THE NEW ATLANTIS
A Journal of Technology & Society

Psychology's Magician

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The great modern doctors of the mind have made men realize as never before the strangeness of their own psyches, and no psychologist has uncovered, or invented, stranger psychic marvels than did Carl Jung (1875-1961). Although his name still lingers on in pop-psychology circles, the substance of Jung's ideas and his analytical psychology techniques is fading from memory. Perhaps he is now most remembered as a favored disciple of Sigmund Freud who later became Freud's most reviled apostate. The split between Freud and Jung presaged today's division in how we think about the mind: we are fixated on the notion that our inner lives can be investigated through methods of rational inquiry like those so successfully applied to physics and chemistry, but we cannot shake the lurking feeling that our psyches are in reality beasts hidden in shadow—that they can never be fully brought out of the woods into the full light of day. Freud's ideas were once taboo, then conventional wisdom, and now largely in disrepute. But since Freud's approach still largely comports with our rationalist shibboleths, we have found a comfortable niche for him as a father of modern psychology. By contrast, Jung remains a more inscrutable, potentially subversive figure: the self-avowed scientist who seemed to embrace all that science defined itself in opposition to—religion, mysticism, even parts of pseudoscience, but most significantly the depths of the human soul. In embracing the strangeness of the human psyche from within itself, he remains that father of psychology who still threatens to upend our view of ourselves.

For Jung, the discoveries he made never lost the gleam of the uncanny. Where Freud shone a searchlight of austere rational understanding on the unconscious, Jung came to eschew the very notion of understanding, indeed the very word: the adept *knew* wondrous things without understanding them. Such knowledge bypassed the conventional mental circuitry and went straight to—where exactly? Jung couldn't say; perhaps no one could. These matters remained enveloped in a haze of mystery.

Freud had it much easier: his dogmatic lifelong atheism foreclosed the ultimate questions and allowed him perfect clarity in his limited range of sight. But Jung never slackened in his pursuit of the ultimate—both

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ultimate good and ultimate evil, which he tended to find inseparable. He was frequently off in the empyrean or down in the bowels of hell, consorting with gods and demons as ordinary men do with family and friends. Few persons conducted such conversations, and most of them were inmates of lunatic asylums. For a time the thought that he might be insane terrified him. The fear dissipated, however, as he became convinced that his visions were genuinely revelatory and belonged to the primordial psychic reality that all men have in common: the collective unconscious, he called it. Poets and such may get away with beliefs like these, for their madness is pretty well taken for granted, but it was a most unorthodox way for an esteemed psychiatrist to think.

Jung would always insist that his findings belonged to the realm of science. But what are we to make of a scientist who is a self-proclaimed visionary? Two twentieth-century thinkers who set great store by their own unswerving rationality, Max Weber and John Maynard Keynes, said such a creature ought to be and yet is not a chimera.

In his monumental address "Science as a Vocation," delivered at Munich University in 1918, Weber famously announced that the modern world is "disenchanted," denuded of immemorial magic; calculating intellect has superseded belief in supernatural powers. Yet he also declared that scientific discovery is not a matter strictly of intellectual calculation: as in art, so in science incalculable imagination is indispensable to high achievement: "the psychological processes do not differ. Both are frenzy (in the sense of Plato's 'mania') and 'inspiration.'" Where this inspiration comes from, Weber does not presume to say. For Plato it is a divine visitation, but divine visitations are out of bounds for most serious moderns.

In the essay "Newton, the Man," Keynes presents the case that Sir Isaac Newton, commonly seen as the paragon of "cold and untinctured reason," had more than a little inspired frenzy in his constitution. The *Principia* tells but a small part of the story. The experimental protocol that is the heart of the scientific method only confirmed what Newton already *knew*—knew as Jung did the truth of the unconscious, with a certainty beyond intellectual apprehension. Personal papers secreted for centuries and running to a million words detail Newton's role in an "esoteric brotherhood" that had its origin in ancient Babylon: he followed the tradition of these adepts in deciphering "certain mystic clues which God had laid about the world to allow a sort of philosopher's treasure hunt." Alchemy became an obsession of Newton's: he was an "unbridled addict" of all its arcana. "Newton was not the first of the age of reason," wrote Keynes. "He was the last of the magicians, the last of the Babylonians and

Sumerians, the last great mind which looked out on the visible and intellectual world with the same eyes as those who began to build our intellectual inheritance rather less than 10,000 years ago."

But Newton was not the last magician. Jung was. The method of his analytical psychology—as he called it, to distinguish it from Freudian psychoanalysis—was nothing short of fantastic. To penetrate the psyche of a woman destined for schizophrenic disintegration, he would study dreams, reveries, her "borderland phenomena"—the apparitions that came to her as she was half-asleep—and explicate them in the light of Mithraic religious symbols, Old Testament wisdom, the words of Jesus, passages from Shakespeare, poems by Nietzsche, Teutonic and Persian and Chinese and Indian legend. His path-breaking 1912 book *Symbols of Transformation* tracks the course of this woman's treatment and introduces what would be Jung's characteristic methods of interpretation. Although Jung focuses intently on a particular patient with a particular disorder, his study has a far more extensive cultural reach. He was out to dethrone arid modern scientism and restore the symbolic imagination—which is to say, religious feeling—to its rightful place in the life of men.

Symbols in his definition were not the penile cigars that Freud made notorious, which Jung maintained would more correctly be called signs; such signs were limited to a one-to-one correspondence in accordance with the theory that attributed a latent sexual meaning to pretty nearly everything. The Jungian symbol, by contrast, was distinguished precisely by its sublime imprecision, its vagueness of outline; the very lack of clear definition imbued it with the mystery essential to the numinous. When Jesus instructs Nicodemus in John 3 that unless a man be born of water and the spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God, Jung writes that He is relying on the power of the archetype to convince Nicodemus, and the reader of the Gospel: spirit and water "are not just random ideas, but typical ones that have always exerted a powerful fascination on the mind.... for the archetypes are the forms or river-beds along which the current of psychic life has always flowed." The fundamental truth of Christ's teaching, then, is not exclusively Christian; other purveyors of sacred wisdom touched the same regions of the human psyche.

The fading of Christian belief in particular preoccupies Jung, however, and he fears the inrush of monstrosity that will succeed its disappearance. Christianity first gained acceptance as a refuge from the ancient world's terrible savagery, and that savagery only awaits the opportunity to be unleashed again; indeed, as Jung writes in 1952, revising *Symbols of Transformation* forty years after its original publication, the world has

seen "what happens when a whole nation finds the moral mask too stupid to keep up." The conventional pretense of morality will not sustain civilization. Nor will the mere authority of tradition suffice. True authority resides in the living symbol, in the archetype that underlies the power of all gods still vital. To recover the symbolic force that disenchanting reason has drained from the psyche is literally to reanimate men, to give them their souls again. It is the one thing needful. "The religious myth is one of man's greatest and most significant achievements, giving him the security and inner strength not to be crushed by the monstrousness of the universe," Jung writes. "Considered from the standpoint of realism, the symbol is not of course an external truth, but it is psychologically true, for it was and is the bridge to all that is best in humanity."

In an essential part of himself, Jung is a highly rational modern man, who cannot or will not insist on the existence of God just because a certain capacity to believe in His existence is built into every human psyche. The god-image that man possesses does not guarantee an actual God. Psychological reality and metaphysical reality are two different things; yet psychological reality is all we can be sure of. Teaching men to make do with that is the highest calling of the Jungian psychotherapist. "Since faith revolves round these central and perennially important 'dominant ideas' which alone give life a meaning, the prime task of the psychotherapist must be to understand the symbols anew, and thus to understand the unconscious, compensatory striving of his patient for an attitude that reflects the totality of the psyche." The therapist must *understand* the symbols, not *know* them somehow or other in a mystic flash, in order to make them live for the needy patient. Jung writes as a scientist here, not as an ecstatic privy to direct contact with the divine. Initiation into the mysteries involves devoted scholarship in comparative mythology, painstaking assimilation of the most various and obscure sources: it is an immense intellectual undertaking.

