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Mourning and Metapsychology: An Archetypal View

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It is not our business as psychologists to base our insights on historical or biological facts. We are not historians, and we are not (or ought not to be) concerned with empirical, but with *psychological* truth, that is to say with the imaginal. And it is therefore from the imagination that we should derive our knowledge.¹

Wolfgang Giegerich

A Thanatocentric Swerve

The astronomers of old believed that the earth was the centre of the universe. When they looked into the heavens, it seemed to them that the sun and moon, as well as the other spheres within the ken of their vision, revolved around the earth for that is what their eyes told them. As astronomy advanced new instruments made it possible to make new observations. Though many of these observations were difficult to square with the geocentric vision of the universe, this vision continued to hold sway for some time. Mimetic to the archetypal image of the father who devours his children, these anomalies were simply assimilated by the existing conceptual framework, regardless of the fact that they were incongruent with it. In this regard, Ptolemy's notion of epicycles may be cited as an exemplar of how a redundant paradigm can devour new observations into its established perspective even as Cronus-Saturn, the father of the Greek divinities, swallowed his own progeny to prevent his usurpation by them. Blinded by the prevailing assumption that the

earth was the centre around which the other heavenly bodies turned, Ptolemy (A.D. 127-151) was unable to arrive at the conception that the earth rotated upon its own axis with the result that he developed, instead, the doubly erroneous view that the other planets each moved in tight loops or epicycles, scrolling across the heavens as they orbited the earth. Of course, as we have ultimately come to know, these loops or epicycles are descriptive, not of the movements of the spheres, but of the psychic activity of the astronomers themselves. Just as we ascribe what we do not know about ourselves to others, Ptolemy mistakenly ascribed the motion of the earth, of which the science of his day was unaware, to the other planets. The unconscious, as Jung put it, appears first in projection.²

The theme which I shall be exploring in the pages that follow (in no way my own invention, though always and inevitably my own discovery) is as revolutionary for psychology as the heliocentric vision of Copernicus was for astronomy and the other scientific and humane disciplines. For, like the mutation of consciousness, the epistemological or psychic swerve, which allowed Copernicus (A.D. 1473-1543) to conceive of the sun, and not the earth, as the centrepiece around which the planets turn, the recognition of the ongoing role which the dead play in the psychic life of the living obliges us to radically re-vision contemporary metapsychology. Where formerly we had regarded mourning as a discrete area of psychological investigation, we are now beginning to see that this process by which the psyche resolves its losses is at the same time the process by which psyche is itself generated.³ The transpersonal depths of personality which we designate with the terms psyche or soul are constituted of the ghostly presence of all that has been lost. It is, and therefore, we are an underworld of ancestral traces, an afterworld of shades.

Of course, we cannot know, on account of epistemological considerations, whether the dead live on after death as immortal souls in the manner described by the religions. We can, however, explore

the heuristic value of the metapsychological perspective which imagines the psyche in relation to the dead. In this venture, religious ideas have a crucial importance. Concerned as they are with the afterlife, religious ideas provide a structural hermeneutic through which we can interpret psychic phenomena.⁴ Needless to say, this does not require that we approach these ideas with the attitude of belief. It is their metaphoric acuity which is significant for psychology. What do we learn about the psyche when we imagine by means of these mythopoeic expressions of it? Whereas Christian theology teaches that the resurrection of Christ is the mystery which underpins and makes possible the resurrection of the dead, imaginal psychology puts it the other way around. Religious ideas such as resurrection and immortality arise in relation to death, in the phenomenology of the mourning process, in the relationship to the images which subtly continue the existence of the dead in the mind. Whether true or not in their own metaphysical sense, these ideas are facts for psychology inasmuch as they present the fossilized expressions of the psyche's emergence out of loss.

