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https://doi.org/10.32724/phanes.2019
JUNG’S ALLEGED MADNESS: FROM MYTHOPOEIA TO MYTHOLOGISATION

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PHANĖS • VOLUME 2 • 2019 • PP. 1–27

https://doi.org/10.32724/phanes.2019.Schaller
ABSTRACT
The testimony Jung gave of his nekyia, published in Memories, was spread and amplified by his biographers, so that it became a story of Jung’s morbidity, or madness. This story constitutes the ‘positive perspective’ of the legend of Jung’s madness, of which the Freudocentric point of view constitutes the ‘negative perspective’. This paper offers a new reading of the experience Jung began in 1913—one opposed to the retrospective diagnoses it criticises—by reflecting on the understanding Jung had of his crisis, regarding the way he understood schizophrenia at that time. Thus, this study tries to show that the concerns Jung had of his mental state before the outbreak of the First World War logically stem from his understanding of schizophrenia as developed in Transformations and Symbols of the Libido: that the appearance of mythological motives to consciousness indicates a loosening of the phylogenetic layers of the unconscious and is thus a symptom of psychosis. By consciously dealing with these visions, Jung will come to some of the deepest insights of his lifework and to a new understanding of schizophrenia, as well as to insights concerning the role and place of mythological contents in the psyche.

KEYWORDS
Jung, psychosis, madness, schizophrenia, Liber Novus, mythopoeia, mythologisation, nekyia.
O
tober 1913. Jung is thirty-eight years old and has acquired an international scientific reputation for his psychiatric work, which particularly focuses on psychosis. He has a private practice primarily frequented by a large group of often wealthy patients, and a model family, according to the Swiss customs at the time. He is travelling by train towards Schaffhausen and, going through a tunnel, he loses consciousness and is overwhelmed by a vision. This event, which made him fear he might ‘do a schizophrenia’ (Eliade 1952:233), is the prelude to a long crisis, to the Odyssean undertaking of a hero looking for his myth, his nekyia.

Jung describes this nekyia in his *Black Books*, and narrativises it in his *Liber Novus*, which was published in 2009. However, his closest disciples had long known about the experience and existence of *Liber Novus* (Toni Wolff and Tina Keller for example, as will be discussed later). The public learned about it in 1962, when Jung’s *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*—wrongly viewed by many as his autobiography—came out. Since *Liber Novus* represents a new testimony of this time of crisis in Jung’s life, a troubled and controversial chapter of the history of psychology has opened up again with its publication: Jung’s alleged madness.

To this day, Jung’s name is too often associated with mysticism and madness—his work appearing at any rate unscientific and his personality resembling a sort of narcissistic guru. This collective idea was born in the Freudian ranks as soon as the first signs of dissent appeared between the Viennese neurologist and the Swiss psychiatrist in 1911-1912.

This study does not intend to trace the history of Jung’s pathologisation by his detractors. This manoeuvre, which seeks to discredit Jung’s person and work, is well known today and discussed in several publications. What is discussed less often is the other aspect of the history of Jung’s madness, the one propagated by his hagiographers and biographers, who based their retrospective diagnoses above all on the testimony reported in *Memories*. If Jung’s pathologisation by his detractors represents the negative perspective of this story, this other aspect constitutes the positive one: the mythologisation of Jung’s mythopoetic experience.

This study will thus handle the legend of Jung’s madness from its positive perspective. A summary of the conceptualisation of schizophrenia in the first decade of the twentieth century, with a focus on Jung’s place and contribution to this research, will first be made. The reflections Jung has in 1912 of Dementia Praecox, or schizophrenia, as he developed in his biggest work before his experience, *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido*, will be stressed, as this understanding of schizophrenia is still
valid for him during the first part of his crisis, that is to say during the 
experience of the visions that came about between October, 1913, and the 
outbreak of the war on August 1st, 1914. This review will help to capture, 
later in this paper, the way he understood what was happening to him 
at that time. A summary of the testimonies Jung gave of his nektyia will 
then be developed in order to determine what he was talking about in the 
most accurate way and to understand its reception. It will then be possible 
to examine the spreading of the story of Jung’s crisis by hagiographers 
and biographers of Jung. It will become clear that such hagiographers 
and biographers went beyond the statements of Memories without 
questioning the text by making remote analyses and diagnoses of their 
subject of study—diagnoses the reliability of which need crucially to be 
questioned—diagnoses that, as will be discussed in this study, make no 
sense in this context. I will try to show that these biographies elaborated 
a mythology of Jung’s pathology by reading the testimony he made of 
his experience beyond the limits originally set. A new reading of Jung’s 
nektyia, of his ‘experience of madness’, will then be proposed, to show 
that, if Jung deeply engaged with the question of madness during his 
experience, to the point that he feared for his mental health, he did not 
undergo the experience of schizophrenia. Indeed, it is the understanding 
of schizophrenia he had at the time that made him fear this possibility, 
an understanding that changed significantly as he came to some of the 
deepest insights of his lifework during his experience.

MADNESS IN THE EASTERN WORLD AND ITS NOSOLOGICAL 
CLASSIFICATIONS

In the course of the nineteenth century, psychological research in 
its broader sense switched from the field of philosophy to psychiatry, 
passing through neurology. Correspondingly, in a scientific perspective, 
madness became medically conceptualised as psychosis—and thus as a 
disease—and its nosological classification was constantly adjusted within 
this category at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth 
century. I will very briefly summarise the development of the psychiatric 
conceptualisation of madness. One can find a laudably detailed overview, 
partly focusing on Bleuler’s and Jung’s works, in Michael Escamilla’s 
Bleuler, Jung, and the Creation of Schizophrenias (Escamilla 2016).

In 1896, Emil Kraepelin creates a new disease entity, ‘Dementia 
Praeocx’ (Escamilla 2016:49), in the fifth edition of his Psychiatrie: Ein 
Lehrbuch für Studirende und Aerzte (Kraepelin 1896), then expanded in
the sixth edition (1899). There, Kraepelin differentiates the psychoses between Dementia Praecox and ‘manic-depressive insanity’. He describes Dementia Praecox as a ‘progressive mental deterioration’ appearing in earlier life (cited in Escamilla 2016:45), thus grouping ‘together into one presumed disease entity several previously described forms of insanity: hebephrenia, “the catatonia of Kahlbaum”, and “certain forms of paranoia which undergo early deterioration”’ (ibid:44). Another entity is isolated (without being clearly cut off from Dementia Praecox) on the psychotic spectrum at this time: paranoia, to which Eugen Bleuler devotes a work in 1906 (Bleuler 1906) and which differs from Dementia Praecox because of the prominence of profound delusions. There, Bleuler distinguishes ‘the insane’ (the term is used ten times in the book to qualify the idea or person of the paranoiacs—thus furnishing the supposed link between insanity and psychosis) from the obsessive, hysterical and intellectually limited personalities (Bleuler 1906:108,115). The term schizophrenia was coined in 1908 by Eugen Bleuler, as he was giving a lecture at a meeting of the German Psychiatric Association in Berlin. In a paper published the same year, he explains that the syndrome is neither a real dementia nor necessarily precocious, and that he will thus replace Kraepelin’s term ‘Dementia Praecox’ with the word ‘schizophrenia’, as the latter best describes the principal symptom of the syndrome: the splitting of psychic functioning (Bleuler 1908:436).

In 1911, Bleuler publishes his work *Dementia Praecox oder die Gruppe der Schizophrenien* and departs from Kraepelin’s biological approach by adopting a psychological one, without giving a final conclusion on the aetiology of schizophrenia. He reduces Kraepelin’s view of seven pathognomonic symptoms to only two, keeping the incoherence of the thought (neologisms, stereotypies) and the absence of emotions, and differentiates five ‘undergroups’ (second section of the book) of these endogenic psychotic processes: paranoia, catatonia, hebephrenia, schizophrenia simplex and ‘special groups’ (Bleuler 1911).

