



ENEMY
CRIPPLE
&
BEGGAR

SHADOWS IN
THE HERO'S PATH

EREL SHALIT

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The cover image “Emerging” is a painting by Susan Bostrom-Wong, an artist and analyst member of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. Learn more about Susan and her artwork by visiting: www.SusanBostromWong.com

With careful observation, perhaps you will find layers of images embedded in the human figure of this fine painting. As with the human shadow, ‘Emerging’ could possibly represent the need to look within to find these vital symbols and hidden aspects of our evolving selves.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In his “Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*,” Jung writes, “Everything of which we are conscious is an image, and that image is psyche.” He then continues, “the psyche is a world in which the ego is contained.”

This statement reflects Jung’s cyclic perspective, as well as the centrality of the *image* in Analytical Psychology. It is not an ego-psychology; the world of the psyche does not reside in the ego; rather, what we call ego is contained in a world we call psyche. The Jungian approach to man’s psyche is situated at the edge between consciousness and the unconscious—never fully established on the empirical ground of ego-reality, its natural habitat is on mountainous myths, or wandering off into fairy tale forests.

For the same reason, Jungian psychoanalysis has many names, reflecting Hermetic movement rather than Apollonian authority, and the elusive images of the soul take the place of the well-defined mechanisms of the mind.

The hero serves as an image of that aspect of our ego that ventures into the unknown land of shadows, for instance in our dreams at night, to trace its treasures and bring them home to consciousness.

I have chosen the images of *enemy*, *cripple* and *beggar* to convey three essential layers of the *shadow*—the image that Jung chose to describe the unconscious, repressed or unrecognized aspects of the personality, or, as he distinctly defined the shadow, “the thing a person has no wish to be.”

These images are primarily intended to reflect the matter and fluidity of soul, rather than providing empirical structures and systematic definitions; I hope they facilitate weaving the story of the hero’s journey into the soul and the shadow.

I am most grateful to the many analysts, supervisees and colleagues who have allowed the publication of their dreams and clinical material, and I wish to thank those who have granted permission to quote their works. I also wish to thank

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Susan Bostrom-Wong, longtime friend and colleague, has generously contributed her painting *Emerging* for the front cover. Susan has been able to bring her depth as an analyst to profound expression as a painter. When I contemplated the front cover on the blank canvas of my mind, this was the very painting (with which I was familiar) that emerged—thank you Susan!

Finally, I owe it all to those very close to me: Sonia, Danny, I'layah, Dandan, No'ah, Gal and Emma.

PREFACE

We shall follow in the footsteps of the *hero* on his (or her) *path* or *way*, and face the *shadows* that the hero (whether in masculine or feminine dress) necessarily encounters.¹

Were the hero to believe he already knows all there is to know, and if he would insist on standing on the firm ground of principles and conventions, he would seldom bother to respond to *the call to adventure*.² Our hero would remain at home, seated like Archie Bunker in the confined and drowsy embrace of the armchair-ego. He would stay away from the unknown, unaware of moonlit nights, and intolerant of the shadow-carrying *Other*. “The usual person is more than content, he is even proud, to remain within the indicated bounds...,” says Campbell.³ “The hero,” says Jung beautifully, “is the symbolical exponent of the movement of libido.”⁴

The hero who searches for new paths in his heart and soul often lets hints and hunches guide him forward. Yet, he also needs to be equipped with *courage* to search beyond the boundaries of common ground and with *humbleness* towards the unknown that lies ahead of him. He must also carry a bagful of questions and concerns, curiosity and conflict, doubt and fear; “Every man hath the right to doubt his task, and to forsake it from time to time; but what he must not do is forget it.”⁵

The hero ventures into the shadow-land, far away from home, beyond the familiar security of ego-boundaries. Or perhaps the shadow is not a land, but an entire continent, with many different landscapes—fields and valleys, seas and forests, some quite recognizable, others remote and mysterious, some seemingly friendly and embracing, others hostile and

¹ As Patricia Berry writes, “there is not a shadow but many (as there is not one conscious standpoint but many...” (*Echo’s Subtle Body*, p. 187f.).

² Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 49ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁴ “On Psychic Energy,” *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, CW 8, par. 68. [CW refers throughout to C. G. Jung, *The Collected Works*]

⁵ Paulo Coelho, *The Fifth Mountain*, p. 53.

intimidating. The forests may become increasingly dense and dark, the sea so wild and stormy that it carries one away, “far from native lands,” to the point where one may contemplate “whether to cast myself out of the ship into the sea and perish there, or ... to endure and bide among the living.”⁶

Some of those in shadow-land are easily recognized as foes we loathe. Yet, often envy, pride, greed, anger, and lust are found in friends whom we’d never believe could possess such qualities—or even more, we discover these universal patterns, those “deadly sins” within ourselves. There are also warriors and cripples, the homeless and vagabonds, and some of awe-inspiring stature.

The land of shadows holds both the chains and the treasure-house of our ancestors, as well as the prospects and the promises, the fears, anxieties and uncertainty about our offspring. It pertains to the shadows we cast onto our enemy so that we may fight him—yes, usually *him*—in order to gain a sense of a free and secure personal identity. And it is the crippling sense of complexes that we may try to dump on the dunghill, outside and away from the central city square and the walls of our ‘ego-state,’ only to be terrified as they stare back at us when we try to gain a moment’s rest. And there, further down the murky path, stands the beggar as if faceless, without the social mask of the persona, lurking in the misty shadow at the gateway to the Self.

⁶ Homer, *The Odyssey*, p. 92.

PART I

THE HERO

“Where id was, there ego shall be,” proclaims Freud.⁷ By interpretation, the unconscious is made conscious. Interpretation is the sword of psychoanalysis, splitting the enigmas of the unconscious into intelligible slices of consciousness. A symbol’s multitude of meanings becomes the unitary signs and banners of consciousness. The ego, which in Jungian thought stands at the center of consciousness and conscious identity, may be stiffly bound to the totem of collective consciousness, to norms and conventions. Alternatively, the ego may bravely turn around to face what lies in the unconscious.

For this purpose, the ego needs the *hero*. The notion of the hero in Jung’s analytical psychology represents that particular aspect of the ego that ventures into the darkness of the shadow, searches for “the treasure, the princess, the ring, the golden egg, elixir of life, etc.,” which, as Daryl Sharp says, all are “metaphors for one’s true feelings and unique potential.”⁸ By means of its hero-function, the ego turns toward the Self and a *vital and dynamic relationship* between them is made possible. As Joseph Campbell succinctly says, “The effect of the successful adventure of the hero is the unlocking and release again of the flow of life into the body of the world.”⁹

While on the one hand “the hero symbolizes a man’s *unconscious self*,”¹⁰ he also brings victory to consciousness; “The

⁷ Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, SE 22, p. 80. (SE refers throughout to *The Standard Edition of the Works of Sigmund Freud*)

⁸ Daryl Sharp, *Jung Lexicon*, p. 59.

⁹ *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 40

¹⁰ “The Dual Mother,” CW 5, par. 516.

hero's main feat is to overcome the monster of darkness: it is the long-hoped-for and expected triumph of consciousness over the unconscious," says Jung.¹¹ The hero must defeat the dragon, escape being devoured by it, and then return safely, even if marked by bitter strife, to the kingdom of the ego. As Jung says:

In myths the hero is the one who conquers the dragon, not the one who is devoured by it. And yet both have to deal with the same dragon. Also, he is no hero who never met the dragon, or who, if he once saw it, declared afterwards that he saw nothing. Equally, only one who has risked the fight with the dragon and is not overcome by it wins the hoard, the "treasure hard to attain."¹²

And there, upon his return, the hero himself risks being devoured by consciousness, losing his heroic stamina, establishing the new rule with its new norms and conventions, yielding to his own uncompromising kingship.

Freud's myth circles around psychosexual development and genital maturity, attaining the capacity for love and work. Jung's myth is the *myth of meaning*, and the meaning that is to be found in the mythical, as it has so pertinently been expressed.

Jung said that the problem of modern man is mythlessness. Without a guiding myth and a sense for the mythical, when exclusively relying on the ego and concrete reality, and by being disconnected from the archetypal energies of the gods, man experiences meaninglessness. "The loss of a central myth brings about a truly apocalyptic condition," says Edinger.¹³

The central, nuclear myth of Jungian psychoanalysis is the *Hero-myth*, because the psychological essence of the hero is to abandon the kingdom of the ego, to challenge the norms and obsessions of collective consciousness and the persona—the face of social adaptation—and to search for meaning. The absence of meaning is the essence of neurosis, which, Jung says, "must

¹¹ "The Psychology of the Child Archetype," CW 9i, par. 284.

