ROGER DE VERTEUIL

The Scapegoat Archetype

Introduction

It is a strange paradox that the time in which we live, which by reason of accumulated knowledge and rapid communication can rightly claim to be the age of maximum enlightenment, should also be the age of maximum peril, of the greatest threat ever known to our common survival. It seems, indeed, that those same forces of scientific progress and social reform that, given sufficient time, would surely drive back those ancient—and not so mythical—enemies of man: war, poverty, and disease, have at the same time rekindled with undreamed-of energies the ancient, underground fires of fratricidal instincts. The same voice that passionately and sincerely (and in accents of many races) proclaims today the advent of "the great society" must still in the same breath sound an angry battle-cry and declare the presence of a human "enemy." How many times have we heard—and believed—this double-sided appeal! Its success down to the present day proves that it answers some deep-rooted need in human nature, some need with which every demagogue is familiar, a need so great as to defy all logic and experience, so imperative as to fashion, where necessary, symbols of the divine out of the most unlikely material, and to project the spectre of evil into the least blameworthy of creatures. Our age, the age of maximum enlightenment, has witnessed, and still witnesses, the worst conceivable distortions of value judgments combined with the power to enforce them on a scale never before imagined. It is a ripe field, indeed, for the moral philosopher, the historian, the sociologist, the analytically-minded psychologist.

The present study, of the phenomenon of the scapegoat, or rather of the primordial image in the human unconscious that we have identified as the "scapegoat archetype," represents an attempt to throw some light on a problem both very ancient and very modern, a problem far more mysterious than might appear from all that has so far been written about

it. If, as we here affirm, the mental health of a society can be said to *vary inversely* with its need for scapegoats, then we are, indeed, a very sick society, and an inquiry into this particular "symptom" is much more than an academic exercise.

Historical origins of the scapegoat

It is generally accepted that the image of the scapegoat (though its antecedents may be much more remote) appears clearly for the first time in the Old Testament. The ceremonies of choosing the scapegoat by lot, of discharging "all the sins of the Children of Israel" upon its head and of escorting it amid shouts and curses into the desert, are described in detail in the Book of Leviticus (16: 5-10, 20-22). Several distinctive features of the scapegoat are mentioned, as compared with the other sacrificial victims. The goat chosen for this purpose was not to be sacrificed (made holy) on the altar to Yahve, but was to be delivered, still alive, to Azazel, a demon believed by the ancient Hebrews to inhabit the desert. The scapegoat was, therefore, considered as accursed or unholy (by reason of its weight of collective guilt), sacrifice on the altar was too good for it, yet it could fulfill another important expiatory function by "taking away" guilt. Biblical scholars agree that the scapegoat ritual has a more archaic character than the other sacrificial rites associated with it. By the same token, it can perhaps take us closer to the primitive instinctual origins of what may be called "sacrificial behavior" on the part of human beings. It may also be hoped that, by correctly identifying the primitive, it may be easier to discern the nobler aspects of sacrifice.

The primordial image or archetype

Since the object of this study is the scapegoat as a "primordial image" (leaving aside the strictly historical, sociological, theological, and other aspects of the same phenomenon), it may be well at this point to try to define the term "primordial image" as it is used in the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung. In his book, *Psychological Types*,[1] Jung defines the primordial image as "an inherited organisation of psychic energy," collective (experienced by a group) rather than personal, the product on the one hand of "universal and continuous external influence, which must therefore have the character of natural law," but at the same time having the "peculiar and autonomous quality of living mat-

ter." Jung illustrates this point by an analogy, that of the eye (representing the "creative activity of living matter") in its encounter with light (representing the "universal and continuous external influence"). In a similar way, he explains, "the psyche meets the process of Nature with a symbolical image, which apprehends the Nature-process just as the eye catches the light." He further elaborates on the nature of the primordial image by trying to define its relationship with "instinct" on the one hand, and "idea" on the other. The primordial image is "the necessary counterpart of instinct," since it provides "apprehension of the given situation"; (it may thus be said to give sight to the blindness of instinct). In relation to "idea," the primordial image acts as the "preliminary stage" or "maternal soil," from which the idea becomes differentiated and achieves clarity and communicability. Conversely, "the primordial image has advantage over the clarity of the idea in its vitality": it may thus be said to give life to the coldness of intellect. This somewhat nebulous definition may become clearer when applied to the archetypal image of the scapegoat.

