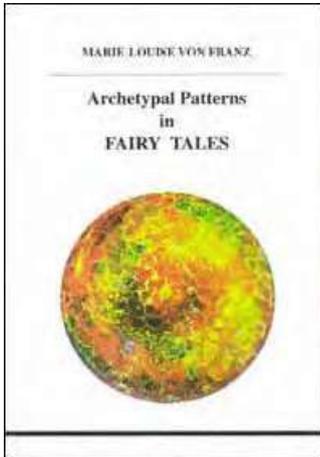


Archetypal Patterns in Fairy Tales Studies in Jungian Psychology By Jungian Analysts



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The Three Carnations (A Spanish tale) 27

A peasant was out in the fields one day when he saw three marvelous carnations. He broke them off and brought them to his daughter. The young girl was very happy, but one day, when she stood in the kitchen and looked at them, one fell into the coals and burned. A beautiful young man appeared then and asked her, "What's the matter with you? What are you doing?" Since she didn't answer, he said, "You don't talk to me? All right, then you can find me near the stones of the whole world." And he disappeared. She took the second carnation and threw it in the fire. Again a young man appeared before her and said, "What's the matter with you? What are you doing?" But she didn't answer. So he said, "You are not talking to me? Well, near the stones of the whole world you can find me." And he disappeared. Maria that was the name of the young girl took the last carnation and threw it in the fire. And again such a young man appeared, again he asked the same questions, and again he disappeared.

But now Maria was sad because she had fallen in love with the last young man, and she decided after some days to go on a journey and find the stones of the whole world. She went away quite alone, and walked further and further until by chance she came to a place where there were three high stones. She was tired, so she sat down and began to cry. When she cried, one of the three stones opened and the young man she loved came out and said, "Maria, why are you crying?" And as she continued to cry, he said, "Don't be sorry, just go up there where you see a farmer's house. Go into it and ask the mistress if she will take you as a maid."

The girl did so and was taken as a maid by the mistress. Because she worked very hard and had a good heart, she was soon the favorite of her mistress. That made the other maids jealous. They went to the mistress and said, "Do you know what Maria said?" "What did she say?" "She doesn't understand why you have so many maids, because she can clean all the dirty linen herself in one day." "Come, Maria," said the mistress, "you said that you can clean all the dirty linen in one day?" "No," said Maria, "I did not say that." "But the other maids said so and now you have to do it," said the mistress, "otherwise you have to go." Then she ordered all the washing to be carried to the river.

Poor Maria didn't know what to do. She went to the stones and cried. The same young man appeared and said, "What's the matter with you? Why do you cry?" And since she didn't answer, he said, "Well, don't worry about my mother's laundry. Go to the river and say to the birds, 'Birds of the whole world, come and help me.'" She did so, and when she said that, an enormous swarm of birds came and began to wash the linen, and in one minute everything was finished. By afternoon it was all dry. The mistress was very glad, and again was very pleased with Maria. But that only infuriated the other maids more, so they thought up another trick.

The mistress had an illness in her eyes. It was caused by her crying so much the day after her three sons went hunting, because they were bewitched and never returned. And the mother didn't know where they were. She called Maria and said the maids had told her that Maria could find the water that could cure her eyes. Maria denied it, but again the mistress said, "You have to do it or you must leave." So Maria went to the stones and the young man came out again and said, "Don't worry. Take a glass, go to the shore of the river and call out, 'Birds of the whole world, come and cry with me.' When they have all appeared, the last one will drop a little feather. Put it into the glass and touch the eyes of your mistress with it. Then she will be cured." Maria did so, and all the birds came and cried into the glass, and the last one dropped a feather, and with the tears of the birds and the feather she cured the eyes of her mistress.

But this wasn't enough. Again the maids slandered Maria and said she boasted that she could redeem the three sons of the mistress. So the mistress ordered her to do so. But the young man came out of the stones again and said, "I know our mother has ordered you to redeem us, but don't worry. Go to her and tell her to assemble all the girls from the surrounding countryside. Tell her they should come in a procession, each with a burning candle, and walk three times around the stones. But they must be very careful that none of their candles are blown out."

So Maria told the mistress, and all the girls of the surrounding neighborhood came, each with a burning candle, and made a circular procession around the stones three times. But when they went around the last time, a gust of wind came and blew out Maria's candle. She cried out in despair, "Alas! my candle went out!" At that moment the stones opened and the three brothers came out, and the youngest said to Maria, "Thank God you spoke. Now we are redeemed." Then the stones disappeared, and the young man told them that a wizard had bewitched them when they passed this place. He had turned them into carnations and said they could be redeemed only if the person who had burned the carnations would talk near the stones.

The mother and her sons were overjoyed and the youngest asked Maria if she would marry him. Since she loved him, she said yes. They married and were quite happy. And the maids no longer plotted against Maria but asked to be pardoned, and she pardoned them.

We have here a mistress and three sons. Also, we have a lot of maids and a black magician who like the troll in the Danish story has bewitched the three sons. We also have a peasant and his daughter.

On the one hand, then, we have a mother and three sons, but no father; and on the other hand we have a father and a daughter, but there the mother is missing. These two deficient groups

unite later; then you have the young group consisting of the three sons and the daughter, and the old couple. It is not said whether or not the mistress and the girl's father marry, but certainly the young group comes together, and the maids remain with them in the house as a kind of benevolent power.

The whole story centers on the interplay between the family of the peasant and his daughter, and that of the mother and her three sons. The mother and sons are apparently rich for she has all those maids. The peasant isn't explicitly described as being poor, but he is obviously not as wealthy as the mother.

