



Research Article

The Prototype and Political Mythical Connotations of “Drowning Death” in Kenzaburō Ōe’s *Death by Water*

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Abstract

This article meticulously examines the interplay of myth and memory in Kenzaburō Ōe’s novel *Death by Water*, with a central focus on the protagonist’s relentless investigation into his father’s death by drowning. Ōe skillfully intertwines personal tragedy with the collective consciousness of Japan, invoking the ‘Meiji Spirit’ and the ‘Spirit of Postwar Democracy’ to frame the narrative. The study identifies the ‘drowning death’ as a mythological archetype, analyzing its symbolic representation of life, death, and rebirth cycles within the novel’s context. Through a close reading of the characters’ experiences, particularly the deaths of the father and Daio, the paper explores the multifaceted nature of mythical thinking shaped by historical zeitgeists. The findings suggest that national spirit, or Zeitgeist, exerts a profound influence on societal values and actions, leading to a discourse on the nation’s relationship with the concepts of sacrifice and offering. Employing political mythology, the study delves into the nuanced connection between national identity and the sacrificial ethos, proposing that such narratives reflect deeper cultural and political undercurrents.

Keywords: Kenzaburō Ōe; *Death by Water*; Prototype Criticism; Political Myth.

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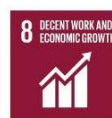
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1. Introduction

Death by Water is one of the late works by the Japanese Nobel Prize winner for Literature Kenzaburō Ōe, serving as both a reflection on the author's later creative journey and a recollection of childhood experiences. The novel employs numerous intertexts and multiple metaphors, making its content not easily understood by readers in general, and it has not garnered significant attention in the academic sphere. Currently, there is limited research on this novel, with the focus mainly on three aspects: analyzing the portrayal of the father figure, exploring the mythological prototypes and multiple metaphors within the novel, and analyzing the author's late-life writing style (Ren, 2016; Huang, 2017; Han, 2014). In the novel, on the occasion of Japan's defeat and surrender, father drowns after leaving home in a small boat during a flood, leaving behind a red suitcase, which contained James George Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. Years later, the protagonist returns home and tells the story of three generations rebuilding their identities in a quest to track down the cause of his father's drowning death in the summer of 1945. "Drowning death," as the central imagery of the entire text, the dissection of its archetype and connotation is the key point to understanding the work. Water consistently serves as the thematic thread connecting life and death cycles throughout the mythological prototypes of water, from flood myths to baptism rituals, from the custom of river gods marrying wives to water burials. In the novel, Kogito mentions, "Once washed away by the river water, those who drowned, needless to say, and even those who were rescued, would be regarded by everyone as soon to leave the village" (Ōe, 2013, p. 16). Therefore, the father's drowning death is not merely a simple demise but a specific ritual of life.

This study, grounded in an interdisciplinary perspective, adopts the method of archetypal criticism from mythology studies, starting from the core imagery of "drowning death", and by elucidating the mythical thinking behind "death and rebirth," explores the relationship between "drowning death", the zeitgeist and national politics. In the conclusion, the father, through a ritualistic sacrifice, sought to take away misfortune and bring about a new beginning for the nation, which was on the verge of defeat, responding to the demands of the Meiji spirit under the absolute imperial system, namely, the requirement for people to love their country, be loyal, and be always ready to sacrifice for the nation. Combining with the post-war State Shinto political form in Japan, this study reveals the underlying structure behind Ōe's critique of the spirit of the times under imperial rule in *Death by Water*, namely, a reflection and warning of the dark side of modern political myths, guiding readers to contemplate the "conspiracy" within modern political myths and the relationship between individuals and the state. In the contradiction where national ideology must exist but also be questioned, it inspires modern citizens to make value choices and judgments about the world in which they live.

2. The Prototype and Cultural Metaphor of "Drowning Death"

The father's drowning death serves as the core theme and starting point of the entire novel. During childhood, the mystery surrounding the father's cause of death lingered in the protagonist's mind, becoming a lifelong knot that could not be untied. To investigate the motive behind the father's drowning while carrying the anthropological masterpiece *The Golden Bough* upstream on a canoe and shouting "Long live the Emperor," the protagonist decides to return to his hometown and

study the father's belongings—the red suitcase. Hoping to unravel the truth of his father's death by writing a novel about drowning death, he completes his lifelong contemplation and exploration of the drowning theme.