Yet in order to help the patient find meaning in his life, the therapist must be not a disinterested intellect but a man or woman of a particular character—compassionate, kind, tender, but also bold, determined, authoritative. Jung said that it was by being such a person that he was most successful in effecting a cure: like Walt Whitman, he convinced by his presence. That is, he had some of the charisma, in the exact sense of the word, that attached to the priest.

Jung may have had a hard time affirming his own faith, but Christ was always with him: a photograph of the Shroud of Turin hung on the wall behind his desk. The theological debate about the authenticity of

the Shroud goes on today: the awe of the true believer, who *knows* that his Redeemer left the image of His face on this burial garment, clashes with the skepticism of the disenchanted modern. Jung customarily kept the photograph of the Shroud covered with a cloth; perhaps he venerated the image in private, perhaps not. He also displayed a bust of Voltaire in his study, always in plain view. Skepticism and soulfulness both had their place in Jung's nature, and in his clinical practice. Medical function overlapped with sacerdotal duty. Psychiatry in Jung's hands aspired to its original meaning: the cure of souls.

A Spiritual Searcher

Carl Gustav Jung's own spiritual knots and confusions began in childhood, as they often do. He was born into the Swiss Reformed Church, of which his father was a minister. Paul Achilles Jung had been a promising student at Göttingen University, turning out a fine dissertation on the Arabic version of the Song of Songs, but had succumbed to mediocrity in his career as a parson. When Carl was about three years old, his mother did time in a Basel mental hospital—neurotic hysteria, the eminent Dr. Jung would one day diagnose her illness. As a boy, Carl blamed his father's fecklessness for bringing on his mother's mental collapse.

Carl's spiritual direction took a sharp turn from paternal example at a very young age. Bizarre, terrifying dreams came to him in childhood, one of the most memorable when he was not quite four: On a golden throne in a stone-walled chamber under a meadow, what looked like a tree trunk made of flesh, with an eye in the top, stretched to the ceiling, and his mother's voice said, "Yes, take a good look at him. That's the man-eater." Coming from his mother, the word *Menschenfresser* made him think not of a fairy-tale ogre but of Jesus. Several years later Jung would realize he had dreamt of a phallus, and in his learned maturity would see it was a ritual phallus or "a subterranean god." The dream stayed with him vividly his whole life, but he never spoke of it to anyone until he told his wife six decades later.

Thanks to the ithyphallic cannibal Jesus and even more disgusting visions, Jung eventually became convinced that God had chosen him specially for unsettling revelations of His true nature: "I have not done this to myself, or wanted it.... God had put me into this situation, and then left me to my own devices.... I had no doubt that God had devised this decisive test for me, and that everything depended on understanding him correctly." That Christianity with its august institutions had made

itself deserving of the Lord's contempt was one of the things Jung came to understand. That God might not be all good, that He might have a frightfully malicious side He was inclined to indulge, occurred as well to the seeker after divinity.

Sometimes it is the dark and blasphemous thoughts that launch careers of passionate inquiry. Naturally enough, Carl first sought religious guidance from his father—not that he would ever think of telling him about the sacred abominations of his night life. Confronted with the youth's hot anguish over theological questions such as the nature of the Trinity, Paul Jung admitted his incomprehension and exhorted his son to have faith. But faith was what Carl could not have so long as his probing intellect remained unsatisfied. Meanwhile, secretly, his father's own faith was moribund if not extinct, degraded by the crass materialism of the psychiatrists at the mental hospital where he served as chaplain. Carl overheard him praying desperately for spiritual restoration. The son vowed to live otherwise.

If he was going to find his way to God, it would be through a medical vocation—though certainly not through that alone. During much of his five-year course in the medical faculty at Basel University, questions about the spirit world preoccupied him. Heavy doses, consumed on the sly, of the cultish mystic theologian-scientist Emanuel Swedenborg counteracted the lessons of the anatomical theater that meat and bone are the whole of human substance.

Hearing the spirits speak was far more exciting than reading about them. Jung convened a series of séances, in which his cousin Helly Preiswerk, four years younger than he and wildly in love with him, was the marquee attraction—a medium of startling impressiveness. Dead relatives and assorted newcomers were summoned and made themselves heard. The séances continued for four and a half years, and Jung and Helly became uncommonly close, perhaps sexually intimate, but eventually Jung broke off their relationship. Helly died at thirty, of tuberculosis according to medical opinion, but of heartbreak according to some family members.

Jung wrote the inaugural thesis for his medical degree on the séances—a newly respectable subject for scientific investigation. Although he had encouraged Helly to believe her abilities were real, and had even hypnotized her on occasion, in his role as detached researcher Jung argued that the so-called spirits were broken-off shards of the medium's own personality. The not entirely scrupulous young doctor neglected to mention that he had taken part in the occult rites, and that he did not altogether believe his own expertly professed disbelief.

Suffering and Sympathy

Jung's introduction to medical practice actually preceded his writing of the thesis: in 1900 he was appointed an assistant physician at the Burghölzli Lunatic Asylum, which was also Zurich University's psychiatric clinic, where he served for nine years. The hospital's director, Eugen Bleuler, was an innovator in the treatment of schizophrenia—a term of his coinage. Where predecessors in the field had dismissed the speech of psychotics as impenetrable and thus effectively dismissed all hope of treating their condition or even making basic human contact, Bleuler listened with the intention of finding meaning in the apparent chaos. He respected the humanity of the mad, devoting long hours to making rounds, taking time for chats, and assigning patients simple work that would enable them to demonstrate some degree of competence at ordinary living.

All the same, life in the madhouse before the advent of psychotropic medication was akin in horror to the human detritus left on a battlefield. Hopeless brain damage incapacitated nearly a quarter of the 340 inmates at Burghölzli; most of the rest were schizophrenic. With more sociable forms of diversion unavailable most of the time, patients masturbated ceaselessly and in plain view. One woman decorated herself with her own excrement and asked Jung if the sight appealed to him (evidently it did not). He soldiered on, the way doctors do as well as fighting men, living in the hospital, mastering the vast clinical literature, bucking up the spirits of his patients, acting as social chairman and organizing dances and masquerades, trying to relieve the terrible pain of psychosis with slight chance of success.

The scientific papers he wrote on schizophrenia—or dementia praecox, as the illness was previously called—illustrate both Jung's acute boldness of approach and the limited effectiveness of even the very best medical knowledge of the time. His 1907 monograph *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox* deploys his novel research in word-association tests, which establish the subject's prevailing "feeling-toned complexes," the affects that habitually cluster around a particular sensation or idea. Jung thereby deciphers the apparent senselessness of a paranoid schizophrenic dressmaker's elaborated word associations, as though he were performing a Freudian dream analysis, and indeed discovers that the patient "speaks as if in a dream": to the physician alert to verbal nuance with a fine literary critic's sensitivity, the closed world of an exceedingly bizarre mind begins to open.

In the 1911 article "The Content of the Psychoses," Jung expresses the hope that research like his own will offer the prospect of understanding broken minds and perhaps of bringing them comfort: "The more carefully

and patiently we examine the mentally sick, the more we find cases which, despite the appearance of total imbecility, allow us at least fragmentary glimpses of a shadowy psychic life, far removed from that spiritual impoverishment which the prevailing theories have obliged us to accept." His is the compassion born of a new understanding of the most severe mental illness: when he looks into the psyche of the insane sufferer, Jung sees a brother or sister. "Even the most absurd things are nothing other than symbols for thoughts which are not only understandable in human terms but dwell in every human breast. In insanity we do not discover anything new or unknown; we are looking at the foundations of our own being, the matrix of those vital problems on which we are all engaged."