Note that the daughter, the heroine, doesn't set out to perform heroic deeds. She is made to do them under pressure of the slandering housemaids. That is a motif more usual in a king's court. There are innumerable stories where the hero becomes a servant at the king's court, and then some jealous ministers or courtiers slander him, which makes the king order the hero to do his heroic deeds. So from the fact that it is generally a king's court where this happens, we can be fairly certain that this mistress-farmer and her three bewitched sons are socially above the peasant and his daughter.

Nevertheless, the setting of our story is entirely pastoral. Generally the farmer represents the milieu in which fairy tales were told and retold more than in any other part of the population. Farmers are, so to speak, the keepers of tradition; in agricultural communities there is a tendency to keep to old habits. Even our word "pagan" comes from the Latin *paganus*, which means simply "peasant," because the peasantry did not at first accept Christianity. It was in the towns that Christianity spread initially, while the peasant communities kept their previous forms of worship much longer. That is so throughout history. The peasant is the keeper of folk tradition.

In his everyday life, the peasant often represents simple common sense. You cannot be a peasant without having a lot of common sense. A peasant has both feet on the ground; he is usually not sentimental. He can't be because, for instance, he has to kill and butcher his own animals to survive. He has a kind of realistic attitude to his surroundings, and therefore we have many fairy tales where it is a peasant boy who comes to court and becomes the king through his deeds. And this peasant boy is generally characterized as being naive, forthright and realistic. He therefore compensates the refined cultural differentiation of the people at the king's court who have lost touch with their instincts.

The fact that peasants live with their families and their animals in a "community of fate" makes it important for them to be in the right contact with their instincts. A neurotic peasant is very quickly bankrupt.

In the peasant family here, what is lacking is the mother. The peasant has an only daughter and it is stressed that he loves her very much. But he is a very unusual peasant. He brings three carnations home and gives them to his daughter. That is a gesture which probably no peasant would ever do. You bring flowers once in a while your beloved, but not to your daughter, especially if you are a peasant. So it seems there is a very close, rather incestuous bond between

this father and daughter. If it were a personal story, we could say that the daughter is destined to develop a father complex.

We cannot look at this beginning set-up without taking into account the other family, the mistress with her three sons, for there it is the father who is absent and the boys are obviously "mother's boys" from all we hear about them later. So we have a split. There are two compensatory realms in the collective. Both are deficient, and only when they unite is the balance restored. To put it in general terms, the basic story line is to bring together two separate realms within the collective area of feeling and thinking.

The more dominant attitude is represented by the mistress and her three sons. She has the higher position and she dominates the proceedings in the second part of the story. Obviously, we have here a matriarchal order, with a mother who dominates her bewitched sons and all those maids, and who also takes the young girl into her clutches, half benevolently and half malevolently. She is good to the girl, but she listens to the mischievous maids and as a result gives her impossible tasks.

If we look at the social situation in Spain, as well as in Greece and Italy and the rest of the Mediterranean area, we find a strange set-up. In political life there is a conservative patriarchy. For instance, in Italy there was strong resistance against women behaving too independently or even studying at the university. The men reserve to themselves the area of the mind and of politics. But at home sits the great mother, and there she, or the grandmother, the *nonna*, rules completely. *Mama mia!* This is true to an even greater extent in Spain where the women do not even take the name of their husbands. They are still Señora So-and-so, using their maiden name first and then only do they add the husband's name. And they completely dominate home life. So this is a split situation. You have a patriarchal spirit in the public world but a matriarchal spirit in everything that refers to the home, the bringing-up of children, and generally material things and money. Matter and money are really in the pocket of the Señora and not of the husband, who is just allowed to work and bring it home.

The peasant gives his daughter those three carnations, one of which turns out to be her future bridegroom. We know that if those carnations are burned, the girl will have the difficult task of redeeming those three young men. Thus the father imposes on the girl, in a hidden form, an enormous challenge. Giving her those carnations looks like a gesture of love, but really it throws a difficult task at her feet. On the personal level we could say that the peasant is a man who has an inadequate relationship with the feminine. His wife is never mentioned; perhaps she is dead. So now the peasant has a claim, a projection, on his daughter, which takes the form of throwing carnations at her feet. In doing so he challenges her to make a relationship to the problems of the masculine.

We know from experience that when a daughter has a close positive tie to her father, this gives her an active spirituality and an aliveness of the mind, with mental and spiritual interests. As Jung pointed out, such women are not like others who do things only to please men. They really do these things on their own.

Here the heroine is faced with the problem of the weak father, and that is the usual problem in such a set-up. When the mother is dominant in a culture, then the fathers become weak, at least at home. They are "under the slipper" and generally develop incestuous fantasies toward their daughters because their wives won't allow them to look out the window. The only erotic fantasy they can spin is onto the daughters in their own home. And that conditions the daughter to pick up the father's problem, to have a question in her mind about the problem of the true man what a real man should be like and with that comes a desire to find some spiritual and mental interests.

At the very beginning of the story we are confronted with the fact of the three carnations. Carnations have been imported into Europe from the Near East for some two thousand years. And because the original varieties of carnations were all flesh colored rosy colored they are called carnations. That word comes from the Latin *carnis*, flesh. So, the carnation was the fleshlike or flesh-colored flower. There is a medieval legend that carnations appeared on earth when the Virgin Mary cried on the way to Calvary. At every place her tears fell, a carnation grew. Therefore, carnations are a symbol of mother's love, which is why in the United States carnations are given on Mother's Day.

In this fairy tale we also have the motif of a woman bereft at the loss of her sons. The mistress who has lost her sons is like the Virgin Mary on her way to Calvary. She is in tears; she has cried so much she has even ruined her eyes.