**JUNG’S THOUGHT ON MADNESS UNTIL 1912**

I will consider the evolution of Jung’s thought on schizophrenia beginning from his paper *The Content of the Psychoses* (Jung 1908). Similar to Bleuler, Jung adopts a psychological approach in his study of the mental disease and tries to sketch out a psychology of what he still calls ‘Dementia Praecox’, though criticizing the term for the same reasons given by his mentor (Jung 1908:§330). While analysing the associations of some
patients, Jung finds meanings in their delusions that indicate the presence of an inner world functioning on its own, which is incomprehensible for others, because it has broken away from the outer reality (ibid:§383). Hence, he discovers, for example, a rich inner life that nobody suspected in an apparently apathetic patient (ibid). Jung concludes that the inner life, which, by common sense, is called ‘fantasy’, becomes ‘reality’ to the mentally ill. Meanwhile, the exterior world, normally understood as reality, becomes a distant dream (ibid:§385).

In the first part of *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido*, Jung distinguishes two types of thinking: the directed thinking, rational and logical, directed towards the external world (with adaptation purposes), and the non-directed thinking, or fantasy, working through images and feelings and turned away from the outside reality, towards the inner world, thus producing what Jung later calls an introversion of the libido (Jung 1912b: ‘Concerning the Two Types of Thinking’; CW5:§§4-46). By the characterisation of these two kinds of thinking, Jung groups together different thought processes into the non-directed thinking: those of the so-called primitives and of ancient man (found in mythology for example), those of children, those found in dreams and those found in delusions of the mentally ill. It is interesting to note here that these reflections imply a continuum on which both schizophrenic processes (or what he personally termed at that time ‘introversion neurosis’; Jung 1912:50, n.2) and the fantasies of a sane psyche are to be found: morbid delusions and sane fantasies belong on the same spectrum. He then postulates the ontogenetic recapitulation of phylogeny in man’s psychology (Jung 1912b:28), and so the existence of an impersonal layer of the unconscious. Therefore, he understands schizophrenia as being a loosening of the phylogenetic layer of the unconscious. The non-directed thinking, turning the individual towards his inner world (introversion), produces a regression. This regression reaches first the personal, infantile material of the unconscious and, in case of an intensification of the regression due to a psychosis or violent (and thus morbid, pathological) repression, will reach the historical layers of the unconscious (the infancy of humanity) and activate their archaic contents (ibid:37). Based on Freud’s theory, Jung even explains, for example, the ‘hallucinating clearness’ of some dreams by a regression of the thought excitation reaching the perceptive system of the individual (ibid:26).

In *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido*, Jung does not diagnose the object of his study, Miss Miller, but only analyses her productions. Yet, at the beginning of the chapter, ‘The Hymn of Creation’, Jung compares
the state of introversion of Miss Miller with Dementia Praecox and even describes it the way he described Dementia Praecox in his 1908 article:

after the life of the cities, with their many impressions, had absorbed her interest […], she breathed freely upon the ocean, and after so many external impressions, became engrossed wholly in the internal with intentional abstraction from the surroundings, so that things lost their reality and dreams became truth (Jung 1912b:50).

In a corresponding footnote, he relativises the poor prognosis of Dementia Praecox, explaining this latter by the theorisation, or classification, of the illness by psychiatrists who can only observe the most serious cases. He then compares Dementia Praecox with Bleuler’s schizophrenia and Janet’s psychasthenia (a mental illness in which thoughts, emotions, and representations intrude upon consciousness, leading to a dissociation, and in certain cases to a duplication of the personality), implying that Miss Miller’s case (which he understands as a repression of an erotic tendency, later transformed into a creative piece of writing) belongs to these numerous less serious cases, which do not require psychiatric internment (Jung 1912b:50n.2). Thus, he confirms his view of a ‘normal’ or non-morbid state of introversion that produces a reversal of inner and outer reality. The main difference between sanity and madness lies here in either maintaining or losing contact with external reality (Jung 1912b:50;141).

In the second part of Transformations and Symbols of the Libido, Jung redefines the Freudian theory of libido as not applying to the psychology of Dementia Praecox: he explains that the absolute loss of ‘fonction du réel’ (Janet) cannot be attributed to the loss only of sexual functions of the psyche, since reality is not a sexual function (Jung 1912b:141f.). On the contrary, in the case of most neuroses, the sexual part of the libido is repressed and leads to a regression in this domain, but the psychological adaptation to external reality is guaranteed through a non-sexual part of the libido. Jung then distinguishes hysteria and schizophrenia by writing that the schizophrenic ‘is more than autoerotic, he builds up an intra-psychic equivalent for reality…’ (Jung 1912b:152). These considerations lead him to adopt an energetic conception of the libido.

Continuing on with these reflections, Jung postulates that the non-sexual libido that is withdrawn from reality in schizophrenia, which is normally used by the psyche for adaptation purposes, causes the regression
to an earlier, and so archaic, mode of adaptation, which means the use of non-directed thinking, taken by the mentally ill at face-value: it is the symbolic life, in which the symbol is considered as applicable, or valid, for external reality. This implies the existence of two kinds of truths and realities: the ‘actual truth’—or reality—and the ‘psychological truth’—or reality—(where the symbol belongs), two realities with their own kinds of contents and modes of apperception (Jung 1912b:262).

Jung then shifts his clinical language to a mythological one, or a graphic one, a method of amplification which he uses to analyse the psychological processes found in a particular transformation of the libido: the introversion which leads to a transformation of personality, which he describes as a journey found in mythology under the name of nekyia.

In the second part of *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido*, Jung postulates a necessary neurotic condition as the basis for the descent into one’s own depths (the introversion): the child, separating himself from the mother (the symbolic mother, which is his biological mother as well as his unconscious) to meet the exterior life, will later as an adult feel a sense of disunity with himself (Jung uses in the German version ‘uneins mit sich selbst’ (Jung 1912a:359), literally ‘not one with himself’, divided, which is not translated into the English version): he is separated from his unconscious. Hence, he yearns for death, for the return to the mother, and so descends into his own depths: this movement introduces the catabasis.

After the descent comes the time for the fight with the devouring terrible mother, with the paralysing yearning for the depths (see chapter, ‘The Battle for the Deliverance from the Mother’). The only way to overcome it is to sacrifice this longing, that is to say the infantile personality (see chapter entitled ‘The Sacrifice’):

> and this is the dangerous moment, in which the decision takes place between annihilation and new life. If the libido remains arrested in the wonder kingdom of the inner world, then the man has become for the world above a phantom, then he is practically dead or desperately ill (Jung 1912b:330)

How not to think about the clinical picture of catatonia at the reading of this sentence! On the other hand, if the individual achieves the sacrifice, then his personality will be transformed and the anabasis will take place—transformed in religious yearning.

These are the big lines of Jung’s thought on schizophrenia and its place in the nekyia at the time of the beginning of his crisis.
JUNG’S TESTIMONY ON HIS ‘NEKYIA’

Let us now concentrate on the crisis Jung endured from 1913 on. I will not enter in detail concerning what he later called his ‘experience of the unconscious’ as his testimonies dealing with it are known—I will settle on summarising them. The first written testimony of Jung’s nekyia which must be mentioned is the seminar he gave in 1925 (Jung 1989)—this event represents also the first and only time Jung spoke of his experience in public. However, it was not published until 1989 and the fifty copies of the notes on the seminar were only distributed to some of Jung’s disciples (Shamdasani 2012:xxi). But, if the first depiction of Jung’s nekyia is to be found in this seminar given in 1925, there is, to my knowledge, no correspondence between Jung’s disciples, nor are there any writings, proving and detailing a spreading of this story. As it has not been published before 1989, and the first biographies of Jung relating to his nekyia date from the early 1960s (as will be discussed later in this paper), one cannot consider the testimony contained in this seminar as the main source for the disseminating of the story of Jung’s madness among his hagiographers and biographers. The first publication relating to this experience is an interview that Jung gave to Mircea Eliade for the Journal Combat in 1952, but only available to the German- and English-speaking public from 1977, as the article is published, translated in English, in C.G. Jung Speaking (Eliade 1952). Memories is thus the first detailed story of Jung’s nekyia and can be considered as the main source for the spreading of the story of Jung’s morbidity: until the middle of the 1990s, all of Jung biographers based their analyses of this episode on the testimony from Memories.

