaism. Like all such teachings it is ultimately about the many levels, visible and invisible, that connect the primordial unity with the reality we experience every day.

The Kabbalistic Tree of Life presents the essence of this teaching. This "ladder of lights", as it is sometimes called, can be traced back to the mystical Judaism of thirteen century Spain and gives a succinct yet profound picture of the universe as envisaged by the Kabbalists. The Tree has informed and inspired countless mystics, Jewish, Christian and others. For all its apparent obscurity, it is not a particularly difficult or intricate system. One could

memorize it in an evening, as one could spend a lifetime contemplating it and still find new things to learn.

The most familiar version of the Tree of Life depicts ten circles (symbolizing the sefirot or "principles"; the singular is sefirah) arranged in three columns or "pillars". This system gives a flexible but dynamic view of the workings of existence that can be applied to everything from the creation of the cosmos to the baling of a cake. At the top is Kether, or "Crown", the dimensionless point at which something begins to appear out of nothing. At the bottom is Malkuth, or "Kingdom", our familiar, solid reality. Between these, the other eight sefirot, with names like Tipheret ("Beauty") and Yesod ("Foundation"), symbolize the forces of expansion, contraction and equilibration that beget and maintain all things. The Kabbalistic Tree is far more than an intellectual system. It is a profound tool for expanding the horizons of consciousness.

See (7), Plant World, Trees: Kabbalistic Tree.

Appearing in the depths like an amorphous phantasm, all head and feet (cephalopod), the eight-tentacled sea mollusk octopus has received humanity's deepest imaginings about the mysteries of dissolution and regeneration. An elusive mandala-in-motion, the image of octopus brings together extremely negative and positive attributes, a paradox that expresses the hidden connection between chaos, emptiness and the ordering capacity of the psyche.

Symbolically, octopus often belongs to the fateful round of The Great Mother. Like other archetypal "monsters of the deep", ancient mariners seem to have considered it one of the most grotesque and frightening terrors of the sea, capable of pulling whole ships down to a watery grave. A recurring motif in decorative Minoan and Greek art, was the octopus also a model for the many-headed Hydra, or for the paralyzing Medusa – to whose big, round head, staring eyes and tentacles of hair the octopus bears an uncanny resemblance?

The Greeks dubbed both the octopus and their great sea-hero Odysseus "polumetus" (loosely translated as "wisdom" and "magical cunning"). Perhaps the sea monsters who menaced Odysseus and his crew personified the terrifying undifferentiated aspects of the classical Greek psyche, understood as dangerous, capable of sucking in and emptying out, until mastered by the creative and clever Odysseus?

Related to the astrological sign of cancer, the moon, the summer solstice and the depths, the octopus resembles its cousins – the whirlpool, the spider's web, the wheel and the spiral – in representing both the mystic center, and the unfolding of creation through dissolution.

See (7), Animal World, Water Creatures: Octopus.

Legend has it that humanity is descended from the tears of God. The eye retains this magic aura, shining, sparkling, withering, radiating. The eye receives and emits light, looks out and looks in, is a window on the soul and on the world, revealing and perceiving, seeing through and true. It can also see too much, or nothing at all. The eye illuminates, understands, expresses, protects, scorches and stares. We can feel truly known by the wat another's eyes take us in, and despair and sorrow at being unseen.

Loss of the eye or loss of sight can lead to something healing or creative, to the opening of clairvoyance, to the "third eye" of "inner sight", transpersonal awareness. Belonging to the psychological dynamic of dissolution, sacrifice and reconstitution, loss or missing eyes are symbolic of the potential transformation of one form of consciousness – or one form of "seeing" – into another. Going both ways, this can mean "there's none so blind as those who will not see", or can refer to "sight" and consciousness that is more dependent and responsive to an inner vision than to sense perception.

In matters of wisdom, “second sight” has always been considered more accurate, or “visionary”, than the bodily eyes. An “eyewitness” can be deceived, but the “blind eye” of Justice see the truth. So although the eye is traditionally associated with light, insight, intelligence, reason, and spiritual awareness, the inner eyes see with a nighttime vision and darker awareness, into the wisdom of dreams and all the unconscious and emotional elements that also comprise full human understanding.

See (7), Human World, Human Body: Eye.

Originally, the dakini was associated with the terrifying aspect of the Indian goddess Kali and was taken to be a witch, a flesh eater and a demon. But as traditional folk demons became integrated within an increasingly sophisticated religious canon, the role of the dakini rose to be one of the most powerful and multivalent symbols in Tantric Buddhism. Women,

concurrently, became accepted as teachers, mystics and practitioners in their own right. Until recently, the dakini has been best known for her usually secret role as teacher and consort to the great Tibetan wise men and leaders. Lately, however, Buddhist scholars have recovered the dakini as an archetypal representation of a potent and many-faceted feminine self.

Contemporary writers such as Nathan Katz make a comparison between the dakini and the Jungian concept of the anima – usually seen as the feminine side of a man, which in its undeveloped form (the demoness) leads to moods, sulks, rants, and rather hysterical behavior, but in its developed form serves as a teacher, a balancer and a bridge to the unconscious and lager self.

For women, the symbol of the dakini integrates traditionally masculine attributes – her activity, passion, leadership and yang energy – with feminine being that which is playful, wild, mercurial, creative and deeply wise. She may appear as human, taking a variety forms, from crone to virgin or sexual consort. Her name literally means sky or space-goer.

Though one can summon the dakini, she will arrive if and when she wishes. One beseeches her with longing and reverence. She can bring fear, delight, awe and great challenge when she appears. But the dakini cannot be pinned down or made subject to the ego's demands.

See (7), Spirit World, Mythical Beings: Dakini.

The spark embodies the incendiary potential of ideas, which can plant the seed for a new invention, scientific discovery or artistic creation, as well as spark a revolution powerful enough to reconfigure the entire world order. Sparks fly when opposite electrical charges join or conflict, and when passions ignite between two people, whether in love, anger or enmity.

One can imagine the awe inspired in ancient humans the first time that two stones struck together released sparks, as though hiding from within. Many Native American tribes venerated flint, a hard quartz that sparks when struck, regarding it as a god of fire, and using it as a lucky charm to protect against bad magic and aid in the search for buried gold. The early stone tool and hand-axe were charged with mysterious power, analogous to the thunderbolt, as both could emit sparks and inflict injury.

The meteorite, a ball of fire falling to earth like a spark from the anvil, was seen as the product of the nuptial impact between the god of thunder and the goddess of earth. The early smiths who fashioned sacred tools from this

ore were themselves venerated as godlike. Sixth century Greek philosophers talked of the soul being made out of star-stuff. The Gnostics saw the soul of a human as a spark or seed of light from the greater fire of God, left behind or fallen in his Creation, imprisoned in the darkness of matter, awaiting restoration to the realm of light. This soul spark formed the secret backbone of humankind, without which there would be no redemption.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Fire – Light and Darkness: Spark.

A tray laden with succulent pinkish peaches has been prepared for the goddess Xiwangmu, the Queen Mother of the West. These extraordinary peaches have taken 3000 years to ripen, for these are the peaches of immortality. Now that they have finally been picked, Xiwangmu will invite her fellow Taoist gods for the festival to eat this miraculous harvest.

The tree that yields Xiwangmu's peaches grows in her palace garden in the Chinese paradise of Mount Kunlun. Three thousand leagues across, this world tree's tangled branches reach to the sky, serving as a ladder for gods to move between heaven and earth. Just as the tree is protected by divine guardians, peach wood contains ling, spiritual force, and thus is efficacious against evil spirits.

In China and Japan the symbolism of the peach is extensive, uniting the sensual and the esoteric, the human with the divine. In appearance and taste, the peach suggests a juicy abundance that is both natural and sacred. Blossoming in the early spring, the peach tree is a sure sign of nature's regeneration. The peach, with its cleft, rounded forms has long been associated, in east and west, with the female genitalia, and with the feminine principle of fecundity and renewal.

The peach's evocation of life's rebirth poetically coalesces in two Chinese myths. In one, the Peach Blossom Spring, issuing from deep within a cave, gives access to a happy world beyond this mortal life. In the other, the Little Peach Boy is discovered by a childless couple when they find a great peach flowing in a stream. When the fruit is split, it gives birth to the tiny child, Momotaro, which means peach child. It goes on to heroically regain treasures from a band of demons.

Peaches are not just magical fruits and the food of immortals, but touch ordinary lives as well. Shou-Lo, bearded old man pictured emerging from a peach, is a Chinese god of long life for humankind. And the promise of the peach is made manifest in a celebratory soup eaten in Chia on New Year's Day.

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Peach.

Since the earliest times the scorpion has embodied the bridging of fluid depths and firmer ground. Older than the dinosaur or the spider, and physically almost unchanged to the present day, the scorpion was resident in the warm Silurian environment of 400 million years ago. The oldest fossil arachnid is a scorpion. A descendant of what was likely a marine animal, it was able, because of its horny exoskeleton, to make the evolutionary shift from sea dweller to land creature without fatal water loss.

The scorpion's uniqueness lends itself to majestic and dire projections. Incarnate in the scorpion mother that takes her newborns onto her back and carries them until their first molting, the Egyptian scorpion goddess Selket represents the capacity to survive transitions of a fundamental nature. Selket is known as the one who gives us breath; hers is the gift of immortality. With her companion goddesses Isis, Nephtys and Neith, Selket guards the coffins of the dead and the canopic jars containing their vital organs.

Yet, Selket is also associated with the scorching sun and the desolation of the wilderness. The Mayans depicted their god of war and the Christians their devil as having the fiery scorpion tail, evoking in the one case physical death, and in the other, spiritual demise, treachery and subversion of consciousness into occult domains of fascination and compulsion.

Shakespeare's Macbeth, poisoned by murderous ambitions, laments: "Oh, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife.". The legendary scorpion of Mali asserts: "I am a creature which brings death to whatever touches me.". But if the scorpion represents death's sting, it also attests to the endless renewal embedded in endless death, making it one of the most ancient emblems of the Great Mother and her round. Like psyche transforming its primal matter – poison, antidote and panacea, self-destroying and self-healing – the scorpion mythically "slays itself with its own dart" and brings itself back to life again.

See (7), Animal World, Arachnids and Insects: Scorpion.

Tears move us in a remarkable way, so much so that human ethologists consider them to be favored by natural selection for our survival. So valuable are tears as a psychic factor that they have been depicted in myth and in dreams as precious jewels, golden amber, rain and the life-giving rays of the sun.

Tears can reveal to us unknown depths of sadness. We find ourselves suddenly tearful over some small thing that links us to a long-repressed loss or discontent. Not only physical toxins seem to be cleansed by tears but psychological one as well. In fairy tales, tears are often redemptive; they wash away the effects of a curse or they heal the individual or the part of the body on which tears fall.

Tears may also signify experience that is exhaustive and corrosive. The Greeks of Homer's time believed that something liquid and vital in the flesh could be lost in the form of tears or sweat. The Indian epic Mahabharata tells how, in order to stop the endless procession of life when Brahma first brings life into being, he produces the maiden Death so that all living things will repeatedly be born and repeatedly die. Death's tears of compassion for the creatures she is to kill become the terrible diseases that cause our demise, but also usher in our rebirth. Tears of mourning are imagined by the Dagara people of Burkina Faso to carry the dead to the realm of the ancestors. Tears ritually spilled for the gods of eternal return, like Attis or Osiris, were believed to bring about the regeneration of nature.

See (7), Human World, Human Body: Tears.

How is it that the unicorn, that "beast….that never was" (Rilke), has such a place in our imagination – even now, 3000 years after first appearing in Chinese myth? Why is she still alive in our minds? Umberto Eco answers: "The Unicorn…..is like a (foot)print. If the print exists, there must have existed <u>something whose print it is</u> ….it is the print of an idea."

The idea embodied in this imaginary animal appears in different images at various times and places, yet some threads run through them all: He is a wild, solitary animal of great strength and swiftness, bearing a single horn in the center of his forehead. He cannot be captured alive except by trickery. He has magical powers.

Unicorns were of special fascination in the West during medieval Christian times. But centuries before that, the Hindu epic Mahabharata told of a human-bodied unicorn called "Gazelle Horn", lured from his solitary forest life by a king's beautiful daughter, because it was foretold that rain would not fall in the kingdom until the unicorn came to the royal palace. The Chinese

unicorn has an animal form and also lives alone in the forest. His body gives off light and he has a voice like a monastery bell. He harms nothing – not even plants. He embodies benevolence, wisdom and long life. He is rarely seen, and then only when virtuous men rule the kingdom.

By contrast, consider the ancient western images: the Greek physician Ctesias (400 B.C.) wrote of seeing unicorns in Persia whose horns were taken and used to cure epilepsy and poisoning. Megasthenes (300 B.C.) described the terrible roaring voice and wild belligerence of unicorns in India. When the Hebrew Bible was first translated into Greek (in about 250 B.C.) the Greek word for unicorn was used to express the Hebrew word re-em. (This usage continued until the twentieth century.) This biblical unicorn was an image of the spiritual power and fierce destructive energies available through through Yahweh.

Later images show what happened to this wild unicorn during the Christian Middle Ages. He is, in images from that time, shown in the arms of pure maidens or in fenced flowery gardens – both of which are too slight to hold on to him. Evidently, he is there by choice. Christian symbolism combined the unicorn's fiery, penetrating spiritual nature with a loving benevolence. He was imagined as a metaphor for Christ. His legendary attraction to the scent of virginity (he was said traditionally to lay his head in a virgin's lap, or suckle from her breast, and so allow himself to be captured) was interpreted in terms of the spirit's willingness to be incarnated through the body of the Virgin Mary.

See (7), Spirit World, Mythical Beings: Unicorn.

The sharp and ragged stone from Stenness, Scotland, points toward the sky, half its length buried underground. We will never know the exact meaning invested in this monument, but it still moves us after four thousand years. In raising the stone to an upright position its sculptural form is revealed, creating a powerful presence and new meaning. In fact, it was this act of giving meaning to their world – of turning stone into symbol – that made our ancestors fully human. Our relationship with stone is so ancient and intimate that we have named the beginning of human history the Stone Age.

