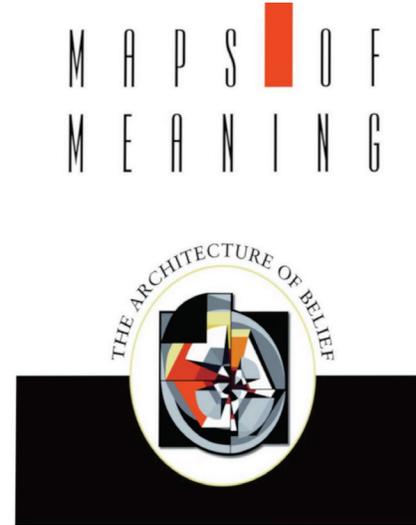


notes on Maps of Meaning



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i. wisdom, an abstraction of common sense

wisdom need not surprise us. his theory is the Story of all stories - of course it's familiar.

truths we've always known, our adaptive action: formalized in ritual, woven into narrative.

as summa of the hero myth, his book is a heroic feat, itself. his book performs the very role he gives to Myth - all the truths of action, of "motoric exploration", abstracted up the hierarchy.

he's thought his way to the apex of meaning, & down to its somatic origins.

ii. he says he's no poet

i'm sceptic, at first, of his style.

of his discipline's vocabulary: 'cognitive model' - i doubt this could ever yield wisdom, be wielded precisely.

yet all these words i've thrown around in lecture that he's plausibly sharpened. **meaning** is "implication for action"¹. **value** is "impact on affect"². **the Hero** is "the most universally applicable behavioral pattern"³.

and **consciousness**:

We attend, involuntarily, to those things that occur contrary to our predictions—that occur despite our desires, as expressed in expectation. That involuntary attention comprises a large part of what we refer to when we say “consciousness.”⁴

he says he's no poet, but his prose is lucid, virtuous. i hear the man whose Overvoice - an older Voice, a bored admonishing - trained him to the truth.

he says he's no poet, yet his book implies a theory of the Epic verse. it opens with a young man's dreams, some lines unattributed.

he says he's no poet, but his scholar's sum of Kali, of the Great & Terrible Mother, has incantatory power.⁵

¹ p 3

² p 4

³ p 181

⁴ p 21

⁵ p 164

iii. the center of his Church

he's center of a church, now, as prophesied: whose gospel is the sacred self, the centered individual.

his dream of a cathedral, realized - a dream he tried to wake from. the elevated center was his cross to bear.

the center isn't Peterson: it's spread among the congregation. the center is wherever there's a locus of experience, is each of us.⁶

another dream, he's come before the risen kings, a churchyard full of all the restive fathers, with a pacifying ritual:

*If all the great kings would bow, voluntarily, to the figure of the hero,
there would be no more reason for war⁷*

he may be somewhat narcissist - who isn't? he's also a reluctant star, a hero with a Marduk's hesitation.

the Hero's discovery of "a new manner of dealing with . . . an emergent unknown . . . demands to be given; compels communication"⁸.

⁶ **Interfaces Brasil / Canadá** [v.17, n.1, 2017] pp 200-218

⁷ p 179

⁸ p 179

the Terrible Mother long has used "erotic pleasure as bait to keep the world alive and breeding"⁹. the Father, too, could spread his Word by the social rewards of speaking well, the pulpit's status.

*You don't believe that.
That isn't true.*

the younger man's Overvoice trained him to the truth, to his convictions.

Which part, precisely, was me—the talking part or the criticizing part? If it was the talking part, then what was the criticizing part? If it was the criticizing part—well, then: how could virtually everything I said be untrue? In my ignorance and confusion, I decided to experiment. I tried only to say things that my internal reviewer would pass unchallenged. This meant that I really had to listen to what I was saying, that I spoke much less often, and that I would frequently stop, midway through a sentence, feel embarrassed, and reformulate my thoughts. I soon noticed that I felt much less agitated and more confident when I only said things that the “voice” did not object to. This came as a definite relief.¹⁰

I *am* this second Voice, he decides. so self-identified, the admonishings fade - and who shall now restrain his speech on the trending crises, on every issue, global or intimate, lobbed at him in Q&A?

bereft of answers, the youth had been gifted a Problem. his Problem solved, the terrain well-mapped, the Prof is released from his questions.

research lab & lecture hall draw within them lovers of truth. also those who love **being right**. loves hard to extricate, in social beings.

