

## RE-SINK THE TITANIC

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Western man has no need of more superiority over nature, whether outside or inside. He has both in almost devilish perfection. What he lacks is conscious recognition of his inferiority to the nature around and within him. He must learn that he may not do exactly as he wills. If he does not learn this, his own nature will destroy him.

— C. G. Jung, *CW* § 535

At the bottom of the sea, somewhere between the Old World and the New, a giant sleeps. It is a final, deathly sleep, though not a peaceful one; the demise was too sudden, the shock too great, the consequences too much to assimilate. Contrasting the image of her motionless bulk, the dreaming remains restless. The Titanic, yet to find her place in the underworld, exists between worlds, waiting upon some gesture, remembrance, or ritual. The broken waters of a calm, clear night early this century still stir the imagination and wait upon soulful attendance. Between fact and fiction, history and myth, this once celebrated Titaness lingers. Our response to her cry has been fervent, but not very insightful. We have

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searched for her broken body, pondered the circumstances of her demise, retold her story and that of those who anchored her fate. More recently we have mapped out her murky location, photographed her through a deep blue shroud, and irreverently removed her belongings. Still, Titanic sleeps uneasily, and we are a part of her restless dreaming.

The Titanic disaster of April 15, 1912, is singular among modern catastrophes for its hold on the collective psyche. As the largest steamship of her time, longer, taller, heavier than anything else afloat, a technological marvel without precedent, Titanic ferried the visions of a modern industrial age. As an icon of technological disaster, painfully checking the flight of this modern bearing, we turn to her story for historical perspective. And as a messenger to a culture continuing to ignore nature's warnings, we still live within Titanic's wake. Eighty-five years after the event, books, documentaries, feature films, and even a Broadway musical bear witness to this unfinished dream.

When the technology arrived, fascination with the disaster turned into literally dredging. The exploration and museum plans made way for corporate-sponsored treasure hunts and salvage expeditions. Recently such exploits provided a spectacle for cruise ships which circled like sharks awaiting the arrival of each disemboweled section (Broad, 1996). But as superficial exploits increase and fascination turns to titillation, the disaster's unplumbed poignancy is only underscored. Although the ship herself has plunged into the deep, we have not yet made the accompanying descent. Submarines make it down but our reflections on the tragedy do not. We have not soulfully remembered Titanic's broken body. The autopsy has not yet progressed to a funereal rite. The dream has not been worked.

Our cultural attachment to the disaster resembles an obsession with an open wound, and has all the characteristics of an unrecognized cultural complex. We are compelled to get to the bottom of the literal reality, immersing ourselves in facts and theories; we want to see, touch, unravel, control. But, at its core, we cannot loosen the intensity of the initial devastation. Caught in a spell, chased by images, we are unable to assimilate the event's impact.

With each revisit little seems to change. The story is the same one, we know it backwards, and yet it continues to hold something. The pull does not subside. The event penetrates our vitals, but that which is vital consistently escapes. So we keep searching for the one thing we have overlooked all along—the memory that has not surfaced, the missing piece of evidence, the things that might have gone differently. The combination of this obsessive-compulsive attachment and the failure to honor Titanic in her dying suggests that within our dreaming there is also haunting. Here spectacle hides specter. Caught on the wrong level, our shallow remembering lays little to rest.

The task this dreaming and haunting presents is one of finding ears to listen and eyes to see; we need a fitting mode of perception. This is psyche's balm. When a traumatic experience rocks the soul, only the soul's forms and languages will be sufficient to digest the disturbance; when caught in a dream, we must follow the ways of the dream; when haunted, we must turn to the underworld. Technological analysis, recounting of facts, and photographing evidence will not do. A psychological salvage must be undertaken. This salvage attempt will explore our obsession with history's most significant maritime disaster through mythic forms, locating submerged fragments by following currents of poesis, reconfiguring the story from a soul perspective. Such an attempt will anchor itself to those points where the Titanic corresponds to modern crises and pathologies. Making this dive into the depths, attending to this level of complexity, would, I believe, mitigate the compulsion to drag concrete fragments of twisted wreckage to the surface. Witnessing the ship as she lies, locating her story within that of the modern era, its unconscious complexes and their archetypal roots, would forge an understanding that Titanic has a resting place. It is we who have not yet completed this voyage.