The term “death by water” in the novel originates from T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), specifically the fourth chapter, “Death by Water”: “A current under sea picked his bones in whispers. As he rose and fell, he passed the stages of his age and youth entering the whirlpool” (Eliot, 1960). The poem tells the story of Phoenician sailor Phlebas buried at sea, combined with mythological prototypes and their rituals for analysis. The image of drowning Phoenician sailors in the poem can be traced back to the myth of Adonis, the god of vegetation who dies and is reborn in ancient Phoenician mythology. During the Adonis festivals held annually in Western Asia and Greece, women mourned and wept, dressing up their god to resemble real corpses, carrying them to the funeral procession, and then casting them into the sea or water sources... The next day, his resurrection was celebrated (Ye, 2011). The statue of the god thrown into the water floated with the waves and was eventually washed back to shore by the tide, thus achieving the resurrection of the god and the return of natural forces. In Eliot's notes on *The Waste Land*, he specifically mentioned: “Another anthropological work that greatly benefited me and profoundly influenced a generation is *The Golden Bough*. I particularly used the two volumes about Adonis, Attis, and Osiris. Those familiar with these contents can easily see exact references to the ritual of the vegetation god in this poem” (Eliot, 2006). In the chapter “Death by Water”, Eliot metaphorically represents the myth of the resurrection of the vegetation god Adonis through the Phoenician sailors’ “death by water,” demonstrating the ritualistic origin of “death by water” and the mythological thinking that connects “life, death, and resurrection.” “Water” is also a representative symbol of both destructive and regenerative forces in Western culture. The flood myth of the deluge is a concentrated embodiment of the disastrous and destructive nature of “water”: *The Old Testament Genesis* records Jehovah punishing humanity with a flood, and Greek mythology also tells stories of Zeus and the gods causing rainstorms and floods to punish humanity. As a Christian rite of initiation, the baptismal rite is a vivid example of water's power to cleanse and regenerate. *The Gospel of Mark* 16:16 in the New Testament records: “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Helton, 1994), indicating that the baptismal rite forgives the original sin of the baptized and saves them, allowing them to return to purity and gain new life. Therefore, in Western cultural tradition, the water archetype embodies three main meanings: disaster and destruction, life and hope, purification and rebirth. Eliot's death by water in *The Waste Land* is a baptism-oriented ritual death aimed at revitalizing the wasteland through a death ritual achieved by water.

Oe's resonance with Eliot's phrase “death by water” is rooted in his childhood experiences and the Japanese mythological tradition. In the Japanese national myth *Kojiki* (Records of Ancient Matters), the father god Izanagi enters the underworld to find his wife. After seeing the impurity of the mother goddess Izanami, he returns to the human world to bathe in the river, cleansing himself of the impurities brought by the underworld and subsequently giving rise to fourteen deities. In Japanese native mythology, what is directly connected to death by water is not just the rebirth of the father god but the birth of all the gods. Therefore, it can be said that in the Japanese mythological concept, “water is intertwined with the underworld and the mortal world, impurity and purification, death and rebirth, formlessness and form, profanity and holiness” (Zhao, 2016).

In Japanese folklore, rituals of “drowning death” can also be found. The Hinamatsuri (Doll’s Day) on March 3rd is one of the five major folk festivals in Japan, and “exiling doll figurines” is a unique custom during this festival. People put dolls and offerings into the river and let them drift downstream, hoping to rid themselves of their own misfortunes and impurities through this ritual (Li, 1996). The *Tale of Genji- Suma* of the Heian period also describes the Doll’s Day: On the first day of March, which happened to fall on the Day of the Snake (Sexagenary cycle), Prince Genji persuaded Murasaki to go to the seaside to perform a purification ceremony, inviting passing Onmyoji (yin-and-yang master) and place the human shape doll on a boat, and float it into the sea (Shirane, 2008). Placing the doll on a small boat and floating it into the sea may be the embryonic form of Doll’s Day.