In contrast to religious traditions and traditional societies, which have always imagined the spirits of the dead as exerting an influence upon the souls of the living, our scientifically enlightened Western civilization has largely dislocated us from this sensibility as part of its dialectical materialist project. One result of this 'enlightened' devaluation of the soul and of the ideas which it spontaneously generates in its grief has been conceptions of the mourning process which are incongruent with its actual experiential content. Freud, most notably, in works that have greatly influenced subsequent research and therapy, identifies the task of mourning as one of "detach[ing] the memories and expectations of the survivors from the dead."⁵ The persistence of such memories and expectations in the bereaved Freud writes of in pathologizing terms as a "turning away from

reality... [in which] the object [is] being clung to through the medium of a hallucinatory wish-psychosis."⁶

There is no denying that the death of someone with whom we have closely shared our lives is usually experienced as a loss and a letting go. The psyche, however, as we are now coming to appreciate, has a very different viewpoint. As an order of reality in its own right, an order of reality whose ontological ground resides in images,⁷ the psyche does not share the materialistic bias of the science which investigators in this century have brought to bear upon it.⁸ From its perspective, a perspective which even Freud recognized as being characterized by what he called an inability to represent negation, absence continues to be registered as presence such that the dead live on as shades of their former selves, inner representations, psychic images. Though dismissed as imaginary by 'geocentric' psychologies, these shades, inner representations and psychic images, like the proverbial stone which the builders rejected, provide, when rightly understood, the basis upon which psychology may be re-visioned anew, even as the rejected stone mentioned in the proverb is said to become the cornerstone of the new temple.

The Copernican revolution on behalf of the dead begins with the recognition of the primacy of their images in psychic life. While the images of the dead which the mind retains do facilitate the letting go of the physical connection which has been lost, they continue to animate the psyche long after grief's bitterness has passed, as if they had a fate beyond this function. It is not simply that the dead carry on in the mind until we are able to let them go, as the geocentric view has maintained; *the mind carries on in the dead* unable to be rid of anything. As Jung, the unrecognized Copernicus of this revolution, wrote to a bereaved correspondent, "Sooner or later the dead become who we also are."⁹

It has been said that the scientific revolution is now over and that the critical revolution has begun. Perhaps this is why we are now able to imagine the mourning process less starkly than before. Advances in hermeneutics, epistemology and critical theory have made it possible to recognize and appreciate the signifying power of the psychic images which the enlightenment ego, sicklied over by the pale cast of the scientific paradigm, explained away as decaying sense impression lingering on in the mental apparatus. As we become more and more sceptical about where to draw the line between matter and mind, as we come to see that science, for all its empiricism, is as rooted in the tropes of language as is a work of *belles-lettres*, we become less sure of the divide between the living and the dead as well. For, inasmuch as both are also images, they continue to interact with each other in the drama of human existence.

Of Introjection and Epicycles

The recognition of the on going importance of the inner representations of lost objects in the psychology of the bereaved, though a crucial advance in our understanding of the mourning process, remains pre-Copernican in the sense of the revolution which I have been describing, if these representations are conceived to be merely introjections of outer figures as is the case in psychoanalytic thought.¹⁰ Although lost objects are introjected, although the widow does retain the image of her dead husband, the child images of its parents, etc., these observations, like the epicycles observed by Ptolemy, are but the dimly perceived outlines of a larger vision in which the dead--and by the dead I mean our archaic forebears, the ancestral dead--are conceived to be as central to the psyche as the sun is in our solar system.

But how do we make the swerve from the epicyclic theory of introjection to this larger, thanatocentric vision? Having only begun to take heed of the lingering significance of lost objects

for the bereaved, how can we now take the next step and recognize the cosmogonic significance of the dead in our psychic universe?

The fact that we have almost entirely lost consciousness of our relationship with the ancestral dimension of the soul may be attributed to the dead having been eclipsed in our thought and feeling by our preoccupation with life and living. With the notable exception of Jung, who described his psychological opus as an attempt, "ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between `here' and `hereafter'",¹¹ post-Enlightenment psychology has been as reluctant to abandon the assumption that psychology is a branch of the life sciences as astronomy was to abandon its geocentrism. Subject to this variant of the materialistic bias, contemporary psychology simply takes it for granted that the psyche belongs to the living, develops through the life-span, and ends with the cessation of bodily life. Like ghost story and folklore descriptions of unreconciled souls haunting the living to whom they are still attached, scientific psychology in our own day, restrained by a similar theory of psychic gravity, myopically restricts the focus of its interest exclusively upon the relationship between the images of the dead and the issues and interests of the bereaved survivors, as if the dead had no ontology of their own, but had merely derived their being from that of the survivors who continue to remember them. Thanatology, ironically enough, is also inspired by what Ernest Becker called "the denial of death."¹²