In this seminar, Jung shares some of the big visions and events which punctuated his nekyia, and discusses the similarities between his mental state at the time and the processes occurring in Dementia Praecox. In the fifth lecture, Jung narrates his vision from October, 1913, and the argument with the voice of his Anima telling him he was doing art (Jung 1989:24). The vision from October, 1913, is again discussed in the sixth lecture, along with his first ‘conscious descent within the unconscious’ (Jung 1989:51) and the dream of Siegfried’s murder (Jung 1989:53)—which is again addressed in the seventh lecture (Jung 1989:61).

1 This interview was given at the 1952 Eranos Conference. Jung discusses there his recently published book Answer to Job, his psychological understanding of alchemy, the reality of religious experience, his concept of collective unconscious and his nekyia.

2 Until the publication of Sonu Shamdasani’s ‘Memories, Dreams, Omissions’ (1995).
lectures 8, 11 and 12 discuss the content of the first part of *Liber Novus*, ‘Liber Primus’: the encounter with Elijah and Salome and the occurrences in the ‘Mysterium’.

According to the narration of *Memories* (chapter, ‘Confrontation with the Unconscious’), at the end of 1912, Jung had important dreams that meant for him a tremendous, or—as he put it—‘unusual’ animation of the unconscious (Jung 1962b:172), which made him ask himself whether he was experiencing a mental disorder (Jung 1962b:173). From October, 1913, onward, a multitude of visions poured through him, most of them transcribed in the *Black Books* and in *Liber Novus*. As the vision of the flooding of Europe repeated itself in December, 1913, he asked himself whether he was not ‘doing a schizophrenia’ (as related in his interview to Mircea Eliade). From December 12th of the same year, Jung begins his ‘confrontation with the unconscious’. In *Memories*, he speaks of the panic which manifested to him as visions with a clear mythological content, imposing themselves on his consciousness (ibid). He writes on the inner world he was discovering:

> It is of course ironical that I, a psychiatrist, should at almost every step of my experiment have run into the same psychic material which is the stuff of psychosis and is found in the insane. This is the fund of unconscious images which fatally confuse the mental patient. But it is also the matrix of a mythopoeic imagination which has vanished from our rational age (Jung 1962b:188).

In *Memories*, Jung simply states that he feared a psychosis until the war broke out in 1914. Strictly speaking he does not say he experienced psychosis, but only the same material he observed in the psychotic delusions of his patients: the mythological images. In 1934, at the Eranos conference, he compared the symbolic process, i.e., the practice of active imagination, with a ‘voluntarily induced psychosis’, in which the threshold of consciousness is involuntarily overwhelmed by the contents of the unconscious (Jung 1935:224, author’s translation). In *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, he explains that if ‘the patient can do active imagination and shape out his fantasies, and there are no suspicious incidents, then there is as a rule no longer any serious danger’ and that active imagination ‘amounts to an anticipated psychosis’ (Jung 1955-1956:§755).

Answering a question about his visions in the 1925 Seminar, Jung explains:
there was a great deal of affect with them. As I could see no possible application to be made of them, I thought to myself, “If this means anything, it means that I am hopelessly off.” I had the feeling that I was an over-compensated psychosis, and from this feeling I was not released till August 1st, 1914 (Jung 1989:48).

Here, Jung expresses the fear he had after this vision, concerning his mental state, but also clearly denies a potential psychosis. On August 1st, 1914, Jung learns about the outbreak of the world war and understands that the visions he had, the flooding of Europe, the freezing cold on Europe, etc., did not concern his psychological state but foreshadowed the collective events, which came to pass in Europe—that these ‘big dreams’ originated from the impersonal layers of the unconscious and so had—also—a collective value; or, as he will later say, a prophetic value, understanding the atemporal and aspatial properties of the unconscious.

THE MYTHOLOGISATION OF JUNG’S ‘NEKYIA’

The first biographical writings which relay the story of Jung’s ‘confrontation with the unconscious’, and therefore of his proximity to madness, were, with some exemptions, produced by Jungian scholars from a non-critical perspective and are thus hagiographers. The myth of Jung’s madness was first propagated through the writings of his disciples and then through those of professional biographers that took Memories as an autobiographical work (although it has been proved not to be—see Shamdasani 1995 and Maillard 2002) and blindly relied on them to make and deliver their own retrospective diagnoses of their subject. These are certainly not as polemical as Jung’s pathologisations which were spread through his critics’ writings, but their relevance and accuracy is just as questionable.

Also, the handling of the main source of these biographies is clearly problematic. The truth of Memories is not questioned, as concerning the supposedly autobiographical nature of the work as well as the integrity and origin of its statements. I propose to review some important works which spread the story of Jung’s madness in its positive perspective.

In 1964, D.W. Winnicott writes a review of Jung’s Memories (‘Memories, dreams, reflections by C. G. Jung’). There, he diagnoses Jung with infantile schizophrenia, a psychotic disease and a psychotic
depression, when the subject was three years old (Sedgwick 2009:82). The catalytic role of *Memories* should be noted here, thus its shift to an object of projection for Winnicott (see Sedgwick 2009 and Meredith-Owen 2012), and Jung’s assertion concerning the non-pathological nature of the dissociation he expresses through the conception of the personalities 1 and 2 (Jung 1962b:45).

Henri Ellenberger continues the story in 1970 with the chapter he devotes to Jung in his monumental *Discovery of the Unconscious*. He identifies the crisis Jung passed through as the ‘creative illness’ he had postulated in 1964 (Ellenberger 1970:672; Ellenberger 1964). Later, in 1993, Ellenberger identifies Jung’s ‘creative illness’ as a ‘protracted neurotic disorder’ (Shamdasani 2005:69).

Barbara Hannah devotes a ‘Biographical Memoir’ to the Swiss psychiatrist in 1976. Hannah simply regards Jung’s experience of the unconscious as a depression, which is hardly debatable (depression being understood, in Jungian psychology, as an important introversion of the libido, and so as a regressive psychical movement), and relays Jung’s word concerning his fear of ‘making a psychosis’ (Hannah 1976:107).


In 1985, Gerhard Wehr published his work *Jung: Leben, Werk, Wirkung*, in which, mainly drawing again on *Memories*, Jung is diagnosed with a ‘“borderline case” [...] on the threshold between neurosis and psychosis’ (Wehr 1985:160, author’s translation). This analysis, knowing that Wehr takes Jung’s account of his *nekyia* at his word, is completely justified and logical:

To the extent that I managed to translate the emotions into images that is to say, to find the images which were concealed in the emotions I was inwardly calmed and reassured. Had I left
those images hidden in the emotions, I might have been torn to pieces by them. There is a chance that I might have succeeded in splitting them off; but in that case I would inexorably have fallen into a neurosis and so been ultimately destroyed by them anyhow (Jung 1962b:177).

This diagnosis will be repeated in subsequent biographical studies, like Spillmann’s and Strubel’s (2010:127, noted in Falzeder 2014:20).

Jeffrey Satinover devoted an article to Jung in 1986. Citing numerous authors who tried a retrospective analysis of Jung, he states here that one finds a guiding thread in all their diagnoses: ‘Jung’s psychopathology was not neurotic—it was narcissistic (Homans 1979), or “trans-neurotic” (Wolf 1984), or schizophrenic (Stern 1976), or childhood-schizophrenic (Winnicott 1964)—that is, in general terms, it involved “early and deep fragmentations of one’s self” (Ticho 1982:861) (Satinover 1986:415).

In 1988, Linda Donn collected interviews she conducted with some close relatives of Jung. In them, Liliane Frey expresses that Jung ‘was very near psychosis. He didn’t know how it would turn out’ (Donn 1988:179). Franz Jung states also here that his father ‘placed a gun in his nightstand, and said that when he could bear it no longer he would shoot himself’, and that Jung thought he ‘might fall forever into the void’. He also describes his father as ‘a man who […] painted pictures of circles all day’ (ibid:172).