Primitive roots of the scapegoat archetype

Assuming the hypothesis of a primordial image, we should not be surprised to find, along with the precise and elaborate rituals associated with the scapegoat, some evidence of its biological purpose. We find in the Old Testament a dramatic clue to this purpose in the familiar "sacrifice" of Isaac, when the providential appearance of the ram averted the slaughter of the son by his father, Abraham (Genesis 22: 13). Here is eloquent testimony to the transition in human history from human to animal sacrifice. The animal scapegoat is seen as a step away from the human scapegoat, from a time in ancestral memory when—to quote from J. Graven in a study on capital punishment—"man is still a wolf to man, when the law of the world is still the law of the jungle and the murderous impulse still a sort of reflex. . . ."[2] In such a climate, the scapegoat has survival value for the group by drawing the destructive energies away from within the group and toward a common "enemy." Without the scapegoat (or in a more general sense without the expiatory rituals), these destructive energies would lead a society at this stage of its development to destroy itself. The danger is vividly expressed in another chapter of Leviticus when racial memory, expressed through the voice of Yahve as in some prophetic mirror, warns of the savagery to be un-

leashed as a consequence of the nonobservance of his commandments and rituals. "I will chastise you . . . till you begin to eat the flesh of your own sons and daughters. I will demolish your high places, overthrow your incense stands, and cast your corpses on those of your idols . . ." (26: 27-31). For a society standing on the brink of chaos, it would, indeed, be difficult not to see in the scapegoat a safeguard, a justifiable measure of survival, and hence something desired by their God. Yet human history has shown that, although societies have had no lack of scapegoats (or failed to make good use of them), we never seem very far from a return to jungle law. We may have to conclude after all that the scapegoat defense (at least in the sense that we have understood it so far) is not such a decisive step away from barbarism, and still leaves us in danger of backsliding.

The scapegoat and divine wrath

There is hardly any need to make the point that sacrificial rituals are seldom seen except in conjunction with some image of God. The doctrines associated with sacrifice often state explicitly that God is "angry" and must be "placated" by the killing of some creature, be it animal or human being. Like the primordial image of the scapegoat, that of the "angry god" also has its primitive origins. "Along with the natural instinct of defence and protection," writes Graven, there is the need for "appeasement of heavenly anger, no less natural to any society dominated by that religious feeling which is inherent in man threatened by superior and invisible powers." The angry god is, therefore, a deification of destructive *natural* forces such as lightning, flood, famine, war, and pestilence; but it is also, and even more clearly, a projection of primitive man's still untamed savagery. It would have been impossible for human society at this stage of its development to conceive of or recognize any other kind of god, for in the hard struggle for survival there was hardly any room for tenderness or mercy. What then more natural than to imagine that God was "angry" (as man had to be "angry" in order to survive), and that anger of God, like the anger of man, must vent itself on some appropriate victim in that "murderous impulse which is still a sort of reflex"?[3] But unquestionably the "angry God" of Israel was a decisive step away from more primitive idols, a path to the discovery (or rediscovery, perhaps) of other divine attributes besides sheer power and creative vitality. Thus Yahve was capable

on the one hand of destructive fury, but also of compassion and fidelity. He was, therefore, in a sense a *symbol in transition,* from the images of savage gods of primitive man to that of the "loving God" to be elaborated in later centuries. It should be noted, too, that the idea of appeasement through sacrifice is entirely in keeping with this transitional image of God, for it repeatedly evokes the *transition* from anger to compassionate love.

