

SURVIVING A POSTMODERN PATHOLOGY

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Carl Jung decided fairly early in his career that pathology was not merely individual but collective. His experience of Nazi Germany gave some impetus to this idea., and his attempts to understand the phenomenon led him into a mode of thinking which has come to be called archetypal psychology.

Archetypal psychology as a contemporary way of thinking about culture and behaviour is largely based on the work of Jung, but it actually goes back to Plato, through Kant, Ficino, Plotinus and Augustine. Jung regarded himself as an empirical scientist, and in that role he devoted himself to documenting the regularities he found in human behaviour, both individual and collective. When it came to understanding these regularities he did not find adequate explanation either in mainstream science or in Freud. Hence his shift towards metaphysics and his exploration and adoption of the notion of archetype. Jung, following Plato, was inclined to understand archetypes as pre-existent forms which are replicated again and again in nature and in our experience. However, he was not very consistent in his way of defining archetype. On the one hand, he called the archetypes "primordial images", but he also wrote of them as "instinctual patterns of behaviour" which are genetically inherited, as "structures of the collective unconscious" and as "modes of apprehension" which shape our encounter with reality. They were for him both the guiding patterns of evolution and its product. For Jung, all behaviour is patterned by archetypal images of great meaning and power which human beings used to call gods. He made what he considered an essential distinction between the archetype per se (which is form without content and cannot be directly observed) and the archetypal image - its personally and culturally determined manifestation.

The central contemporary figure in this school of thought is James Hillman¹, who has a much less essentialist view of archetype than Jung. Hillman argues that the image has no referent beyond itself, that images don't stand for anything, but are the primary datum of our experience. He does not make Jung's distinction between the archetype per se and the archetypal image, nor his distinction between the personal and collective aspects of the unconscious, so that for him every image is an archetypal image, and these archetypal images structure all our experience and behaviour. For Hillman, the proper work of psychology is *seeing through* our personal and collective experience to the archetypal image behind it. He rejects and attacks reification and literalism. He wants us to see the world metaphorically. He argues, in fact, that we have no other way of seeing it.

In Hillman's understanding, all consciousness depends on fantasy images. All we know about the world, about the mind, the body, about anything whatsoever, including the spirit and the nature of the divine, comes through images and is organised by fantasies into one pattern or another. Because these patterns are archetypal, we are always in one or another archetypal configuration, one or another fantasy

Hillman's argument takes him inevitably into a multi-perspectivist understanding of reality. As a framework for his multi-perspectivism he takes the gods of the Greco-Roman pantheon. Each of the gods personifies a "mode of apprehension" which gives a distinct and observable shape to our encounter with the world. Distinct but not discrete, for the archetypal patterns interpenetrate in ways which are represented by the relationships (familial and erotic) between the gods. Hillman takes the classical Greek pantheon as his preferred set of images because these images are embedded in European culture - even in the culture of positivist science.

James Hillman suggests that archetypal psychologising starts with the question *what?* and ends with the question *who?*. If we want to *see through* the phenomenon to which Don Michaelⁱ is drawing our attention, we will start by asking "What is going on here?", "What pattern can we see?", putting aside all *whys* and *hows*. While other psychologies take other paths, archetypal psychology's *what?* looks for an image. The *what*

ⁱ This paper is written in response to a paper by Don Michael in the previous issue of *Futures*.

dissolves as it specifies, first into *which image?*, and then into *who?*. In exploring personal pathology we might ask: "Who in you, or me, is saying or doing this? Whose voice is telling you/me this?", and find what at first seems to be a fragment of our personality or personal history. But these interior persons are not simply parts of us. The harder we look at them the more impersonal and collective they appear. For, whether we are looking at the personal pathology of the contemporary leader or the collective pathology of our nation or species, "...in the last instance, the *who* refers to an archetypal figure within the complex, the dream, and the symptom."² Our enquiry becomes : "What god do we find here? In what myth are we enmeshed?"

Freud and Jung, Neumann and Gebser, left us the notion that, for all our illusion that we are essentially rational beings, there is a structure of consciousness operating in us which is pre-rational, a "mythical" consciousness by which we deal with the world not through concepts but through stories. Freud documented a couple of stories in particular which he claimed we are scripted to re-enact largely (or totally) unawares. Jung discerned a larger and more diverse set of scripts, symbolisations of the multiple archetypal energies and images within whose interplay, he asserted, we conduct our lives.

