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THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES IN YAŞAR KEMAL'S ÇUKUROVA TRILOGY : THE OTHER FACE OF THE MOUNTAIN(*)

YAŞAR KEMAL'İN ÇUKUROVA ÜÇLEMESİ : DAĞIN ÖBÜR YÜZÜ'NDEKİ BİN YÜZLÜ KAHRAMAN

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ABSTRACT : Joseph Campbell's classic work, *The Hero With A Thousand Faces,* traces the archetypal pattern of the hero from obscure origins, the call to adventure, the crossing of the threshold, encounter with dark forces, the winning of a boon, the re-crossing of the threshold, the re-entry of the ordinary world and the hero's re-integration with his community. The present paper traces this pattern in the Triliogy of Yaşar Kemal entitled *The Other Face of the Mountain*, following the hero Tashbash through the various phases of this archetypal-heroic journey.

The presence in Yaşar Kemal's work of these universal patterns embodied in highly original and brilliant prose makes it clear that this Turkish novelist belongs among the great authors of world literature.

Keywords : Myth, archetypes, foklore, Turkish literature, Yaşar Kemal.

ÖZET *: Joseph Campbell'in klasik eseri Bin Yüzlü Kahraman'ın kahramanı gizli kaynaklardan maceraya, davete, eşiğin geçilmesinden karanlık güçlerle karşılaşmaya, iyi olanı elde ettikten sonra eşiği tekrar geçerek, sıradan dünyaya dönmeye ve toplumla yeniden bütünleşmeye uzanan temel modeli izler. Bu makalede de Yaşar Kemal'in Dağın Öbür Yüzü isimli üçlemesinin kahramanı Taşbaş'ın benzer temellere oturan cesur yolculuğunun çeşitli evreleri izlenerek incelenmiştir.*

Yaşar Kemal'in bu özgün ve görkemli eserinde var olan evrensel model onun sadece Türk edebiyatının değil, aynı zamanda dünya edebiyatının da en büyük yazarlarından biri olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler *: Mit, temel prototip, folklor, Türk edebiyatı, Yaşar Kemal.*

The archetypal patterns discernible in the work of Yaşar Kemal provide ample evidence of its essential connection with world literature. The recurrence in the fiction of this great Turkish writer of universal themes accounts for the fascination his stories hold for readers of many countries and differint cultures and different languages. Tashbash, the hero of the Çukurova Trilogy, embarks on a vocation as a

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* The present paper is a slightly revised version of a lecture presented at a Symposium in Honor of Yaşar Kemal in the Turkish Literature Faculty of Bilkent University in May 2002 at which Yaşar Kemal was awarded an honorary doctorate. Dr. Brandabur was invited by Dr. Talat Halman to contribute to this Symposium. That paper will appear in Turkish in the Proceedings of the Symposim.

healer much like that of Black Elk, a Native American of the Oglala Lakota, a branch of the Sioux, who lived from 1863 to 1950. As John G. Neihardt records his story, Black Elk learned in a vision that he was to be a Shaman or healer, one who conducts religious ceremonies and uses herbs to heal the sick. His vision showed him where to find the sacred herb with which to effect cures and he makes a journey into the prairie reminiscent of the quest of Gilgamesh for the Moly Flower some five thousand years ago in ancient Mesopotamia. In fact, Black Elk recognizes the location of the sacred herb by the presence above it of birds—'I looked towards the west, and yonder at a certain spot beside the creek were crows and magpies, chicken hawks and spotted eagles circling around and around. Then I knew, and I said . . . 'Friend, right there is where the herb is growing.''' In Yaşar Kemal's narratives too the flight of birds figure prominently as signs and omens, and, like Tashbash after his first healing of the paralyzed girl, Black Elk 'was busy most of the time' after healing the dying son of Cuts-to-Pieces. (*Norton Anthology of American Literature*, p. 944)

The archetypal heroic pattern is described by Joseph Campbell in his classic study *The Hero With a Thousand Face*. The full trajectory of this cylcle is incarnate in the career of Tashbash, the protagonist of this novel. Moreover, the complexities and paradoxes surrounding the life and death of 'Our Lord Tashbash' push beyond this archetypal pattern, forcing a confrontion with the very nature of tragedy and its relationship with ritual sacrifice in ancient society. Symbolically and thematically identified with Job, Jesus, and the dying gods of pre-Patriarchal nature religions, like Adonis and Osiris, Tashbash exemplifies the fate of the tragic hero who is without blame and yet whose death is necessary for the survival of his community.