Although here Jung hails the advent of a new psychiatry that emphasizes the immaterial psyche over the material brain, even in the 1907 monograph he allows for the possibility that there is an organic etiology for raging madness. A similar understanding has since been shown largely right—so largely right that it is frequently taken for the whole truth. True enough, Jung's humane insight did not cure the schizophrenics he treated; it was not until the 1950s that the discovery of chlorpromazine began to clear out the chronic wards of asylums like Burghölzli (though not even the most effective anti-psychotic medications developed since then can really be said to work a cure). Yet reading Jung's early writings on the subject, one wonders whether twenty-first-century psychiatry would not do well to recover the awareness of causative psychic distress in the schizophrenic even as medicine expands its knowledge of physical damage. The psychotic dressmaker he writes of grew up in penury, pain, and degradation, her sister a prostitute, and the hallucinations and delusions she suffered were of "every conceivable splendor" on the one hand and "all sorts of malicious persecution" on the other. Of course, many endure worse ordeals and do not go mad; the question why some do remains vexed and unsettled. Jung, for his part, saw as deeply into the question as anyone of his time.

Intellectual Intimates

The foreword to *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox* pays homage to the psychiatric master of the age, Freud—though at the time there were relatively few who acknowledged Freud's achievement. Jung declared that those who disdained Freud's theorizing without seriously trying to see through his conceptual lenses were as bad as the seventeenth-century scoffers who had refused to look through Galileo's telescope. Having

studied Freud with the attention he deserves, Jung places himself inestimably in the great man's debt—with caveats. Important as sexuality is, for Jung it is not as important as Freud makes it out to be—and for Freud there is nothing more important. Despite Jung's respect, even reverence, the fissure that separates the two minds is apparent already in *Dementia Praecox*, and in time it will become an impassable chasm.

Jung sent Freud a copy of his monograph. Freud's response has been lost, but in Jung's following letter he alludes to Freud's apparent displeasure: Jung had reprimanded Freud for failing to distinguish clearly between the origins of hysteria and those of dementia praecox. But Freud and Jung had been corresponding with mutual esteem for several months by then—Jung had sent him his major word-association paper, and Freud had answered admiringly—and this new difference of opinion did not derail their relationship. Indeed, Freud quickly put to rest Jung's fears that he had crossed him: "In reality I regard your essay on D. pr. as the richest and most significant contribution to my labors that has ever come to my attention, and among my students in Vienna, who have the perhaps questionable advantage over you of personal contact with me, I know of only one who might be regarded as your equal in understanding, and of none who is able and willing to do so much for the cause as you."

Comrades-in-arms, with Freud the superior officer by agreement, the two thinkers fought to advance their revolutionary understanding of the human psyche. Personal warmth stemmed from the two men's intellectual fellowship: as is often the case with embattled intellectuals, shared ideas drew them ever closer. Freud gushed that Jung's letter of introduction had been the voice of salvation, breaking in upon a solitude that seemed like doom. Jung wrote back, from the First International Congress of Psychiatry, Neurology, and Psychology in Amsterdam, that hearing from his mentor reminded him he "was fighting not only for an important discovery but for a great and honorable man as well." Surrounded by sickening dolts and scoundrels, who knew nothing of Freud's theory but arrogantly trashed it nevertheless, Jung did what he could to defend truth and honor. He closed the letter with "a long cherished and constantly repressed wish: I would dearly like to have a photograph of you, not as you used to look but as you did when I first got to know you." It was a desire that he had felt again and again. Freud obliged, with a formal portrait of himself, seated with his arms folded sternly and his trademark cigar between his fingers. Sometimes, one trusts, a cigar is only a smoke.

After receiving the photograph, however, Jung confessed that there was some aspect of his feelings for Freud that he was ashamed of: "my

veneration for you has something of the character of a 'religious' crush. Though it does not really bother me, I still feel it is disgusting and ridiculous because of its undeniable erotic undertone. This abominable feeling comes from the fact that as a boy I was the victim of a sexual assault by a man I once worshipped." The murky episode Jung refers to, the perpetrator of which has never been firmly identified, seems to have occurred in his adolescence at the hands of an older trusted friend. Though in the letter Jung does not make a terrible fuss about the molestation, a psychologist today would recognize the lasting distortion such a trauma would likely cause in a person's adult intimate relationships. Indeed, a lingering debility hobbles Jung in his dealings with others—especially, it seems, with psychiatric colleagues, whose conversation can cut quite near the bone: "*I therefore fear your confidence.* I also fear the same reaction from you when I speak of my intimate affairs." Intimacy inevitably turns rancid for Jung, though he plainly craves it with Freud, or he never would have exposed himself in this way. A few days later Jung wrote another letter, fearing he had said too much in the previous one. Freud's answer is missing, but Jung's answer to that letter of Freud's thanked him for the welcome advice: laugh it all off as well as you can. Henceforth Freud, who had invariably used the salutation Dear colleague, would address Jung as Dear friend and colleague, and then later simply as Dear friend. Jung would always adhere to the most respectful decorum, writing Dear Professor Freud. The amity would last for almost the next five years, but in the end a cold and bitter formality would be all they were left with.

Meanwhile, much of their voluminous correspondence concerned the business end of psychoanalysis. Freud saw to it that Jung became a force in the International Psychoanalytic Association, first as the editor of its professional journal, then as president of the organization. Fearing that his new science would be taken for the machinations of a Jewish cabal, Freud insisted that vigorous Teutonic blood was needed in the movement, and he knew Jung to be the most righteous of gentiles. The two friends stood shoulder to shoulder in the vanguard, determining strategy, battling infidel hordes, sniffing out heresies, damning apostates.

Jung piled the great man's expectations on his own shoulders until the load bent him over double. He complained that his practice was consuming him, not to mention his lectures, seminars, and correspondence, which left him scant time for theoretical exploration. Freud advised Jung to let his wife, an heiress wealthy enough for both of them, save him from "losing [himself] in the business of money-making." Jung replied that he needed to work at a fevered pace in order to catch up with Freud. "The

feeling of inferiority that often overcomes me when I measure myself against you has always to be compensated by increased emulation." Both men were sufficiently worldly to appreciate money and its perquisites, but they were of course sufficiently serious to know that there were finer things in life than the so-called finer things in life. Such close friendship as they shared was surely among the finest things.

They also discussed their patients, not only with clinical and intellectual interest but occasional wicked humor. But even as they shared a laugh over perverts and degenerates, Freud assured Jung that such filthy psychic secrets as they discovered genuinely appall proper men like the two of them: they really *don't* want to know what they know about the unconscious, unlike their nasty-minded colleague Wilhelm Stekel— "Because he is a perfect swine, whereas we are really decent people who submit only reluctantly to the evidence."

Of course, regular immersion in others' dirty bathwater can make you more forgiving of the grime around your own neck. Jung certainly was inclined to think of himself as decent. He may have been a dog, but he accepted his canine nature with equanimity. "The prerequisite for a good marriage, it seems to me, is the license to be unfaithful." Jung took full advantage of the license he granted himself. Women threw themselves at the distinguished and hunky doctor, and what could he do but catch them? Among the longest lasting of his many conquests were two patients of his, Sabina Spielrein and Toni Wolff, both extremely mentally ill women—Wolff was the only patient Jung said he actually cured of schizophrenia—who became Jungian analysts under his tutelage. His fabulously rich wife was expected to produce children (five in all) and put up with the infidelities. Jung filled Freud in on the theory of marriage but spared him the more unsavory details of the practice.

