

JUNG, THE PSYCHE, AND GOD:

A Critical Attempt  
to  
Locate the Implications  
of  
Jung's Epistemic Psychology  
for  
Theology and the Existence of God.

by

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## PREFACE

Religious questions seem somehow appropriate to and part of Jungian thought. But a close examination of his work makes clear how much Jung conscientiously remained within the domain of psychological questions, even to the point of professionally denying the epistemological possibility, need, and coherence of theological questions. It is due to this that this theological examination of Jung's work became also an epistemological endeavor.

The theological reflection presented in Chapter III, then, is the reflection of another discipline, theology, upon the psychological insights of Jung. Jung himself, I believe, had reached the point in his work at which it called for the addition of philosophical and theological reflection, but refused to immerse himself in such disciplines. We do not hesitate at this boundary, and the epistemological flavor of our work makes clear that point at which one discipline, of necessity, flows into another discipline.

The means I used to tame the almost unmanagable Jungian corpus was to approach his thought through his two volumes of personal letters. This approach had the added advantage of giving a less formal voice to Jung's thought, and in the study of Jung's thought, this can be an enormous advantage. His correspondence also presents Jung in his best light--in his inter-

action, albeit in epistolary form, with other people.

My thanks are due to the members of my Thesis Committee: to the Rev. Matt Lamb, for his interest and patience over the years, and to Dr. Dan McGuire and Dr. Paul Mason. Thanks also to Fr. William Kelly and the Theology Department at Marquette University for their willingness to see me finish this work. My greatest thanks are due to my husband, John, for his encouragement, and for his patience in the many hours he cleaned house and cooked and cared for our children while I worked on this thesis. And, finally, I must thank our children, Julia, Katie, Peter, and Louis, for the many happy distractions they brought me.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents,  
Josephine F. and Gerald A. Roux.

## CHAPTER I

### BRINGING PERSPECTIVE: JUNG AND HIS PSYCHE

One does not need to look far to find a disparaging remark about Jung or Analytical Psychology. Today, more than twenty years after his death, Jung is still, by majority vote of the member psychologists, excluded from Psychological Abstracts.<sup>1</sup> It seems the old charge of Freud and his circle remains--a charge which affected Jung profoundly, and against which he struggled all his life.

The main point with me is that it is difficult having to deal with careless and superficial criticisms. None of my critics has ever tried to apply my method conscientiously. Anyone doing it cannot fail to discover what I call archetypal motifs. <sup>2</sup>

Faced with the damning charge of being unscientific, Jung, at one point, referred to Freud's work as "a bastard of a science!"<sup>3</sup> At issue here is the definition of science itself.

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<sup>1</sup>James W. Heisig, Imago Dei: A Study of C. G. Jung's Psychology of Religion (London: Associated University Presses, 1979), p. 147, n. 7.

<sup>2</sup>C. G. Jung, C. G. Jung Letters, Vol. II: 1951-1961, sel. and ed. Gerhard Adler, in coll. with Aniela Jaffe, trans. R. R. C. Hull, Bollingen Series XCV:2 (Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 191. Dated 8 Nov 54, to Calvin S. Hall.

<sup>3</sup>C. G. Jung, C. G. Jung Letters, Vol. I: 1906-1950, sel. and ed. Gerhard Adler, in coll. with Aniela Jaffe, trans. R. F. C. Hull, Bollingen Series XCV:1 (Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 141. Dated 30 Jan 34, to Bernhard Baur-Celio.

Jung was interested in spiritualistic phenomena (which Freud referred to as "the black flood of occultism"<sup>4</sup>), in psychic experiences which did not easily fit into Freud's "unendurably narrow"<sup>5</sup> definition of the psyche, and in what Jung eventually referred to as "numinous experiences." "...the main interest of my work is not concerned with the treatment of neuroses but rather with the approach to the numinous."<sup>6</sup> Later in life, Jung's work was declared "religious," a refinement of the earlier charge of "unscientific." Banished to the border of scientific respectability, Jung declared that the psychic experiences which interested him were fitting subjects for scientific examination, and that there could be devised a method for examining these subjects insofar as they manifested themselves psychologically. Jung was actually challenging the paradigm for science in his day. David Burrell explains:

...what Jung finds himself challenging is a paradigm for science, one so settled as to preempt the field. In exposing this notion of science as one paradigm--and a limited one at that--he also managed to expose the pretensions of a society crafted in its image. 7

Jung's greatness lies precisely in his "volcanic

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<sup>4</sup>C. G. Jung, Collected Works, 19 vols., eds. Sir Herbert Read, Dr. Michael Fordham, Dr. Gerhard Adler, William McGuire, trans. R. F. C. Hull, Bollingen Series XX (Princeton University Press) 10, p. 530. (References are to paragraphs.)

<sup>5</sup>CW 5, xxiii (Forward to the Fourth Swiss Edition, Symbols of Transformation, 1950.).

<sup>6</sup>Letters, I, p. 377. Dated 20 Aug 45, to P. W. Martin.

<sup>7</sup>David Burrell, Exercises in Religious Understanding (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974), p. 183.

eruptions of [his] unconscious"<sup>8</sup> and in what he called "a damnable participation with the [psychological] subject-matter."<sup>9</sup> But Jung could only with great difficulty and questionable success extract himself from this participation with his psyche to explain his work to his contemporaries in and out of psychology. For while Jung was utterly convinced that his work was of vital importance to the world, he found himself basically unequipped to unambiguously convey such work through the usual scientific and scholarly channels. One may identify in Jung's damnable participation with his volcanic unconscious the single source for his insights and his frustration. His damnable participation made him an extraordinary psychological observer, but certainly neither a rigorous systematic thinker nor a lucid writer. Walter Heisig has commented that "in questions of methodology, depth psychology still lumbers along in its covered wagon days,"<sup>10</sup> and Anthony Storr has remarked that he knows of "no creative person who was more hamstrung by his inability to write."<sup>11</sup>

Jung's inability to think systematically and to write clearly were compounded by his place in history. To be unable to clearly and unambiguously state the subject matter

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<sup>8</sup>Paul J. Stern, C. G. Jung: The Haunted Prophet (New York: G. Braziller, 1976), p. 156.

<sup>9</sup>Letters, I, p. 187. Dated 12 March 35, to an Anonymous American woman.

<sup>10</sup>Heisig, p. 103.

<sup>11</sup>Anthony Storr, C. G. Jung (New York: Viking Press, 1973), p. 31.

under psychological investigation and the method of your scientific inquiry, at a time when the nascent field of psychology was only beginning to gain acceptance and to define its subject and method (bringing with it the defensive, rigid guidelines not uncommon to a newly established discipline), was to effectively remove yourself from that scientific community.

In November of 1954, Jung writes in a letter to J. B. Priestley:

You as a writer are in a position to appreciate what it means to an isolated individual like myself to hear one friendly voice among the stupid and malevolent noises rising from the scribbler-infested jungle. <sup>12</sup>

And to another, in 1960: "If I could not stand criticism I would have been dead years ago, since I have had nothing but criticism for 60 years."<sup>13</sup> These typically Jungian laments reveal the frustration which haunted Jung, and which Jaffe says made it so that he "needed an echo from the world more than others did."<sup>14</sup> Indeed, banishment only seems to have amplified his difficulties. "You have understood my purpose indeed, even down to my 'erudite' style. As a matter of fact it was my intention to write in such a way that fools get scared and only true scholars and seekers can enjoy its read-

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<sup>12</sup>Letters, II, p. 192. Dated 8 November 54.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 583. Dated 16 Aug 60, to Robert C. Smith.

<sup>14</sup>Aniela Jaffe, From the Life and Work of C. G. Jung, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968), p. 124.

ing."<sup>15</sup> Jung could not clearly grasp why he was so misunderstood. He gives this typically Jungian explanation of this lack of comprehension on the part of others: "...my writings represented a compensation for our times....what I said would be unwelcome for it is difficult for people of our times to accept the counter-weight to the conscious world."<sup>16</sup> Although we may grant an element of truth to this explanation, Jung's "undimmed prospect of all-around incomprehension"<sup>17</sup> was due to more than this psychological explanation was willing to admit.

James Heisig has characterized the thought of Jung as a "challenge,"<sup>18</sup> and Jung himself, in 1956, claimed that his most important work was "still left untouched in its primordial obscurity."<sup>19</sup> Despite all that has been written on Jungian psychology since this casual remark, Jung's life has yet to find the biographer which Freud had in Ernest Jones, and his thought still awaits a faithful and competent interpreter. Meanwhile, his work remains "defiant, resilient, and

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<sup>15</sup>Letters, I, p. 425. Dated 20 April 46, to Wilfrid Lay.

<sup>16</sup>Jaffe, p. 124, quoting Jung in Memories, Dreams, Reflections, p. 222.

<sup>17</sup>Letters, II, p. 32. Dated 5 Jan 52, to Erich Neumann.

<sup>18</sup>Heisig, p. 145.

<sup>19</sup>Letters, II, p. 309. Dated 17 June 56, to Benjamin Nelson.

clamoring for justice."<sup>20</sup> His thought is so difficult: it seems to have its own inner logic and dynamic. Bringing perspective, indeed, could be seen as a necessary and formative preliminary for any work concerned with Jung. There are several questions which require an exposition: 1) an historical question: the life of Jung's psyche, selectively capsualized in the story of his friendship and break with Freud, for that friendship and its psychological struggles are the crucible from which there emerged the contributions of the mature Jung; 2) a literary question: the evolution of the Jungian genre, and the key role this plays in understanding Jung; and 3) a philosophical question: the formative role of epistemology in Jung's work.

Jung's Friendship and Break with Freud:  
Establishing the Nature of Jung's Psyche

It is the nature of Jung's work that until a kind of definitive understanding of it has been hammered out, it needs the perspective that reference to his personal life will grant, for his work is grounded in the nature of his psyche.<sup>21</sup> Jung

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<sup>20</sup>Heisig, p. 145.

<sup>21</sup>We must be wary in our attempt to review Jung's friendship and break with Freud, for, as Vincent Brome warns: "Considerable hazards beset the path of anyone who tries to set down the truth of what he finds in the early history of psychoanalytic and analytic psychology." (Vincent Brome, Jung: Man and Myth (New York: Atheneum, 1981), pp. 11-12.) Both Jung and Freud were not above revising the accounts of events in their lives to their own satisfaction, particularly the events of the Freud-Jung friendship. The re-structuring was more than mere psychological license. Historians of psychology will surely wince at this account Jaffe gives:

"Burning letters in the beautiful old stove with green tiles which stood in his library was a solemn and at

himself says: "...whatever I had learnt about the unconscious was due to a somewhat similar but internal catastrophe in my psychic neighborhood..."<sup>22</sup> And again: "My psychology and my life are interwoven to such an extent that one cannot make my biography readable without telling people at the same time about the things I have found out about the unconscious."<sup>23</sup>

A decisive factor for Jung was his powerful and undeniable relationship to his unconscious. Jung's introduction to his unconscious world was an important event of the Twentieth Century and of very particular interest to us here. The Freud-Jung friendship and break are the historical setting of this event, and if we may grasp the relationship of Jung to his unconscious as it is revealed in this historical setting, we will have a vantage point from which we may bring order to and examine a portion of his thought.

Prior to 1912, Jung had established his reputation as a competent and promising psychiatrist. His work on Word Association<sup>24</sup> and his monograph on Dementia Praecox<sup>25</sup> had won

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the same time cheerful occasion. Once, with the fire roaring, he smote the side of the stove with the flat of his hand, as though clapping an old friend on the shoulder, and remarked, laughing: 'This fellow is my discretion.'" (Jaffe, p. 117)

<sup>22</sup>Letters, I, p. 380. Dated 26 Sept 45, to Susan R. Bach.

<sup>23</sup>Letters, II, p. 38. Dated 6 Feb 52, to J. M. Thorburn.

<sup>24</sup>CW 2.

<sup>25</sup>CW 3.

him acknowledgment as an important thinker in his own right. Freud's recognition of his competence (as well as of his non-Semitic and non-Viennese background) was to place him as the recognizable head of the growing international psychoanalytic movement. It was the original and insightful work of Freud on dreams that had drawn Jung to Freud's side in 1907, and Jung's appropriation of Freud's insights should not be underestimated. Even as late as 1957, Jung wrote:

Despite the blatant misjudgment I have suffered at Freud's hands, I cannot fail to recognize, even in the teeth of my resentment, his significance as a cultural critic and psychological pioneer....Without Freud's 'psychoanalysis' I wouldn't have had a clue. 26

Jung's criticism of Freud's work can be said to be founded in Jung's very particular, apparently powerful, and undeniable relationship to his unconscious. Freud had coined the term "phylogenetic traces" to categorize the images of the unconscious which could not simply be labelled suppressed, but failed to pursue them, considering them worthless fantasies and substitutes for reality.<sup>27</sup> But Jung understood these phylogenetic traces as effective symbols of transforma-

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<sup>26</sup>Letters, II, p. 359. Dated April 57, to Edith S. Schröder.

<sup>27</sup>We must be careful to do justice to Freud's concept of the unconscious. There is a "truly dynamic face" to his theory of primal urges, but it is his concept of the unconscious as a "container of frustrated desire" which has gained predominance, mostly because of his therapeutic practice. (Ira Progoff, The Death and Rebirth of Psychology: An Integrative Evaluation of Freud, Adler, Jung and Rank and the Impact of their Culminating Insights on Modern Man (New York: The Julian Press, Inc., Publishers, 1956), pp. 140-43.)

tion, and the reader of his 'autobiography' Memories, Dreams, Reflections<sup>28</sup> will quickly assent to the judgment that these "impersonal" dreams (at least as they were recollected by the elderly Jung) had seized the attention of Jung even as a young child.

Although Jung knew that without Freud's psychoanalysis he "wouldn't have had a clue," even contemporaneous psychologists could see that Jung held serious reservations about some of Freud's basic positions from the very beginning, and these reservations, though attended by periodic respites, persisted and grew more serious.<sup>29</sup> Jung's attempts to recon-

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<sup>28</sup>C. G. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, rec. and ed. Aniela Jaffe, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Vintage Books, 1963).

<sup>29</sup>Perhaps these differences were partly due, as Anthony Storr points out (Storr, pp. 9-19), to some obvious differences in the experience and interests of these two men. Upon receipt of his medical degree, Jung accepted a position at the Burghölzli mental hospital in Basel, Austria on 10 Dec 1900, beginning as assistant staff physician to Dr. Eugene Bleuler. He referred to the start of his clinical experience as his "entry into the monastery of the world." (MDR, 114) He had already completed six years of clinical psychiatric experience at the Burghölzli when he met Freud. Freud, on the other hand, never worked in a mental hospital, with the exception of a brief period as locus tenens (Storr, pp. 9-10), and he regarded those committed to mental hospitals as beyond the reach of psychoanalysis. Freud had little therapeutic experience with psychotic and schizophrenic patients, who were the focus of Jung's interest, but worked mainly with hysteria and obsessional neurosis. Storr further points out that while Jung found Freud's theories, in general, satisfactory for hysteria, they were not so for his work with schizophrenics. I believe Storr's isolation of these two simple facts of differences of experience and interest are a possible explanation of the unfortunate war between the Freud circle and the Jung circle. It does provide a foothold into an objective debate, as it avoids calling Freud intollerant of criticism and of "infidelity," and it gives a scientific legitimacy to Jung's work.

cile Freud's theories with his own encounters with his unconscious and his therapeutic work presented him with major flaws in Freud's thought.

Jung made undeniably clear to all his differences with Freud as he then perceived them with the publication, in 1912, of Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido.<sup>30</sup> Later in life Jung explained that his

...scientific conscience did not allow...[him] to countenance the absurd position which the human psyche occupies in his [Freud's] theory....I have sacrificed my scientific career in doing all I can to combat this absolute devaluation of the psyche. 31

The break with Freud, finalized in 1913, plunged Jung into a quasi-psychotic state, which lasted until 1916 or 1918. The "confrontation with the unconscious,"<sup>32</sup> immediately precipitated by his break with Freud, seemed to be caused by the "greater psychic depth"<sup>33</sup> of Jung's dreams and fantasies, a conclusion with which Jung himself would be pleased to agree. Possibly Ira Progoff's sense of Jung's "fidelity"<sup>34</sup> to archetypal images is appropriate, but with the following understanding of "fidelity." Jung remained attentive to the

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<sup>30</sup>CW 5.

<sup>31</sup>Letters, I, p. 122. Dated 29 May 33, to Christian Jenssen.

<sup>32</sup>This is Jung's own phrase to describe the period of 1913-1918. It is the title from the chapter dealing with this phase of his life in his Memories, Dreams, Reflections, pp. 170-199.