### *The Grip of a Titan*

The ship and her story suggest a powerful but largely unrecognized mytheme at work in the culture. Recently, when an

eleven ton section of Titanic's hull was nearing the surface, it broke loose and returned to the ocean floor (Broad, 1996, 6). Here psyche exercises her own intentionality: Opposing the great twentieth-century exploit of dragging everything into bright light, this event issues the decree that some things belong in the deep dark. At the very least it suggests an invitation for deepening and reflection—a need to take pause before action. But even the poesis of this moment and its invitation for introspection is avoided: Both the mechanical analysis of what went wrong and the counter-pole declaration that “the wreck is cursed” miss the boat. Both the scientific-technological attitude and the New Age seductions of curse and karma prevent the psychological salvage (although the fantasy of a curse may surely be taken as a sign of sacrilegious arrogance). Both the rational explanation and the metaphysical speculation remain unconsciously bound to the mytheme—caught in the headlock of an unnamed archetypal presence.

A major site of insight recovery stares us in the face. The archetypal character of the tragic event is already there in the ship's name. As architects of hubris—unmitigated pride and sacrilege—the Titans, a race of giants, fought with and were defeated by the Olympian gods then banished to the underworld. The root meaning of “hubris” suggests a “running riot” over other cosmic principles. The term “Titanic” refers originally to the temper of the war between the Titans and the Olympians. The Olympians, of course, portray the dominating forces of the cosmos, and personify the very organs of psychological life. Ever poised to displace this organicity, the Titans sponsor the gigantism of the psyche—inflation, grandiosity, unchecked haste. The myth suggests that identification with the Titanic tendency results in a heady power-trip followed by certain descent. Olympus will not tolerate Titanism; Titans belong in the underworld. It is ironic that Titanic's sister ship was named the Olympic, and, in spite of an almost identical build, sailed steadily past her sibling's fate without infamy. When these ships were named, someone failed to take their mythology seriously; the place of the Titan is in Tartaros, a dark prison beneath the sea, as far below the earth's surface as the sky is above. What's in a name? Indeed.

These reflections on naming align with the events and atmosphere surrounding the giant ship herself. Hubris lived not only in title but in the ship's birth into the world and the attitudes which accompanied her maiden voyage. It is well known that Titanic was declared "unsinkable" by elements of the press before she sailed, a claim desperately returned to by the White Star Line in New York once the reports of her distress were known. The claim was due to a special design dividing the bowels of the ship onto several watertight compartments. Yet, when the fateful moment arrived, this innovation was no obstacle for the perfectly positioned jaws of Poseidon, eager to correct the slight of an irreverent age. The iceberg tore into the hull and soon the invading sea flowed over the top of the bulkhead dividers. A side-glance from the deep's protrusions and it was all but over.

Several facts are stunning in their fidelity to the mythopoesis of the tragedy: Titanic's radio room received iceberg warnings several times from other ships. Most were ignored or were not communicated to the bridge. On the bridge warnings were not heeded. Due caution was never observed. True to her name, the Titanic steamed on at a speed, fueled by an unofficial attempt on the Atlantic crossing record. When she set out on her maiden voyage, her stopping capacity and turning ability had never been fully tested during sea-trials. The ship was unwieldy in its bulk and displacement dynamics. She narrowly avoided collision leaving harbor when a smaller ship was sucked into her path. The Titanic carried lifeboats for roughly one-third of the passengers; there was a tendency to think of the ship herself as a lifeboat. Topping off this archetypal congruence a recent discovery suggests that Titanic's hull was constructed of extremely brittle, highly sulfurous steel (Gannon, 1995). This metallurgical matter provides an apt metaphor for the rigid mentality of the whole exercise. Let the alchemists muse upon the corrupting attributes of excess sulfur!