It is a paradox that while death cancels out individual features to the point that one skull looks very much like another, it also throws into relief images which present the individual uniqueness which the dead attained in their lives. While in one sense, our lost loved ones so lose the vividness which their bodies provided them that we say they are gone, in another sense, their psychic distinctiveness, in the degree to which this was achieved,¹³ shines forth in the mind, often more

luminously than ever before. In stark contrast, however, to other ages in which these luminous images were called angels, ghosts, and shades and by still other names, in our time they are called object representations--a term that hardly does justice to the phenomenon to which it refers. For the dead are not objects. Death has freed them from that. Nevertheless, our modern habit of referring to them as such has a de-realizing effect upon them in both the Platonic and colloquial senses of the word "real.

As Coleridge expressed it, "objects perceived as objects are soon rendered fixed and dead."¹⁴

In psychology, as in all empirical sciences, verification is dependent, not simply on the facts observed, but on the conceptual assumptions about what constitutes a fact and what qualifies as an observation.¹⁵ This is particularly true in the present context. For what one conceptual system values as its primary data, another conceptual system dismisses as illusory and vice versa. The rub here, at least for psychology, is that the boundary between fact and fancy is indeterminable. Illusions, supernatural beliefs, and mad ideas are "facts" in a psychological sense, even though they may be no more substantive than a thought, feeling, image or metaphor and may only yield themselves to measure through literary means. Unsettling as this may be from a scientific point of view, there is no advantage to be gained in denying psychology's epistemological quandary and acting as if we possessed an extra psychic viewpoint which would allow us to clearly distinguish the human psyche from our conceptions of it. The best we can do is to view our conceptions and those of our forebears as "facts" regardless of their truth. For research which disdains to recognize the mythopoeic outpourings of an individual's or a culture's grief as providing useful data, preferring, instead, to credit only that data which conforms to the objectifying assumptions implicit in the term "object representation," will draw conclusions regarding the on going importance of

inner representations in the psychology of the bereaved which are discontinuous with the experiences which the bereaved actually have with the angels with whom they are wrestling. This is not to say that such research efforts have not made significant contributions to knowledge. At the same time as these contributions are acknowledged, however, we must reckon with the unfortunate irony that despite the fact that the specific uniqueness of the lost loved one is all important for the bereaved, that loved one, being merely an "n" of one, has no significance for science, which directs its attention instead to the study of groups of subjects who share a common attribute--orphaned children, widows and widowers, the elderly. Absent from this entire class of investigation is the specific peculiarity of the late loved one, though it is this person's peculiarity, as an individual (raised to the power of the ancestors), which structures mourning from the other side as it were.

We grieve different individuals differently, not merely because of the peculiarities of *our* situation or of who *we* are, but because of the unique peculiarities of who the *dead* were and are as we now commune with them in this "last of meeting places." Some people are more difficult to grieve than others entirely by virtue of what they did with their lives.¹⁶ Again, while the attention which has recently been given to the role which the dead continue to play as selfobjects in the psychology of the living across the life-span constitutes an advance in our insight over Freud's more pathologizing view, this insight, like Ptolemy's epicycles, nevertheless turns upon itself in too tight an orbit, its larger implications not yet spun out.

Perhaps our tendency to study the living as members of larger and larger samples has, in addition to its scientific rationale, a basis besides this in the very realm which science has abjured. For just as the rotation of the earth was inappropriately attributed to the other planets before it was known for what it actually was, so our practice of studying statistically collectivized abstractions of

ourselves suggests that we have unwittingly transferred to the living a motif which ubiquitously appears in mythical descriptions of the community of the dead. In this connection, Swedenborg's angelic thanatology, read imaginally, which is to say, for the metapsychological possibilities of its metaphor, may help us to see how overdetermined our observations are by the psyche's eschatological categories. According to Swedenborg's visionary accounts, the dead change at death such that their interior soul images take the place of their absent bodies, apparelling them in images as beautiful or as ghastly as they actually were as moral beings during their lives. Regarding the continuation of their lives in the afterworld, Swedenborg imagines further that those souls are near to one another who are of a similar angelic essence and those are far apart whose angelic essences, or soulful "interiors," are dissimilar. The same principle, suggests Swedenborg, holds for the living. Even when they are members of what we assume to be a random sample, those "who differ greatly are far apart; [and] those who differ slightly are not far apart; and likeness brings unity."¹⁷

