

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Origins of Myth

Underlying all modern scientific and scholarly endeavors is a fundamental assumption crucial to our understanding. This assumption holds the key to social attitudes, religious practices, the treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and the determination of policies of universities, industries, and governments. The assumption says the universe and all things within it, including man, is an accident of time. According to that assumption there is no master design behind the panoramic glory of the galaxies, nor behind the intricate complexity of man. Furthermore, there can be no intelligent management of the affairs of such an accident. The galaxies have no ultimate purpose and man has no lasting meaning. Out of this godless philosophy have arisen innumerable personal, social, and international problems. The world is in turmoil; marriages falter wholesale on the rocks of disillusionment; religionists kill one another; nations slaughter one another; the entire world runs mad.

The reason for this massive unhappiness and animosity is that man does not take kindly to the notion that he is an accident. He is structured with innate feelings of meaning and of purpose, with inherent desires to relate to a Maker, and with hope for eternal significance. Modern scholarship interpreted this inherent and constitutional longing as deriving exclusively out of a psyche that is nothing more than the product of two billion years of organic evolution. According to these godless assessments the product of such psychic longing is myth, the verbalized expression of psychic hope.

Joseph Campbell, in his series *The Masks of God*^{MOG}, treated this subject at length. Campbell believes the study of myth can be reduced to a science and that such science *is concerned precisely with the phenomenon of self-induced belief*.

It may be helpful to examine this line of godless thought.

Campbell argues that man has an inherent desire to break the banalities of life, the opaque weight of the world, as he calls it, and thus men everywhere give origin to myth. According to his view myth is a play world in which man acts out the godhead, and all of its associated powers, such as the bread and the wine of the Last Supper. Jesus was merely striving to show that he had control over the processes of life and that he was not subject to the irreversible event of death. The bread and wine were not a play but a form that took on reality itself. The bread was actually the body and the wine was actually the blood — not merely some representation of the original substance.

In Campbell's view the sacrament is not conceived to be a reference, a mere sign or symbol to arouse in us a train of thought or emotion, but is God himself, the Creator, Judge, and Savior of the Universe, come here to work upon us di-

rectly, to free our souls (created in his image) from the effects of the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden which, according to Campbell, we are to suppose existed as a geographical fact.

Campbell illustrates with the story told by Leo Frobenius in which a professor is writing at his desk while his four-year-old daughter is running about the room disturbing him. To occupy the little girl he gives her three matches and tells her to go play. Sitting on the rug she pretends the three matches are Hansel, Gretel and the witch. Some time elapses when the child suddenly exclaims in terror. The father jumps up and asks, "What is it?" The little girl comes running in fright and says, "Daddy, Daddy, take the witch away. I can't touch it anymore!"

For the little girl the match has become the witch. The girl first identified the match with the witch on the level of sentiment, and then transferred the idea to the plane of consciousness. For the little girl the match has suddenly become something more than a representation; it now possesses the power of the witch; it is the witch. Thus a symbolic representation, the match, has become the real thing, the witch. In the Last Supper the symbolic representation, the bread and the wine, have become the real thing, the body and the blood. And Jesus, the symbolic representation of God, has become the real thing; he now is God.

For modern scholarship this suggested parallel between the play of the little girl and the acts of Jesus is an attempt to make rational what otherwise is irrational in the life and teaching of Jesus. Since the universe is an accident and there is no Creator God, Jesus could not be God living among men. He must be a deluded fanatic who assumed the mythological representation of God out of a psychic longing to give meaning to his accidental existence.

According to prevalent scholarly belief all primitive cultures of the world derive their many social and religious practices, their myth tales, and their gods from similar processes. Their psychic longings substitute symbolic representations for a belief that then becomes real. In later times, as the culture becomes more refined, the myths and practices formalize into literary works describing the original religious concepts and beliefs, with all the pathos and the play. The writers actually believed that the gods and goddesses, and their actions, were real.