A Freudian Slap

This convivial brand of decency on his own part did not stop Jung from going on about the profound human need for the holy. Where Freud had dismissed religious feeling as rooted in "*infantile helplessness*," Jung declared that psychoanalysis must not abolish religion but rather reinvigorate it. "I imagine a far finer and comprehensive task for psychoanalysis than alliance with an ethical fraternity [Alfred Knapp's International Order for Ethics and Culture]. I think we must give it time to infiltrate into people from many centers, to revive among intellectuals a feeling for symbol and myth, ever so gently to transform Christ back into the soothsaying god

of the vine, which he was, and in this way absorb those ecstatic instinctual forces of Christianity for the *one* purpose of making the cult and the sacred myth what they once were—a drunken feast of joy where man regained the ethos and holiness of an animal." Jung proclaims a Dionysian Christ, who will raze the "Misery Institute" that the faith has become, and erect in its stead a pleasure temple where "infinite rapture and wantonness" shall be celebrated.

This was not the kind of talk Freud wanted to hear. Any mention of gods and holiness, even the obstreperous animal sort, was an unforgivable transgression coming from a man of knowledge, and a friend. Freud shot back straightaway: "I am not thinking of a substitute for religion; this need must be sublimated. I did not expect the [Ethics and Culture] Fraternity to become a religious organization any more than I would expect a volunteer fire department to do so."

The intellectually combative seriousness that had led them to join forces in the first place, and that could not escape the intellectual vices of vanity and high-handedness, would finally bring their friendship down. Both of their cardinal concerns were subject to dispute, religion in Jung's case and sexuality in Freud's. Freud confined libido strictly to sexual desire and its offshoots, but Jung expanded it to include desires of other kinds, whose frustration he linked to the loss of reality in dementia praecox. The two men even clashed over their styles of therapy: Freud famously conducted his sessions seated at the head of the patient's couch, where he could not be seen and was seldom heard; Jung sat face-to-face with his patients and carried on an animated dialogue, bumping knees, often getting passionately engaged, giving of himself to a degree that Freud found counterproductive and dangerous to Jung's own equilibrium. To the condescending and even snide remarks of "the venerable old master," the emerging young master offered a gentle but firm response: "I think it is far more a question of our different ways of living than of any disagreement in principle."

In a further bid for mutual respect and friendly independent-mindedness, Jung quoted Nietzsche's Zarathustra: "One repays a teacher badly if one remains only a pupil." This is what he had learned from Freud. "As one who is truly your follower, I must be stout-hearted, not least towards you." In Freud's answer, beneath the appearance of perfect emotional control trembled the possessive anxiety of an older lover trying to hang on to a youthful beauty about to make her break:

> You speak of the need for intellectual independence and quote Nietzsche in support of your view. I am in full agreement. But if a third

> party were to read this passage, he would ask me when I had tried to tyrannize you intellectually, and I should have to say: I don't know. I don't believe I ever did. [The apostate Alfred] Adler, it is true, made similar complaints, but I am convinced that his neurosis was speaking for him. Still, if you think you want greater freedom from me, what can I do but give up my feeling of urgency about our relationship, occupy my unemployed libido elsewhere, and bide my time until you discover that you can tolerate greater intimacy? When that happens, you will find me willing.

For a time Jung tolerated the condescension, the extreme unction, and the unsubtle suggestion that like the earlier turncoat Adler he was neurotic.

But then entered the touchy subjects of incest and libido. When Jung presented Freud with his theory that the incest prohibition responded not to any real desire for incest but rather to a free-floating anxiety that incest *might* have been desired, Freud squawked. This innovation of Jung's overturned a fundamental tenet of psychoanalysis, and restored the fallacy of the bad old days that anxiety did not originate in the prohibition of incest but that the prohibition of incest originated in anxiety.

Jung in turn accused Freud of being the neurotic one: "On the question of incest, I am grieved to see what powerful affects you have mobilized for your counter-offensive against my suggestions." Jung insisted his findings were based on objectivity and reason; originally he had thought he would corroborate "the old view," but the facts had led him elsewhere, and he would stand by his discovery.

After Jung's return from a successful lecture series in America in 1912, he announced that his revised version of psychoanalysis had won over many who had found Freud's dwelling on neurotic sexuality too much to take. In one lecture, he made the break very public: "I must admit that a purely sexual aetiology of neurosis seems to me much too narrow. . . . I therefore suggest that psychoanalytic theory should be freed from the purely sexual standpoint. In place of it I should like to introduce an *energic viewpoint* into the psychology of neurosis." Infantile fantasies, which hold Freud's cherished answer to life's essential questions, are not the source of a patient's trouble. "I no longer seek the cause of a neurosis in the past, but in the present. I ask, what is the necessary task which the patient will not accomplish?"

In their personal correspondence, Jung was mortally insulted by Freud's attributing his intellectual differences to a seething, renegade unconscious: "I can only assure you that there is no resistance on my side, unless it be my refusal to be treated like a fool riddled with complexes. I

think I have objective reasons for my views." Doctrinal disputes could not be separated from questions of character and unconscious drives, for each man was convinced that he knew the other better than the other knew himself. Under the circumstances, personal insult was never far below the surface of substantive disagreement: what could be more insulting for a psychiatrist proud of his virtuosity than to have his most cherished theorizing pilloried by his most esteemed colleague on the grounds of his psychic turbulence? Both Freud and Jung believed they saw deeper into human nature than any previous man of genius: Freud famously psychoanalyzed Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Dostoevsky, while Jung thought he got the better of Goethe, Schiller, and Nietzsche. Neither modern doctor acknowledged that he might be dealing with his superiors here, or that the surface of these artists' and philosophers' works could be at least as profound as the excavations of psychoanalysis. Perhaps the supreme irony of Jung's position was that he wanted the products of his conscious mind to be taken at least as seriously as the workings of his unconscious, "and not be measured by the yardstick of neurosis."

The mess between them worsened, slights wrapped up in fundamental disagreements undergirded by whatever lurked in the unconscious regarding their feelings for each other. Jung was wounded to an astonishing degree to learn that Freud had visited the nearby town of Kreuzlingen without stopping in to see him. Occasional comparison to the traitorous Adler stung personally and professionally. It all came to a head at the end of 1912, when Jung composed his last letter to Freud that was not strictly a matter of business, and was a deliberately unforgivable stomp on the face of their friendship:

> Your technique of treating your pupils like patients is a *blunder*. In that way you produce either slavish sons or impudent puppies (Adler-Stekel and the whole insolent gang now throwing their weight about in Vienna). I am objective enough to see through your little trick. You go around sniffing out all the symptomatic actions in your vicinity, thus reducing everyone to the level of sons and daughters who blushingly admit the existence of their faults. Meanwhile you remain on top as the father, sitting pretty. For sheer obsequiousness nobody dares to pluck the prophet by the beard and inquire for once what you would say to a patient with a tendency to analyze the analyst instead of himself. You would certainly ask him: "*Who's* got the neurosis?" You see, my dear Professor, so long as you hand out this stuff I don't give a damn for my symptomatic actions; they shrink to nothing in comparison with the formidable beam in my brother Freud's eye. I am not in the least

> neurotic—touch wood! I have submitted *lege artis et tout humblement* [genuinely and with all humility] to analysis and am much the better for it. You know, of course, how far a patient gets with self-analysis: *not* out of his neurosis—just like you.

Freud sealed the matter shut with mandarin contempt: "one who while behaving abnormally keeps shouting that he is normal gives grounds for the suspicion that he lacks insight into his illness. Accordingly, I propose that we abandon our personal relations entirely." So it was done.

There can be little doubt that the destruction of their friendship contributed mightily to, if it did not indeed precipitate, Jung's plunge into psychic distress. There can be no doubt that this distress proved immensely fruitful for his subsequent theorizing. But it did bring him within a hair's breadth of ruin.