Stones were among our earliest tools and weapons, often shaped into beautiful perfection; these were symbols of power, increasing the might and effectiveness of early men and women coping with their environment. Throughout the ages stone has been part of human life. Stones heated by fire could be used for cooking, and stone structures housed the living and the dead. In Germany the spirit of the dead remained in the tombstones, just as in Africa stones carried within them the spirit of an ancestor. A stone could

signify a god or become a place of worship, such as the Ka'aba, the meteoritic black stone in Mecca, the central object of Islamic pilgrimage. Another famous meteorite is the black stone of Pessinus, an epiphany of the Phrygian goddess Cybele.

In Hinduism lingam, or the active creative principle, appears as a pillarlike stone while the feminine receptive element, the yoni, is carved into a circular stone hollow. Thus, stone represents feminine matter as well and in personified form becomes the earth mother. The god Mithra was born from a rock, and in many traditions we are told how rocks give birth to precious stones. Like embryos they ripen within the living rock before being mined or "born".

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Earth: Stone.

The shapes of the oak have become imprinted in the human imagination, along with the oak's broad leaf and stippled fruit, the tiny acorn. Ancient Europe was once covered so densely with oaks that Julius Caesar encountered Germanic tribes who had never reached the end of these hardwood forests. Intimating the grandeur and vastness of the mythic World Tree and axis mundi, the oak's commanding presence made it the most widely worshipped of trees.

Evoking what is royal, solid and eternal, oaks are traditionally associated with cycles of birth and death, especially in the seasonal rituals around the mythic year kings. Ancient druids (from the Celtic word for oak, daur) dragged oak logs at yuletide, the winter solstice, and heaped them onto midsummer bonfires to mark the cyclical demise of springtime's Oak King, who was succeeded by the autumn's Holly King. Virgil claimed an oak gave birth to the first humans, just as Norse gods whittled Embla, the first woman, from an oak tree (and Ash, the first man, from an ash tree).

On the other hand, in Northern Europe where the oak tree "belonged to the dead", its occasionally hollow trunk provided a much sought-after coffin. Similarly, the alchemist's "philosophical tree" was often a hollow oak, a maternal vessel in whose cleavage the alchemical king installed his bath of symbolic rebirth, suggesting an inner feminine dimension of the seemingly virile tree that corresponded to the soul stuff of the adept.

Gathering force throughout its span of life from acorn to spreading giant, the oaks represents invincible, august strength. Virgil wrote that violent thunderstorms could not uproot the oak, with its roots anchored in Tartarus and its branches reaching into the heavens. Drawing down lightning as natural conductors, these ancient, legendary oaks were sacred to the thunder-gods Zeus and Jupiter in Mediterranean Europe and Thor and Donar in Northern Europe.

See (7), Plant World, Trees: Oak Tree.

Though ubiquitously familiar, crows and ravens inevitably retain an aura of the uncanny. Like the dark angels come to set the balance of the natural order to rights, they strut and flutter through the landscapes of desert and arctic, tropics and urban sprawl, over tilled farmland and the shifting soil of the human imagination.

They are not inconspicuous, they show themselves without apology. They are destructive as well as helpful. Their communication – announced by the sharp caws of crows or the gruff croak of ravens – can both "quicken us toward all celestial things", or seem obtrusive, disquieting, disruptive of the status quo. Like the mythic Raven who was known by Northwest Pacific Coast Indians as "Real Chief", the "Great Inventor", the "One Whose Voice Is To Be Obeyed", ravens and crows are ministers of veiled mysteries.

For more than 12 million years, crows and ravens have applied their splendid intelligence to the art of living by their wits. They are master opportunists. They seek and find. They take, or thieve. They don't necessarily wait for doors

or anything else to be opened unto them, they do it themselves, with their stout, knifelike beaks. Their tool-making and complex language capabilities excite our admiration. We never grasp the full measure of the birds. They subvert our attempts to do so, just as the tricksters, shamans, magicians and culture heroes they embody in folklore and myth subvert our fondest notions of human superiority, put in question what constitutes the reality of sacred or profane, rearrange our moral landscape.

Consider the progenitor and shaman Raven, who brings humans into being by coaxing them out of their (clam)shell, steals daylight for them through trickery or by opposing the falcon of night, brings them fire and water, teaches them how to sow seed and to hunt – and then "plays" with his creatures and occasionally kills and eats them. Just so does the crow or raven daemon perched in our psyche's open doors, steal treasures for us from hidden places, coax us out of our narrow, conventional shells – and also mercilessly confuses us, trips us up, puts us down and sometimes devours us. The Norse god Odin's famous ravens Hugin and Munin ("Thought" and "Memory") wander shamanlike through the "nine worlds", prying and probing beneath the surface of things in order to bring the hidden truth to the ears of the god.

See (7), Animal World, Birds: Crow/Raven.

Subject to the stern law of gravity, everything in the world falls: snow, rain, leaves, unsteady toddlers. In our dreams, myths and fairy tales we fall from walls, trees, towers, airplanes, from the chariot of the sun and from heaven itself. We wish to rise, we yearn to fly; we fear falling. Perhaps we fear that like Humpty Dumpty, we would never be mended if we should fall.

Falling is not something normally sought for. Out of control, we are catapulted into a new state. Even slumbering is "falling asleep". Mysterious birth contractions forced us all out of the comfort of the womb as we fell into life. Unknown inner forces throw us about as we fall in love. At times, like Rapunzel in her tower, we know that our life is an imprisonment and the fall is a release, if a painful one. More often, though, the fall feels like a loss and a divine punishment, and our myths picture it, like Adam and Eve's loss of Paradise, as the result of disobedience.

And yet, at times, heroic arrogance is necessary. Otherwise we remain obedient children or largely unconscious. The heroes of myth and real life,

from Prometheus to Columbus, Galileo and Einstein, cross the boundaries of the known and risk disaster. Sometimes they fall, are chained to mountain crags, are forced to recant their beliefs. Sometimes they increase their own knowledge and the consciousness of humankind.

Moments of risk, for the sake of new horizons appear in everyone's life and are often announced by dreams of snakes or of snakebites, harking back to the snake in the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve's heroic disobedience, which initiated human consciousness. "There is a deep doctrine in the legend of the Fall; it is the expression of a dim presentiment that the emancipation of ego consciousness was a Luciferian deed", observed Jung, "Man's whole history consists from the very beginning in conflict between his feeling of inferiority and his arrogance".

See (7), Human World, Movement and Expression: Falling.

The golden or logarithmic spiral is the most widespread shape found in the natural world. It is the form of embryos, horns, whirlpools, hurricanes and galaxies, the path that energy takes when left alone, the path of unfettered yet balanced growth.

Spiral motifs appear worldwide in the symbolism of religion, art, dreams, folktales and mythology. Mathematically, a spiral is simply a line that grows continuously toward or away from its own center. But its symbolic power is in its evocation of an archetypal path of growth, transformation and psychological or spiritual journey. Based on the direction of its spin, whether expanding outward and larger, or tightening inward and smaller, a spiral is a cosmic symbol that may represent one or the other of several dualities: growth or decay, ascent or descent, evolution or involution, waxing or waning, accumulation or dissolution, increasing or decreasing, offering or receiving, revealing or hiding. The double spiral combines both opposites in one glyph.

There are three main types of spirals. Coiled snakes, ropes and labyrinthine paths are Archimedian spirals, where the distance between coils remains constant. The way clinging vines wrap around stems and branches, the double strands of DNA and the twining serpents of the caduceus of the helix configuration.

In the logarithmic spiral, also called the equiangular, the distance between coils continuously increases or decreases. The spiral is the path that resolves conflict, allowing for balanced movement and natural unfolding. These spiral processes in nature form a language evoking the mythic journey, regeneration and awakening – as fronds and flowers whirl open to the light – by ascending to a higher rung. Mirroring the way of the wind and whirling galaxies, spirals describe a path of travel not only for shamans, genii and spirits, but also of psychological developments in general, as if the inner development repeatedly comes round to the same point, but at a different level.

Spirals extending infinitely in two directions make the path of ascent and descent between heaven and earth. Deities and humans communicate with each other along spirals. It is the sacred way of commandment and prayer,

the spiral voice of God and the sacred call to God. Various deities speak through spiral whirlwinds and through columns of whirling dust, smoke and fire. Humans pray to deities along the same spiral paths by making offerings with ascending smoke spirals and by blowing through spiral conch shells and ram's horn trumpets. Each natural spiral has a center of balance or calm eye around which all motion and turbulence revolves. It suggests the eye of wisdom that observes all but is never entangled in the turbulence.

See (7), Spirit World, Rituals and Sacred Systems: Spiral.

A great light blazes through the night sky. This brilliant, uncanny visitor that slowly travels across the darkness is a comet. Through the ages, comets have inspired both wonder and dread. As a bad omen, the comet signaled the

disruption of the established order, but it could also herald the appearance of something new under the sun.

The word comet derives from kometes, a Greek word meaning “the long-haired”. In the Iliad, Achilles connects this feature with the comet’s supposed malevolence. “Like the red star from his flaming hair/Shakes down disease, pestilence and war.” And when Electra saw Troy going up in flames. She was said to have torn her hair out with grief, and was then placed by the gods among the stars as a comet.

Political, social or religious upheaval was often connected with the appearance of comets. The death of the Aztec king Montezuma at the hands of the Spanish and the murder of Julius Caesar both coincided with the sighting of comets. The Norman Invasion in 1066 was preceded by the return of Halley’s Comet. It has been speculated that the star of Bethlehem that announced the birth of Christ was a comet’s unexpected brightness.

Jung speculated that comets represent “strange contents” from the collective unconscious that oppose the values held consciously by the culture. On account of their strangeness and their intimation of revolutionary change, such contents cannot be integrated directly. They thus get projected on unusual natural phenomena and interpreted as “menacing omens” or marvelous signs.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos: Comet.

After sending up a tall stem from its bulb underground, the lily plant amazes us by unfolding large, gleaming white flowers, which release a penetrating fragrance. Held high on its leafy stem, this pristine flower has been connected with queenly divinities from the time of Bronze Age Crete, where it represented the island's reigning goddess. In ancient Greece it was sacred to Hera, Queen of Heaven, and was said to have arisen from drops of her breast milk as they fell to earth during the creation of the Milky Way.

"Lily" encompasses almost 4000 species in more than 280 genera, and is found in every part of the world. Mythically, the short-lived lily has also represented the <u>puer</u>, the beautiful youth who dies before reaching maturity. Narcissus, who was captivated by his own image reflected in a pool, wastes away and is transmuted into a "narcissus" or daffodil. Hyacinthus, the young prince beloved of Apollo, was also fancied by the West Wind, who in a jealous rage mortally struck the youth's skull. The blood of the dead boy became the hyacinth.

It is the white lily, however, that flowered in Christian symbolism, the lily of mercy balancing the flaming sword of judgment. Beginning in the twelfth century, the lily was identified with the purity, innocence and chastity of the Virgin Mary. The lily depicted in many images of the Annunciation evokes an attitude of receptiveness to "other" contaminated by merely personal desires or aspirations.

Yet the whiteness of lily is not unalloyed. While "lily-white" can mean an irreproachably spotless character, it can also denote the thing that is deceptively shadowless, or, like lily-white political bodies, is intentionally dedicated to the exclusion of color. In the East the images of purity and sanctity were largely expressed by the lotus, a form of water lily. It is also associated with feminine beauty in China, where an emperor of the Qi dynasty, carried away by the beauty of a concubine, exclaimed, "Wherever she steps, a lily springs up". This gave rise to the "golden lily", the tiny foot of the Chinese women who underwent foot-binding.

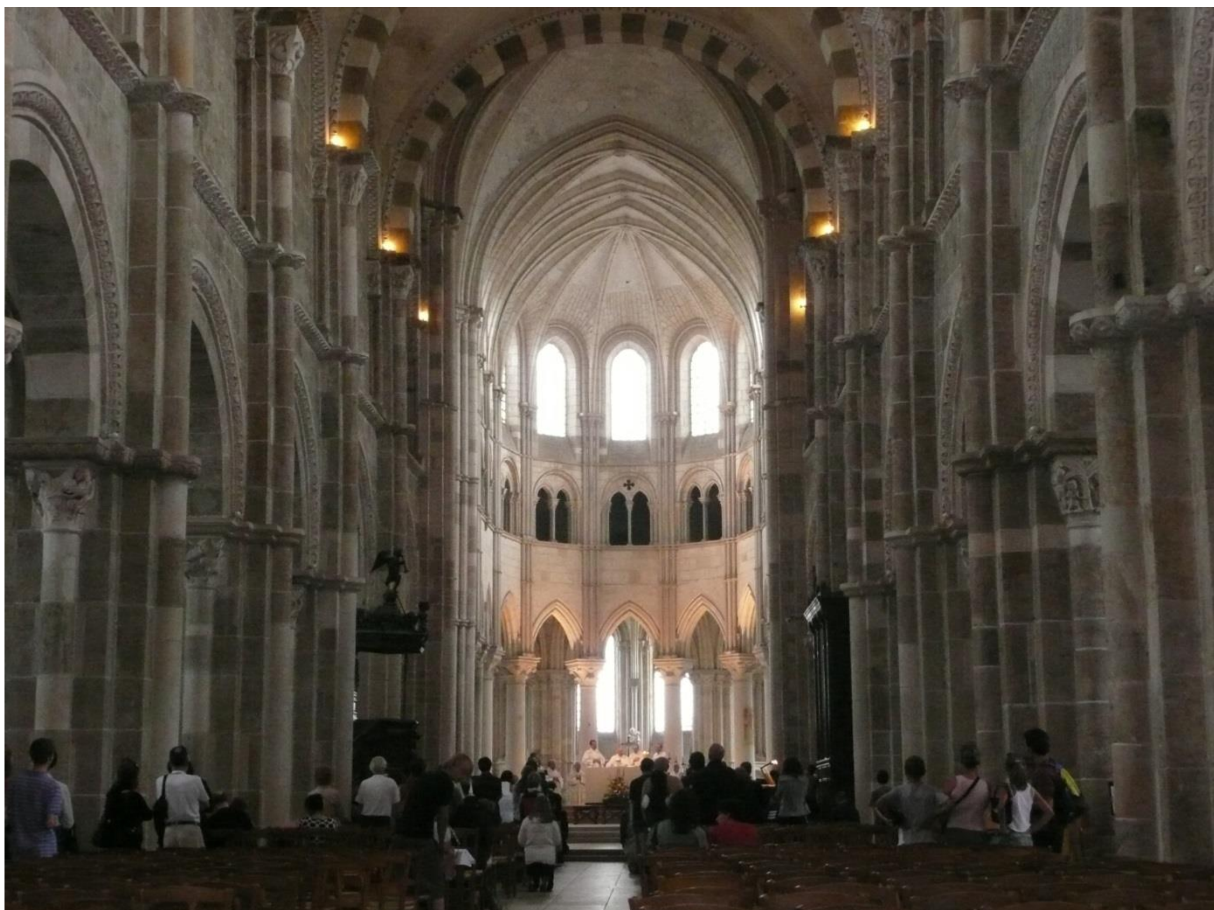
See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Lily.