Joseph Campbell describes a circular pattern which is realized, in whole or in part and with many variations, in these stories of the hero. First there is the call to adventure followed, if the hero responds to this call, by the crossing of the threshold into a strange and dangerous realm. Here he encounters dark forces in the under-world or realm of the dead with whom he must struggle. Sometimes in this phase there is a transfiguration or apotheosis in which the hero is revealed in his divine aspect. The transfiguration of Tashbash is surely one of the most astonishing examples in all of literature: he is seen by Memedik the Hunter as a gigantic Green Man whose countenance illumines the mountains with a green light in a blizzard. If the hero is successful in his grappling with the mysterious forces, he wins a boon which he then must bring back safely to his people. Sometimes he wins such a boon only to lose it, as Gilgamesh wins the Moly flower only to have it stolen by a serpent when he rests exhausted on the shore. Then he must return—he must recross the threshold bringing the boon to his people. Sometimes the returning hero is recognized and acclaimed, and the story ends with a wedding or a coronation. In other cases, the hero is so altered by his travail that his people do not recognize him, and he is rejected and humiliated. If this rejection is extreme, the hero may be killed as in the case of Christ, or die alone as is the case with Tashbash. Only in death is he recognized by his people and at last acclaimed, the women chanting dirges while the young men carry him up the mountain where they fill his grave with fragrant herbs and wild flowers, and all of nature mourns his passing.

The whole trilogy can be read as a drama built around vegetation issues which preoccupy a society completely dependent on the seasonal planting, growing, maturation, and harvest of staple crops. Though the story takes the form of prose fiction rather than a staged drama, it will be instructive to consider the parallels to vegetation dramas in other societies still close to the annual rituals of planting and harvest, in which the stage is the earth, the fields, and in which the acting out of the struggle with cosmic forces plays an important role in the success or failure of the harvest. In *Myth, Literature, and the African World,* Wole Soyinka describes a drama he has witnessed in Africa, the Eastern region of Nigeria, at harvest time 1961—where the ritual space is a farm-clearing at harvest time.(p. 38) Soyinka contrasts this kind of drama, in which the players and audience are the harvest workers themselves, with modern European drama in which the stage is artificially constructed and the drama is a 'form of esoteric enterprise spied upon by fee-paying strangers.' The harvest drama he describes is a traditional mask-drama: a symbolic struggle with chthonic presences, the goal of the conflct being the harmonious resolution for plenitude and the well-being of the community.'(38) The 'ritual space' in this harvest drama, Soyinka says, is the actual field of the farm where the people labor to supply their needs for the essentials of life. This rural drama is exactly like the Çukurova cotton plantation on which the villagers labor in Yaşar Kemal's Trilogy. In such drama, Soyinka says,

> . . . the co-called audience is itself an integral part of that arena of conflct: it contributes spiritual strength to the protagonist through its choric reality which must first be conjured up and established, defining and investing the arena through offerings and incantations. The drama would be non-existent except within and against this symbolic representation of earth and cosmos, except within this communal compact whose choric essence supplies the collective energy for the challenger of chthonic realms. (39)

Yaşar Kemal's *The Other Face of the Montain* is suffused with this ritualistic sense of space, which includes the natural world itself within which the peasants' agricultural work is enclosed—the fields are surrounded by the mountains with their sudden storms, the pine trees with their yalabuk, wild flowers, rivers, and eagles. This is the ritual space, what the Greeks called the *temenos*, the sacred space in which the human and the divine co-mingle and of which the formal stage of the Greek amphitheatre is but a constricted symbol. In this sacred space the villagers are both the dramatis personae and the chorus in the vast drama. In this respect, Yaşar Kemal's characters are very much the same as the harvesters who participate in the seasonal African dramas, in contrast to what Wole Soyinka calls the spectators of modern commercial theater-- 'fee-paying strangers' who come to the dramatic work like voyeurs. The audiences of modern drama, Soyinka suggests, are completely divorced from the drama, as compared with the peasants who are doing the harvesting or planting and who form the 'chorus' of the African drama, for whom success in planting and harvest mean life and death(*).