In Japanese Buddhist beliefs, drowning death is directly linked to the Pure Land of Bliss and becomes the direction of devout believers. “Sun Visualization” is one of the sixteen methods of visualization to reach the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha and is derived from *The Sūtra In Which The Buddha Speaks Of Contemplation On Immeasurable Life Buddha*. This method involves observing the setting sun to determine the direction of the Pure Land or visualizing the light of the Pure Land. (Quinter, 2021) In the novel, when the father reads a passage from Shinobu Origuchi’s novel *The Book of the Dead* (1939), he misreads “淼淼” (endless body of water) as “森森” (dense forest) (Mark & Boehm, 2015). Combined with a discussion by Japanese folklorist Orimoto Nobuo on the “sun visualization” of Buddhist beliefs, it can be understood:

The souls of many devout believers long for the sea to the west and sink into the depths of the ocean... believing that passing through the waves of the sea will eventually reach the Pure Land. In devout belief, Sun visualisation can reach the eastern gate of Pure Land; it can be said to pursue a water depth of Buddhist ecstasy. (Reiji Andō, 2011).

In the Buddhist belief of sun visualization, the Pure Land of Bliss is depicted as existing in a world submerged in water.

Therefore, Eliot’s “Death by Water” metaphor reveals the mythical thinking of plant deities dying and being resurrected, eliciting a deep emotional resonance within Japanese traditional culture. Simultaneously, “water,” as a symbol of life, death, and rebirth, widely exists in Japanese mythology, folklore, and beliefs, possessing the function of disaster relief and purification. Tracing back to the prototype of the “Drowning Death” myth, we find embedded images of father figures, such as the sailor sinking into the sea, the floating Adonis statue, the bathing father deity Izanagi, the downstream doll, and the believers longing to sink into the vast ocean waves to reach paradise. These images intertwine, continually reenacting the cycle of life and death, interpreting the eternal theme of rebirth.

3. “Drowning Death” and *Zeitgeist*

On March 27, 1945, 329 villagers from Takashiki Island, Okinawa, Japan, were forced to commit collective suicide while chanting “Long Live the Emperor.” However, this tragedy was later glorified as a noble sacrifice for the country. In his *Okinawan Notes* (1970), Ōe described in detail the collective suicide of hundreds of thousands of Japanese military and civilians at the end of the Battle of Okinawa, including testimonies that clearly indicated the locals were compelled to suicide

by military orders. As a result, he became a defendant in the Okinawa lawsuit in 2005, a legal battle that lasted three years and placed Ōe at the forefront of confrontation with right-wing forces in Japan. This incident prompted Ōe to reflect on the two zeitgeists he experienced, namely the Meiji spirit and the post-war democratic spirit, with Japan's defeat marking the boundary between the two. Regarding *Death by Water*, Ōe stated, "I began to understand my father's ultra-nationalism, the ideology of chanting 'Long Live the Emperor' and willingly sacrificing oneself for the country. This led me to abandon the direction of writing 'Death by Water' novels and instead trace the roots of this ideology, re-examine the 'spirit of the times' I experienced in my childhood during the defeated period, and realize that the spirit of chanting 'Long Live the Emperor' had deeply ingrained in my heart" (Ōe, 2013, p. 5). Consequently, in the creation of *Death by Water*, Ōe focused on the motive of his father's drowning and explored the zeitgeists represented by three generations: his father, Kogito Choko, and Unaiko.

Ōe first introduces the "Meiji spirit" through Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro*. Through interactive theatre performances by the Caveman troupe and the audience, he initiates discussions on the suicide of the protagonist "Sensei" in *Kokoro*. The debate mainly revolves around two questions: firstly, although the "Meiji spirit" was prevalent throughout the Meiji era, were all people living in that era influenced by it? Secondly, regarding the reason for Sensei's suicide, was it out of guilt for betraying his friend, or was it influenced by the "Meiji spirit" and thus chosen as a sacrifice? This also triggered the narrator's contemplation on the relationship between father's death and the "Meiji spirit" and aroused readers' questions about the motive behind my father's drowning death, namely, whether individuals are inevitably influenced by the zeitgeists. Was the father's death an accidental evasion of personal responsibility or a deliberate act of sacrificing oneself for the country after careful consideration?

Suicide has a profoundly complex composition at the psychological level, with the contemplation and understanding of death by the individual at its core. This construction involves an assessment of real-life hardships and understanding the meaning of death and the afterlife. The mother perceives the father's death as an accident that occurred during his escape process, stating,

The officers were indeed considering rebellion and making preparations, so he felt scared. I think he finally managed to escape" (Ōe, 2013, p. 82).

While in the understanding of the inheritor of his father's spirit, Daio, the father's suicide is seen as an act of sacrifice.