One of the earliest images of kingship in Egypt, and in human culture in general, was the far-flying, far-seeing falcon. Its out-stretched wings evoked the vast spread of the sky. Its fierce, round eyes suggested the sun and moon. Its speckled breast resembled the feathery clouds spotting the empyrean, and its breath was imagined as the winds. Thus the falcon was the emblem of the high god or "distant one", and the king was the god's earthly representative or incarnation. The falcon Horus ultimately became the title of kingship, and the personification of divine and regal power.

While another favorite creature of Egyptian iconography, the cobra, is the chthonic representative of the sun's fiery, penetrating, burning eye, which can "rise up" in the violence of defense, the falcon is the celestial form, and sometimes the two are pictured together as the high god and the king. But the "eye" of the primeval sun that originally protects against the waters of disintegration is a falcon eye.

The peregrine falcon is named from the Latin peregrinus, meaning someone from foreign parts and thus a "wanderer", making the falcon the spirit of peregrination, "sailing on its tapered wings just as the sun sails into night and underworld, or consciousness crosses the great water into the unconscious. Because of tis capacity to fly high, to travel far and wide and to see even ultraviolet light, the falcon is mythically a messenger and sojourner between worlds earthly and unearthly.

See (7), Animal World, Birds: Falcon.



Known as "crusher" and "murder-greedy", Mjollnir, the great hammer of the Norse god Thor, was crucial in fighting both the giants and the world snake, the primal chaos that threatened the gods. Magically, it returned to its master when it was thrown.

The hammer is one of our earliest implements, initially as much weapon as tool, likely a stone hurled or brought down with a forceful swing from a human forearm. Probably the sound of the hammer striking and its capacity to pummel things into small bits associated it with the shattering thunderbolt and lightning that opened the watery clouds, broke the prison that held the sun but also wrought destruction.

The hammer became the tool that "hits the nail on the head", bringing things precisely into place, and evoking mythic artisans and builders of the cosmic order. The Chinese P'an-ku used his hammer and chisel to carve the firmament; exacting human counterparts fashioned the structure of civilization. Hammer is not only of the celestial and human realm, but also of the sooty bowels of the earth, volcanic fire and forge, alluding to psyche's daimonic creative center. With hammer and anvil, divine smiths like the crippled Hephaistus fashioned wondrous weapons, tools and ornaments of gold for heroes and deities, and revealed to human consciousness the mysteries of metallurgic transmutation.

See (7), Human World, Tools and other Objects: Hammer.

The lack of air is fatal; water is only an instrument, yet, in the human imagination, overwhelming depths of water are the cause of drowning. Drowning can occur (face down) in an inch or two of water, as well as in such great waves as in those of Noah's flood which Genesis tells us rose more than 20 feet above the highest mountain peaks and drowned almost all life on earth. Biblical floods and mass drownings occur as God's punishment of a degenerate humankind or his destruction of the enemies of his people, as the Egyptian army drowned pursuing the Israelites through the Red Sea.

Destructive and purifying floods occur in numerous mythologies around the world. Aside from this, mythology and literature often picture drowning as suicidal, a result of despair or loss in love. Ophelia comes to mind. Like the waters, love itself overcomes us. In some cultures, drowning has been seen as the work of revengeful human ghosts who lure people to watery deaths or as being taken by a spirit of the water.

Beyond the concrete and physical, “drowning” has come to mean being engulfed by anything overwhelming. We speak of being drowned in emotion or paperwork. In our psychological age, drowning in dreams and fantasies conveys the softening, weakening or the complete dissolution of the personality. This can be catastrophic; for example, it may signal the emergence of a psychosis – or it can refer to something more positive, such as an individual’s loosening or opening to the possibilities of personality growth. Medieval alchemical symbolism suggested that transformation was not possible until the original material was altogether dissolved.

See (7), Spirit World, Sickness and Death: Drowning.

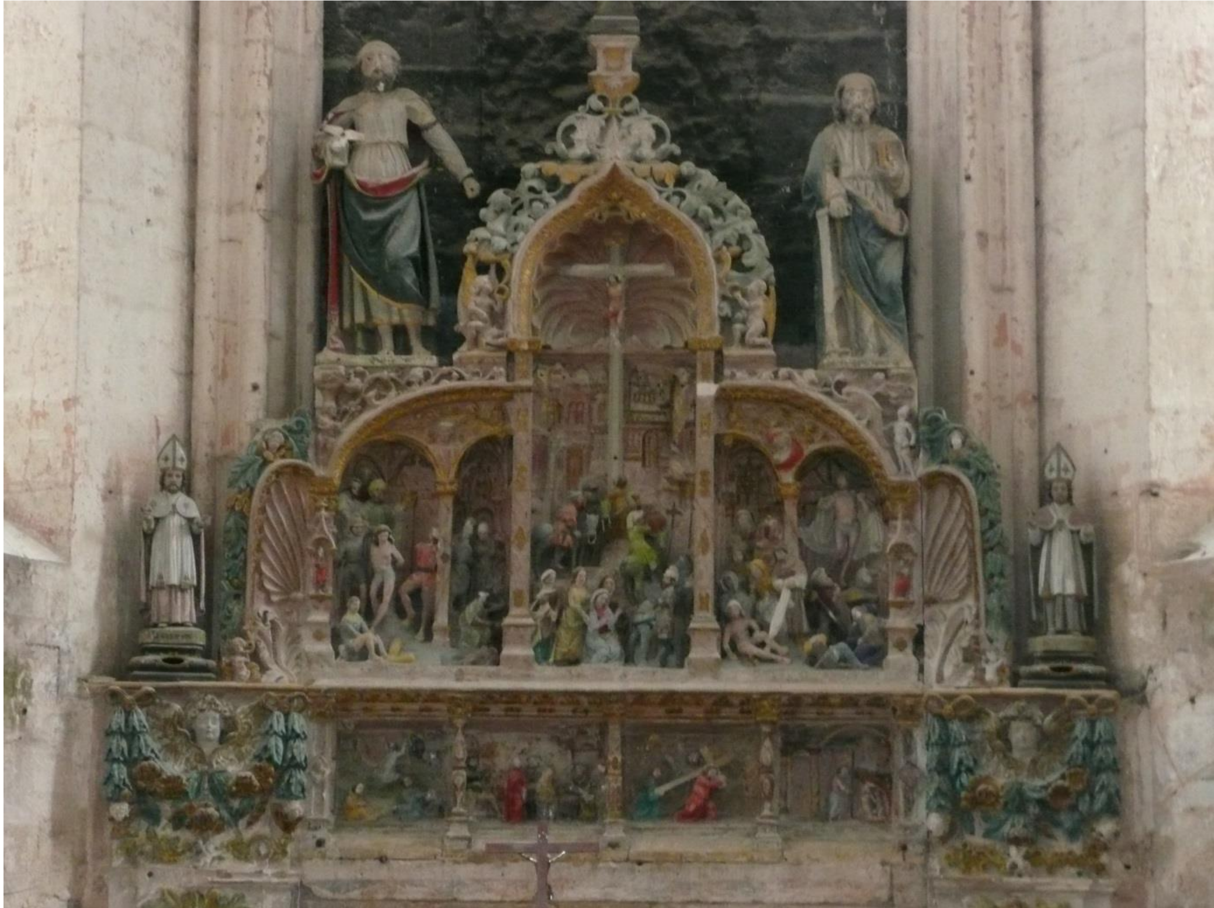
Orinoco, Achelous, Mississippi, Nile…Ganges, Hudson, Danube….Styx and Lethe..

Naming of moving waters flowing between two banks, waters rolling as Time itself, as if veins of the Great Mother Earth. River is vital fluidity; the rivers move through both the upper and lower world, over ground and under ground, inside and outside: rivers of fertility and prosperity, rivers of forgetting, rivers of binding oath, rivers of commerce, rivers of blood, rivers of sorrow, all presided over in our mythic history by beneficient deities, dreadful nixies or changeable river spirits.

Rivers have been central to civilizations locating along their banks, offering fresh or freshening water, living fish, clay, fertile soil, flood cycles and waterways as famously along the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates. The rivers have been the abode of immortals who have offered these many gifts as well as the gifts of purity, cleansing, grace and mythic passage to "the other shore". The river speaks of life as flow, freedom, movement, dangerous currents, drowning, running ever along, running its course, flooding, also as confinement, direction holding, channeling.

Mythologies speak of how the great waters came to earth as river. The rivers diverged into four in Paradise and into seven in ancient India…waters of life flowing from the source into the world need to multiply. The Ganges, the holiest of the three holy rivers in India, flows from Vishnu's toe through heaven, earth, and the world below.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Water: River.



The story of wine begins with the grape. This beautiful fruit may in iconography appear as the shining cloak of Bacchus (Dionysus for the Greeks), or, in other contexts, the grape is the god himself, an intimation that grapes, more than a simple food crop, are involved with spirit.

Grapes have been cultivated and wine produced for over 6000 years, and some of the best wines are apparently produced by grapes grown in difficult soil, attesting to the grape's tenacious life force. Genesis tells us that after the flood, Noah planted vineyards. The grapevine was often equated with the tree of life. In Sumerian cuneiform script, the sign for "life" was a vine leaf. Later, but still in ancient times, Dionysus, alternately "exalted and terrified" the souls of his worshippers with the juice of the grapes, which in Cretan myth the god and his satyrs trod "with dancing steps".

Wine (along with women and song) has long stood for the exuberant pleasures of life and release from care and duty into joy and abandon. Dionysus and his cults brought this spirit into Greek life, and along with it, the

darkness of the vine. For the crushing of the grapes and their running, bloody-looking juices also signified dismemberment of the god, mirrored in the rendering and eating of living animals, and sometimes human beings by frenzied, intoxicated devotees. The powers of the dark god can possess us in unpredictable disinhibitions, dissolution, ecstacy and aggression.

The mystic poets equate wine with divine love, and intoxication with the ecstacy of losing oneself in God. The Persian poet Rumi wrote, in the thirteenth century, "Before a garden, a vine or a grape existed in this world, our souls were intoxicated with immortal wine".

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Grape.

Just about everything to do with African and Asian elephants is on a grand scale. Their imposing architecture, the largesse of their souls, the eloquence with which they inhabit their splendid and increasingly vulnerable gigantism.

Borne on cushioned feet exquisitely attuned to earth's vibrations, absorbing a thousand clues with their uncanny trunks, they travel silently and fluently over the changeable surfaces of rain forests and foothills, of African savannah and desert periphery, and the dream vistas of the human psyche.

They take pleasure in each other's company, rumbling infrasonic secrets and touching faces and flanks. They celebrate and grieve. They shout uproarious greetings to old friends at favorite watering holes.

Not only are the elephants intimately and devotedly related to the "sphere on which they stand", their mythical first parents were 16 elephants who emerged from the golden halves of the cosmic egg shell and ever after supported the earth on their broad backs. Their cloudlike, winged offspring had the ability to change size and shape at will, fleetly traversing the length and breadth of the world, at home in water, earth or air. Even today, poets still see elephants in the sky: the huge, dark thunderclouds, laden with rain, flashing their tusks of lightning and answering with deep, resounding trumpets the magically efficacious summons of their cousins below.

It is generally believed that the presence of elephants is propitious, ensuring the fecundity, vitality and resurgence of the physical and spiritual life of the universe. Gaja Lakshmi (Lakshmi of the Elephants), the lovely Mother Earth whose maternal benevolence causes life-sustaining juices to flow through every plant and animal, is traditionally portrayed with two tuskers, one on either side, pouring potent libations of water over her lush figure.

Ganesha, the beloved elephant-headed Remover of Obstacles and guardian of thresholds, bestows material and creative riches upon his devotees. And Airavata, a moon-white, six-tusked marvel who rose out of the primordial milky ocean, is the theriomorphic form and "divine vehicle" of Indra, Lord of the Heavens and wielder of the rainbow, who unleashes the fertile potency of rain.

See (7), Animal World, Wild Animals: Elephant.

Attic, the part just under the roof, evokes stored memories of childhood, "bits of our personality still alive, which cling around us and suffuse us with the feeling of earlier times". It is accumulated treasures and trash, the residues of faded life and clues to family skeletons. Attic suggests the idea of things removed but not discarded, nor, perhaps, resolved.

Literature has immortalized the attic as the pinched quarters of the servants, the garret of the struggling artist, the room of a lonely child or a sanctum sanctorum giving refuge from the noisy bustle of familial life. In Charlotte Brontë's <u>Jane Eyre</u>, the attic of Rochester's mansion signifies both the forbidden suite where his mad wife Bertha is secretly confined, and the tormented space of Rochester's mind to which Jane has no access. The classic mystery play <u>Gaslight</u> portrays the attic as a dissociated recess of unsolved murder, which holds the key to a lamp's repeated dimming and the heroine's flickering sanity.

Like its literal counterpart, psychic attic contains things known and unknown, but available for discovery, though not necessarily revealed. The attic's diminished verticality suggest that its contents are not so much of an impersonal nature, but rather an often-cluttered museum of personal and familial deposits. The attic requires an ascent, for it suggests the head, but also demands, in the crawlspaces of its territory, that one get down into experience as well, engaging the life of generations that is particular, small, human and perhaps untidy. Attic fascinates, repels and invites. What is it that is "once removed"? Do we let it lie? Or do we enter?