It is not necessary here to address the question whether the archetypes exist as primary forms as Jung supposed. Let it suffice that Don Michael has pointed to a pattern of behaviour which is not merely personal but collective. Let us suppose, as archetypal theory suggests, that behind this pattern is a story that we tell ourselves about the way the world is. Let us suppose furthermore that this story is not a new story but an old story, which was first told before human beings learned to think logically and scientifically about the universe, and which has been told and retold in the thousands of years since. And let us suppose that this story is told in an especially expressive and psychologically sophisticated way in the myths of the great classical civilisations, and specifically in the myths of ancient Greece. Supposing all this, let us look at the phenomenon in question.

How does Don Michael describe the phenomenon which concerns him and us? What is the *whatness* of it all? I do not wish to re-write his paper. His description of the phenomenon is consistent with my own observations, and his reflections on it make perfect sense to me. I need only point to certain images which seem to be central to his description.

The story Don Michael is telling is a story of complexity and chaos, of the dissolution of boundaries, of deceit, denial and delusion, of the preference for image over substance, of the loss of familial and tribal bonds, of the collapse of ethics, of an unwillingness to confront reality and tell the truth, of the abandonment of rationality, of the proliferation of information, of a market-place so noisy that nothing can be clearly heard, of a world seen "through a distorting lens", of an "ever-tightening knot" which we cannot unravel.

Don Michael's description of the state of the world echoes much of what Lyotard reflected on in his analysis of "the postmodern condition".³ Lyotard suggests that postmodernity is an inevitable consequence of the information revolution. According to his analysis, the transmission of information has become a matter of far greater significance than the content of that information. Our society is characterised by a constant flow of information, which has become essential to the maintenance of that society, regardless of what the information is actually about. The boundary between important information and trivial information has largely disappeared. This frenetic exchange of information is carried on the back of a runaway computer technology, which appears to be headed towards a total exteriorisation of knowledge.

The information society is guided by a fantasy of the marketplace, in which exchange is an end in itself - a fantasy of deregulation, free interchange, the commodification of knowledge, wisdom, health, pleasure, law, religion, relationship. The consciousness of the marketplace permeates all areas of life.

A further characteristic of the postmodern condition, which Lyotard sees as another consequence of the information revolution, is the decline of orthodoxy. The "grand narratives" of the modern, industrial era - Marxism, Rationalism, Christianity - have been set aside in favour of an increasing relativisation of values, ethics and beliefs.

Postmodern thinking is characterised also by the abandonment of the heroic fantasy of controlling and possessing nature. Positivistic science, having failed to construct a paradise, is being supplanted by a postmodern science characterised by incomplete information, catastrophe and chaos, indeterminacy, paradox, discontinuity, and a tendency to uncover new questions rather than new answers, to complexify rather than to simplify.

In a postmodern consciousness the significance of the image is magnified to a point where we are floating in a sea of images which are no longer expected to represent any reality or truth. The notion of common or shared meanings seems to be in the process of disappearing, and the pastiche of postmodern art and architecture reflects a world in which anything goes. There remain no meanings, only interpretations. There seems to be nothing fixed and enduring. Our understandings of the world have been destabilised and deconstructed. The ground has disappeared, and reality has become very slippery.

Archetypal psychology, at least in Hillman's post-Jungian version, is itself a manifestation of just this kind of intellectual sensibility. The dilemma of leadership on which Don Michael is reflecting is another.

So what is the story?

In *The Political Psyche*⁴ Andrew Samuels has explored the myth of Hermes as an approach to understanding contemporary economic and political culture and to dealing with our splits and confusions about capitalism and the market economy. I have argued elsewhere⁵ that "the postmodern condition" may be construed as an inflation of late twentieth century European consciousness (wherever it is found) by the image and energy of Hermes. Taking seriously Hillman's dictum that we are always in one archetypal fantasy or another, I have argued that post-industrial society is caught in a Hermes fantasy. I do not want to repeat all these arguments here, but I do want to argue that the dilemma that draws Michael's attention is part of a larger pattern, which archetypal psychology may help us interpret.