<sup>33</sup>Progoff, p. 122.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 122-129.

messages which came to him from his unconscious and he remained somewhat conscious of what these messages implied about the psyche, but his "fidelity" does not mean he freely chose to confront his volcanic unconscious, as Stern points out.

"While Jung's own descent into the psychic netherworld was less self-propelled than he liked to think, he was bold and wily enough to ultimately consent to the inevitable and thus gain a foothold in a new, larger reality."<sup>35</sup> The "intensity"<sup>36</sup> of the Freud-Jung relationship was most probably a contributing element causing Jung's quasi-psychotic state, but Jung's psychological history also seems to have called for this psychotic response.

In Memories, Dreams, Reflections Jung states: "After my break with Freud my friends and acquaintances dropped away. My book was declared to be rubbish; I was a mystic and that settled the matter. Riklin and Maeder alone stuck by me."<sup>37</sup> Here we see described Jung's literal plunging into his psyche, and it reads almost as though this event were occurring in the world shared by you and I:

It was during Advent of the year 1913--December 12, to be exact--that I resolved upon the decisive step. I was sitting at my desk once more, thinking over my fears. Then I let myself drop. Suddenly it was as though the ground literally gave way beneath my feet, and I plunged down into dark depths.... 39

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<sup>35</sup>Stern, p. 9.

<sup>36</sup>Storr, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup>MDR, p. 162.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 179. Emphasis mine.

In 1913 Jung resigned as lecturer at the University of Zurich, as it seems he was not able to continue this commitment, and gave himself wholly to his "self-experiment." There was something compelling him to enact his childlike play therapy and to record his dreams and fantasies in the "Red Book." With reference to his "confrontation with his unconscious," Jung later said, "I always marvelled that I could fight my way through the inimical jungle."<sup>39</sup> The center of Jung's life was the events occurring in his psyche. It was for him the "side door, over-looked by many." Here we see sketched a distillation of Jung's unique perspective.

Nothing is submerged forever--that is the terrifying discovery everyone makes who has opened that portal [the exploration of the unconscious]. But the primal fear is so great that the world is grateful to Freud for having proved "scientifically" (what a bastard of a science!) that one has seen nothing behind it. Now it is not merely my "credo" but the greatest and most incisive experience of my life that this door, a highly inconspicuous side-door on an unsuspecting-looking and easily overlooked footpath--narrow and indistinct because only a few have set foot on it--leads to the secret of transformation and renewal. 40

Jung's life is the story of a volcanic unconscious. He was a man defined by his psyche, a psyche which lived dangerously close to consciousness. Jung's glimpses of this psyche disclosed to him a psychic world different from Freud's, and, acting upon such insight, virulent enough to bring about a quasi-psychotic state. Although, as Stern correctly notes, "there are no total victories to be gained on psychic battle-

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<sup>39</sup>Letters, II, p. 489. Dated 5 March 59, to Stephen I. Abrams.

<sup>40</sup>Letters, I, p. 141. Dated 30 Jan 34, to Baur-Celio.

fields,"<sup>41</sup> still Jung was "bold and wily enough"<sup>42</sup> to emerge from his battle. When he withdrew from his job as lecturer at the University of Zurich, he surrounded himself with his family and continued with his private psychiatric work. It was by his work as a psychiatrist and by his writing that he was able to find a "creative" use of his "incipient madness."<sup>43</sup> Jung's recounting in Memories, Dreams, Reflections illustrates for us how it was that his writing was therapeutic for him.

Around five o'clock in the afternoon on Sunday the front doorbell began ringing frantically. It was a bright summer day; the two maids were in the kitchen, from which the open square outside the front door could be seen. Everyone immediately looked to see who was there, but there was no one in sight. I was sitting near the doorbell, and not only heard it, but saw it moving. We all simply stared at one another. The atmosphere was thick, believe me! Then I knew that something had to happen. The whole house was filled as if there was a crowd present, crammed full of spirits. They were packed deep right up to the door, and the air was so thick it was scarcely possible to breathe. As for myself, I was all a-quiver with the question: "For God's sake, what in the world is this?" Then they cried out in chorus, "We have come back from Jerusalem where we found not what we sought." This is the beginning of the Septem Sermones. Then it began to flow out of me, and in the course of three evenings the thing was written. As soon as I took up the pen, the whole ghostly assemblage evaporated. The room quieted and the atmosphere cleared. The haunting was over. 44

This purgative writing was most certainly out of the ordinary, even for Jung. But he does speak during his life of the "crea-

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<sup>41</sup>Stern, p. 10.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>MDR, pp. 190-191.

tive forces" which urged him on, and which, if he did not curb them, would have driven him "round the universe at a gallop,"<sup>45</sup> and it does help us understand how it was that Jung emerged from his "psychic experiment" in 1918 with a book in hand, Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido.<sup>46</sup> Jung's writings present the insights of a man who was a wily and steely-nerved voyageur into the realm of the psyche. Jung's writings need some special attention in order to unlock his insights, for as Storr has said, he "knows of no creative person who was more hamstrung by his inability to write."

### The Jungian Genre

Part of the difficulty in understanding what Jung has written is easily explained: he had trouble writing. But the fact that he was labelled a renegade from the Freudian camp did not simplify matters for him. Sigmund Freud was a talented writer who conveyed his thoughts clearly and persuasively--he could have been but a writer and been quite successful at that. When set next to Freud, Jung's literary style only

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<sup>45</sup>Letters, I, p. 321. 3 Oct 42, to Margareta Fellerer.

<sup>46</sup>"I have never felt happy about this book, much less satisfied with it: it was written at top speed, amid the rush and press of my medical practice, without regard to time or method. I had to fling my material hastily together, just as I found it. There was no opportunity to let my thoughts mature. The whole thing came upon me like a landslide that cannot be stopped. The urgency that lay behind it became clear to me only later: it was the explosion of all those psychic contents which could find no room, no breathing-space, in the constricting atmosphere of Freudian psychology and its narrow outlook." CW 5, xxiii.

appeared more incomprehensible. However, the severe judgment upon Jung's writing abilities cannot be explained away by the mere fact that, unlike himself, his rival Freud was a man with a formidable literary talent.

Freud was not only a talented writer, but also had at his disposal a powerful literary vehicle: the already structured and thoroughly accepted and understood genre of Positivistic Science. Included of necessity in Jung's challenging of the scientific paradigm of his day was his awareness that the strict delineations of what could be scientifically known by Positivistic Science excluded the symbolic realm of what Jung later labelled the collective unconscious. Jung's literary style and his methodological problems were of a piece. Jung stood alone as the first voyageur into the deep realms of the unconscious, and, of necessity, his writing style evolved from that of the scientific genre of the Positivistic Science of his day to a style which was clearly Jungian, and more suited to the kind of insights into the psyche which Jung was uncovering.

The first point, then, about Jung's writing style, is that it was "labyrinthian,"<sup>47</sup> and this was due to the fact that he was, as David Burrell has explained, challenging the scientific paradigm of his day, and therefore did not have at his disposal the genre of Positivistic Science. Jung's labyrinthian style is portrayed in this revealing description

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<sup>47</sup>Brome, p. 11.

of his writing of Mysterium Coniunctionis.

If one examines the original draft of the work, one discovers, incredibly enough, that by itself it would have made a relatively short book: a nucleus of basic concepts tied together logically in the form of a hypothetical construct. But rather than elaborate this text by studying its assumptions and its consistency with the available data, Jung preferred to adopt it tout court as a sort of mold into which he could empty his files on alchemical literature. The first draft is marked everywhere with red "xs" indicating insertions; then there are insertions within the insertions, and so on--sometimes getting so complicated that the final typist was not able to get everything in the right place. The outcome was a massive volume of over 550 pages, in which the original cluster of ideas had all but perished under the weight of its embellishments. 48

The choice to embellish the nucleus of his basic concepts with a jumble of "factual" information, instead of studying the assumptions and consistency of these concepts with available data, was probably caused by Jung's desire to bring a scientific aura to his work. Though Jung evolved a genre more suited to psychology as a humanistic science, he built confusion into it by insisting upon retaining elements from the natural sciences. Jung believed that acceptance of his work as valid was intrinsically tied to the acceptance of his work as scientific, and this is not too surprising if it is remembered that he "received his education in the natural sciences."<sup>49</sup> Jung knew that the kind of insights about the psyche which he was attempting to communicate could not be adequately conveyed within the framework of Positivist Science, yet Jung judged

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<sup>48</sup> Heisig, p. 108.

<sup>49</sup> Letters, II, p. 210. Dated 19 Jan 55, to Mercea Eliade.

that it was only by was of a "science" that his work would be judged as respectable and acceptable. We can, of course, understand Jung's confusion. To have clearly seen the dilemma in which psychology was implicitly embattled, a struggle which today is spoken of as Geisteswissenschaften and Naturwissenschaften, would have required a philosophical sophistication which Jung did not possess. It is to Jung's credit that he instinctively felt his way into his mish-mash genre as he did. Jung's style, though open to much deserved criticism, was an appropriate vehicle for the unconscious he was uncovering.

The logic which allows Jung's labyrinthian style to boast a quasi-cohesive state was an "imaginative-synthetic"<sup>50</sup> organization of "factual" evidence.

[Jung] prefers imagery to concrete factuality, general structural pattern to specific analysis, free fantasy to directed ratiocination. His is a world where the public, observable datum achieves greatest theoretical interest when it has been first viewed as a subjective symbol and then related to a world of other symbols independent of the initial, objective context. Immediate, intrapsychic experiences exert an uncommonly strong influence on Jung's psychological interpretations. Indeed, we find him saying as early as 1925: "Dreams have influenced all the important changes in my life and theories." 51

When asked by Michael Fordham why he had put a certain seemingly irrelevant footnote in Psychology and Alchemy, Jung's answer was: "Oh, I just thought of it."<sup>52</sup> Michael Fordham ex-

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<sup>50</sup>Heisig, p. 106.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 193, n. 7.

plains that "...indeed the apposition of two apparently unconnected ideas in a single text can be enough to assume a connection between them."<sup>53</sup> Jung at one point had even accused himself of being guilty of a "hypertrophy of intellectual intuition."<sup>54</sup> It thus seems that the best description of Jung's style is that of "courageously immediate,"<sup>55</sup> for the ultimate principle in the organization of his thought and writing, the cohesive element in his mish-mash genre, was that of trusting his own psyche, of what is now spoken of as his principle of intuition or insight. Yet Jung attempted to force this seemingly unscientific principle of intuition and insight into a scientific mold.

Second, Jung's subject matter seemed necessarily to call for a "highly differentiated language." Jung never understood why he was not understood--what he was speaking of was all very clear to him. The particular experiences of the psyche which he was trying to communicate were described by him as vivid, undeniable, and experienced by all. Yet he found no vocabulary immediately at hand which could convey these experiences satisfactorily. He slowly hammered out his own particular vocabulary. "I could never have published what I have discovered without a highly differentiated lan-

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 107, quoting K  nzli.

guage, which I had to polish endlessly for this purpose, so much so that finally, when I try to express my ideas, I can no longer speak any other way...."<sup>56</sup> Beyond Jung's neologisms, concerning which much has been written, there is also an easily overlooked confusion and misunderstanding built into Jung's genre: he freights his language with very particular meanings for words which, in general parlance, are understood quite differently, e.g., Jung's meanings for the words "believe" and "know." Thus the reader of Jung is unwittingly caught in Jung's personally weighted language.

Third, Jung uncovered that the distinctive language of the collective unconscious was a genre distinct from that of Positivistic Science, and also found a body of writing and a terminology which he hoped would validate it. Jung correctly perceived the language of the collective unconscious as "highly rhetoric, even bombastic...[and] embarrassing;"<sup>57</sup> Freud's even-handed writing style is easily preferable to Jung's style when Jung is speaking in the language of the collective unconscious. It seemed to Jung that this bombastic language of the collective unconscious was especially suited to be amplified in historical and mythic materials, and thus he had discovered publicly available, already established symbols of human culture which could translate, though inadequately, the obscure, personally vital experiences of the

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<sup>56</sup> Letters, II, p. 357. Dated 3 April 57, to Traugott Egloff.

<sup>57</sup> Heisig, p. 192.

psyche. Jung states that he found the "dramatic [and]... mythological more exact [in conveying the language and actions of the collective unconscious] than abstract scientific terminology."<sup>58</sup> One of Jung's most frequently employed avenues for establishing the scientific validity of the collective unconscious was by way of a comparison of the symbols and events of the unconscious with similar historical and mythological materials. This "amplification" of collective unconscious contents is of questionable value; the "amplification" by comparison to mythic and historic material effectively removes these unconscious contents from the immediacy which is necessary for establishing their validity. Most psychology scholars have criticized Jung's use of historical and mythical material because of this removal of immediacy. Unfortunately, Jung's explicit reason for the use of historical and mythical material was precisely to establish their scientific validity. But it seems that what is actually more important concerning Jung's use of comparable mythic and historic material was his struggling attempts to find an "exact" language to communicate the collective unconscious, and it is precisely this which so drew Jung to the historical and mythical material.

I had to keep to experiences that were directly accessible to me and compare them with data drawn from the whole history of the mind. This gives rise to some degree of inexactitude which makes my efforts appear provisional. 59

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<sup>58</sup> Heisig, p. 109. Emphasis mine.

<sup>59</sup> Letters, I, p. 231. Dated 27 March 37, to Rudolf Pannwitz.

Then, too, the world of mythic material was probably more vivid to Jung, who was at home in the symbolic world of the unconscious, than to the majority of modern people, who find mythology to be the study of the symbols of the past, and not myth as Schaer vividly defines it.

Myth is primarily the experience and expression of what happens in the soul. For those to whom myth is a living thing, it conveys a meaning as shattering as that which is given to us in the experience of revelation. It is experienced as such by the primitive mind. Myth is never a matter of caprice, of the desire for amusement, or of make-believe with an illusory world that masks the grimness of reality...it is always a way of expressing profoundly moving experiences. 60

Stern is right when he explains that Jung "made a virtue of his weakness in precision"; although he is charged with a lack of scientific precision, Jung was precisely aware of the subtle precision which is needed to investigate the "shimmering, protean" symbol. The genre of Jung, variously praised and decried, does convey, however problematically, the rich symbolic life of the psyche. The language of the collective unconscious, almost inarticulate in the "petty and bourgeois"<sup>61</sup> language of the Freudian embodiment, found a voice in the labyrinthian, highly differentiated, rhetorical and mythologically-oriented genre of Jung. In examining the work of Jung, we must keep in mind the descriptive genius of the Jungian genre and its ability to bring to life the world of the psyche, but we also must be aware of the unfortunate

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<sup>60</sup>Hans Schaer, Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1950), pp. 70-71.

<sup>61</sup>Stern, p. 156.

drawbacks inherent in the Jungian genre, brought about by Jung's struggle to secure his work as scientifically valid.

### Jung's Work as an Epistemological Endeavor

Jung was insistent about the epistemic limits of psychological experience. This concern surely began early on in Jung's career, and was consistent, at that stage of his work, with similar attempts by the psychologists of his day, prompted as they were by the urgency to delineate the new world of psychology as a science and as distinct from academic philosophy.<sup>62</sup> But in the years after his break with Freud, Jung's interest in the epistemic limits of psychological experience was also prompted by another urgency, for he found that the best avenue to justify his work as scientific was to precisely define the limits of what can be known by the psyche, and how it is that such things can be known, and to never budge beyond those limits. Jung's clearest statement of his epistemology is, predicatably and understandably enough, in the "Preface" ("Defense!") of his most controversial book, Answer to Job.<sup>63</sup> It is not surprising, then, that a consideration of Jung's epistemology easily also becomes a consideration of the question of the scientific validity of his work.

Heisig has correctly stressed that "One can hardly overlook the importance that the title of scientist held for

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<sup>62</sup>Heisig, p. 121.

<sup>63</sup>C. G. Jung, The Portable Jung, ed. Joseph Campbell, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), pp. 519-526. Also see CW 11.