(*) This distinction between ancient ritual and modern religion is reminiscent of DH Lawrence who was fascinated by the work of Jessie Weston *From Ritual to Romance.* See 'The Ritual Corn Harvest Scene in *The Rainbow*'. By A. Clare Brandabur. *The DH Lawrence Review.* Vol. 6, Number 3, 1973. (pages 284-302)

Like the Nigerian harvest plays described by Soyinka, the drama of the cotton harvest in *The Other Face of the Mountain* is not about kings and queens, or about superhuman heroes: it is about poor and ordinary people who are actually harvesting cotton in the Anatolian plain. The shift from high mimetic mode heroes to the low mimetic mode is one of the characteristics of modern drama as Joseph Campbell explains in *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*:

> Modern literature is devoted, in great measure, to a courageous, open-eyed observation of the sickenly broken figurations that about before us, around us, and within. Where the natural impulse to complain against the holocaust has been suppressed—to cry out blame, or to announce panaceas—the magnitude of an art of tragedy more potent (for us) than the Greek finds realization: the *realistic, intimate, and variously interesting tragedy of democracy, where the god is beheld crucified in the catastrophes not of the great houses only but of every common home, every scourged and lacerated face.* (p.29) (Emphasis added)

This analogy to older dramatic forms also involves us in the issue of a form of drama earlier that of classical Greece, one in which the sacrificial victim is innocent, in contrast to the 'tragic flaw' which enabled the audience to be reconciled to the death of the tragic hero as somehow justified. Soyinka maintains that the original drama was one in which the gods inflicted arbitrary and undeserved punishments on humans, and that the victim was innocent. Soyinka believes that the Aristotelian idea of a tragic flaw, through which the hero brought about his own down-fall, 'was a later refinement; Oedipus the Innocent remained the ethical archetype of Greek tragedy.' (Soyinka 14) We will return to this issue in the Conclusion of this paper.

The *Call to Adventure* in the Trilogy

There are two components to the call to adventure of Tashbash, both related to the economic problems of his village. On the one hand, the terrible economic crisis of the villagers stems from poor cotton harvests due to lack of rain. This drouth and poverty creates a space for a hero to solve the problem. But why is Tashbash chosen for this adventure? Yaşar Kemal has said (*Yaşasın Edebiyat,* Aralık 1998, Sayı 14), the people create their own saints in times of crisis and discard them when the crisis is past. Yet the reason why they choose Tashbash and not someone else must stem from his concern for social justice. We will look at both aspects of the call to adventure.

The wily Muhktar Sefer has cheated the Yalak villagers every year by contracting for their labor to growers whose crop is sparse and, though he receives a fat commission, the villagers are disadvantaged because they must spend hours gathering the scattered cotton bolls, and so earning far too little money to pay their winter bills. So terrified are they of Adil Effendi, the money-lender, that they have nightmares about his coming to collect his debts, and they hide all their livestock and other possessions to keep him from confiscating them. This acute need for increased income from the annual cotton harvest makes them long for an abundant rain. In Volume One, *The Wind from the Plain,* Long Ali articulates the need for rain, in a series of prayers so vehement as to make his wife Elif tremble:

> 'Now, this very moment. . . or even to-morrow, it should rain over the Chukarova, a fiercer rain than at that time, so that for a week or ten days the labourers should not be able to work . . . . . .A wind should arise, lightning should flash and peals of thunder rend the sky. That would give us time to reach the cotton. Then we'd be able to pay back Adil Effendi and still keep a pile of money for ourselves.'(I, 126)

Thus the call to adventure arises in the first place from the need of the people for rain. And rain will be the boon that Tashbash brings back with him when he re-crosses the threshold to return from that other realm in which he had encountered dark forces and wrestled with them almost to the death.

But why is it Tashbash who is chosen? In the first place, he had spent six years trying to educate the villagers, trying to convince them they should not follow Muhktar Sefer who represents the traditional power structurn. He argues that they should represent themselves when they go down to the Chukurova to pick cotton. Yaşar Kemal has chosen for his saint an ordinary man but one who is instinctively a labor-organizer. Tashbash is a natural leader whose concern for social justice and for the liberation of his community causes him to go to great lengths for their sake. The words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount apply to Tashbash: 'Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled.' When the villagers, all of whom had promised to stand together against the wily Muhktar, capitulate as usual, letting Muhktar Sefer talk them around, Tashbash announces that he is finished with all of them. He has decided that he will go alone to the cotton fields, and that he will not let the Muhktar contract his labor but will pick cotton wherever he chooses. Later, the villagers say, Tashbash has changed since that night when they disappointed him. Perhaps from a feeling of guilt, knowing Tashbash had been right, the villagers now feel uncomfortable in his presence.

> Those who saw Tashbash these days said he had gone out of his mind. And it was true there was something strange about him. Ever since that fatal night at Sögötlü on their way down to the cotton picking, when the Muhktar had thwarted his plans and drawn the villagers over to his side, Tashbash had never been the same again (II 72).

