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Psycho-analysis is a particular manner of exorcism (the psycho analyst tries to create a gulf of silence into which the devil will fall, led by the patient's discourse. And psycho-analysis goes even further by building a real demonology with steps the devil must respect and which define its path. Psycho-analysis guarantees only one way out for the devil, and only one possibility for the patient to 'free' her or himself, since the word 'cure' is taboo.) The theoretical foundations of psycho-analysis, which I call a metapsychology, can be adapted more or less successfully to the other forms of exorcism. The prestige of psychoanalysis is due to these adaptations and many of 'the new therapies' are somatic variations of psycho-analysis.

If metapsychology can act as a theoretical framework for the majority of forms of exorcism, it can no longer do the same for therapies which refute its fundamental attitude. Therefore metapsychology cannot be used to defend E.M.T. At first this statement seemed very awkward. It forced us to do some hard theoretical work. We have now arrived at a simple concept of psychic activity.

The description of Frances' case demonstrates a certain movement which derives its dynamic from the different body positions which tend to enclose the sensation. These sensations are called 'messages'. The articulation between the message and the movement infers a beginning of a theory of psychic activity. Physiology tells us of mechanisms which allow feeling, the message, from a stimulus. It does not reveal any of the message's deep origins, of the underlying psychic meaning. To facilitate communication we call this origin A. And we designate B the psychic symptom with the ability, whether used or not, to respond to the messages originating at the objective of the theoretical work which supports E.M.T. is to establish the different laws which govern the dialogue between A and B.

From *"The Exorcist in Question"* by Jean Ambrosi 1979.

Donald Ellison

Following in the Hero's Footsteps

On reading Paul Rebillot's contribution to Vol. VII No. 4 of *Self and Society*, entitled The Hero's Journey, I found myself wondering who this hero is and what the itinerary of his journey.

We are told that the hero is "someone who hears the call to adventure and

follows it". In the same paragraph, however, it is said that this call "sinks deeply into the hero's being and remains there until it is either acted upon or killed by one who will not follow the striving of his or her own heart". Thus the writer seems to be saying that someone who hears the call to adventure but does not follow it qualifies for the description of hero. This indicates to me that the term "hero" is being used in a sense which includes an "anti-hero".

We learn that this call to adventure may come "from outside" in the form of an invitation or suggestion from another: "come to India with me"; "you should see the strange things that are happening in Paris these days".

We also learn that "there is a spirit guide who gives the hero an instrument of power to arm him. . . . . .King Arthur was given his sword. . . . . .Orpheus, the lyre of Apollo; a traveller to India might have her map, a letter of reference and a handbook of basic Indian phrases".

I find great difficulty in equating the "heroic" significance of Orpheus, armed with his lyre, setting off from Thrace for Hades to rescue Eurydice, with that of a woman setting off from Camden Town for Poona to see Bhagwan, armed with a letter of reference from Kalptaru.

The writer continues: "Armed thus the hero proceeds to the point of no return, called the threshold of adventure". It will be appreciated that in this context, the words "armed thus" cover an exceedingly wide variety of "instruments of power" given to the hero by the "spirit guide", ranging from swords and lyres to maps, letters of reference and handbooks of basic phrases in current use in the country of the hero's destination.

If one's heroic journey lay, as Dante's did, through Hell, one would doubtless appreciate having Virgil to be one's spirit guide, as Dante had. If, however, that journey was a trip to Paris, one might prefer Michelin to be one's guide rather than Virgil. And on a journey to Paris, where would be the threshold of heroic adventure?

That over-worked hero, Oedipus, on his journey to Thebes, encountered at the threshold of that city the dreaded Sphinx, who would only allow him to pass if he correctly answered her riddle, on pain of death if he bungled it. But a hero journeying to Paris would be faced with no riddle of the Sphinx - but at most the unheroic question: "anything to declare?".

The writer's narrative proceeds: "Soon enough, however, the hero encounters the supreme ordeal, a monumental struggle with the most basic fear - the fear of death".

On a journey to Paris? - I ask with some trepidation, visualising the plane crashing in flames, the car-ferry foundering on the Goodwins, the boat-train falling into the Thames almost immediately after pulling out of Victoria - that would be "soon enough", surely!

On a journey to India, perhaps? There I go again: with fantasies of the plane being hi-jacked, the ship breaking in two in a storm in the Indian Ocean, the overland coach coming to grief in the mountains of Afghanistan.

I seriously question Paul Rebillot's statement that the most basic fear is the fear of death. Basic fears are feelings aroused by, or associated with basic experiences. No one has ever experienced death; no one ever can experience death. To speak of experiencing death is logically self-contradictory, since all modes of experiencing pre-suppose a living person, just as the mode of experience we call dreaming pre-supposes a sleeping person.

Although no one has experienced death, everyone has experienced birth. What if one replaces the word "death" by "birth" in the above context? Then the hero's "monumental struggle" is the struggle to be born. The hero is thus identified as the foetus, located at phase three of Stanislav Grof's four basic peri-natal matrices; see Frank Lake on "The Significance of Perinatal Experiences", *Self and Society, Vol. VI No. 7, p.224.*

Now the hero's journey begins to make sense to me. On the first reading of Paul Rebillot's essay, I noticed that the hero was a man (who is given an instrument of power to arm *him*); but when the hero arrives at the threshold *she* encounters the threshold guardian; but then, we are told, the hero continues along *his* way.

