

SOME ASPECTS OF REDEMPTION IN THE NAVAJO CREATION MYTH*

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Since the beginning of recorded history, and doubtless very long before that, man has been concerned with his redemption, with restoring to himself what he senses is rightly his own. There have been many attempts to explain away this concern as a "nothing but" phenomenon, arising from the inability to fully understand or control the natural world. For my part, however, it does not seem enough to say that man has sought redemption because he is a defenseless animal seeking some security in religious myth, ritual, and dogma. Such he may be. Such he may have been for all his countless ages. And as such he may have tried to placate malignant powers outside himself, and to contact the benign powers in order that he might exist in peace. Historically, he may have progressed from this primitive state to one of enlightenment where his religion is for Sundays, where the malignant and benign powers are reduced to poor things somehow vaguely connected with his thoughts. But he continues to participate in annihilating wars, having shunted the powers into combat. He has created a technologically incredible world wherein almost all things are possible except rootedness. Man is, actually, no longer a defenseless animal. He is an animal running frantically from his own defenses.

As Dr. C.G. Jung and others have shown, man is far more than his conscious side. He is also a being with a magnitude of unconscious dimensions and levels, forever at work in him. Where he builds masks and walls to conceal himself from himself, just there is the pain of the pressures of unfulfillment. Where he tries bravely and poignantly to be what he is not, to disregard his deepest desires, just there is neurosis and emptiness. What men most need are the unconscious "others" in himself. What he most ardently does is to dismiss them as nonsense, or, at best, to spend guilty moments with them, moments snatched from the much more important business of getting ahead.

Nonetheless redemption is still important to man. Perhaps I should say--therefore, redemption is again important to man. As a matter of fact, it is just possible that we have been seeing a renaissance of genuinely religious value-judgments in the philosophical formulations of such historians as Toynbee, Northrop, de Nouey. These men have had more than a passing influence on modern thinking, which I take to be a sign that a growing number of individuals are desirous of re-evaluating the world. I point this out in passing because I feel that religious value-judgments--that is, judgments based on what is psychologically valuable for personal growth--are basic to any idea of redemption. On a purely practical level, one does not try to redeem the valueless, any more than one tries to redeem what belongs to another.

Psychological or religious redemption, then, from the viewpoint taken here, is the act of recovering for oneself an essential value or values which one knows to be one's own, and which one also recognizes as having been lost. The genuine search for this lost treasure is in no sense "escapism". It has been conducted, to be sure, in many psychologically unsound ways; i.e., philanthropy, asceticism, spiritualism, occultism. But time and again men have returned to the true search, and since the first "once upon a time" the great world myths and fairy tales have been concerned with it. Certainly it is this same search that Dr. C.G. Jung is describing when he talks of the journey of individuation, the journey to the Self. What I propose here is that it is also this search that is the concern of the Navajo Creation Myth, as told by Hastien Klah.

This search for redemption is basically a paradox, as are many truths. The paradox of the search as it appears in this version of the Navajo Creation Myth, as

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well as in many other myths and in human experience, is something like this: only through darkness, chaos, the unformed, the difficult, can light come into being. This is the vision of redemption. It is a vision with deep roots in the human psyche, a vision of true consciousness and wholeness, a vision of ultimate unity which contains within it duality.

It is apparent that I consider the myth as one way, at least, by which the rootless modern creature can re-evaluate himself and his relation to the universe. In order that I may try to show how such a myth can be a meaningful point of orientation, it is necessary to say something about world-views in general before examining the particular world-view of the Navajos. To talk about myths and mythic symbols and their meanings, valuable though this is, is not enough if one is looking for a personal relationship to the myth. One needs, in addition to knowledge about and empathy for these myths, some sense of why and how they relate to oneself in one's specific time-space framework.

I assume a world-view to be either explicit or implicit in all myths of creation. In a greatly over-simplified manner, let us say that there are two major types of world-view, or two major ways of approach to the "meaning of life," which is after all the subject matter of cosmic myth. These may be variously labeled Oriental and Occidental, esthetic and theoretical (Northrop), or world and life negation and world and life affirmation (Schweizer). For the purpose of the present brief paper (which makes no claim to any comprehensive inspection of philosophical premises) it is enough to use Oriental and Occidental as words to describe the two world-views.