He begins to utter strange prophecies and incantations with dreadful omens and curses:

> Hear me well, oh you craven creatures! Spring will not come this year, out of fear.There shall be no sprouting of grass and plants, no flowering of shrubs and trees in the mountains and the forests. The birds whall not hatch, the horses shall not foal, nor the sheep and goats yean. Your women shall be barren. Your streams and fountains shall flow like blood. And worse, worse things still shall plague you because you would not listen to me all these years (II, 74).

The people come to fear him and even to say he must be killed. His voice, bitter and venomous, echoes in their ears night and day (II, 75). At the same time the collective imagination of the villagers begin to identify Tashbash as a saint, a conviction given shape by the testimony of three villagers in particular: Spell-bound Ahmet, the dream-woman Zaladja, and the hunter Memedek. First, a wise fool or village idiot called Spellbound Ahmet, returns from the kingdom of the Peries during

a blizzard, making terrible predictions, telling of the death by freezing of two lovers who had escaped from the village, and saying that Muhktar Sefer will die by the hand of Tashbash. He echoes the oracular prophecies of Tashbash and kisses the ground before him three times. Next Zaladja, the strange widow whose dreams the Muhktar used to interpret to his own advantage, begins to dream of Tashbash. In a process resembling the workings of the Jungian collective unconscious, the villagers begin to share her dreams.

> 'In everyone's mind a dream is taking shape, a new world, half real, half fantasy. No one dares tell what he thinks, and as the days go by, Tashbash slowly retreats into a distant, magic world. He takes on stature' says the narrator (II, 86-7).

The villagers begin to weave stories about Tashbash based on fragments from all the legendary saints and heroes in their collective memory, giving him epic ancestors. When Tashbash hears such stories, he flatly denies them, saying he had no such heroic ancestors and reminding them who he actually is. The villagers become furious at his denials but keep on creating and embellishing their myths just the same (II, 93).

The Mukhtar tries every trick he can think of to counter these stories, spreading lies about this good man in which he is accused of the most hideous and unnatural crimes. But no one believes him and the stories of his heroic deeds and origins multiply. The Muhktar asks one of his cronies to find out who is spreading the heroic stories: 'I've tried my best,' Tiny Musa said, 'but it's no use. It's as though these stories spring up of themselves, from the earth, the rocks, the trees, as though they stream into the village from that great wide steppe yonder. . . '(II, 110) When he fails to turn the villagers against Tashbash, Sefer is beside himself. He decides to have Tashbash killed: 'He must be got rid of before he is crowned a saint.' In a passage reminiscent of both the crucifixion of Jesus and the abandonment of Joseph by his brothers, Sefer plans to strangle Tashbash and throw his body down a well. (II, 114)

The Transfiguration of Tashbash

But the third and most persuasive testimony comes from Memedek the Hunter. He arrives in the village, completely mesmerized by the vision he has just experienced in the mountains. Having lit a fire in the Peri Caves during a terrific snowstorm, he suddenly heard the earth moan, a noise that filled the world. He was astonished at the sight of seven balls of light which came bounding up the hill,

> . . .flooding the world with light, and in front of the seven balls of light was a man in long robes and his head was green! Such a great brightness he shed about him that the seven balls of light faded into gloom. He was coming nearer and nearer. I began to tremble. Who can it be? I thought. Only some very holy person could make the world in winter seem like spring. . .

(Here Memedek pauses to cut his leg with a knife, to prove to himself that he is actually awake and not dreaming.)

> I could hear my heart beating fit to burst. Then, out of the corner of my eye I stole a glance, and there was the tall man, standing right in front of me. He had a face to beautiful you could not look upon it. . . . *.And as the light hit him the green-headed man shone greenly, his head, his eyes, his garments, the very ground he stepped on. And then the night, the snow, the summit of Mount Tekech, the rocks, the whole world, was aglow with a green brightness.* It gushed out from within the snow, blinding me. I could not move for fright. But I looked, and who should I see? His face so beautiful I could hardly bear to look . . . Who? Our Lord Tashbash! (II, 125-6) (Emphasis added)

The green countenance of Memedek's vision associates Tashbash with the Green Khadr (or Khidr—Turkish 'Khizer') of Islam. Additional legends now spring up, including the claim that the sacred walnut tree appears in fire at night above the house of Tashbash and that he travels to the Holy Kaaba at midnight, prays at the Turbeh of the Prophet and then returns to the village. One story asserts that Tashbash visited Paradise but returned to the village out of concern for their poverty and distress (II, 154-5). Another claims he went to the mountains of Binğöl in search of the immortal horse of Koroğlu and discovered the fountain of life there among the springs of the mountain (II, 156).