The Homeric **Hymn to Hermes** tells us how, to avoid the gods, Maia, the nymph who was Zeus' lover, dwelt in a deep cave, where she bore a son

*who was a shrewd and coaxing schemer,
a cattle - rustling robber, and a bringer of dreams,
a watcher by night and a gate-keeper, soon destined
to show forth glorious deeds among the immortal gods.*⁶

The hymn shows Hermes as a most precocious infant who, as he leaves the cave on the day he was born, comes across a tortoise. First he plays with it as any child might, then he kills it and makes a lyre out of its shell. Accompanying himself on this instrument, he sings the very first song, which is about his parents' love-making.

Having joyfully and ironically sung of his parents, he moves on to other things. He feels a craving for meat, so he leaves his lyre in his cradle and sets out to find some. For a rogue like Hermes, there is one utterly obvious way to obtain the meat he craves. He steals it. When twilight falls he seeks out the cattle of Apollo where they are grazing, and cuts fifty of them out of the herd.

To fool Apollo, he drives the cows backwards so they look as though they are walking the other way, and uses foliage to make the first pair of sandals, in order to disguise his own footprints.

Having invented stringed instruments and sandals, he now invents the fire-stick, and builds a fire. Next, he invents both cookery and religious sacrifice. He takes two of the cows he has stolen, slaughters and roasts them. By this time he has obviously forgotten about his hunger, for instead of making a banquet for himself, he takes the meat (which he stole from the gods in the first place) and offers it to the gods, making sure that he packages the carcasses in twelve equal pieces. Having performed the sacrifice, Hermes returns to his cradle, and lies gurgling and playing like any baby. His mother scolds him for his thieving, at which Hermes vigorously

declares his intention of becoming the Prince of Robbers, so he can support the two of them in the manner they are entitled to.

The next day, Apollo arrives at the cave, having tracked the cows there, and angrily confronts his baby brother Hermes. Hermes lies shamelessly. He declares that he was only born yesterday, which is true enough, and then goes on to swear by the head of Zeus that he has never seen a cow in his life. Apollo won't accept this and picks up the baby Hermes to carry him to their father Zeus for judgement. Hermes' belly rumbles so loudly that Apollo drops him in disgust. Before the throne of Zeus, Hermes continues to lie, well knowing that nobody believes him, and eventually charms his way out of punishment by getting Zeus to laugh. Nevertheless, Zeus exacts from Hermes a promise not to lie again (though he need not necessarily tell the truth!) and sends his sons off together to find the cattle. Realising Hermes' great strength, Apollo tries to bind his hands together, but Hermes the illusionist is far too slippery a character to be bound. Hermes then charms Apollo completely by taking his lyre and playing .

So Apollo gladly exchanges his cattle for the lyre. Apollo takes responsibility for music while Hermes becomes the god of herdsmen and shepherds (as well as cattle-rustlers), and of barter and negotiation (as well as stealing and deception). They become the best of friends. Hermes, promises never to steal from Apollo again. He receives from Apollo his staff, or magic wand, for it is fitting that he should be a god of magic and illusion. Finally, he is designated messenger to Hades, the one who guides souls to the underworld.

*Little is the profit he brings, and he beguiles endlessly
the tribes of mortal men throughout the night.⁷*

Hermes is ubiquitous in Greek mythology. He is the shape-shifter with many names and many forms: the god of travellers, the god of boundaries and boundary-crossing, the god of cowboys, the god of merchants and markets, the god of persuasiveness, the trickster, the god of lies and deceit, the god of gamblers, the god of thieves, the god of illusions, the god of shamanic medicine, the god of the crossroads, the god of connections, of quicksilver, of fast footwork and smooth talking, the god of boundary-crossing. He is slippery and seductive, the divine entrepreneur, a con man without ethics and without malice. He has no values of his own, no concern for substance. He slips into situations where he is not expected, "like smoke under the door". He avoids confrontation; he has no interest in being a hero. He believes that everything is negotiable. He enjoys doing deals, being clever, playing the game. He is the herald of the gods, the connector, the carrier of information.

Hermes does not craft anything, like Hephaistos. He does not manage anything, like Zeus, or lead us to understanding, like Apollo, or ensure the smooth functioning of society, like Hera, or harvest and hoard, like Kronos. He does not fight, like Ares, or nourish, like Demeter, or protect the weak, like Artemis. He has no interest in good citizenship, like Athena, or ecstasy, like Dionysos. He does not wish to stay at home, like Hestia, but is constantly on the move. He loves paradox and process, trickery and risk. He is ambiguous and many-faced. He is everybody's mate.