One approach to the search is the Oriental. This way values the immediately given experience, timelessness, the esthetic component, the inner perfection of Being. It tends to find the outer world more or less meaningless. It is generally more "natural" and less ethical than is the Occidental way. The latter places far greater emphasis on the inferred, the adventure into the future. The world as such is more meaningful, time is more highly valued, as is outer change. The Oriental way concerns itself with eternity, the Occidental with time, although each way is continually being confronted with its opposite. The marked dualistic tendencies of the West are in part due to this preoccupation with time, as it seems easier to bring time into eternity than to pull eternity into the time-bound world.

Perhaps modern man needs to find continually a new balance. Surely we of the Occidental world are desperately limited in natural responses to the immediately given, and in emphasis upon the inner perfection of Being. These elements are contained in the Klah version of the Navajo Creation myth, thus giving the world-view inherent in it sharpened outlines for us of the West.

The Navajo myth under consideration is an expression of both an Oriental and an Occidental world-view. It is primarily concerned with man's emergence from the world of darkness into the state of being Man, i.e., with the problem of redemption. The slow patient climb upward is in terms of the immediately given and the natural. No dualism is anywhere evident. In this it is surely Oriental. But there are also, in the myth, a reaching into the future and an element of striving for a better life for men, which are more Occidental.

How this Navajo myth has come to be such an impressive combination of psychological-religious elements is a question which perhaps can never be fully answered. Surely the North American country where the Navajos have lived for the past centuries has contributed much to the myth's richness. Its vast, beautiful, lonely spaces, the sharp and impersonal mountains, the sky of unearthly blue, all must have encouraged an intense inwardness. Yet also this landscape has an expansiveness not often experienced, not a warm expansiveness but an almost cruel challenge which pulls always toward the next mesa, the farther butte. Then, too, it is a fairly

well-accepted theory that originally these North American Indians came from Asiatic lands. Perhaps some of the Oriental qualities of the myth derive from this. In the final analysis, however, the uniqueness of the Creation myth can only be "explained" after much more is known about the Navajos not only anthropologically but spiritually. Even then the essential mystery will probably remain, as it is the same mystery about the human spirit which eventually lies behind the ultimate questions.

In the following discussion I shall not be concerned with differences between this myth and other cosmic myths. This would lead into the cultural problem, and that is not the concern of this paper. I will sometimes point out similarities between this myth and others of its kind. This is truly the inner and personal problem of mythology. That is to say, here is the place where one sees the myth as born of the people, as surging up from the inner world of mankind. I can only suggest in a general way the great depth and scope of the material, and can in no way attempt a detailed psychological interpretation of it. Only major trends and emphases, as they illuminate psychological processes and psychotherapy, can be indicated. For the rest, perhaps the intriguing quality of the myth itself will lure the reader to fill in the empty places.

II.

Begochiddy, the Great God, and several powers, or Demigods, and a form of human being first created were living in an underworld of darkness. They climb up from world to world of increasing light, creating more forms of life until finally emerging on this world and creating Man of the substance of the whole universe.... Begochiddy, the Great God, is the moving and directing spirit, but is not arbitrary in his creative action, for on every occasion when something has to be decided or done, he calls a Council and acts only when there has been a discussion.... In the myths the forces of nature are made to take form and through this strange world the hero wanders in trouble until he is made over by the powers into a conductor of magic help to his people to heal their bodies and minds.

The myth begins in the lowest of four worlds, with those present being Begochiddy (the Great God), the Son of Fire (in other versions of the myth known as the Black God of Fire), a male and a female element, Coyote Man, and Salt Woman. In the darkness, Begochiddy made four mountains at the corners of the earth, with a red mountain in the middle. He also made various kinds of ants. Finally he made an hermaphrodite, Wound-in-the-Rainbow. Son of Fire became very angry because he couldn't make the laws, so he set fire to this first world. Begochiddy sent the male and female elements to the four corners to get various earths and plants. He put a bamboo into the middle of the red mountain, and as it grew all the created beings climbed up into the second world.

There is a considerable body of Polynesian mythological material which presents aspects similar to this story. Several of the Oceanic groups conceive of creation as proceeding from level to level, from darkness to light. In many Gnostic systems, too, are to be found these various worlds or levels or being, which always have a world of light, a world of darkness, and intermediate worlds. The I Ching of the Chinese has the above and the below. One of the striking things to be noted in this Navajo story is the lack of dualism such as one finds in some of the aforementioned cosmic myths. There is a duality throughout, to be sure, but the duality is a polarity leading to a unity.