¹² "The Conjunction," CW 14, par. 756.

¹³ Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, p. 10.

be understood, ultimately, as the suffering of a soul which has not discovered its meaning."¹⁴ When Sartre says that man is "the incontestable author" who, condemned to freedom, "is responsible for the world and for himself as a way of being,"¹⁵ he speaks of heroic man. For Freud, "heroism involves relations with parents and instincts," says Robert Segal,¹⁶ while for Jung the hero's grand opus concerns the relation with the unconscious. The hero goes forth into the netherworld of the shadow, in spite of being threatened by the monsters that lurk in the darkness of the unconscious, to save an endangered soul, an anima in captivity, or to redeem a dormant myth or mythical motif, which he has to bring into consciousness. The hero thereby creates a new sense of meaning and relatedness.

That is, the Jungian myth of meaning is *consciousness*, not in the sense of an ego-consciousness that replaces the unconscious ("Where id was, there ego shall be"), but in the sense of *the hero who awakens the soul that otherwise lies dormant and barren in the unconscious*. We might call this the *ensouled ego*—an ego-consciousness that turns toward the unknown, the gods, the world soul, and the self. Yes, toward sexuality as well, making the blood pulsate, streaming through the soul. It is Prometheus not just stealing the fire from the gods, but a human consciousness that keeps the fire of eros and logos, of heart and spirit, burning.

WHO IS HE, OR SHE, THE HERO?

The Hero is often portrayed as the golden image of youth, radiant in libidinal vitality and charisma; courageous and rebellious, "young, comely, with glowing locks and fiery crown," as the sun-hero has been described.¹⁷ But he may likewise be the mature leader, guiding the nation through crisis, a Winston

¹⁴ "Psychotherapists or the Clergy," CW 11, par. 497.

¹⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 707.

¹⁶ Robert A. Segal, Introduction, *In Quest of the Hero*, p. xvi.

¹⁷ "The Song of the Moth," CW 5, par. 164.

Churchill pronouncing he has “nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat”¹⁸ in order to move nations out of their slumber to combat evil, tyranny and madness.

The hero may be the male Prometheus stealing the fire from the gods for the benefit of mankind, but no less, the hero may be female. As Joseph Campbell says, “The hero, therefore, is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations...”¹⁹

In the story of *Hero and Leander*, the latter is the hero who every night swims from his hometown Abydos across the strait that separates Asia and Europe, to Hero, a maiden in Sestos who serves the goddess of Love. She, no less a hero, is the one who by the light of her torch guides her lover on his journey across the sea.

Lord Byron, who in 1810 at age twenty-two, repeated Leander’s feat, makes us aware of how pain and love belong together. Remembering how finally Leander drowned in the rough sea, and Hero threw herself into the waves, he writes:

The winds are high on Helle’s wave,
 As on that night of stormiest water,
 When Love, who sent, forgot to save
 The young, the beautiful, the brave,
 The lonely hope of Sestos’ daughter.
 O, when alone along the sky
 The turret-torch was blazing high,
 Though rising gale and breaking foam,
 And shrieking sea-birds warned him home;
 And clouds aloft and tides below,
 With signs and sounds forbade to go,
 He could not see, he would not hear
 Or sound or sight foreboding fear.
 His eye but saw that light of love,
 The only star it hailed above;
 His ear but rang with Hero’s song,

¹⁸ Winston Churchill, May 13, 1940, in his first speech as newly appointed Prime Minister.

¹⁹ *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 19.

'Ye waves, divide not lovers long.'
 That tale is old, but love anew
 May nerve young hearts to prove as true.²⁰

Upon her return to Canaan, Ruth the Moabite, widow of Mahlon ('the sickly'), unites with Boaz, ('the strong'). From this union the House of David is eventually established, reflecting the hero's grand return from the shadow into consciousness. Has she not brought with her a blossoming femininity and loyalty, as her name reveals, to the patriarchal but previously barren, sickly and inflated, Land of Canaan?²¹

And Artemis, roaming freely in the forests and the fields, is she not heroically protecting virgin nature against men's ravenous forays, remaining chaste of the male projections of pure, naked femininity that she attracts? Even if some of us men may identify with the pain and tragic fate of Actaeon, Artemis (Diana) leaves us speechless, as does Charles Boer's exceptional translation of the *Metamorphoses*:

Bath Time As Usual For Diana: & here comes
 Cadmus's grandson! tired, straying, unsteady,
 woods unknown; but he finds the grove! fate brings him;
 enters cave: splashing fountains, naked nymphs!
 they beat their breasts: "Man!" loud outcry
 fills entire woods: they surround Diana, covering
 her body with theirs

 but the tall goddess towers over others
 by a neck! seen undressed, Diana's face

²⁰ The Works of Lord Byron, Vol. III, *The Bride of Abydos*, Canto the Second, p. 178.