Jung personally,"<sup>64</sup> and he speaks of the "prestige-value that Jung attached to the label scientific."<sup>65</sup> Part and parcel of the apotheosis of the scientific for Jung was his lack of regard for metaphysics and faith, apart from the "psychological truth."<sup>66</sup> Jung's antitheses of metaphysics verses science, and of knowledge verses faith, were established "grammatically, by definition," and "tended to be a mere shorthand for philosophical arguments that he felt [ were ] unnecessary to elaborate."<sup>67</sup>

For Jung, metaphysics refers exclusively to philosophical speculation about the unknowable, and faith to theological speculation of the same sort. Science on the contrary addresses itself to the knowable, and knowledge is synonymous with the fruit of reflection on "experience." The conclusion that metaphysics and faith are scientifically and epistemologically sterile exercises is thus little more than a tautology. What makes this rather loose and unconventional idiom intolerable, however, is that Jung extends it to cover virtually everything in the history of thought that has gone by the name of metaphysics and theology.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Heisig, p. 201.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>66</sup>"...epistemologically I take my stand on Kant...So when I say 'God' I am speaking exclusively of assertions that don't posit their object....All such assertions refer to the psychology of the God-image. Their validity is therefore never metaphysical but only psychological." (Letters, I, p. 294. Dated 8 Feb 41, to Josef Goldbrunner.) "Psychology as a natural science must reserve the right to treat all assertions that cannot be verified empirically as projections. This epistemological restriction says nothing either for or against the possibility of a transcendent Being." "Letters, II, p. 6. Dated 17 March 51, to Dr. H.)

<sup>67</sup>Heisig, p. 121.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

What to others seemed only an arbitrary and severe limitation of our knowing abilities, motivated purely by Jung's need to defend his scientific credibility, was also an attempt to identify the cognitive scope of his unorthodox psyche, and this despite Jung's unfortunate lack of love for and interest in philosophical sophistication. For Jung, the exploration of the human psyche revealed new parameters for our epistemological world. This epistemology, though never succinctly or even haltingly laid out anywhere in Jung's writing, is discernible at work throughout his corpus.

In Jungian epistemology, all knowledge is "filtered"<sup>69</sup> through the psyche, and the psyche, therefore, is our prime epistemological vehicle. "We can distinguish no form of being that is not psychic in the first place. All other realities are derived from and indirectly revealed by it..."<sup>70</sup> Jung understood that he would be charged with the arrogance of psychologism, and felt he had invalidated that charge because he saw that his psychological cognition made perception but "secondary,"<sup>71</sup> i.e., psychological.

...I can say of nothing that it is "only psychic," for everything in my immediate experience is psychic in the first place. I live in a "perceptual world" but not in a self-subsistent one. The latter is real enough but we have only indirect information about it. 72

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 113

<sup>70</sup>Letters, I, p. 60. 10 Jan 29, to Kurt Plachte.

<sup>71</sup>Letters, II, p. 129. 1 Oct 53, to Pastor W. Niederer.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 70. 17 June 52, to R. J. ZwiWerblowsky.

Because the self-subsistent world is only indirectly known in Jung's epistemology, what is "known" is only the immediate psychic experience. Jung was fond of pulling what he called the "epistemological curtain,"<sup>73</sup> and stating that beyond this "barrier"<sup>74</sup> or "threshold" we may not trespass and still have a true knowledge of things. This "threshold" was that point at which the "cognitive process comes to a stop,"<sup>75</sup> that point at which we may no longer "know" but only "believe." The self-subsistent world is therefore only "believed" in, and not "known."<sup>76</sup> "You 'know' of that which is beyond the psyche only through belief, not through knowledge."<sup>77</sup>

For Jung, the knowing human was ignorant of the epistemological curtain and of the all-determining quality of the cognitive process because at the point at which "the cognitive process comes to a stop," that point at which we may no longer "know" but only "believe," the psyche engaged the knowing subject in a sleight of hand, inducing him or her to believe that the psychological perception is the objective, self-subsistent world. There was, then, an "underlying psychological process" which "continues regardless" of the fact

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 129. 1 Oct 53, to Pastor W. Niederer.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 327. 10 Sept 56, to Fritz Lerch.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 192. 8 Nov 54, To Calvin S. Hall.

that the actual cognitive process has stopped,<sup>78</sup> and Jung attributed the effectiveness and the opacity of this process to the numinosity of psychic images.

The numinous, for Jung, referred to the emotive foundation<sup>79</sup> of a psychic image, and enrobed such images in an atmosphere of compelling fascination, suffusing our psychological perceptions with a straight-forward quality, with a "tremendous effectiveness,"<sup>80</sup> thus inducing the knower to believe that the psychological perception is the objective world. It is thus, according to Jung, that the psychological perception presents itself as if it were a self-evident, true, and unmediated perception of the self-subsistent world. Jung had faith in the cognitive abilities of the psyche to make available to the knower, in her secondary, symbolic experience, the self-subsistent world precisely because of the numinosity of the psyche's images, for the numinous quality of the psyche's images gave to our perceptual world an element which is beyond the subjectivities and biases of one's conscious life. Jung set up as the opposite of what he judged to be the vested interests of one's conscious knowing the neutral workings of the unconscious, whose guiding influence was her numinosity. Jung had faith in the cognitive abilities of the psyche precisely because the numinous psychic images "go over

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 327. 10 Sept 56, to Fritz Lerch.

<sup>79</sup>AtJ, p. 521.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 525.

our heads,"<sup>81</sup> because they are produced at a level of the unconscious which is not subject to the "snares and delusions, lies, or arbitrary opinions"<sup>82</sup> of the conscious mind. Jung therefore may speak, as he did in 1956, of how it had remained for the advent of psychology to perceive this critical, intermediary role of the psyche in epistemology.

As for the question of how truly the perceptual world corresponds to the self-subsistent world, Jung, it seems, was content to merely state that the self-subsistent world "is real enough but we have only indirect information about it."<sup>83</sup> Jung's "dogma of the immaculate perception"<sup>84</sup> was his naive faith that the "subjectively conditioned perception"<sup>85</sup> of the facts of an individual's psychic life was "an objective datum of observation."<sup>86</sup> The status of "dogma" can only be removed from this naive cognitional faith by reference to Jung's perception of the over-shadowing power of the numinosity of the psyche's images. Epistemologically, Jung was isolated within the psyche, and seems to have been oblivious of the need to proffer even a semblance of philosophical integrity.

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., pp. 524-25.

<sup>83</sup>Letters, II, p. 70. 17 June 52, to R. J. Zwi-  
Werblowsky.

<sup>84</sup>Heisig, p. 119, quoting Nietzsche.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

Jung regarded as a "fact" only what was "known." A "fact," therefore, could be the experience of a mental patient who one day looks out his window and describes how the sun has a phallus and is the source of a mighty wind. These "facts" were questionable facts to many; we hear this lament from Jung: "I am essentially an empiricist and have discovered to my cost that when people do not understand me they think I have seen visions."<sup>87</sup> Jung was certainly the first empiricist to be so accused!

The thing being "known" by the Jungian psyche exists either in the self-subsistent world or in the psyche itself. "Psychic experience has two sources: the outer world and the unconscious."<sup>88</sup> Jung states that he received his "scientific education in the field of the natural sciences, whose principle is nihil est in intellectu quod non antea fuerit in sensu."<sup>89</sup> He goes on to explain how it is that he learned to also take the psyche herself as a source of knowledge.

...you can imagine my astonishment when I encountered associations of ideas, or rather "thought forms," among alienated and later among neurotics and normal persons, for which no models could apparently be found. Naturally this was particularly shocking to me because very recognizable models did exist, but entirely beyond the purview of my patients. There was not even the chance of cryptomnesia since the models did not exist in the patient's environment. I waited and explored all the possible explanations for fourteen years before I published the facts. 90

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<sup>87</sup> Letters, II, p. 129. 1 Oct 53, to Pastor W. Niederer.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 4. 13 Feb 51, to Heinrich Boltze.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 210. 19 Jan 55, to Mircea Eliade.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

Jung considered the psyche as a distinct source of knowledge, for he found that humans were capable of a perception for which our senses were not accountable. "...I can intuition any kind of perception which takes place in a way that cannot be explained by the function of the senses."<sup>91</sup> This delineation of the sources of our knowledge, in particular the psyche itself as a distinct source of knowledge, is a hallmark of Jung's world, for it was experiences such as the one described above which led Jung to believe that the psyche was capable of educating us about the fact that "the psyche supplies the images and forms which alone make knowledge of objects possible."<sup>92</sup>

However, Jung's narrow description of what was "fact" begins to loose any definition at all if we examine closely his actual use of the term. First, Jung trusted his own psyche to find the facts, as we have said. The "authority" of his intuition was sufficient reason for Jung to bend the facts; he wished to bring scientific respectibility to what were considered by the scientific world of his day to be border experiences. A case illustrating this is Jung's famous account of the paranoid schizophrenic who, Jung says, shared with him a vision of the sun-phallus.

When I asked him what he saw, he was surprised that I myself saw nothing, and said, "Surely you see the solar penis. When I shake my head, it also shakes, and that is the origin of the Wind."....Our patient was about ten

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<sup>91</sup>Letters, I, p. 420. 20 April 46, to L. J. Bendit.

<sup>92</sup>Heisig, p. 113, quoting Jung.

years older than I....His attitude towards me was benevolent--he liked me, as the only person with any sympathy for his abstruse ideas. His delusions were mainly of a religious nature, and when he invited me to blink into the sun like himself and to wag my head, he apparently intended to let me partake of his vision. He played the role of the mystical sage and I was the pupil. He was the sun-god himself, creating the wind by shaking his head. 93

Jung drew a parallel between this vision by the paranoid schizophrenic and Mithraic sun-worship rituals. The patient's vision occurred "under circumstances which rule out any possibility of direct transmission."<sup>94</sup> Not only were the background, education and employment of the patient unable to account for knowledge of Mithraic sun-worship rituals, but Jung claims that he knew nothing of the historical parallels to the patient's vision until four years later, with the publication, in 1910, of a book by Albrecht Dieterich, Eine Mithrasliturgie. Yet...

Ellensburger remarks that in fact a similar image is to be found in Creuzer's Symbolic (1841), opening up the remote possibility that Jung, who was acquainted with the work, had already met it previously....A further complication arises from the fact--disguised in later accounts of the case and even in the revision of the original passage--that it was not Jung himself but a pupil of his, J. Honeger, who had first discovered the patient's vision. 95

What, really, was the vision of the mental patient, and how much did Jung really know of Mithraic sun-phallus rituals? J. L. Brunneton has remarked that "C. G. Jung...is aided by

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<sup>93</sup>CW 9.1. (The Concept of the Collective Unconscious.)

<sup>94</sup>CW 5, par. 223. (Symbols of Transformation.)

<sup>95</sup>Heisig, p. 206, n. 37.

a power of concentration and a memory that are incomparable. He reads anything that he gets his hands on and ceaselessly returns to the sources."<sup>96</sup> Jung was capable of sacrificing exactness and truth to a higher goal, that of making accessible and understandable the experiences which he found to be undeniably a part of the psyche. It is as if the overwhelming importance of the discipline of science for Jung consisted of the fact that, for his day, what could be accepted as valid and true was what could be found within the framework of science. What was undeniably true for Jung was what he had experienced psychically, and it is almost as if the particulars of how his science proved those truths was immaterial to Jung, as long as the final results proved the truth of his experiences. In place of a "rigorous and systematic [scientific] argumentation," we find the "subjectivistic logic" which has already been spoken of with regard to Jung's genre.<sup>97</sup> In actuality, the evidence used in his scientific work is gleaned and structured "in a private and covert fashion," and thus in examining what is really present in his scientific work, "one often feels oneself in the grip of ideas whose very strength lies in their intuitive ambiguity," that is, they actually rest on the "authority" of Jung's "intuition."<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 162, n. 3, quoting J. L. Brenneton, "C. G. Jung, l'homme, sa vie, son caractere," Revue d'Allemagne 7 (1933): 673-89, p. 683.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

Second, Jung was capable of applying the term "fact" to what were, in reality, theoretical assumptions. The most striking example of this is his insistence upon speaking of the collective unconscious and the archetypes as "facts."

I reject the term "romantic" for my conception of the unconscious because this is an empirical and anything but a philosophical concept....I am not [a philosopher]. I do not "posit" the unconscious. My concept is a nomen which covers empirical facts that can be verified at any time....I have no use for romantic hypostases and am strictly "not at home" for philosophical opinions. People can only prove to me that certain facts do not exist. But I am still waiting for this proof. 99

Jung was, as he never tired of insisting, "interested solely in the facts,"<sup>100</sup> and, we must immediately add, markedly uninterested in any philosophical issues. So we have Jung's naive assessment of the collective unconscious revealing itself as "fact" on the same level as the "facts" it claims to explain.<sup>101</sup> It was probably due to this distaste for philosophical sophistication or for even a minimal philosophical awareness which will ultimately bring the judgment that Jung's scientific work rests upon creaking foundations.

...a number of serious objections arise to his [Jung's] persistent and unqualified claims for the "objectivity" of his factual material....He did not attempt a systematic analysis of his method, and this alone makes us suspect that he was largely unaware of his own theoretical assumptions, or at least lacked the incentive required to ask the questions he needed to ask. As a result, the mass of allegedly unimpeachable empirical data that Jung treated as bedrock foundation for his psychological theory

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<sup>99</sup> Letters, I, p. 329. 4 Feb 43, to Arnold Künzli.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 346. 22 Sept 44, to H. Irmingier.

<sup>101</sup> Heisig, p. 137.

begins to assume the status of a vast construct born by other concerns than critical objectivity. 102

At one time Jung descriptively referred to what he was engaged in as "walking in the dough at the bottom of the sea."<sup>103</sup>

In this void of philosophical sophistication, Jung inserted as an organizing and authoritative voice the intuitive persuasiveness of what he experienced of his psyche, explaining very simply: "When things fit together it is not always a matter of a philosophical system; sometimes it is the facts that fit together"<sup>104</sup> and "(One fact is no fact, but when you have seen many, you begin to sit up.)"<sup>105</sup> The "fitting together" of facts, and the many years of observing psychic experiences were enough for Jung, whereas others needed the rigorous demands of scientific proof and philosophical speculation.

### Conclusions

Despite his dubious scientific validity, his alleged epistemological cul-de-sac, and his striking philosophical naivete, the sum and substance of Jung's insights emerges intact. The persistent problem of the relationship between fact and theory in Jungian thought still awaits a resolution. The "alternate methodological groundwork"<sup>106</sup> which Heisig

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>103</sup> Letters, II, p. 557. 7 May 60, to Anonymous.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 192. 8 ~~Nov~~ 54, to Calvin S. Hall.

<sup>105</sup> Letters, I, p. 395. Nov 45, to J. B. Rhine.

<sup>106</sup> Heisig, p. 110.

claims is necessary to "properly locate" and "give due place"<sup>107</sup> to Jung's genius is work which certainly needs to be done, although not here. Some have even charged that his theory of the collective unconscious and of the archetypes perishes under this critique. However, in rectifying this philosophical muddle, we may effectively remove and therefore leave unaddressed a central critique of the modern person and society which Jung was elaborating by quarantining fact and theory. Not denying the irreplaceable importance of correct and rigorous systematic work as a foundation for any serious psychological thought, let us bring one point to the fore. We have already seen that Jung was a man who lacked and disliked philosophical sophistication, who stood for all intents and purposes alone in the discovery of the depths of the unconscious, and who lived, suffered and was enraptured within the realm of the collective unconscious. As such it may be intolerant to demand of Jung any more than a deep and initial appreciation of the consuming world of the unconscious' symbols. He was faithful to the world of the archetypal images, and, in his personal ethics, found it to be the most unpardonable sin to deny their immediate and autonomous reality: "Deviation from the numen seems to be universally understood as being the worst and most original sin."<sup>108</sup> Undeniably, Jung did make theoretical claims; they were usually issued in

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<sup>107</sup>Ibid.

<sup>108</sup>Letters, II, p. 370. 11 June 57, to Rev. H. L. Philp.

a defensive context. But he was also capable of denying those same theoretical constructs, claiming them to be but quasi-theories; they were but "mere names of groups of irrational phenomena,"<sup>109</sup> only "certain hypothetical patterns serving as a means of comparison."<sup>110</sup> His distrust of theories had as source the unpardonable sin of denying the immediate and autonomous reality of archetypal experience, and this by way of depotentiation: Jung felt that with theory came a replacing of the "descriptive concept of the self by an empty abstraction, [and therefore] the archetype is increasingly detached from its dynamic background and gradually turned into a purely intellectual formula."<sup>111</sup> The psyche, for Jung, undeniably laid claim to "its own intrinsic reality," and this "intrinsic reality" could not "be got rid of by believing in something."<sup>112</sup>

Jung once said that nothing "frightened" him more than "dead conceptualisms."<sup>113</sup> However admirable and singular was Jung's fidelity to the immediacy of archetypal experience, we must insert the patently obvious qualification that theory is not experience, and experience is not theory, and that it

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<sup>109</sup>Ibid., p. 302. May 56, to Anonymous.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. 259. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., p. 372. 14 June 57, to Bernhard Lang.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., p. 290. 11 Feb 56, to Maud Oakes.

is not expected that one should perform the function of the other. Jung would probably reiterate his stubborn quarantining of fact and theory in the face of these disjunctions on the grounds that de facto, theory had come to replace fact for the modern person. He particularly felt that religious experience had become equated with a conformity with the dogmatic positions of the Western Churches. Here we witness his peculiarly strict delineation of theology and philosophy as mere beliefs paling before and incapable of bringing about religious experience and "knowledge."