⁹ p 164

¹⁰ Preface

the love of **truth** > of **being right** > of **seeming right**, of scoring points - a declension of Philosophy to status game, the parody Academy.

a pull we're all susceptible to: the social gains of speaking well. pleasure when your utterance is amplified, confirmed in applause.

that early voice, the troubled dreamer's Overvoice, trained him like a lab rat: with pain. pain should he diverge from his convictions. pain for all he said undeserving of assent.

does the pain still restrain him? or is it outweighed by the social pleasures supersized, intensified? the response-arc tightened, quantified by ticket sales and tweet-count?

iv. ontic / epistemic

The domain of the unfamiliar might be considered the ultimate source of all things, since we generate all of our determinate knowledge as a consequence of exploring what we do not understand. Equally, however, the process of exploration must be regarded as seminal, since nothing familiar can be generated from the unpredictable in the absence of exploratory action and conception. The domain of the known—created in the process of exploration—is the familiar world, firm ground, separated from the maternal sea of chaos. These three domains comprise the fundamental building blocks of the archaic world of myth¹¹

order from chaos is the primal process. is it "merely" epistemic? or prior to psychology, pre-biologic?

order from chaos: does this include the origins of Physical law?

i hesitate to call him a reductionist. yet Logos is "equivalent to the process of consciousness". and what it makes is recent & local, it

initiates human experience and historical activity (which is reality itself, for all intents and purposes).¹²

¹¹ p 109

¹² p 292

his God is mix of subject & object: the object plus its motivational valence - for us.
his elder gods are super-persons,

embodiments of the archaic transpersonal intrapsychic phenomena that give rise to human motivation, as well as those aspects of the objective world that activate those intrapsychic systems.¹³

the gods made our world, he says - with stress on *our*. i hesitate to call his gods psychologic "reductions" - his psychology is profound. yet his gods have no life outside our own. they're "a domain of phenomena with similar implications for behavioral output, or for affect".¹⁴

thus must he bracket them in caution-quotes. they're

the manifestation of a primeval "independent" personality—the unified "embodiment" in ritual or imagination of some set of phenomena united by their affective or functional equivalence.¹⁵

they're woven deep into our species' history, but aren't prior, cosmically. to expect such priority misconstrues them:

From the standard perspective, objective things exist, in and of themselves. But this viewpoint eliminates the necessity of the observer, who gives to all things a necessary vantage point, reducing indefinable virtuality to extant actuality. Myth makes no such mistake, equating the very presence of being and becoming with the emergence of consciousness and self-consciousness. It is this equation that allows the mythic imagination to place man at the center of the universe, and to draw an analogy between the principle that makes order out of chaos, and the individual himself.¹⁶

ontology is psychologic - necessarily. Being is perspectival, the observer "gives to all things a necessary vantage point, reducing indefinable virtuality to extant

¹³ p 113

¹⁴ p 9

¹⁵ p 159

¹⁶ p 294

actuality."¹⁷ the Myth understands this, that "consciousness is allied with the very creator of things"¹⁸.

we might agree, then suggest: the cosmos of a hundred billion galaxies, of fourteen billion years, is the perspectival feat of Deity.

Psyche may precede us, vastly. i don't just mean it's wider in our biosphere, older in phylogeny. the dawn of human consciousness, our mental separation of the thing from self and thing from thing - this may be the Logos only locally. mimesis of a process that our Physics tells objectively, the dispersion of matter/energy from a primordial bound state.

¹⁷ p 294

¹⁸ p 295

v. his book as personal prophecy

he says he's no poet but he's some kind of prophet. the Gnome's Tale compells me, predicts an evil version of my last ten years.

he says he's no poet but the first thing he wrote was poetry.¹⁹

Philosophy, too, begins in a poem, in the prophecy-dream of Parmenides.

The Purana includes an introduction in Book 1 that describes its own creation.²⁰

archetype map, a decent name for prophecy: of what has been, shall always be.

prophecy, this book has been, for its author.

of **what has been**: his truths are earned, in a young man's year of agonies.

of **what shall be**: a professor's trajectory. he'll venture from his class & office, out onto the steps above St. George. he'll take his stand "with the creative Word in the face of death, and despite group pressure to conform."²¹

¹⁹ at the end of his undergrad studies, after applying to Montreal for Clinical Psychology. **Interfaces Brasil / Canadá** [v.17, n.1, 2017] pp 200-218

²⁰ Wikipedia: Bhāgavata Purāna

²¹ Preface

by the "Sumerian solution" to the question of politics - Who shall rule? - he's centered in his pulpit, now.

a harmonious community or way of life, predictable and stable in structure and function, is unexpectedly threatened by the emergence of (previously harnessed) unknown and dangerous forces. An individual of humble and princely origins rises, by free choice, to counter this threat. This individual is exposed to great personal trials and risks or experiences physical and psychological dissolution. Nonetheless, he overcomes the threat, is magically restored (frequently improved) and receives a great reward, in consequence.²²

of humble & princely origins: he always was the small one, from smalltown Alberta with his funny accent. surely this occurred to him, while writing.