²¹ The land of Moab and the Moabites trace their feminine ancestry to the mother of Moab (whose name means 'from my father'), the daughter of Lot. As a heroic act of renewal, when she believed no men were alive but her father, she lay with him and Moab was born. As Robert Graves writes, "Lot's daughters are not here reproached for their breach of the incest taboo, since they acted innocently; a midrash even suggests that God aided them" (*Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis*, p. 185). For an extensive analysis of the story, see Yehezkel Kluger, *A Psychological Interpretation of Ruth*.

goes scarlet dawn, sky color when
 clouds deflect sun; her troops crowd round:
 she, sideways, looks back, wishing
 she had arrows ready: instead throws water,
 soaks virile face, wets his hair, adds
 to water-vengeance words promising disaster:
 "Now say you saw me undressed!
 if you can!"

no more threats: she sprouts old stag
 antlers on his wet head, expands neck, points
 his ears, lengthens arms & legs, spots on body;
 & adds fear: hero flees surprised at his own speed
 he sees in water, head antlered & starts to say,
 "Oh dear!" but no word comes; groans
 only; tears streak cheeks not his own;
 his mind alone unchanged ²²

In the male psyche, Diana may serve as a fascinating and fearsome anima, defying capture, making him plunge deep into his own shadow. She heroically defies the fate spoken by the gods by turning poor Actaeon, brought by fate to find her in the grove, into a stag, then setting his own hounds upon him, tearing him to death.

We may compare her with Dora, eighteen-year-old Ida Bauer, victim of abuse, manipulation and psychoanalytic projection: She fought heroically against the fate of seduction, betrayal and deception imposed upon her by her father's authority, as well as Freud's fatherly authority, abandoning the latter after merely three months; leaving him with, as he admits, only a *fragment of an analysis*.²³

The Hero may be the *Heroic Healer*, the brilliant brain surgeon who with his laser-sharp sword, the scalpel, cuts through human flesh and bone and nerve to determine in the operating theater's war between life and death. Or, he may be the *Wounded Healer*, whose cure to heal broken souls is brewed

²² Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, translated by Charles Boer, p. 53.

²³ *Fragment of an analysis of a case of hysteria*, SE 7, pp. 3-124.

in the pain of his own untreatable wound. Or, the hero may be the *Wounding Healer*, whose tool is the *dirty needle*, which Freud put at centre court by means of psychoanalysis' initial dream, the *Dream of Irma's Injection*, with which he introduces the *Interpretation of Dreams*²⁴—like a Churchill in the battlefield of mind and psyche, promising nothing but dirt, mud, guilt and shame, in the struggle to uncover the autonomous complexes in the shadow, which threaten to undermine free will and psychic balance.

THE HERO IDEAL

We often confuse hero with hero-ideal. The hero-ideal is a *persona*-representation, an outer shell, the knight's armor parading on the stage of collective consciousness, a public image in the world of customs, values and ideals. The hero-ideal is an idea or image that an individual, a society or a sub-group may place at the center of its admiration. When a hero becomes a hero-ideal, the process of aging has begun, and, as von Franz says, "myths lose their spirit, and just like aging kings, they must die."²⁵ The same is true for the hero: returning home, the mission is fulfilled, and at the peak of vitality, triumph and idealization, the process of stiffening has begun, possibly coming to an end in the form of the old, worn and dying ruler who refuses to step down.

Just like the term *ego-ideal* refers to the ego's attachment to the persona, its desired appearance, the hero-ideal refers not to the heroic process, but the hero's *appearance*.

We find the hero in myth and tale, bidding farewell as he leaves home, traveling on rough roads and sailing stormy seas, as he encounters hardships and struggles with dragons and monsters, and finally finds and releases the treasure from its

²⁴ *The Interpretation of Dreams*, SE 4, p. 106ff; Robert Bosnak, "The Dirty Needle: Images of the Inferior Analyst," *Spring*, 44, pp. 105-115.