There is nothing particularly original in applying the image of Hermes to our era. Jung, for one, was very conscious of the Hermetic in his own writing. New Age thinkers, particularly those with gnostic tendencies, are much inclined to the uncritical worship of Hermes. However, I want to suggest that we can find the myth of Hermes in the abstractions of the so-called postmodern analysts of our culture and in the fantasies of the stock market as surely as we can in the turgidities of Jung's alchemical writings. I want to suggest that the complexity of our situation and the inability of political leaders to confront their inability to manage it belong to this same pattern, as does the pervasive tendency to deal with the crisis through "image control" rather than through taking effective action. When I suggest that our society, or what I can observe of it, is in the grip of an inflation (Jung's term) of the Hermes archetype, I am not suggesting that this is the first time European culture has experienced this particular inflation. There are historical phenomena (the culture of mediaeval Venice, for instance) which parallel our own experience in interesting ways. However, mobility and information technology add enormously to the strength of the present inflation, and make it potentially global rather than merely local.

In psychological inflation, as Jung developed the idea, the individual is "blown up" by a particular archetypal pattern. A person's perceptions, values and behaviour are driven by an image which has its source outside the individual, in the collective or objective psyche. Personal identity is engulfed by the archetype. One's perceptions of the world, one's thoughts about it, one's values, are shaped by a single image. This process is often driven not only by the energy of the archetype as experienced by the individual, but also by the archetypal image projected on to the individual by others. Analogously we can talk about cultural inflation, in which a nation or society, or at least a substantial part of the population, is taken over by an archetype, so that the group's perceptions, self-image and behaviour are formed by a single archetypal pattern and driven by a single archetypal energy. Jung understood German Nazism as a national inflation by what he called the "Wotan" archetype.

For the last four hundred years, European conscious has been dominated by other gods than Hermes. The Enlightenment and the birth of modern science were dominated by the image of Apollo, god of clarity, of light, of reason, of phallogocentric superiority. The industrial age from which we are emerging was dominated by the image of Prometheus. It is the failure of the Promethean fantasy which has precipitated us into the present age of uncertainty.

Prometheus, in Greek mythology, is the creator of men (though not of women), the superhuman hero who sacrifices himself by stealing fire from heaven, giving men light and heat and technology and thus freeing them from the domination of the gods and enabling them to become masters of the earth. The images of the Promethean myth - emancipation, technology, control, empowerment, progress - have shaped the guiding fantasy of the dominant (Western, masculine) consciousness for the past two or three hundred years. European culture has dwelt, more or less uncritically, in a fantasy of progress, of liberating humanity from the power of "nature", of gaining control over the processes of life, of breaking free from poverty and ignorance and disease, and of doing all this through technology, through Prometheus' gift of fire and crafting. When one technology fails to deliver the paradise we switch our faith to another, within the same fantasy of inevitable progress.

This fantasy is at present wavering, as it becomes apparent that every solution provided by technology brings with it new problems, that our drive to master the planet has been taking us, perhaps irreversibly, towards the destruction of the planet and humanity, that technology manages to enslave more people than it emancipates, that heroic revolution does not inevitably bring freedom. We are losing our ability and, indeed, our will to reduce the world to simple cause and effect sequences which we have the cunning to manage. The Promethean vision is fading. Paradise is postponed. European civilisation is shifting from an infatuation with Prometheus to an infatuation with Hermes. Even though Promethean values are no longer so much a part of mainstream thinking that they are unchallengeable, assumed simply to reflect the truth about the world, we still find some resistance to letting them go. I find in Don Michael's description of our plight a suggestion that we *ought* to be able to understand and control our world, or at least some nostalgia for the days when we dwelt happily in the fantasy that one day we would be able to.