Every single person, even while he is living in the body [before death], is in a community with spirits as far as his own spirit is concerned, even though he is unaware of the fact. A good person is by means of these spirits in an angelic community; an evil person in a hellish community; and each person enters that same community after his death.¹⁸

Just as scientifically conceived psychology, restricting its vision to external features of the life process which are discernable by the five senses, studies people in groups according to some variable or experience which they have in common, so the angelic dead, visible only to the inner eye of imaginative cognition, co-exist in the heaven of their imagery in terms of similarities in the states of their interiors, which is to say, in terms of their resemblance to one another, their epistrophic essence. Exemplary of a host of topographies of the afterworld which represent the dead as gradually losing their individual distinctiveness as they take up their place among the

company of others who are similar to themselves from some sort of final point of view, Swedenborg's visionary account is also congruent with contemporary dreams of the dying and the bereaved, which share this conception. Indeed, as was pointed out above, such dreams and fantasies would seem to be the basis of the mythic accounts of post-mortem life. As Jung puts it, "Psychic existence and above all the inner images...supply the material for all mythic speculations about a life in the hereafter, and I imagine that life as a continuation in the world of images. Thus the psyche might be that existence in which the hereafter or the land of the dead is located."¹⁹

Tennyson and the Ancestors

In his great elegy, "In Memoriam A.H.H.," Alfred Lord Tennyson, wrestling with the object representation of his dead friend as with an angel, conveys something of the felt experience which underpins and necessitates the shift toward a thanatocentric paradigm. Looking at the death mask of his deceased companion he sees, not only the familiar face which he wishes to retain in his memory for the duration of his life, but the ancient faces of ancestral forebears.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and more
A likeness, hardly seen before,
Comes out--to some one of his race;

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
And what I see I leave unsaid,
Nor speak it, knowing Death has made
His darkness beautiful in thee.²⁰

Intrinsic to Tennyson's attempt to creatively retain, or better, imaginatively perceive the essential

value through which his dead friend lives on, as it were, in the poet's psyche is a widening of the focus, as we see in these particular verses, to reveal the fateful connection which his friend, as a member of the human race, also has with the collective psyche or ancestral soul to which he is now being assimilated. Like Swedenborg, who imagined the dead to reside in the afterlife in the midst of others in accordance with the similarities in the state of their soul-images, and Jung who imagined the afterlife as an extension of psychic existence in the world of images, the grieving Tennyson sees in his dead friend's face "a likeness, hardly seen before...to someone of his race," a likeness which he further describes as resembling the "wise below" and the "great of old." Significantly, the afterlife which Tennyson's friend obtains as a psychic image does not wholly depend upon the poet's reluctance to relinquish his love for him or, for that matter, upon his willingness to write further stanzas in his honour. While these soul-making efforts may have great significance for Tennyson's personal psychology, his psyche and the psyche of his dead friend, being largely inherited from the ancestors, are themselves stanzas in a greater elegy, an elegy written not in ink by a poet, but in the blood of dead forebears whom neither of them has ever known.

Imagined against a religious background, the better to gain a depth psychological perspective, the inner representations of our lost loved ones acquire the psychic permanence worthy of the name eternal life entirely by virtue of the capacity of the dead to bury the dead, not through the efforts of the living to remember them. Though Tennyson's verses, like Shakespeare's, are powerful enough in their rhyme to outlive marble or the gilded monuments of princes, they afford the dead whom they celebrate only a deferred mortality. Widening our focus from the personal attachment through which the bereaved and the deceased continue to be connected with one another to what Tennyson