²⁵ Marie-Louise von Franz, *Interpretation of Fairy Tales*.

imprisonment in the shadow—be it the princess in captivity, the grail, the fire of the gods or the diamond in the cave, the new idea or the new dispensation.

That is, the hero has taken upon himself an undertaking, and returns home with something new or hitherto dormant, thereby rejuvenating the individual psyche or society. Accordingly, Greek hero-myths “are concerned with the origins of cities, families, and tribes,” as Kerényi points out.²⁶ In the psyche, new tracks, new paths of thinking replace old patterns. For example, a woman in her early fifties, who strictly followed her parents’ advice to “keep your job whatever, be sure to get a pension,” had remained in her secretarial position, in spite of feeling that she “dies every day of boredom.”

After many years of hesitant attempts and painstaking deliberations, she had the following dream: “I live in a fortress with a high, decaying wall around. I dig beneath the wall in order to clean up things. Surprisingly, the wall doesn’t fall, but its shape changes; it becomes more open and green, with birds.” Following the dream she resigned from her job, and found a way to earn a modest living and a rich life from her awakening creativity.

In society, the hero may be the messenger of hope who lights the torch of democracy. Sometimes it is amazing how, at the right moment in history, the heroism of a nation, spurting forth through layers of oppression, creates dramatic changes and overthrows worn-out regimes.

We may wonder if the Bolsheviks of 1917 and the militants of Islamic Jihad are heroes in this sense. In some places they have overthrown dubious regimes and brought issues that resided at some depth in the shadow to the foreground. Was there anything heroic about the Nazis, unleashing the violent animal forces of paganism and anti-Semitism from the lion’s den in the shadow, letting them loose at the city center, at the center of concourse? We know that, initially, it attracted Jung’s fascination.

²⁶ Carl Kerényi, *The Heroes of the Greeks*, p. 12.

The mere process of bringing material from the shadow to the surface and taking power does not anoint the hero or crown a king. Destruction of morality and humanity does not turn the rebel or the militant in the world into a hero. Psychologically, there is no rejuvenating heroism in projecting the shadow onto the *Other*—as does the fanatic, the fundamentalist and the terrorist. Neither suicide or homicide, nor genocide or sociocide—the destruction of the “evil other’s” vulnerable social fabric by spreading terror at crossroads and city squares, on buses and ice-cream parlors—imply renewal of the ego, but merely make use of ego functions to concretize destructive projections onto the other.

The simple hero-ideal that we often adhere to and refer to as ‘hero,’ is usually two-dimensional and shadow-less. In the early days of Zionism, for instance, the hero was personified by the pioneer who redeemed a barren myth, recovering the archetype of Mother by digging into her harsh and unfruitful earth in the Land of the Fathers. I have elsewhere elaborated how in this process the mythical was brought into the realm of concrete ego-reality—which is the task of the hero. The common ground shared by psyche and matter, soul and the desert landscape, is evident in Israel’s Proclamation of Independence: The night before independence, the paragraph saying pioneers “made deserts bloom” (lehafriach *schmamot*), was changed by a single letter, so that the text came to read lehafriach *neshamot*, that is, “make souls [or spirits] blossom.” Redemption of the soul was as much part of the Zionist hero-myth as the revivification of the harsh earth.²⁷

But as soon as the hero began to appear as a poster-image, a persona-hero, his head raised from the ground, looking up and ahead with a visionary gaze, then the reality of hardships and despair was disposed of in the shadow. And so the shadow raised its voice in the so-called *Theatre of Doubt*, which spoke about the loneliness, despair and estrangement.²⁸

²⁷ Erel Shalit, *The Hero and His Shadow: Psychopolitical Aspects of Myth and Reality in Israel*, p. 45ff.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35f.

HERO AND SHADOW

There is no hero without a shadow. Carl Kerényi says, "The glory of the divine, which falls on the figure of the hero, is strangely combined with the shadow of mortality."²⁹ Denial of the shadow and identification with the "golden hero" and "godlike heights," is "certain to be followed by an equally deep plunge into the abyss," says Jung.³⁰

Consequently, it is the enchanting hero-image of youthful narcissism that pays the heaviest of prices, because it knows no shadow, and there is no survival without a shadow. When "the brave die young" motif is acted out in actual reality, as all too often in all too many wars, the pain is devastating, the agony petrifying.