& clues, perhaps: in family physiognomy, anagrams in home address, that showed his hidden royalty.

he's on a tour of mid-size halls, moving thru the Unexplored. his R.V. tour is the **motor output** of his Discovery.

he imitates the Father. erupts in archetype uniforms. the cape is given by the patriarchs of Portugal, keepers of the Sacrifice. the tall leather boots are for calling out on TVO the enemies of the Rodeo.

with the Dragon's many heads he's long contended: with campus PostModernism, Relativism; the hierarchy-resenting Marxism. with our students' mindless Scientism, a smug & easy atheism.

his weapon is the holy Word - his theory of the Myth itself. he brings them a forgotten tale, the very one he manifests: a Hero's Progress.

the Father, too has many heads. Jung, too, is a Father he's rescued. he's brought him into day from the dungeon the Academy consigned him to.

his book is personal prophecy: he'd agree, for it's his thesis. we imitate a pattern, it predicts us.

the hero seems to enter us, select us. we've fed him with our energies for so long, we've raised him to autonomy - so thru us he may incarnate, enter from a transhistoric, super-personal realm.

vi. synchronicity

Jung's definition is **a meaningful coincidence, by an acausal connection.**

the ones we can't reduce to confirmation bias, to our lapses with large numbers, are evidence for what?

they're messages, woven in our environment. written in the language of archetypes: so seem to show the archetypes' independence.

for Wolfgang Pauli, they're rooted in the logical core of physical law, in symmetry / anti-symmetry.²³

Jung is their prime theorist. he's also been, for me, their guiding spirit. behind the signs, i sense an old intelligence, sober & benign - that draws me into study of his theory.

my father and i have sparse conversations. with my mother i'm loquacious, with my sisters i get silly but with him i tend to sit in quiet.

²³ see David Peat, "Time, Synchronicity, and Evolution." in Monika Sachtleben[editor]: **Kooperation mit der Evolution: Über das Zusammenspiel von Mensch und Kosmos** [Diederichs-Verlag, New Science, München 1999]

home on break from gradschool, i was chatty with him, once - critiquing U of T, i think, complaining of the Analytic style, perhaps, of the Discipline's sad professionalizing. i made some point about an East-West syncretism - its promise and/or limits - and my father smiled.

he said i'd made a similar point in **The Life Divine**; in the works of Sri Aurobindo.

he'd come upon my marginal note in McLaughlin library, our local college library.

a couple small surprises: one, he knew my hand so well; and two, he'd been in the McLaughlin stacks? he'd worked the main desk before i was born, as a grad student. they had been reading lots of Hindu literature lately, my parents. but all the books at home they'd bought on trips to the World's Biggest Bookstore, or from ashrams & mandirs, the pages smelling of mold and incense. but just that week, he'd been in the McLaughlin stacks, and came upon my undergrad marginalia.

my note i can't recall too well. i'm sure it was precocious & presumptuous. an aphorism not yet earned.

it's what i'd written, my father said, the thing i said - & he smiled. his smile was his large, implicit learning - all he knew i hadn't yet drawn from him. all the other things he could surprise me with.

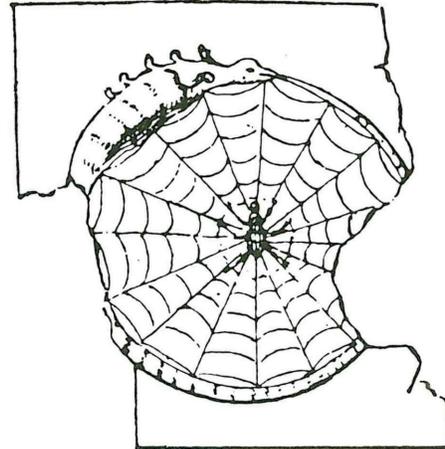
i wouldn't, now, call his find a synchronicity. and i wouldn't have then - the term i'd learn soon after. i had been seeing a lot, back then, of **108** and its variants. i must have learned its sacred status flipping thru my parents' lit, and it was classic Baader-Meinhoff after that, with the near-hits captured thru creative math.

back at school, wandering the Robarts stacks, a run of dark spines drew my eye: Jung's Collected Works. i hadn't yet read him, but i knew him as an esoteric touchstone. my mother had the books of Joseph Campbell and his master's name was now & then deferred to.

i pulled a book - i'd like to say "in ritual imitation of my father" - and flipped it open, seeking a sign.

it was volume 12, **Psychology & Alchemy**. the title must have drawn me, but the page was uncontrived:

108. Maya, eternal weaver of the illusory world of the senses, encircled by the Uroboros.—Damaged vignette from a collection of Brahminic sayings



Moreover, there is a very considerable difference between the two personalities in question. The earlier case, which I never saw at first hand, ended in psychic catastrophe—a psychosis; but the present case shows a normal development such as I have often observed in highly intelligent persons.

325 What is particularly noteworthy here is the consistent development of the central symbol. We can hardly escape the feeling that the unconscious process moves spiral-wise round a centre, gradually getting closer, while the characteristics of the centre grow more and more distinct. Or perhaps we could put it the

"my first ouroboros." the Spider took me back to a dream i had my first summer home from gradschool. dismayed with academia, i'd cried myself to sleep, pleading to the cosmos for a teacher. i had taken several excellent courses by that point: Wayne Sumner's seminar on Utilitarianism, and Brad Inwood's seminar on the Stoics come to mind. but i'd half been hoping for a guru-shishya relation, a direct encounter with wisdom, or my bildungsroman notion of it; and was predictably frustrated.

a giant spider came instead, into the classroom of my dream, and struck me with its forepaw in my solar plexus.

the number 108 is overlaid on the primary text. it's not a "marginal note", but is higher in the page's written strata.²⁴

there's only one story i recall from **Small Miracles**, and i now see why. the one about a son who dislodges from the Wailing Wall a note from his father. he knocks it out, trying to push his own folded note - to his father - in a crack. they'd bitterly fought, years ago, and hadn't spoken since.