See (7), Human World, House and Home: Attic.

A single, natural pearl from its source, the oyster is considered a treasure. Whatever is most valued, most beloved, most beautiful, from a child to the

Kingdom of Heaven, we have called "pearl". Pearls have filled the coffers of royalty, and ornamented the vestments of queens, kings, sultans and popes.

Pearls are mythically guarded in their deep-sea abodes by mermaids, water nymphs and snake genii. Strands of pearls, threaded orbs of light, adorn the sensual bodies of deities:

"On Me all this (universe) is strung / Like heaps of peals on a string" says the god Krishna to Arjuna.

Chinese symbolism depicted the Tao as the pearl of the sage. Celestial dragons retrieve the pearl of wisdom out of the mist of chaos, and are themselves the form of the pearl's effulgence. Chinese alchemy called its divine water, the fluid, quicksilverlike psyche, "the flowing pearl".

The delicate, pristine nature of the pearl has made it an emblem of virginity, purity and youthful love, a gift of betrothal and a bridal necklace. In earlier times, it was ground into a fine powder for elixirs of healing. Yet, the pearl is self-made in the fleshy oyster, intimating something of singular and of inestimable worth luminously hidden in the psychic darkness of our fleshy nature, a "pearl" that could be discovered by chance, actively sought or mysteriously shown.

In Persian mysticism the pearl became an image of the immortal soul within the mortal body. In the Gnostic Hymn of the Pearl, the pearl is the gnosis or "self-acquaintance" that reunites the soul forgetful of itself with its divine origin.

See (7), Spirit World, Soul and Psyche: Pearl.

As you fly above the clouds you are experiencing both natural phenomena and poetic evocations of limitless freedom and tranquility. The natural qualities of clouds embody both a connection to and a release from the terrestrial, as we see them suspended between the earth and the upper reaches of the atmosphere.

Clouds are part of an endless, reciprocal exchange between the ethereal and the earthly, moving between formlessness and form. In many cultures, clouds were regarded as the wellsprings of cosmic fertility. The cloud was associated both with life-giving rain and the fertility principle itself, which activated the receptive earth. Because of clouds hovering between heaven and earth, it has been an image that conveyed the hiddenness as well as the manifestation of the divine.

Before Islam's Allah revealed himself, he existed as a cloud in a primal, undifferentiated state. In Mayan cosmology, the creator took the form of a cloud, from where he created the universe. In the Hebrew scriptures, God is

present as a pillar of cloud to Moses and the Israelites in their long exodus from Egypt. The fourteenth century Christian mystical text "The Cloud of Unknowing", alludes to the dark cloud that closes one off from God. This "cloud" is penetrated not by reason, but by intuitive love that is met from above by the piercing light from the divine.

Symbolically, the cloud also evokes the endlessly shifting imagery that hovers in psyche's in-between spirit-matter nature. In clouds we see the angels, dragons and animals, geometric forms and religious symbols that form the background of psychic process. Such images are playful, anticipatory, inspiring, ominous. We can "live in the clouds", unrelated to grounding realities. The Chinese sage is even likened to a cloud: he transforms himself through spiritual practice, losing the ego's fixity and undergoing a metamorphosis merges himself with the formlessness of infinity.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Air – Wind and Weather: Cloud.

There is something uncanny about mushrooms. Above ground, mushrooms appear suddenly, overnight, where no plant was visible before. They are weightless. They seem to be plants, but they are not green. Eaten, they are sometimes gourmet treats, sometimes poison. Sometimes mushrooms cause visions. Small wonder that these little plants, the largest of the fungi have been (and still are in some places) seen as magical – demonic or divine.

The western European imagination associates mushrooms with mold, decay, rotting leaves, slimy toads. "Toadstool" is the popular term for a toxic mushroom. Fantasy holds that mushroom are to be found in witches' brews and are the property of fairies. Or that "fairy rings" of wild mushrooms sprouting when their underground root system gradually expands, leaving an empty center, are dancing grounds that can hold a human captive.

In pre-Hispanic cults of the sacred mushrooms still alive in Mexico and Central America, special mushrooms are ritually eaten for the purpose of healing, divination and producing visionary states. When a contemporary Mazatec Indian in Oaxaca, Mexico, was asked why the sacred mushroom was called nti si tho, "that which springs forth", the Mazatec answered: "The little mushroom comes of itself, no one knows whence, like the wind that comes we now not whence nor why".

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Mushroom.

Emerging from a long evolution stretching back nearly 50 million years comes the horse, a wild beauty, grazing peacefully on the plains, and then suddenly breaking free with snorting and fiery breath, swift as the wind. It flies across the landscape with thundering hooves as if to run out of its own skin for the love of freedom.

The horse is a fabulous striving power to which we aspire for good and ill. We tamed them. They came to know us. We whispered to them and they understood us. We broke them and they gave us their service. We tied them to our plows and carts, and they have carried us into and through countless wars and expansive conquests. They have served as symbols of aristocracy and enticed our betting minds. Our struggle for freedom has been won through the freedom they have sacrificed for us in exchange for a powerful mutual bond ad benefit.

Hold your horses. Phaeton could not hold his and met a disastrous death. He tricked his father Apollo into allowing him to take control of the great chariot

of the sun for a day, but the horses sensed a weaker hand and tore off out of control, endangering the order of the universe. The nightmare hag-on-horseback, or the black-demon-horse mount of Hel, breathes a dreadful and otherworldly air upon the dreamer and tugs him into a land of destructive mania and sexual violence masked by illusion. The Trojan Horse of Odysseus gives victory through the powers of imagination. Poseidon, god of sea and quaking earth, gave the horse to mankind, but Athena of wise counsel gave us the bridle. With these gifts we have transcended the literal limits of space, time and strength by harnessing horsepower to our efforts.

In the imagination, the horse has become an even greater animal of the cosmic beyond. The Norse god Odin, "Swift One" and "Shaker", rides his eight-legged whit steed Sleipnir, gathering the dead, a ride which induced such fear in the countryside folk that they would lay fodder aside for Sleipnir as he passed. At the end of the dark age the tenth incarnation of Vishnu as the white steed Kalki will bring forth a new world.

See (7), Animal World, Domestic Animals: Horse.

Ziggurats, pyramids and stupas are ancient towers created in the image of the cosmic mountain. They stand at the center of the world as an expression of the universal desire to reunite with heaven, as it was at the beginning of time.

The luba people told the story this way: The High God and the humans were living together in the same village. Finally the creator tired of hearing the endless quarrels and sent the humans down to live on earth where they came to know sickness and death. A diviner advised them if they built a tower they could return to the sky and find immortality.

A string of round towers across southern Africa is believed to be connected with the widespread tower myths in southern Africa, seeking to unite above and below. Church spires and minarets likewise pierce the heavens at the center of their spiritual worlds from where the sounds of bells and prayers mark sacred space and time.

The strong walls of towers once served as protective fortresses from where enemies could be discovered from afar. Gradually, cities grew up around the towers and anything beyond was considered wilderness. Symbolically, these "towers of strength" have become the structures of society, where its organizations protect us from the return of chaos that always seems to threaten at a distance.

Sometimes the entire structure, like the Tower of London, served as a prison. Here the movement is turning inward, also allowing for reflection and study. Being out of touch with the ground, like living in an ivory tower (which originated in the purity of the Virgin Mary as a mandala-precinct), has come to mean self-absorbed isolation.

In the story of Amor and Psyche, the heroine is able to complete her last and most difficult test by applying those aspects of the tower which at times are necessary – of being far-seeing, having emotional distance and a sense of discrimination. In many fairy tales a tower also plays a role in the trials of the heroine. The young girl or princess finds herself imprisoned in a tower, situated in the middle of a forest or some abandoned war-wasted land. In this case, the tower suggests the need for a different kind of far-seeing view, one of patient endurance in solitude.

See (7), Human World, Buildings and Monuments: Tower.

It was the witch Circe, on whose island Odysseus was marooned for a time following the Trojan War, who foresaw that as he continued to sail home he would face many dangers, including the haunting song of the Sirens. Circe warned Odysseus to have himself bound to the main mast of his ship so that he could hear their irresistible singing and yet not abandon himself to their clover-covered shore. His crew must stop their ears with wax, ignore their captain's pleading to be set free and keep rowing out of harm's way of these embodiments of "these impulses in life as yet unmoralized, imperious longings, ecstacies whether of love or art or philosophy, magical voices calling to a man from his "Land of Heart's Desire".

The Siren is one of psyche's deadliest anima aspects, luring the ego overboard, pulling consciousness off course, obliterating the memory and means of getting to where one needs to be. Addiction, delusion, seduction's disintegrating madness, she is a daughter of a river god and a muse, so that her divinely exquisite voice is combined with powers of dissolution.

She is unearthly, only partially human in form. She wears a human face and sometimes the breasts and arms of a young woman, while her body is that of a either a fish or a bird, clawed, winged and feathered. She is volatile, fleeting, primordial, preying especially on consciousness becalmed in windless weather (and it is sometimes she who lulls the sea), so that nothing of the vital or creative is stirring.

The Sirens are specifically the temptation of music, a deadly shadow of the beauteous soundings of the spheres; diabolical muses and musings – omniscient, prophetic, spellbinding.

See (7), Spirit World, Mythical Beings: Siren.

Gnarled and tenacious roots secure a tree to the earth and support its trunk, which invisibly reaches skyward. The primary root is, botanically, the first part of a plant to appear when a seed germinates. Root matter is foundation,

origin and source. When we speak of a "root cause" or the "root of the problem", we mean its basis. Cultural lore acknowledges a root principle in certain edible plants. The ancient Greeks believed that wild carrots excited the passions. The radish, from the Latin radix, or root, became a favorite theme in Japanese art, signifying that the humblest form of life can attain Buddhahood.

Cultural, ethnic and geographical roots link one with ancestral origins and the deep strata of evolutionary process and its psychic matrix in "sacred time". Family trees of material and mythic substance develop from such roots and continue to grow with each generation. Likewise, the roots of an individual extend into layers of personal and archetypal ground. The quality of such rooting, fostered by experiences, mirroring and imagination, affects the capacity to thrive, generate new growth and creatively blossom. Roots that find only meager subsistence in rocky soil can struggle with circumstances so inimical they would seem not to support life at all. The power of roots is that they find a way.

Rootlessness, on the other hand, connotes desultory movement from place to place, or from one identity to another. The feelings of shallowness, instability, and depersonalization that characterize pathological narcissism, borderline states, affective and dissociative disorders suggest a disconnection with one's authentic, nourishing ground. To "put down roots" means to settle into something, materialize potential or recognize a locus of belonging.

See (7), Plant World, Trees: Roots.

As a mythical being, the snake is an emblematic, primordial life force. Emerging with 8-shaped movements from primal waters, spiraling or coiling up on itself (like the DNA in every living cell), striking out at lightning speed or deftly slithering away on its limbless belly and vanishing in a flash, the snake enters our mythologies as a cosmic creator, progenitor, destroyer and sacred being.

The snake sees through lidless eyes covered by a transparent scale, never blinking, evoking a supernatural vigilance, like the cobra protectively encircling the brow of the Egyptian pharaoh, or the eye of the unconscious psyche that sees where consciousness cannot, or the mesmerizing eye of the legendary hero, or the unflinching eye of death. When the snake withdraws to shed its skin, signifying renewal, rebirth and immortality, the eye becomes milky, sometimes taking on a ethereal, misty blue cast as though the serpent is entering a meditative state and has access to wisdom beyond our ken.

The underworld realm of the dead that snakes mythically inhabit is also the fecund ground from which new life emerges, a place of healing, initiation and revelation, dominion of the ancient Great Goddess. The snake is the theriomorphic form of countless deities including Zeus, Apollo, Persephone, Haades, Isis, Kali and Shiva. In the Tantric traditions of India, the feminine cosmic energy of the kundalini lies asleep like a coiled serpent at the baase of the spine. Awakened in processes of yogic meditation, this serpent, Shakti, rises through the subtle body, the two nerve currents flowing on either side of the spinal cord, passes through and opens the energy centers, or chakras, to unite in the crown with Shiva in ecstacy and transcendence.

Sacred also to Asclepius, the divine healer of ancient Greece, the snake embodied the demon or "genius" of the physician and was often depicted entwined around his staff. A patient came to the sanctuary seeking "incubation" in the innermost chamber, where, in sleep, one's innermost depths could "accomplish their curative potentialities" in the form of a dream.

See (7), Animal World, Primordial Creatures: Snake.

If color is the music of the eyes, then red would be the sound of trumpets. Concretely, red is evoked in humans by radiant energy of specific wavelengths, which increase muscle tone, blood pressure and breath rate. For soe animals it is sexually arousing. These effects occur also in blind humans and animals, so "red" is not purely an experience of the eye but something more like a bath.

Symbolically, red is the color of life. Its meaning relates, at bottom, to the human experience of blood and fire. In primitive thinking blood was life. When the blood left the body, it took life with it. At the same time, the red flow of blood was a danger signal. The glow of fire was our great comfort ad protection, but, out of control, a threat of annihilation.

Red attracts us, conveying vitality, warmth, excitement, passion, but also warns us of danger, calls for attention, says "stop"! In China, as well as in Stone Age Europe, red pigment was buried with the bones of the dead for renewal of life. Red stands at the center of our images of libido – life energy –

whether sexual passion or aggression and rage. The slinky red dress, the scarlet-robed Whore of Babylon, the Scarlet Letter (of adultery), the red hearts of Valentines all strike the sexual chord. But we also "see red" when we are enraged and connect the "red planet" Mars with the god of war. In Africa, the warrior has red eyes, and the vengeance-seeking Erinyes of the Greeks did too.

See (7), Human World, Color: Red.

For thousands of years, the aromatic smoke of incense (from Latin <u>incendere</u>, to burn) has ascended, symbolically, merging material and non-material realms of being in its diffuse, spiraling, vaporous cloud. It has signified the fragrant eros of that conjunction in ceremonies, meditation ad rites of worship. Two of the three precious gifts the Magi mythically presented to the

infant Jesus were incense: frankincense, emblematic of his divinity; and myrrh, his future death on the cross.