The ritual of the scapegoat, and in particular the necessity for sacrificing *two* goats, one for Yahve and one for Azazel, can now be better understood. For here, too, we find duality and transition: of two goats, one, chosen by lot, is blessed, the other cursed; one is purified, "made holy," and calls forth the image of a merciful God, the other is abandoned, unforgiven, to the ungodly Azazel and to whatever fate this desert-dwelling demon might have in store for him. (Though we are not told, we can presume that it was something less than divine mercy). It is clear that this dichotomy, by which man sought to establish a cleavage in the God-image between divine wrath and divine mercy, was still far from complete. The two goats, separated by lot, are yet bound together by a primordial image: they are both "scapegoats." Similarly, Yahve and Azazel, though in a theological sense opposites (being prototypes of God and Satan, or of good and evil), betray their common roots in the collective unconscious of man: just as Yahve retains a primitive quality of demonic rage, Azazel has not lost his godlike power, for he, too, must be placated with sacrificial victims. It could be claimed that this dichotomy was already begun, even in the most primitive times, and finds a parallel in the mythologies of other races; for in most such families of gods one can distinguish those that lift man above himself (the more Godlike gods, so to speak) from those that seem to be more or less "pure" projections of man's own primitive instincts or deifications of natural forces. It was, nevertheless, through the collective intuition of the Hebrews that these races of gods (who did not seem to behave differently from the races of man, though on a much grander scale) gave birth to the image of Yahve, God of Israel and God of All. In this tremendous vision, philosophical abstractions sprang to life, "all the nations of the earth" were bequeathed a common heritage, "good" and "evil" were pulled apart to become the poles of a cosmic generator. The cleavage was incomplete, but it was, in a certain sense, irreversible: only a regressive step, a sort of blindness or perversion, could

henceforth undo it. Yet because of this incompleteness, the archetypal poles would continue to reveal their primordial origins, would still attract their dynasties of angry "gods," their numberless multitudes of scapegoats.

Since our study now appears to overlap into the field of theology, it is necessary to emphasize that, in fact, no statement has yet been made about the objective realities of good and evil, or about the existence of a real God or a real Satan, but only about the *subjective* components of those images by which man gropes for the absolute. Indeed, if there be such a thing as Revelation, it could only conceivably take place across the shifting screen of these primordial images arising from the collective unconscious of man. A real God would necessarily have to take into account the condition of the human psyche before He could hope to effect any creative transformation of man, just as surely as a teacher would need to accept the cultural level of a pupil before he could teach him anything, or as a psychiatrist would be forced to compromise with his patient's existing defenses before he could establish any meaningful communication. It is, therefore, entirely in keeping with the idea of Revelation to believe that God is ever ready to address man in language, no matter how crude, that he *can* understand, and to assume whatever images will make Him most easily recognizable to man, in order to maintain that I-and-thou dialogue without which no "revelation" is possible. These images would, therefore, of necessity *have* to include projections of the human unconscious. It is regrettable that they have been so long misrepresented as being *entirely* of divine origin, and hence having absolute and eternal validity, for thus their vital and creative value as images in transition has been gravely impaired. Revelation cannot be said to take place "once and for all." The image of a living God cannot be caught on a frozen mask, or His "word" caged forever in the forms of human discourse. The process remains in essence one of unfolding or unmasking, though the projected image or language form be retained as a condition of the dialogue. And in this process the primordial image remains the fruitful "maternal soil" of new ideas concerning the nature of God.

Elaborations and vicissitudes of the scapegoat archetype

If the definition of "primordial image" is recalled and if the hypothesis of a "scapegoat" archetype is still tenable at this point, it is time

to trace some of its important developments in three areas of human life that have a special bearing, in one way or another, on the present topic: (a) criminal behavior and its consequences, (b) Judaeo-Christian history (an extension of the theme set forth in the preceding paragraphs) and (c) mental illness.