²⁴ typing out the 108, i notice how its figures show the snake. first, straight & single. then the 0, rounding back into itself. the 8 is two serpents interwound, like the ones on Hermes' staff.

thinking thru this note, i concede: all ten Number signs - except for 3 and 4, perhaps - are plausible snakes. though 6 and 9 are rather large-headed, more spermatic.

scanning Jung's page, i notice now the figure is "in" paragraph 324 - or 3 times 108. the prior page is 216, or 2 times the sacred number. i now recall, when reading Jung's comment, standing there entranced in the Robarts stacks, i made myself "the present case", his therapand. perhaps i'm now a third case: a future self, twenty years older than the guru-seeking ingénue.

vii. dream of Diane, mistress of the animals

- : a local beauty, Ms Alberta
- : her body feeds the many, she's "the many-breasted"
- : a mistress as in master, or their minister / their emissary
- : could sum them in her feminine inclusiveness

Dream interpretation is a difficult and uncertain business²⁵

- : she's foaming at the mouth, convulsing in the power surge
- : reverting to her primal stuff, an energetic state
- : the dogs prefer the cans of mush & veggies
- : they're thin & upright, Egyptian & uncanny
- : they're carving her into consumable bits, for barter

viii. ahead in line, a Taurus hulk

his eyes were sad & heavy going down, as they took him apart.

he said it with a subtle turn of head, with a shrugging in his bulk:

w h a d d y a g o n n a d o a b o u t i t .

super-deep & drawn out. his massive face morphing in the waning day, the early dark.

my first time thru, i thought he meant **avenge me**. i thought he was my Father.

he may have meant it, then - fours years back when i hadn't done much but eat my veggies, all my life.

avenge me, he said - so i did, a little.

but last night, sliding down the drain again, down into the awful dross, i think he meant **relax**, and was more like a brother.

he'd been thru this how many times, was telling me to go with it.

or no advice, no hard commission, just an ancient resignation, as in

h e r e w e g o a g a i n

on coming to, i said his name: "Rocky!"

he's heavy and swollen as a knocked-around boxer. a stoic bull, eternally weary. slow to fight, but unstoppable.

Rocky i said, as we fell into the kill line; **Rocky**, as we came apart, sliding down the awful drain again.

Rocky though he's all bled-out & headless; and hanging in a line of bodies Rocky, the man, practices on.

to live thru death, you'd have to live thru being digested. it's like resisting throwing up, the first half-hour of a shroom trip. but it's not just your gut, its your whole self grinding, being ground up, but you keep it together.

ix. the Early Yahweh Diet

beef, salt, water. he was down to steak & broccoli, then dropped the broccoli.²⁶

steak & Book sum the field into a palmable pound: the grasslands & the history of adaptive action, respectively.

on steak and his book - on these alone, he lives, now.

he shows ascetic leanings. it's a cowboy's simplicity he seeks.

perhaps a man can live on that: simplicity. a single food is focus, so is power.

a feeding routine as simple as Behaviourism:

- i. his steak is the Unconditioned Stimulus. the dabs of powdered meat on a dog's tongue.
-

²⁶ interview, Joe Rogan Experience #1139. Jul 2 2018

ii. his flush new grin is the Unconditioned Response.

on or off his plate, by accident or planted - what comes with it, is the Conditioning?

sulphites in the cider put his system in crisis. or ritual clysis. prepped him for his inch-thick steaks, the bits of fat sizzling on the motorhome hotplate.

the sulphites & his thirty nights of sleepless terror. now he's flush & manic, risen from a death-rite.

in Jung's sketch of alchemical *Sol*, "the sulphuric aspect of the sun's substance is attributed negative, demonic characteristics."²⁷

grant that the sulphur is demonic; still we must interpret his *ingestion* of it.

- i. the sulphites overtook him, say: a demon now commandeers his person.
- ii. the sulphites were his psychopomp. led him thru the shadowlands, to union with his god.
- iii. the sulphites were a poison, and Peterson is Shiva. he took in & neutralized what all the other gods balked at. a lord upon his bull, he emerges from his quarantine triumphant. cattle are the life he rides, his metabolic mount, now.

x. **get him** means: take him down, or understand him

i'll try to do as he did re the violent inmates: inhabit him for days, get inside his mindspace - till i, too, could praise a Soviet vivisector.