Frankincense and myrrh are obtained from the dried sap of two different species of a botanical family of plants common to present-day Somalia. Both resins were extraordinarily prized in ancient Mesopotamia, Africa, Egypt and India for religious ritual and healing. At Sinai, God was said to have commanded Moses to have frankincense and myrrh blended with spices into fine oils for anointing and consecration.

The ancient Egyptians used frankincense as an antidote to hemlock and as an essential ingredient in cosmetics. Daily worship of the sun god Ra included burning golden resin at dawn, myrrh at noon, and at sunset a compound of frankincense, honey and wine, symbolic of harmony. Myrrh, which is softer than frankincense and has antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties, was an ingredient in Egyptian embalming and deification mysteries of the dead. Greek soldiers carried supplies of myrrh into battle as a medicinal for cleaning wounds and preventing infection.

Myrrh's association with both death and cleansing is carried in Ovid's Metamorphosis, where Myrrh, the maiden whose incestuous love for her father produced Adonis, is transformed into a tree whose weeping sap is her repentant tears.

See (7), Spirit World, Rituals and Sacred Systems: Incense.

Dusk is the interval between day and night, a darkening that still holds within itself the final, residual luster of the sun, now mythically embarked on its night-sea journey. It is this soft, gradual dissolution of the diurnal light simultaneous with the rising of the moon and the evening stars that evokes such a mixture of elements: the erotic, seductive, melancholy, quiescent, night's magical or sinister possibilities, solitude, cessation and return.

Among the Inuits, twilight was the time when the shadow of a shaman could separate from his body and transparently enter invisible realms. In the same sense, consciousness at dusk may yield to the psychic tow of the unconscious, senses and perceptions attune themselves differently and the psychic landscape undergoes a blurring and blending of things.

Dusk brings enchantment and uncanny manifestations. Animals of the night awaken and become active, unveiling themselves in pairs of glowing eyes, the flittering wings of bats, an owl's hooting or the amorous incandescence of fireflies. Our own repressed, crepuscular energies surface, mythically

portrayed as a quickening of the spirit world and the supernatural, haunting apparitions, and shape-shifting from human into were-animal, vampire and alter-ego. Evening of day, evening of life, evening of time – the "twilight of the gods" when the earth's light is swallowed. There is pensive intimacy and release in the lengthened shadows and lowering darkness.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Fire – Light and Darkness: Dusk.

The ancient Greek counterpart to Flora, the Roman goddess of flowers, was named Chloris, meaning "green". Zephyr, the gentle west wind, enamored of Chloris, pursued her, and as he overtook the maiden, flowers spilled from her lips, and they were subsequently married.

There is no surer sign of renewal in the world, of awakening and rebirth than the coming of flowers. The young, budding shoots of violets, snowdrops and crocuses push up even through the impacted earth and late snows of winter's

end. Delicate, fragrant cherry and apple blossoms signal anticipated fruits; other flowers are themselves vegetation's radiant, culminating bloom. Their ephemeral blossoms have associated flowers with all the brilliant forms that quickly fade. The transitory soul, for instance. Or Kore, the divine maiden who, picking flowers, was herself plucked by Hades and carried to the underworld to become its queen. Or the lovely, short-live youths of antiquity: Narcissus, who wasted away, spellbound by his own reflection; Hyacinthus, felled by Apollo's misguided arrow; Adonis, for whom the briefly petalled anemone memorializes the blood of his mortal wound from a boar.

Yet, flowers are, in truth, remarkably resilient. Their roots invade rough, inauspicious soil. All of nature is enticed into the flower's proliferation. Flowers are incorporated into ritual and sacrament the world over, as emblems of eros, beauty, perfection, purity, fertility, joy and resurrection. A European alchemical text describes the synthesis of the four elements, the hoped for unity in multiplicity of nature and psyche as the goal of the opus: "as it were a meadow decked with colours and sweet-smelling flowers of divers kinds, which were conceived in the earth by the dew of heaven".

See (7), Plant World, Magical Plants and Flowers: Flower.

An Armenian fifteenth century manuscript depicts a crab holding a full moon in its claws as if the moon were a mirror in which the crab sees its reflection. Or is the crab about to eat the moon, initiating the phase of its waning? Crab and moon are counterparts in this manuscript, and in symbolism all over the world.

The moon rises in the night sky; the crab in its shell rises from watery depths. The moon waxes and wanes, cycling from dark to new to full and back. The crab also advances and retreats, oriented by lunar tides, and, depending on the species, in its movements typically scuttles sideways, or backward and forward. Moon and crab are associated with mother, night, water, feeling, and also with the changeable, moody and inconstant.

Imagination has amplified the observed qualities of the crab. We picture, as mentioned, the big claws and wide mouth devouring even the moon as Time, Myths of giant crabs dragging ships down to their doom reflect the catastrophic reversals and profound regressions that seem to reach, crablike,

out of the void to pull us under. Yet, regression is not essentially negative. The dark of the moon brings renewal, and the dark of the unconscious, psychic rebirth in the womb of the sea-mother.

In western astrology the crab is the emblem of the fourth sign of the zodiac, Cancer, in which the moon is exalted. The time of the Crab is the summer solstice when the sun reaches its highest northern point and then retreats backward toward the ecplitic as the days get shorter. On the one hand, this is the defeat of the solar hero, and likewise the crabbing pull on the life that has reached its zenith. On the other hand, it is the Crab's balancing of progression and regression and the dissolution of solar avidity in crescent darkness.

See (7), Animal World, Water Creatures: Crab.

The massive bell of King Seongdeok was cast in bronze for the Pongdok Temple in eighth-century Korea. Rung throughout the day, it summoned the

Buddhist monks to periods of devotion. On the bell's body are iage of apsaras, celestial nymphs, and its rim is shaped like an eight-petaled flower. From the deep resonance of a ritual bell like the Seongdeok or the sonorous tolling of the hour bell of the Great Clock of Westminster, to the silvery tinkling of the little bells adorning the ankles of Hindu dancers and Hindu gods, the crystalline emphasis of the sanctus bell and the cow's bell's more earthly comfort, bells awaken the senses and the spirit.

Bells ring out glad tidings of victory and celebration, warning's urgent clamor, the "joyful noise" of praise, the cadenced voice of mourning. Hindus identify the bell's echo with the primordial vibration of the universe, and scientists confirm that "the early universe rang like a bell". Similarly, the Japanese Zen sage Dögen evokes the image of a bell when he compares meditation to the melodious sound made by striking emptiness – an endless sound, both preceding and following the moment when the hammer hits.

The tonal properties of bells have made them the expression of harmony of the spheres, the cosmic unity that the Greek philosopher Pythagoras saw in the fundamental patterns of numbers and ratios. In magical folk practices bells bring rain, ward off storms and protect animals from malign spirits, and attempt to insure nature's harmonic balance with human life.

In Russian history the tolling of church bells is credited with turning the human heart away from its most destructive intentions, or bringing the hard-hearted to repentance. In Russian Orthodox Christianity, bells are animated beings, with names, feelings and bodies; they are not tuned to major or minor musical chords, because the bell is considered "not a musical instrument, but an icon of the voice of God", and each bell is prized for its deep, rich, untuned individuality.

See (7), Human World, Sound: Bell.

A "wound" from the Old English wundian, is a laceration or a breach I the physical body or psychic tissue. Wounding of every sort is a "trauma", the Greek word for wound, which also meant the hurt or damage of things, and heavy blows, or defeat, in war. From the latin vulnus, wounds represent cuts, holes, rents, cracks and misfortunes; visible and invisible, they reveal and expose our vulnerabilities. Wounds are eruptions and disruptions in what is otherwise continuous and developing. Wounds are embedded in narratives, and often change the narrative in critical and permanent ways.

Mythically, the wound as opening is also a gateway to potential transformation, and a window on encapsuled history. Freud's psychoanalytic technique relied in part on the revelations of hidden traumas. Collective wounds, like the World Wars, or the Holocaust, or the 9/11 bombings of New York's Twin Towers, are intentionally kept open by memory and memorial as a means of illumination, mourning and conscious reflection.

Through psyche's wounds, new dimensions of being may come to birth. Psychic process involves both the healing of wounds and the causing of wounds as those "lesions to the ego" that inevitably result from expanded self-knowledge. Alchemy depicted this as the nigredo, a wounding of sun, king or lion – all symbols of the reigning attitudes of consciousness. Likewise, when the Biblical patriarch Jacob wrestles with the angel of God, he suffers a wounding to the thigh, a dislocating encounter with the divine. Wound may be a passage into an initiatory drama or represent a numinous site where the relationship between self and other coagulates on new terms. We must look into a wound, not neglect or evade it.

See (7), Spirit World, Sickness and Death: Wound.

A valley is the opposite of a peak; it is the lowest point in a lofty landscape. The valley creates a gulf between mountains and hills. It is often an area of

plenitude, amassing rainfall and providing rich earth for vegetation, a longed-for destination after rugged treks. Because water chooses the lowest place to gather, a river or glacier may incise a valley, its contours the result of channel erosion, transport and deposition of debris. Valleys are the living fossil record of powerful geologic and fluvial forces.

The valley is associated with the earthy, the humble and also with the womb as a source, linking us with The Way and oneness: "Those on the Way of Tao, like water/ Need to accept where they find themselves/ And that may often be where the water goes/ To the lowest places, and that is right" (Laozi).

A valley can also be empty and deserted. We depict states of emotional heaviness as the vale of life, shadowed oppressively by mountainous burdens or looming fears – the vale of tears, the lonesome valley. At the same time, the "valley of the shadow of death" is where the psalmist feels the immanent presence of the deity and is comforted.

Dwarfed by the majestic heights of the towering mountains and the "peak experience" of transcendence they intimate, the valley conveys a sense of experience that is <u>not</u> transcended, but imparts a deep and sustaining effect. "Soul is at home in the deep, shaded valleys" said a Dalai Lama of Tibet. Similarly, the pharaonic burial site, the Valley of the Kings, in Egypt, denotes a place of immortality and quiet observation, permanently defined by its surrounding cliffs, and is emblematic of stillness and rest.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Earth: Valley.

To the ancient Egyptians, among the first to raise bees, the honeybee was the creature that transformed the warmth of the sun's rays into golden sweetness. In Hinduism, deities Indra, Krishna and Vishnu are called "nectar-born" and the sound of the rising Kundalini serpent, awakened from its coiled state, is compared to the humming of bees.

Yet the honeybee is most often associated with the great mother goddess, since the queen bee, created by feeding an ordinary larva only on "royal jelly", a glandular substance, dominates honeybee society.

A mere pound of honey requires about 25 000 trips between flower and beehive, and contains the essence of over two million flowers. Ancient honey gatherers disregarded the perils of cliffside and stinging bees to reach into a black, womblike crevice and remove the ovoid honey-dripping hive. Our ancestors linked bees and caves to the nurturance of ambivalent infant gods like Zeus and Dionysus, or tho the earth's creation, or imagined a universal

hive at the center of the earth, or envisioned a great beehive issuing forth gods, goddesses and humans.

It is no wonder that the intricacy of the honeycomb and the honey-making process was identified with divine wisdom, or that the sweet touch of its golden product o the tongue could inspire poetry, truth-saying and prophecy, and even propitiate gods and monsters. In mystery-religions, purifying honey was poured over the hands and tongues of initiates and, associated with immortality by its sunlike color, given at later stages of initiation as a sign of new life and transformation. The ultimate goal of Sufi mystics was to melt like honey into the godhead.

Equated with the bliss of nirvana in India and heavenly pleasures in China, honey also connotes earthly sexual pleasure. Early poets describe eros as "bitter honey" because Cupid, the honey thief, stings with arrows that intoxicate with both the sweetness and the agony of sexual desire, the ultimate outcome of which is new life.

See (7), Animal World, Arachnids and Insects: Honeybee.

An ordinary an of ancient Egypt, named Bai, dedicated an ear stele to the god Amun-Re, the "beautiful ram" of the sun, whose three pairs of ears in different colors signify "one who harkens supplications". Inscribed with a single pair or many pairs of ears, Egyptian votive ear stelae made their appearance with the rise of personal devotion during the New Kingdom (1570 – 1070 B.C.). "The god who listens comes to him who calls, splendid of mien and rich in ears", says a hymn of the time.

Antiquity suggests how important it is for us, not only the gods, to listen, especially to the soft-spoken "sounds" that religions hint at through their metaphor of the ear, and which are also a psychic reality. The spiritual intimation of unseen realms, subliminal or supernormal, led to an ancient culture of intuitive hearkening, as gods and humans entered into direct conversation with one another.

Hebrews and Christians sought God's word, propitiating him to incline his ears to their individual cries, while Jeremiah blasted the "uncircumcised" ears

of those who failed to comprehend the deity's subtleties. Long before, to put one's "ear to the ground" of nature was one of the surest means, as it is for many animals, of discriminating the landscape, receiving warning, finding direction, water, prey, knowing what was ahead or behind. Particularly in her solitary precincts, nature's sounds have ever been experienced as responses to questions and longings, and such auditory guidance seems also to express itself (silently) out of the wildernesses of psyche in fantasies, dreams, visions and, both helpfully and dangerously, in hallucinations.

Hindu cosmology refers to a primordial humming sound – the mantra om – that existed before the creation of light and remains audible to sages through profoundly introverted concentration. Medieval Christians claimed that Christ (as the Word of God) was conceived in his mother's womb after a dove entered her ear, while Rabelais wildly boasted that Gargantua was somehow born from his mother's ear. The more sober Egyptian stele-artisans insisted that only the right ear received the "air of birth"; the "air of death" was received by the left ear, consistent with the widespread notion that the left side is that of the "sinister".

See (7), Human World, Human Body: Ear.

The dejected ghost of a woman named Oiwa was the subject of one of Japan's most popular nineteenth-century kabuki plays. Oiwa's husband wantd to be rid of her so that he could marry the grand-daughter of a well-to-do neighbor. He tried to kill Oiwa by means of poison, but it served only to disfigure her. Aware of her husband's betrayal, Oiwa died of anger and returned to haunt him as a terrifying ghost.