a. *The criminal as scapegoat of society.* It is assuredly no coincidence that the Book of Leviticus contains, along with the prescription of the scapegoat ritual and other sacrificial ceremonies, a detailed list of punishment for various crimes. It will be noted that the "law of talion" is made explicit, and that capital punishment is reserved especially for those transgressions threatening the bonds that hold society together, i.e., the crimes of sexual perversion (in particular incest), murder, and blasphemy. The fate of the blasphemer is of special interest, for here we have a clear re-enactment of the scapegoat ritual. "Take the blasphemer outside the camp, and when all who have heard him have laid their hands on his head, let the whole community stone him. Alien and native alike must be put to death for blaspheming the Lord's name." (Leviticus, 24: 14-16). It will be seen from this that under certain conditions the transition from human to animal sacrifice can be reversed and the scapegoat once again assume his original human form. These conditions, it is true, represent some sort of advance from more barbarous forms of human sacrifice, in which the victim is chosen at random, not on the basis of guilt or innocence, but simply because a sacrifice is required at a certain time and someone has to be designated as a victim. In comparison, the blasphemous scapegoat mentioned in Leviticus has played his part only too well, or rather he has overplayed it. He has been an *active* rather than a passive scapegoat; he has first *provoked* the destructive energies of society, then drawn them down upon himself.

Here we touch upon a crucial point in the argument: the secondary hypothesis that criminal behavior can be based on the *instinctual apparatus underlying the scapegoat archetype.* It will be recalled that this primordial image is to be found in the deepest layers of the human unconscious, the "collective" as distinct from the "personal" unconscious. It would, therefore, be expected to manifest itself only when a "given situation" calls for the appearance of a scapegoat, and it would then appear as collective or group behavior rather than in isolated, individually determined action. Thus the blaspheming scapegoat in Leviticus would have to be acting in a sort of unconscious yet highly effective co-

ordination with his society in the provoking and discharging of its destructive tensions; if it were otherwise, why would his blasphemy not be greeted with indifference or ridicule, which would seem to be a more rational and appropriate reaction?

While it would seem absurd to extend such a hypothesis into the whole vast field of criminology, it may also be that we have here an instructive prototype of the relationship of the criminal to his society, a relationship that is often a form of *collective* behavior and that is based, far more than has been realized, on very complex instinctual patterns. And lest it be assumed that the society portrayed in Leviticus was too primitive for comparison with our more enlightened times, it would be wise to recall that in early nineteenth-century England it was not uncommon to see young children hanged in public for petty thefts. In his book *Réflexions sur la potence*, Koestler recalls that in 1801 Andrew Benning, aged thirteen, was hanged in public for breaking into a house and stealing a spoon; in 1808, a little girl of seven was hanged at Chelmsford for setting fire to a house, and another girl of thirteen was hanged the same year at Maidstone. As late as 1833, a boy of nine was condemned to hang for stealing tuppence worth of colored ink through a broken store window; only a public protest saved him from the gallows.[4]

In a recent article in the *Canadian Psychiatric Association Journal*, Dr. R. Boyer has vividly illustrated the sometimes ludicrous excesses of our own Canadian law (representing the society of the time) in the punishment of criminals. Not only was the law of talion applied, but frequently the venting of a sort of sadistic fury on the condemned man, who was at times subjected publicly to amputation, burning, or evisceration while still alive. The role of the scapegoat in discharging the destructive savagery of the group is very clear in such cases. Dr. Boyer cites other cases in which the executioner, after having carried out the wishes of his society in the disposal of a scapegoat, *became himself in turn a scapegoat*, insulted and ostracized for the insatiable collective guilt he had now assumed.[5]

The persistence of capital punishment to the present day (though as a rule the law takes pains to see that the "punishment fits the crime") betrays the reluctance of societies to give up their scapegoats. But, in fact, the criminal is far from getting the worst of it. Rather it is in the form of racial oppression and political persecution that scapegoating is being carried out today, and on a scale that even the most primitive

societies of antiquity might have considered excessive. Yet it is not in self-righteous indignation, or in the ostracism of societies that have practiced or still practice these excesses (such as Hitler's Germany or Verwoerd's South Africa) that the answer can be found, any more than in the ostracism of the hangman described by Dr. Boyer; rather it is in a much greater awareness of the unconscious natural laws underlying these phenomena that we can become freed from their oppressive compulsions and better able to see what is still sublime in the word "justice."