Fate conspired around this combination of irresponsibility, virginal temptation, arrogance, and sheer poetic consistency. The sea was visited by an eerie calm that night so that the lookout did not have the foamy meeting of sea and iceberg to warn him. There was no moonlight to offset the dark of the evening. And had the

ship not attempted to maneuver at the last moment, the iceberg would not have punctured as many compartments; most likely she would not have sunk.

When the stern rose high enough into the night, the ship's innards tore loose and roared towards the bow. Her back broke when she settled. As if the Titaness had always known her fate, the ship was taken by the sea with barely a ripple. A few survivors simply stepped off her deck as she headed down. When the screams ceased, the lifeboats drifted into a deathly silence.

The consistency of these themes is crystallized in a 1996 obituary of a Titanic passenger, Miss Eva Hart. The obituary notes that seven of the eight passengers who are still alive today were then too young to remember the event. The remaining survivor, "nearing her 100th birthday, no longer remembers" (Thomas, 1996, 15). Thus, Miss Hart was the "last link of living memory" to the disaster. The article recognizes that no other shipwreck "claimed such a chilling grip on the popular imagination," and that this was "mainly because of a well-publicized exercise in hubris." Nevertheless, it is the recounted words and actions of Miss Hart's mother that are most striking. The claim that the ship was unsinkable

...caused Miss Hart's mother such apprehension that even as they walked up the gangplank, her daughter later recalled, she renewed her warning that calling a ship unsinkable was "flying in the face of God." She was so convinced of impending doom, her daughter later maintained, that she slept during the day and stayed awake in her cabin at night fully dressed. (Thomas, 15)

Eva Hart and her mother survived. Eva's father went down with the ship.

This "last living memory" asks to be integrated into our understanding of the catastrophe. Eva Hart's mother perceived an overstepping of cosmic and psychological boundaries; she knew, intuitively, that something had been pushed beyond its limit. She expected a backlash. Such a sensibility, which keeps one eye on the invisible constants of life, is missing from our age. The Titanic disaster carried within it the failed recognition

of such invisibles. Tragedy struck hard because, in identifying with Titanism, backs were turned on the Gods, the Furies, and the Fates.

The Titanic may have been less prone to disaster were the atmosphere of hubris confined to the ship itself. We do, after all, get away with a great deal of "flying in the face of God." However, Titanic's hubris reached beyond itself and played too neatly into the hands of a cultural *zeitgeist*. The doomed ship exemplified too perfectly the overly focused technological faith of an entire age. She carried many wealthy exemplars of a cultural revolution based on the philosophies of the Enlightenment, and, in the sometimes impersonal world of archetypal justice, these high-flying industrial elite were prime candidates for corrective descent. At that time, with declarations abounding of science being on the brink of unraveling all mysteries, nothing seemed to stand in the way of progress. No previous age had dispensed so efficiently with ties of religion and nature. But as rationalism was evicting soul's inhabitants, one can hear the voices of dismissed gods inciting Poseidon's act of revenge.

Since that time, we have lost a great deal of the mechanical uncertainty with which the universe was then regarded. Yet we are not so far from the underlying confidence and faith in our own devices. In looking back upon these events, we realize that a significant hubris is still afloat in the culture.

When perceived psychologically, the Titanic confronts our present-day hubris and challenges the dominant Western cultural ethos of "where there's a will there's a way." Recognition of this theme is unnerving. It entails seeing through our fascination with disaster into our state of archetypal possession—our identification with the ways of the Titan. It involves an acknowledgment of our participation in a dream, a story with its own autonomous presence. It fosters a sense of this archetypal movement, placing us within the same tragedy now, today, knowing the way in which we are still aboard a sinking ship. This recognition understands that to forget these things is to sail blindly into a stream of catastrophes, unconsciously provoking recreations of the Titanic tragedy. A psychological perception of Titanic's murmuring

compels a recognition of our Titan roots, an awareness of where our souls are stirred by the unfinished business and attitudes of our immediate ancestors. We thereby return our Titanic dreaming to the dream of the Titan. Then the grip of the giant is felt as an active myth—a myth that cradles our desire to plow across the surface of the world and simultaneously underscores the call of the depths below.