Everywhere in the world there is the concept of ghosts, spirits of the dead that return to haunt the living. Jung speculated about a "consciousness without the brain" of which ghosts would be the manifestation. Ghost also reflect our age-old fascination, fear and bewilderment in relation to death. Unresolved grief and persistent attachment to the dead may overwhelm the living, a danger reflected in countless tales of the East and West peopled by ghosts who behave as vengeful, malicious shape-shifters. Shamans, spiritualists and exorcists have long been summoned to cure states of possession by the dead or a "loss of soul" to the underworld.

Yet, the derivation of the word "ghost" links it with root words that convey mixed qualities: spiritual being, angel, devil, fright, fury, wounding or tearing in pieces. In our imaginations, ghosts may return for many reasons: to complete unfinished business, to bring messages of import or offer care and protection. There are tender ghosts, while others are restless, unhappy, demanding vengeance or retribution. An African custom was to paint the head of a corpse in bright colors so that the ghost could be recognized. In China paper boats bearing images of deities or lotus-shaped lanterns were set upon the water to guide the way of the dead across the river of transmigration.

See (7), Spirit World, Soul and Psyche: Ghost.

Nose almost touches nose in a mystical sharing of breath between god and king. The pharaoh touches the head of the creator god Ptah. Responding, the

deity, mummiform, to signify his immortality, embraces the king and breathes into him life, stability, prosperity and health, "all joy". Breath animates the clay of our being. It is the lusty cry of the newborn, and the essence of wind.

Our feeling states manifest in changes of breath, from the panicky shortness of breath to the sighs "too deep for words" of intense sorrow. Everything "breathes". Woods on a spring day, the susurration of leaves, the rippling grasses, the trembling of dappled light. "The Tao is the breath that never dies. It is a Mother to All Creation", says the Tao Te Ching. Classical Greece perceived breath as something vaporous within, dewlike, sometimes visible, blending and interacting with the air.

Breath was identified with consciousness, locating both thought and feelings in the lungs, which interacted with the heart, blood and pulse. "In men of understanding the eyes and tongue and ears and minds are rooted in the midst of their breasts." And the gods as inspiration, Latin inspirare, "to breathe", might be experienced in a sudden influx of love, courage, wrath, prophecy or brilliance.

Do we breathe or are we breathed? The Sanskrit prana, "breathing forth", refers to the source and force of life and the vibratory energy of all manifestation. The sacred texts of India describe the vital breath of the living being, rhythmic and pulsating, as the microcosmic form of the alternating day and night, activity and rest, of cosmic time. In the interval between successive creations, the god Vishnu, having withdrawn the universe back into himself, sleeps, floating on the cosmic ocean in the coils of the serpent Ananta, "Endless".

See (7), Creation and Cosmos: Breath.

So many of the qualities we associate with birds are distilled in the image of a single feather: lightness, mobility, air, wingedness, balance, flight and joy. Part of the magic of feathers, unique to birds, they are thought to have evolved from the scales of primordial reptiles, attesting to the unity of heaven and earth. We now know that there were feathered dinosaurs that likely originated flight, just as mythically the Mayan feathered serpent god Quetzalcoatl combines the numinal elements of bird and snake.

American Indians used feathered bird-skins cut into strips and woven into blankets as insulation. Inhabitants of the Arctic stichted water-bird skins into their parkas in order to waterproof them. But everywhere in the world, feathers were also believed to be endowed with magical powers, which accrued to the individual who wore ritual dress or used implements adorned with feathers.

Representing the altered states of consciousness described as ecstatic flight between earth and the spirit world, feathers covered the shamanic cap or

robe. Sticks decorated with feathers were ritually employed by the Indians to carry prayers aloft and by the Maori to transport the soul of a deceased chief to the realm of the gods. Hindu Asparas, or flying genies, and Christian angels have wings of brilliant feathers, allowing them to be swift, celestial messengers.

In ancient Egypt, the ostrich feather was the hieroglyph for Maat, goddess of the right order. In later dynastic times, it was thought that the heart of the deceased was weighed against the feather of Maat. Depending on the result, the dead entered the land of the blessed, or was swallowed into the void, suggesting that the heart of one who had lived life in balance should be at the end "light as feather".

Feathers are sensitive to the slightest wind, and thus are emblems of the psyche's capacity to pick up "invisible and imperceptible currents". If we take note of these and follow up on them, as happens in some fairy tales, we can be shown new possibilities, or discover where psychic energy is tending. Thoughts, intuitions, imagination are often depicted as feathers that are caught up and carried on the breath of inspiration.

See (7), Animal World, Birds: Feather.

A shamanic line drawing traces a path leading through a series of trials called the "swaying places" marked by water, sand and clouds, before bringing the shaman to the radiant face of his supreme god, White Ulgen. The Altaic shamans of Siberia inscribed recognizable shapes on such maps, which guided their ascent to the Upper World for the purpose of healing the sick or retrieve a lost soul. The maps depicted an interior landscape of sufficient constancy from one shaman's experience to the next that each could venture beyond the familiar world to the supreme heights of the shamanic cosmos without becoming lost.

Gods and heroes of myth and religious lore also ascend to celestial realms representing glory, immortality or transcendent knowledge and spirituality, which they often share with those below. In the Christian narrative, when Jesus ascends to heaven, there is an expectation that he will return at an unknown time, sometimes depicted as an end-time of Judgment. In the Hebrew Bible, figures like Abraham and Moses make mountain ascents to the

presence of the Lord, whose laws or instructions they carry down to the people. At Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock was built over the footprint of Buraq, the magical horse on which Muhammad was said to have ascended into heaven. Dante conveys the difficulty of obtaining spiritual heights and the unusual nature of their psychic access by portraying heaven as reached by climbing a seven-storied mountain, a world-tree, or a column of smoke.

Ascent, from the Latin ascendere, to climb, has to do with physical or psychological movement upwards. Ascent is associated with emergence, elevation, sublimation, freedom from what weighs one down. It is often depicted mythically as flight, wingedness, the birdlike eye taking in a greater perspective or spiritual expansiveness and release from limitations of mattered life.

Ascent is often paired with descent in initiatory rites and psychic processes of transformation. Here, it signifies one pole in a shifting between above and below, height and depth, the ups and downs of affect and mood, or the movement between intellect and instinct as means of self-knowledge or in dynamics of separation and synthesis.

Ascent can suggest the volatilizing of a solid, or the spiritualizing of matter. Symbolically, this would mean a making conscious of unconscious projections that result in entrenched patterns of behavior or in the concretizing of something meant to be understood as a psychic factor requiring integration. On the other hand, descent can bring something suspended, in the conceptual or potential, into realized form.

Ascension often supposes a hierarchy of values. Something is seen as ascending from a lower, heavier, darker, more primitive state to something increasingly higher, lighter, more refined or more intelligent. In Gnosticism, for example, the anima mundi, the soul of the world, is trapped in physis, or nature, and redemption amounts to her release and ascent. Ancient rites of solifacio by means of ascent through the spheres of the seven planets symbolized the return of the soul to the realm of the sun from which it originated.

See (7), Human World, Movement and Expression: Ascent.

With intimate care peoples of all over the world have preserved the cherished relics of their ancestors – bits of native soil, ritual objects or personal belongings, bones of the dead that they washed, rocked, sang to, prayed or blessed. The ancestors possess this in-between quality of the flown soul and the hovering presence. They seem to have a kind of materiality and exalted awareness. They also display an immateriality, a repose and introspective serenity that suggest they inhabit a timeless dimension. They are imagined as residing in the Island of the Blessed, the Land of the Dead, the Spirit World, Underworld, Night Sky or West, mythic conceptions of the place of origin.

In some cultures the ancestors represent the way to spiritual liberation, in others the endless procession of rebirth. For good and ill, they are "the custodians of the source of life" whence derives our vitality, sustenance and renewal. The great goddess Mnemosyne "is memory as the cosmic ground of

self-recalling which, like an eternal spring, never ceases flowing". They are the emblems of accumulated experience and existential riches.

See (7), Spirit World, Soul and Psyche: Ancestor.

Although some caves are formed by abrupt geological forces – pockets of volcanic gas, tubes of lava, earthquakes – it is the glacially slow seepage of groundwater that creates the iciclelike stalactites and the eternal calm of the legendary limestone caverns of Paleolithic France and Spain. Deep in their labyrinthine corridors, a water drop or falling stone echoes through a world of absolute darkness and constant temperature. Our ancestors felt their way along these cool walls, balancing flickering cups of burning oil in their hands, listening for the breath of massive cave bears, before reaching astonishingly realistic animal paintings – proof of humanity's long fascination with artistic technique and symbolic images.

By providing a passage between this world and the underworld, or between life and the land of the dead, caves evoke the primordial functions of the earth mother as both womb and tomb. The Aztecs traced their origin to Seven Caves (Chicomoztoc), a primordial event mirrored in the creation myths of the Pueblo, Hopi and Zuni, recalling their emergence from a cavernous earth-womb. Ancient and medieval poets depicted the entrance to Hades or Hell as a plummeting cave, drawing on these maternal associations to portray a place of death, return, initiation and rebirth.

According to Eliade, traditional miners compared their art of drawing precious metals out of the earth's body, where it gestated in caverns, to the art of obstetrics. Similarly, Ovid tells his ancient Roman readers that in the primitive age of Saturn, humans made their first homes in caves, just as Jupiter was sheltered from Saturn in the Cretan cave of Mount Ida, protectively fed by bees and goats.

In the cave's complete darkness, the dramatic symbol of light was forcefully manifested. When the insulted Japanese sun-goddess Amaterasu withdrew into a cavern, she plunged the world into darkness. She was cajoled out only when the gods aroused her curiosity by holding a mirror at the cave's entrance to reflect her own brilliance. Plato taught that the world itself is a cave to the ignorant, who watch shadows on its walls cast by a celestial light that the enlightened perceive directly.

Psychologically, entering a cave can have the quality of introversion, incubation, regression to the source, psychic withdrawal or hibernation. The cave can represent a refuge, but also a confined and archaic perspective.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Earth: Cave.

The sovereign "eye" of the high god of ancient Egypt, the heat or "anger" of the blazing sun, was depicted as a cobra of intense, fixating vision and burning venom. Called "the rising goddess", or "the fiery goddess", a gilded, rearing cobra encircled the brow of pharaohs, a sign of their sanctified kingship and the god's power to strike in all his manifestations, including that of the crowned king.

Found among the dazzling treasures of the pharaoh Tutankhamun's tomb was a pendant known as "the great enchantress", a goddess with a woman's head and a cobra's body nursing the young king, and a golden cobra Netjer-Ankh, "the living god", which served Tutankhamun as a protective device.

Easily mythologized as the image of annihilation – terrifying, mesmerizing, self-sufficient, lightning quick – the cobra is nevertheless as much an emblem of deathlessness as it is of death, for time winds into eternity, which once again gives birth to time. India depicts the cobra as a form of the naga, the serpent residue of the destroyed cosmos at the end of an age and also the

stuff of a new beginning. The cobra is mythically the most ancient of serpents, Vritra, who coils around the mountain that guards the eternity before creation. Likewise, the cobra encircles the waist, wreathes or is the sacred thread, amulet or ornament of divine Rudra-Shiva, Kali and Ganesha, creator-destroyers who hold the universe within their substance. The cobra spreads its protective hood above the sacred lingam, or over the infinity of the meditating Shiva, Brahma and Buddha. It signifies the inscrutable ferocity and fascination of the "wild god of the world" and his appalling sensuality and asceticism.

For the Egyptians, too, the cobra represented not only the inevitability of death, but its antidote in the mysteries of rebirth and the establishment of order, to which the cobra aligned itself as a killer of rodents. The cobra as Apophis serpent was the enveloping chaos that each night threatened to swallow the sun, and at the same time its opposite, "the power of life to defend itself inviolate against dissolution and the spirits of non-being" and a warding off of the enemies of the king, kingdom and cosmos.

See (7), Animal World, Primordial Creatures: Cobra.

In the dawn of human consciousness, a Paleolithic hunter in an ancient rock engraving stalks an ostrich with a bow and arrow. An antelope in the background suggests there is plentiful game, or a magical invoking of it. A female figure assumes a ritual pose, and there is a line of connection between her genitals and the man's. She may represent his wife, whose observance of rituals and taboos affects her husband's fruitfulness in the hunt.

Primordial hunting scenes such as we see them in cavern engravings indicate an instinctual reality of interconnection in which humans, animals, the landscape and invisible, supernatural forces participate in nature's predation. There is an affinity, even a secret identification, between predator and prey, and reversals in which one becomes the other. Assimilation of the strength, ferocity and essence of the one slain is realized by the eating of its flesh and blood, in the making of clothing from skins, feathers or fur and the incorporation of bones into shelter and tools.

Shamans, who in trance might shape-shift into animals, often mediated the relationship between their hunting group and the mythical Lady or Lord of the Beasts associated with the release or withholding of game. Shamanic energies were also employed in the importuning and propitiating of animal spirits and the imaginal sending, penetrating, magnetizing and luring that extended to the object of the chase.

The convergence of natural and supernatural in the hunt is perpetuated in countless myths and fairy tales where the hunt initiates a heroic quest, symbolically conveying both the wonders and ordeals of self-renewal and individuation.

See (7), Human World, Fundamentals of Work and Society: Hunting.

In Aeschylus' Orestia, Orestes, who has committed the most heinous crime of all, matricide, is not mad but at his most sane at the moment he recognizes

that his mother's Furies are in pursuit. Fury, vengeance, madness and guilt are psychological realities that can't be denied, but must be suffered through their deeper meaning. The gods hound us; the pursuit of Orestes by the Furies enacts a deep ethical response in the psyche to take ownership and responsibility for one's totality: for death, guilt, fear, despair, pain and all that appears hostile to the ego's life. Madness dismembers and is a first step in the fertility magic where the dissolution provides the seeds of rebirth.

The ancient Greeks struggled with the problem of containing fury's madness, as we do today, searching for a pact with the Furies that would express meaningful contact with the archaic life of the unconscious, not just the triumph of reason over the darkness of our deeper selves.