A hero without a shadow is like an ego without a soul. And it is precisely when the ego experiences a loss of soul, for instance a self-experience of emptiness or meaninglessness, that the hero-function needs to be constellated and venture into the shadow in search for meaning and relatedness.

In a way it seems right to describe the hero as narcissistic. He needs to be 'full of himself' in order to move out of the safety and confidence of the couch or the comfort and protection of the armchair. He must dare to trust his own capabilities, in order to oppose the gray and dull routines of common adult life. At the height of narcissism, when the heart pounds triumphantly at the peak of youthful feat, our hero may be seduced into believing that for him there are no obstacles along his road. And unless he manages to survive the transformation assigned to him by fate, he will die, and only if he manages to survive his death, will he be transformed, and only then will he determine his own destiny. Yet, when his mission is fulfilled, the hero dies, taking his position as the new king of consciousness.

If shadowless and inflated by megalomaniac love of self—seemingly the height of supreme beauty and fearless courage—

²⁹ *The Heroes of the Greeks*, p. 3.

³⁰ "Two Essays on Analytical Psychology," CW 7 (2nd Ed.), par. 41.

then his premature death by the kiss of Narcissus is sure to ensue, since there can be no life without a shadow. These are the youthful gods of promise and fertility, burned out in summer's heat, never to reach mature fulfillment. They are Adonis, Attis and Tammuz,³¹ the worshipped and adored, beloved and lamented gods of vegetation. Adonis' death and resurrection were celebrated at midsummer, in the festival called Adonia. As Frazer tells us:

[T]he ceremony of the death and resurrection of Adonis must also have been a representation of the decay and revival of vegetation ... At Byblus the death of Adonis was annually mourned with weeping, wailing, and beating of the breast; but next day he was believed to come to life again and ascend up to heaven in the presence of his worshippers.³²

In Ezekiel's vision of the Temple, the prophet is brought "to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north," where he found the women of Jerusalem "weeping for Tammuz."³³ The God of words, who in Genesis creates by saying and by naming,³⁴ cannot easily defeat the heart's yearning for the spirit of fertility, for Tammuz who dwells "in the midst of a great tree at the centre of the earth,"³⁵ and for whose revival the grief-stricken Ishtar was willing to descend into the netherworld to fetch the water of life. At the mourning ceremony, "men and women stood round the funeral pyre of Thammuz lamenting," and as water was thrown over him, represented in effigy, he came alive.³⁶

These young male gods are needed in springtime for new beginnings, vegetation and creation, but they do not last long;

³¹ Adonis, from *Adon*, Lord. Tammuz, from Babylonian *Dumu-zi*, 'the son who rises' (Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English*, p. 705), 'son of the blood' (Barbara Walker *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*, p. 971), 'sprout' (Joan Comay & Ronald Brownrigg, *Who's Who in the Bible*, p. 372).

³² James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, p. 280f.

³³ A hapax legomenon, occurring only in Ezek. 8:14.

³⁴ Gen. 1:1-31

³⁵ *The Golden Bough*, p. 288.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

either (self-)castrated like Attis, destroyed by wild animals like Adonis, or they die at summer's peak—Tammuz lending his name to the Hebrew month at the height of summer's heat.³⁷

Transformation takes place by the death that the hero experiences when he sheds the known; what was, can be no more. This is the death by which the shadow constellates and life becomes genuine. Can it be better told than in the words of Oscar Wilde's *Happy Prince*, who stands as a statue "High above the city, on a tall column,"³⁸ and tells the Swallow who asks him how come he, the Happy Prince, is weeping, that:

When I was alive and had a human heart, ... I did not know what tears were, for I lived in the Palace of Sans-Souci, where sorrow is not allowed to enter. In the daytime I played with my companion in the garden, and in the evening I led the dance in the Great Hall. Round the garden ran a very lofty wall, but I never cared to ask what lay beyond it, everything about me was so beautiful. My courtiers called me the Happy Prince, and happy indeed I was, if pleasure be happiness. So I lived, and so I died. And now that I am dead they have set me up here so high that I can see all the ugliness and all the misery of my city, and though my heart is made of lead yet I cannot choose but weep.³⁹

There is no shadow in the Palace of No-Sorrow (Sans-Souci), and there is no heroism when not "caring to ask what lies beyond." The Happy Prince must die in order to depart from his paradisiacal palace of pleasure and venture into the shadow of misery, to feel the sadness that enables empathy and care for others. "It is the rarest of exceptions," says Kerényi about the hero, "if he does not fall victim to death; he is always in contact with it, death belongs to his 'shape'."⁴⁰ Death is the essence of the hero's transformation.