It is also interesting to note that our girl is called Maria. Not very often do the heroines in fairy tales have a name, but this one has, and naturally in a country like Spain the name Maria is collectively associated with the Virgin Mary. So, our heroine is like a human incarnation of the Virgin in her archetypal role, and therefore she is the one who has to restore the right ideas about femininity and love. In some dictionaries of flower symbolism, white carnations are said to be the symbol of pure and ardent love, and also a good luck gift to a woman. You know there are such rules, for you find them sometimes even in flower shops: different flowers have different meanings, and therefore if you want to buy flowers for someone, you may pick them according to what they mean. And white carnations especially mean pure and ardent love. Now, ardent means "burning"; the girl drops these carnations into the kitchen fire and they burn up, and with that action the whole story begins.

The fire, especially the fire in the kitchen, is akin to the alchemical fire. It is the fire of affect and emotion, but it is contained and used for the transformation of food. In alchemical symbolism, fire and cooking denote a continuous warm participation or interest, an emotional concentration on the process. But the alchemists say one should never make the fire too hot, because then one would burn up the lovers in the retort. One has to bring the lovers together with a moderate but constant fire. So, when the girl drops the carnations into the fire, it means that what was meant to be pure and ardent love now becomes passionate. Maria, therefore, must have an earthly passionate nature which is awakened by her father's attention. And, since she is alone, she is burned, so to speak, by love-passion. That is why she burns those flowers.

That's the first time the three young men appear and ask the strange questions, "What's the matter with you? What are you doing?" They don't say, "Please redeem me," or "Please do something for me." They say, "What's the matter with *you*? What are *you* doing?"

There are some reverse parallels where a hero comes into a paradise garden and picks some oranges or lemons (there are different variations). When he breaks them open, a girl comes out and says, "Give me bread and water!" And because he hasn't any bread and water ready, she says, "Okay, I'll return to my tree," and disappears. But the third time he breaks open those oranges or lemons, he has bread and water ready for the beautiful girl who comes out, and this time she remains human. Then he can marry her.

In these there's a question of having to provide the feminine with some bread. This would mean giving the feminine incarnation and some psychological concern. But in our fairy tale it is the other way around. The boys say, "What's the matter with you? What are you doing?" But we find out why they ask this question in the end it is because the girl has to speak. We don't know what would have happened if she had spoken earlier; a dialogue might have developed and the young men could have told her how to redeem them. But, because she never answers, the young men just disappear. Maria is not yet able to redeem them. She has to go on that long trip first.

We know that the more "burning" a problem becomes, the more we become inarticulate and silent. The more emotional we are, the more difficult it is to express what is the matter. You see this in word association experiments when a word touches off an emotionally-laden complex. People cannot answer, sometimes for two or three seconds or even longer. In extreme cases, behind the complete mutism of a catatonic schizophrenic you will often find an absolute *burning* fire of emotion which is so strong that that person can only lie rigidly in bed, unable to utter a single word. That is the extreme, but it is something we all experience to a lesser degree. The more we are hit, the less we are able to react.

So, the girl has a passionate, fiery nature, but she has no articulate mental capacities. Now, this is just the same problem that arises in a civilization where women are not allowed to study or develop their minds. It becomes most acute if they have a gift, if they are talented in a certain way, because they are prohibited from expressing their potential. So it remains bottled up in them as a huge emotion, which then surfaces in irritability, hysteria or silent, grudging ill temper. It is as though they have a fiery ball in their chest for which they have no use; and yet they cannot dispose of it.

This extreme irritability in a woman is in Jungian jargon generally interpreted as a symptom of animus possession. There is the verbalizer animus, who talks too much and talks a lot of nonsense, and then there are silent, ill-tempered animuses, a hard attitude behind which there is generally a very passionate nature which the woman cannot express.

Now, our girl cannot answer. She can't take up the dialogue, and therefore each young man says, "All right, you can find me near the stones of the whole world." We see later that far, far away, after she has gone on a long journey, the girl finds the stones "of the whole world." They are simply three high stones and "by chance" she lies down by them and comes into contact with the

bewitched young men again. The same expression, "of the whole world," is also mentioned in connection with the birds who help her in her task, so this expression, "of the whole world," must have some meaning.

It is a natural feature of the feminine, be it a woman or be it the anima in a man, to be personal. Eros is personal; it means relatedness, and one cannot relate into mid-air. Relatedness always means being related to something, to this or that. By "personal" I don't mean only from person to person; one can also have a personal relationship to one's cooking pot or to one's house or one's garden, etc. But it is the essence of femininity to give one's attention not to generalities but to concrete or personal things. And if a man has a developed anima, then he can do it too.

On the other hand, for the woman it belongs to the realm of the logos, or in her case, of the animus, to acquire some general, *impersonal* truths. In its beginning, raw form, you find that the animus says "always." Women in their animus rarely say, "This and this is so and so." They say "This and this is *always* so and so." In other words, the animus loves to generalize. That's where even he goes wrong when he talks about personal things in generalizations. But if we look at it positively, we can say this tendency to generalize signifies that the woman has begun to take an interest in broad spiritual values and truths. She has begun struggling to free herself from that totally feminine life where she has been confined to live in a small circle with her husband, children, cats, dogs, curtains and furniture, never looking further. We see, therefore, how much those two principles, eros and logos, need each other.

Maria had been cut off from such completeness, but through her father complex she is destined to find those things that belong to "the whole world," those things which would give her a wider horizon and an expansion of her personality beyond the merely personal. If one looks in on some homes in the Mediterranean area where the *nonna* or the Señora dominates the family, one finds that the ability to expand one's personality is just what is lacking. There is often a very warm, personal atmosphere among the members of the family, but one has the feeling one cannot breathe. Time stands still. There is a kind of conservative mental atmosphere that consists in the mother's or the grandmother's animus opinions, and that is that. In such cases and here in Maria's case, therefore, it is especially needed that the spirit of "the whole world" fantasy, creativity should be let in.