Madness had the better of him for a time. Visions and dreams of ghastly frightfulness bedeviled his days and nights. During a train journey in late 1913, Jung fell into a two-hour trance, and he beheld a flood that inundated Europe from the North Sea to the Alps, the turbid water turning into blood, drowning multitudes. The seas of blood would surge through his mind again and again in weeks to come; he was powerless to stop the visions once they seized him. Dreams recurred of arctic cold descending from space and locking the summer world in ice and snow. The third such dream, however, had a heartening end: the cold had turned the leaves of a fruitless tree into sweet ripe grapes, and Jung picked some and distributed them to a gathered throng. Dionysus was come again, and Jung had the god in himself. The unconscious would offer rich bounty, this dream appeared to instruct, provided one could withstand the terror. That Jung proved willing to take direction from the unconscious would be his salvation: it would not only spare him from the worst of schizophrenia, but would also be the making of his career as theoretical innovator and clinical virtuoso of resounding fame.

Descent and Return

From 1913 to 1916 Jung recorded his wanderings in the spectral world of his psyche, his raptures and desolations, in six notebooks called the *Black Books*; these writings he would transcribe in elegant calligraphy and illuminate with his own paintings, working on the book for sixteen years and producing the *Liber Novus*, known in English as *The Red Book*, a volume of pharaonic ambition and splendor, six hundred folio manuscript pages bound in red leather. *The Red Book* remained unpublished

until 2009, when Jung's heirs permitted its release through the Philemon Foundation, in a format of uncommon beauty, printed in Italy, featuring the German manuscript with accompanying illustrations, and an English translation with an extensive introduction by the eminent scholar Sonu Shamdasani. The heart of Jung is in this book.

The Red Book relates Jung's peregrinations well beyond the bounds of the customarily visible world, as he attempts to recover his soul and to find his way to the true God. Whether he yearns more intensely for God or for the fulfillment of his own nature is never quite clear; the two needs appear

Jung's Writings

The Red Book: Liber Novus
ed. Sonu Shamdasani, trans. Mark Kyburz, John Peck, and Sonu Shamdasani
W. W. Norton & Co. ~ 2009 ~ 416 pp. ~ $195 (cloth)

Books and essay collections published by Princeton University Press, translated by R. F. C. Hull:

- *The Psychogenesis of Mental Disease* (1907-1958)
- *Freud and Psychoanalysis* (1906-1929)
- *Symbols of Transformation* (1912/revised 1952)
- *Psychological Types* (1921)
- *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (1912-1928)
- *The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious* (1934-1955)
- *The Practice of Psychotherapy* (1928-1951)
- *Psychology and Alchemy* (1944)
- *Essays on Contemporary Events: The Psychology of Nazism* (1936-1946)
- *Psychology and the East* (1929-1949)
- *Answer to Job* (1952)
- *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle* (1952)
- *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies* (1958)
- *The Freud/Jung Letters* ~ ed. William McGuire, trans. Ralph Manheim and R. F. C. Hull (1974)

Recent Biographies

A Life of Jung ~ Ronald Hayman
Norton ~ 1999 ~ 522 pp. ~ $18.95 (paper)

Jung: A Biography ~ Deirdre Bair
Little, Brown & Co. ~ 2003 ~ 881 pp. ~ $19.95 (paper)

137: Jung, Pauli, and the Pursuit of a Scientific Obsession ~ Arthur I. Miller
Norton ~ 2010 ~ 336 pp. ~ $16.95 (paper)

to be enmeshed. His ordeal, which he did not seek but was forced upon him, began just when his life seemed in perfect order: "I had achieved everything that I had wished for myself. I had achieved honor, power, wealth, knowledge, and every human happiness." Freud famously declared that the sum of human happiness was found in wealth, fame, and the love of beautiful women. Jung definitively rejects this worldly calculus; such triumphs may be good enough for the first half of life, but when a man has passed the midpoint they seem trifles compared to the soul's new imperatives.

A long conversation with the prophet Elijah, who materializes with the temptress Salome (Elijah's daughter here rather than Herod's, and Jung's own blind sister by their mother Mary, though the story eventually develops more coils than the serpent that accompanies them), makes Jung begin to see his true need. "If you do not acknowledge your yearning, then you do not follow yourself, but go on foreign ways that others have indicated to you. So you do not live your life but an alien one. But who should live your life if you do not live it? It is not only stupid to exchange your life for an alien one, but also a hypocritical game, because you can never really live the life of others, you can only pretend to do it, deceiving the other and yourself, since you can only live your own life." Jung's encounters with and discoveries among the spirits have their undeniable truth, then, he is convinced, even if it might seem some horror-show bizarrerie to those who have not passed along the same way. Knowledge is personal, and one must insist on his own singularity or renounce his birthright.

In his singularity, Jung came to know God in a way that perhaps no one else quite had before: after his crucifixion, and during his descent into hell, Christ became "his Antichrist, his underworldly brother"; resurrected, he was whole in his being for the first time, good and evil conjoined in divinity. But it is not enough for Jung to understand Christ; Salome tells him that he *is* Christ, and he sees no reason why not. "It is as if I stood alone on a high mountain with stiff outstretched arms. The serpent squeezes my body in its terrible coils and the blood streams from my body, spilling down the mountainside. Salome bends down to my feet and wraps her black hair around them. She lies thus for a long time. Then she cries, 'I see light!' Truly, she sees, her eyes are open. The serpent falls from my body and lies languidly on the ground. I stride over it and kneel at the feet of the prophet, whose form shines like a flame." The beings he meets, the experiences he has, are not symbolic: they are real, he avers, and their reality is life-changing.

Like Jung, the masses of men who are engaged in the Great War will learn to appreciate the ecstasies of self-sacrifice; to see millions perish in the hecatombs brings the wild joy of enlightenment. "If blood, fire, and

the cry of distress fill this world, then you will recognize yourself in your acts: Drink your fill of the bloody atrocities of the war, feast upon the killing and destruction, then your eyes will open, you will see that you yourselves are the bearers of such fruit." Blood must flow if the mystery is to be realized. The blood and the mystery are the work of "the spirit of the depths." Men fail to understand if they attribute guilt for the holocaust to each other. Guilt is beside the point. The truth lies beyond such mortal considerations.

To bear such awful truth takes some getting used to; Jung resists the knowledge that comes to him against his will. The old self wants a life that the new knowledge has made impossible. But God will not let Jung go, however he might kick and fret and wriggle:

> There is no escape. So it is that you come to know what a real God is. Now you'll think up clever truisms, preventive measures, secret escape routes, excuses, potions capable of inducing forgetfulness, but it's all useless. The fire burns right through you. That which guides forces you onto the way. But the way is my own self, my own life founded upon myself. The God wants my life. He wants to go with me, sit at the table with me, work with me. Above all he wants to be ever-present. But I'm ashamed of my God. I don't want to be divine but reasonable. The divine appears to me as irrational craziness. I hate it as an absurd disturbance of my meaningful human activity. It seems an unbecoming sickness which has stolen into the regular course of my life. Yes, I even find the divine superfluous.

The once and future man of science may revere reason but in the end he must acknowledge that reason falls far short of comprehending reality. "One cannot understand magic. One can only understand what accords with reason. Magic accords with unreason, which one cannot understand. The world accords not only with reason but also with unreason." Jung converses with his Soul, with Satan, with various minor deities, with the Serpent, and with Philemon, "the host of the Gods." In the final pages of the book—though the book remained unfinished—his Soul tells him that Jung is not only Christ but also a devil. Useful to get that sorted out.

"To the superficial observer it will seem like madness. It would also have developed into one, had I not been able to absorb the overpowering force of the original experiences." So Jung wrote in the epilogue to *Liber Novus*, in 1959. He sounds perfectly reasonable about the role unreason played in making him a whole man—an individuated one, as he would put it—in whom the conscious mind and the unconscious were integrated.