What good is it to anyone when a theologian "confesses" that he has "met the living Lord"? The wretched layman can only turn green with envy that such an experience never happened to him. In my practice I often had to give elementary school lessons in the history of religion in order to eliminate, for a start, the disgust and nausea people felt for religious matters who had dealt all their lives only with confession-mongers and preachers. The man of today wants to understand and not be preached at. The need for understanding and discussion is as great as it is unconscious (at least in most cases)....It is of burning interest for them to hear something understandable about religion, so much so that often I am hard put to it to draw a distinction between myself and a director of conscience. 114

Jung saw his psychological work as capable of instilling an attitude which would allow the modern person to meet religious experience half way, which would allow the modern person to stand open to any religious experience which "might happen along,"<sup>115</sup> whereas the world of theology and philosophy was a world of "dead" conceptualism. It was a presumptuous lan-

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<sup>114</sup>Letters, II, p. 67. 28 May 52, to Dorothee Hoch.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., p. 258. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

guage which believed that by speaking of God one therefore could circumvent experience and still know God. We might possibly redeem Jung's dichotomy of fact and theory by a return to experience, and thus place theory upon a solid footing. Jung saw barely any glimmer of this in his life, and it is thus not surprising that he so dogmatically (!) divorced fact and theory.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SYMBOLIC REALM

#### "Arguing with the Modern Mind"<sup>1</sup>

Jung was particularly adept at moving in the symbolic realm of the unconscious. This familiarity with the world of symbols was not routine for his contemporaries, and, except for those who were compelled to acknowledge the symbolic realm by virtue of their mental illness, Jung felt modern man was but peripherally aware of the unconscious, symbolic underpinnings of consciousness. While Jung identified ego with consciousness in agreement with Nineteenth Century psychology and psychiatry,<sup>2</sup> his revolutionary understanding of the psyche as a symbolic realm gave him at least the beginnings of a new perspective for the relationship of the conscious and the unconscious. For instance, he did speak of our symbolically-oriented unconscious as a "life behind consciousness...from which...consciousness arises."<sup>3</sup> The degree of our familiarity with the symbolic "life behind

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<sup>1</sup>Letters, I, p. 387. Oct 45, to Victor White. "I do not combat the Christian truth, I am only arguing with the modern mind."

<sup>2</sup>James Hillman, "Anima," Spring: An Annual of Archetypal Psychology and Jungian Thought (1973):97-132, p. 126. (Hereafter referred to as Hillman, "Anima" I.)

<sup>3</sup>CW 9,1, 57; Hillman, "Anima" I, p. 127.

consciousness" is in direct ratio to the degree to which we live a psychologically healthy conscious existence, for the symbolic realm is that "from which consciousness arises." Jung did not draw these intuitive stammerings concerning the relationship of the conscious and the unconscious to their conclusion. Hillman has attempted this, suggesting that "consciousness refers to a process more to do with images than will, with reflection rather than control, with reflective insight into rather than orientation towards objective reality."<sup>4</sup>

While Jung did not fully articulate a new and fuller relation of conscious and unconscious which would be adequate to the unconscious as a symbolic "life behind consciousness," he did identify the cause of the modern, partial consciousness to be a "sophistry, i.e., overvaluation of the rational intellect,"<sup>5</sup> a "wrong rationalism that excludes even the possibility of an inner experience."<sup>6</sup> As such, Jung felt that the subtlety of the symbolic realm of the unconscious was almost inaccessible to the modern person: "The soul [i.e., the realm of the psyche and her symbols] is the problem of modern man..."<sup>7</sup>

People speak of belief when they have lost knowledge....  
The naïve primitive doesn't believe, he knows, because

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Letters, II, p. 272. 21 Sept 55, to Piero Cogo.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 183. 2 Oct 54, to Anonymous.

<sup>7</sup>Schaer, p. 27.

the inner experience rightly means as much to him as the outer. He still has no theology and hasn't let himself be befuddled by boobytrap concepts. He adjusts his life--of necessity--to outer and inner facts, which he does not--as we do--feel to be discontinuous. He lives in one world, whereas we live only in one half and merely believe in the other or not at all. We have blotted it out with so-called "spiritual development"... 8

If this critique is true, it is not surprising that Jung's work was so misunderstood and ignored, for, as he said, "I give names to observations and experiences unfamiliar to the contemporary mind and objectionable to its prejudices."<sup>9</sup>

Jung's tool for accomplishing a familiarity with and a tolerance for the symbolic world of the psyche was the discipline of science. He felt that Analytical Psychology was capable of establishing a process of discernment by which the modern person could establish an interchange between his or her conscious world and the symbolic realm of the unconscious. The overarching importance imparted by Jung to the discipline of science was based upon his perception (as well as his educational preference) that modern notions of verification and validity are the prerogative of the scientific. Once, when asked his advice concerning how to teach the I Ching to Europeans, Jung counselled: "If you want to avoid the disastrous prejudice of the Western mind [i.e., his "wrong rationalism"] you have to introduce the matter under the cloak of science."<sup>10</sup> Jung, it seems, viewed science, in

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<sup>8</sup>Letters, II, p. 5. 13 Feb 51, to Heinrich Boltze.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 307. 17 June 56, to Benjamin Nelson.

<sup>10</sup>Letters, I, p. 201. 25 Oct 35, to Anonymous.

its capacity to bring a validity to his study of what were deemed border experiences by the psychology of his day, as a propadeutic to the symbolic world, almost easing the mind operating under a "wrong rationalism" into an attitude which would allow one to "happen upon" an "inner experience."<sup>11</sup> How adequately science could function in this capacity will become clear as we proceed.

### Archetypal Images as Symbols

Jung's theory of the archetype remains a murky concept in psychology, betraying Jung's own lack of definitive thought on the subject. He failed to present a comprehensive and lucid theory of the archetype. His marked willingness to continually revise his theory of the archetype<sup>12</sup> as a new understanding of the psyche's images became focused for him has resulted in a plethora of descriptions of the archetype, while the overwhelming immediacy of psychic experience for Jung gave to each of these descriptions a sense of finality and completeness. Historical criticism, the usually fruitful avenue for bringing cohesion to such a situation, is questionably successful for the Jungian corpus. With Jung's writing, historical criticism "conceals as much as it discloses,"<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Letters, II, p. p. 183. 2 Oct 54, to Anonymous.

<sup>12</sup>Jung's definition of theory was of something which was continually to be revised. "Mythological motifs are facts; they never change; only theories change." Letters, II, p. 192. 8 Nov 54, to Calvin S. Hall.

<sup>13</sup>Heisig, p. 10.

because "no aspect of Jung's thought shows a clear process of evolution."<sup>14</sup> His was an eminently intuitive mind, where ideas "spawned" other ideas, where the mere association of ideas in a text was enough to suggest that those ideas were intimately related in Jung's intuitive world. His mind was also a private realm. Of some of his most important insights Jung spoke only years later; these insights had been at work in his thought for all those intervening years. "...my interest was always riveted only by a few but important things which I couldn't speak of anyway, or had to carry around with me for a long time until they were ripe for the speaking. In addition I have been so consistently misunderstood..."<sup>15</sup>

Adding to this confusion was, of course, Jung's own lack of systematic work. An attempt by one author to give a coherent presentation of Jung's theory of the archetype has uncovered "at least three different theoretical functions" which Jung "invoked" for the archetypes.<sup>16</sup>

(1) As models for classifying psychological data, such archetypes are used as offering evidence helping to suggest the hypothesis of a collective unconscious. (2) As specific innate patterns of psychic behavior, they function as the formal causes of the psychic phenomena that constitute the data. (3) As the primordial structures behind specific fantasy-images, they are said to embody the meaning of the process of the collective unconscious. <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Letters, II, p. 449. 11 June 58, to Karl Schmid.

<sup>16</sup>Heisig, p. 137.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

Furthermore, the author contends...

Not only does Jung not draw these distinctions, but the vocabulary used to refer to each distinguishable function is unscrupulously applied to the others as well. Needless to say, in conventional scientific discourse, logical universals, epistemic preconditions, and hermeneutic principles need to be carefully distinguished from one another. To Jung's failure to observe such distinctions is due much of the obscurity [of some of his notions] 18

As such, the theory of archetypes emerges as "radically problematic."<sup>19</sup> It may be possible to avoid the inbuilt pitfalls occasioned in examining Jung's presentation of archetypes and archetypal images by viewing his theories concerning the psyche's images under the rubric which their descriptive phenomenology discloses them to be: symbols. The symbolic world of psychic images is precisely what Jung perceived in the unconscious, and is what set Jung apart from Freud and his reductive interpretation of psychic contents.

When speaking of the psyche's images, the description Jung always gave of them was, first, that they were initially experienced as "numinous." That is, they possessed a "gripping emotionality,"<sup>20</sup> they were "compelling."<sup>21</sup> Their numinosity was their "efficacy."<sup>22</sup> This gripping emotionality revealed to Jung that the images were vested with psychic energy

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<sup>18</sup>Heisig, pp. 135-36.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>20</sup>Letters, II, p. 517. 10 Oct 59, to Günther Wittwer.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 606. 22 Oct 60, to Sir Herbert Read.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 522. 16 Nov 59, to Valentine Brooke.

(Jung's "libido") and, therefore, for Jung, they also possessed a "value." He described this fantasy figure:

Who is the awe-inspiring guest who knocks at our door portentously? Fear precedes him, showing that ultimate values already flow towards him....

...All his love and passion (his "values") flow towards the coming guest to proclaim his arrival. 23

Usurping the willfulness of consciousness, the numinous images of the psyche lead the partially conscious interlocutor of the psyche with their compelling fascination. Jung's experience of the gripping emotionality of the psyche's images lead to the following remarks by Jung.

[The numinous images of the psyche refer to]...all overpowering emotions in my own psychic system, subduing my conscious will and usurping control over myself....all things which cross my wilful path violently and recklessly, all things which upset my subjective views, plans, and intentions and change the course of my life for better or worse. 24

Of course because the psyche's images possess energy and value, it does not necessarily follow that they are partial to their impact upon the personality as a whole. Jung saw that they were impartial, and spoke of the psyche's energy as a force of nature--they could lead a person to psychic wholeness as well as to madness. "The archetype is...an overwhelming force comparable to nothing I know."<sup>25</sup> Jung looked questioningly upon human freedom in the face of the experience of the compellingly fascinating images of the psyche; the numinous images seemed to be a locus of a "will" of sorts.

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 590-91. 2 Sept 60, to Herbert Read.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 525. 5 Dec 59, to M. Leonard.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 26. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

He felt a distinction needed to be made between "the thing which you do" (i.e., that which is consciously willed) and "the thing which happens to you" (i.e., the experience of the numinous images of the psyche).<sup>26</sup>

Second, this numinosity "bestowed" a characteristic "autonomy" upon the psyche's images as an experiential "consequence" of their numinosity.<sup>27</sup> They were "compelling" because they were experienced as other than ourselves. As autonomous, Jung described the psyche's images as being "just so."<sup>28</sup> They were "spontaneous"<sup>29</sup> manifestations of the unconscious, untouched by a conscious willing. They were a "res" of sorts. They existed as autonomous contents of the realm of the unconscious, and could not, as with Freud, be reduced without remainder to a repressed derivative of an individual's life. Nor could they justifiably be inflated, according to Jung's scientifically critical eye, to something beyond an inhabitant of an individual's psyche, i.e., the imago Dei was not equatable with God per se.

Third, Jung called the psyche's images impersonal, or, better, supra-personal. For the observer of psychic realities, the psyche's images are "formed personally only to a minor degree and in essential not at all, are not indi-

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 590-91. 2 Sept 60, to Herbert Read.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 522. 16 Nov 59, to Valentine Brooke.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 591 and 449. 11 June 58 and 2 Sept 60, to Karl Schmid and to Herbert Read, respectively.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

vidual acquisitions, are essentially the same everywhere, and do not vary from man to man."<sup>30</sup> That is, the images may reflect or may be an imaginative conflation of what we have experienced in life, but the meaning which these images convey is not a derivate of these life experiences. Thus, Jung observed that these images were common or typical to all people at all times and all places. At times, Jung said the psyche's images were "'divine;'"<sup>31</sup> he used the predicate divine merely to distinguish the images, as they were known by experience, as distinctly not human in origin, i.e., they cannot be explained away by simply referring them to our personal world.

Fourth, Jung perceived that one "cannot undo"<sup>32</sup> the psyche's images; they are irreducible inhabitants of the realm of the unconscious. They cannot be made conscious and also retain their identity and their characteristic numinosity and autonomy. As such, the psyche's images are truly unconscious, and their natural tendency is not to become conscious and thus to cease to exist as images of the psyche, as in the Freudian interpretation, but to remain unconscious. They psyche's images make us dwell in the unconscious, just as they do.

Fifth, as truly unconscious, the psyche's images not only may not become conscious, they are "above and beyond logi-

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<sup>30</sup>Letters, I, p. 408. Feb 46, to Pastor Max Frischknecht.

<sup>31</sup>Letters, II, p. 606. 22 Oct 60, to Herbert Read.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 626. 11 Feb 61, to Roger Lass.

cal definition."<sup>33</sup> The observer of the psyche may state that the psyche's symbols are "real, but we are unable to express its reality."<sup>34</sup> Jung once described the psyche's images as a "'hoarding.'"<sup>35</sup> The image seemed to be a "hoarding" from the side of conscious knowing in that it is impossible to adequately express the richness of the images on the "discriminating level of human thought and human language."<sup>36</sup> In attempting to articulate the image's richness we are caught in "an inextricable snarl of paradoxes."<sup>37</sup> The image is the Upanishad's "neti-neti."<sup>38</sup> When we speak, we "will always say the wrong thing, or at least things that are also wrong."<sup>39</sup> For Jung, the struggles to articulate the richness of the psyche's images were "witnesses to the living Mystery, honest attempts to find words for the Ineffable."<sup>40</sup> Jung's way of referring to this "hoarding" was to refer to the "archetypal unimaginable event"<sup>41</sup> as a coniunctio, as

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 394, fn. 8, editor's note. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 395. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick. Emphasis mine.

<sup>35</sup>Letters, I, p. 557. 14 May 1950, to Joseph Goldbrunner.

<sup>36</sup>Letters, II, p. 394. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 395. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 396. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 394. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick.

"'impossible' unions of opposites, transcendental beings which can only be apperceived by contrasts."<sup>42</sup> In the imagal fullness of the unconscious, "a is b, stench is perfume, sex is amor Dei..."<sup>43</sup> In examining the psyche's images, "One is dealing with something obviously beyond all traditional expectations of our rational thinking."<sup>44</sup>

Sixth, Jung perceived that the psyche's images functioned as symbols; that "nothing the unconscious produces ought to be taken for granted or literally."<sup>45</sup> They exhibit the definitive actions of a symbol: they "both reveal and conceal."<sup>46</sup> "...they hint at something, they stammer," "they try only to point in a certain direction."<sup>47</sup> Jung understood that the function of a symbol was to point to an imageless reality--called by Jung the archetype per se--which can only be known through a symbol--called by Jung the archetypal symbol, to distinguish it from the archetype per se.

And finally, the psyche's images exhibited what Jung came to call a "synchronistic" causality. The scientific understanding of cause and effect, according to Jung, was

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 395. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 394. 15 Oct 57, to John Trinick.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Letters, I, p. 109. 25 Nov 32, to Anonymous.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 557. 14 May 50, to Joseph Goldbrunner.

<sup>47</sup>Letters, II, p. 290. 11 Feb 56, to Maud Oakes.

based on statistical probability. There were events in our world which were statistical exceptions, and these were synchronistic events. They were those events which embodied meaning, but seemed to have occurred independent of our conscious world of space and time. The psyche's images sometimes disclose "the knowledge of future or spatially distinct events," and therefore must be "contained in a psychically relative space and time, that is to say in an irrepresentable space-time continuum."<sup>48</sup>

Jung's Surreptitious Hypothesizing  
and His Isolated Used of Descriptive Phenomenology

Jung was aware of the fact that he was, when speaking of the archetypes per se, beyond the mere description of archetypal images, and therefore beyond his own strictly delineated scientific world of "experience" and "fact."