Once the villagers are convinced that Tashbash is a saint, they begin to importune him to intervene on their behalf in every need. The first to bring her crippled daughter to him is Zaladja, the woman of dreams, who pleads, begs, and then threatens Tashbash until, reluctantly, he places his hands on the girl's head and prays, 'Allah, whatever I may be, this girl is full of faith. Make her well.' (II,160) A few days later, the girl comes to Tashbash walking on her own legs, and Tashbash is overwhelmed with joy. As more and more people come to him to be healed, he enjoys the adulation of the people and the good he can do for them, but soon the unpleasant consequences of his sainthood begin to manifest themselves. His wife, with whom he had enjoyed a close affectionate relationship suddenly becomes terrified of him and will have nothing to do with him sexually. Dismayed, he realizes that his life has changed forever. 'It had to be one of two extremes now,' he thinks. 'The crown of the saint or the crown of thorns.' (II, 163) (The mention of a 'crown of thorns' is an allusion to Jesus who was mocked and scourged and crowned with thorns as a preliminary to being crucified.)[(*)]

Crowds of sick and infirm begin to come to him from far and near, which opens him to prosecution since under Turkish law it is illegal to set up as a healer. He is arrested and taken for questioning but released when he explains to the officer what has happened. Sent back to the village after promising not to continue practicing as a healer, Tashbash finds it impossible to keep his promise because people continue to come, taking dirt from under his house which they regard as sacred, and

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[(*)] The Folkloric, Shamanistic, Quranic, Biblical and Zoroasterian elements of *The Other Face of the Mountain*, as well as some aspects of the archetypal heroic cycle in the novel have been dealt with in more detail in an earlier paper co-authored with Dr. Nasser Athamneh. See 'Yasar Kemal: The Life and Death of A Hero/Saint in *The Other Face of the Mountain*.' By A. Clare Brandabur & Nasser Athamneh. *The Toronto Review*. Volume 17, No. 3, Summer 1999. (pp. 44-64) Published in Turkish translation by Yurdanur Salman: in *Adam Sanat*, July 2001, (pp. 20-39)

demanding that he heal their ailments. Torn between the demands of law and the demands of his neighbors, Tashbash goes through an agony wondering if it is possible God could have made him a saint without telling him. 'If he was not a saint, if he was just an ordinary man, then what did it all mean? . . . . Wouldn't a man know if he were a saint?' he thinks. (II,184) When he considers leaving the village to escape from this impossible situation, he makes another unpleasant discovery, one which he cannot tell even his wife. 'The truth was he simply could not tear himself away from all this adoration.' (II, 185)

He experiences strange ecstasies and euphoric dreams, at times convinced that he must be a saint. However, he decides he must make certain. He goes outside into the freezing night to discover for himself whether or not the magic walnut tree truly blazes above his house. In one of the most touching scenes in the novel, poor exhausted Tashbash prays to God for a sign,
remembering Jesus and Mohammad:

> Men had always dealt cruelly with the saints Allah sent them. Hadn't they done so even to Allah's beautiful prophet, our Lord Jesus, dragging him to Mount Ararat and nailing him to an ebony tree? Nailing him by the hands and feet and leaving him on the cold summit of Mount Ararat, leaving him there to freeze and die . . . He died, our Lord Jesus, without uttering a word of complaint or entreaty to anyone. (III, 194)

He prays with passion, desperate to know if he is a saint, recalling the miracles wrought by Mohammad:

> Why shouldn't the holy tree of light come to visit the house of a saint at night? There have always been men of good will on this earth, and many who have attained holiness. . . . Why shouldn't a man like him who had always followed the path of Allah, be made a saint? . . . 'I will make them follow the path of righteousness and virtue. I will make whose who have much to give to those who have little. I will strive for the good of the oppressed, the exploited, for truth and justice.' (III 197)

Having fallen asleep after his long watch in the cold, he awakens at dawn when the sun strikes his eyes in a blinding flash before he loses consciousness. Carried inside by his family, he sleeps peacefully, convinced at last that a sign had been given him: he must indeed be a saint.