The person who originally formulated this strategic plan, as a symbolic act, needed to rise up alone... If at the moment of defeat, by some means, the emperor was to leave, it would be necessary to prepare in advance for sacrifice... Mr. Kogito Chōe indeed made mental preparations in advance for sacrifice" (Ōe, 2013, p. 233).

The differing interpretations of the mother and Dahuang echo the two questions raised by Da Jiang mentioned earlier and also coincide with the two aspects of suicide motivation: whether it is the termination of "real-life hardships" or the pursuit of "the meaning of death."

Matsumoto Sannosuke, an expert in the history of Japanese political thought, pointed out when discussing the general attitude of people during the Meiji period, "the strong enthusiasm and concern aroused by national issues shaped a common, universally existing spiritual atmosphere

among the people of the Meiji era" (Matsumoto, 2005: 3). As an ordinary civilian, through interaction with the military stationed in the mountainous areas, father early on recognized the inevitability of defeat. Therefore, he led the villagers to stockpile garlic to guard against food shortages and actively promoted the "Kill the King Plan." These actions fully demonstrated his concern for the nation and sense of mission and reflected the political enthusiasm of ordinary Japanese people at that time. Matsumoto pointed out that the "Meiji Spirit" core is "nationalism," which emphasizes national interests and values and requires citizens to sacrifice themselves unconditionally for the country. In addition, this spirit instilled moral values such as filial piety, fraternal respect, loyalty, and righteousness into society through forms such as the *Imperial Rescript on Education* (1890) (Matsumoto, 2005: 7). It is this emphasis on political values over personal values and the supremacy of national consciousness that forms the psychological basis for the father's act of sacrificing himself for the country. Therefore, we can draw two conclusions about the relationship between the "Meiji Spirit" and the father's suicide: first, the influence of the spirit of the times on the individual is irresistible, and second, the father's act of suicide for the country was a sacrificial gesture made after careful consideration.

In the novel, the second-era spirit, opposed to the Meiji spirit represented by the father figure, is the "post-war democratic spirit" represented by the Caveman troupe. After World War II, the US military headquarters in Japan implemented post-war democratic reforms nationwide. *The Peace Constitution* (1947) and the *Fundamental Law of Education* (1947) emerged, and ideals of pacifism, liberalism, and individualism permeated Japanese society. The Caveman troupe actress Unaiko has been subjected to dual persecution of body and spirit by the director Masao couple from 17 years old. However, Unaiko's resistance against Masao ultimately concludes with Daio's drowning death. In narrator Kogito's dream, Daio might "bury his face in the densest leaves of the trees, filled with rainwater, and stand still, dying by water" (Ōe, 2013: 315). The Masao couple represents the right-wing forces in Japan. Unaiko's failed resistance not only represents the weakness of the democratic spirit in resisting the suppression of right-wing forces and the resurgence of the "Long Live the Emperor" era spirit but also reflects Ōe's contemplation on the future of democracy. With the rise of right-wing forces in Japan, post-war democracy is under fierce attack, and its "dominant ideological position lasting for more than half a century is coming to an end" (Chen, 2013). As the inheritor of his father's spirit, Daio believes he got guidance to climb up to the forest to return to the "vast forest." However, Daio's drowning death is clearly different from his father's. In the envisioned ending by narrator Kogito, Daio's drowning death symbolizes the ending of this exploration, the abortion of the water death novel, Unaiko's failed rebellion, the dissolution of the Caveman troupe, Daio's suicide, and the profound sense of powerlessness of the novel's characters. If the father's drowning death links death and rebirth (the "death" of the Meiji spirit and the birth of the post-war democratic spirit), then Daio's drowning death connects rebirth and death (the "death" of the post-war democratic spirit under the right-wing forces), namely: the world after rebirth will not become better, but even worse.

Ōe himself is trapped in the same spiritual dilemma as Daio. On the one hand, he claims to have actively embraced the "spirit of the times" since childhood, but on the other hand, he deeply feels that the spirit of the era of "Long Live the Emperor" is rooted in his heart (Brasil, 2017). In the squeeze between these two-era spirits, Ōe can examine their pros and cons. His father sacrificed for the Meiji era spirit, Tofukiko struggled for the democratic spirit, and Daio chose to end his

life by intertwining these two spirits. These different behaviours and choices also reflect the differences in the thinking of different individuals and groups in Japanese society as they experience the process of two eras and explore a way out politically for the country.