The great cosmic polarity evident in this first world is that between Begochiddy and Son of Fire. Here is a God of Light, the immovable heavenly father, brother to those other gods such as Jehovah, Zeus, Apollo, the "good" gods of Gnostic and Persian systems. Here also is the God of Darkness, the dark sun or alchemical dark fire, the

Promethean figure. From the beginning, these two great powers are set against each other. Yet their conflict is not that of "good" and "evil," even though it sometimes appears so, for the Son of Fire is an instrument of growth, or redemption, just as surely as is Begochiddy. The dark form is always the life-bringer. By its attacks it forces an ever-expanding consciousness of the other side of things. With the conflict between Begochiddy and Son of Fire, therefore, movement in time and space begins, an upward movement leading to wholeness and awareness.

The male and female elements present in the beginning are also a polarity, as are Coyote Man and Salt Woman. Both of these couples certainly carry within them the qualities of the feminine Eros and the masculine Logos, at least in a primitive and rudimentary form. It is also quite possible that a parallel with ancient alchemy is contained here with Coyote Man representing the hot substance, sulphur, and Salt Woman the cool substance, quicksilver. In alchemy both of these were necessary for work on the opus, and in the Navajo system they seem to be elements of the beginning of individuation.

The four mountains created by Begochiddy constitute the first concrete expression of the fourfoldness which is basic in all Navajo myths and rituals. Here is the primal and elemental power of the stone, the sacred place where countless deities have dwelt. How many such mountains there have been, such as Olympus, Valhalla, Fujiyama, and those of the Old Testament. One cannot but feel that mountains, remote, high, awesome, are the primeval thrust upward from a chaos of water, or of volcanic fire. The central red mountain, which does not appear often in the Navajo rituals or sand-paintings, is the place from which the bamboo begins its first growth, and thus the sacred place which is yet approachable, moving, intense. It is earth, but impregnated with something of passionate spirit, something of the dark fire itself.

For any individual, are not beginnings something like this? Infancy is a kind of mature innocence in which dark/light, masculine/feminine, are mixed together in a purely undifferentiated state. As one sees adults in psychotherapy, one also realizes that this same condition of intermingled and interacting opposites is precisely the one which precedes every new start. No psychological movement comes without conflict. The Promethean push from the unknown rejected side of man is the true life-bringer. It goads the individual until he must rouse from his sick one-sidedness and turn in another direction. This is a healing movement. This is why the dark gods, the fire gods, are unexpected instruments of redemption.

Observe how richly the first world of the Navajo myth is filled with this idea. Begochiddy created the four holy mountains, but he also created the various kinds of ants. At one and the same time, there is a given potential of wholeness, structure, solidity, and a great sense of restlessness and irritability. I am quite certain that most people, were they writing the myth today, would find the mountains "good" and the ants "bad" and would exterminate the ants as soon as possible. In fact, most come to psychotherapy with this attitude either implicit or explicit.

But here, however, in this myth, are some of the basic truths of existence, truths to be faced in psychotherapy if the redemption of the lost parts of the self, if the healing of the psychic split, is to occur. Man begins life as an infant or as a perplexed infant adult, in darkness, unenlightenment, restlessness, confusion. If he stays at this stage, he remains childish, irresponsible, restlessly moving about. If he tries to leap over, to repress it by denying the conflict, he must sooner or later go back and recapture the "natural" attitude from which he has been estranged. All things of himself need to go with him. Just as in the myth no thing is left behind.

In addition to the mountains/ants polarity, there are also the light and dark aspects of the gods, and that superb statement of man's problem, Wound-in-the-Rainbow. Here is the drive for wholeness. Here is the personification of the breaking of the paradise state of unconsciousness. The rainbow, the covenant between man and the gods,

the perfect merging of all colors, is wounded. The Hindu myths tell of the jeweled island lost at birth. The Old Testament myth tells of the loss of the unconscious unity of Adam and Eve, and their departure from the garden. The hurt, the split, the lost, the wound--these are the urgent ends and beginnings of man's longing to become himself. We are wounded by neither being permitted nor yet permitting ourselves to grow. And, later on, to be forced to growth, consciousness, life, is another kind of wound. Driven by these hurts, pushed by the fear of darkness and the intensity of energy contained in the Promethean Son of Fire, all the people have to move upward.