b. *The scapegoat in Judaeo-Christian history*. It will be recalled that in the selection of two goats, "one for Yahve and one for Azazel," the Children of Israel were interpreted as trying to effect a transition from the image of a primitive God of wrath to that of a loving and forgiving God, to purify, so to speak, the holy image of God from its primitive origins; yet the cleavage remained incomplete, the links in the collective unconscious between these two images persisted; man, and man's God, were still angry, and the scapegoat must at all costs be retained. To follow the subsequent elaborations of the scapegoat archetype in Judaeo-Christian religion, it is necessary to take a closer look at the elusive figure of Azazel, the desert-dwelling demon. We find a clue to his origin in yet another section of Leviticus (17: 7), where the Children of Israel are commanded "no longer to offer their sacrifices to the satyrs to whom they used to render their wanton worship." A footnote informs us that the Hebrew for "satyr" also signifies "goat," and designates spirits in animal form that were supposed to inhabit deserts and ruins. In Greek mythology, the satyr is a companion of Dionysos, son of Zeus, and is closely associated with the nature god, Pan, and with Priapus, son of Dionysos. The satyr, like Pan, is pictured with the horns and legs of a goat. The Greeks imagined these mythical beings in pastoral settings, engaged in the unbridled pursuit of pleasure, and doubtless representing the bountiful and pleasure-giving aspects of Nature. There is probably a significance in the fact that the satyr was singled out for condemnation by Yahve, since he was a symbol of primitive nature threatening the integrity of His people. For the same reason the satyr would also represent "temptation" and would have to be kept in permanent exile in the desert. The ascetic Milton clearly grasped this conflict when he restored poetic life to these forbidden idols in "Paradise Lost." "For those the race of Israel oft forsook/ Their living

Strength, and unfrequented left/ His righteous altar, bowing lowly down/ To bestial gods; . . ." (lines 432-435).

In the same poem, Azazel is cast in an impressive role, as one of the more princely among the fallen angels, and Satan's standard-bearer, ". . . a cherub tall;/ Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled/ The imperial ensign; . . ." (lines 534-536). Milton's poetic imagination was in this quite different from Hebrew tradition, according to which Azazel (whose name in Hebrew signifies "removed") dwelt like the satyrs in the desert, a forsaken region where Yahve did not bestow His fruitfulness. Thus the images of the satyr, the demonic Azazel, and the scapegoat seem to blur and fuse together, like a mirage in the desert air; thus, too, they reveal their common archetypal roots in the collective unconscious of the Children of Israel. In more recent times, G. Papini, writing after years of reading and research on "the Devil," accepts the common identity of the scapegoat, of Azazel, and of Satan, pointing out that, even centuries later, "the goat is often associated with witchcraft and the cult of Satan." He adds that "the Devil often plays the role of sacrificial goat, even in our own times," for it is "frighteningly easy to forget the evil ferments of our blood, the innate concupiscence of our flesh, the perverse inclinations of our minds, the morbid attitudes of our spirits, and most willingly do we discharge all our errors and furies on Satan." Papini does not conclude from this that Satan is solely a product of man's unconscious, but rather that this view of Satan is one that corrupts man. "He who attributes responsibility for all sins to the Devil does so—even if he does not know it—by making of him an omnipotent being, that is, another God."[6] Yet certain periods in history have favored precisely this transition, which was already foreshadowed in Yahve's warnings to the Children of Israel of the return to the worship of satyrs. These were periods when, while still retaining the outward forms of civilization, society regressed to a state of primitive savagery. At such a time, as explained previously, the society can no longer maintain in its collective consciousness the image of a merciful or loving God, and this image must give way to that of an angry or even sadistic one, hardly distinguishable from the primitive idols of ancient times.

Judaeo-Christian history is, indeed, a succession of waxings and wanings of the divine light as perceived by man across the intervening screen of his own archetypal images. In the Book of Consolation (Isaiah 40-

55) we find what is probably the clearest image in the Old Testament of a God synonymous with love. The prophet here is essentially a poet, and as such closer to the level of vital, fluid images, freer from the theological concepts that tend to freeze the images into a mask. In this book, too, we find allusions to the scapegoat; but his destiny is altogether different, his innocence and saving function are recognized, and he is honored as the "Servant of Yahve." The cleavage in the God-image begun in the ceremony of the two goats, the transition from a God of wrath to a God of love, is thereby completed, and no vestige of savagery remains to mar the countenance of Yahve. But once again the image fades, until the life of another prophet, Jesus, will give it new radiance.