Such integration is the *sine qua non* of mental soundness, for one can know the unconscious only when it is brought to consciousness, and if it does not become conscious the unconscious can be the most destructive of hazards.

The experiences Jung records in *The Red Book* made Jung who he was, yet for most of his life he feared its publication would taint his intellectual work, so unorthodox in the first place, with the imputation of lunacy. And what the book indeed shows is that Jung was at the very least an incipient schizophrenic, as he had earlier diagnosed Frank Miller, the pseudonym of the woman whose case he detailed in *Symbols of Transformation.* With a nearly miraculous maneuver, however, while Jung was already falling into the pit, he found a way to pull himself out by the scruff of his neck. He believed it was reason that saved him—the scientific truth making itself apparent. But it may have been a not entirely reasonable confidence that he had discovered the truth, indeed the psychological truth of truths. In either case, he had lighted upon what Machiavelli, with something quite different in mind, called the effectual truth: the truth that works.

Personality Types and the Limits of Reason

What saved Jung from hopeless psychosis, he believed, was the outbreak of the Great War on August 1, 1914. Until then, he thought the dreadful visitations issued from his personal hell; now he knew his terrors were premonitory and transcendent, referring not to him alone but to the fate of Europe. The general conflagration was personally reassuring. One might suppose that it would be disturbing past all measure to foresee such cataclysm. But Jung enjoyed the advantage of some medical experience with the collective unconscious, so he did not suspect divine or diabolical agencies at work; and his new insight into the realm of the archetypes dispelled some of his old fears about it. In *Symbols of Transformation* he had assumed that a running discharge from the collective unconscious surely foretold an individual's fatal descent into unreality, but now he understood that his own persistent hallucinations and fantasies served to bring reality home to him. Schizophrenia, he became convinced, was a terrified recoil from an untamed unconscious that frothed and raged but could do you no actual harm as long as you remained unafraid.

Fearlessness freed him to explore the unconscious to a depth he believed no scientific man had reached before, pointing him in the direction of his most sensational scientific work. Yet is *sensational* the word a scientist would want applied to his most famous discoveries? That question encapsulates the lingering doubts surrounding Jung's achievement.

Did the heterodox peculiarity, indeed the overwhelming weirdness, of Jung's spiritual life help lead him toward the most profound truths of human nature, or did they encourage him in headlong obscurantism? Was he the source of genuine wisdom or a prototype of the New Age charlatan? What place does science have, really, in the development of his theories? Or what do they offer that might be more significant than scientific truth? Even if he got a great deal wrong, did his teaching provide some crucial relief for parched soulless modernity?

The theoretical insight of Jung's that is most accepted by conventional psychology—though it is still not always—and that is most familiar to common parlance is the fundamental distinction between extraverted and introverted personalities, first developed in *Psychological Types* (1921). "When we consider the course of human life, we see how the fate of one individual is determined more by the objects of his interest, while in another it is determined more by his own inner self, by the subject. Since we all swerve rather more toward one side or the other, we naturally tend to understand everything in terms of our own type." Each principal type is further subdivided according to one's dominant psychological function: the rational ones being thinking and feeling, and the nonrational ones, intuition and sensation. This is not to say that any one person fits a type and concomitant function to the exclusion of all else; the formula accommodates innumerable degrees of and divagations from type. Nearly every introvert has some extravert to him, nearly every extravert some introvert. And an introvert can even become an extravert, or vice versa, given certain life-altering experiences.

The ensuing variety of types accounts for the inevitability of human conflict where the most serious questions are concerned: "every man is so imprisoned in his type that he is simply incapable of understanding another viewpoint." Workable societies recognize this inherent abrasiveness and do what they can to ameliorate it. Jung pointedly rejects the regimes founded on the totalitarian fantasy that such abrasions can be eliminated altogether. "A man must have a very clouded vision, or view human society from a very misty distance, to cherish the notion that the uniform regulation of life would automatically ensure a uniform distribution of happiness. . . . No social legislation will ever be able to overcome the psychological differences between men, this most necessary factor for generating the vital energy of a human society."

The best men and women transcend their types, for correct understanding and righteous action require one's full humanity; the modern bias is to rely on intellect alone, and to do so shears away an indispensable

element of our nature—indispensable particularly to the understanding of the psyche. The intellect is constitutionally incapable of detaching itself from the psyche and regarding it from an ideally disinterested perch. To seek such privilege for the freestanding intellect ends unavoidably in "paradox and relativity." Moreover, the psyche encompasses both conscious and unconscious minds, so that reason alone cannot circumscribe it. All the other psychic functions available must be engaged if the search for truth is to have any hope of success. The Jungian psychologist is a far cry from the philosopher who swears by unaided reason.

Jung knows the limitations of his own type as a thinking introvert—the designation he gave himself, though someone else might have called him an intuitive introvert. He exploits its virtues, treads carefully around its pitfalls, and is aware how difficult it is to see past its boundaries. His most esteemed colleagues, each confident of possessing the whole truth, were unaware how their own personalities shaped the main tendencies of their theorizing: "While the dominant note in Freudian psychology is a centrifugal tendency, a striving for pleasure in the object, in Adler's it is a centripetal striving for the supremacy of the subject, who wants to be 'on top,' to safeguard his power, to defend himself against the overwhelming forces of existence." Although Freud knew well that a man's character is his fate, he naturally bridled at Jung's insistence that a psychologist's character is the fate of his theory, and he pulped *Psychological Types* as "the work of a snob and a mystic, no new ideas in it." But at this point Jung was confident of his powers and such opposition only egged him on.

The Berserker God of Nazism

Although Jung had presented his theory of human types as the ground for a defense of liberal democracy, he has been accused of indefensibly illiberal behavior during the early years of Hitler's regime. The accusation is not a baseless one. Like all other branches of knowledge, psychology was caught in the ideological storm, and Jung's actions were sometimes far from admirable.

In 1933 the Nazis publicly burned Freud's books; the "Jewish science" of psychoanalysis, like that of Einsteinian physics, had no place in a wholesome Germanic civilization. All members of the German General Medical Society for Psychotherapy were ordered to read *Mein Kampf* "thoroughly and conscientiously" as *the* basic professional text; the head of this newly formed society was Dr. Matthias Göring, cousin of Hermann Göring, Hitler's second-in-command.

As a Swiss, and the new head of the General Society for Psychotherapy—the international organization of which Göring's outfit was an affiliate—Jung was not required to heed such directives from Berlin. But he showed signs of knuckling under nonetheless. In a Radio Berlin interview in 1933, Jung flayed Freud and Adler as "hostile to life" in their emphasis on sex or power to the detriment of human wholeness. "In this way a part of the phenomenon is isolated and corroded." *Zersetzung*, the German word for corrosion, Jung's brilliant biographer Ronald Hayman points out, was well-known Nazi code for baneful Jewish moral influence, and Jung would use the term again in a Berlin seminar, warning against the corrosive sort of dream-interpretation. No one listening would have missed the point.

The point was reiterated and amplified, as in this article of Jung's in the General Society's house organ: "Where was the unheard of energy and tension when there was as yet no National Socialism? It lay hidden in the German soul, in that depth which is anything but the garbage bin of unresolved childish wishes and unresolved family resentments." Here Jung professes to know the grandeur of the soul, and of the German soul in particular, as Freud and his ilk could never do. Nobody exemplifies that grandeur better than the new order of Teutonic chivalry, Jung declared in a 1937 interview: "The S.S. men are being transformed into a caste of knights ruling sixty million natives. . . . There is no more ideal form of government than a decent form of oligarchy—call it aristocracy if you prefer."