How do they move? From a bamboo placed by Begochiddy in the central red mountain. Movement must come from the place of feeling, of emotion, of danger. This is very like aspects of the healing process in Analytical Psychology and psychotherapy. For the head to know is never sufficient for the cure of a neurosis. The unconscious heart must understand. The shy or fearful or hostile feelings must be acknowledged. More than that, they must be admitted as the growth place, the most fertile soil for healthy seeds. And this has to be consciously done--not intellectually or rationally, but consciously.

The bamboo (or reed) is just this masculine principle of consciousness given by the gods to redeem the chaos. It is the anthropos, the impersonal saviour element, the possibility of psychological and spiritual progression toward the next stage. It is part of the psychic structure, although not part of the ego consciousness, at least not for quite a time. The ego, the "I," comes but slowly to realize that the possibility is there, and then to choose to climb.

III

The people emerge into the Second World. Begochiddy has brought along earth and plants from the First World, but the ground here is not rich enough to plant crops. Begochiddy creates bees and wasps, and twin male and female beings. Son of Fire (Dark God) does not like this world nor its creatures, so he kills the twins. Begochiddy turns the twins into male clouds and female grasses by breathing his spirit into them. The rain begins to fall everywhere. Now all the beings want to go up into the mountains and live there forever. Angered by this, Son of Fire sets fire to the water. Begochiddy makes a central Mountain-which-gives-sores, places it in the bamboo pole, and everyone moves up into the Third World.

With the gathering of earth and plants to bring along, the first great step toward bringing order into chaos has been taken. One of the first moves of any person seeking wholeness and release from conflict and confusion is to see what has been left behind through repression and ignorance, then to gather it up and bring it into his present life. So he expands his own nature, gives himself a wider view. Moreover, the great wisdom of the myth is that every new emergence into a new world--and there are four--is marked first by this same sort of action. Representatives of everything existing in the preceding world are brought into the present one.

Surely this means that there is, in man, a most genuine urge towards wholeness. It means also that no growth is completed, no self-actualization quite achieved, unless some consciousness of what went before pervades what comes next.

These worlds, as I have indicated, may be seen as mythic descriptions both of age levels, and adult psychological processes. In this wise, the Second World perhaps shows adolescence, where maleness and femaleness come into being, where the young are beset on the one hand by this fearful and strange differentiation, and on the other hand by the great dreams of the future which make them want to live in solitary

phantasies on a mountain top. But in a deeper sense, this Second World is the intuitive vision of what is to be--and this is neither rich enough nor deep enough at this stage to "contain" the substance of life--to produce crops.

The twin male and female beings are a sort of prevision of the quaternity of wholeness. They are not in themselves wholeness, only "images" of it. In the psychotherapeutic process of healing, it often happens that these previsions come through fantasies, dreams, outer life experiences. The individual gets a glimpse of what can be. But each stage of growth is a paradox, having in it both creation and destruction. This is hard to know and accept. Because the tendency is, once having seen the unexpected possibility, to want to live in the insubstantial glimpsed vision, rather than to let it be tested in the commonplace daily life.

Thus there must be a destruction leading to an ever fuller creation. Son of Fire, at this point in the myth, is again the "no" which forces Begochiddy to act. As the intuitive twin images are not the actuality, they must be destroyed lest they become causes for stumbling. Only then can the prevision be redeemed by being transformed into life stuff, into the reality of nature. And the divided essences of masculine-feminine can then be united in the natural world. In most of the great myths of the Earth gods and goddesses one finds a similar emphasis on the natural aspect of the superhuman powers. Even Zeus descended as a cloud, and Demeter was like the grasses of the earth.

Psychological healing cannot take place in the head. The psyche of man will not "quicken to creation" if fed only on images-of. The body and its urges and emotions demand their share of participation in the growing consciousness of oneself. One of the major Christian problems has been the attempt to force man to live unrelated to the natural earth aspects of himself and of the world. This leads to far more than just sexual repression, though that may enter the picture. It leads tragically to the repression of all creatureliness, all naturalness and spontaneity--and the fertility of the spirit diminishes. Psychotherapy almost inevitably has, at some point in the healing process, to concern itself with redeeming the reality of man's nature side.