The young men always say, "You don't talk to me? All right, you can find me near the stones of the whole world." So Maria walks and walks. She seems to walk instinctively in the right direction because suddenly she finds a place where she sits down on the ground and begins to cry from fatigue and desperation. And that place where she sits down is just the very place where the three stones of the bewitched young men happen to be. And later, if you remember, it is mentioned that the young men passed here, and in this very same magic place they were bewitched by the wizard.

This is a strange circumstance: everything happens at a single specific spot. When the three young men hunted quite by chance at that spot, they became bewitched. The girl now sits down in despair quite "by chance" in that same place and they come into contact with each other. We

must therefore assume that this spot belongs in a special way to the wizard because it is there he waited for the young men in order to bewitch them.

The wizard is mentioned only once in the whole story. Like the girl in white in the Danish tale, he just whisks through and you never find out much about him. You don't know why this wizard bewitched the three sons; you don't know his reasons or anything else about him. He's just there; he functions to bewitch the young men and then he disappears. But in spite of his elusiveness, we have to go into this fact, just as we did with the white girl.

It is specifically said that the one who did the bewitching was a wizard, and therefore a masculine figure. We could assume he is like a negative father figure toward the young men. He certainly acts like one. In that case he would also be an "evil husband" of our mistress. Or, we can connect him with the peasant, the father of our heroine; then he would be the shadow of that loving father because, although he is a loving father, in a strange way he also imposes a difficult, deadly task on his daughter, so he can't be quite as loving as he seems. We could say the wizard is in a shadow relationship; he would be the dark father compared to the too naive peasant. And he is also the dark father of those sons.

Now it is not a matter of chance that we have a wizard and not a troll. In general, the evil figures in the Mediterranean cultures are either man-eating ogres or, much more frequently, black magicians and witches. The troll is more brutish, a nature figure without much refinement, while the wizard represents all that is meant by black magic. If you have read Apuleius' story of Amor and Psyche, you know how extensive a role black magic has played in the Mediterranean culture, probably since the Stone Ages. Even today, it still occupies the minds of simple people in those countries. The few Italians I have analyzed, to my great surprise have almost always dreamt of black magicians and occultist shadow figures. That seems to be a favorite form of the shadow in those countries. In other words, aggression and power do not manifest directly or brutally so much as through intrigue and witch work. I've seen many dreams where such figures are summoned by a black pope who turns out to be an occult black magician, like a shadow figure of the white pope.

During the Nazi era, Mussolini was pressed by Hitler to persecute the Jews in his country as much as they were persecuted in Germany, but this was simply not done. It was carried out to a certain extent due to pressure from above, but the people never quite joined in. So, one could say that this absolutely cold brutality of the shadow as it manifested in Germany didn't break through in Italy. On the other hand, the shadow in the Mediterranean countries plays its tricks mostly in the form of political intrigue and corruption not so much open aggression as sly, corrupting intrigue. I mean that not as a value judgment; it's simply that different nations have different types or styles of the shadow. Whether one prefers the one or the other is a question of personal taste. They're both black. But you see from the dreams of black magicians as black popes that they represent a shadow of the ruling collective attitude.

The twentieth-century ruling Weltanschauung in Mediterranean countries is still Catholicism. And the black occultist wizard would be its shadow, which naturally also contains all the suppressed pagan religious elements, just as the troll represents the suppressed form of pagan

elements in Scandinavia. We can therefore say that if the masculine principle is repressed at home and tires itself out mentally with political intrigue, and if it repeats old cultural patterns in a rigid way, then all creative fantasy drops into the realm of the shadow and takes on these features of destructive black magic. What is mostly lacking and what has been suppressed by the organized religions of these countries is individual fantasy. As Jung put it, individual symbol formation has been suppressed by the Church and replaced by officially recognized symbolism. So any need of the psyche for individual symbol formation has fallen into the realm of the shadow and flourishes there, in the form of black magic.

And that has now stopped the sons. It has cut them off from life and petrified them. What this means is that the whole future of the masculine principle literally has been petrified.

Jung said that the unconscious psyche of people in the Catholic Church was contained in its rich symbolism, and therefore the people were protected against certain evil influences from the unconscious. This is true, but you must remember that in our tales we have the compensatory dreams of the community. In other words, we rarely find pointed out what is positive, but only what is problematic. Our fairy tale therefore brings up the problem of the danger of suppressing the creative building of individual symbolism. If an individual happens to have a rich capacity for symbolic creativity which remains unexpressed, then it can fall into the unconscious, and in that case arises this situation of the black magician, who then hampers any further development.

Ogres are a more international family of evil beings. They are not localized in the Mediterranean, but they do appear there, and they generally illustrate or symbolize the devouring quality any archetypal unconscious complex has. You see, one can be eaten by a passion, an idea or a fantasy. All powerful but unrecognized contents of the unconscious have a tendency to eat us, in the sense of possessing us. Ogres express this general quality of all contents of the unconscious. They aren't as localized as the black magicians who seem to frequent the Mediterranean countries. Although black magicians usually come to replace all other nature demons, the eating ogres remain.

The youngest son tells Maria that now she should go to a certain farmhouse, which turns out to be the home of his mother, and to apply to work there as a maid. She does this, and becomes a servant.

The motif of the hero or heroine serving for a while is common in folk tales. Even Hercules, who was not at all the servant type, was a servant of Eurystheus for some time. This motif has to do with the fact that the heroes or heroines must prove themselves. One can be pretty sure that, when some new psychological or spiritual movement turns up, claiming to improve the world and put everything right, that it is just nonsense. All cultural renewals that have been valuable in history claimed to be able to change the world, but they did not get started by overthrowing the outer order. Buddhism did not overthrow any of the former religions or political systems. Christianity did not, at least at first, concentrate on overthrowing the system of the Roman Empire. They all kept their values hidden, for they had something more important to do than to fight with the established order. It is more important to build up the spirit of the future than to

destroy what has value in the ruling order. And therefore it is typical for heroes and heroines to prove their value for a while by serving the existing principle.