The later appearance of the scapegoat in Christian doctrine can be traced to 553 A.D., when the Church adopted what Michelet calls the "atrocious resolution of damning the spirits or demons inexorably, without room for repentance whatsoever." (The condemnation was later extended to include even the souls of newborn infants who died unbaptized.) The resemblance of this doctrine to the fate of the original scapegoat is striking in its detail: the "souls of the damned" are already identified with the "goats" mentioned in the New Testament (Matt., 25: 33), but actual guilt or innocence appears as a relatively minor issue, and "Hell" is clearly a derivative of that arid desert forsaken by Yahve, where the scapegoat would be delivered over to Azazel and from which no return would be possible (or, from the point of view of society, desirable). Yet this doctrine was clearly at variance with the belief of the early Christians, still imbued as they were with the teachings of Jesus (whose theme was, if anything, the forgiveness and return of the scapegoat) and contrary also to the teachings of some of the early Church Fathers (Origen, St. Gregory of Nysse, St. Jerome). Europe was already at the threshold of the Middle Ages, the so-called Age of Darkness, and it seems that the bulk of the Christian world (with the exception of certain monastic orders that functioned as beacons of civilization) was for a time to lose sight of its own ideal and follow the society of that day in a sort of regression to a more barbaric state. The light of God would be eclipsed again and the scapegoat come into his own.

The Age of Darkness has been vividly portrayed by J. Michelet in his book *Satanism and Witchcraft*, described in the Encyclopedia Britannica as "the most important work on Medieval superstition yet written" (though it might be criticized as being too impassioned to be coolly

scientific.)[7] Michelet describes with compassion the plight of the common man of that period, suffering "the fatal overmastering pressure of an age of iron, the irresistible constraint of grim necessities," and having at the same time "complete consciousness of his own wretchedness, and consequently full and complete agony of suffering, without any expectation of relief . . ." Such conditions, writes Michelet, "required that Hell itself should appear a shelter, an asylum, a relief, as contrasted with the Hell of this world." The destructive tensions in such a society would create such a need for scapegoats that we are hardly surprised to find the old archetypal images emerging once more from the collective unconscious to dominate the scene: Satan, the Satyr, the Scapegoat. There was, indeed, little to choose between the image of a sadistic god, (as upheld by a clergy pathologically obsessed with evil and damnation, and caught up in the savagery of the period), and that of Satan, who at least was willing to be the scapegoat and take the blame for it all. This was the prelude to the reign of Satan, the Black Masses and the witch hunts, the diverse elaborations growing out of the primordial image of the scapegoat. The imagery is vividly evoked in this passage, in which Michelet describes the opening scene of the ritual of the Black Mass: ". . . resinous fires burn with yellow tongues of flame and ruddy embers, making a vague, fantastic veil of smoke. . . . In the background the Sorceress set up her Satan, a great wooden Satan, black and shaggy. In virtue of his horns and the he-goat that stood by his side, he might have passed for Bacchus; but his virile attributes unmistakably proclaimed him Pan and Priapus. A darkling countenance, that each saw under a different aspect. While some beheld only an incarnate terror, others were moved by the haughty melancholy . . ." The author, however, concludes this rather depressing book on a more hopeful note: "The gods wane, but not God. Quite otherwise; the more they wane, the more He waxes strong. He resembles an eclipsing light, that after each period of obscuration only shines the brighter."[8]

The "Age of Darkness" seems reassuringly far behind us—or is it? The twentieth century, Age of Enlightenment, has seen cycles that on closer study are uncomfortably close to that far-off Age of "Darkness." Inquisitions, witch-hunts, massacres: the plot is all there, only the names of the actors differ in this stark drama. There, too, is the "angry god," the Caesar with the many faces, the many-accented voice of thunder, angrier than ever, and with an insatiable appetite for scapegoats. In a

society that has regressed to this level, the average citizen is caught in the dreadful choice between identification with (or at least acquiescence to) the "angry god" and the very real danger of suffering the fate of the scapegoat. Imagine one further stage of regression, and the law of the jungle is back: kill or be killed, devour or be devoured.