Modern animal experimentalists - most notably Jeffrey Gray - have adapted the Russian line, with striking success.²⁸

he cites their work on fear & pain. on "predator exposures" - with or without a means of escape.

in college, in his Socialist phase, he had his sights on corporate law: to learn the master's game & get inside.

today he *is* an advocate for capitalism: for the law's lower stratum, the ur-myth of the herders. he sides with Abel, Yahweh's favoured sons who bring their fatted cattle.

perhaps he's gone full-in, his cover deep as amnesia.

Rupert Murdoch, too, was a Socialist in college. today he plays a caricature of capitalism. he's Mr. Burns: a comical reductio of the ethic of self-interest.

my polemic model, my impossible ideal, is Sartre's **Saint Genet**. on reading Sartre's manuscript, Genet had to pause & re-assess. the logic of his soul laid bare, his art seemed to dissipate. after **Saint Genet**, he could only play his old Self as schtick.

the trick has magic when it keeps alive a mystery; when even from magician, something's hid.

awareness changes everything. seeing one's self clearly could release you from it. your story is a pattern, the pattern is a habit, and the habit is released, when we get it.

his strange compulsion understood, Peterson was freed from it.²⁹

guided by signs, i'm called to out this Lion. **get him** they said, the herd i'm on the edge of.

as i read, my aim dissolves in sympathy. **get him** means, first of all: understand him.

guided by signs, to 'the Peterson meme' i tried to ignore. a lion who predicts me:

Understanding can be reached at the most inclusive, yet primary level, through ritual and mimesis. An unknown phenomenon, gripping but incomprehensible, can yet be represented ritually, can be *acted out*. Secondary representation of this “acting out” constitutes the initial form of abstract representation. To understand the lion, for example—or the hunted beast—it is first necessary to “become” the lion or the hunted beast—to mimic, physically, and later to represent

²⁹ "At some point during the lecture, I would unfailingly feel the urge to stab the point of my pen into the neck of the person in front of me. This impulse was not overwhelming—luckily—but it was powerful enough to disturb me. What sort of terrible person would have an impulse like that? Not me. I had never been aggressive. I had been smaller and younger than my classmates for most of my life." [Preface]

the mimicry in imagination. It is in this manner that the son imitates the father, whom he will later become.³⁰

a lion who precedes me. the year he came to U of T, i began my PhD. my focus was Religious Phenomenology; the topic vague, we let in any deep Psychology. my reading list had Paul Ricoeur, Rudolph Otto, Paul Tillich, Martin Buber, Feuerbach. **Maps of Meaning** would have been superb on that list. could have been the key to many readings. but Peterson was just a name - spoken by the brightest boy in my Intro to Philosophy tutorial, spoken with a measured reverence.

all my unease, aside: i keep exclaiming, looking up at no one from my notes: "a powerful mind, a virtuous mind, at work!"

the mind i praise is his, and our own: a universal hero, whose story he's told.

xi. the Sacrifice, the animal lab

thru "voluntary exposures", the guided imitation of heroic exploration, human patients lose their phobia.³¹

their healing is the upside of the animal's terror.

The unexpected appearance of a predator where nothing but defined territory previously existed terrifies the rats—badly enough that they “scream” about it, persistently, for a long period of time.³²

the Blanchard lab was ritual site of "predator exposures" - the Sacrifice reverted to "an early (pre-abstract behavioural) variant"³³.

taken up, later, in their many publications.

we have a dream, wrote Blanchard & Blanchard to the U-Hawaii ethics committee. of a "place where enacted plans produce unexpected, threatening or punishing consequences"³⁴.

It didn't matter how a rat related to his mother six months earlier if you could make him "food-deprived" enough.³⁵

³¹ p 171

³² p 60

³³ p 177

³⁴ p 23

³⁵ p 35

we have a dream, of a bound-in hell. a tiny world of infra-red we'll supervise.

Rats identify one another by smell. If an experimenter removes a well-loved rat from its familial surroundings, scrubs it down, provides it with a new odor, and returns it to its peers, it will be promptly dispatched by those who once loved it.³⁶

why our whole wide world is a U-Hawaii biolab! a range of situations to elicit vital questions, set within a possible isle of paradise:

will this (new) thing eat me? Can I eat it? Will it chase me? Should I chase it? Can I mate with it?³⁷

³⁶ p 61

³⁷ p 23

xii. our epithets can't track him

he's skeptical of gender-fluid pronouns. yet insists we're amorphous in our origins. behind the sharp gods is a multitude-exuding goddess.

his apex Hero was a feminized sufferer, softer than the conquering Davids & Marduks.

anti-feminist, capitalist - these categories complicate.

She is to be valued higher than status or material possessions, as the source of all things.³⁸

approach her cheerful & open, not cynical or wary; but mindful of an endlessness that can't be gamed.