The unavoidable pain accompanying each step of growth is also made clearer now. In the First World of confusion, darkness, restlessness, Son of Fire ignites the earth itself because of his anger. The emergence bamboo grows from a central red mountain. In the Second World, Son of Fire kills the twins first. Then, when the people want to dwell forever in the mountains, he sets fire to the water. And this time the emergence bamboo grows from a point called Mountain-which-gives-sores.

Burning earth, redness, destruction, burning water, a mountain of pain--all this is intertwined with creation and recreation, new beings, more fertility, and emergences into expanding worlds. These hurts and wounds are certainly not ends in themselves. They are simply statements about the experimental facts of how we achieve more consciousness and wholeness. We do not do that by ordered and orderly objective reasoning, but by a slow progression of stumbling starts, anxious hesitations, egocentric retreats. Two-fold suffering is then upon us; first, because our egocentric defenses cannot ever really be successful; and second, because by trying to make them so we thwart the urge towards self-fulfillment. Son of Fire, our own divine disobedience, sets his face stubbornly in the direction of change and growth, burning savagely into the crystallizations of arrested movement. These struggles in us between forces of the unconscious are painful. Our intellectual attempts at rationalizing and explaining will not stop the process once it has started. We may succeed in resisting it for a while, even in repressing any awareness of it. Yet the Mountain-which-gives-sores has to be the place of progression. Sometimes, for example, only our psychosomatic disorders can finally push us into action and change, for it is not quite so easy to overlook physical symptoms as to brush away psychological ones.

IV.

Begochiddy led the beings from the Second World into the Third World, bringing with him plants, clouds, mountains, from other worlds. He created new mountains. He created two streams, one running east and west, one running north and south, and where they crossed he made Water Meeting Place, with Red Turtle in the center. He created birds, trees, animals. He made four men and four women, placing Wound-in-the-Rainbow in charge. The first marriage occurred. Then Begochiddy and Son of Fire sent Water Horse to lure the wife while the husband hunted. The husband grew jealous at his wife's frequent absences. They quarreled, she left him, and the men and women were separated completely after a council of the gods. After quite a time of suffering, men and women asked to be reunited. Then Coyote stole a baby found floating in a whirlpool. Great storms and floods come. The people learned Wanderer-in-the-dark ceremony. Bamboo would only carry them up if planted in quicksand. Locust finally gets through to the Fourth World first.

This Third World, as always, is first made rich with elements and organisms from the preceding worlds. It is more fertile, larger in scope, able to support more manifold forms of life. It is as if, with each willingness to change, each brave outreach toward change, we find widened horizons and greater psychological fruitfulness. We need to remember this. Too often, in the times of persecuting darkness, we forget that darkness can lead somewhere. A life of self-fulfillment, self-realization, is a life of creativity and responsibility. Responsibility means the ability-to-respond to all of life with all parts of oneself. I believe this is one of the central emphases of the Navajo Emergence myth which so clearly says that at each new level more of the previous levels must be incorporated.

The rain water dominating the final scenes of Second World now becomes the two streams and Water Meeting Place of Third World. Psychologically speaking, the unconscious processes are more available, can be better directed and channeled. Masculine and feminine each has its own place, and also they have a place of meeting. It is not the man-woman problem being dealt with here--that comes later--but two sides of a personality which must be slowly differentiated as to function, and yet allowed to meet and merge at the center. The purposive, active thrust, the striving to know, the plough, the sword--these are the masculine component. The fullness of the knowable, the quietly receptive, the field, the bowl--these are the feminine component. Every individual needs both. The masculine stream alone can become hostility, "pushiness," hardness and insensitivity. The feminine stream alone can lead to passivity, moodiness, hyper-sensitivity. But if both are alive, and meet, the place of their conjunction is the place of the tortoise, the ancient bearer of the whole world.

As Begochiddy makes the four men and four women, with Wound-in-the-Rainbow in charge, so comes the creation of "natural man," of Adam and Eve, as it were. And the one who leads them is he who carries the idea of future redemption, of the healing of the separation in the psyche of man.