calls "the likeness hardly seen before," we realize, in what St. Paul, referring to a similar paradigm shift, described as the "twinkling of an eye," that the horizons of object representation are not limited to the life-span of the bereaved survivor whose psychology continues to be shaped by the fact of having once shared life and having subsequently continued to share soul with the deceased. For the psyche itself, in the collective sense in which we share it in common, is constituted of a vast accretion of (lost) object representations, the majority of which were introjected or psychized long before our births. Just as in the dreams of the dying and the bereaved we frequently find the motif of a reunion with uncles, cousins, parents and the vague outlines of unknown relatives who died long ago, Tennyson discerns in his dead friend's face an object representation or composite of object representations which neither he nor his late friend have personally known, personally lost, or personally retained. This accretion of object representations, which Freud identified in a Larmarkian manner with actual prehistoric families dominated by a tyrannical father(s), and Jung with archetypes of the collective unconscious,²¹ attends the wake which Tennyson holds for his dead friend for they, too, have been involved in these men's lives, mediating their experience along archetypal lines and enabling them to make soul with one another throughout their lives and during this period of Tennyson's grief. While from a phylogenetic point of view the psyche may be envisioned to be the product of many millions of introjected experiences and relationships, from the ontogenetic point of view, projection of this `deposit' of experience precedes the introjection of our contemporary relationships such that we endow one another *a priori* with archetypal significance which we later come to grieve. It is in this angelic rather than genetic sense that we retain the notion of ontogeny recapitulating phylogeny in mourning and loss. It is a basic fantasy.²²

But what is it that lies beyond the ancestors? Immediately after observing his dead friend's

reunion through likeness with his kin and kind, Tennyson is filled with the religious emotion of mystic awe--the *mysterium tremendum* of Rudolph Otto.²³ Peering deeply into his friend's face he beholds an unspeakable mystery. All he can say is that there is more than he can see and that what he does see is so numinous that he dare not speak of it. In the last line of the stanza, however, he is able to symbolically apostrophize his revelatory encounter with what I take to be his dead friend's mystical identification²⁴ with God when he declares, in words addressed to his late friend, "Death has made/His darkness beautiful in thee."

Just as Wordsworth, drawing upon early childhood experiences which intimated to him a sense of the soul's immortality, conceived birth to be "a sleep and a forgetting" through which we become ever more estranged from "God, who is our home" and the "Heaven [which] lies about us in our infancy,"²⁵ death, for Tennyson, is an awakening and remembering which returns us to the heaven of our ancestors, the bosom of Abraham, our home in God.

Freud was right, though in a different way than he intended: God *is* a glorified father-figure, the ancestral archetype from which our personal fathers derive their god-like eminence in our lives. And, in a different way than he intended, Nietzsche was right as well: God *is* dead, or, rather, the dead, as the various cults of ancestor worship have long recognized, are god(s). Creating us in their image, after their (collective) likeness, our Godlike forebears function within the psyche as *a priori* creative factors, structuring perception, memory, cognition and affective states in that characteristically anthropomorphic manner which we have come to experience as meaningful. As one who has been recently bereaved scans his or her surroundings in search of a lost loved one, only to mistake a stranger seen from the back for a deceased parent or spouse, so we, or rather, the timeless aspect in us, unwittingly scans the world in which we live in search of the ancestral dead,

with the result that we recognize and become attached to one another according to well-worn human patterns such as those that obtain between parents and children in family life.

This is not to say that the richness of the *archetypal* psyche can be simply reduced to the richness of death. The fact that we hold onto life beyond its apparent end suggests an abundance to begin with. Just as a deposit of fossils, though rich in its own way, points beyond itself to a plethora of life forms including early man, the dead, or rather, their images, are the shale in which *spirit* is fossilized. Perhaps--who knows?--the universe in which we live, move, and have our being, or rather, the *mundus imaginalis*²⁶ through which we apperceive this universe, is a plenum such that absence (and by absence I mean both the absence of what once was as well as the absence of what we intuit ought to be) is the aperture through which real presence--the presence of the Real--is perceived. Imagined from this perspective, the lost loved one whom we unwittingly seek through our projections upon one another throughout our lives is the *deus absconditus*, or hidden God, who creates the world by withdrawing from it as in the Jewish mystical conception.²⁷ Similarly, the images of the dead which animate the mourning process, apprehended through the *imaginatio vera*, are transparent to the theophany of origination²⁸ even as Coleridge defined perception as "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM."²⁹ Beyond our Copernican or thanatocentric revolution there may be a more strictly theocentric or archetypal one in which the gods are central. The sun, after all, is merely the centre of our solar system, not of the universe as a whole. The dead, likewise, may be our closest star, beyond which the psyche expands galaxy upon galaxy into the unknown.