*Between Abandon and Binding: The Trouble with Prometheus*

Approaching the psychological impact of the Titanic via the Titan myth leads us to a more specific mythic narrative. Seeing into the grip of the Titanic story and its archetypal complexity suggests the palpable presence of Prometheus; the Titanic carried the imprint of this most celebrated Titan more than any other. Prometheus brings the gifts of ingenuity and invention, steals fire from Zeus, is bound to Caucasus and has his liver eaten by day and restored at night, cheats in sacrificial ritual, and is the divine patron of the human reach beyond the gods. This champion of human freedom and creativity deserves to be celebrated for freeing us from a kind of unconscious slavery to the gods. Yet this freedom comes at a cost.

This Titan's foundational role in humanity's cosmic predicament is witnessed by Karl Kerényi's subtitle to his work on Prometheus—"archetypal image of human existence." Bearing a name that means "forethought," Prometheus is present in any innovative design which furthers human intentions. He is thus enmeshed in the dominant cultural ethos of the 19th and 20th centuries—expanding consciousness, growing industry, technological breakthrough. Prometheus provides the impetus for scientific discovery and application in the modern world and is most present whenever these innovations begin to exhibit a godlike power. And so this particular Titan has also gotten us into some big trouble. Embracing this Titan we are called to remember the subtitle of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus* and to locate the monster lurking in the shadow of the Enlightenment's brightness.

The problem with our embrace of Promethean gifts and the freedoms of the enlightened age is that we split off the darker portion of this mythic narrative, namely the tortuous results of untethered innovation. We forget that Promethean abandon can lead to an incarnation of gigantism, which then calls forth a corresponding binding—a chaining to the laws of Zeus. Through this familial association, the unruly behavior of Prometheus’ relatives endures and enters the world cloaked in the garb of progress. Blinded by the wonder of his creative gifts, this residue of Titanic ancestry easily escapes our perception. But it is losing sight of the Titan in Prometheus that we become most prone to hubristic excess and its results.

Akin to the sinking of the unsinkable and the tragic demise of celebrated social figures, the myth of Prometheus is one of enantiodromia, of reversal, the assertion of opposites—the revenge of gods whom we fail to recognize when we become enchanted with our own craftiness and power. Here we find out just how much we are tethered to an archetypal psyche. What sailed with Titanic on her maiden voyage were the Promethean dreams of a culture reveling in a perceived emancipation from “superstition” and in an unprecedented industrial reduction of nature to resource. It was through this mythic identification with one side of the Promethean narrative that a ticket on the Titanic became an invitation for catastrophic reversal.

Today we are still poised on the edge of Promethean enantiodromia. And as we approach the 21st century, glued to the information superhighway, technology at our fingertips, our consciousness still identifies with this Promethean forward thinking while remaining largely unconscious of its Titanic background. There is a part of our psyche cruising unawares through dangerous waters, with unchecked speed and techno-faith, focused on the distant horizon of the New World, its back to the Old World. We are still on the deck of the Titanic. And under the belly of the ship, Poseidon and Tartaros await. Irreverent of the depths below with its gods and ancestors, this Titanic tendency accompanies us into postmodernity.

To be Promethean is to enter a Titanic family system and to be situated within the interplay of abandon and binding. Signal the engine room. Ahead slow. These waters need a closer eye.