To know what these forms [archetypes per se] are in themselves, we would have to be able to penetrate into the whole mystery of the psyche. But this is totally unconscious to us, because the psyche cannot lay itself by the heels. We can do no more than carefully tap out the phenomenology that gives us indirect news of the essence of the psyche. <sup>49</sup>

Despite his awareness of the "indirect" knowledge which the psyche afforded of the archetypes per se, Jung almost systematically engaged in surreptitious hypothesizing concerning the archetypes per se. He included in his descriptive phenomenology what was more than mere description. Tucked in with a simple description of the psyche's images were unacknowledged

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 449. 11 June 58, to Karl Schmid. (Quoting himself from "Synchronicity," CW 8, par. 948.

<sup>49</sup>Letters, I, p. 546. 4 March 50, to Edward Whitmont.

personal hypothesis and conclusions. We might excuse this trespassing by Jung himself beyond his own rigorously embraced scientific boundaries, seeing in this license a living witness to the dynamic and meaning of a symbol: they would draw us into a deeper reality to which they can only point.

For instance, Jung included in the description of the experience of the psyche's images as impersonal the conclusion that 1) because the psyche's images were impersonal and 2) because he could not identify a source other than the impersonal psyche for anachronistic and technical symbolisms, there therefore existed an a priori meaning localized in the psyche which was the cause of these impersonal meanings. There would therefore be the same experience of a particular impersonal meaning for the various images of the psyche for all people at all times and all places. Thus his descriptive phenomenology seemed to necessarily and descriptively call for the existence of what would be an a priori meaning to all human beings.

The archetype is a psychologically experientiable factor, i.e., archetypally constructed images are produced by the unconscious. Obviously, these images, so far as their specific content is concerned, are always dependent on local and temporal conditions. But the ground-plan of these images is universal and must be assumed to be pre-existent, since it can be demonstrated in the dreams of small children or uneducated persons who could not possibly have been influenced by tradition. 50

Jung not only concluded that this experience of impersonal

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 538-39. 31 Dec 49, to Ernesto A. C. Volkening.

meaning necessitated the hypothesis that these meanings would be the same for all, but located these a priori meanings as properly contents of the unconscious. "Thus the archetype as a phenomenon is conditioned by place and time, but on the other hand it is an invisible structural pattern independent of place and time, and like the instincts proves to be an essential component of the psyche."<sup>51</sup>

If one remains merely on the level of descriptive phenomenology, one has only what a descriptive phenomenology is capable of disclosing, and one has the distorted description which is given with an isolated use of descriptive phenomenology. Descriptive phenomenology and the experience of the psyche's images presented to Jung what was phenomenologically correct: the psyche's images are experienced as presented to and coming at the particular person who is experiencing such images. And, in a descriptive phenomenology, the meaning of symbols is experienced as beyond those images, as the experience of images is of something beyond or, to use a spatial metaphor, "behind" the symbols. Thus, if one describes one's psychology solely by way of a descriptive phenomenology, and the phenomenological dynamic is of a movement which is precisely away from the human who is experiencing, the source of those images and of the psyche itself will be understood as 'something over there.' This is a questionable objectification and displacement of the dynamic of the psyche outside

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 539.

the human, and helps us to see the incredible importance for Jung of the hypothesis of the archetypes per se. This tendency of descriptive phenomenology to distort by objectification could have been corrected by philosophy or theology, but was instead exacerbated by Jung's insistence upon remaining solely with descriptive phenomenology.

Yet the ability of the human to derive the general from the specific and to symbolize such a meaning does not necessarily want for an a priori structure localized in the unconscious. One can understand the meaning of the Mother from the experience of one's own mother, from motherhood as it is understood by the community in which a person lives, and from a particular culture's expressions of motherhood (e.g., in local songs, tales, rituals, etc.), and this would be true for youths and for uneducated persons. Nor is the particular human incapable of symbolizing such impersonal understandings of meanings for the unconscious. These capacities of the human being to understand impersonally and to symbolize such understandings are questions which have been variously dealt with by philosophy and theology, and as Jung refused to engage in what he deemed to be empty philosophical and theological speculation, such systematic sophistication was not critically engaged by him. Instead, there is an inflation of descriptive phenomenology and the very descriptions of the psyche's images are freighted with hypotheses, in the guise of the merely and simply descriptive.

To the extent that Jung's particular psychology created a science in which he needed to tuck his theoretical

conclusions into what were claimed as merely descriptive phenomenology, and to the extent to which he refused to avail himself of the benefits of philosophy and theology, Jung must consequently understand the source of the archetypal images in hypothesized archetypes per se, and these archetypes per se as precisely 'something over there,' which gradually became reified. This reification was unquestionably a violation of the spirit of Jung's own distaste for "dead conceptualisms."

But there is no reason whatsoever why one may not situate the locus for the generalization and symbolization characteristic of what Jung labelled archetypal images with the particular person taken as a whole, as a being who is both conscious and unconscious, and as a being who we may describe, in accordance with Jung's awareness of the person as a being who possesses an ultimately inscrutable psyche, as mysterious. It must be strongly noted that Jung does not unambiguously engage in situating the locus for this outside of or with the human person, and as such it remains problematic, and is open to the criticism which has just been articulated.

### Jung's Use of Spatial Metaphors

A further illustration of Jung's tendency for objectification and displacement when speaking of the psyche is his persistent use of spatial metaphors in his language about the psyche. "Psychic experience has two sources: the outer world and the unconscious."<sup>52</sup> Victor White has discussed the

use of spatial metaphors in Jung's treatment of the phenomenon of projection.

Thus, with Professor Jung, I shall go on to describe a projection in much more absolute terms: 'Im Dunkel eines Aeusserlichen finde ich, ohne es als solches zu erkennen, mein eigenes Innerliches oder Selliges'. ('In the obscurity of something outside of me I discover, without recognizing it to be such, something which belongs inside me and to my own psyche'.)....I claim, albeit tacitly, that I can define the psyche at least sufficiently to enable me to attribute to it an 'outside' and an 'inside' ...and this in its turn implies that I have found justification for applying these or any other spatial concepts to the psyche. 53

Jung's personal engagement with the psyche's images may be characterized as one of immediacy; his descriptive phenomenology of the symbolic contents of the psyche illustrates this. The ironic but logical sequel of this immediacy was Jung's intellectual process of describing and understanding these images of the psyche as displaced objects. Peter Homans has identified what he calls a "core process"<sup>54</sup> by which Jung was able to find a somewhat intelligible meaning for the overwhelming, numinous images of the psyche through engaging them in a relationship of projection or objectification and then through interpretation. This "core process" outlines a prototypic model for the dynamic of Jung's treatment of the psyche's images.

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<sup>52</sup>Letters, II, p. 4. 13 Feb 51, to Heinrich Boltze.

<sup>53</sup>Victor White, pp. 85-86.

<sup>54</sup>Peter Homans, Jung in Context: Modernity and the Making of a Psychology (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 74.

The lasting aspect of Jung's experiment with the unconscious consisted of a particular kind of mental activity in which he first projected or objectified specific mental contents and engaged in a relationship with them, then interpreted them. Through this double process he was able to dissolve their psychological force over him and gain a modicum of psychological distance from himself. This process was also the personal experience that provided the matrix for the formation of the ~~ideas~~ <sup>ideas</sup> that composed his original psychological system. 55

Jung's imposition of this projection and objectification is, I believe, witnessed to in Jung's persistent use of spatial metaphors. It may be argued that the very process of intellection, which is involved in something such as scientific knowledge, is only possible through a certain type of refinement of experience which necessitates an objectification of immediate experience. But the use of spatial metaphors involves a certain alienating kind of objectification which invites a distortion of the object being experienced. An epistemology which is delicately and discriminatingly aware of the dynamic of cognition as a preconscious identity of subject and object does not fall into such a crass objectification. Jung's persistent use of spatial metaphors implies an ultimate disjunction between subject and object in the Jungian epistemology, and, therefore, for his science of psychology, which he called a "science of conscious contents,"<sup>56</sup> a bifurcation of conscious and unconscious.

Jung's psychological work was an inherently thoroughgoing and consciously epistemologic work; his use of spatial

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>56</sup> Letters, I, p. 556. 14 May 50, to Joseph Goldbrunner.

metaphors discloses an unexamined epistemological bias which will distort his very epistemology and his understanding of the psyche itself. Victor White rightly locates the historical origin of the precritical use of spatial metaphors which allows the one knowing to speak of what is being known in a displaced, objectifying manner in

...that fateful day (was it cause or symptom of the split in the post-Renaissance European psyche?) when Rene Descartes was left alone with his stove, and, forgetful of the stove, and conscious only of Rene Descartes, attempted to rebuild Western thought on the Cogito....For the pure Cogito never was nor will be in human experience: it is an arbitrary abstraction from a fact, and one which a priori mutilates it, and irreplacably divorces the ego from the non-ego without which it is no conscious ego at all. I cannot be conscious of my thought, still less of an 'I' as the subject of that thought, unless I am thinking the 'Not-I'--things, objects....Subject and object are not ultimate a prioris: they are conscious data which presuppose a pre-conscious identity, a participation mystique in the deepest sense. 57

Jung was not able to articulate a coherent definition of the relationship of the conscious (that which was doing the knowing) to the unconscious (that which was being known). That is, he could not provide an operational system which could account for a "pre-conscious identity, a participation mystique in the deepest sense" between the conscious and the unconscious.

There is, of course, a distinction to be made between the subject knowing and the object being known, but how this distinction is made is crucial. On this place of discrimination, Jung's epistemology breaks down. His use of spatial

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<sup>57</sup>Victor White, pp. 98-99.

metaphors betrays his failure to delineate a refined and sufficiently distinct yet familiar relationship of subject and object, knower and known, which is only available to one who has chosen to be aware of the pre-critical bias in which the Western mindset was engaged with the advent of Cartesian epistemology. Ultimately, then, Jung's use of spatial metaphors discloses a crippling, philosophically unexamined epistemology. Jung's cognitive process seems to almost have called forth a disjunction of subject and object and a bifurcation of the conscious and the unconscious, and therefore so easily allows one to slip into separating that which is being known of the symbolic psyche from the particular mystery which is a person.

#### An Epistemological Nightmare

Jung did not clearly and unambiguously state the interrelationship of the conscious and the unconscious in their special cognitive relationship which occurs in psychology's conscious knowing of unconscious contents. In particular, the labelling of the contents of the unconscious as either part of the personal unconscious or part of the collective unconscious was necessitated because Jung was unable to otherwise distinguish the changeable but mutual presence of both the conscious and the unconscious. The personal unconscious was defined as that portion of the unconscious which was closer to consciousness (i.e., consciousness played a greater role in determining the meaning of its contents) and the collective unconscious defined that portion of the

unconscious which was further from consciousness than the personal unconscious (i.e., consciousness played a much more diminished role, as if it were merely an onlooker to the "archetypal unimaginable event"). For instance, Jung did know that consciousness played a cognitive role even in the dream state, but "its only function was to observe; it could not affect the workings of the unconscious."<sup>58</sup>

The closest Jung came to defining the degree to which the images of the unconscious were cognitively defined by the participation of consciousness was by measuring the degree to which the psyche's image was descriptively experienced as being either the product of the "will" of the unconscious or the product of human willing. Jung described the willing which the images of the psyche demonstrate as distinct from human willing. He defined the images of what he called the collective unconscious as numinous and autonomous, and believed them to be, by his definition of numinous and autonomous, beyond the reach of human willing. In their numinosity and autonomy, they were experienced as "just so," as a force with which we must reckon if we are to remain psychologically healthy. Jung took the human ability to will as a function of consciousness. Therefore the degree to which an image was more truly of the realm of the unconscious was measured by the degree to which it was experienced as not originating from the will of the human being. He bestowed

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<sup>58</sup>Heisig, p. 203, n. 6, quoting Jung, 1923.

upon what he called archetypal images, or the contents of the collective unconscious proper, the honor of being beyond the reach of the willful tamperings of consciousness, and he allows as authentic their alteration by human willing in active imagination or amplification because the ultimate numinous power of the archetypal image would safeguard the purity of the unconscious' will, as Jung ultimately locates the willing of archetypal images in the archetype per se, and therefore in the truly unconscious or what Jung referred to as the "Objective Psyche."<sup>59</sup> The sophistication of Jung's articulation of the varying degrees of the relations of the conscious and the unconscious was merely a function of the degree to which Jung experienced the images of the unconscious as possessing a will of their own.

This attempt to delineate the realm of the unconscious and the conscious by way of measuring them against the standard of either a human or a psychic will was actually a petitio principii. He was unable to define them otherwise because Jung did not see that he, Jung, brought to the cognitive process, in the very knowing of objects which requires the consciousness of a subject, elements which were constitutive of himself as a conscious being. Although Jung, in his uncritical pursuit of a descriptive phenomenology, may have been unaware of his conscious participation in knowing the contents of the psyche, his conscious participation remained

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<sup>59</sup>Letters, I, p. 395 and p. 497. Nov 45, to J. B. Rhine, and 15 April 48, to Jolande Jacobi, respectively.

nevertheless. There was in his knowing of the contents of the psyche the also and always already included co-operative workings of his consciousness, and Jung thus brought to his cognitive process the informative wealth of his life's experience. Admittedly, we must allow that the experience of psychic images is not a particularly transparent kind of human cognitive experience, for the knowing of the images of the unconscious is of images which are experienced as overwhelming our conscious life, and tend to make us the most minimally aware of the participation of our consciousness in the knowing process.

This hermeneutic of conscious and unconscious was not of any interest or of any concern to Jung, and, it could be added, to most Jungian psychologists today. Instead, there is a descriptive fascination (a downward pull of consciousness toward the numinous images of the unconscious) with the upsurge of the images of the unconscious, for that is the aim of the unconscious according to Jungian psychology, but with the result that there is insufficient attention to the concrete person who is cognitively engaged in experiencing the psyche. Jung remained unaware of the influential role of consciousness in the process of knowing the psyche, and therefore accounted all that he experienced of the psyche's images to those images.<sup>2</sup> This brings about a conflation of archetypal images, a confusion of personal unconscious and collective unconscious, and the unacknowledged presence of cultural and personal elements<sup>1</sup> in the very experience and interpretation of impersonal archetypal images.

### Anima and Animus

This critique is most readily evidenced in the revisionist work of James Hillman on the often variously interpreted images of the anima and animus. The confusion of the levels of the conscious and unconscious is critiqued by Mr. Hillman by asking why it is that the same psychological phenomenon is described as a contra-sexual soul-image in one sex and a shadow in the other, for...

the roles which Jung (CW9, i, 356, 358) assigns to the anima--relation with the mysteries, with the archaic past, enactment of the good fairy, witch, whore, saint, and animal associations with bird, tiger, and serpent (to mention only those he there mentions)--all appear frequently and validly in the psychology of women. Anima phenomenology is not restricted to the male sex. Women have little girls in their dreams, and whores; they too are lured by mysterious and unknown women. The Saint, Sappho, and Sleeping Beauty are part of their inscapes too. And as the images are not restricted to men only, so anima emotion cannot be confined only to the male sex. Women too bear an expectancy, an interiority that is opposed to their outer persona actions. They lose touch, and may be drawn away to meditate their fate, their death, their immortality. They too sense soul and suffer its mystery and confusion. We say of a woman, "she has soul", and we mean much the same as when we say this of a man. 60

But psyche, the sense of soul, is not given to woman just because she is born female. She is no more blessed with a congenitally saved soul than man who must pass his life in worry over its fate. 61

When one asks today what the signs of the anima or animus are, one is immediately deluged with a flood of characteristics which can include the wildest possible combinations

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<sup>60</sup>Hillman, "Anima" I, p. 115.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

of incompatible characteristics, and this plethora can sometimes apply equally as well to an anima as an animus. When one does attempt to approach the archetypal image with intellectual precision, some fascinating distinctions come to light.

Hillman observes that intellectual precision is particularly difficult with regard to the anima "because our society, and psychology as part of it, is in high tension concerning feeling, femininity, eros, soul, fantasy--all areas which analytical psychology has involved with anima."<sup>62</sup> What must be added to this analysis is the observation that the ability to regard the animus with intellectual precision is equally difficult, given what may be characterized as the masculine consciousness of the Western world.<sup>63</sup> Hillman therefore makes the following distinctions:

The anima is not equatable with eros.<sup>64</sup> In fact, the mythological phenomenology of eros and psyche or anima are contradictory. Although the anima can be the object of desire, she is not equatable with that desire. Today eros is given a

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>63</sup>This consciousness has been cognitively identified with the male human, but this does not mean it is particularly restricted to him. With the return of the anima and animus to the collective unconscious's syzygy, the woman can clearly be seen to be capable of this masculine consciousness. Thus we are freed of that naive insistence which surfaced about ten years ago that believed that all one needed to do was to strategically place a woman in the Pentagon, White House and on Capital Hill and one could bring a humanizing influence.