4. “Drowning Death”: The Conspiracy of Political Myth

Myth, as a mode of thought, was not originally a political tool, yet political power relied on mythological thinking from its inception. In *The Myth of the State*, German philosopher Ernst Cassirer discussed the emergence of political myth: In all cases that can be dealt with by comparatively simple technical means, man does not have recourse to magic. It appears only if man is confronted with a task that seems to be far beyond his natural powers...This description of the role of magic and mythology in primitive society applies equally well to highly advanced stages of man’s political life. In desperate situations, man will always have recourse to desperate means—and our present-day political myths have been such desperate means (Ernest, 1946, pp. 278-279). Although modern humans have long departed from the primitive forms of magic society, the need for myth persists during major life crises, collective disasters, and social upheavals. German philosopher Hans Blumenberg summarized three aspects of the legitimacy of myth in politics: 1) Myth simplifies real dilemmas. 2) Myth provides psychological comfort in a complex world. 3) Myth drives violence and extremism (Yack, 1987). Combining Blumenberg’s concept of political myth, myth, due to its simplification of reality, psychological resolution of dilemmas, and comforting practical function, can effectively guide and utilize political support at the spiritual level. However, the irrational characteristics of myth may also be exploited by politics, thereby becoming an effective means for extremist organizations or national governments to implement implicit spiritual control over the people.

In modern Japan, the concept of “State Shintō” that governed the Japanese is a vivid example of political manipulation of mythology. Ruth Benedict once remarked on modern Japan, “What the United States cannot do what no outside nation could do is to create by fiat a free, democratic Japan” (Benedict & Buruma, 2006, p. 222). Following the Meiji Restoration, Japan emulated Western democratic nations and established a modern secular nation-state to eliminate religious political intervention and reinforce the state’s secular authority. However, the secularization resulted in the formation of a false secular state. *The Meiji Constitution* (1889) legally stipulated the secular nature of Japan’s political system and upheld the principle of “separation of politics and religion.” Yet, in reality, it exerted transcendental political control over the social and spiritual world of the people through a mechanism similar to the “unity of politics and religion” seen in religious states. On the one hand, it excluded the intervention of religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Shintoism in politics; on the other hand, continuous commemorative rituals provided spiritual bonds and sacred discourse support for politics.

Japanese strategist Terumasa Nakanishi pointed out that considering the Yasukuni Shrine (Peaceful Country Shrine) as a core facility where the nation dedicates lives and consoles the fallen is the foremost important issue in national security policy. This indicates that worshipping at the Yasukuni Shrine is not merely about the shrine but involves an agreement between the state and its people. The state utilizes this to instill in the people a sense of loyalty and patriotism, promising to transform the brave sacrifice into “martyrdom” through posthumous worship. This “implicit

agreement" provides a rational and continuous spiritual drive for the dedication of the people at the spiritual level. The Yasukuni Shrine symbolizes the state's fulfillment of this implicit agreement and is the most symbolic place for achieving political intentions.

The Okinawa lawsuit was the direct impetus for the creation of *Death by Water*. The lawsuit directly addressed the collective suicide incident that occurred in Okinawa before World War II, where seven hundred islanders were coerced into suicide. These individuals were packaged by the government as representatives of the "sublime spirit of sacrifice," incorporated into the state's political mythological ritual system, and became exemplars for educating patriotic spirit. In the novel, the mechanism of political mythological control over the national psyche is showcased, where the father voluntarily sacrifices himself under the spiritual influence of the Meiji era. He becomes a newly recognized "martyr" and a core figure in nationalist groups, directly leading to the protagonist, Daito's, eventual choice of suicide. This illustrates the fundamental reason behind why individuals find it difficult to escape the influence of the zeitgeist—the real purpose of the political mythological system and its inherent inviolable rules. It also reflects the political conspiracies present in the formation of modern Japanese national character.

In witnessing the continuous expansion of right-wing forces in Japan and the gradual decline of democracy, Ōe raised a profound question in his speech: "In the near future, will I still be able to resist the resurgence of the 'Long Live His Majesty the Emperor' as the 'spirit of the times'?" (Ōe & Xiong, 2010). Cassirer explicitly pointed out,

The new political myths do not grow up freely; they are not wild fruits of an exuberant imagination. They are artificial things fabricated by very skillful and cunning artisans. (Ernest, 1946: 282).