Continuing with Campbell's thought, in many of these beliefs the festival of the lived myth abrogates all time, hence the myths do all manner of wish fulfilling; the once upon a time becomes the immediate present, the dancing priest becomes a living god, and the dead swim back to life. Thus there are not only gods walking about on earth, there are also gods who rise from the dead, and gods who can perform miraculous feats.

This conjectural scheme is carried further. In these play-actions *the impact of so-called 'reality' upon the psyche is transubstantiated*. The play state becomes a state of joy, and then a state of rapture, in which the individual may see God. According to such theorizing this sequence, founded in the psyche of man, is the source of all religious experience, the reality that had such a profound influence upon the history of man.

Hence the rapture, the feelings of delight, and the sense of refreshment, harmony, and re-creation! In the case of a saint, the game leads to seizure — as in the case of the little girl, to whom the match revealed itself to be a witch. Contact with the orientation of the world may then be lost, the mind remaining rapt in that other state. For such, it is impossible to return to this other game, the game of life in the world. Such individuals become possessed by God; that is all they know on earth and all they need to know. And they can infect whole societies, so that others, inspired by their seizures, may likewise break contact with the world and spurn it as delusory, or as evil. Secular life may be read as a fall — a fall from Grace, Grace being the rapture of the festival of God.

Having developed this fanciful conceptual structure, it is necessary to support it by adducing evidence. But it is only in the primitive world that Campbell can find support for it. *For indeed, it is in the primitive world where most of the clues to the origin of mythology must be sought.*

Campbell, with his distorted conceptual frameworks, fails to recognize that primitive man, the source of his evidence, is infected by the unknown history of our world. Man cannot be found today in a primitive state but only in a modified state conditioned by his strange history. Campbell, and all other scholars who cling to this scheme, cannot find valid evidence because their source of evidence is contaminated. The visitation of divine beings, the influence of those beings upon primitive man, the modification of cultures, planetary traumas, and other factors grossly confuse the evidence.

Campbell admits that he cannot stop with primitive man. He must trace back to the biological mechanisms that tell the birds to dance during their mating season, that tell the bees to dance when they discover a new source of nectar, that tells the young sea turtles to hurry to the ocean water if they are to survive the sea gulls, and that tells the human female organism that the moon has come around and that her time of the month has come. According to these views there must be a probing of the very depth of cell chemistry itself if we are to trace the sources and the origins of myth.

This contorted theorizing is based on that one fundamental assumption: the universe and all things within it are an accident. All of the strange religious longings and notions of man derive exclusively out of the accidental processes of organic evolution.

But if there is an organizing intelligence behind the designs of the universe all of the theorizing becomes nonsense and is merely the work of aching human hearts attempting to put meaning back into that giant universal accident. If that organizing intelligence truly exists man may have been designed with a longing to return to that origin of all origins, back to that master intelligence, the source of his existence. Then Jesus may indeed have had the power to heal and to raise himself and others from the dead. The Last Supper may have been given by him to provide more vivid remembrance of a God who lived among us as a man.

When man feels the urge to dance he may do so for more than one reason. He may first feel the impulse of his biological heritage; he may then feel a need to translate that organic urge into a veneration of the source of all impulse. The

veneration is as natural as the dance itself. The spiritual mechanisms may be as much an organic part of the psyche of man as his powers of speech, his rational thought, and all those other attributes which set him apart from the animal kingdom.

If the universe is an accident man cannot be anything more than the product of accidental biological evolution. There can be no bridging, either through dance or religious ritual, between the organic and the divine. There can be no expression, either through ritual or through theology, that would permit man to ameliorate the opposition he feels within himself, between his biological legacy and his divine destiny. Since there is no divinity, no source of impulse toward higher existence, all actions of man must be interpreted as the forces of biological evolution derived from the slime and mud of the earth.

But if creation is integrated, if it has components which derive both out of material mechanisms and out of intelligent design, then man can only be understood as a creature who is subject to both his organic heritage and his divine potential. Furthermore, if God is merciful, if he provided means to assist man in bridging that great gulf between the material and the divine, then we should expect to find evidence for God's ministrations to poor, befuddled, confused and impulse-driven man. Not only should we expect to find such evidence, it should be evident if we honestly search and have not precluded it through our deluded theories.