While we often are stunned by the hero(-ideal)'s radiant charisma, the transformation pertains to the death of Narcissus.

³⁷ The Hebrew calendar is lunar. The month of Tammuz coincides with June-July.

³⁸ Oscar Wilde, *Complete Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde*, p. 9.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴⁰ *The Heroes of the Greeks*, p. 14.

To grow up and become an adult means, in painful sadness to the very marrow of one's bones, to let go of youth, giving up some of the breathtaking libido of sweet sixteen. When asked by pregnant Leiriope, Teresias the Seer tells her that her son Narcissus will "live to a ripe old age, provided that he never knows himself."⁴¹ 'To know oneself' entails the painful confrontation, encounter with and recognition of one's shadow, which is essential to maturity; not only the maturity which forms the basis of Western Apollonian civilization and goal-directed consciousness, but also reflective consciousness, in which the ego is acutely aware that it is not the grand-all. And if not before, then at that very moment of self-awareness, the elevating spirit of Narcissus escapes the embrace and abandons us to the pain of our wounds; (secondary) narcissism must die. Narcissism is an indispensable driving force, but it entails denial of one's shadow.

Let me in this context briefly mention Oscar Wilde's wonderful doppelganger novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in which the painted portrait magically relieves handsome Dorian, 'gift of the goddess,' from the grayness of aging. As long as Dorian Gray remains the handsome youngster himself, while projecting his shadow onto the canvas, letting the painting on the wall carry the afflictions of aging, he causes damage and death to others. Terrified by old age, Dorian strikes a Faustian deal, trading his soul for the beauty of eternal youth. His double, the painted portrait, carries the painful shadow of getting old. But only that which remains connected to the instinctual roots of the shadow owns its life. Having externalized his shadow, harm and hell, death and destruction inevitably ensue. As Rank says, the double reflects the soul as duality, the person and his shadow, simultaneously representing "both the living and the dead person."⁴²

Dorian falls in love with the performing skills of the actress Sibyl, but when she is touched by the reality of love, she can no

⁴¹ Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths: Vol. 1*, p. 286.

⁴² Otto Rank, *Beyond Psychology*, p. 71.

longer perform. Dorian's love for her thus comes to an end, and he turns away from her, leaving her to suicide.

And when Dorian after several years shows the portrait to its painter, Basil, the latter begs him to repent his sin. Rather than expressing remorse, Dorian kills his creator.

Any archetypal identification, for instance with eternal youth and supreme beauty, entails projection of the shadow, which leads to loss of soul, which in turn causes the very uprising of the shadow—beauty turns into ugliness, the charms of youth into the agony of old age, euphoria into despair.

Only as godlike beauty ultimately is returned to its proper place, to the painting on the wall, Dorian is forced to reclaim the yoke of old age, and dies. His old and ugly dead body is found in front of the picture of young Dorian. The image of the hero as carrier of youth and glamour must die. Likewise, every psychological hero, that is, that inner function which enables us to depart from the ego, to venture into the shadow and retrieve what has been lost, and to bring it home into conscious living and our conscious identity, he as well must die when the mission has been fulfilled. When successful, the hero dies by being transformed into the king, the dominant principle of consciousness, who, as mentioned, eventually stiffens into collective norms, rules and regulations, into the adamant truths that replace the many thoughts; truths that when embraced become false, making people grotesque.⁴³ And then, as is inevitable in the cycle of the psyche, he as well must abdicate the throne—if need be, defeated by the new hero.

The dreamer of the following dream experienced the pain of relinquishing an outdated identity. He had to accept the new features that initially were brought to him by the transformative capacity of the trickster:

I am at the seashore. It is as if in the Middle Ages. From the sea a big ship, like a frigate, with strong silent strength, approaches the coast. I stand on the beach facing the sea, throw a spear, but it falls in front of the ship into the sea. I am weak, the ship invincible. Behind me, a group of archers

⁴³ Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio*, p. 6.

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Title page for "The Voices," and "The Song of the Beggar," from Rainer Maria Rilke, *Selected Poems*, Translated by Albert Ernest Flemming (Routledge, 1990).

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