Although Christianity does not consciously engage in ancestor worship, the Christian belief that the dead are gathered to God amounts to the same thing. For what would the invisible God of love,

the "firstborn of the dead" (Rev. 1:5; 1 Cor. 15:20), slain from the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:19,20), be without our forebear's representations of their dead? From the point of view of an imaginal psychology, Christ is the archetype of object representation, at least for the Christian psyche.³⁰ As the incarnation of God, who lived in the flesh, died as a man, and returned from the dead in a manner that vouchsafes our own return, "Christ" presents the mediating influence of the archetypal psyche in our lives. Jung's research on Christ as a symbol of the self is, of course, relevant here, but in a subtle way so too are Freud's reflections on loss. For what Freud said concerning the role of loss in the genesis of the ego may also be said of this dying and resurgent aspect of the psyche, symbolized in Christianity by the son of God. Christ, too, "is a precipitate of abandoned object cathexes [which] contains the history of those object-choices."³¹ Mythically imagined, Christ's precipitation out of loss corresponds to his descent into *Gehenna*, the Hebrew Underworld, where he preached to the dead that they, "though judged in the flesh like men,...might live in the spirit like God" (1 Peter 4:6). Significantly, it is only after this descent, after, that is to say, "the memories and hopes which bound the libido to the [lost] object[s] have been brought up and hyper-cathected" that his resurrection, i.e., "the detachment of libido," takes place.³²

From what I am here calling the Copernican or thanatocentric view of the psyche, the attachments which we make to one another during our lives are mediated, from their inception, by the dead. Transference, as an archetypal predisposition bequeathed to us from the "great of old," starts in the cradle. Just as Tennyson saw the ancestors in the features of his dead friend's face, and beyond that the unspeakably mysterious face of God, so the new-born babe gazes into its mother's eyes and into the eyes of its subsequent selfobjects. "I looked into the void and the void looked into me," writes Nietzsche of this *a priori* psychic factor.

The analytic maxim which states that we act out what we do not remember holds as well for events which we have not personally experienced. Though we have no personal recollections of our distant forebears, having never known them, we, nevertheless, repeat or reincarnate something of their spirit, or of the spirit they mediate, in the way we experience one another. This is particularly the case with those to whom we are related by blood and marriage. Much of the significance we attach to those we regard as our significant others originates in an archetype which, as pattern, spans the generations in the embrace of its vision. While from one point of view it would seem that this archetype is the product of experiences introjected by our forebears during the course of man's development or evolution, from a more strictly archetypal point of view it may not have developed or evolved at all. Like all archetypes, the ancestor archetype is ahistorical and uncreated, regardless of the fact that it compels us to conflate the archetypal order, which is by definition eternal and 'above' time, with the genetic and historical. Though *history's* genetic aspect has roots in the object representations which our forebears introjected during their lives, and though these roots implicate us in a profound manner through the complexes, our ancestral sense of soul does not come from our literal genealogy, but from a mythical genealogy, projected upon the literal, through which we are linked by our forebears to our first ancestor, Adam's parent, God. Mimetic to mythical exemplars such as Abraham and the *barren* Sarah, our actual ancestors do not create the soul and pass it on to us solely through genetics, but also through participation with the divine initiative of the ancestor archetype which, as imaged in Abraham, conceived in the seventy year old Sarah not merely a son but the future Jewish nation.³³

The soul is necessarily always already constructed in a creation myth. Just as God is imagined to be the ultimate creator of humanity, we have, in addition to all that we have inherited from previous

generations, a narcissistic cathexis of libido which enters our lives from the archetypal realm, the realm of the Gods, and provides for the individuation of the soul.³⁴ This extra mundane cathexis of libido, this God which analytical psychology calls the self and psychoanalysis calls narcissism, is, to the extent that we are able to relate to it as other, the true parent of the soul, our first ancestor, the archetype through which our empirical parents and grandparent's derive, as selfobjects, their generative, soul-making power.