The Crossing of the Threshold

Arrested again, Tashbash goes peacefully with the policemen, sheltering with them in a cave when a blizzard descends. But he risks death in the blizzard and steals away while they are sleeping, fearing what will happen when they take him to the Police Captain. In Chapter 29 of Volume Three, *The Undying Grass*, we learn what happened to Tashbash from that point when the soldiers said he had just disappeared, and the villagers thought he had been taken up to Paradise to join the Forty Holy Martyrs:

> *Tashbash would never forget that night of death. When he closed his eyes it would come back to him, sending tremors through his body. On that night he had died and had come to life again.* (III, 196) (Emphasis added)

This corresponds to the descent into Hell in the epic stories of Gilgamesh and Odysseus. Struggling through the snow trying to find the Frozen Men Cave, Tashbash finds himself too exhausted to take the last few steps which would lead him to this refuge. But the faithful yellow dog which had followed him crawls along beside him, warming him with his breath. Later, after having been in a coma for weeks, he learns that a boy named Eseh, a shepherd from a nearby village had been warming himself by the fire in the Frozen Men Cave when a snow-covered animal had come running in from the storm. At first he thought it was a bear but soon realized it was a domestic dog, a dog which kept pulling him by the sleeve until he went outside into the snow and found the unconscious Tashbash lying there.

Eseh soon realizes that the man he brings in half-dead from the snow is Tashbash, the saint of their neighboring Yalak Village, and he is reminded of the legendary saints who had returned to life after years during which they were hidden in the Cave of the Seven Sleepers:

> Wasn't this the saint of Yalak Village, that saint of saints, the great Lord Tashbash? Wasn't the yellow hound that guarded him Kutmir, the legendary dog of the Seven Sleepers? The light that flowed out of our Lord Tashbash's body was spreading gradually, a green magic light. Soon the whole cave was aglow, shining in a green spring-like radiance. And then Eseh had thrown himself down and kissed the saint's feet. (III 198)

The villagers of Yerlidjik, who take care of Tashbash for months until he has quite recovered, resemble the 'eternal ones of the dream' in Carl Gustav Jung's dream analysis. 'A huge fireplace, its hearth piled high with crystal-red embers . . . A tall white-bearded figure with kindly eyes and a genial face . . . A beautiful young girl . . . A youth, children, one of them with eyes like Hassan, huge, sad, wondering eyes.' (III 197) They treat him with great kindness, insisting that he stay in the best house in the village. Before Tashbash knows wht is happening, Yerlidjik Village now becomes a magnet for the sick and infirm as people come to the saint to be healed and religious men come to the the saint as well. Fearing what will happen when the Captain and the gendarmes find out about this, one night while everyone else was asleep, Tashbash quietly made his escape.

The Return, The Re-Crossing of the Threshold

Tashbash made his way to the Çukarova plain and took work cleaning the stable of a rich Agha, a job reminiscent of the labors of Hercules which included cleaning out the Stygian stables. Finally the longing to see his people again overcame him and when harvest time came, Tashbash set out to find the Yalak Villagers among the cotton fields though he knew it might cost him his life. (III, 200-201) Famished and shrunken from privation and hunger, Tashbash knows his family and friends may not even recognize him. His re-crossing of the threshold back into the everyday world is underscored by long hesitation: he recognizes the Yalak villagers, but hides himself at the edge of the field behind a thicket, fearing to approach. He knows that he will be unable to bear it if they reject him or fail to recignize him.

> If they dare to mock me, if they so much as say one doubting word about my being a saint, then I'll kill someone. . . Or I'll kill myself . . . Because I did see the sign after all! I saw the luminous Holy Walnut come to rest on my roof and shed its brightness through the dark night. (II, 202)

At last, after hesitating and once even turning away, he stands again on the edge of the field, when an abrupt rain storm fills the plain, and a huge eagle hovers above the cotton field 'never even attempting to fly for shelter.' (III, 203) This eagle becomes a symbol of the divine affirmation of the sainthood of Tashbash, a corollary of the bird which hovers over the Dead Sea at the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, when a voice from on high is heard saying 'This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.' This eagle will hover above the swollen river when Tashbash drowns alone, and it will hover overhead when the yung men carry him up to a grave filled with fragrant marjoram and wildflowers while the women intone dirges in his honor.