Although his comprehensive denial of political myths is rooted in the specific background of the Nazi era and thus has a certain one-sidedness, Ōe's concern about the resurgence of the imperial era spirit under the backdrop of the resurgence of right-wing forces in Japan precisely confirms Cassirer's warning. That is, beneath the rational facade of the state lies the madness of myth, which is easily exploited by extremist forces in times of significant social change. Despite World War II being a history of the last century, right-wing forces in Japan still lurk under the wings of political myth, constantly evoking vocabulary such as militarism and fascism. This confirms that Cassirer's question, which was raised half a century ago, remains unresolved to this day.

The establishment of modern nation-states is based on their ability to wage war externally and the willingness of citizens to sacrifice themselves for the nation. At the same time, those who sacrifice themselves for the nation undergo a Shinto-style ritual by the state, which continues to this day. This religiosity and ritualism of the state are not unique to modern Japan but are problems commonly found in modern nation-states (Koyasu & Dong, 2007). The proliferation of democratic national systems, while superficially implying the comprehensive suppression of irrationality by rationality and the complete victory of state politics over religious myths, has not truly removed irrational religious myths from the political stage. Instead, they permeate each other with political discourse, influencing the citizens' thoughts in forms such as the spirit of the times, national spirit, and national dreams. Due to the prominent characteristics of right-wing forces in Japan, it is easier to see modern politics' true face from its political myths' operational mechanism. In the inevitable combination of politics and myths, rationality and irrationality, how should the

political system benignly guide political myths to prevent the abuse of extremist forces? Individuals are inevitably influenced by the spirit of the times, which is inevitably controlled by political discourse. How should individuals deal with the "implicit contract" relationship between citizens and the state, and how should they respond to the call of the spirit of the times? These are the profound reflections left to readers by Kenzaburō Ōe in *Death by Water*.

5. Conclusion

This study traces the prototype of "drowning death" in Kenzaburō Ōe's *Death by Water*, delving into the mythological thinking of "life-death-rebirth" behind it. By combining the mythological psychological basis of "drowning death," it further reveals the roots of the father's drowning, influenced by the "Meiji spirit," choosing to sacrifice to help the country out of its predicament. It can be concluded that the father's drowning death symbolizes both death and rebirth, representing the end of imperial rule and the rise of democratic nations. Under the influence of the spirits of two eras, Daio adopts extreme behaviours, such as shooting Masao and following his father's path by drowning in the forest. Daio's drowning death symbolizes both rebirth and death, marking the replacement of the "Meiji spirit" by the "post-war democratic spirit. Yet, this spirit ultimately fails to resist the powerful suppression of right-wing forces. The drowning death of the two characters reflects Ōe's helplessness towards the inevitable influence of the spirits of the times on individuals, as well as the powerlessness and disappointment towards the increasing spread of right-wing forces and the gradual decline of democratic spirits. Based on the connection between the characters' drowning death and the spirits of the times, the last part of the study explores the inherent mechanism of the influence of the spirits of the times on individuals from the perspective of political myths, that is, politics utilizes the irrational characteristics of myths to manipulate citizens spiritually, revealing the common strategy of modern national political myths, prompting individuals to ponder and choose their values regarding the country and the spirits of the times.

Utilizing the mythological prototype of drowning death, Ōe points out that the "Meiji spirit" still deeply rooted within the Japanese people. Although the democratic system brought by the West exists in Japan, it has not truly taken root, and the spirit of democracy appears precarious. Revealing the essence of modern politics from the perspective of political myths, the political nature of modern society is fundamentally like that of a mythological society, with the difference in applying techniques. The role of the shaman has transformed into that of a politician, while "myths have been personified as collective will" (Ernest, 1946, p. 280). Modern myths are no longer presented in specific narrative forms. However, they are integrated into the collective unconsciousness of universal values, spirits of the times, national spirits, national dreams, and so forth, advocated in our daily lives. Nowadays, our analysis and understanding of mythological prototypes should not be limited to viewing them as some objective and unchanging historical existence but rather should be understood from the dynamic process of "production-acceptance-reproduction" to comprehend the positive effects and negative impacts of myths as representatives of metaphysical irrationality in modern society.

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