When the Greek god Cronos flung the severed phallus of his father Ouranos toward the sea, the Furies were born from the blood that fell onto the earth, while the phallus received by the sea fathered Aphrodite. The furies embody the dark side of the binding power of eros, the madness of blood betrayed, the primal affective cry when one's substance and identity are denied. They are imagined as three winged, whip-wielding sisters with serpentine hair and deadly claws, beastly predators when enraged. They emerge from their underground lair in dreadful Tartarus to punish the most heinous crimes, particularly murder, particularly blood-guilt within a family, and especially matricide. Their names mean "unceasing", "vengeance" and "strange dark memory".

The Furies are also conceived as the unpurified spirits of the dead. Their frightful wailing was called a "binding hymn", and like the Sirens' song, had the power to grip its victims, weaving a curse, casting a spell, reaching into the blood and driving its victims mad.

See (7), Spirit World, Mythical Beings: Furies.

In physical reality, a bubble exists as a watery transparent object filled with air or gas. Its smooth, glassy surface mirrors rainbow colors of light, intermingling in fluid movement. The weightlessness of the bubble allows it to float freely on invisible currents of a gentle breeze, but is fragility soon causes it to burst and dissolve into mist.

In contrast, the archetypal symbol of a bubble exists in the psyche beyond time and space. It constitutes an invisible reality imagined by mystics throughout the ages, a round nothingness that is paradoxically the primordial source of all. The unseen forces within the archetypal bubble symbolizes the oneness, which can be likened to the Tao as described in the Tao Te Ching:

There is something formless yet complete / That existed before heaven and earth / How still! How empty! / Dependent on nothing, unchanging / All pervading. Unfailing. / One may think of it as the / Mother of all things under heaven. / I do not know its name, / But I call it "Meaning". / If I had to give it a name, / I should call it "The Great".

Throughout history, the translucent bubble has inspired contemplation of the infinite and the eternal. In ancient Egypt the Ba soul, or ghost that appeared after death, flew in and out of the tomb as a weightless bubble. Like the circle or sphere, the globular roundness connotes oneness, wholeness, totality, completion and spiritual perfection. The translucency of the bubble introduces, in addition, the numinosity, ethereality and spirituality associated with the celestial light of heaven.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Water: Bubble.

The dung beetle of the desert, a type of scarab, has captured the mythopoetic imagination. This “sacred scarab” embodies the Egyptian god Khepri who propels the sun out of the darkness of the underworld and across the sky in its diurnal journey. Shu, the god of air, supports the solar barque, while Nut,

the goddess of the sky, receives the brilliant orb to which she gives birth each day.

The dung beetle has the remarkable instinct of rolling balls of animal dung along the ground to its underground cache where the dung will be stored for food. Unlike the images of the scarab, however, it is not its front legs but its feathery-looking hind legs with which the beetle rolls the balls of dung. The ball is sometimes so large that the beetle is forced into an almost vertical position. Yet, persistent and resolute, the scarab manages to negotiate obstacles in the way.

African cultures featured the dung beetle in myths of the beginning, as the creature able to bring up a piece of primordial earth from the watery abyss. But the scarab's pushing of its dung ball resonated especially in the imagination of the ancient Egyptians. Khepri, associated in particular with the sun of the morning, was depicted in lifelike form as the black dung beetle, sometimes with its wings spread, or as the figure of a man with a scarab beetle head. Kheper, from which Khepri gets his name, means "to take shape" or "come into being", evoking the sun and solar consciousness taking visible shape with day. But Khepri's blackness also suggest that it is an invisible force that upholds solar energies, an unconscious that propels consciousness into its awakenings and discriminated forms, creativity and perpetual motion.

The scarab's relation to the rising sun made it an emblem of rebirth. This symbolism was reinforced by the fact that besides the dung ball it rolls for food, the scarab fashions from sheep dung a pear-shaped ball in which to lay its eggs and feed its larvae. Pupae resembling tiny mummies, their wings and legs encased, rise out of the earth in which the dung ball containing the beetle's eggs was embedded, giving all the appearance of spontaneous self-creation.

So much did the scarab evoke the qualities of immortality, sublimation and transcendence that its dwelling, a subterranean, vertical shaft leading to a horizontal passage, may have been imitated in the architecture of Egyptian tombs. Hundreds of thousands of scarab amulets were crafted in Egypt out of precious and semiprecious stone, metal and glass.

See (7), Animal World, Arachnids and Insects: Scarab.

In the very urge to carve intricate units of temporal human order on what must have seemed an ageless, indestructible 25-ton stone, the Aztecs sought to bring together time and eternity. The round calendar-stone, at one time placed on top of the great pyramid in Tenochtitlan, functions as a mandala reconciling opposites. A cycle of 250 tzolkin, or days, roughly equal to the period of human gestation, was divided into 13 20-day units synchronized by means of a unique numerical system with figures of gods and forces in the mythic cycle of the plumed serpent Quetzalcoatl. The whole was correlated with the solar year and then reconciled at the end of a 52-year long "Calendar Round", when, symbolically, the world met destruction and was created anew. This moment was depicted in the stone as the conjunction of the sun disk of light and the earth monster of darkness.

Calendars of most premodern societies reflect the rhythms of a symbolic cosmos experienced within, that found correspondence in the cycles and seasons of the world without, the movement of its celestial bodies in relation to earth and ocean and the molting, rutting, migration and hibernation of tis creatures. The monthly phases of the moon – easily observed and measured – mirrored a woman's menstrual cycles, and psyche's energies of fullness and emptiness, light and dark, pregnancy and birth.

The fixed patterns of stars and the sun's yearlong passage of ascent and descent marked by the solstices told the archaic farmer when to plant and when to harvest, and resonated in his own being as intervals of potency and dormancy. By their seeming magical regularity, the sun and moon served both the practical and symbolic needs of archaic cultures to measure time, leading to a development of counting, number and prediction – important foundations of consciousness and culture.

In the later shift to a primarily linear or historical reckoning of time, and the privileging of consciousness over psyche's "round" totality, one can lack, felt Jung, the sustaining sense of recurring natural cycles. Counter to this shift are the traditional horoscopes that place the signs of their revolving zodiac around the earth at the center, or liturgical calendars that provide symbolic containers for the passage of ritualized, sacred seasons and "ordinary" time.

See (7), Human World, Tools and other Objects: Calendar.

Zero, the numeral that indicates the absence of value, is rich and vital. Zero has a paradoxical mystique, the void that is powerfully present, the number that is both ordinary and absolute. The invention of zero has been considered one of humankind's greatest achievements, but central to its significance is the radical effect that zero has had upon human thought.

Zero's history hints at the deeply philosophical nature of this numbered concept. Zero began in Babylonia, and in the Mayan culture, as a placeholder in writing numbers indicating that a unit of value was nil, a function that remains the same today. It was in seventh-century India that the true genius of zero began to reveal itself, allowing progress from the concrete world of geometry to the abstractions of algebra and purely mathematical calculations.

In Sanscrit, zero was sunya, emptiness, with its implication of a qualityless layer that exists behind all appearances. Its root, vi, to swell, connotes that it is a receptive womb, a pregnant void with the potential to give birth to all

things. Like the Cosmic Egg, zero is the fecund feminine principle, paired with the number one, the male animal force.

From India, the new number entered the Arabic-speaking world, where it was called <u>sifr</u> (root of both zero and cypher), from whence it spread to Europe around the year 1000. That it took another 650 years to be fully adopted attests to its profoundly unsettling nature. In the Middle Ages, zero was considered the Devil's work, introducing the horror of nothingness into the fullness of God's creation.

While a frightening reminder of the primal void, zero had both logic-defying mathematical properties and the power to suggest the abyss of infinity. The Rennaissance discovery of perspective's infinite space was found in the zero vector of the vanishing point. And for Descartes, the proof of God could be sought at the meeting of the void and the infinite, for there lay zero, the balance point between negative and positive, the crossroads of coordinates that made a common language of number and form.

Modern physics has discovered in zero its own portal to the infinite, with absolute zero the theoretical freezing of all molecular movement, the zero space of the black hole, the limitless zero point energy of quantum mechanic's vacuum, and the cosmic zero of the big bang theory, the cataclysmic creation of the universe from nothingness.

See (7), Spirit World, Rituals and Sacred Systems: Zero.

Eos, the winged goddess of dawn, dispenses dew from twin amphoras as she flies above the earth. The lovely lightness of the image conveys the celestial grace of the goddess who brings from above to below the renewing moisture. This mystery of the darkness that leaves all the plant life glistening at first light has contributed to dew's symbolic potency.

For the ancients, the refreshment and cooling balm of the dew was evidence of divine visitation and divine gift – of Eos, or the rainbow messenger Iris, or the starry, overreaching Egyptian Nut in her night-sky aspect. Because of its "heavenly" source, others saw in the dew tonic and panacea, even a mystical mirror in which the world was reflected. Buddhist literature speaks of Kuan Yin emerging from the center of the lotus with her vase of the "sweet dew" of compassion. Ethereal, evanescent, vanishing with the appearance of the sun, dew was the imaginal food of spirits, or the form that souls took following the cremation of the body.

Dew's relation to both night and dawn has also made it a portent of transpersonal intervention and illumination. In the biblical Exodus, dew heralds the "manna", the bread that God sends to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. For the early Christians, dew symbolized the gift of the Holy Spirit, a boon from heaven that revitalized parched souls. Borrowing in part from these sources, alchemy found in dew a synonym for the <u>aqua sapienta</u>, the mercurial water of wisdom.

Not merely an intellectual form of understanding, but incorporating feeling values, the dew alluded to psyche's capacity to freshen and reanimate the personality dessicated by unconsciousness of its soul-stuff. The dew represents the "moisture that heralds the return of the soul".

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Air – Wind and Weather: Dew.

Nature's extravagance has made the peacock almost more mythical than actual. Like the phoenix, he is a solar bird. His shimmering tail is emblem of the sun's expansive, fiery descent, and its radiance fanning out of darkness at dawn. Bird of immortality, the peacock enthrones the immortals, his multiple "eyes" suggesting their surpassing vision, and the all-seeing eternal.

There is an old Hindu saying that the peacock has "the feathers of an angel, the walk of a thief and the voice of a devil". The stunning tail is a courtship display that is also heavy and conspicuous, making the peacock vulnerable to predators, and also to moralizers who perceive an example of pride and fall.

In antiquity the peacock signified rebirth and early Christian art adopted the image as a symbol of resurrection. Pairs of peacocks accompanied the lamb on Christian sarcophagi. Rennaissance versions of the adoration of the Magi, or the Annunciation, perched a peacock in the rafters, signifying auspicious events yet to unfold. The peacock molts in the fall, and unadorned for many months acquires brilliant plumage in the spring, a fact that found correspondence in the penitential season of the Lent that precedes the Easter renewal.

From its origins in India, the peacock was greeted as a marvel throughout the ancient world. Byzantine and Roman imperial courts assigned the peacock to the empress, just as the eagle was the emperor's bird. For ancient Greeks, who protected the bird to assure its propagation, the peacock belonged to Hera, the Queen of Olympus, the Roman Juno. Ovid relates how Mercury slew the hundred-eyed Argus, whom Juno had enlisted to spy upon the maiden Io, one of Jupiter's conquests.

Evoking insight that can shift what is felt as poisonous into healing medicine, the peacock was said to transmute the snake's venom into his blue throat-feathers and the snake's cunning into the "eyes of wisdom". Divine Shiva's throat had turned peacock blue when he swallowed ad purified the poison of the primordial ocean. India's epic, the <u>Ramayana</u>, relates how the storm-god Indra transformed himself into a peacock in order to elude the demon Ravana, afterwards rewarding the bird with hundreds of eyes in its feathers and the power to kill snakes.

See (7), Animal World, Birds: Peacock.

Glass is translucence, transparency, refraction. A pair of spectacles that bring into focus words on a page, a glass of wine that invites unhurried sipping. So many things are visible through glass. Light striking a prism in a radiance of color, perfumes and spices, the pungent, mysterious medicaments of itinerant healers.

Human being were making glass over 4000 years ago in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Syria invented glass-blowing of hollow objects at the end of the first century. In the West, Venetian technology produced glass of rare brilliance and made possible the mass production of glass for industry and science. Medieval alchemists, fascinated by glass, made it an emblem of their opus of transmutation. Glass referred to the transparent "vessel" in which processes of transformation at many levels were taking place.

The dual nature of glass induces bivalent fantasies. Glass conveys beauty, ornamentation, purity, delicacy, but also extraordinary fragility as a substance that can be shattered into minute and cutting shards. The glass mountain of fairy tales is removed from life, dissociated, the end of the world, the land of the dead, the dwelling place of supernatural, shape-shifting forces personified as ogres, withes and swan maidens. Suggesting loss of soul and the arduous journey to find it, a princess is often captive in the glass mountain, which can only be penetrated by her true love.

See (7), Human World, House and Home: Glass.

Like the somber cadence of a tolling bell or the funereal drumbeat for a fallen leader, burial most immediately evokes an utmost sense of finality. Although death and life will continuously merge and separate in the grave, burial nevertheless marks the terminus of a <u>particular</u> existence or embodiment. At

the grave, the living must irrevocably surrender the last bodily vestiges of the beloved's once animate, inspirited presence to the silence and mystery of the "underworld".

Since the Stone Age, burial in the earth has been the natural way for numerous cultures to deal with the dead. Inhumation, interment, is rendered as "planting" the dead. The idea of burial as planting alludes to the mysteries of descent and resurrection. The image evokes not only ultimate submersion in the body, but also the fertilizing humus of psychic depths and the dissolutions that release rich elements of transformation.

The grave markers suggest, much as Shivas stringing of skulls in old Indian paintings, the movement of generations through endless cycles of life and death. In his role as Bhuteswara, haunter of cemeteries and cremation sites, Shiva embodies the opposing energies of creation and destruction, the erotic and the austere, which hover at the grave.

Descent is restoration of contact with the mother ground, where loss is the seeding of the "golden grain", and death is conception.

See (7), Spirit World, Sickness and Death: Burial.

Though first appearing as the merest attenuation of darkness, dawn, the beginning of daybreak, nevertheless signals an inevitable resurgence of light. Whether alluding to the incipient universe, or to the momentary flicker of an idea or feeling in its earliest apprehension; whether naming the interlude of communion engendered by the pristine clarity and shared focus of the whole creation poised at the brink of sunrise, dawn evokes annunciation, beginning, approach, coming into being.