More primordial, and from the psyche's point of view, more generative for soul than the so-called primal scene of parental coitus is the scene of loss. For, while the former may preside as a super-ego over the infantile beginnings of this life (its nature *and* nurture), the latter brings to bear the childhood aspect of the collective psyche,³⁵ connecting us with the archaic vestiges (Freud) of the phylo-angelic (mythic) past³⁶, which I have elsewhere described as the psyche's creationist aspect.³⁷ Listen to the last breath as it rattles from the chest of the dying man and to the gasps and sobs of his mourners: This mingling of breaths between the living and the dead partakes of an eternal moment, the moment in which the Ancient of Days breathed upon the clay (to which death returns us), creating the First Man.

Notes

1. Wolfgang Giegerich, "Ontogeny = Phylogeny? A Fundamental Critique of Erich Neumann's Analytical Psychology," *Spring 1974*, p. 118.
2. C. G. Jung, *CW 8*, para. 584.
3. Greg Mogenson, *Greeting the Angels: An Imaginal View of the Mourning Process* (Amityville: Baywood, 1992), pp 1-16.
4. Heintz Westman, *The Structure of Biblical Myths: The Ontogenesis of the Psyche* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1983).
5. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*. In *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud* (New York: Random House, 1938), p. 858.
6. Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia." In *Collected Papers*, Vol. IV, J. Riviere, Trans. (London: Hogarth Press & The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1950), p. 154.
7. C.G. Jung, *CW 13*, para. 75.
8. Greg Mogenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-40.
9. C.G. Jung, *C.G. Jung Letters, Volume One: 1906-1950*, R.F.C. Hull, Trans. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 347.
10. Cf. Sigmund Freud, "From the History of an Infantile Neurosis," in *Collected Papers*, Vol. III, A. & J. Strachey, Trans. (London: The Hogarth Press & The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1925), p. 578. Although Freud "fully agree[d] with Jung in recognizing the existence of phylogenetic inheritance," his analytic descendants, guided to be sure by his qualification that he considered it "a methodological error to seize upon a phylogenetic explanation before the ontogenetic possibilities have been exhausted," have tended to confine their analytical efforts to understanding the object relations which arise in the course of the child's early years in his or her actual family.
11. C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Aniela Jaffe, ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), p. 294.
12. Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: The Free Press, 1973).
13. Cf. Marie-Louise Von Franz, *On Dreams and Death* (Boston: Shambhala, 1986), pp. 118-119. Making much the same point with reference to the dreams of the dying, von Franz discusses the motif of a subtle body, imaged variously as a stone, fruit, kernel of corn etc., which survives the destruction of the organic body: "...this `body' which survives death would, in psychological terms, be made up of everything from the collective unconscious which the individual had, in life, brought into consciousness."

14. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Biographia Literaria." In *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, M.H. Abrams, editor et. al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975), p. 1588.
15. Evangelos Christou, *The Logos of the Soul* (New York: Spring Publications, 1976), p. 1.
16. Cf. C.G. Jung, *C.G. Jung Letters, op. cit.*, p. 239. In a letter to a correspondent Jung describes something of the shaping influence of the deceased upon the subsequent life of the bereaved survivor: "It frequently happens that when a person with whom one was intimate dies, either one is oneself drawn into death, so to speak, or else the burden has the opposite effect of a task that has to be fulfilled in real life. One could say figuratively that a bit of life has passed over from the dead to the living and compels him towards its realization."
17. Emmanuel Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, G.F. Dole, Trans. (New York: The Swedenborg Foundation, 1979), p. 56.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 355.
19. C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, pp. 319-320.
20. Alfred Lord Tennyson, "In Memoriam A.H.H." In *Victorian Poetry and Poetics*, 2nd edition, W. Houghton & G.R. Strange, Editors (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968), p. 64.
21. "The collective unconscious, being the repository of man's experience and at the same time the prior condition of this experience, is an image of the world which has taken aeons to form. In this image certain features, the archetypes or dominants, have crystallized out in the course of time." Jung *CW* 7, para. 151.
22. Cf. Wolfgang Giegerich, *op. cit.*, p. 116. In an essay which exposes the fallacy of equating ontogeny with phylogeny in an archetypal psychology, Wolfgang Giegerich (1975) affirms, nevertheless, that "the fantasy of phylogeny is, as it were, a self-representation of an archetype."
23. Rudolph Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 12-24.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 22. "A characteristic common of all types of mysticism is the *identification*, in different degrees of completeness, of the personal self with the transcendent reality."
25. William Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality From Recollections of Early Childhood." In *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, p. 1431.
26. Henri Corbin, "Mundus Imaginalis or The Imaginary and the Imagenal," in *Spring 1972*.
27. The Baha'i doctrine of progressive revelation is another example of an apocalyptic conception of loss. According to this doctrine, God's creation is revealed to mankind in a single 'day,' the "Day of Resurrection." The 'hours' to this aeon-spanning day, which constitutes a temporal reflection of