Adam may have been intended to help bridge the distant gap between God and man. He may have played a very important role in bringing man closer to God. But he may also have betrayed that great trust. If Don and Dona were purely mythological creatures, figments of man's psychic impulses, then the form of the myth developed into a sophistication far more complex than entertained by the most imaginative modern mythologist. Campbell, Eliade and other modern scholars are postulating fanciful theories in ignorance of the full range of evidence available to them — if only they had looked. Because they did not include this evidence in their hypothetical models of the psychic history of man their theories are worthless.

It goes beyond reason to believe the sophisticated Don evidence derived strictly from psychic impulses. How would such impulses, presumably unformulated and unformalized, have taken a basic Semitic verb and applied it to the titles of Europe? Could such designations come from fanciful mythological figures, covering such wide geographical areas, and among such diverse people? Since the secular theories do not include this essential data we must reexamine the foundation of those theories. There is a structure in the data which expresses far more than the psychic impulses of man. If we remove the one fundamental assumption that all creation is an accident of time then we open whole new vistas into the history of man. We become free to make reasonable sense of the data, to structure it into models which appeal to our common sense and to logical consistency. We are not forced into hypothetical distortions derived out of childish, immature, and primitive assumptions. We will not merely suppose that the Garden of Eden existed as a geographical fact; our attempt to reduce the data to a

rational level must invoke a central geographical location. If that central location included the home of the source of the phenomenon we are led naturally to the notion of a Garden, or whatever else one might wish to call it, with a specific location as a geographical fact. The notion that the geographical place names, the social honors and titles, the names of the god and goddess ancestors, and the stories surrounding them should all derive out of some transubstantiated impulse from the psyche of man becomes more than inadequate to explain the data; it becomes downright ludicrous. One is forced into devious intellectual contortions to sustain the concept of an enraptured state as the source of the evidence. But modern godless scholars might very well engage in contorted intellectual writhing to avoid the implications of the evidence. They then become the ones to lose contact with reality. They become possessed, not by God, but by their own delusions.

These scholarly assumptions, invented because of lack of concrete evidence for celestial intelligence, have insidiously infected all modern culture, not through any seizure, but through the poison of godlessness. Secular theories are indeed a fall, a fall from the very nature of man himself, a fall from the integrity and meaning of our existence. If celestial beings should come down to us from out of the sky, not some ungodly foreign scientists who reflect nothing more than our isolated secular delusions, but real beings with power equal to their status, then all such secular theorizing and childish assumptions would evaporate like a mist of the night.

While we poor human creatures do not have the power to invoke the intervention of celestial beings we do have the faculty of our senses. It would behoove us to closely examine the foundations of our modern attitudes, and to take a more solid look at the evidence. Although our world may be isolated from universe circuits and from stellar communications, God and his agents may have been kind enough to provide evidence sufficient to convince any objective and open-minded individual.

Scientists and godless scholars have fallen into an ancient trap. In their attempts to make sense out of their existence, devoid of contact with higher realities, they have built an intellectual structure which is now being threatened by the natural unfolding of time. They have emotionally locked themselves into their assumptions and fully consider them to be valid testimony of reality. Because they conditioned themselves to such assumptions they are in the same position as were the old Christian theologians who were unwilling to examine the evidence of science. The modern learned man is now the prejudiced caretaker of a social structure he wishes to preserve; as such he has become the guardian of an outmoded structure which must fall. There is now on display in the world the hand of God, taking us from the pitfalls of religious prejudice, through the pitfalls of scientific prejudice, on to new insights into a world of true reality. A great day has arrived for this world, but the torture of the new birth will be severe indeed.

We shall now take a closer look at some of the myth patterns to show how the olden people preserved the memory of those ancient days, but which were lost on the pages of world history. We shall see that the folk tales and the myths

are nothing more than the embellished and distorted tales of a reality which lies buried deep in the past. They are far more than invention deriving from the biological impulses of man.