In our story this is the matriarchal order, as represented by the mistress. Maria has grown up without a mother, so she must be quite unconscious of the positive and negative values of the maternal archetype. So now she has to become involved with it. She has to fall under its dominance and have it out, so to speak, with the mother principle before she can proceed. This also seems to confirm my suspicion that the wizard who destroyed the sons is not entirely unconnected to this mistress-mother. They must be connected somehow, for Maria is not told directly to destroy the wizard and redeem the sons that way. Instead, she is told to go to the mother and suffer all sorts of difficulties with her in order to redeem the sons. I think the wizard had not a little to do with the mistress's hidden spirit or animus, in the background.

Now we must look at the motif of the maids slandering Maria by telling the mistress she can do things supernatural things which actually she can't do at all. These maids induced the mistress to order Maria to do them. It is as if Maria hadn't enough incentive or wouldn't know enough to engage her own spirit in the task. She has to be forced into it. We see this motif just as frequently in stories of male heroes, as noted earlier, where the jealous men in the court, for instance, make the king order the hero to do impossible tasks. It also occurs repeatedly in mythology, where the hero becomes a hero only against his own will. He wouldn't have become a hero if he hadn't been forced to by dire necessity. Think of Heracles: he would never have become Hercules if Hera hadn't pursued him all his life. That's why his name means "the glory of Hera." It was by the pressure of his unrelenting enemy, the mother goddess Hera, that Hercules performed all his heroic acts.

That is perhaps the decisive essence of the true hero: that he doesn't have the ambition to achieve anything great by himself, that he has only the wish to be true to himself and to his feelings, and that then, through a clash with the world or with other antagonizing forces, the goal is brought out. It is always useful to look at how people behave in an impossible situation, because that is where their true nature comes out. That is where one sees if the person has substance or has none. And therefore, the true hero is most frequently a person forced into great achievements by fate.

This doesn't contradict the fact that one might have a feeling of vocation or a specific goal, but it's the circumstances that bring out one's capacities. For instance, Winston Churchill knew all during his youth that one day he would have to do some heroic task for his country. That's why he exposed himself to danger in the Battle of Omduram and other places; it was not because he felt so courageous, but because he knew he wouldn't die yet. And that gave him the confidence to risk his life. But when they offered him the position of prime minister in the midst of the most desperate days of the war, apparently he knew at that moment: "This is it, this is why my life has been spared until now. Now I have to prove myself." It was the circumstances that induced him to bring forth his best capacities. He did not try to do this work on his own initiative he didn't even like it, except, perhaps, in a deeper way because he finally had the feeling, "Now I am in the place where I have to show who I am and achieve what my life was meant for."

Now the slandering maids tell the mistress first that Maria can wash a tremendous amount of dirty linen in the river, but naturally she can't do it. It is the birds "of the whole world" who help her.

Dirty linen is a kind of shadowy dirt, the dirt we produce every day. Part of the dirt in our linen we produce ourselves by sweating and other excretions. And part of the dirt in our linen is what we pick up from our surroundings. So the dirt in our linen represents our animal side and also the shadow we pick up through social contact with other people. We are constantly becoming impure, so to speak, through interaction with our surroundings.

In German, we say we have to "wash dirty linen" if we have quarreled and now have to have it out with the other person. We say, "I said . . ." "No, you said . . ." "Yes, but I meant it differently; you misunderstood, I meant it *that* way! And it's *not* true that I said . . ." and so on. That's what we call "washing dirty linen," and generally we never really get to the end of it.

It is often the hero's task to wash away all this petty, mischievous shadow-dirt that estranges people from one another: little egoisms, the silly projections and so on that infect all communities and all relationships all the time. People think they can actually clear these matters up by the "I said . . ." "You said . . ." kinds of confrontation. People want passionately to wash their dirty linen that way. But it doesn't work. Our story shows a better way, namely that you have to call the birds of the whole world to help. And birds, of all things! The idea of birds washing linen with their claws or beaks is really a strange picture! But the birds do it, and they not only get it clean but they even manage to get it dried in a single afternoon.

In hexagram 16 of the *I Ching*, called "Enthusiasm," it says that there can be no great achievements in a community unless a great uniting feeling or idea brings the people together.²⁸ Because it is a Chinese paradigm, it goes on to say that in musical or theatrical performances, the Chinese meet in their ancestral cult and that cleans away all pettiness. It activates their feeling on a higher level. It gives them a new, enthusiastic sense of the meaning of life, and that washes away all the petty negative projections human beings have on each other.

I have seen that myself again and again that it is useful to show someone the animus or the shadow or some other complex, to have it out in "washing dirty linen," but it is very often best just to help people to find the essential meaning of their lives, what they are there for. When they become interested in that, they completely lose interest in petty nonsense. When the main water of life in a human being is flowing again, when there is, for instance, some meaningful creative interest, then one no longer has time to spend hours on the phone to one's sister or brother or a friend to complain that she or he has been wrong. One just hasn't the time, and therefore one is much more inclined to think, "Oh well, let it be. Never mind. It may be my fault, so let's make peace." Because life is flowing again. When one finds the essential meaning of one's life, this has a purifying effect upon one's "dirty linen" affairs.

So now we can understand why it is birds that help Maria: birds represent fantasies, and obviously here they represent creative fantasies. In our story, Maria's creative symbol-forming

fantasies are precisely what have been blocked. So, with the help of those birds, Maria can finish off all the nonsense that has accumulated through the stagnation of her life.