Expectation and faith determine the “response” of the unknown (as courageous approach eliminates anticipatory anxiety, and exploration makes the unexpected something valuable).³⁹

Peterson teaches the Knight of Good Faith. Game that would reduce her to a sex-output protocol guarded by a convobot, elicits the Bitch, spirals into self-confirming misogyny:

if we are willing to admit to the existence of those things that we do not understand, those things are more likely to adopt a positive face. Rejection of the unknown, conversely, increases the likelihood that it will wear a terrifying visage when it inevitably manifests itself.⁴⁰

he may be anti **animal rights**, yet honours **animal worship**. who is more pro-cow: a secular vegan, or worshipper of Hathor?

³⁸ p 167

³⁹ p 167

⁴⁰ p 167

xiii. the Myth is [many-sectioned]

the Myth is multi-valent

the Myth is multi-valent. Hegel-like, he lets in all the variants.

he lets in the anomaly, "the Stranger / Revolutionary". whose acts we've yet to understand, who shows our future maxims.

the Messiah may be there, among the prof's own disruptors!

dreams i can't explain i can't retain. the novelty is fascinating *while* i dream, then dissipates on waking. all i recall is that *something* strange & promising was shown me.

Hegel-like, he lets in opposition. *a totalizing patriarchal Theory*, i would say - yet his Mother, too, is all-consuming.

the monster is both Moby Dick & his murderous trawlers. the men who killed his women & kids.

The Jungle is an exposé of labour under unrestrained capitalism. **The Jungle's** tragic center is the European immigrant. we're grateful to this book which brought the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, The Wholesome Meat Act of 1967. for Mookerjee “the novel comes apart when Sinclair moves from a vision of human suffering”. Elliott acknowledges Sinclair’s racism yet praises him “for showing the destructive effect upon poor people when they live without hope for the future.”⁴¹

The Jungle's tragic center could be cattle, too. the myth is multivalent, it lets in many readings.

the myth is multivalent and his students will infer from it divergent politics. the myth exceeds his own exemplifying. the **Devouring Mother** is hierarchy-destroying Marxism. she's also the Matrix, a technologic monster of consumption. an address less Bloor & St. George - OISE and the Faculty of Social Work - and more Bay-Bloor, the temples of luxury & bank towers.

his theory is broad, but the candidate you know by his exemplifying. from what he'd excise from our syllabus.

Equity Studies is politicized. yet "politics" is often just the politics we notice, the disruptive note. the wider power won't sound uppity & strident - it's already up & well-heard. align with it, and you'll seem to stand alone, as you call out its dissenters.

The archetypal revolutionary hero therefore faces the anger and rejection of his peers, as well as the terrors of the absolutely unknown. He is nonetheless the “best friend” of the state.⁴²

⁴¹ from Harold Bloom's survey: "The Jungle", in **Novelists and Novels** [Infobase Publishing, 2009]

⁴² p 275

the campus, too, has versions. walking thru, i don't see his PoMo beast. i see a business school spreading. a law school reaching out to Bay Street.

i recall a school that gave a C.I.A. director an honorary degree.

and everywhere, the animal labs. i know they're there, behind the silvered windows. spilling down hospital row, into the Discovery District. high in MARS, a thousand mice being eaten inside out. in Sick Kids, rooms where they sacrifice [their favoured term] the kids of other species.

Diversity propaganda, yes it's endless - yet safe within the limits of the ruling race, Homo sapiens. campus is a humanist hub: where junior capitalist & marginal's advocate each is served & welcome - and hard to tell apart if you're an animal they eat, wear, or dissect.

the partial myth as propaganda

partial myths are ideology: they "tell only part of the story, but tell that part as if it were complete."⁴³

Something must exist, prior to the construction of identifiable things (something that cannot be imagined, in the absence of a subject). That thing might usefully be portrayed as the "all-devouring mother of everything."⁴⁴

a Prior must exist. the second thing, the Monster overlaid - this is propaganda.

to think of it as Woman, and the Woman as Devourer - this is useful politics.

⁴³ p 219

⁴⁴ p 123

It is not until the original unity of all things is broken up - until the most primordial of gods is murdered - that existence itself springs into being.⁴⁵

Marduk is a god of war, a

role model for the culture of the West, who violently carves the unknown into pieces, and makes the predictable world from those pieces.⁴⁶

we can't avoid his core story, of Order from Chaos. yet how it's told says much about the teller. the City's founding, how is it remembered in our rites? there's a line from Marduk to the global whale hunt - a justifying line thru the "monsters" we cut up & barter. a justifying line, from Babylon's wall to the billionaires' ring of arms contractors around Washington.

the myth has endless versions. which one does he advocate & incarnate?

he imitates the Father, lately. how much of the Tyrant is in play?

our Hero has a knife, and **life feeds on life** - we have a troubled history, our stories bear the trace of our trauma.

the Unity divides, and Life must metabolize; yet how it's gone on Earth so far is dubious.

the King is a protector & a tyrant. the Mother is a nurturer / devourer. Marduk's war with Tiamat is sexual union, also.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ p 145

⁴⁶ p 123

⁴⁷ p 125

the full myth, the true myth, is not "patriarchal". Father rules the City but the City's only vital by the wider waters.