The role of Water Horse Man, the seducer, is a very interesting one. He seems to be the foreign element, the alien thing, the intruder. He is, paradoxically, the divisive, separating one sent by the gods to cause a quarrel and thus to bring on the necessary process of seeing the "other". This ultimately leads to a new unity on a more discriminatory level. How often we are plagued by the alien and intrusive thing. Perhaps it is an idea or a feeling seemingly utterly inappropriate, a blurted-out statement of emotion, a situation or person threatening our egocentric image of what we ought to be. In any case, we find it extremely difficult to see the alien element as sent from the gods, or God.

But when the distinctions are recognized, when the separated are united, a new life is found. The baby floats on the whirlpool. The baby is a classic and ancient symbol of fresh beginnings. In order to survive for its heroic task it has to be protected and nurtured--i.e., the flight into Egypt in the Christian nativity myth, the hiding of the infant Moses in the bullrushes, the placing of the Navajo hero twin infants in a hole in the earth. In this present myth, however, the baby falls into the hands of Coyote. One of the omnipresent psychological dangers is that new values and resources, as soon as they emerge from the unconscious levels of personality, are seized upon and misused. Precisely this occurs when Coyote steals the baby.

Coyote, present from the First World, is the quixotic and ambivalent representative of man's creatureliness. He is the fool, the outsider, the blunderer. The instinctual fire of man's passions and enthusiasms is in him. Son of Fire has the same intensity but his is in the realm of the gods. Coyote is the more human one. When the awkward creaturely emotions too quickly try to force into action a new found sense of meaning, the result is never happy. The waters begin to rise, the unconscious is of course enlivened. But it threatens to engulf the slowly emerging order in unconsciousness and confusion. This is always one of the critical times in psychotherapy--when new values have been discovered but a too hasty seizing of them seems to be leading toward disaster. Is the only answer to flee the darkness and imminent inundation?

The way out is clearly stated in the myth. The people gathered together and created a ceremony which was called Wanderer-in-the-Dark ceremony. It is as if, whenever regression threatens, the religious instinct arises to protect growth. Then it is not a passive drowning which destroys life, but a conscious descent into darkness which leads to a deeper understanding of the unconscious levels. Final redemption of the lost parts of the self is dependent on this conscious downward movement, this deliberate search for the answers not only in the illuminated known but in the obscure unknown. Time and again psychological crises force us into our darkness in order that we may find life, may become creative and mature. Why does ceremonial wandering lead to life, quicksands lead to growth? Because most of us exist but narrowly within the images of what we ought to be and of how we imagine life is. And the great vitality and largesse of our selves is held back behind the walls of our ego defenses. So we must go to the dark places, the unconscious places, where the spirit dwells and the meanings await us patiently. On such apparently shaky foundations as this, the bamboo grows upward. And the change to the Fourth World, the highest most expanded level of awareness, cannot be made by "natural man" alone. Locust must go first--Locust, the symbol both of man's primitive pre-psychic power, and his sub-human instincts, his sympathetic nervous system responses. For the sub-human is also, like the perceptions of animals, supra-human and magical.

V.

(Because the events in the Fourth World are more complex and extended, including also the rather separate myth of Changing Woman and her hero twins, only a few major episodes will be told and discussed here.)

After the people and gods emerged in Fourth World, water kept rising from Third World. Finally Coyote gave up the stolen baby, it was returned to Third World, and the water stopped rising. The people had no fire. Coyote stole some from demi-gods. But Begochiddy told people how to get it from Son of Fire. Then the people made a sweat house for purification, so as to learn how to live in this world. In the sweat house, they sang the song of the Holy Spirit of Darkness--"The world is beautiful and we are

going to put the spirit into it." They made Earth, Sky, Sun, Moon, but nothing moved. Finally, the first death occurred, and all creation began to move.

In many myths, as also in the psychological work of the ancient alchemists, to go from the third to the fourth phase is the most difficult. This emergence into the Fourth World is the hardest. Here is the introverted spiritual world, the highest level of real differentiation achieved in this myth. The threat is greatest now, for the more intense the thrust toward the creative spirit becomes, the more aware one is of the things which pull backward, and the greater the need for harnessing the unconscious powers. The demi-gods are at hand, existing in this "air" world as the positive spirit. Man must go beyond himself, beyond his earth bound nature, into the gods' spiritual creation.