Humiliated, unrecognized, the dying Tashbash goes alone to the river which has been swollen by the terrific storm, the flood for which Long Ali had prayed and which is the boon brought back by the suffering Tashbash after his encounter with strange powers in the dark world of death. After he has drowned and is lying peacefully in death, his wife recognizes him at last and cries out, ''My saint! Mine! My own, my holy one,' she sobbed, 'This is what they brought you to with their spite and jealousy. . .' (III, 312) And she begins to intone the traditional lament:

> 'Why do you lie there, oh my beloved, in the heat of the morning,'
> she keened,
> 'and I waiting for you, the light is raining on your grave . . .
> Oh, why do you lie there under the sun ...? Why don't you come to me ...?' (III, 313)

According to the decree of the Bald Minstrel, Tashbash is to be given the burial of a martyr in Islamic tradition:

> 'This body does not need the washing rites,' the Bald Minstrel pronounced knowingly. 'Nor a shroud either. He's got his clothes anyway and we have no shroud here. I'll say the prayers over him and we'll make the funeral namaz here right away. Then we'll build a shrine for him on that hill over there. Anyway Tashbash won't remain in his grave, that's sure. He'll go right up into the Mountain of the Forty Holies not later than tonight. This body doesn't need any of the ordinary funeral ries.' (III. 314)

Tashbash is recognized by his villagers in death as he had not been in life—there had grown too wide a space between their image of him as a great saint already glorified in Paradise and the actual human figure of the emaciated, ragged Tashbash who was their husband, neighbor, father. Now, however, the Bald Minstrel directs the funeral, telling the young men to pick up the body and carry it up the hill. 'The grave was quickly dug. The villagers threw into it large bundles of marjoram they had picked on the way. Tashbash was covered with blue-flowering marjoram.' (III, 314)

The women prepare a funeral feast, Tarhana soups, bulgur pilaffs with tomatoes, even okra and aubergines from a nearby vegetable garden, francolins and pigeons. All the food was carried to the wattle hut of Tashbash's wife and laid on large cloths on the ground. Prayers for the repose of the soul of Tashbash were said, each person greeting his wife as they left, and long before sunrise the Bald Mintrel intoned a beautiful elegy accompanying his deep voice with the *saz.* This elegy makes it clear that Tashbash in death is celebrated like Adonis or Osiris, or Jesus, one of the dying gods sacrificed for the life of the community.

> That instant the waters held their flow, the Minstrel sang. The rivers and streams were frozen in their courses that instant. The fountains and springs turned dry. And that instant the wind dropped, not a leaf stirred, the seas and lakes were smooth. The birds stopped in mid-air, their wings bound. The grass did not grow, the flowers did not bloom. The night never ended, nor did it begin. And there was no light, nor darkness. The darkness was frozen. The stars did not shine or twinkle. They froze. The forest held its rustling and the ants did not creep. That instant even men's hearts stopped beating and everything on earth and everything in heaven came to a standstill. Young buds would not break open, fires would not flame. The mountains would not awake to the day and even the smoke would not rise in the sky. That instant when our Lord Tashbash died, when he gave up his earthly breath, the whole of creation paid its silent homage and all was hushed and still. (III, 315)

Because of the abundant rain, the boon which Tashbash brought back with him from the other world, the villagers picked cotton from fields heavy with the harvest, filling their sacks in record time. 'They were making their way back at last to their homes in the hills. In their pockets this year they had more money than even they could believe. It had been a good year for the crops.' (III, 319) Memedek is at last able to kill the Mukhtar Sefer, and his beloved Zeliha Lass is faithful and promises to wait for him till the end of time when he goes off happily to prison. And the great eagle makes three slow circles in the sky and then flies off to his home in Mount Aladag.

So the cycle of the hero is complete. But I want to conclude this study with an epiphany which Yaşar Kemal puts in the mouth, not of Tashbash or the Bald Minstrel, but that of Meryemdje, the mother of Long Ali. This epiphany, which is comparable in its eloquence and grandeur to the 'what a pice of work is man' soliloquy of Hamlet, is set in a comic-ironic situation which demonstrates the humor and the richness of the narrative. Meryemdje was left alone in Yalak Village during the most recent cotton harvest, because she was too feeble to walk down to the Çukarova, and Long Ali was physically unable to carry her all the way. Her princpal problem was loneliness. She sees around her all the richness of the natural world, the trees, the clouds, the houses, the swallows, the bees, the scents—yet the world seems empty without a fellow human being. Here is the passage, surely one of the most beautiful pieces of poetry in any literature of any language:

> Meryemdje felt all the dread of this desolate world in the very core of her heart. A world full to the brim, yet lifeless, dead. In the very core of her heart, piercing as a poisoned dagger, she felt the absence of the human being**. So it is man that fills the world, man that is everything. Without him the world does not exist. . . .**

> They could give me the whole of Paradise all to myself, I wouldn't have it. I'd rather be cast into Hell and be with human beings. What's the good of a world with nobody in it. . . .'(III, 243) (Emphasis added)

Though this passage has a sublimity every bit as marvellous as the soliloquy of Hamlet in which he calls man 'the beauty of the universe, the paragon of animals,' the irrepressible humor comes from the fact that these sublime lines are put in the mouth of this quarrelsome old lady who has cursed her son, fought with Old Halil about which of them should ride the grey horse, and vowed never to speak to any of the villagers again.