I will not elaborate on the biography Deirdre Bair devoted to Jung in 2003, as the work has been already analysed in detail (Shamdasani 2005:87ff.). But because of its reception, we shall repeat that the book contributed to the mythologisation of Jung’s madness, as the author considers his visions to be psychotic (Bair 2003:245, 290).

The list of works by analysts, historians, and more or less professional biographers, that contribute to the propagation of the legend of Jung’s madness is still long. Most of them deliver the kind of retrospective diagnoses I have just discussed in this chapter by relying, above all, and incorrectly, on the narration of Jung’s experience as written in his Memories. But the issue raised here does not only concern the retrospective character of the diagnoses (a problematic character regarding its reliability and scientific rigour), but the essence of diagnosis itself. This is very clear while reading the innermost document relating to this period, Liber Novus: in it, everything indicates that Jung did not consider his experience at that time in terms of ‘diving into the unconscious’. As the terminology of Liber Novus shows, Jung completely put aside the psychiatric nosology at that time, for the duration of his experience at least—including the
notion of the ‘unconscious’. Thus, there was probably no question of ‘the unconscious’ during his experience, but rather of ‘the spirit of the depths’, ‘the chaos’, ‘the void’, ‘the pleroma’, etc. It is thus nonsense to try to classify Jung’s crisis psychiatrically: what he recounts is a living symbolic and prophetic experience, which has nothing to do with any kind of psychiatric framework or rigid scientific conception. He tells the story of his meeting, of his engagement with madness, which allowed for a deeply creative movement: Liber Novus contains far less reflections on ‘madnesses’, which could be linked to psychosis or neurosis, than reflections on ‘divine madness’, which is Philemon’s magic: an interior, irrational access to a different kind of knowledge.

The reception of Jung’s testimony by his biographers is thus a ‘story meant to be repeated mechanically, almost unknowingly’ (Shamdasani and Borch-Jacobsen 2012:12), a dehistoricised story, a legend whose function is ‘evidently not to adequately represent the past, but to ritually celebrate a timeless miracle’ (in Shamdasani and Borch-Jacobsen 2006:26)4. (On the particular dehistoricisation found in Memories, see Shamdasani 1995:41.) It is a legend which crystallises logically on the mythologisation of the period of Jung’s ‘confrontation with the unconscious’, the period of his meeting with madness, as he very famously said:

The years when I was pursuing my inner images were the most important in my life—in them everything essential was decided. It all began then; the later details are only supplements and clarifications of the material that burst forth from the unconscious, and at first swamped me. It was the prima materia for a lifetime’s work (Jung 1962b:199).

A NEW READING OF JUNG’S EXPERIENCE

So let us take a completely different look at what happened for Jung at that time by asking how he could understand the crisis and the visions he was experiencing regarding the comprehension he had of the psyche, and particularly of schizophrenia, in 1913.

Towards the end of writing Transformations and Symbols of the Libido, Jung asked himself the question that initiated his own

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3 I wish to thank Sonu Shamdasani for this remark.
4 Author’s translation. This sentence does not appear in the English version of the book.
transformation, the question of the nature of what he had just written and
the existence of the myth of his life—this myth relating to the meaning of
one’s life (Jung 1962a:10). The time of crisis, his nekya, is a journey of
the search for meaning, of the search for his life’s myth. By seeing that
this latter, narrativised in Liber Novus, is intimately linked to the contents
and the process of writing Transformations and Symbols of the Libido
(and so to a certain comprehension of schizophrenia, which will come to
change during Jung’s own experience), one can understand why Jung was
at first puzzled when mythological visions and autonomous contents of the
unconscious poured over him. But not only were they mythological, they
also repeated some contents and processes he found active in Miss Miller,
a case he compared with some aspects of Dementia Praecox, as I showed
earlier.

In Transformations and Symbols of the Libido, Jung exposes a
neurotic condition prior to the catabasis, an ‘Uneinssein mit sich selber’—a
division within oneself, a nostalgia of the mother, of the depths. A condition
often happening in the second part of life: ‘In the first half of life, [the
libido’s] will is for growth, in the second half of life it hints, softly at
first, and then audibly, at its will for death’ (Jung 1912b:480). These two
elements, the metanoia and the feeling of division (I deliberately avoid the
term ‘dissociation’) are to be found from the beginning of Liber Novus.
On November 14th, 1913, Jung writes in his Black Books: ‘On the second
night I called out to my soul: “I am weary, my soul, my wandering has
lasted too long, my search for myself outside of myself…I wandered for
many years, so long that I forgot that I possessed a soul”’ (Jung 2009:233).
On December 17th, 1913: ‘So I cried full of anger, “But then my
indignation must also come from you, and in me you are indignant against
yourself.” My soul then spoke the ambiguous words: “That is civil war”’.The corresponding footnote indicates that the I asks then to the soul: ‘Are
you neurotic? Are we neurotic?’ (Jung 2009:241).

Jung interprets the moment of this introversion (the metanoia) in
the second layer of the narration, written between the summer of 1914
and 1915. In the chapter, ‘Refinding the Soul’—whose title itself is very
relevant in the context of this paper—Jung wrote:

> When I had the vision of the flood in October of the year 1913, it
> happened at a time that was significant for me as a man. At that

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The often used expression ‘personal myth’ comes from the mistranslation, in the
English version of Memories, Dreams, Reflections, of the expression used by Jung in
the original German version: ‘der Mythus meines Lebens’, i.e. ‘the myth of my life’.
time, in the fortieth year of my life, I had achieved everything that I had wished for myself. I had achieved honor, power, wealth, knowledge, and every human happiness. Then my desire for the increase of these trappings ceased, the desire ebbed from me and horror came over me. The vision of the flood seized me and I felt the spirit of the depths, but I did not understand him. Yet he drove me on with unbearable inner longing (Jung 2009:231).

About this flood, which Jung saw several times in vision and which is central in his testimony of his experience, of his questioning of his mental health and on the interpretation of these events as prophetic, he writes in *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido*, relying for example on Indian mythology: ‘Through Vishnu’s ecstasy came the flood on the world (engulfment through introversion, which symbolizes the danger of entering the mother)’ (Jung 1912b:330). Or: ‘This motive explains the meaning of the “Deluge”; the maternal sea is also the devouring mother. The fantasy of the world conflagration, of the cataclysmic end of the world in general, is nothing but a mythological projection of a personal individual will for death’ (Jung 1912b:481).

In *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido*, Jung wrote: ‘This means, mythologically, that the sun is devoured by the serpent of the night, the treasure is concealed and guarded by the dragon: substitution of a present mode of adaptation by an infantile mode, which is represented by the corresponding symptoms’ (Jung 1912b:421). In *Liber Novus*, in the chapter, ‘Descent into Hell in the Future’: ‘In the deepest reach of the stream shines a red sun, radiating through the dark water. There I see—and a terror seizes me—small serpents on the dark rock walls, striving toward the depths, where the sun shines. A thousand serpents crowd around, veiling the sun. Deep night falls’ (Jung 2009:237).

The ‘terror’ here is quite understandable on several levels: of course we can imagine this emotion overwhelming him in advance of such a vision; but the vision is also very close to a mythological motive he had analysed a few years before in a case of morbid introversion.

In *Liber Primus*, the meeting with Elijah and Salome happens in the crater where they are living, in the Mysterium. There, the narrator finally accepts his descent in the chapter, ‘Resolution’, which enables him, after his ‘crucifixion’, to enter the visions following in *Liber Secundus*. In *Transformations*, one can read: ‘The crater symbolizes [...] the mother; the serpent the resistance defending her’ (Jung 1912b:476). However:
he [the hero] is at war with himself [uneins mit sich selbst], and, therefore, the descent and the end appear to him as the malicious inventions of the mother of death, who in this way wishes to draw him to herself. The mysteries [Das Mysterium], however, consolingly promise that there is no contradiction or disharmony when life is changed into death⁶ (ibid:419).