<sup>64</sup>Hillman, "Anima" I, pp. 102-109.

particularly erotic tinge, in agreement with an Aphroditic mindset. Thus, anima and women are culturally equatable with the erotic. This highly sexualized, erotic preoccupation of our present Western culture is present in its Sexualwissenschaft, and this erotic approach can be seen to be historically a part of the beginnings of psychology in Charcot's clinic in Paris. Further, this erotic element is given a modern interpretation in analysis, so that the appearance of an anima comparable to Miss America is interpreted as heralding psychic growth and maturity.

The anima is not equatable with feeling or relationship.<sup>65</sup> There are two particularly telling reasons Hillman gives for the modern insistence upon this equation. First, if feeling is culturally an inferior function of men and considered the prerogative of women, then, in accordance with Jung's principle of opposites, it will be associated with the contra-sexual image of anima. It becomes assumed that if one has successfully discriminated the anima, one has also successfully discriminated the feeling function. Hillman correctly observes that the more proper discrimination needed is that of feeling from anima. And second, if anima is associatable with relationship (something we shall make clear below), there is a modern presumption that relationship equals feeling. This, however, is not at all what Jung meant by the term relationship, and has nothing to do with what is meant by anima. Hillman amusingly observes: "But should Dante and

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 109-114.

Petrarch today go into psychotherapy, would they not be told that Beatrice and Laura were immature anima projections, unreal, regressive, revealing inferiority of feeling and relatedness to women and 'the feminine'?"<sup>66</sup>

The anima is an archetypal "structure of consciousness"<sup>67</sup> whose function it is to mediate "between personal and collective, between actualities and beyond, between the individual conscious horizon and the primordial realm of the imaginal, its images, ideas, figures, and emotions."<sup>68</sup> It is in this sense that anima is relationship. Relation means mediation, because about the anima are gathered a "consciousness of our fundamental unconsciousness."<sup>69</sup> The anima mediates to consciousness all those elements in our life which are of crucial importance but which cannot become conscious. She is "that shimmering, protean, exasperating"<sup>70</sup> image. It is she who brings significance to those unconscious and crucial elements of our life, she who brings "the moment of reflection."<sup>71</sup>

...with her is constellated a consciousness of our fundamental unconsciousness. In other words, consciousness of this archetypal structure is never far from unconsciousness. Its primary attachment is...to all things that simply are--life, fate, death--and which can only be reflected but never separated from their impenetrable opacity. Anima stays close to this field of the natural

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 112.      <sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 110.      <sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>70</sup>Schaer, p. 162.

<sup>71</sup>Hillman, "Anima" I, p. 104.

unconscious mind. 72

Anima not only mediates these unconscious elements into our conscious lives, she pulls the conscious into the unconscious. She would make the conscious unconscious if she could, and it is because of this that she is always imaged as attached,<sup>73</sup> and that we fear her.

This gestalt must...bear definitive attributes that are archetypally anima: mystery, emotion, paradox, importance; she must stir my loving, and link backwards through tradition to pre-history, trailing the archaic, phylogenetic and psychotic psyche in her roots; as well, she must be instrumental to fate and be the prime mover of fantasy and reflection by remaining "unknown." 74

As the anima/psyche brings the unconscious into relation with the conscious, it does so, though it would pull the conscious into the unconscious, to be understood by what would at first seem paradoxical, the psychological intellect. "Psychological understanding thus consists of two interpenetrating constituents, psyche and logos, soul and intellect."<sup>75</sup> Anima and animus are therefore to be understood most properly in terms of their psychological function rather than as a classically archetypal image for the two complementary halves of masculine and feminine. Hillman points out that violence is done to the very notion of psyche by locating an archetypal image exclusively within the unconscious of only one gender of the human

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>James Hillman, "Anima II," Spring: An Annual of Archetypal Psychology and Jungian Thought (1974):113-146, p. 134. (Hereafter referred to as Hillman, "Anima" II.)

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

species.<sup>76</sup>

Jung's willful ignoring of the hermeneutic element in the human cognitional process has resulted in his imprecise appreciation of the psyche's image of anima and animus. Jung's description of anima and animus was laden with his culture's typifications of sexuality and these typifications informed his objective analysis of the psyche's images. Jung's epistemological oversight brought not only a willingness to denote all that is found in the experiencing of the psyche as uncritically and inherently belonging to the psyche, but also disallowed for an epistemic structure which would mutually interdefine the experience of the realm of the psyche and the experience of the realm of the workaday world in which you and I live and meet. Jung's psychology is actually thoroughly defined by his epistemology, and this is just as Jung intended it to be. But the systematic blindness of Jung's epistemology to the subtle and formative interpenetration of subject and object, of conscious and unconscious, ultimately cripples his psychology, for as such it is actually a constricting of the rich symbolic vitality of the realm of the psyche.

Jung was not able to bring his revolutionary, symbolic deepening of our psychic life into relationship with the full, vibrant light of our workaday world. The correlation between the upsurge of meaning in our psyche and in our cultural world, which is granted in an epistemology which

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<sup>76</sup>  
Ibid., p. 141.

takes into account the hermeneutic interplay between the informative wealth of a concrete person's life experience and the imaginal presentation of meaning by the psyche, allows us to look to our cultural world as a locus in where there are symbolic gestures and a symbolic knowing. Jung was fearful of a personal (and therefore a cultural) contamination of archetypal images, as his strict delineation of conscious and unconscious betrays. He was not capable of seeing, and would not have wanted to see, culture informing the psyche's images. It seems that Jung's understanding of culture, despite his great appreciation of the symbolic richness of many cultures, was an understanding which allowed for the reflection of the images and symbols and meanings of the psyche in a particular culture, but did not allow for that culture to creatively inform the images of the psyche in a hermeneutic cognitive process which engages both the conscious and the unconscious. Jung might argue that he is merely seeing all things through the eyes of the psyche, and again, disdain the charge of psychologism. But, de facto, Jung's analysis of anima and animus betrays an uninformed and distorted understanding of the role of culture and personal understanding in the experience and interpretation of the contents of the psyche, and therefore he is guilty of a psychologism, because his very denial of an independent presence of culture and of the individual person's personal world actually resulted in a distorted understanding of anima and animus.

Jung understood that the particular imaginal embodi-

ment of the anima and animus by way of the topos of sexuality reflected a certain economy of the psyche. The psyche partook of what we might call a preference for or a choice of the particular topos of sexuality from the available fund of personal experience to flesh out the meaning of what he called the archetype per se. The archetypal images were "true symbols, that is...the best possible formulation for unknown facts that cannot be reduced to anything else."<sup>77</sup> Jung's inadvertent portrayal of his culture's understanding of sexuality, due to his lack of a critical epistemological hermeneutic, obscured the potency of the topos of sexuality as "the best possible formulation" of the anima and animus. His stilted perception of culture, first, as a living channel of symbolic human understanding, and, second, as cognitively informing the hermeneutical knowing process of psychology, prevented his fullest appreciation of the psyche's anima and animus. Perhaps this was due, with regard to the particular question of the image of sexuality in anima and animus, to the force with which Freud had made convincingly clear the debilitating facet of culture in his analysis of the relationship between culture and the freedom and creativity of sexual expression (and the personal embodiment of this in his understanding of the psyche's images). But implicit in Freud's thesis is the fact that sexual intimacy is itself capable of sundering all these cultural harnesses inhibiting the conversion to another which is present in sexual imagery

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<sup>77</sup>Letters, I, p. 143. 5 Feb 34, to Anonymous.  
Emphasis mine.

and intimacy. We are thus not too impulsively and proudly to down play culture as a force capable of imparting a desirable result. The very reason culture is a powerful force is that it is deemed capable of appropriately channelling a human understanding of sexuality for a group of people. When these "channels" are experienced properly, they are experienced precisely as no channels, for they truly are a cultural embodiment of what those classic human modes of interpersonal, sexual interaction are and can facilitate our understanding and portrayal of them in the realm of the psyche.

The 'choice' of the psyche to enflesh the meaning of the images of anima and animus for the psychological intellect by way of the topos of sexuality (for these two images of the psyche must be definition be either female or male<sup>78</sup>) expresses a psychological phenomenon which reflects

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<sup>78</sup>Victor White points out that what is believed to be truly masculine and feminine actually seems to depend upon what a given culture describes as masculine and feminine. Although this seems to make these characteristics culturally relevant, the meaning here is that there is no culture which proscribes no difference between the sexes. (Victor White, pp. 272-73.) What is crucial is how each particular culture chooses to describe that difference. There is in Western civilization what might be called a cultural agreement that the feminine is closer to the anima's connection function which brings reflection the the unconscious and that the masculine is closer to the animus' psychological intellect which would 'understand' the unconscious. We may call this a peculiarity of culture which should not be accepted as a reflection of sexuality per se, but rather a particular cultural embodiment of sexuality. The degree to which there exists in a particular culture an insidious and insistent social demand that one be consciously and strictly identifiable with what that given society dictates as masculine and feminine, reflects the degree to which there is a tendency to associate that

the active hermeneutical participation of the conscious in the psyche of the unconscious.

### The Source of the Psyche as the Human Person

Our society is currently struggling to realize an understanding of sexuality apart from the many but partial cultural understandings of sexuality, but it seems that the symbolic realm of the psyche already and always has known what this understanding is. It is thus that she is able to adjudicate that sexuality is the best possible formulation for the meaning of the archetype per se.

The psyche possesses such already and always present knowledge of the meaning of human sexuality. How is she so informed? Only because it is the human person him or herself who is the creative source of the meanings (what Jung called the archetype per se, and we must include also what he called the "psychoid" realm) which are variously symbolized by the archetypal images. The ultimate context for the psyche and for the meaning which creates the images of the psyche must be the human person. The hermeneutic epistemological critique of Jung's symbolic images of the psyche restores unambiguously the situating of the whole of Jung's psychological work with the fullness and the mystery of the human person. Jung's isolated use of descriptive phenomenology can give hints of this fact, but ultimately will distort and falsify these facts, and not disclose the grounding of these facts in the

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particular, limited understanding of sexuality with an understanding of sexuality per se.

human person, without the additional and (what most would grant) naturally called for tool of philosophy. Even the "primitives" who experienced the world as "one" and not as "two" engaged in what we could and do call metaphysical statements concerning what is knowable to humans.

Jung's use of spatial metaphors betrayed a divorcing of conscious and unconscious, of subject and object, which disallowed his realization of the intimacy to one's person which is present in the special knowledge which is the discipline of psychology. His hermeneutically naive epistemology seals his tendency to locate the dynamic source of the psyche in something ultimately somehow beyond the human person. All of this seems to disallow the full acceptance and investigation of the meaning of the psyche as finally grounded in the mystery of the human person. It must again be strongly noted that Jung never brings such a grounding so to the fore in his work; he is only interested in the "facts" and in descriptive phenomenology. But if one chooses such a stricture, as Jung did, one must accept the limiting--and ultimately belying, distorting, and falsifying--consequences. Jung thus does not unambiguously engage in grounding the psyche and the source of the psyche with the human person.

### Jung's Psychology as a Science

Cognizant of Jung's hermeneutical failings, his articulation of an epistemology clearly delineates for us Jung's limits of the discipline of science. He whole-heartedly embraced those limits, and even was audacious enough to

continually point out that place at which others would unwittingly pass over the "epistemological border" and engage in metaphysical speculation. He was adamant that the human knower must at least pause at this epistemological threshold and then, if he or she so desires, knowingly pass over it. Jung's psychological work had revealed to him that it was due to the numinous power of the psyche's images that the knower inadvertently found him or herself moved to begin "transpsychic" reflections. In Jung's analysis, the movement from "experience" to "fact" to transpsychic reflections seems to be a need enjoined upon the human knower precisely by the natural human progression from the experience of "facts" to the need to understand the existence of these "facts." But Jung was interested only in measuring how these transpsychic reflections stood when set side by side with "facts" and "experience," which by his strict definition, were the only real and solid things. By his adamant epistemic strictures he interjected a conscious break into this natural process, and was professionally content to remain, at least by definition, within the confines of the epistemological curtain. He could not examine with sympathy and understanding the human dynamic which precisely urged the knower over the epistemic threshold, and which was thoroughly a part of the human condition.

As our critique has made clear, Jung himself did not always pause at this epistemological threshold; he felt in himself the workings of the numinous and experienced their captivating reference to a point beyond themselves. Mr. Heisig has pointed out that the "gradual reification" of some of Jung's

theoretical reflections to the point at which they become "cosmic principles" should correctly be seen as "more indicative" of Jung's "reverence" for all things psychic than for their "actual theoretical content."<sup>79</sup> Jung's transgressions were for the sake of establishing the reality and the validity of "observations and experiences unfamiliar to the contemporary mind and objectionable to its prejudices."<sup>80</sup> Jung's willingness to bend facts does not necessarily abrogate the truth of his thought. His difficult struggle to gain scientific respectability was of utmost importance to him personally--it meant he had accomplished something and that his work was understood and would be furthered.

In his later writings, circa 1958, Jung reflected upon his interest in questions concerning the source of the psyche, about which he had coined the adjective "psychoid" and had correctly labelled transcendent or "transpsychic" questions, and said that they "must be counted [as] sheer mythology."<sup>81</sup>

Naturally we can postulate that there is "something" hidden behind these phenomena, but this gets us no forrader since it is impossible for us to conceive what that "something" would have to be like....This is where mythology begins....It is legitimate to ask yourself what it is that carries the qualities of the archetypal and synchronistic, and to pose the question, for instance, of the intrinsic nature of the psyche or of matter. This

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<sup>79</sup>Heisig, p. 137. Emphasis mine.

<sup>80</sup>Letters, II, p. 307. 17 June 56, to Benjamin Nelson.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 449. 11 June 58, to Kark Schmid.

natural need is a legitimate occasion for further conceptualizations... 82

The "legitimate further conceptualizations" Jung had in mind was a conceptualization which

...wait[ed] on events, no matter what kind, for instance dreams in which possibilities or ideas are presented to me but do not come...from my biased speculation but rather from the unfathomable law of nature herself.... [It] cannot be the product merely of the conscious intellect but must necessarily proceed from the total man, i.e., from the co-participation of the unconscious. 83

It seems, then, that this "psychic need"<sup>84</sup> did not are well in Jung's "realm of scientific verifications" and was "legitimate" in that 1) the need for it had its origin in the psyche and 2) it retained as a touchstone the very fact that these "further conceptualizations" would have as their source "the co-participation of the unconscious," as "for instance dreams." Although this "legitimate psychic need" produced "no scientific responsible knowledge," the mythology which it produced was acceptable in that it was "a psychic phenomenon" and therefore remained under the strictures of psychology. The contents of this mythology remained within the confines of Jung's definition of "experience" and "fact."

Mr. Heisig is probably quite correct in proclaiming that "Jung's practical methods are better understood hermeneutically."<sup>85</sup> The tragedy of Jung's work, it seems to me, was that although he challenged the paradigm of science for his day, he did not ask the question of whether science was

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 448.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 449.

<sup>85</sup> Heisig, p. 145.

the appropriate vehicle to convey his thought. He did not manage to disentangle his insights from such an inadequate framework, and this has lead to confusion and/or an easy dismissal of his difficult to grasp and seemingly unsound thought.

But what all this makes clear is that the discipline of science, as it was envisioned by Jung, was not a completely adequate and satisfactory tool for dealing with the psyche as Jung experienced it. He himself overstepped the bounds of his science. He was being drawn to questions which his experience of the psyche opened up for him, but he floundered and could go no further in his questioning within the parameters of science. At issue for him really was the question of what the appropriate discipline was for what he was being led to question, and was not, as Jung saw it to be, a question of continually keeping before one's self an adherence to what he termed "facts" and "experience," his strict definition of the science of psychology. He had reached a point at which one discipline flowed into another, of necessity. Science had become an insufficient tool in his cognitive and descriptive analysis of the psyche and her contents and dynamics. His tragedy was that the discipline which he needed most to embrace, that of philosophy and/or theology, was the last discipline Jung could have drafted for himself to employ for his task, and which he was personally capable of employing. Of all the many people who surrounded Jung and who became ardent disciples of his work, we may ask ourselves why it was that

Jung felt that the O.P. Father Victor White should be the "son" to carry out the work of the "father" affectionately called "C.G."?