the eternal NOW, are the prophet figures of the Adamic cycle. As God withdraws from His creation in the death, crucifixion or martyrdom of one prophet, he simultaneously returns or resurrects in each successive prophet, thereby inaugurating a new dispensation of creation. Read for its metapsychological implications, this doctrine suggests that the dialectics of absence and presence are grounded in 'God,' i.e., in an uncreated, *a priori* psychic pattern. Thus, what we experience as lost is not merely something or someone who actually once was, but an archetype or irrepresentable ideal which has been projected upon the actual even as the actual mediates the ideal for us. The most primary relationship is the narcissistic relationship of the psyche with its own *a-priori* potential, imaged in religious imagination as our relationship with a creator God.

28. Cf. Giegerich, *op. cit.*, p. 120. Again, to quote Giegerich, though the ontogeny = phylogeny fantasy may shape the way we imagine origination, even as Tennyson sees an ancestral likeness in his dead friend's face, "origin is (at least for an archetypal view) never in history, or temporally before it, but 'above' it, in a 'place in the heavens' (Plato), or in *illo tempore*, as Eliade likes to stress." In light of the fantasy that our dead forebears abide in heaven, we might re-vision phylogeny as representing the descent of man, not in the Darwinian, evolutionary sense, but in an angelic sense as a descent from an uncreated, archetypal order. In this more Miltonic fantasy our primordial forebears, their brute physicality notwithstanding, are the fallen angels of a lost paradise.

29. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *op. cit.*, p. 1588.

30. The late Canadian painter Jack Chambers is noteworthy in this regard. While many of his paintings are high realist depictions of landscapes, he has also painted visionary works in which religious personages are represented. In Chambers' view, the religious figures and sacral forms which are explicit in the visionary paintings are implicit in the realistic landscapes. Like Platonic forms, they have, in these images of lake and highway, faded into presence. Although unseen, they are, as it were, the organs of perception (Chamber's spoke of "immaculate perception," through which the landscapes of the realistic paintings have been perceived.

31. Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, Joan Riviere, Trans. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1962), p. 19.

32. Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," *op. cit.* p. 154.

33. The ancestor archetype would seem to be the pattern underpinning the Mormon doctrine of Baptism for the Dead. In a vision, Joseph Smith, the founding father of the Mormons, was instructed by the prophet Elijah to seek after the dead, that is, to bring all the progenitors in the family of man to the Lord, even as Christ preached to the spirits of the dead in *Gehenna*. This encounter with what for us is a manifestation of the ancestor archetype, has subsequently become the basis of the largest, and most sophisticated genealogical project in the world. Entrusted by God with the responsibility of the saving the souls of the dead (Smith believed that the salvation of the living depended upon this effort), the Mormon faithful, to this day, research their genealogy and take a census of the world's dead. This information then becomes part of their ritual. The names

are baptised and stored on microfilm. It is hoped that every individual who has ever lived, right back to Adam and Eve, can be traced. There are now over a billion and a half names stored in a climate-controlled, nuclear-bomb-proof container near Salt Lake City, Utah. For a detailed account see Alex Shoumatoff, *The Mountain of Names: A History of the Human Family* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985), pp. 253-293.

34. Cf. Jung, *CW* 10, para. 511. "The individual will never find the real justification of his existence, and his own spiritual and moral autonomy, anywhere except in an extramundane principle capable of relativizing the overpowering influence of external factors."

35. C.G. Jung, "Approaching the Unconscious." In *Man and his Symbols*. (London, Aldus Books, 1964), pp. 98-99.

36. See note 29 above.

37. Greg Mogenson, "Children of Hell," *Spring* 55, p. 47.