A fundamental teaching the narrator receives from Elijah concerns the objectivity of the unconscious and the element of reality of the contents of the unconscious. Jung already wrote about the ‘other reality’, the psychological reality, in Transformations, as well as about the objectivity of the unconscious⁷—which means he was conscious of these facts before the instruction through Elijah. Yet, this teaching seems new for the narrator of Liber Novus:

I: You are symbols and Mary is a symbol. I am simply too confused to see through you now.
E: You may call us symbols for the same reason that you can also call your fellow men symbols, if you wish to. But we are just as real as your fellow men. You invalidate nothing and solve nothing by calling us symbols.
I: You plunge me into a terrible confusion. Do you wish to be real?
E: We are certainly what you call real. Here we are, and you have to accept us. The choice is yours. (Jung 2009:249).

In Transformations, Jung wrote:

That the dragon is only an artifice is a useful and delightfully rationalistic conceit, which is most significant for that period. In this way the dismal gods were effectively vulgarized. The schizophrenic insane readily make use of this mechanism, in order to depreciate efficient personalities (Jung 1912b:403).

One understands that the conversation between Elijah and the narrator just quoted seeks exactly the opposite purpose of the apotropaic movement described here in Transformations, so that the conversation can be seen, on another level, as having auto-suggestive purposes—

⁶ See original terminology, set here in square brackets (Jung 1912a: 359).
⁷ As discussed earlier.
which recalls those used by Helene Preiswerk, as Jung analysed in *On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena* (Jung 1902).

Apart from the similarities of the motives and processes found in Miss Miller’s case in *Transformations*, and in Jung’s case in *Liber Novus*, one should consider the realisation of the objectivity of the psyche and, therefore, of the reality of the unconscious contents, as one of Jung’s fundamental discoveries during this time—as one knows about the importance of this question in Jung’s life work. And the process of this realisation seems quite clear: as the objectivity of the unconscious contents was a fact he was intellectually aware of during the writing of *Transformations*, it became a fact he livingly experienced at the end of 1913, and which seemed to unsettle him quite significantly.

**JUNG’S PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL ISOLATION**

Another biographical question needs to be raised in this context: Jung’s professional and personal isolation. The narration of *Memories* highlights this isolation and links it with Jung’s concerns about his mental health at the time. As the status of *Memories* is here re-evaluated, one should consider this issue anew, regarding important facts and versions removed from *Memories* and thus absent from the works representing the story of Jung’s madness, as addressed earlier in this study.

Concerning Jung’s professional isolation at the time, Ellenberger considers this to be ‘exaggerated’, a statement which he repeats several times in regard to some assertions Jung made about this period in his life, because the psychiatrist ‘had kept a few disciples, and a small Jungian group was founded in 1916 in Zurich under the name of Psychologischer Club’ (1970:673). Maeder stated that he was very close with Jung at that time and considered himself to be one of his disciples until 1928. Furthermore, his resignation as Privatdozent in April 1914—which contributed to Jung’s professional isolation—seems to have come about not only due to the fact that his ‘experience and experiments with the unconscious had brought [his] intellectual activity to a standstill’ and that he found it ‘unfair to continue teaching young students when [his] own intellectual situation was nothing but a mass of doubts’ (Jung 1962b:193). As a matter of fact, Ellenberger reports that Maeder told him that Jung quit his post at the University of Zurich, because the university ‘refused to grant him the title of Professor’ (1970:739, n.38). In the *Protocols*, Jung

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8 See Jung (1962b:167): ‘After the break with Freud, all my friends and acquaintances dropped away…’.
gives a reason for his demission which differs from both the explications of *Memories* and those of Maeder. He there states that he quite consciously sacrificed his academic career and was at the time ready to assume every risk concerning the huge process happening in him: there is thus a clear prioritisation of the inner experience over the scientific work and career.

On the 10\textsuperscript{th} of July, 1914, the Zurich Psychoanalytical Society left the International Psychoanalytical Association and became the Association for Analytical Psychology, in which Jung was ‘actively involved’ (Shamdasani 2009:201). His scientific activity was profuse: he worked on some of his fundamental writings at that time, like his psychological typology—as reflected in his correspondence with Hans Schmid (Jung 2013) and his communications at the Psychologischer Club—as well as some important texts (namely *The Transcendent Function*, 1957, and *The Structure of the Unconscious*, 1916—the two talks upon which *Adaptation, Individuation, Collectivity*, 1970, is based). These works, because of their nature, their theoretical formulations and their systematisation, require a strong involvement of the directed thought, which is opposed to the non-directed thought (as mentioned earlier), which Jung used in the evenings during his visionary experience and which destabilised him so much. Furthermore, his weeks were busy with intense therapeutic activity, with on average of five to seven consultations per day, five days a week, between 1913 and 1914 (Shamdasani 2009:201). Jung also served in the military at the time, doing 248 days of service between 1913 and 1917; this was an activity which requires, as one can imagine, a certain amount of discipline and balance (Shamdasani 2009:201).

Hence, Jung’s days were devoted to his family and professional activities, compensating, in an effort to find the right psychic balance, for the introversion of his visionary evenings (Shamdasani 2009:201). The professional isolation Jung addresses in *Memories* does not seem as unintentional as it appeared in the narration. However, Maeder emphasized that even if Jung kept relationships with his disciples and some colleagues, he was, between 1914 and 1919, ‘extremely reserved and somewhat distrustful, even toward his most faithful disciples. None of them suspected the interior experience he was then undergoing’ (Ellenberger 1970:673). One understands thus that Jung, even surrounded by a crowd, could have been plunged into loneliness at that time. But what about his personal isolation? Another figure of major importance supported him during this confusing time and gave him comfort in the solitude of his evenings: Toni Wolff.

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\(^9\) Later published in Jung (1921).
Toni Wolff’s name does not appear in Memories, although Jung stressed the vital importance of her help during his crisis years, as evidenced in the ‘Protocols of Aniela Jaffé’s interviews with Jung for Memories, Dreams, Reflections’. This ‘omission’ is by no means insignificant. As Jung told Aniela Jaffé in these interviews, and as notably Barbara Hannah, Tina Keller and Liliane Frey explained, without Toni Wolff’s help, Jung would undoubtedly not have been able to throw himself in the experience he began in 1913, or maybe he would not have come out unsathed (Healy 2017:127 and Swan 2006:503). For many, Toni Wolff, with her extraordinary intuition (which was one of her main gifts as an analyst), was able to accompany her patients in the world of the unconscious like no other, and thus for Jung she played the role of the Anima, of the Soror Mystica, so that some scholars consider her, in some sense, to have been Jung’s analyst during this time (see Swan 2006:503, 506; Hannah 1976:118; Wehr 1985:171; for references regarding this discussion, see Healy 2017:349, n.78). And indeed, Jung explains in the Protocols that with the beginning of the relationship with Toni Wolff, he entered the great chaos of the unconscious. He also states there, contrarily as earlier certified by Barbara Hannah and Tina Keller, who reckoned that Wolff never had the ability to practice the method of active imagination and had ‘difficulty to let her own images emerge’ (Swan 2006:506; Hannah 1976:118f.), that Wolff entered a similar stream of images, which he thought he himself unintentionally triggered, and that both their interior experiences were in such a ‘participation mystique’, that it was a common stream and a common task. One understands thus the importance of the relationship and the level of intimacy he had with his former patient. Jung declared in this same interview that nobody could help him, and that he could speak of this experience with nobody else (not even with his wife, Emma) but Wolff, who also found herself completely disoriented in the same chaos as him.

Toni Wolff seems however to have also been a further help in this crisis. Jung explained the importance of the rational interpretation within the symbolic experience, which enables one to emerge from the chaos of images and not to allow oneself to be possessed by this chaos (Jung 1962b:192, 1929:§64). In this process of understanding, the young woman’s help and skills were precious: she understood the depth of what he was going through and was ‘recognizing and identifying elements in his visions that C.G. himself may have not seen’ (Healy 2017:124). According
to Jaffé, she helped him with the ‘intellectual penetration of the world of psychic images’ (Jaffé 1971:174; Healy 2017:124).