c. *Dynamics of the scapegoat role in mental illness.* The significance of the goat symbol will seldom appear more clearly than in this dream of a young female patient in a mental hospital: "I was on a train with both my parents, on our way to Western Canada. We went through the Rockies and it was very beautiful, the billowing clouds were low. Then we came to an *immense pasture where herds of goats were bleating loudly*. Then the train stalled and we had to walk the rest of the way, stepping over the hot manure all the way to the West Coast. At that point I awoke." The significance of the goat image is made even clearer by another dream two months earlier, this time by the patient's *father,* himself a sort of community scapegoat and, therefore, well qualified to empathize with the patient's role: "My wife and I were on a steam locomotive, coming into the railway yards at X . . . Everything was clear in the headlights. . . I saw a *pet goat*, appearing over a coal shed. I seemed to be worried about him. He seemed to be *tied,* and one of the workmen was petting him. The goat had *stripes over his face* like a chipmunk. It was an eerie night, hot and humid, with the wind blowing." The two dreams appear to interlock, almost as though the same situation were being viewed from different vantage points. Neither of the dreamers was aware of the significance of the goat symbol.

Analytical psychology has understood psychosis as the invasion of consciousness by the primordial images of the unconscious, with consequent alterations of behavior and personality. On this hypothesis, it is not surprising to find the scapegoat archetype (with others) frequently appearing among the phenomena of mental illness, though exceptionally in the naked form described above. Unlike the case of the antisocial ("criminal") scapegoat, who tends to act *out* his role on the basis of more or less blind instinct, the psychotic scapegoat, especially if introverted, tends rather to suffer the same experience *inwardly* through nightmarish perceptions, disturbed emotions, and disordered thinking. The experience inevitably becomes one of alienation from the world of the "others." There would not be necessarily at first any active re-

jection on the part of "the others," but having submitted to the experience (almost like a "possession") of the primordial image, the patient would then necessarily appear "different" and baffling to others. Thus even without the aggressive provocation characteristic of the "criminal scapegoat" (by which society "gets the message" clearly and reacts accordingly), but with uncanny ability to discern and bring out the hidden tensions in a group, the psychotic individual invites rejection. This is not to suggest that all mentally ill persons assume a scapegoat role (some of them behave more like angry gods!) or that such a hypothesis can explain away the enigma of functional psychosis; it should, however, be logically considered when we observe a consistent pattern of so-called "masochistic" or self-defeating behavior, a persistent death-wish or suicidal obsession. A casework approach to the patient's family will often reveal the scapegoat role, as pointed out by Celia Mitchell in a recent conference on family diagnosis. Her conclusion is that "a healthy family equilibrium does not require a scapegoat."[9] The following extract from a letter written by a patient's mother to her social worker will help to illustrate the point: ". . . if my daughter and I have to be the sufferers, let it be so. . . . the children must not again be upset. . . . I would rather she were cut adrift . . ."

The scapegoating of the mentally ill is thus not so much a matter of condemnation as one of *alienation;* society accepts, not that the patient is "bad," but that he is just "not one of us." Yet in so doing we, the "others," gain some degree of inner security, some respite from the inner turbulence that each human being must share, insofar as each mind impinges on that mysterious and primordial world of the unconscious. In much the same way, we tend to feel more "alive" in the presence of death. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the "insane" were used as scapegoats by more primitive or less informed societies in the past, that they were ostracized, incarcerated, chained, burned at the stake, and otherwise "demonized." Nor should it be surprising that the victims in turn played their part so well, in the unconscious co-ordination that is typical of group instinct.