*Promethean Slight and Sacrifice*

Prometheus is, like Hermes, a communicator, moving between the divine and human realms. After the Olympic-Titan war, he manages to align himself with Zeus. He is taught mathematics, medicine, astronomy, and architecture by Athena, before educating humanity. When Zeus becomes wary of the increase in human power, it is Prometheus who intervenes on mortals’ behalf. However, the relationship unravels when Prometheus cheats in a sacrificial ritual designed to stabilize god-human relations. In this act of cheating, his Titan ancestry shows through. Zeus consequently withholds the gift of fire, which Prometheus promptly steals. The guardian of human ingenuity is punished for his theft, eternally (or nearly so) bound to a cliff-face where an eagle from Zeus picks daily at his liver. The slighted sacrifice sets these events in motion.

This narrative is imbued with insights into our Promethean heritage. Here human-divine tensions coil around a specific limitation: Zeus tolerates human innovation and power by only a marginal degree. At the core of this tension, defining turns and outcomes, lies the ritual sacrifice. Sacrifice—making sacred, surrendering to the presence of a god, humbling oneself to the scheme of things—plays a pivotal role in all myth by determining the mood of archetypal forms which rise to meet the protagonist. Successful sacrifice occasions the recognition of divinity and quiets shadowy beings. Failed sacrifice fuels tragedy. In such a way sacrifice functions as the conduit to the gods par excellence. For Prometheus, sacrifice fails, the divinities are not properly recognized, and both he and his human devotees are drawn into a resultant tragedy which, by divine design, will forever tempt the innovator’s soul.

Failing to honor the gods through a sacrifice which would alleviate their distrust of human power sets up the second, darker

half of the Promethean narrative. This second movement constitutes the shadow of our preoccupation with human design and fills out the underbelly of the Titanic saga. The exercise of human will can only be tolerated when accompanied by a successful sacrificial recognition of the gods. In the absence of such sacrificial gesture, sacrifice is extracted at greater cost. Sacrifice is imposed. And thus we must beware: Giantism, Titanism, hubris do not sacrifice, but they do invite a sacrificial enantiodromia, a reversal which pulls the whole project down. Sacrifice is then carried out upon us with high tragedy; Hindenburg, Challenger, Chernobyl as witnesses.

In the failure to sacrifice, we are sacrificed.

From these mythic patterns we may distill the following: In so far as the modern-postmodern era identifies itself with Promethean exploits, it must keep its eye on its Titanic roots. To learn this lesson is, I believe, the key to a successful embrace of the technological age. We do not have to dispense with technology, but we must understand its archetypal grounds. Even then, we should expect no more than marginal ascension from Olympus.

Archetypal  
context of  
technology.

Fortunately Prometheus' failed sacrifice and cliff-face binding is not the end of a saga. Two ensuing themes provide us with means for negotiating the Titan's fate, offering a way to mitigate the enantiodromia of the narrative, and thereby opening a path of awareness through our Titanic dream. Both themes concern the restoration of sacrificial attitude.

The myth informs us that Prometheus' "eternal" punishment is temporarily assuaged each night when his shredded liver is restored. This healing quality of the night points to the restorative possibilities in embracing the dark, the underworld of shadow and dream, the counterpart of the bright focused gaze of rational consciousness. Both the chains and the night recall the fate of Prometheus' forbears in the dark prison of Tartaros. This motif thus provides a metaphor for working with unconscious themes (as we have been doing) and for developing a night-vision which perceives depth. Another motif specifies this suggestion by the myth. Prometheus is eventually unbound, freed once again by Zeus. This unbound Prometheus is a

different Titan. His ancestry has been worked over, softened, torn up, and refigured. Thus tempered by endless suffering and grief, he agrees to use his foresight to aid Zeus. In this way the Titan returns his gifts to Olympus, sacrificing his own will to that of Zeus, prefiguring the restoration of a sacrificial consciousness we are called to embrace today. Karl Kerényi writes, "the unbound Prometheus...thenceforth wore a special wreath as a sign of his subjection to the power of Zeus. As another emblem he bore an iron ring, which was said to have had a stone in it to remind him of the crag on which he suffered" (1951, 221-22). These motifs signal the completion of the Promethean narrative. The Titan turns to serve Zeus, fulfilling the punishment of bondage, redeeming his sacrificial failure, and integrating the healing experience of night.