Thomas Mann believed that in fulminating against "soulless rationalism" during the mid-1930s, Jung had lost both his soul and his reason: the psychologist had fallen into "a total rejection of rationalism, long after the moment has come for us to fight on the side of rationality with every ounce of our strength." Jung, having it on high authority that unreason must be taken as seriously as reason is, might yet have reasoned harder about just what it means to take unreason such as Hitler's seriously.

Ronald Hayman's *A Life of Jung* (1999) is appropriately unsparing about Jung's political follies. Deirdre Bair's *Jung: A Biography* (2003), on the other hand, gestures toward even-handed comprehensiveness but settles into apologetics. Bair is right to point out that Jung was not as malignant as he has sometimes been made out to be, but that still leaves room for considerable cancerous rot, into which she is perhaps too hesitant to cut deeply.

Still, it must be acknowledged that Jung recognized the monstrous in Nazism even as he was heralding the movement. The essay "Wotan,"

which appeared in a Swiss journal in March 1936 and was collected in *Essays on Contemporary Events: The Psychology of Nazism* in 1946, opens with a catalogue of horrors, the "veritable witches' Sabbath" that followed the Great War. "Everywhere fantastic revolutions, violent alterations of the map, reversions in politics to medieval or even antique prototypes, totalitarian states that engulf their neighbors and outdo all previous theocracies in their absolutist claims, persecutions of Christians and Jews, wholesale political murder, and finally we have witnessed a light-hearted piratical raid on a peaceful, half-civilized people [the Italian conquest of Abyssinia]." Jung sounds as reasonable as Thomas Mann here, and the unreason he discerns in Germany seems simply to appall him. That Soviet Communism should emerge from a primitive place like Russia is readily understandable; that National Socialism should develop in the cynosure of civilization is horrifyingly unexpected. Yet it is in Germany that "an ancient god of storm and frenzy, the long quiescent Wotan," has unleashed his fearsome power. Wotan is a god who possesses men: he has possessed Hitler, and Hitler has possessed Germany—"infected a whole nation to such an extent that everything is set in motion and has started rolling on its course to perdition." The usual reasonable explanations for historical events, economic, political, psychological, do not apply here. An archetypal Germanic force, a god potent as Jehovah, has surged up from the depths of the unconscious: "the berserker, the god of storm, the wanderer, the warrior, the god of magical wish and remembrance, the lord of the dead and of the heroes in Valhalla, the master of secret knowledge, the magician, and the god of the poets."

God of magic and poetry and secret knowledge: maybe Wotan is not entirely bad after all, despite the berserking. Ambivalence lurks in the corners even of Jung's most famous anti-Nazi polemic. The truly vital gods, not those etiolated by institutional timidity but the ones who appear in their full resplendence, are as evil as they are good, as good as they are evil. Kali is both a sage creator and a destroyer with a necklace of human skulls, insatiable in her blood lust; Christ, after all, took on the black luster of Antichrist during his sojourn in Jung's hell; Yahweh tormented the perfect and upright Job to settle a wager with Satan—a divine abomination Jung will attempt to comprehend in *Answer to Job* (1952). So Wotan may be expected to have not only his faults but also his winning qualities.

In his writings on Nazism during and after the Second World War, Jung would be wholeheartedly vehement in his disgust and denunciation, but in "Wotan" he still cannot bring himself to unequivocal condemnation: he is appalled, but fascinated too. One wishes he had joined the economic,

political, and psychological explanations of conventional historical analysis to the archetypal profundities of his own way of knowing: the surface of life must be understood before the depths can be sounded. Such an approach might have enabled Jung truly to see reason about the most vicious unreason.

Alchemy, Magic, and the Sublime

From the 1930s on, Jung's scientific preoccupations focused on activities and beliefs commonly considered archaic, bizarre, alien, or ludicrous; it was thought beneath the dignity of science even to investigate them. Like Newton, Jung became an unbridled addict of alchemy—not that he believed in it as science or practical magic, but that he found it to be a living allegory, or sometimes an explicit spiritual undertaking: alchemists mined the psyche in search of the mother lode of the unconscious, to bring the discovered treasure to conscious light, and to live richly, in spirit, off the discovery. In "The Psychology of the Transference: Interpreted in Conjunction with a Set of Alchemical Pictures" (1946), a monograph collected in *The Practice of Psychotherapy*, Jung offers an interpretation like no other of "the last and greatest work of alchemy—Goethe's *Faust*. Goethe is really describing the experience of the alchemist who discovers that what he has projected into the retort is his own darkness, his unredeemed state, his passion, his struggles to reach the goal, i.e., to become what he really is, to fulfill the purpose for which his mother bore him, and, after the peregrinations of a long life full of confusion and error, to become the *filius regius*, son of the supreme mother." In the famous efforts to transmute matter, the alchemist performs the far more serious work of purifying his own soul: individuation, personal integration, discovery of the self are the ultimate ends of his art, which probes to reach the god within.

The Jungian self is something very different from the common usage of the term: not the grasping sweaty homunculus of Tom Wolfe's Me Decade, but the archetype of the God-image, whatever god one happens to worship, apprehension of which constitutes human wholeness. Centuries before the analytical psychologist, the alchemist found that this archetype is engrained in the collective unconscious. As Jung writes in *Psychology and Alchemy* (1944), a tome that grew out of lectures delivered in 1935 and 1936, one of the central psychological processes involves an alchemy-like mixing of the material and the numinous, the visible and invisible, the "irrigation of the conscious mind by the unconscious." This process he calls individuation; it is the Grail of Jungian psychotherapy.

Most of the patients Jung took on were middle-aged and suffering from what he considered the prevailing neurosis of modernity—a sense of meaninglessness, of pointless drift. They were not seriously mentally ill but troubled and unhappy, like many who seek a therapist's help today. Achieving wholeness, becoming one's true self, meant making contact with the inward god, and then uniting the god-knowledge with the outward life. The therapeutic process customarily involved immersion in the Jungian system of archetype interpretation. Jung would read the patient's dreams and fantasies in the light of alchemical texts, or simply lecture him on alchemy. This, of course, carried one about as far as could be from the workaday twentieth-century mind, even as it was precisely that mind that was being explored. But then, Jung did not think much of workaday modern minds; they were raw material to be transformed, like base metal into gold. He believed in psychic marvels, which he revivified. In his alchemical interpretation of dreams he promulgated a teaching designed to supersede Freudian sexual symbols with their crude reductionism; he always kept the human potential for sublimity in the forefront. Admittedly, however, sublimity was not what everyone was looking for. Ronald Hayman cites one patient who wanted to discuss with Jung the usual issues concerning his mother; Jung said such stuff did not interest him, and referred the sufferer to a colleague. Jung agreed to talk about the things that did interest him, and provided lengthy and detailed instruction in the subtleties of the collective unconscious.

The things that interested Jung got even stranger than alchemy. In 1950 he contributed an introduction to an English translation of the oracular Chinese classic the *I Ching*, or *Book of Changes*, and he argued that although the Chinese have "never developed what we call science," in which causality is an axiomatic truth, they might have a leg up on the West in their appreciation for "the immense importance of chance." "The Chinese mind, as I see it at work in the *I Ching*, seems to be exclusively preoccupied with the chance aspect of events. What we call coincidence seems to be the chief concern of this peculiar mind, and what we worship as causality passes almost unnoticed." Noting the fall of three coins or forty-nine yarrow stalks, and consulting a gnomic text that comments on the patterns formed by those objects, the practitioner interprets the oracle to elucidate his current condition: "the hexagram was understood to be an indicator of the essential situation prevailing at the moment of its origin." Interpreting the oracle is rather like puzzling out the schizophrenic dressmaker's cryptic utterances in Jung's 1906 dementia praecox research. The schizophrenia research must have been intellectually more satisfying. The

entire oracle business nettles Jung; it is just too unscientific for his liking. Yet he extols the effectual truth of this system of divination. Dealing with the unknown is, after all, standard practice in psychotherapy, as methods that ought to work do not and others that ought not do. In any case, there is genuine moral value to what really becomes an exercise in self-knowledge. "Even to the most biased eye it is obvious that this book represents one long admonition to careful scrutiny of one's own character, attitudes, and motives." These sound like the traditional concerns of the psychologist, or even the moral philosopher.