Like E. M. Forster who in *A Passage to India,* gives to Mrs. Moore, a mature woman, a mother of children, twice married and twice widowed, the central role of mystical adept, Yaşar Kemal gives to a mature woman a role in which she is the one who voices what could be called the theme-song of all of his work:

> So it is man who fills the world, man is everything.
> Without him the world does not exist.

Conclusion

It seems clear that the archetypal heroic cycle as described by Joseph Campbell is indeed delineated in *The Other Face of the Mountain*. It is also evident that the drama of the villagers of Yalak and the cotton harvest is set in the sacred space of the Çukarova plain surrounded by mountains, rivers, the sky and the sea, with its wild flowers and its eagles. Man moves within this sacred space in the kind of natural drama described by Wole Soyinka in which the peasants themselves are dramatis personnaie and chorus.

As we have reviewed the adventure of the archetypal hero Tashbash, a cycle in which he has been called to an adventure of sainthood culminateiing in his ritual death, we face the question of whether he is a tragic hero in Aristotle's sense. Several times, as we have seen, he himself asks what he has done to deserve such suffering, and though he knows he has always tried to obey the laws of Allah, that he has tried to do only good to other people, he believes *he must have done something* to merit the terrible suffering he undergoes. The idea that god would inflict suffering on him though he is innocent is repugnant to him, as Aristotle says it would be if the tragic hero is perceived to be totally innocent. Therefore Tashbash often asks what it is he has done to deserve such punishment:

> *What crime have I committed?* Have I rebelled against Allah that he should afflict me like this and make me a plaything of the whole world? To be worshipped as a saint . . . And if I'm not one, that's the worst punishment Allah could have inflicted upon me. . . . *this is a judgement passed on me. This is how a saint is punished when he has committed some sin. I've done something, I must have, and Allah is chastizing me*. He's turning me to scorn in the eyes of all the world. . . '(III, 202-3) (Emphasis added)

And a little later, perhaps the most touching plea of all:

> 'Oh! God,' he began, 'hear my plea in the silence of this night. Many times I have doubted and put you to the proof. I have tested myself again and again, but now at last I know that I am your saint, your representative upon earth, sent by you to relieve the sick and comfort the poor and give strength to the weak. This was your trust, and *because I betrayed it you have brought all these troubles upon me. And you were right*. I have come to my senses now, but too late. The people have rebelled against me, and against you too.' (III, 227) (Emphasis added)

These cries of the heart are reminiscnet of the anguish of Job who was reduced to the extremes of suffering and whose friends urged him to admit he had sinned and ask foregiveness, unwilling to believe that Yahweh could permit the suffering of an innocent man. And of Jesus who in the liturgy of Good Friday is made to ask 'What have I done to thee or in what have I offended thee? Answer me!' Traditionally Christ is perceived as the innocent sacrificial victim who dies for the sins of sinful humanity.

Wole Soyinka raises the question of the difference between the sacrificial victim and the tragic hero. He believes that the ancient sacrificial victim was innocent, and that the attribution of blame by reason of *hamartia* is a later sophistication. Soyinka quotes Shakespeare's lines in *King Lear:*

> As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
> They kill us for their sport.

Then adds, 'The psychological base—the 'tragic flaw' in the hero – was a later refinement; ***Oedipus the Innocent remained the ethical archetype of Greek tragedy***.' (*Soyinka,* 14) (Emphasis added)

Aristotle requires of the 'finest kind of tragedy' that 'in the first place it is evident that good men ought not to be shown passing from prosperity to misfortune, for this does not inspire either pity or fear, *but only revulsion'* (*The Poetics.* translation of James Hutton*, Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces, p. 834*) It should be said that this revulsion is moral before it is aethetic inasmuch as we find repugnant the idea of a cruel or unjust deity. Oedipus himself cries out 'My God, My God, What have you planned to do to me?' Through the fate of the tragic hero, we glimpse the dark forces of fate and of the gods, and there is indeed something shocking, something that causes our revulsion. The terrible dark aspect of the fate of Tashbash seems the pure victim of sacrifice rather than the death of the flawed hero who brings about his own fate. I think this reading of the fate of Tashbash was exactly what the author had in mind.

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