The Promethean myth and the Apollo myth are versions of the myth of the masculine, misogynist hero, combating the darkness and chaos, conquering the dragon, liberating man from the power of uncontrolled nature. They have their roots in a patriarchal politics, which Apollo clearly supports and Prometheus resists in the name of heroic individuality. However, human consciousness was not always dominated by hero stories. Before the hero story came the mother story, a story which emerged from the primal human sense of oneness with the nurturing and devouring earth. The emergence of the hero story in Greece in the second millenium B.C. coincides with a political and cultural conquest by which an indigenous, matristic, nature-worshipping culture was replaced by the culture of the invading warlords. In the old story, Nature is Mother and we are part of her. In the new story, Nature, still female, is darkness and chaos and monstrous strength, which Apollo, or Prometheus, or Herakles must overcome through the clear light of his masculine intelligence or the strength of his masculine arm.

In classical Greece, a polytheistic consciousness enabled both stories to be heard at once, and the classical pantheon and its mythology represent a meeting of these two very different versions of reality, albeit in a political context which was essentially patriarchal. One place where we find the old story and the new story meeting is in the myth of Hermes, the smooth-tongued negotiator. It is Hermes who demonstrates that all the gods must be worshipped. Hermes is indeed the son of Zeus, but his primary connection is with Maia, the earth goddess whose name simply means "old mother". In the Homeric hymn of Apollo, we find that god announcing at his birth that his task is to "prophesy the will of unerring Zeus",⁸ then going off on his journey to establish the domination of reason over chaos by killing the she-dragon and taking over her shrine. Hermes' story has a similar structure, but Hermes is an anti-hero who subverts and destabilises the status quo and announces to his mother that

*I shall be master of whatever skill is best
to provide for you and me forever: we shall not suffer
as you bid me, to stay right here and be
the only two immortals not plied with gifts and prayers.
...And if my father does not allow me this, I shall surely
try to be, as I no doubt can, the chief of robbers.*⁹

Monotheistic societies do not have this ability to hold two stories in balance. Over the past two thousand years it has been the hero story which has represented orthodoxy, whether religious orthodoxy or scientific orthodoxy. The mother story has emerged from time to time, but proved unable to flourish in most political climates. Now we find the mother story emerging in the contemporary Hermes culture, just as it did in the Hermes culture of thirteenth century Europe. I suggest that eco-feminism, in its challenge to the anthropocentricity and hero-pathology of the modern age, belongs to the same pattern as postmodern science, the information superhighway, the multicultural society and the worship of the unregulated market. A Hermes consciousness does not see complexity negatively, but rather delights in it. It trusts that what we perceive as chaos represents a higher level of order, and hence perceives a world at play where an Apollo consciousness sees a loss of control. The deceit and dishonesty, the opportunism, the entire lack of ethics which characterises the infantile Hermes, are justified by him as destabilisation of an oppressive system. "Mother", he says, "I'm only doing it for you." There are Gaia worshippers who do not share Don Michael's concerns at all, but look forward to the imminent collapse of our scientific-technological culture, and even to the annihilation of our species. It is only thus that the mother-planet will be saved from destruction at our hands. Such thinking is enmeshed in the oldest story of all, which Eliade has called the "myth of the eternal return"¹⁰, in which humanity is devoured by the Great and Devouring Mother who gave it birth.

The Greeks had nothing in their mythology which approximates to Satan. The nasty or pathological aspects of behaviour were shared out among all the gods. Hermes has his good side and his bad side. However, to make distinctions between positive and negative, healthy and pathological, we must adopt the perspective of Apollo. Hermes himself makes no such distinctions. From the perspective of Apollo (and Zeus, and Prometheus) the deceit, delusion, irresponsibility and amorality to which Michael draws attention are symptoms of a Hermes pathology. So are the boundary-crossing, the substitution of image for substance, the attack on rationality, the opportunism, the groundlessness of a god of illusion whose winged feet rarely touch the ground, the slipperiness of "the unraveller" who cannot be pinned up or tied down, the restlessness of the god of travellers who never stays in one place.

Jung warned us that in every inflation we will find pathology, as the negative aspects of that complex/archetype get full expression. The ancient Greeks would have put it another way. They could have warned us of the dangers of monotheism. If we give all our worship to one god, not only do we sentence ourselves to suffer the pathology of that god, but we find ourselves under attack from all the others.