Another valuable testimony concerning Jung’s therapeutic practice during this time of crisis comes from Tina Keller who was his patient between 1915 and 1924 (Swan 2006:493). She reported that her analysis began during Jung’s confrontation with the unconscious—the year Jung began the drawings of Liber Novus—and therefore the book was often placed on an easel during the sessions, within sight of the patients (Swan 2006:501) and it helped him to explain his introspective method to his patients (Swan 2006:497). While the therapeutic work Tina Keller did with Toni Wolff (who served as her analyst between 1924 and 1928) was based upon the confrontation with the unconscious, the work she did with Jung prior to this aimed at reinforcing the ego (Swan 2006:498, 506) to ‘withstand the impact of unconscious images’, a psychological condition required for the exploration of the unconscious, of which Jung was aware at least from 1915.

CONCLUSION

In the 1925 Seminar, Jung explains that Transformsations and Symbols of the Libido has to be read by taking into account its subjective aspect, as he had projected his unconscious material and his fantasy function onto Miss Miller’s, also stating that ‘the Psychology of the Unconscious can be taken as [him]self and [that] an analysis of it leads inevitably into an analysis of [his] own unconscious processes’ (Jung 1989:28).

This means that the crisis of 1913 can be seen as a withdrawal of this projection and so a direct experience of the contents and processes he projected. This movement is really clear when one compares the symbolic contents and the psychological transformation described in the two books. Hence, by putting oneself into Jung’s place at that time, one understands that between October, 1913, and August, 1914, he began to directly experience contents and processes he wrote about a few months before and compared to Dementia Praecox. As known from the understanding Jung had from schizophrenia after the writing of Transformations, which is that the emergence of mythological symbols in the psyche means a loosening of the phylogenetic layers of the unconscious, and is thus a symptom or an indication of schizophrenia, one can understand that he was confused and bewildered by the appearance of this kind of symbolism in his fantasies—which made him naturally question his mental health. Another interesting point is that, during this time, he could directly experience
psychological facts and processes he intellectually understood during the work on *Transformations and Symbols*: the ‘Uneinssein mit sich selber’, the metanoia, the descent into one’s own depths, the objectivity of the unconscious, and so the character of reality of its contents, among other things. It is the assimilation of this last point, the reality of the unconscious, that allowed the psychological process and the fantasies to continue after those transcribed in *Liber Primus*.

This is most probably the second reason why Jung was so startled during the first part of his experience: after observing in his own fantasies the type of contents he could see in the delusions of his schizophrenic patients a few years before, he then experienced, as he could also observe in his schizophrenic patients, the character of the unconscious and its contents, including their overwhelming power over the consciousness. Jung, talking about Elijah and Philemon in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, said:

Philemon and other figures of my fantasies brought home to me the crucial insight that there are things in the psyche which I do not produce, but which produce themselves and have their own life. Philemon represented a force which was not myself. In my fantasies I held conversations with him, and he said things which I had not consciously thought. For I observed clearly that it was he who spoke, not I. He said I treated thoughts as if I generated them myself, but in his view thoughts were like animals in the forest, or people in a room, or birds in the air, and added, “If you should see people in a room, you would not think that you had made those people, or that you were responsible for them.” It was he who taught me psychic objectivity, the reality of the psyche (Jung 1962b:183).

These—the emerging of mythological visions and the direct experience of the reality of the soul—seem to be the two important elements which have unsettled him the most at the time. It is thus not surprising that these elements also permitted two of the biggest realisations he had during his experience and its interpretation, namely the fact that the apparition of mythological motives in the psyche is not a criterion of morbidity and can be dealt with consciously in the context of a work of transformation of the personality; and the reality of the soul itself.

To finish, let us return briefly to the 1925 Seminar, where Jung compares the vision he had in October, 1913, and the processes going on
in Dementia Praecox—this applies also for the dream of the freezing cold descending on Europe, which repeated three times between June and July, 1914.

If I were a case of dementia praecox I would easily spread my dreams over the whole world and take it that the destruction of the world was indicated, whereas in reality all that might be indicated would be the destruction of my relation to the world. A person with dementia praecox wakes up one day to find that the world is dead and the doctor nothing but a ghost—he alone is alive and right. But in such cases there are always plenty of other symptoms present to prove the essential abnormality of the person. The more normal the individual, the more it can be assumed from such fantasies that some profound social disturbance actually is in progress, and at such times there are always many more than one person whose unconscious register the upset conditions (Jung 1989:47).

Then: ‘So if I had been crazy, I could have preached the coming disaster like the man on the walls of Jerusalem’ (Jung 1989:48).

This means that Jung controlled his experience at the time, in the sense that he dealt with the experience consciously: instead of preaching the coming disaster, he asked himself what these visions meant, tried to interpret them, and finally confronted himself consciously with the contents of the unconscious from December 12th, 1913, onward. Thus, he could understand that the crucial element regarding schizophrenia is not the appearance of mythological contents in the fantasies but the behaviour of the consciousness towards the contents of the unconscious, the integration of the unconscious contents preventing the overwhelming of the consciousness—as he will theorise in his texts written in 1916: *Structure de l’inconscient* and *The transcendent function*.


ABSTRACT
L’articolo presenta in modo del tutto inedito il confronto di Jung con l’opera dantesca, attraverso uno studio diacronico che procede dagli anni giovanili fino agli scritti dei tardi anni ’50. Si è inteso seguire passo per passo la cronologia di tale incontro, in cui si intrecciano elementi storici, ermeneutici, e psicologici. Con questo, si è scelto di chiarire il senso generale della lettura dantesca di Jung, obbligati a rimandare la discussione dettagliata dei singoli passaggi menzionati a lavori futuri. Ai fini di proporre un lavoro veramente esaustivo, abbiamo considerato lo spettro completo del materiale disponibile, dalle opere pubblicate a quelle in via di pubblicazione. Per i riferimenti al materiale inedito, e per ulteriore preziose indicazioni, ringraziamo qui Ernst Falzeder, Martin Liebscher, e Sonu Shamdasani, senza cui il completamento di questo articolo non sarebbe stato possibile.

KEY WORDS
Psicologia analitica e complessa, C. G. Jung, Dante, ermeneutica, esoterismo.

1 Vedi Priviero (2018), Shamdasani (2016).
IL PRIMO PERIODO (1898-1912)

Jung legge Dante sin dagli anni giovanili. Difficile dire se lo leggesse già quando sua madre gli suggeriva, all’età di circa 15-16 anni, la sconvolgente lettura del Faust di Goethe (Jung ETG:65).2 Difficile anche confermare se la prima giovanile lettura di Jung di Dante avesse avuto o meno lo stesso esplosivo impatto scatenatogli da Nietzsche (Jung 2012:7) o il ‘soffio di vita’ percepito in Meister Eckhart (Jung ETG:74). Tuttavia sappiamo che già come studente di medicina, Dante figurava nelle letture extracurricolari che Jung voracemente affiancava alla preparazione accademica all’università di Basilea. Qui spendeva il suo tempo tra gli studi, le sedute spiritiche di sua cugina Helene Preiswerk, cui assisteva con alcuni suoi compagni, e gli incontri dell’associazione studentesca Zofingia, di cui diventa presidente nel 1897, tenendo 5 lezioni. In una di queste, nel semestre estivo del 1898, quando compiva 23 anni, il nome di Dante compare per la prima volta ufficialmente nei documenti di Jung (Jung 1983: §229). Dal momento che nel corso degli anni Jung indulgerà in tutti i più importanti simboli danteschi, con una personale predilezione per Lucifero e Beatrice, la menzione di Zofingia appare piuttosto singolare. Jung infatti si serve qui di un episodio noto ma piuttosto specifico della Commedia, ovvero i Canti XXXII e XXXIII dell’Inferno, in cui Dante si figura il Conte Ugolino immerso nel ghiaccio del secondo cerchio (Antonora) della zona più bassa dell’Inferno, riservato ai traditori della patria o del partito (Dante 1987:321).