At first, I took this apparent sex-change to arise from a mere slip and so did not stop to ask myself if I had ever heard of a hero starting as a male, turning into a female, and then back into a male. Had I asked myself that question, the answer I would have come up with would have been: Teiresias, the blind seer, who is the central figure in T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land", which suggests to me that bisexuality is the central motif of that obscure poem.

Francis J. Mott, in *The Nature of the Self* (London and New York: The Integration Publishing Co., 1959, at p.40 says:

> *"It is a fact which has never been rationally explained, that the great heroes of antiquity tended to be endless travellers. Upon analysis the myths clearly reveal an underlying link between this travelling and the umbilical flow. In the course of his travelling the gods and other foetal representatives suffer and are restored. There are even strong indications that in the course of this travelling they become by turns solid and hollow, which is to say male and female. The legend of Teiresias is particularly plain on this point, for in the course of this travels he comes at different times upon copulating serpents, and through this experience is changed from a boy to a girl and then back again. Not only is Teiresias blind (as the foetus may poetically be said to be!) but his experiences take place at intervals of* seven years, *which is a typical instance of the sort of symbolism in which the myths tell the tale of the*

umbilical experiences of reversal of polarity in association with a sevenfold periodicity.".

The term "umbilical flow" used above refers to the back-and-forth flow of blood between foetus and placenta, through the umbilical cord. Mott's hypothesis is that this circulation of blood sets up an alternating reversal of "feeling" in the relation of the foetus to the placenta, the alternation being between solid and hollow, or penetrant and penetrable, - hence, male and female. Mott connects the frequent appearance in myths and folk-lore of the number seven (e.g. Snow White and the seven dwarfs) with the seven apertures of the head (two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and the mouth).

Obviously, the "magical" significance of the number seven is heavily over-determined, not least because every child is the seventh arrival in the "ideal" family, the other six being the two parents and four grandparents - ideal in the sense that sibling rivals are excluded. If, then, the hero is the foetus, his journey is the pre-natal one, starting at conception, proceeding to implantation, then to birth via Grof's four basic perinatal matrices. To what extent does Rebillot's hero's journey trace such an itinerary?

When we first encounter him, this hero is "reasonably well adapted to the social-cultural environment". This sounds like a foetus which has reached Grof's first B.P.M. in pretty good shape, and without - in Frank Lake's memorable phrase in his contribution to this journal to which I have already referred - "taking on board all the results of mother's alcoholism or nicotine addiction".

The hero's arrival at the threshold of adventure which, says Rebillot, "generally appears as a gate, a cave mouth or the entrance to a forest.", and the encounter with "the threshold guardian. . . . . .that refuses admittance", which, for Rebillot, represents "all the self-negating forces within the personality", could be fairly said to correspond to Grof's second B.P.M. - the "no-exit" phase. No exit from the womb = no admittance to the external world.

Next comes the hero's "supreme ordeal", the monumental struggle which, as I have already mentioned, corresponds to Grof's third B.P.M. As Lake has said, "there are as many variations here as people".

Finally, Rebillot's hero earns "the reward of the journey. . . . . .the gift of life that comes after the long night of death", which corresponds to Grof's fourth B.P.M., immediately after birth, the moment crowned by the sudden success of all those awful efforts - Herculean labours, one might call them - and the relief from the compression syndrome, so vividly described by R. D. Laing in The Facts of Life (New York: Pantheon, 1976; London: Penguin).

Rebillot gives no indication that he sees his hero as a foetus or the hero's journey as an uterine one, despite the fact that the language he uses is rich in uterine and peri-natal metaphors. In other words, he uses "birth language" without being aware of it. Consonantly with this, when someone talks to him in "birth language", he is apt not to hear what they are really saying.

This, I suggest, is amusingly illustrated by the anecdote which Rebillot relates in the opening paragraph of his essay. He tells us that a nurse at a psychiatric unit in which he was working, said to him one evening: "when I see what happens to some of our patients after they have gone through their madness, when I see the integration that takes place, I'm jealous. I would like to be able to go crazy myself, but I can't. I don't seem to have the talent or the chemistry or whatever it takes".

He does not say how he responded to this cri de coeur. Apparently, he just walked away. He merely says that the nurse's "comment" set him thinking. His referring to what she said as a mere comment rather suggests to me that he was very far from sensing that she might have been expressing a deeply-felt need and that she was, in fact, sexually propositioning him. Is it not at least possible that when she said to him that she would like to be able to go crazy, she was expressing a desire to re-experience her own birth, that is, a desire to bear a child, which is the most significant way in which a woman can re-experience her own birth - and the "integration" which takes place afterwards?

I suspect that when the nurse said that she did not seem to have the talent or the chemistry or "whatever it takes", she was reminding Rebillot that he had the talent (penis) and the chemistry (testicular) and "what it takes" (potency) - to make her a baby.

I appreciate, of course, that even if Rebillot had interpreted the nurse's words in this way, he might have refrained, for all sorts of reasons, professional and personal, from responding in any other than a neutral way. He would probably, however, have rounded off the conversation in a way which would have let the nurse see that her message had been received and understood.-

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