### CHAPTER III

#### SOME THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

##### Jung's Understanding of the Divine and Religion

Jung insisted throughout his career that what he had to say had a direct bearing upon religion and upon theological reflection, claiming that the primary subjects of his psychological investigations were religious symbols. He stated, following Rudolph Otto and William James, that his subjects were the numinous images which surge up from the unconscious. Despite this centrality of religious symbols in his work, Jung complained that "For most people my Christian standpoint remains hidden, and because of the strangeness of my language and the incomprehensibility of my interests I am given a wide berth."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Jung referred to the "'Auseinandersetzung' between theology and psychology"<sup>2</sup> and he even went so far as to draw a parallel between the reception of his work by theologians and its reception by Freud and his circle. "The criticism and 'understanding' I have had to endure at the hands of theologians (long before Job!) give me no cause to treat their theological concepts any more gently than they treated

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<sup>1</sup>Letters, II, p. 226. 22 Feb 55, to Pater Lucas Menz, O.S.B.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 554. 30 April 60, to Father V. White.

mine. The same is true of the Freudians."<sup>3</sup>

Jung's psychology of religion is probably the most controversial segment of his work. His stubborn insistence that analytical psychology was a science and therefore could say nothing as to the actual existence of a God or gods, while at the same time obviously moving in a world endowed with the attributes of fascinum et tremendum, piqued a world of critics who attempted to prove either that Jung was an avowed enemy of religion, replacing it with the new religion of psychology, or that he had finally put modern belief upon a solid footing.

A now famous quote, uttered late in his life, brought reassurance to many who were scandalized by Jung's apparent agnosticism. "I only believe in what I know. And that eliminates believing. Therefore I do not take his [God's] existence on belief--I know that he exists."<sup>4</sup> But the epistemological flavor of this remark invites the cautious query: What does Jung mean when he says that he "knows" that God exists? A closer look at his personal opinions and religious life as well as at the intentions of his professional work will yield an understanding of his psychology of religion. One has only to read Jung's "autobiography" Memories, Dreams, Reflections to find the personal sources of the mature Jung's

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 277. 9 Nov 55, to Theodor Bovet.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Frederick Sands, "Man, Women, and God," published in the London Daily Mail, 25-29 April 55, published in Jung Speaking.

religious thinking.

Jung was a baptized member of the Swiss-Reformed branch of Protestantism, and grew up in a home saturated with the world of religion. "In my mother's family there were six parsons, and on my father's side not only was my father a parson but two of my uncles also."<sup>5</sup> Despite this abundance of parsons, Jung found in his family life a dark side to religion. Jung says his father was "consumed by inward doubts"<sup>6</sup> and suffered "pangs of conscience"<sup>7</sup> because of this. He concluded that his father had attempted to "'win it [i.e., faith] by struggle,' forcing it to come with convulsive efforts."<sup>8</sup> The young Jung<sup>9</sup> determined that his father's error lay in his insistence upon belief without experience or knowledge.

Later, when I was eighteen years old, I had many discussions with my father....But our discussions invariably came to an unsatisfactory end. They irritated him, and saddened him. "Oh nonsense," he was in the habit of saying, "you always want to think. One ought not to think, but believe." I would think, "No, one must experience and know," but I would say, "Give me this belief," whereupon he would shrug and turn resignedly away. <sup>10</sup>

His father "did not dare to think" and "insisted upon blind faith,"<sup>11</sup> and this, Jung decided, was to be his fatal error:

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<sup>5</sup>MDR, 42.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 73.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 73.

<sup>9</sup>This is actually a recounting by the elderly Jung of an event in his childhood, and so is open to the charge of redaction by Jung.

<sup>10</sup>MDR, 43.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 73.

"It was the tragedy of my youth to see my father cracking up before my eyes on the problem of his faith and dying an early death [because of it]." <sup>12</sup> The young Jung, however, had gone through "subjective inner experiences" which "prevented" him "from drawing negative conclusions about religion" from this tragedy of his youth. <sup>13</sup> Despite the good personal relationship Jung says he had with his father, he was unable to share with him his "miracle of grace." <sup>14</sup> The subjective inner experiences of which Jung spoke centered around an experience in 1887, when he was eleven, his "cathedral fantasy." <sup>15</sup> It involved thinking through to completion a thought "forced" <sup>16</sup> upon him by the Omnipotent God. Thinking through this thought, Jung felt, was committing a sin against the Holy Spirit, and therefore was damning. But, Jung says, he did not want to think this thought, and it was intentionally forced upon him by an "inexorable command" of God, as a "decisive test." <sup>17</sup> Jung concluded that since he had "no choice" <sup>18</sup> his critical role in thinking such a deadly sin was to "understand Him correctly." <sup>19</sup> God desired him to "show courage" <sup>20</sup> and by this courage receive "His grace and illumination." <sup>21</sup> Here

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<sup>12</sup> Letters, II, p. 257. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> MDR, 43.

<sup>15</sup> Homans, p. 124.

<sup>16</sup> MDR, 37.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

we read the "cathedral fantasy" of the eleven-year-old Jung, "rich in wit and irony,"<sup>22</sup> told through the eyes of the aging Jung.

The world is beautiful and the church is beautiful, and God made all this and sits above it far away in the blue sky on a golden throne and....--and from under the throne an enormous turd falls upon the sparkling new roof, shatters it, and breaks the walls of the cathedral asunder. 23

Jung tells the result of thinking this thought through to its completion: "I felt an enormous, an indescribable relief. Instead of the expected damnation, grace had come upon me, and with it an unutterable bliss such as I had never known. I wept for happiness and gratitude....It was as though I had experienced an illumination."<sup>24</sup> Jung concluded from this experience that one must show "utter abandonment" and "obedience" to the will of God, which "refuses to abide by traditions, no matter how sacred."<sup>25</sup> He decided that his father had failed to experience God's inexorable will and His grace because he had opposed God's will, even though this opposition had been

...for the best reasons and out of the deepest faith ....He had taken the Bible's commands as his guide; he believed in God as the Bible prescribed and as his forefathers had taught him. But he did not know the immediate living God who stands, omnipotent and free, above His Bible and His Church, [and]...who can force him to renounce his own views and convictions in order to fulfill without reserve the command of God. 26

This trial by obedience was decisive for the eleven-year-old

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<sup>22</sup>Homans, p. 124.

<sup>23</sup>MDR, 36 and 39.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 40.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

Jung:

It was obedience which brought me grace, and after that experience I knew what God's grace was. One must be utterly abandoned to God; nothing matters but fulfilling His will. Otherwise all is folly and meaninglessness. From that moment on, when I experienced grace, my true responsibility began. Why did God befoul His cathedral? That, for me, was a terrible thought. But then came the dim understanding that God could be something terrible. I had experienced a dark and terrible secret. It overshadowed my whole life... 27

This account by Jung of his first experience of the will and grace of God is consistent with what he later says, and reveals for us the attributes of Jung's God.<sup>28</sup> First, God is experienced as "force" and "inexorable command." Jung's God is undeniably "always experienced as power at first,"<sup>29</sup> pressing upon him as a demand over against himself. "The working of the Divine is always overpowering, a sort of subjugation no matter what form it takes."<sup>30</sup> Unlike his father, Jung was able to experience God because he was willing to experience what was commanded of him and willing to try to understand God's command. Jung described the experience of God's will by himself at the age of eleven as "torment,"<sup>31</sup> and as "sheer torture."<sup>32</sup> In

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Homans, p. 124: "We should, I think, take Jung's word for it when he remarked that his entire youth could be understood in terms of this fantasy. In fact, Jungians should accord this fantasy the same attention that Freud's key dreams in The Interpretation of Dreams have received from historians of the psychoanalytic movement."

<sup>29</sup>Schaer, p. 146.

<sup>30</sup>Letters, II, p. 272. 21 Sept 55, to Piero Cogo.

<sup>31</sup>MDR, 38.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 37.

1954 he wrote to the Reverend Erastus Evans:

The attribute "coarse" is mild in comparison to what you feel when God dislocates your hip or when he slays the firstborn. I bet Jacob's punches he handed to the angel were not just caresses or polite gestures. They were the good hard kind; as you rightly say, "with the gloves off."

That is one side of my experiences with what is called "God." "Coarse" is too weak a word for it. "Crude," "violent," "cruel," "bloody," "hellish," "demonic" would be better. That I was not downright blasphemous [in Answer to Job] I owe to my domestication and polite cowardice. <sup>33</sup>

This experience of the power and demand of God brought into question the existence of human freedom. Human freedom seemed to exist only to the extent that humans choose to obey God and attempt to understand His will. Jung's God was an omniscient Creator who "intentionally" made Adam and Eve "as they were," placing in them the possibility of sinning.<sup>34</sup> "God in His omniscience had arranged everything so that the first parents would have to sin. Therefore it was God's intention that they should sin."<sup>35</sup>

Jung drew a parallel between the temptations of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and the temptation to think a thought which the eleven-year-old Jung took to be a sin against the Holy Spirit, forced upon him by the command of God.

God had also created Adam and Eve in such a way that they had to think what they did not at all want to think. He had done that in order to find out whether they were obedient. And He could also demand something of me that I would have had to reject on traditional grounds. <sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Letters, II, p. 156. 17 Feb 54, to Rev. Erastus Evans.

<sup>34</sup> MDR, 38.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 40.

Jung felt himself being "forced" into what he once called "the impossible conflict,"<sup>37</sup> and, like Christ, acted with obedience "regardless of human convention and in opposition to his own lawful tradition, as the worst heretic in the eyes of the Jews and a madman in the eyes of his family."<sup>38</sup>

Thus, second, the experience of the power of God revealed a God who "refuses to abide by traditions, no matter how sacred"<sup>39</sup> and "stands omnipotent and free, above His Bible and His Church."<sup>40</sup> God is not contained in any traditional religious knowledge, but is experienced as "the immediate living God."<sup>41</sup> Jung had seen the tragic result of his father's reliance upon "a pathetic and shopworn theology."<sup>42</sup> Jung located religion within the realm of the psyche, and thus religious experience was an experience which was not against reason, but only beyond it.<sup>43</sup> It was the experience of "the union of opposites in ourselves,"<sup>44</sup> of something other than our own conscious expectations, intentions and will. "Time out of mind he [God] has been the psychically stronger, capable of throwing your conscious purposes off the rails, fatally thwarting them and occasionally making mincemeat of them."<sup>45</sup> Religion

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<sup>37</sup>Letters, II, p. 77. 3 July 52, to Dorothee Hoch.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid. <sup>39</sup>MDR, 40.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid. <sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Homans, p. 124. <sup>43</sup>Schaer, pp. 130-31.

<sup>44</sup>Letters, II, p. 76. 3 July 52, to Dorothee Hoch.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 4. 13 Feb 51, to Beatrice M. Hinkle.

for Jung was a "careful consideration of the numina..."<sup>46</sup>  
 Jung's fear of the ability of "dead conceptualisms" to effectively remove the numinous and autonomous experience of the realm of the psyche is evident in his rejection of traditional religious understandings. His perception of God as an immediate experience above all tradition and humanly mediated structures, above the Bible and Church, is absolute. He did not view dogmas or rituals as conduits capable of becoming vessels of grace. Instead, religious structures were effective defenses and shields for those incapable of facing the naked experience of God.

What is usually and generally called a "religion" is to such an amazing degree a substitute that I ask myself seriously whether this kind of "religion," which I prefer to call a creed, has not an important function in human society. The substitution has the obvious purpose of replacing immediate experience by a choice of suitable symbols invested in a solidly organized dogma and ritual.... As long as these two principles work, people are effectively defended and shielded against immediate religious experience. 47

Dogma and ritual are "important" as "methods of mental hygiene,"<sup>48</sup> and Jung "supported" them as "means of defense against a grave risk,"<sup>49</sup> but as a psychologist made paranthetic "the academic question whether the defense is more or less an ultimate truth."<sup>50</sup> Jung contended that the "overwhelming majority of educated people are fragmentary personalities and have a lot of substitutes instead of the genuine goods."<sup>51</sup> Those who have "the genuine

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 283. 14 Dec 55, to Eugen Böhler.

<sup>47</sup> Psychology and Religion, pp. 52-53.

<sup>48</sup> MDR, 53.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 52.

goods," the "really human and complete persons,"<sup>52</sup> have the courage, as Jung did, to undergo "the terrible ambiguity of an immediate [religious] experience."<sup>53</sup> Of those who were so courageous and who came under Jung's care, Jung says he had to "accompany them through the peripetes of passionate conflicts, panics of madness, desperate confusions and depressions which were grotesque and terrible at the same time."<sup>54</sup>

"...the gnostic danger of ousting the unknowable and incomprehensible and unutterable God by philosophems and mythologems must be clearly recognized, so that nothing is shoved in between human consciousness and the primordial numinous experience."<sup>55</sup> Jung held that belief effectively removed the need for religious experience, as it gave the believer a conviction in the statements of a religion, or what he called a creed. Religion "is not at all a matter of intellectual conviction or philosophy or even belief, but rather a matter of inner [i.e., psychological] experience."<sup>56</sup> He held that "our modern theology turns the whole thing round and holds that we first ought to believe and then we would have an inner experience, but this reversal forces people directly into a wrong rationalism that excludes even the possibility of an inner experience."<sup>57</sup> Belief was thus a complete kind of knowl-

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 55.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 53.

<sup>55</sup>Letters, II, pp. 255-56. 23 May 55, to Pastor Jakob Amstutz.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 183. 2 Oct. 54, to Anonymous.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

edge, an usurping of the need to 'wait on events,' and 'directly forced' the believer into an ignoring of the events of the psyche. For himself, Jung said, "I cannot anticipate a thing by believing it but must be content with my unbelief until my efforts meet with the grace of illumination, that is, with religious experience. I cannot make-believe."<sup>58</sup> He took as model St. Paul, whose belief was based on his religious experience, and who had experienced the numinous power of God "while he was blindly pursuing his own way."<sup>59</sup> Jung concluded that what was important for religion therefore was not a belief, but an "attitude"<sup>60</sup>: "As a young man I drew the conclusion that you must obviously fulfill your destiny in order to get to the point where a donum gratiae might happen along."<sup>61</sup> "...the charisma of faith was denied me. I was thrown back on experience alone."<sup>62</sup> Religion then was a "careful consideration of what happens....,"<sup>63</sup> an attitude which was faithful to one's particular situation, waiting for "an experience of the Unfathomable" which would "come our way."<sup>64</sup> Of those who were courageous enough to face "the terrible ambiguity of an immediate [religious] experience" and who came under Jung's

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 199. 7 Dec 54, to Bernhard Martin.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 257. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 257. <sup>61</sup>Ibid., pp. 257-58.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 272. 21 Sept 55, to Piero Cogo.

<sup>64</sup>Letters, I, p. 125. 12 June 33, to Paul Maag.

care, Jung claimed that they were the ones who had TLSTLS enough,"<sup>65</sup> and by this faith Jung meant "loyalty"<sup>66</sup> to their immediate religious experience, and not faith in what Jung referred to as a "creed."

Third, Jung's God is the bestower of the "donum gratiae."<sup>67</sup> This "grace" is given when a person understands and with courage obeys the command of God: "It was obedience which brought me grace..."<sup>68</sup> Jung describes this grace as "unutterable bliss." The experience of God as crude and coarse were but "one side" of God described by Jung to the Reverend Erastus Evans. Of the other side, Jung tells him: "And at each step I felt hindered by a beatific vision of which I'd better say nothing."<sup>69</sup>

Fourth, the immediate experience of God brought a certain knowledge; Jung described what followed his willingness to bring his sinful thought to completion as "the wisdom and grace of God," and said it were "as though I had experienced an illumination."<sup>70</sup> This knowledge of God, though, was essentially a secret knowledge. "With the experience of God and the cathedral I at last had something tangible that was part

<sup>65</sup>MDR, 52.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Letters, II, p. 257. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>68</sup>MDR, 40.

<sup>69</sup>Letters, II, p. 156. 17 Feb 54, to Reverend Erastus Evans.

<sup>70</sup>MDR, 40, emphasis mine.

of the great secret."<sup>71</sup> This element of secrecy is probably traceable to Jung's acute awareness that his own trial of courage was experienced by him as one undergone alone. The trial was the ordeal of one who felt himself isolated within an experience for which, Jung felt, traditional religious knowledge could offer no insight, and could be endured only by one who had their wits about them. It could only be understood by and communicated to one who had also been engaged by an immediate religious experience.