Noi eravam partiti già da ello,
ch’io vidi due ghiacciati in una buca,
si che l’un capo a l’altro era cappello;
e come l’hanno per fame si manduca,
cosi ’l sovran li denti a l’altro pose
là ’ve ’l cervel s’aggiugne con la nuca.
(Dante, Inferno, XXXII, 124-129,

Bisognerà aspettare diversi anni prima che il nome di Dante compaia nuovamente tra le pagine dello psichiatra svizzero. Si tratta della prima versione (1911-1912) di Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido, in

2 Vedi anche Jung a Max Rychner, 28 febbraio 1932 (Jung Lettere:88).
cui appare una lunga citazione dalla quarta ecloga di Virgilio, in cui il poeta latino annuncia l’arrivo venturo di un puer salvifico e l’inizio di una nuova età dell’oro (Jung WSL:78). In nota (n3, 78), Jung riprende il fatto che questa ecloga abbia spinto diversi esegeti cristiani a interpretare retrospettivamente Virgilio come poeta quasi-cristiano, annunciatore ante temporem dell’imminente diffondersi del cristianesimo. Questo sembrerebbe esser stato, egli aggiunge, uno dei principali motivi per cui Virgilio assume il ruolo di psicopompo nella Commedia dantesca.3

Al di là di questo collegamento, quel che c’è di più interessante in questa notazione è che da lì a breve sarà Jung stesso, alle soglie delle esperienze visionarie che confluiranno nel Liber Novus, a servirsi di una guida, il vecchio saggio Filemone, le cui caratteristiche finiranno per ricordare molto da vicino il Virgilio dantesco (Shamdasani 2009:202).

**ATTRAVERSO IL LIBER NOVUS (1913-1930)**

È il 26 dicembre 1913 quando Jung trascrive nei suoi Libri Neri, strato primigenio del Liber Novus, due terzine dal Purgatorio di Dante (Dante 1987:625, 636-637), di cui disponeva in traduzione tedesca (Jung LN:104).4

I’ mi son un che, quando  
Amor mi spira, noto, e a quel modo,  
ch’e’ ditta dentro vo significando. (Dante Purgatorio, XXIV, 52-54).

E simigliante poi a la fiammella  
che segue il fuoco là ’vunque si muta,  
segue lo spirto sua forma novella. (Dante Purgatorio, XXV, 97-99).

Sull’importanza di questo riferimento, e più in generale sulla funzione di Dante nel Liber Novus, rimandiamo all’articolo precedentemente citato.

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3 Nella religione greca, psicopompo indica la funzione di chi guida le anime verso il regno dei morti.

Ci limitiamo a ricordare qui che questa duplice citazione testimonia apertamente la rilevanza di Dante per Jung al cuore delle esplorazioni interiori che segneranno questo periodo. Da questo momento in poi, la Commedia dantesca diventa un vero e proprio modello di confronto per il viaggio di Jung, vivificato da una serie di corrispondenze tra l’opera di Dante e il Liber Novus, operanti tanto su un piano letterale quanto simbolico. In questo senso, la primissima lettura dantesca ai tempi dei Libri Neri rivela un carattere fortemente esoterico. Jung non si approccia alla Commedia con intenti critici, lasciando la dimensione letteraria o estetica del lavoro di Dante ben fuori dai propri interessi. Ma nemmeno vi si avvicina con l’intento di un’interpretazione a sfondo psicologico. Vi si rivolge invece in modo meditativo e fortemente pragmatico, nel senso attribuito al termine da William James (1907), partendo dalla convinzione di una profonda corrispondenza tra la propria esperienza visionaria e quella che Dante descrive attraverso i Canti della Commedia. Così, le difficoltà iniziali incontrate di fronte al travolgente materiale psichico in cui si imbatte, lo portano spesso a descrivere le proprie esperienze come una vera e propria discesa agli inferi, o catabasi (Jung LN:237). Qui il ruolo di Dante incomincia a giocare una parte cruciale. Non solo esso infatti rappresenta il modello di una discesa infernale ai tempi del Medioevo, un aspetto che Jung pone al centro del Liber Novus, dichiarando:


Ma ancora e soprattutto, il modello della Commedia diventa più che altro un riferimento all’anabasi, la risalita dagli inferi, completamento vittorioso della discesa, una psico-cosmologia degli opposti che avvicina, in un modo che William Blake riprenderà, l’energia infernale al rinnovamento psicologico e spirituale simbolicamente rappresentato dalla rinascita nel Paradiso. Dunque, attraverso Dante, il riferimento di Jung alla corrispondenza tra ‘fuoco’ e ‘forma’ descrive in modo davvero

Quello che preme sottolineare qui, tuttavia, è che oltre il livello esoterico, esiste una seconda, importantissima dimensione della lettura dantesca di Jung di quegli anni. Si tratta del tentativo di affiancare alla lettura diretta di Dante, un’interpretazione della *Commedia* come un fondamentale esempio di ciò che egli andava delineando in quel periodo nei termini di ermeneutica e psicoterapia ‘costruttiva’ (Jung 1921, GW6:§701). Vediamo allora i riferimenti danteschi moltiplicarsi. Per cominciare, notiamo che il 15 febbraio del 1918, Jung scrive ad Alphonse Maeder evocando il ‘motivo dantesco’ per tracciare il ‘concetto di anima’, *Seelenbegriff*.5 Anticipata in questa lettera, tale prospettiva trova sua completa espressione nei *Psychologische Typen*, 1921, in cui Dante viene a occupare una posizione di assoluto rilievo nella discussione dei tipi psicologici nella produzione poetica occidentale. I riferimenti a Dante in questo contesto sono tra i più importanti di quelli che si possano trovare nell’intera opera junghiana. È qui, ad esempio, che Jung osserva che la nascita dell’individualismo moderno avrebbe avuto origine con un elemento medievale, l’adorazione della donna, dal momento che ‘culto della Donna significava infatti culto dell’anima’ (Jung 1921, GW6:§376).5 A questo aggiunge:

5 Corrispondenza Jung-Maeder, 15.02.1918, inedita: ‘Ich habe doch Deinen Vortrag expressis verbis anerkannt und die Danteparallele ebenfalls bis auf den Seelenbegriff’. Grazie a Ernst Falzeder per questo riferimento.

6 Le traduzioni in italiano dalle opere complete di Jung fanno fede a C. G. Jung (1969-2007). Laddove, come nel caso dei seminari di Jung in inglese, si è voluto suggerire una nuova traduzione italiana, questo è stato indicato a seguito del passo con ‘trad. originale’.
Ciò è stato espresso nel modo più bello e più completo nella *Divina Commedia* di Dante. Dante è il cavaliere spirituale della sua donna; per essa egli supera l’avventura del mondo inferiore e superiore. E in quest’eroica impresa l’immagine di lei si eleva per lui fino a divenire la trascendente mistica figura della Madre di Dio, una figura che s’è staccata dall’oggetto per diventare la personificazione di un fatto puramente psicologico, cioè di quei contenuti inconsci alla cui personificazione io ho dato il nome di Anima. (Jung 1921, GW6:§§376-377).