Such images of Promethean restoration guide us through our collective identification with this mythic figure, prime our awareness of the shadow he casts, and offer a way to behold our Titanic dream. Acknowledging the punishment and failure which comes with the narrative, we reunite our Promethean preoccupations with their shadow elements. Noting the context of Prometheus' final redemption, we discover the cosmic demand for a sacrificial attitude. The Titanism which found its enactment in the Titanic disaster, having entered the culture through Promethean abandon, is returned to its ancestry and psychologically grounded within its full mythic narrative. Innovation, invention and freedom also invites bondage; in between lies a sacrificial attitude, lost and regained, and a reverence for what lies beyond us in the dark of the deep.

### *Lost Sea Wariness*

The insights into the collective psyche provided by these mythic themes usher us into a reassessment of the Titanic's fate. If we remain faithful to the details, this disaster, now present to us as an image of unreflected modern-postmodern exploits, can be attributed to the ship's officers and crew who failed to heed iceberg warnings. Think of these figures as the point-men of the cultural complex. Similarly, the extent of the disaster can be

traced to the blind arrogance of the ship's designers and owners, and to other crew who, in a state of denial, sent some of the lifeboats off half empty. Even after it was clear that the ship would sink, officers and crew continued to act otherwise. Significant in themselves as points of reflection, these events extend the metaphor of the Promethean shadow and detail the issue of unchecked hubris. They also lead us back to an understanding of that which guards against the perils of Titanism. Were all involved with the Titanic to have maintained their sea wariness, with one eye trained on autonomous powers beyond their control, the disaster would have been avoided. Such sea wariness is the rudimentary matter of the sacrificial attitude I refer to above, for to make sacrifice is to be in awe, to be unsettled and uncertain, ever ready to alter course.

Blind faith in human innovation made otherwise well experienced seamen lose their better judgement. The newness, the power, the size, the spectacle, the sophistication, the elegance, the dreamy wonder of it all closed off all portals to less heady sensibilities. In particular, perhaps the first to go was the capacity to intuit something amiss, a sailor's sixth sense—a sniff, a wind-shift, an omen—the kind of capacity that did not elude Eva Hart's mother. The wonders of science and technology, along with their rational methods, tend to close off these other senses. This is ultimately ironic; the best scientific discoveries are rarely divorced from a playful, intuitive perspective. Many breakthroughs in science come through sudden leaps of intuition. Yet as our world view becomes more mechanistic and less defined by psychic realities, more deterministic and less synchronistic, we lose touch with our soul methodologies. Without these vertical pathways with their visceral connections to the deep, anything crossing the sea of life becomes vulnerable. The stakes are raised when the vessel is Titanic in nature, when the Titanism of the Promethean venture overshadows everything else.

A recovered sea wariness would heed the laws of the sea. Psychologically, it would prioritize the patterns of the psyche. Mythically, it would embrace the wreath of Zeus and the ring which reminds one of punishment and bondage whenever one enters the Promethean realm. Adding verticality attends to all of these modes of perception. Slowing down the big ship, we

would reflect, turning ourselves to the past as well as the future, the Old World and the New. In so doing, we would reconfigure the archetypal family, remembering Prometheus' brother, Epimetheus, whose name means "afterthought." We would watch and listen for signs to be intuitively perceived. Journeying into the future on moonless nights requires a moonlit vision, a soft and peripherally sensitive eye. These sensibilities remind us of other presences, and provide us with ears and eyes for the invisibles when we are passing through calm, deep waters. So begins a sacrificial attitude.

James Herish notes that in Prometheus' punishment he is situated "within a pattern of movement. His manic, nonstop creativity (our science) is forced to rest, to be positioned within a schema, but it is not destroyed. Prometheus' activity has been moved from flux to rhythm" (1982, 156). The Titan's wound and punishment is also an opportunity for attunement to the gods. Conscious suffering is also a meditation on bondage, a lesson on how we are tied to archetypal reality. Turning to this part of the narrative reveals the value of its shadowy element. To digest the complete Promethean narrative is also to find faculties for successful negotiation of the technological age and to disarm Titanic giantism.