I cannot leave your "question of conscience" unanswered. Obviously I speak only of what I know and what can be verified. I don't want to addle anybody's brains with my subjective conjectures. Beyond that I have had experiences which are, so to speak, "ineffable," "secret" because they can never be told properly and because nobody can understand them (I don't know whether I have even approximately understood them myself), "dangerous" because 99% of humanity would declare I was mad if they heard such things from me, "catastrophic" because the prejudices aroused by their telling might block other people's way to a living and wondrous mystery, "taboo" because they are an ЗВУТОВ protected by БЕЛОСЛАВЛОВИЦ.... <sup>72</sup>

Jung felt himself to be truly alone; his solitary stance even included an isolation from God. "I no longer thought of praying for illumination, since God had landed me in this fix... and had left me without any help. I was certain that I must search out His intention myself, and seek the way out alone."<sup>73</sup> This solitary stance emphasizes the importance of courage for those who endure an immediate religious experience. It might

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 41.

<sup>72</sup>Letters, I, pp. 140-41. 30 Jan 34, to Bernhard Baur-Celio.

<sup>73</sup>MDR, 38.

even be accurate to ask if courage had not replaced "belief" for Jung. "I 'believe' only when I have sufficient grounds for an assumption. The word 'belief' means no more to me than that. Leaps into the dark I know very well. For me they have everything to do with courage and nothing with belief, and not a little with hope (i.e., that all will go well)."<sup>74</sup> As Jung epistemologically denied the human ability to truly know anything beyond the human psyche, and as his psychology of religion and his personal religious "beliefs" were consistent with this epistemology, Jung's perception that this experience of the command of God was undergone alone is phenomenologically correct.

#### An Epistemic Psychology

What could pass for an examination of an experience of God in Jung's "cathedral fantasy" is merely a fascination with the most numinous images of the psyche. Jung claimed that "...the main interest of my work is not concerned with the treatment of neuroses but rather with the approach to the numinous."<sup>75</sup> This attraction to the numinous was, even in Jung's estimation, the source of his life's interest. "I find that all my thoughts circle round God like the planets round the sun, and are as irresistibly attracted to him. I would feel it the most heinous sin were I to offer any resistance to this compelling force."<sup>76</sup> This fascination with the

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<sup>74</sup>Letters, II, p. 8. 17 March 51, to Dr. H.

<sup>75</sup>Letters, I, p. 377. 20 Aug 45, to P. W. Martin.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 236. 28 March 55, to Pater Lucas Menz.

numinous must not be understood in terms of Otto's understanding of God as Numinosum, but rather in terms of Jung's understanding of the numinosity (and autonomy) of the images of the psyche.

This distillation of religion to inner psychic experience must also be understood within the constraints of Jung's epistemological strictures. The vehicle by which the human knower was able to know, for Jung, was the psyche. The human knower was 1) only capable of knowing that which could be known by the psyche and 2) all that is known by the human is necessarily a psychic knowing. "...if it is non-psychic it cannot be conceived at all."<sup>77</sup> This ubiquitous and all-determining nature of the human psyche allowed Jung to interject an agnostic doubt into the integrity of human cognition, for despite the fact that the object being known in the human cognitional experience was an object other than the human psyche, Jung allowed the human to verify as fact only the immediate inner experience, which was the psyche's imagal presentation of the objective existent. Thus, for Jung, "Reality is an anthropomorphism."<sup>78</sup> What is known of the objective world will always be psychic, human attempts to understand something other than the human.

The human knower did know "something" of the objective

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 556. 14 May 50, to Joseph Goldbrunner.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 214. 30 April 36, to Claire Kaufmann, and Letters, II, p. 258, 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet, and Ibid., p. 557, 7 May 60, to Anonymous.

world, but could not depend upon immediate inner experience to provide for a reliable correspondence between the objective world and the psyche's images.

I am far from denying the possibility that our psychic structure projects an image of something. But there is no reason whatever to suppose that the psychic image reflects the nature of its unknowable background either completely or in part or not at all; we cannot jump over our own heads since all we can ever assert is our own conception. 79

Epistemologically and psychologically, Jung was content to remain with the immediate inner experience of the psyche, and it is there that he finally places his faith. Believing in something other than the intrinsic reality of the psyche, for Jung, meant obfuscating inner experience. Even the question of "the revelation of God in Christ" is "simply another mythology,"<sup>80</sup> as it is beyond the facts and experience of the psyche, and is suspect as a foreign artifact wedged between the experience of the psyche and the conscious which is knowing. Faith and belief, theology and philosophy, dogma and creeds all fell before Jung's utter, vivid and demanding experience of the realm of the psyche. "I cannot make-believe."<sup>81</sup> He neither denies nor affirms metaphysical assertions which go beyond this experience; such assertions and the faith which is erected upon them are "superfluous." The immediate inner experience of the psyche is bedrock for Jung.

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<sup>79</sup>Letters, II, p. 371. 14 June 57, to Bernhard Lang.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 262. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 199. 7 Dec 54, to Bernhard Martin.

Can anyone say "credo" when he stands amidst his experience ILUTE UWV OPA MXTL SELVW ["In faith trusting the terrifying apparition."], when he knows how superfluous "belief" is, when he more than just "knows," when the experience has even pressed him to the wall? 82

Jung's response to such an experience is not to situate here the beginning of faith. He is content to rest in the "only" of his epistemology: "As an empiricist I know only..."<sup>83</sup> Jung's response is acceptance. This experience is "in order to reach that point where he [the lover of the psyche] has become simple enough to accept those influences, or whatever it is we call 'God's will,' which come from the Unfathomable and whose source lies behind these same psychic images which both reveal and conceal."<sup>84</sup>

The immediacy of the experience of the psyche was definitive for Jung. Because this immediacy was a matter of all importance, what became equally important was defending it against anything which would nullify or deny it. Jung had said that he was "deeply impressed by man's proneness to error and self-deception,"<sup>85</sup> and he pinpointed this error and self-deception at precisely that point in the cognitional process where the human knower moved from the "fact" of the immediate inner psychic experience to the making of philosophical

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<sup>82</sup>Letters, I, p. 141. 30 Jan 34, to Bernhard Baur-Celio. (Trans. by ed.)

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 195. 7 Sept 35, to Pastor Ernst Jahn. Emphasis mine.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 556-57. 14 May 50, to Joseph Goldbrunner.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., p. 557.

or theological claims concerning such "factual" experience. The "danger of ousting [the immediate inner experience of God]...by philosophems and mythologems must be clearly recognized, so that nothing comes between human consciousness and the primordial numinous experience."<sup>86</sup> What is of utmost importance, then, is to remain true to the "fact" of the experience of God in the psyche, "which is obfuscated only by silly rationalism and an equally silly theology."<sup>87</sup>

Jung had said that nothing "frightened" him more than "dead conceptualisms,"<sup>88</sup> and this is so clearly understandable when it is read side-by-side with his statement that "The archetype is...an overwhelming force comparable to nothing I know."<sup>89</sup> The struggling attempts by Jung's father to find belief "with convulsive efforts,"<sup>90</sup> aided by a "pathetic and shopworn theology,"<sup>91</sup> was, according to Jung, a denying of psychic and religious experience and a courting of death. This was Jung's assessment of the situation, but neither he nor we are able to look into the soul of Paul Jung. Jung's observations might correctly reflect the aberrations of the religion of his day. However, the struggling acceptance of creeds and the embracing of belief are not without merit.

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<sup>86</sup>Letters, II, pp. 255-56. 23 May 55, to Pastor Jakob Amstutz.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 4. 13 Feb 51, to Heinrich Boltze.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 258. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 260. <sup>90</sup>MDR, 73.

<sup>91</sup>Homans, p. 124.

Jung was an exceptional person, capable of varied and deep psychic experience, but this depth and familiarity with the psyche did take its toll upon him. This wealth of experience does not seem to have also allowed him to understand that most people are not so gifted and that an experience, especially a religious experience, is not an everyday event. His singular insistence upon the ready availability of inner experience is what is finally alienating and elitist. His single-mindedness on the matter of the availability of psychic and religious experience to all is the conviction of one overwhelmed by the power of the psyche, yet incapable of a perspective which allows room for other forms of religiousity, and cannot simply be put down to the judgment that the majority of humanity is not capable of withstanding the "terrible ambiguity of an immediate experience."<sup>92</sup>

Jung had believed that dogma and creeds were diametrically opposed to psychic and religious experience. His favorite example of this was St. Paul, who was felled from his horse by a conversion experience while "blindly pursuing his own way."<sup>93</sup> But his model--St. Paul--was a believer in the Jewish tradition, and it was this belief which put him on the path of a 'blind pursuing' and which eventually led to his experience on the road to Damascus. St. Paul is the perfect example of the ardent believer who was fervently persecuting Christians because of

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<sup>92</sup> MDR, 55.

<sup>93</sup> Letters, II, p. 257. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

of the presence of God in the human knowing process, as its many insights into the experience of the human psyche are marred by a hermeneutically naive conception of the human cognitional event. Jung may himself be guilty of ousting the "unknowable and incomprehensible and unutterable God" by his naive separation of the experience of the psyche from the structured understanding of such experiences of the psyche by rational reflection.

### Theology and Jung's Work

There is no question but that Jung's psychology, by its very discipline and epistemology, forbids any true engagement with divinity, though it draws the reader of his work into a world endowed with the attributes of what have always been described as divine. We witness in his work what "has always been called 'God,'"<sup>97</sup> but epistemologically restricted and psychologically defined. With Jung, all that can be known of the divine are "characteristics of the attribute 'divine,'"<sup>98</sup> In matters of theology, Jung fiercely maintained that the human knower could only speak with impunity of the imago Dei, and could say nothing as to the existence of a God or gods. "'God' therefore is in the first place a mental image equipped with instinctual 'numinosity,' i.e., an emotional value bestowing the characteristic autonomy of the effect on the image."<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 523. 16 Nov 59, to Valentine Brooke.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 254. 23 May 55, to Pastor Jakob Amstutz.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., p. 522. 16 Nov 59, to Valentine Brooke.

Epistemologically correct, he neither acknowledges the existence of God, nor denies His existence. "...no metaphysical assertions will be found in my writing, and n.b., no denials of metaphysical assertions."<sup>100</sup> What is available to the modern religious person in the experience of the images of God in the psyche is the simple, descriptive awareness that what are experienced are images and only images.

Despite this strident epistemology, Jung, surprisingly, routinely includes in his writings of the images of God in the psyche the phrases which are used in the normal parlance of believers, and thus he erects a landmark by which the psychologist and the theologian may mutually locate their positions. He conscientiously (though not always) presents such phrases within quote marks, thus obviating any need on his part for disclaimers.

The strange force against or for my conscious tendencies is well known to me. So I say: "I know Him." But why should I call this something "God"? I would ask. "Why not?" It has always been called "God." An excellent and very suitable name indeed. 101

Jung seems to equate the God who is worshipped with the experience of the images of God in the psyche, the imago Dei.

Jung knows so acutely the distinction which can be made between experience and the thought and language about experience, and he especially drives his distinction home in the particular case of the divine--a case in which words and thought can never do justice to the reality. He makes us

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<sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 523. Also, "From time immemorial man has called anything he feels or experiences as stronger than he is 'divine' or 'daemonic.' God is the stronger in him. This

aware that God is not even there. It is at this point that Jung's insistence upon his strict delineation of what is knowable and what is unknowable actually becomes a function of a kind of "modesty,"<sup>102</sup> or an awareness of a greater. "You seem not to have noticed that I speak of the God-image and not of God because it is quite beyond me to say anything about God."<sup>103</sup> His epistemology may be correctly viewed as "wholly imprisoned in the psyche,"<sup>104</sup> as a profound, radical and complete awareness of the limitations of human knowing, at least as Jung perceived these limitations. Jung's experience of the psyche's images of God forcibly brought home to him that "Deus est ineffabilis."<sup>105</sup> The value of Jung's recognition of the epistemological constraints of the images of the unconscious was that it made him aware that God is not even in the psyche's images of God, no matter how much the believer or the most numinous experiences of the psyche want Him to be grasped there. The psyche's images of God were "what has always been called 'God,'" but were radically not

psychological definition of God has nothing to do with Christian dogma, but it does describe the experience of the Other, often a very uncanny opponent, which coincides in the most impressive way with the historical 'experiences of God.'" Ibid., p. 272. 21 Sept 55, to Piero Cogo.

<sup>102</sup>Letters, I, p. 125. 12 June 33, to Paul Maag. "We must admit in all modesty the limitations of all human knowledge and take it as a gift of grace if ever an experience of the Unfathomable should come our way."

<sup>103</sup>Letters, II, p. 260. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>104</sup>Letters, I, p. 556. 14 May 50, to Joseph Goldbrunner.

<sup>105</sup>Letters, II, p. 260. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

God. "God" is "only" a "name." The psyche's images of God were the human psychic perceptions of the affects of an Ineffable. "Everything that man conceives as God is a psychic image....If it were not, he would be unable to conceive anything at all. That is why Meister Eckhart says, quite rightly, 'God is pure nothing.'<sup>106</sup> Of the experiences of the images of God, Jung says that the ego

...may conjecture that it has come up against something greater, that it feels powerless against this greater power; that it can cognize nothing further; that in the course of the integration process it has become convinced of its finiteness, just as before it was compelled to take practical account of the existence of an ineluctable archetype. <sup>107</sup>

This mobilizing and radical awareness of the ultimate limitation of human knowing has been praised as the ushering in of a critical and modern awareness for all theologians and believers.

...this outsider of theology has, with the relentless determination with which he demands experience of man, with his uncomfortable criticism of ecclesiastical talk of God, with his bold vision in particular of the Protestant Church, urged upon contemporary theological thought questions which in the interest of theology are absolutely necessary and which in their rigour show the way. <sup>108</sup>

Augustine himself, in what was for him a crucial insight for an awareness of God, saw that we may not measure God "ex consuetudine" of creaturely existence. God is "a subject which is not spoken about as it is thought of and which is not thought

<sup>106</sup> Letters, I, p. 556. 14 May 50, to Herr Goldbrunner.

<sup>107</sup> Letters, II, pp. 258-59. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 264, n. 12, by editor B.

of as it really is, namely, the unique 'esse' of God."<sup>109</sup>

But what must be brought to bear against this challenging awareness of the "deifying anthropomorphisms, psychic structures and myths"<sup>110</sup> in the theological talk of God is the final disjuncture which Jung persistently presents of experience vs. rational reflection. Jung necessarily had to speak of an imagal understanding, because the experience of the psyche was not just and purely experience, but always had to be, according to Jung, an imagal experience. The psyche worked precisely by images. "...it is beyond the power of imagination and language to grasp and express it's [the archetype's] deepest nature. It can only be experienced as an image."<sup>111</sup> The experiential knowledge which Jung advocated as unobfuscated was an experiential knowledge of images.<sup>112</sup> Without debating the evidence for other avenues of knowing--the aural, gustatory, tactile, and olfactory--what Jung has presented in his primacy of imagal knowing is a fiction. Jung claims that the human knower may separate out distinct moments in the human cognitional process. One may first and purely experience, and then may add to this immediate experience a reflective moment. But there is no such

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<sup>109</sup>John C. Cavadini, unpublished Master's Thesis, Marquette University, 1979, p. 118.

<sup>110</sup>Letters, II, p. 261. 13 June 55, to Pastor Walter Bernet.

<sup>111</sup>Letters, I, p. 313. 7 Feb 42, to Elisabeth Metzger.

<sup>112</sup>See also the letter of 10 Dec 58 in Letters, II, pp. 466-67, to James Kirsch, on satori as an imageless experience.

distinction to be made. Human knowing is at once experiential and reflective, and any distinctions which can be made in the cognitional process are only made by the reflective human logically and philosophically seeing such distinct contributions in an event of human awareness.

Jung does not see that the imagal experience of the psyche already involves the workings of consciousness and of human ratiocination, albeit not as boldly as it would be present in metaphysical reflection. He does not see that immediate inner experience and our ability even to so experience is based upon the whole world of our conscious being, and that this conscious being is intimately involved in our immediate inner experience. Jung's epistemological fascination with the imago Dei is an intense interest in experience alone, and is blind to what human experience wants to identify as the source of such imagal experiences of God.

Part and parcel of Jung's failure to see in inner experience the mutually engaged workings of experience and understanding was his failure to clearly and unambiguously state the interrelationship of the conscious and the unconscious. Jung was unschooled to the fact that he brought to his imagal knowing elements which were constitutive of himself as a conscious being. There was in his knowing of the contents of the psyche the also and always already included cooperative workings of his consciousness. Jung creates a psychology and an epistemology in which the human knower can only know the imago Dei and is oblivious of the fact that God can be and is "more inti-

mate to me than I am to myself," as Augustine has so beautifully put it. He is thus not allowed to see that God may be present in the workings of the psyche--by a door which Jung was ignorant, by his own proudly embraced limitations. In his failure to acknowledge the presence of an other in the human cognitional process, he disallows for the recognition, within his wholly epistemic world, not of a boldly recognizable other, but of the delicate but real presence of a God within the subtleties of the human cognitional process.

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