There are always fears which come when we are changing from one personality dimension to the next. And the unconscious keeps coming up and trying to flood our fragile and hardly won island. We must find the renegade in us who steals and tries to hold onto lesser forms of life and limited ways of perception. We need fresh growth. Thus the stolen baby, as Coyote's use of the new life, must be found and sacrificed because in this form it is inadequate, it is too "animal." This is comparable to the many legends of animal gods who have to be sacrificed in their animal manifestations. Such partial values must be returned to their rightful places.

Likewise fire, the sun power, the psychic energy so indispensable for widened consciousness and fullness of being, cannot come through Coyote despite his semi-divine nature. It must come from the god-like, more than personal, Son of Fire. Man has to have divine knowledge to see and be able to use the divine fire. This psychological fact is neither a contradiction nor a denial of what has gone before. All parts of the psyche, beginning with the most sub-human, must be passed through, explored, accepted, assimilated. Coyote, man's wayward and paradoxical creaturely godlikeness, is an intrinsic partner in man's journey to himself. Yet he is not all. He is not divine fire, nor the cool clear vision of the redemptive act, nor the impersonal devotion of the gods. Often the restless pusher toward change, still he can err in his treatment of the sprouting seed.

So man must move into the mystery. With humble wisdom, the people asked, How can we learn to live here? They built the sweat house for purification, and there they sang the Song of the Holy Spirit of Darkness. They sang, "The world is beautiful and we will put the spirit into it." The vessel of man's wholeness, the containment of the Self--this is the sweat house. Man is in it; it is his, with God's help, through meditation, introversion, creation, and all the ways of inwardness.

Our ceaseless question is how to be alive, creative, "all of a piece," redeemed. We want to arrive there too fast and too easily, and this is not possible. After the arduous emergencies, we must learn how to live, we must see that it is not the "world" but we who need purification, maturation. So the darkness is seen as "holy" healing, and we become possessors of the spirit.

Earth, Moon, Sky, Sun--all is now in place. Man has learned to differentiate between the feeling realm of the substance, the material of his inner world, and the realm of direction, purpose, consciousness. Both are accessible, neither is cut off. But if psychological movement is to be possible, something must happen. The first man must die, says the myth.

Here is a psychological statement of immense religious significance. This new sacrifice, similar to that of the baby but at a deeper and higher level, is like the ancient "mystery death." It is the motif of God's need for man, of the interdependence

of man and God. A call must go out, and man must answer, in order to make the inner world of the forms and images of man (the archetypes) move. All may be there in us, everything may be ready for our healing, our redemption, our ability to move in our world. But if our initiative is lacking, nothing goes forward. We must take the way of the mystery. We must recognize that we have two aspects--the above, the below, the dark, the light, substance, spirit--which reflect the divine as well as the human. Unless we are connected with both, the cyclic rhythm of our full selfhood cannot be.

Each individual life is its own myth, filled with restlessness, struggle, emergence, danger, paradox, creation. Ancient myths, such as this Navaajo Creation Myth, are valid to us insofar as they deal in symbolic language with our personal myth. For most of us, the individual life myth is not consciously serving us until we are willing to read it, until we are forced to embark on the hero-journey of redeeming the lost. Whether or not we prefer it to be so, our life is a journey, and we must go forward or backward, up or down.

In this journey, inescapably, are incorporated all the levels and dimensions of the psychic structure: the instincts, basic drives and urges; the ego level, social relationships; the differentiation of psychological maturity, the orientation toward both past and future, both oneself and others.

And what does this journey, this hero-pilgrimage, require of us? The same thing the earth requires of each of her multitudinous forms of life--to fulfill our own destiny as creatures, to be as rich, as total in our unique humanness as a tree in its treeness. Yet one further step is needed from us which the tree does not have to take. For the tree has not lost itself, since from the beginning it has been humbly obedient to its particularity. Not so with us. We have become confused in the cerebral labyrinth of whence and whither. We have sought to be more than human--this is our greatness--but have insisted on our own definition of how--and this is our littleness.

If we can but learn, as this myth shows, the simple and hard lesson of emergence, of going into the darker places to follow the restless longing upward, of letting no small thing stay forgotten and unhonored, then we shall be whole. Then we shall be related to the unconscious powers within us of life and God. This is redemption.

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