Yet while Jung protested that occult knowledge did not interest him, in fact the odder it got the more he went in for it. In 1952 he published *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*.* Briefly, synchronicity is "meaningful coincidence." Not so briefly, it means "the simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state—and, in certain cases, vice versa." Briefly again: you think of something and it shows up on the spot. Jung tells of a patient who was relating a critical dream in which she was given a golden scarab; just then Jung heard a tapping at the window behind him, and he opened the window and caught the insect that flew in: the closest thing to a golden scarab found in that part of the world, and seeking entrance to a dark room quite contrary to its customary tastes.

He has other stories of flocks of birds appearing as omens of impending death; a soldier's premonitory dream of a volcanic explosion thousands of miles away; Swedenborg's famous true vision of a fire raging in distant Stockholm; a patient's dream of the written and misspelled name of an Orphic god, whom she could not possibly have heard of, but whom Jung had been studying intently, and whose name he had misread and had come chronically to misspell. Serious scientific men scoff at such things, but Jung predicts parapsychological discoveries in the offing comparable

* This appeared in a volume with a monograph, "The Influence of Archetypal Ideas in the Scientific Theories of Johannes Kepler," by Wolfgang Pauli, boozehound, womanizer, barroom brawler, and Nobel laureate in physics, who became Jung's patient and his theoretical confidant. The historian of science Arthur I. Miller has presented their fascinating relationship in *137: Jung, Pauli, and the Pursuit of a Scientific Obsession*. Like Jung, Pauli wanted it all and had a hard time getting it: "my real problem was and still is the *relation between Mysticism and Science*, what is different between them and what is in common. Both mystics and scientists have the same aim, to become aware of the unity of knowledge.…And who believes that our present form of science is the last word in this scale. Certainly not I."

to historic scientific breakthroughs like Galileo's telescopic sighting of the moons of Jupiter. Conventional authority will have to bend before the new wave. The anecdotes from his own experience may not amount to convincing evidence, Jung admits; but he believes that ongoing experiments in the accuracy of mantic procedures such as astrology and ESP will open wondrous new vistas. The world's magic will be restored, even for persons of august scientific probity, disinclined to swallow baloney.

The scientist-magician astounded his audience, and appalled no small part of it, with an excursion somewhere between the twilight zone and the outer limits in *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies* (1958). Jung took pains to insist at the outset that as a psychologist he was concerned with psychic phenomena and had nothing useful to contribute about UFOs' physical reality; but in the end he resorted to rhetorical contortions to maintain his scientific reputation and only just resisted the temptation to declare that the damn things must be out there.

Though Jung was eighty-three when he wrote the book, such eccentric wobble should not be mistaken for an old man's doddering. This is in fact a powerful and well-argued work, and it does focus almost entirely on dreams, fantasies, and paintings of extraterrestrial visitations: in an era of "mass-mindedness," Jung writes, when titanic rival nations possess the capacity to annihilate mankind, and individual life counts for less and less, the apparition of UFOs fulfills collective fears and wishes—fears of malign forces come to enslave or destroy humanity, wishes for salvation from anxieties cosmic or mundane. Longings for freedom, for wholeness, for individuation, and anxiety that such longings will never be realized, underlie the dreams and pictures and books that Jung analyzes with expert address.

The very shape of the typical UFO is evocative of the circular mandala, the universal symbol of wholeness, of the self in its perfection or in its struggle to achieve perfection; Jung painted mandalas in abundance in *The Red Book*, and encouraged his patients to paint them. Whether or not Jung was a believer in UFOs himself is a moot point: he understood the need to believe.

The Whole Truth

Understanding the need to believe—in the soul, in the self, in God—and what happens when that need is suppressed or misdirected or reasoned away, was Jung's life's work. What exactly did Jung believe in, besides the truths of the psyche that he believed he had uncovered? Hard to say: the

Shroud of Turin and Voltaire contradicted each other. Jung wanted to be a prophet but his adherence to the precepts of science held him back; he wanted to be an utterly rational scientist but his initiation into prophecy prevented him.

Today's Jungian practitioners seem similarly poised between clinical rationality and openness to astonishments. Professional training has its scientific rigors: a diploma in analytical psychology from a recognized Jungian institute, often taking several years of coursework to earn, is required if one is to call himself a Jungian analyst. And the intellectual standards for Jungian practice may appear to be high, but there are standards and there are standards. A Canadian analyst whose website I found at random, and who is a graduate of one such highly-regarded Jungian institute, charges $100 per hour in the analytic and therapeutic side of her practice, but the fee goes up to $150 per hour for astrological sessions, because it takes extra time to prepare the patient's chart. The website of the Center for Jungian Studies of South Florida—not a diploma-granting institute—professes seriousness after Jung's own high-flown manner: "Why are we here? What is the meaning of existence? What is truly most important in life? . . . [K]eeping these mysteries before us is what matters most." These aims are admirable, but one wonders whether the reality lives up to the prospectus. A recent lecture there on Jung and the Tarot was given by a self-proclaimed "Tarot Master." No real surprise, then, that even though Freudian psychoanalysis is becoming less and less widespread in the psychopharmacological era, it still outpulls analytical psychology by a long stretch among patients looking for heavy-duty psychic excavation. Oedipal fixation continues to draw a crowd in a way that alchemical hermeneutics do not. Freud remains more respectable than Jung. Whether he was wiser is another matter.

Where Freud was a thinking engine, Jung knew he possessed a soul as well as a mind. His life subjected both to a hard ordeal. Jung's old age in particular required that he draw upon all his wisdom and strength of spirit. The last years were cruel, as one severe affliction followed another, and death was perhaps too long denied. He was certainly ready for it when it came. As he wrote in *Flying Saucers*, it is best to accept what you cannot resist: "Very often the nearness of death forcibly brings about a perfection that no effort of will and no good intentions could achieve. He is the great perfector, drawing his inexorable line under the balance-sheet of human life. In him alone is wholeness—one way or another—attained." As a scientist Jung had no proof of God's existence, and often said so; yet when asked by an interviewer late in life if he believed in God, he replied,

"I don't believe. I *know*." During one of his last nights, in May 1961, he dreamed of a monolith inscribed, "And this shall be a sign to you of wholeness and oneness."

Wholeness and oneness—this was the ambition of Jung's life, not only in terms of realizing individuated psyches but in seeking after truth: one truth, the whole truth, a truth that would somehow incorporate and explain every observation that he made, including every florid apparition that reductive modernity would have expelled from serious consideration. Signs, wonders, visions were a regular part of the life of this strangest and most marvelous of twentieth-century scientists. He endeavored to interrogate them with a completely open mind, allowing for the possibility that they might be something beyond mere byproducts of a disordered brain—that they might *mean* something.

In this earthly lifetime we shall not know whether Jung found the most profound wisdom or rather a most interesting way of being mistaken. About the charms of Nazi stormtroopers in the noble service of the god of storm he was of course worse than mistaken. This flirtation with monstrosity threatened to become a consuming passion; the episode was sordid and deserves censure, but he would atone for it. Despite this momentous departure from decency and reason, Jung was one of the standard bearers of modern civilization, largely because he did not care to be civilized in the modern fashion. He deserves the honor reserved for the most earnest, searching, serious souls. His vision of the world is sufficiently alluring that the question of whether it is scientifically true seems of lesser importance. As a scientist, he was a poet and a seer, and he pointed humanity in the direction of its true needs.