yet center of the story is **the Son**: Way between the Earth & Sky, column of the axis mundi.

he *could* be a Joan of Arc, an exploratory ingénue like Dorothy or Alice. the full myth, the true myth, isn't patriarchal; yet the Daughter - so-named - is marginal.

the myth as cancerous memplex

a story may succeed because it's useful:

It is reasonable to presume that, over the long run, our species "forgets" most things that are useless: we do not forget our myths, however. Indeed, much of the activity broadly deemed "cultural" is in fact the effort to ensure that such myths are constantly represented and communicated.⁴⁸

or it could arise as a victor's propaganda. persist because it's useful for the powerful.

worse, it could succeed by a C-TaP structure: exploit us as a virus does a cell, to spread *itself*.⁴⁹ the story ends badly: "over the long run", we're overwhelmed in viral load and collapse.

Consumerism, ethic of the all-devouring. a code far older than capitalism. could weave within our better tales, mimic modes of healthful growth & exploration. insinuate itself into our dreams.

⁴⁸ p 92

⁴⁹ see Susan Blackmore, 'Meditation as meme weeding'.

Kekulé saw a serpent rise, and curl into an O. a mingled gift, ambiguous: a key "organic compound" & a carcinogen. omen O of the coming synthetic Century, of a thousand new chemicals we'll let into the biosphere per annum.⁵⁰

Kekulé saw a serpent rise, and curl into an O: the circle of life, or its self-consuming.

How is it that complex and admirable ancient civilizations could have developed and flourished, initially, if they were predicated on nonsense?⁵¹

initially - and why do they collapse? our City nears the end of a **mahayug** - a cycle of 12,000 years, that ends in dissolution.⁵² a desert seems to follow us: up thru the Sahara, outward from the Middle East. we roam the earth & fence it in, converting all the biomass to cattle.

The "biggest disasters" occur when the larger stories we play out are threatened with dissolution, as a consequence of radical "environmental" transformation.⁵³

the Story made specific by our politics. versions, with divergent endings. Garden of Isaiah or "the Evening Redness in the West", the Cormac McCarthy apocalypse.

we're lord of all the eye can see, Simba - a lion king's pride, or epitaph of Ozymandias.

⁵⁰ each of which we tested on two to six thousand animals. Balls, M. 1983. *Veterinary Record*. 113: 398. cited in Wolfgang Scharmann, "Ethical aspects of animal experimentation", in **Advances in animal welfare science**. M.W. Fox & L.D. Mickley, eds. [The Humane Society of the United States: Washington, 1985/86]

⁵¹ p 7

⁵² p 87

⁵³ p 87

xiv. the Act itself may be unreasoned, poorly understood

Action is abstracted into Theory. is taken up the chain of imitation: in play & sacred rite, then into our fables & Philosophy.

the Act itself may be unreasoned, poorly understood.

Theory condenses into Action. his monologue complete, Hamlet draws a blade. his preaching done, Jesus charged the Temple.

Nietzsche wept, and put his failing self between a horse & whip. his final act was prefaced with a manic burst of writing, and followed by a catatonic decade. his argument with Pity, his five thousand pages, ends in an anomaly, or synthesis: an Overman's disruptive will, with Christian sympathy.

xv. Narrative Axiarchy

the Axiarchic view

the Axiarchic view is that

the cosmos ought to be, so it is.

the cosmos is good: this is what **explains** its existence. **the ought**, the moral need, is productive.⁵⁴

we avoid the regress that haunts all First Cause cosmologies. we also evade the non-explanation of a Something-from-Nothing story. a moral truth, a principle of value, is **more than nothing** - yet not so robust as to beg the cosmologic question.

a moral truth is world-independent & eternal. it's like a truth of math. were there never 3 things, still: 3 plus 3 would equal 6. would equal 6, without a thinker to think it. likewise, were there never innocents, still it would be true that it's *good* to protect the innocent. and wider,

it is good for a world [of a certain kind] to exist.

the goodness, alone, is productive. does not depend on inspired or compelled agents - on gods who'd invite the Regress.

⁵⁴ as advocated by John Leslie, a view he derives from Plato / Plotinus

we know the ought's power in our ethical reasons, feel it in the social pressures. our [flawed] obedience, the psychic cost of ignoring it [guilt] - these are local inklings of the ought's real power.⁵⁵

all production is odd, on analysis. we call A **the cause** of B, yet the power itself is mysterious. is **ethical demand** any weirder?

the power of story

a cosmos could exist because it ought to. one great reason it ought to is *it makes a great story*.

prior to the cosmos there are logical relations. these include **narrative** relations.