But the maids are not satisfied, so they next induce the mistress to order Maria to obtain healing water for her eyes. She has cried so much, remember, that she has ruined her eyes. Again Maria has to go to the river to the essential flow of life and there she has to call out, "Birds of the whole world, cry with me." She collects those tears in a glass and with the tears and the feather which she puts into the water of the tears, she heals the eyes of her mistress.

In mythology, tears are often supposed to have a redeeming and healing effect. If you have ever dealt with people who have become petrified by suffering, you know how redeeming it is if they can cry. Once a person reaches a certain climax of suffering, very often he or she cannot cry or break down anymore. They simply harden in horror. And then there is danger ahead.

I once read of an American psychiatrist who investigated the reactions of people who had been hospitalized in England after being taken out of bombed houses. Often those people themselves were not badly hurt, but as soon as they came back to consciousness, one had to tell them that their husband or their children or their whole family had been killed or crippled and so on. And this heartless psychiatrist I still can't understand how that man could do such a thing simply watched the reactions of these unfortunate people and found that most of them broke down within three days. They either broke down crying at once, or they reacted by turning white and horrified, but sooner or later, within three days, they broke down and cried.

The psychiatrist visited these people again after ten years, and though they were still often very depressed or grieving, none of them had any serious neurotic problems. But there were a few individuals who did not break down and cry, who petrified in horror and stayed that way. They simply said, "Yes, thank you for telling me." The others did this sometimes too at first, but some never came out of their first petrified reaction. They never cried. And when the psychiatrist visited those people after ten years, he found what you could call a serious war psychosis, a serious trauma.

From that you see how tears and crying are a healing reaction. Tears are necessary for the realization of one's pain, and they seem to have this natural function of melting the petrifying shock effects. They melt them and bring us back into the human realm.

Tears also have an induction effect on our surroundings. When we cry, this is an appeal for help and those around us react with feeling. Perhaps the origin of this characteristic response to crying comes from those many appeals for help that you find in the animal realm. There are certain cries among wild dogs and apes and so on that function purely to make the surrounding tribe turn toward the animal in distress. They are a call for help. And tears in humans probably have that function too, so they both heal us and bring us into touch with others. One is more or less accustomed to young children howling at the top of their lungs for all sorts of things that we don't think so terribly bad. But if an adult breaks down in front of us and cries, it is always terribly moving, and one feels very upset. I always feel *awful*. I think, "Oh my God, I should now show my feeling, but *how?*" One feels at such times that no words, no reasonable talk, will help.

Only a human gesture from one human being to another will help. Crying has this immediate appeal.

Now we know that the sons in our story are petrified *literally* petrified, not just bewitched into animals or other things. And the mother, like the Greek Niobe, is bereft at the loss of her children and has cried her eyes out. To "cry one's eyes out" means that one has cried so much that one cannot cry any more. One is then in a state of resigned deadness. The mistress therefore needs the compassion of the birds, the compassionate, understanding fantasy only Maria can call up. If we have no imagination, we have no empathy, because generally our suffering is not the same as another's. But, generally, we do understand the suffering of others even when we have not had the same experience. We have an imaginative fantasy which enables us to empathize, and it is essential that this be called forth, for it can heal the eyes.

In alchemy, the magical water from which the Philosophers' Stone is made called the mercurius, the permanent immortal water, and by many other names refers to the *prima materia*. In psychological language, the *prima materia* would be the vitality of the unconscious psyche. One of its names is *collyrium philosophorum*, the "eye water" of the philosophers. Mercurius is the eye water of the philosophers. If you put it on your eyes, your eyes will open to a new sight. There are many texts praising this alchemical substance.

Now, Maria can also constellate the right type of understanding. She can call forth certain fantasies that enable her to understand her mistress and thus heal her. There are many alchemical stories where the alchemist is searching for the phoenix; the famous Michael Maier, for example, only catches a feather, but even with this one feather he can work miracles and heal people.

In fact, the feather of the miraculous bird that lives at the end of the world is a motif in alchemy that spread quite far into European folklore. You even find German fairy tales where the feather of the phoenix has to be found. These are borrowed directly from alchemical symbolism. 29

Maria is instructed to use a single feather instead of the whole bird. This means the feather is *pars pro toto*, a part in place of the whole thing, but it also means she only has a hunch or an intuition not the whole idea. If you have only a feather of the phoenix, it means you haven't grasped the psychological mystery that is expressed by the symbol of the whole bird. You have only *one* aspect, one hunch about it. But even that is infinitely healing, and so here Maria has at least a partial understanding of her mistress. She worked as a servant to the mother, a position she had not held previously, and has now forged a relationship to her.

Now, the last task becomes the redemption of the mistress's three sons. This time, all the girls of the surrounding villages have to come with burning candles, to form a procession and walk three times around the stones. No candle can be allowed to blow out before this has been achieved.

Here again we have a large group of females, like the evil maids. We don't know how many there are in either group, but obviously they function in a compensatory way. Maria not only gathers the birds of the whole world, she also gathers all the feminine forces available in the collective. They have to come together and concentrate for this big, final action: not only the birds, which

are the creative fantasy in the unconscious, but the whole feminine in its human reality in the unconscious or the collective has to be assembled in a procession. The procession has to go three times around the stones. That is the famous *circulatio*; in all religions of the world this action has a magical effect by concentrating all the forces of the psyche onto one point.

The burning candles in this context are obviously related to a Catholic viewpoint. They represent the little light everyone has to carry in order to contribute to the solution of the problem. Processions are not an invention of the Catholic Church. There were already processions in the antique mystery cults, in the Egyptian religion and in many other religions all over the world. Generally they are connected with the idea of renewal and the aim of including all the people in the religious act. In Egypt, at the great Sed festival, the king left the palace and the people carried behind him his fourteen *kas* in the form of flags. He moved to the temple, and there he went through a kind of ritual death and renewal. That procession was meant to renew the spiritual life of the whole country. Also, the Egyptians carried their statues in procession to the Nile and washed them there, and by that renewed them.