However, if we worship Hermes as one god among others, as his myth insists we do, we can find in a Hermes-consciousness the flexibility and inventiveness which may yet save us from the catastrophe to which our excessive faith in Apollo and Prometheus seems to have condemned us. The god of transformation,

conciliation, magic, playfulness, intuition, imagination, ambiguity, paradox, irony, has destabilised a pattern of thinking and behaviour which was, in its arrogant assertion of its own truth, destroying the world. For Hermes, truth is far more problematic than it is for either Apollo or Prometheus. Truth is a flash of beauty, glimpsed for the briefest of moments and always alluringly elusive, like the nymphs that ancient Greek travellers glimpsed for a moment in the forest, pursued, and lost, never sure that they had really seen anything. This image is as present in the fantasies of postmodern science as it is in the fantasies of postmodern literature and postmodern politics.

However, Hermes cannot solve our dilemma on his own. He has no messages of his own; he bears only the messages of the other gods. He offers no guide to ethical behaviour. If we want ethics we will have to look elsewhere, to Zeus for the ethics of absolute moral law and the ethics of traditional values, to Hera for the ethics of social bonds and social stability, to Demeter for the ethics of caring and nurturing, to Eros for the ethics of relationship, to Artemis for the ethics of earth-consciousness. We will have to look to Apollo for a rational ethics and to Aphrodite for an aesthetic ethics. And we will have to look to Athene for common sense and the ethics of citizenship.

Postmodern thinking is often nihilistic. It is inclined to argue that if nothing is to be valued above anything else, then nothing is to be valued at all. Hillman avoids such nihilism by insisting that all perspectives are to be fully valued, just as Hermes demonstrates that all the gods are to be worshipped. The same psychological polytheism is manifest in Lyotard's celebration of "local narratives", in Thomas Kuhn's notion of opposing paradigms, in an increasing relativism of religious belief, in a consensus that multiculturalism is "a good thing", and in the contemporary assumption that the civilised person is tolerant of diversity.

Unfortunately, we have largely lost our facility for polytheism. We have to learn again how to acknowledge all the squabbling gods together. When the one god lets us down we tend to redirect all our worship to another. Yet a polytheistic Hermes consciousness is something we desperately need. It is a necessary protection against the oppression of new and old fundamentalisms. The development of a Hermes consciousness in this century provided a long awaited relief from Apollo consciousness and Prometheus consciousness. The Enlightenment invited humankind to see the world clearly for the first time. The technological revolution invited us to break free from the domination of the gods and gain control of our world. If Hermes asserts anything, it is that we must honour all the gods, and Maia not the least of them. It is consistent with Jungian theory to argue that it is the suppression of Hermes for so long which has led to the present outbreak of Hermes-pathology, and that the best way of dealing with this is to acknowledge and value the positive manifestation of the god.

This paper is not an injunction to love our disease, nor do I want to assert that this is the way things are and we may as well accept it. Like Don Michael, I think that there are reasons to hope, if not for the patient's cure, at least for some amelioration of the pathology.

The dilemma he describes is not a dilemma of our leadership but a dilemma of us all. The solutions we must find are in the development of a polytheistic consciousness. We must not turn to a fundamentalist Zeus consciousness, or return to the monotheistic worship of Apollo or Prometheus, or even to the monotheistic worship of Gaia/Maia which the deep ecologists would promote, but to honestly worship all the gods - Aphrodite and Athene, Ares and Eros, Demeter and Dionysos, Hera and Hestia, Persephone and Poseidon - to accept all their truths, to honour all their values, and to put up with their constant squabbling. Even if they don't exist, we can't ignore them.

ENDNOTES

- ¹. See James Hillman, *Archetypal Psychology*, Spring, 1983
- ². James Hillman, *Revisioning Psychology*, Harper Colophon, 1977, p. 139.
- ³. Jacques Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, Manchester University Press, 1984.

- ⁴. Andrew Samuels, *The Political Psyche*, Routledge, 1993.
- ⁵. Bernie Neville, "The Charm of Hermes: Hillman, Lyotard and the Postmodern Condition", *Journal Of Analytical Psychology*, July 1992, p. 337 - 353.
- ⁶. Hesiod, *The Homeric Hymns*. trans. Apostolos Athanassakis. John Hopkins University Press, 1976, p. 31: 13 - 16.
- ⁷. *ibid*, p. 47: 576 - 8.
- ⁸. Hesiod, *ibid* p. 19: 132.
- ⁹. *ibid*, p. 35: 166 -175.
- ¹⁰. M. Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Princeton University Press, 1990 [1954]. The myth is particularly transparent in fantasies of the human species being wiped out and then regenerating.