These moves against Titanic inflation are all concerned with a turn to the dark, beginning involuntarily through the revenge of the gods, then leading to an acceptance through endurance and sacrifice. When connected to such themes, the Titanic's demise corrects the sun-drenched logos of modern technological vision and moves us into the less defined, less focused, less mechanical world of mythos. A Titan chained on Caucasus or imprisoned in Tartaros is a counterweight for manic modernity.

This awareness makes possible another reading of the Titanic's story, namely that its literal descent to the dark sea bed occurred through the failure of other kinds of descent. And so, if we are still aboard the Titanic by way of our incomplete Promethean lives, still caught in the middle of the narrative, we remain faced with options of descent. James Hillman underlines this very situation after noting the same, "We're aboard the Titanic." He writes:

What is the right action? What do you do while the ship goes down? Strike up the band? Take to the lifeboats? But there's no other shore. Check it with your analyst? Go down like Lord Jim, with honor, courage, decency? At least keep things ship-shape? Or, perhaps, perform the rituals of sinking. (1995, 36).

Hillman makes the correct cultural diagnosis, "The wrath of the immortals against hubris" (36), then suggests a solution which enters the murky depths at the end of the Titanic's journey. "Let there be dark!" (37). Through psychological salvage, the Titanic returns a crucial element of psychological life, specifically, our relation to the unseen, to all below-the-surface phenomena, and prescribes a remedy for sailors overly entranced by the spell of modernity. Which way down? Only sacrifice to the deep keeps the culture afloat.

Insofar as this perspective on descent pertains to the actual ship, we have already failed miserably. Although some survivors and relatives of the disaster's victims have protested the "grave desecration" that salvage of the wreckage entails, few dare think that the Titanic has found her rightful resting place. In the poesis of the soul she headed in the right direction—toward the underworld. By contrast, the compulsion to bring pieces of the ship and her belongings to the surface speaks to a lacking vision of Promethean bondage and an enduring drive to conquer the dark. The popular fantasy of raising the Titanic and the realized efforts to recover her parts reflect the continuing growth of an untethered technology which asserts itself with ever increasing autonomy.

On the other side of such technical logos the mythic form of events surrounding the Titanic emerge. For most of this century, the Titanic avoided her mapping. Now large chunks of her hull do not want to surface. Expected treasures opened on worldwide television turn out to be less revealing than anticipated. Literal salvage is thwarted. Psychological salvage locates fragments of a myth held in place by an unrecognized Promethean narrative. In this story, the Titanic belongs at the bottom of the ocean—close to her ancestors. This is her fate, a kinship with

archetypal principles. And with fifteen hundred lives lost, this kinship is not something to be taken lightly. Here, as myth reveals human lives caught in a larger-than-life archetypal drama, tragedy is returned to its transpersonal origins.

### *Remembrance and Re-membering*

If the archetypal drama of the Titanic disaster remains unrecognized, if the events surrounding her voyage are not remembered, then its basic themes are certain to find more vivid repetition in the 21st century. The culture's engagement with Titanism is far from over.

The story persists that the Titanic sank with the band playing, and the remaining passengers singing "Nearer My God to Thee." For a venture that flew in the face of God, what could be more fitting? Like the dying person wishing to revisit past transgressions, the spontaneous song completes the hubristic neglect of divinities. Beyond themselves, perhaps, these passengers were singing last rites for a sinking giant. It was the distance from god(s) which provoked the disaster, and the movement nearer to the gods in this final, tragic, sacrificial scene. Embracing this very movement would not only be in accord with the dying perspective of the Titanic's passengers, it would also move our fixation on the process of autopsy to the remembrance of a funeral rite. "Nearer my God to Thee" is the soul's response to an event which demonstrated the separation of human endeavor and archetypal integrity. The Titanic's pieces need to be collected in the soul, not in the museum.



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