In all religions, the gods live in sacred groves or temples, and there they tend to become a bit segregated, just as the king in his palace becomes segregated. The gods are in those temples, and one goes to visit them from time to time with a sacrifice. Otherwise one tends to fall apart, and that's why these great powers are brought out among the people from time to time. That is an archetypal motif. Even kings must move from time to time; by that they become *moving* moving in the psychological sense of the word. Otherwise the people are no longer moved by their king and what he symbolizes.

Processions in Catholicism also have to do with redistributing a blessing to all the sacred stations where the procession stops. At these places the people say certain prayers and decorate their statues, for example crucifixes or statues of the Virgin Mary. Even the sacred Host is carried in the tabernacle through the streets at such times, while normally it is kept most carefully hidden in the church.

Being in procession means to move. It also symbolizes the idea that the archetypes of the collective unconscious are not static. They are in constant movement from one place to another. That is symbolically expressed in the idea of the procession. So, since petrification is what has to be healed in this case, procession would be essentially the counter-magic, the way needed to bring the movement of life back.

Now, as the procession goes round the three stones, with all the girls carrying their candles, a gust of wind comes and blows out Maria's candle. "Alas!" she cries, "my candle went out!" And immediately the stones open. The three young men come out and say, "Thank God you spoke. Now we are redeemed" because that was the condition: the person who had burned the three carnations had to talk near the stones.

This is a strange and puzzling motif. Ordinarily one would suppose that the ritual of circumambulation with holy or blessed candles would be sufficient in itself to bring the cursed sons back to life. Here, on the contrary, it is the fact that the ritual has gone wrong that is the

redeeming factor. We must therefore look for parallels. I have not found any other tales where a mistake in the prescribed ritual is the redeeming factor, but I did find one where holy candles have a negative aspect. There is a northern German fairy tale which in English is called "The Three Black Princesses."³⁰ In this story, a young man is sold to the devil by his father.

The devil takes him away to Hell, but on the way he escapes and goes into a deep dark forest. In it he finds a castle that is entirely hung over with black curtains. When he enters, he finds three completely pitch-black princesses sitting there. They tell him they have been cursed, and the only way he can redeem them is to stay with them for three years without talking. He swears to do that, but after awhile he misses his mother and decides to go home for a short time. The princesses are greatly distressed because they fear it will be dangerous for the young man to visit his mother. In fact, when he tells his mother what he has been doing she says it is an uncanny business, that he ought to take holy water and candles, sprinkle holy water on them and put some candle light on them.

He returns to the princesses and follows his mother's advice, but the moment he drops the water on them, the upper part of their bodies turns white while the lower part remains black, and they cry out, "You accursed dog, our blood shall cry for vengeance on you! . . . We have still three brothers who are bound by seven chains they shall tear you to pieces!" Then the young man hears a thundering noise. He manages to jump out the window just before the whole castle collapses, but he breaks his leg and becomes a cripple.

There you see that the use of holy candles to chase away demons in an exorcising ritual has a negative effect. We can guess why: it is because the hero's mother advised it. The mother wanted to prevent her son from redeeming the feminine principle, and to do so she misused a sacred object of the Church. We could say her animus misused the means of the Church for her own egocentric purpose. The young man acts out of his mother complex, and on account of that the exorcism goes wrong.

It happens quite frequently that when one misuses a religious ritual it has a destructive effect, working as a kind of black magic. I remember, for instance, a young girl who had a very negative mother complex. Her mother was a real dragon, very destructive. The girl's early childhood dream was that she was lying in bed when suddenly she heard her mother moving about in the next room, so she went and peeped through the door. She saw a black man approaching her mother. But the mother, who was terribly pious, had a Bible nearby which she read every evening. It was black with a golden cross. The mother took this Bible and held it up against the black man, and the black man fled. The girl woke up sweating with terror, but not because she was afraid of the black man; rather, she was terrified at having seen her mother do that magical action.

According to this dream, the mother had an absolutely hellish animus and a suicidal tendency. She told her children repeatedly, "Oh, I wish I hadn't married and that you didn't exist." So you can imagine what a mother she was!

You could say that the mother was in a close connection with the devil. She was constantly threatened by the greatest destructiveness, and she used her so-called piety to ward off her evil animus. But in fact, she really served the evil animus with piety. She even used the Bible and her pious side in order to have commerce with the devil. And the dream of that young girl, who was only about three years old at the time, tried to show her what was going on in the unconscious background of her mother.

What is important for us to note is that here too we have a magical gesture that makes use of a positive religious symbol, but which is used for the wrong purpose. Therefore it has a terrifying and destructive effect. There is a Chinese saying that captures this point: "The right means in the hands of the wrong man work in the wrong way, just as the wrong means in the hands of the right man work in the right way." It also shows us that the Christian teaching and the Christian Weltanschauung, and in our case the Christian ritual, can be misused for egocentric ends, or in order to avoid an inner conflict. Then it is exactly the same thing as using black magic. We can therefore assume that in our fairy tale the religious ritual of the procession and the circumambulation of the stones with the candles, which is a purely Christian ritual, is negative. Hence the gust of wind that puts out the candle is the redeeming thing.

Now, the wind is a form of manifestation of the Holy Ghost. If you remember, the Holy Ghost came down at Whitsun in the form of a wind filling the whole room, and then there were flames on the heads of the Apostles. This is a continuation of the concept of the *Ruach-Yahweh*, the spirit of God, and was identified also with the spirit of God hovering over the waters in Genesis 1. **31** We must therefore ask ourselves, "What is the difference between the candlelight and the wind?"