It would be pertinent, but tedious, to discuss the predisposing and precipitating factors, both internal and external, that call forth the emergence into an individual's consciousness of this latent archetypal image, or once established, the secondary ego defenses that develop along with the primary experience. This information can be selectively

found in any treatise on the functional psychoses. Three points should, however, be emphasized: First, the recognition of the scapegoat role in a patient should lead to the greatest care that the role should not be *reinforced*, especially under the guise of therapy, by anything that might be interpreted by him as condemnation, rejection, or condescension (one patient was very hurt by being, as she called it, "patientized"; to her a milder form of being "demonized"). Secondly, the key to the "cure" is the establishing and maintaining of a genuine dialogue with the "scapegoat," in order to lead him out of his "forsaken place"; when the communication is broken (as it inevitably is at times), the line must be repaired as quickly as possible, but the therapist is not "omnipotent," he can be replaced, or assisted, so long as the basic therapeutic attitude remains the same. Finally, the therapeutic goal, which is the "return of the scapegoat," must always be kept in view. While this may appear unrealistic in some cases, in essence all it means is that the patient should be reintroduced into a human environment where a degree of stability exists so that the patient is no longer required to be a scapegoat and can gradually learn to be himself.

Conclusion

In a presentation of this type, there are unavoidably oversimplification, overemphasis, and one-sidedness; these concluding remarks are intended to restore the perspective. It should be clear that the hypothesis of the scapegoat can in no way dishonor the nobility of voluntary self-sacrifice. A mother who chooses to go hungry so that her children will have enough food to keep them alive cannot be labelled a scapegoat; the scapegoat role as we have understood it is *not* voluntary, the victim does not choose the role, but is cast into it by others or pushed into it by instinctual forces of which he is only dimly aware. In discussing religion, law, and social custom, we have emphasized the primitive elements, but only in order that the ideals that are truly Godlike in these human institutions should be all the more apparent. A society has the right and duty to defend itself against its enemies from within and without; crime is rightfully exposed and punished by the law; all evil must be expiated sometime, somewhere. These issues may superficially resemble, but have nothing to do ultimately with, what we have called the "scapegoat archetype," for they normally uphold the dignity, the divine element we might say, in human life, in justice, and in virtue. It is only

when the same reactions go *beyond* the necessity of self-defense, or justice, or righteousness, when they no longer discriminate between enemies and neutrals, or between guilt and innocence, that institutions (while still preserving the same structures) can be said to have lost sight of their own ideals and fallen under the spell of the primitive scapegoat archetype. A change of this type should no longer be seen today as anything but what it is, a regression, a social disease. Like the thunder of Yahve in ancient times, its justification was that of the "lesser evil," a sort of instinctively-guided emergency measure to save society from self-destruction. As our collective insights develop, it becomes more and more difficult to see any "good" in it, and voices of protest are justifiably raised. In a "great society," the use of the scapegoat, to paraphrase a famous line of Shakespeare, "soileth him that gives and him that takes." The ideal of such a society is in no way served by further humiliations or extortions of unwilling sacrifice, but on the contrary by honoring what is truly Godlike in every country, creed, and creature.

Our world today, despite the "age of maximum enlightenment," can hardly be said to have recovered from this recurrent affliction. Like the Children of Israel in the Book of Leviticus, we still tend to rely on the primitive defense, the false security, of using our ever-present scapegoats. In the age of the "ultimate weapon," the "defense" is no longer a defense, but on the contrary a heightening of the danger. It may be that a greater awareness of being *collectively* afflicted, a greater sense of urgency about *collective* survival, is driving us at long last to yet another phase of enlightenment, and perhaps to a discovery of the *fundamental* difference between defense of an ideal and dependence on a scapegoat. Along with other insights, a deeper understanding of the "twilight zone" of the collective psyche will still be needed, to teach us the lessons of antiquity.

Summary

Relying on some of the principles of Jung's analytical psychology, the writer has presented a hypothesis of the primordial image of the scapegoat, tracing its origins in antiquity and in the collective unconscious of man, its associations with the God-image and its development in the history of Judaeo-Christian religion, of the administration of justice and of the treatment of mental illness. The conclusion is reached that the scapegoat is an anachronism that the human race has outgrown,

a luxury we can no longer afford to keep, and that a realization of this fact is important for the times in which we live.

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