Weaving variegated semblances of light into the fabric of the universe, dawn may, on the one hand, restore the form and texture of an ordered world. For some, every dawn is a new creation, crafted by the deity from the transformed chaos of "night". On the other hand, in early popular Hindu tradition dawn represents the intoxicating allure of the "primal power of existence", introducing the surprising, the "spontaneously charming", the "incorrigibly unintentional" into the ongoing process of creation.

In the Arctic darkness, during the ten days when the sun disappears following the winter solstice, Inuit whale hunters and their wives gather on the roofs of their igloos to await the "breaching" of the dawn, a shred of light that shines and fades immediately on the southern horizon, anticipating a gradual return of daylight and a prosperous hunting season in the spring.

Typically, dawn is depicted as a beautiful young woman, like Eos, the goddess of Greek mythology whose saffron- and rose-tinted light announces the momentous and conspicuous advent of her brother Helios. In ancient Egyptian mythology, the red streaks of dawn represent the blood of the cow-goddess Hathor as she labors to deliver her calf – the sun – who is born anew each morning. Likewise, the chariot of the Vedic goddess Usas, laden with riches for humankind, is drawn through the sky by tawny cows or by red-gold horses. Just as cows break out in the morning from their night enclosure, Usas breaks open the darkness; as the swollen udder of the cow yields life-giving milk, so Usas "uncovers her breast" to bestow beneficient light.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Fire – Light and Darkness: Dawn.

The fox's fiery red coat, flamelike ears and tail and vertical pupils in glowing amber eyes give it a volatile appearance, embodying the elusive, flickering, transformative qualities of fire itself. The fox seemingly possesses its own inner light, like the shifting, mysterious "foxfire" that luminesces eerily in marsh and forest, representing a more chthonic form of consciousness than man's.

In Japanese folklore, this shape-shifting fire is said to be generated by Kitsune, the fox-trickster, when he wants to become human, by using his belly as a drum or, in allusion to his sexual potency and fertility, by pulling his tail between his legs and rubbing it with his forepaws until it ignites. Thus he produces an elusive glimmer that beckons from another realm – a fleeting presence that Japanese poets likened to sunlight flashing amidst rain, suddenly appearing, dazzling us, and then vanishing, like the fox itself.

Though often portrayed as a low-down, thieving outlaw who must be tracked down and punished, the nimble fox's notorious ability to transgress

boundaries has made it one of the most successful survivors on the planet. In Medieval legend, the labyrinthine passages of the wily Reynard’s underground “castle” allowed him to be everywhere at once and nowhere at all, while the shimmering fluidity of his vulpine intelligence, anticipating and deluding all opponents, subverted the “proper” order of things.

Called “son of the earth” by the Incas, the fox’s ability to hear through the earth about far-off events made him a diviner-curer, just as the fox-guide’s subterranean knowledge led North American and Siberian shamans through paths not ordinarily open or visible to humans.

See (7), Animal World, Wild Animals: Fox.

A cloister is an enclosed walkway attached to a cathedral or abbey, designed to protect the seclusion of monastic life. The typical features of a cloister are a covered arcade with an interior colonnade, often filled with tracery or glass,

opening onto a quadrangular garden. A cloister's four walls conceals a central garden from the outside world, often with a well or rosebush at its center to recall the Garden of Eden.

A cloistered person may voluntarily choose isolation to concentrate upon the stillness that may be otherwise drowned out by the external world. The Latin root of the word cloister – claustrum – means an enclosed place with the implied rigors of solitude. Walking along formal pathways is an ancient practice in sacred traditions worldwide. While a Buddhist monk deepens his meditation by slowly winding around a stupa, so does a Christian nun find that her spiritual center is mirrored in the labyrinth she treads in a cathedral undercroft. Such geometric exercise includes the body in a reordering pattern and through the fourfold form of a cloister reinforces sense of wholeness.

One can live a cloistered life outside of a monastery. The American poet Emily Dickinson drafted her poems in insular seclusion, even shielding herself from callers by visiting them behind a half open door. Psychologically, "cloister" reflects the dedicated circumambulation of one's interior, transpersonal center, in the service of enlarged consciousness. There were many in the Middle Ages who found the cloistered life to be the container in which their potential could bloom.

The shadow side of cloister is suggestively preserved in our modern term "claustrophobia", derived from the same root. A cloistered existence could represent a defensive circumscribing of consciousness out of fear of life's demands. However, Jung was firm that the circumambulatio was active engagement of the psyche and not escape into an Eden-like innocence that avoided the tension of opposites. The unity in multiplicity then revealed as the transcendent self is beautifully embodied in the image of the garden at the center of the interior "cloister".

See (7), Human World, Buildings and Monuments: Cloister.

Her upper half is the form of a beautiful woman with flowing hair and glistening, naked breasts; her lower half the iridescent scales of a fish. From her underwater niche she invites engagement. While the mermaid plays a cautionary role in Christian symbolism, she descends from much earlier traditions. Here, she warns of the enticements of the flesh personified by the feminine as sensuality, fluid, unconscious depths and instinctual life.

To the men who gaze upon her at their peril, the mermaid is both beguilingly human and very alien. As a personification of the sea's and psyche's generative waters, the mermaid represents the prospect of sexual love, pleasure and wish fulfillment, and she also possesses the gift of prophecy. The mermaid's habitat is the open sea, the rocky shoreline and an underwater world of unbelievable luxury. Yet, attraction and danger are inseparably intertwined in the mermaid. For many cultures, the mermaid has embodied fears of dissolution of consciousness as well as fears of woman

who gets identified as its agent because of her imagined fickleness, hiddenness, engulfing eroticism and captivating allurements.

Although the mermaid is quasimortal, she is related to a worldwide pantheon of water gods and goddesses, nymphs and tritons and like them represents the potency of seas, rivers and all profound, watery realms in their abundance and unpredictability. Among her earliest ancestors can be counted Oannes, the beneficent Babylonian half-fish, half-man sun deity, and Atargatis, the mermaid goddess whose violent anger conveys the destructive aspect of erotic energies. Mermaids belong to the lineage of Aphrodite, the sea-born Greek goddess of love.

Alchemy regarded the mermaid as Melusina, the water creature who is a variant of the mercurial serpent, embodying the spirit of the unconscious. She was said to have seduced Beelzebub into practicing witchcraft, and was descended from the whale that once held Jonah, associating her with the unconscious as "womb of mysteries" and with the innocence of Paradise. In the alchemical fantasy, Melusina "lives in the blood", suggesting she has reality in the interior substance of a man, and that, calling to him from the depths, she longs for a soul and redemption, the unconscious soul stuff wanting to be humanized by being made conscious.

See (7), Spirit World, Mythical Beings: Mermaid.

A small boy reaches for the hand of his young sister and summoning courage, the two children taking in the perspective of a huge, ancient forest. We know the Germanic fairy tales of children who are forced by circumstance to wander off into a wilderness where every cracking branch signals a goblin's approach and every dark stump transforms into a prowling animal. When one is lost in its depths, a forest becomes fiendishly alive as the evening gloom swallows the last sunray.

Once, the great oaks of Germany and the evergreens of Scandinavia formed an unbroken canopy, part of the immense forest that strechted from Ireland to Japan. Before walking upright, our humanoid ancestors lived in the trees of the arid forests of Africa. A sultry, teeming rainforest such as the vast Amazon is home to the most species of trees as well as 90 percent of organisms of every kind.

The forest, with its exotic forces, is "outside" the inhabited precincts of consciousness, as village, city, household or castle. But the boundaries are

often depicted as tenuous; many tales begin with the protagonist living "at the edge of forest", just as, inevitably, the worlds of typical and archetypal impinge upon each other. An unusual presence comes out of the forest or a magical animal is sighted there. One chances into the forest as into a daydream, and loses one's bearings. Many spiritual and psychological journeys begin, as Dante's did in the Divine Comedy, by entering the "dark wood" of psychic wilderness.

One can disappear into the forest, escaping life. But the Hindu notion of a life span includes becoming a vanaprastha, or "forest-dweller", once the responsibilities of house-holding are over. It was in the legendary Deodar Forest of ascetical refuge where the cast-off phallus of Lord Shiva became a fiery pillar connecting heaven and earth, and the form of the original lingam. To the sacred groves of antiquity devotees of the deity came for healing and communion. A Japanese torii gate opens simply on the natural shrine of a pine forest. Somewhere in the midst of the forest we may also happen upon a sanctuary set apart in virgin country. Perhaps it is drenched with rain, muffled with snow, or hanging moss makes the trees look ghostly.

See (7), Creation and Cosmos, Earth: Forest/Jungle.

The bull represents the power of nature harnessed to create the first civilizations. The domestication of cattle supplied sufficient food to form stable communities, The oxen (castrated bulls), the most forceful and untiring of all draw animals, were used for plowing and harvesting, corresponding to humanity's increased mastery of nature through the cultivation of land.

In ancient belief, the overarching sky was a cow, like the Egyptian god Hathor, and Hindu myth tells us that the universe was supported by the legs of a bull. The symbolic range of the bull is so encompassing that it is associated with all the four elements, indicating the tremendous power of nature, beyond human control. The bull was worshipped as a divine being in most early civilizations.

The blind fury of stampeding bulls, their heads and horns lowered towards the ground, seemed much like the frenzied gods of storm-winds, destroying anything in their way. In Sumeria, the kings shared with the god the title of "The Wild Bull". Like a cornupia, the river Ganges was flowing from the horns

of the Hindu bull-god Shiva in one version of the myth. Perhaps it was as the element of water that the bull was most venerated. In Egypt, the creator god Ptah in the form of the Apis bull caused the flooding of the Nile, the river's fine silt making the fields ready to sprout into new life each year. The annual flooding of the river Tigris in Mesopotamia was the result of the union between the bull-god Ninlil and the cow or mother goddess, making the land fertile. In Sanskrit, the words for "bull" and "rain" both come from the same root , meaning both "to water" and "to impregnate".

In front of most Shiva temples in India, Nandi, his adoring bull, is facing the inner sanctum, which contains the lingam, the phallic symbol of Shiva's reproductive power. In Greece, another bull-god was worshipped for his generative power, his phallus carried in processions during his festivals. Dionysus, the god of wine and exuberant sexuality, was called "the horned child", "the horned deity", the "bull-browed" and the "bull-horn". It was in the form of the bull Zagreus that Dionysus was dismembered by the Titans but was reborn after his heart was saved.

Our fascination with the bull throughout history, ritualized in bull cults and bull sacrifices, still survives in present-day bull runs or bull-fights. Psychologically, it is the story of our relationship to instinctual nature, where humans are confronted with the bull's thrusting animal energy as utterly "other".

See (7), Animal World, Domestic Animals: Bull.

Yellow is “a color capable of charming God”. So wrote Vincent van Gogh from his yellow house in sun-drenched Arles. Preparing a room for his friend Gauguin, he made a series of yellow sun-flower paintings but judged only two to be fine enough to hang. Van Gogh’s yellow is exhultant, radiant with the energy of the sun in the blue sky.

The Maya of ancient Mexico used the word Kan, yellow, for the god who held up the sky. Traditional Chinese belief has also linked yellow with the highest things – with the sun as the center of the heavens, with the emperor (whose emblem was a yellow dragon) as the center of the universe. During the Ch’ing dynasty (1644 – 1911) only the emperor was allowed to wear yellow clothing. Huang, the Chinese word for yellow, also means “radiant”.

In China, yellow was also the color of fertile soil and used for hangings on the bridal bed to ensure the fertility of the marriage. Chinese refer to themselves as golden, not yellow, and of course yellow is closely linked to gold in Western symbolism, from the halos of the saints to the bones and flesh of the

Egyptian gods, which were thought to be of gold. Islamic culture saw yellow in two ways. Golden yellow stood for wise and good advice, while pale yellow stood for betrayal and deceit. This pale yellow is the color of Sulphur, which belongs to the devil's realm.

See (7), Human World, Color: Yellow.

A mask is the face imagination gives a god. Reaching back into Paleolithic history and still in use today, the mask may be a quintessential genre of human psychological expression. Masks portray the human "life drama" in all its manifold aspects, especially the compelling , ambiguous, sometimes revelatory and often treacherous search of the "real self" behind our more familiar self-images. As the human wearer of a mask becomes obscured, he or she is transformed into the archetypal patterns the mask evokes.

Used for worshipping the gods, for healing, for initiation, to maintain collective authority, and also to escape that authority, masks belong to the mythic arts of drama and storytelling. These, in turn, trace their lineage back into shamanism and, by extension, into a sacred sensibility toward the mystery and depth of human experience.

Distillation of powerful archetypal emotions – love, fear, rage, disappointment, joy – are given impersonal artistic form in a mask, which supports paradoxically both catharsis and disidentification. The mask, far from merely concealing its wearer, provides a bridge, opening psychological experience toward the "spirits", the instinctual, archetypal factors of the personality, by providing "temporary housing" for those "gods".

Since the mask stands between one's self and the world, it has a dual nature. It looks both in and out. A mask can disguise, cover, veil, lie, capture, release, reveal, project, protect, disown, recollect, deceive, dissociate, embody or transform. The best theatrical masks have the ability to "change emotions", appearing differently depending on how the light strikes the mask, capturing both the "essential" and "changing" nature of emotional and psychological life. This shape-shifting aspect of the mask provides ritual access to levels of experience not ordinarily available to the conscious mind.

There is a terrorizing aspect to being idenfified with one's persona, with our contemporary "tribal roles" – the masks through which we enter and live in the world, such as "spouse", "doctor", "artist", "mother". These masks also stand between subjectivity and the collective. At the same time, they reflect the underlying archetypal drive toward adaptation and participation in collective life, toward incarnation of the "gods". Sorting this out, in other words becoming aware of one's masks and identifications, The living "masquerade", what is hidden and what is revealed, what is unduly pressured by conformity, and what is emergent and true, is part of the work of individuation.

See (7), Spirit World, Rituals and Sacred Systems: Mask.

Bibliography for Houses of God and Houses of Men

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