Obviously, candlelight has to do with consciousness. In general, when candles are carried by people, or when you put a candle on the grave of a dead person as one still does in many Catholic countries, it represents the light of individual consciousness of that person, as though one were saying, "May that person keep his or her light in the darkness of death." That is what this gesture expresses. And when you carry a candle in the church, you offer to God your effort toward personal individual consciousness, the small light you carry through the darkness of the world.

The wind, on the contrary, has more to do with inspiration, with being emotionally gripped by the spirit. The word "inspiration" comes from the Latin *spirare*, "to breathe." It is not so much a phenomenon of concentrated consciousness as of being moved by the spirit, swept up by some content from the unconscious, gripped by a religious experience. The wind comes from the unconscious and in certain situations can even temporarily put out the light of consciousness.

Now, finally, we come closer to an explanation of the petrification of the three young men. In the collective conscious situation that is compensated by this fairy tale, the Christian Church ritual had become a spiritless affair, a kind of mechanical magic. That is the danger of all rituals carried out with concrete gestures and prescribed prayers: they become lifeless and repetitive affairs to which one attributes a magical effect. And then one begins to use them thoughtlessly to protect oneself against the unconscious.

Jung often pointed out that the ritual of the Church serves to protect one against the immediate impact of meeting the collective unconscious and its potential dangers. But though this is often positive, it can also be negative. Whenever the ritual becomes an autonomous, habitual action that is thoughtlessly applied, contact with the unconscious is broken off too much; then it becomes a purely formal, mechanical affair. It becomes antireligious, in a sense. It prevents one from being immediately gripped by a religious experience. It literally cuts the Holy Ghost out of the Church.

We saw earlier that the wizard, who bewitched and cursed the three young men into stones, was a black magic occult master, a counter-pope, a shadow figure of the ruling conscious attitude. We can now see how that works. It is the dark, shadow side of the Christian attitude that has led to this petrification: ritualization that no longer has any spiritual meaning and which cuts one off from the experience of the unconscious instead of making a bridge to it. That is why, when the wind *puts out* the candle, we find the redeeming factor. There is a moment of darkness, so to speak a hole in the ritual through which a manifestation of the divine can break in. Generally, when one circumambulates in a religious ritual, one is very careful to prevent the formation of such holes, for the assumption is that through them the devil may break in. But here it is God or the Holy Ghost who wants to break in and who has been excluded by the ritual. This is what makes Maria speak, to cry out in despair.

There is a great temptation, when one is "contained" in the framework of an institutionalized religion, to become thoughtless, to accept "truths" from religious leaders, while contenting oneself in everyday life to simply making the appropriate gestures. One no longer searches and suffers personally from religious problems, for these have been settled long ago by other people; one has page_92 Page 93 only to believe what one is told. In this way one can suppress an enormous amount of suffering, because when asking searching questions about God or the meaning of life, one inevitably gets into deep waters and profound suffering. That's why people repress these questions and, as the German proverb says, "Gott einen guten Mann sein lassen" leave God to be a good man. They leave him alone and they do not ask the burning questions of who He is and how we, the single individuals of the human race, might connect with Him.

Maria's candle went out, and its going out was for her a call, indicating that she was meant to suffer, to go through agony and despair. And through this suffering she would come to a new light, a new conscious attitude. Her psychological suffering redeems the three cursed sons.

Now the mother and her sons are happy. Maria marries the youngest son because she loves him, and she pardons the maids who slandered her because they ask her to. This is the union of opposites, a common solution in fairy tales: the coming together of conscious and unconscious. The dark side of the psyche and the light side are united, and even the dark side is to a certain extent integrated, since the evil maids are not punished.

As in all fairy tales, there *is* a solution, but it is not quite perfect. And as in many others, one feels at first that it is a wonderful solution. But then one begins to be puzzled by it. We were puzzled about the solution in the last fairy tale, and now here, because nothing has happened with the evil wizard! In fact, the end of this fairy tale is even a bit more superficial than the ending of our

Danish troll story, because there, at least, the troll is killed and the people he had cursed were redeemed with his blood. But here the wizard, who never appears but is only mentioned, stays discreetly in the background; we can expect, therefore, that he will show his hand again on the next propitious occasion.

In other words, there is a reconnection of the ritual religious attitude with certain aspects of personal emotion and individual inspiration, but the problem of evil is in no way solved or even addressed. It is only skimmed on the surface. This deep problem is never really resolved, as is shown by the pardoning of the evil maids. I would not be surprised if they got into mischief again.

This situation corresponds historically to the Franciscan reformation of the Catholic Church. The Church at the time of St. Francis of Assisi had been in great danger of completely degenerating into pure formalism, secretly overwhelmed by black magic and power drives. It was reformed and purified in the Franciscan Orders: the connection with Holy Ghost inspiration and immediate religious experience was revived. But here, too, the problem of evil was not really touched. The Franciscans put the soul back into the Church, so to speak, but page_93 Page 94 they still ignored the problem of evil. They only skimmed over the surface.

Movements such as this take place again and again, and I do not mean to disparage them. "The Three Carnations" does show a tremendously positive compensatory development to the existing collective consciousness. Yet there is always that "But . . ." which we must never overlook.

27MDW, *Spanische und Portugiesische Märchen*, no. 5 (Jena: Diederichs, 1940).

28 *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, trans. Richard Wilhelm, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes (Bollingen Series XIX; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 67ff.

29 See *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, CW 14, chap. 3d, "The Fourth of the Three."

30 *The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*, p. 620.

31 [See Rivkah Schärf Kluger, *Psyche in Scripture: The Idea of the Chosen People and Other Essays* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1995), pp. 36ff. Ed.]

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