I learned that the meanings of the most profound substrata of belief systems can be rendered explicitly comprehensible, even to the skeptical rational thinker—and that, so rendered, can be experienced as fascinating, profound and necessary.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ a PHL110 student, Angus Lam, objects: i ought to study, yet i don't; a dehydrating plant ought to have water, yet dies. **the ought** seems impotent, relying on an agent to enact it. why suppose **the ought** could make a world?

i respond: perhaps **the ought** is super-weak, effective in the early void where only other truths compete. the other truths, like truths of math, are truths of *what is*, thus lack leverage.

the ought is the whispering god and its reign was the Age of Magic - soon drowned out by a noisy world.

the world's mere *appearance* has a power to constrain us: as shown in our dreams, whose absurdities we readily accept; as shown in the Milgram set-up, whose subjects accept the lab's legitimacy. the productive **ought** that made our world is losing to that world, it seems, when feeble cues of context [the labcoat & clipboard, the blinking lights & dials, the periodic voicings that "The research must go on"] convince us that our world not only **is** but that it **ought to be**, when clearly it is evil [the strapped-in, screaming monkey.]

another student, David Cassels, responds: all events, by world's end, could be redeemed, be rendered ethically necessary. the ought *could* have its way, but slowly & abstrusely, working thru history.

⁵⁶ Preface

were there no world, still it would be true that the Hero is adventurous, & adventure approaches the Unknown. the Myth is a complex logical truth, with agent linked to agent, and agent to expected action - the definitions Peterson elucidates superbly. the Father is a Tyrant & Protector, for the one implies the other. the relation is near-geometric: a wall must both protect and constrain us.

the archetypes are eternal, are the logical core of agency. if they also have **value** - a value independent of our pleasure in the story⁵⁷ - then by axiarchic logic, a world could arise to host them.

Globe & the subjunctive O

it's long been held that **Henry V** was the Globe's first performance. James Shapiro disputes this, but thinks Shakespeare himself played the Chorus, who opens the play⁵⁸:

O for a Muse of Fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of Invention;
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!

the Author himself, speaking the Globe into being: it's hard to resist this story. addressing his audience, hardly hid by the character prompt.

his O would be an icon of the Globe, and its opening: the Globe's inductive speech-act.

his O would be a wish & its attainment: his yearning for a play-space, *and* its summoning.

Then should the warlike Harry, like himself,
Assume the port of Mars; and at his heels,

⁵⁷ or: it is **objectively** good that we enjoy them.

⁵⁸ Wikipedia: *Henry V* (play)

Leash'd in like hounds, should famine, sword and fire
Crouch for employment.

when making war on France, the historic King Henry plays Mars. it's an order of mimesis: where each plays his prior type, back into the realm of the archetypes. the actors play royals, and the royals play the gods.

an order of mimesis: iterations outward and concentric from the Globe's small stage, from the poet's hopeful O. out into the world, then out into the pantheon.

drawn along this imitative train, we might inquire: whom does Mars imitate? for the Roman god is an archetype image, not itself the archetype. the archetype is the god's inner noumenon.

the Chorus says sorry for the flimsy set, for all the constraints on his Summoning. a battle will be staged, yet they have no horses, only our mutual mindspace: guided by the inspired code of poetry:

Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts;
Into a thousand parts divide one man,
And make imaginary puissance;
Think when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs in the receiving earth

a *perfect* imitation of War would be more than an excellent fake - it would incarnate the thing. the **v** in **vR** we'd rightly query, we'd plausibly drop, if the programming were good enough.

the Chorus is a spirit of the theatre. he lives there, perhaps: haunts the rafters, wanders backstage. has vague ideas of the world outside. he seems to think that all is Play, that everything is imitating *something*.

he may be confused about the status of the actual sun. his O is odd, is hope for a Sun that would rise & power a *world* - but it does already, we want to tell him. it's all out there, where we came in from.

does Muse play the Sun, or is Sun her incarnation? which is first?

the opening O would summon her: She who'd then inspire him. the poet is her scribe, but his own O, his wish for her, is prior.

and O is an icon of the Sun itself!

a Muse of Fire - by the bi-directional **of**, he equivocates. Fire, Sun, and Goddess are conflated.

the real & the imaginal, original & imitation - the theatre conflates them, a conflation that reiterates the cosmic one - if Axiarchy reigns.

the view is close to Peterson's - just take out his caution-quotes & qualifiers:

Cosmological phenomena themselves “act out” (are utilized as descriptive tools for, more accurately) this eternal drama: the sun (god), born in the east, “dies” in the west, and passes into the underworld of night (into the lair of the dragon of chaos). Nightly, the sun hero battles the terrible forces of chaos, cuts himself out of the belly of the beast and is reborn triumphant in the morning.⁵⁹

for Peterson, a story comes after, is abstraction of, Action. yet its agents are *in play*, long before narration.

stories are *of* happenings. action & abstraction, in their origins, conflate.

letter O, of the endless regress, & of logical completion.

letter O, of motion unceasing, & rest.

the O is no mere symbol, for it shows the thing it represents:

The picture is evidence in its own right for the theorem⁶⁰

⁶⁰ James Robert Brown, "What Do We See in a Thought Experiment?" in **Thought Experiments in Science, Philosophy, and the Arts**, edited by Melanie Frappier, Letitia Meynell, and James Robert Brown. [Routledge, 2012]