Accanto a questo passaggio e ad altri in cui ritorna l’immagine di Beatrice, nei *Psychologische Typen*, anche altri aspetti della *Commedia* vengono considerati. Particolarmente interessante è la visione per cui secondo Jung la preghiera di San Bernardo nel Canto XXXIII del *Paradiso* rifletterebbe la trasformazione psichica di Dante, la cui voce è ora innalzata in quella di un santo (Jung 1921, GW6:§§377-378). Centrale e complesso è poi l’accostamento dei contemporanei Dante ed Eckhart, i due grandi maestri dell’anima e della relatività del principio divino nel Medioevo:

Incontriamo in Eckhart idee nuove, idee informate allo stesso orientamento verso l’anima che mosse Dante a seguire l’effigie di Beatrice nel mondo sotterraneo dell’inconscio e ispirò i poeti che cantarono la leggenda del Gral (Jung 1921, GW6:§410). Da notarsi, infine, è il ripetersi di un riferimento all’episodio del Conte Ugolino (Jung 1921, GW6:§321). Se la presenza dantesca nei *Psychologische Typen* testimonia complessivamente il crescente interesse di Jung per Dante a partire dalla lettura del 1913, troviamo un altro importante riferimento a Dante negli anni ’20, che rappresenta in modo evidente la stretta connessione che intercorre tra l’esperienza diretta del *Liber Novus* e le elaborazioni scientifiche successive. Si tratta del seminario del 1925, in cui Jung decide di commentare (8 giugno 1925) un’importante visione occorsagli nel 1913, precisamente nello stesso periodo in cui trascriveva versi dal *Purgatorio*, in cui il profeta Elijah riportava il famoso detto ermetico per cui le cose stanno ‘come in basso, così in alto’, indicando così nella coincidenza degli opposti il motivo supremo dei processi di trasformazione interiore. Nel caso particolare della visione appena citata, il detto si riferiva alla coincidenza riscontrata da Jung tra l’immagine della caverna, in cui ha inizio la penetrazione del profondo, e quella della
montagna, in cui si sviluppa il rovesciamento e la trasformazione spirituale (Jung LN:252). Jung qui non si dimenticava di ricordare la corrispondenza stabilita da Dante non solo tra gironi infernali e cerchi celesti, ma anche tra la caverna infernale e la montagna purgatoriale, annotando:

Elijah disse che quello che stava sotto era proprio come ciò che stava sopra. Confronta con l’Inferno di Dante.
Gli gnostici esprimono la stessa idea nel simbolo dei coni rovesciati.[...] Ne deduco che Dante abbia tratto le sue idee dagli stessi archetipi (Jung 2012:104-105, trad. originale).


Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita

7 Poco dopo egli notava che era fondamentale osservare come Dante, nel suo viaggio nell’aldilà, si spostava costantemente dall’Inferno al Paradiso, e viceversa. (Jung [1928-30]:101).
mi ritrovai per una selva oscura
ché la diritta via era smarrita.

Ahi quanto a dir qual era è cosa dura
esta selva selvaggia e aspra e forte
che nel pensiero rinova la paura!

Tant’è amara che poco è più morte;
ma per trattar del ben ch’i’ vi trovai,
dirò de l’altre cose ch’i’ v’ho scorte.
(Dante, Inferno, 1-9).

Presumibilmente evocando questi versi, in un certo passaggio del Liber Novus Jung dice di camminare nel mezzo di una foresta oscura e di sentirsì improvvisamente perduto (Jung LN:261). Questa era, si può dire, la situazione in cui Jung si ritrovava a leggere la Commedia di Dante nel momento più critico del suo esperimento visionario, trovando in essa una profonda ispirazione lirica e spirituale. E nella copia della Commedia tedesca da lui posseduta, un pezzo di carta accompagnava la pagina di questo passaggio (Shamdasani 2009:261, n21), quasi a ricordare, come scriveva Hölderlin, che dove cresce il pericolo, cresce anche quello che salva (Hölderlin 1909:347).

LA SVOLTA DEI ’30 (1930-1941)

Quando alla fine degli anni ’20 Jung pone fine alla lunga serie di esperimenti immaginativi confluiti nel Liber Novus, ne segue un progetto di studio comparativo che ha lo scopo di trovare fonti contenenti un simbolismo analogo a quello che aveva sperimentato personalmente negli anni precedenti. Troverà il materiale occorrente in due direzioni. Da un lato, nella tradizione meditativa orientale, e in particolare nello Yoga Sutra di Patanjali, nel Kundalini Yoga, e nel buddhismo tibetano. Dall’altro, nella tradizione esoterica occidentale, espressa per Jung al suo massimo nell’alchimia tardo medievale, ma anche rivelata negli esercizi spirituali di Ignazio di Loyola e in autori visionari quali Dante, Blake, e Nietzsche. È a partire da questa svolta metodologica, e in particolare con riferimento alla seconda categoria, che Dante incomincia a diventare un riferimento costante delle opere e dei seminari negli anni ’30.

Nel 1930 Jung dà alla luce Psychologie und Dichtung, un testo in cui elabora a fondo alcuni concetti precedentemente proposti in una lezione

Il lettore esige commenti e spiegazioni, prova sentimenti di meraviglia, stuporazione, smarrimento, diffidenza o, quel ch’è peggio, ripugnanza. Qui nulla ricorda la vita quotidiana, qui prendono vita sogni, paure notturne e lugubri intuizioni di tenebre psichiche. La gran maggioranza del pubblico rifiuta una simile produzione, a meno che non parli alle sensazioni più rozze; e davanti ad essa anche lo specialista si trova spesso notevolmente imbarazzato. Dante e Wagner gli hanno bensì reso il compito un po’ più facile, poiché nel primo un avvenimento storico e nel secondo un evento mitico ricoprono l’esperienza primigenia e possono quindi passare per “argomento”. In entrambi però la dinamica e il significato profondo non risiedono né nel materiale storico né in quello mitico, ma nella visione primigenia che essi esprimono. (Jung 1930/1950, GW15:§§141-143).
Accanto a due lettere, una del 28 febbraio 1932 e una del 12 dicembre 1938, in cui Jung riprende Dante scrivendo allo scrittore svizzero Max Rychner e allo storico tedesco Heinrich Zimmer (Jung Lettere:89, 250), sono però soprattutto i seminari ad attestare quanto attraverso tutti gli anni ’30 la conoscenza e l’interesse di Jung per Dante si acuiscono notevolmente. Riferimenti a Dante sono infatti presenti nel seminario sul Kundalini Yoga (1932), sulle visioni di Christiana Morgan (1930-1934), a Berlino (1933), sullo Zarathustra di Nietzsche (1934-1939), sui sogni di Wolfgang Pauli nel seminario di Bailey Island e New York (1936-1937), sui sogni dei bambini (1936-1940), nelle lezioni all’ETH (1939, 1940, 1941), e nel seminario sull’interpretazione antica e moderna del sogno (1936-1941).

Per cominciare, nel seminario sul materiale di Christiana Morgan troviamo svariate menzioni all’opera dantesca. Ci sono due riferimenti che più di altro colpiscono la nostra attenzione. Uno è del 24 giugno 1931, in cui Jung s’intrattiene sul significato mistico della rosa nel Medioevo. Qui riprende ancora una volta il prezioso lavoro di L. Valli, Il linguaggio segreto di Dante e dei Fedeli d’Amore, in cui peraltro il filosofo italiano scriveva che la rosa ai tempi di Dante era un simbolo mistico universale, noto ‘dall’India fino alle valli della Loira’ (Valli 2014:475). Di questa rosa dantesca, culmine della visione estatica che conclude la Commedia, e che in diverse altre occasioni Jung raffronta ai mandala orientali, egli dice:

La rosa significa amore. E questo rosso è il colore della passione.
Non è un rosso chiaro, ma un rosso denso, un colore infuocato.
Ed è anche il colore della zona muladhara, il centro più basso secondo il Kundalini Yoga. (Jung 1997:413, trad. originale).

Della rosa mistica, insieme al rapporto di Dante con Virgilio, lo psichiatra svizzero si occuperà nuovamente nel seminario di Berlino, in più di un’occasione nelle lezioni all’ETH (3 marzo 1939, 19 gennaio 1940, 28 febbraio 1941), e nel commento a un’immagine onirica di W. Pauli, parlando della rosa del Paradiso come di un ‘mandala cosmico. […] Un’idea di completa simmetria tra il mondo fisico e quello psicologico’ (trad. originale). Per rimanere invece con le visioni di Christiana Morgan, l’altro riferimento dantesco di rilievo, ripetuto in modo simile in tre occasioni (9 marzo 1932,

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8 Il 7 novembre 1932 Jung scrive a Werner Kaegi a proposito di Luigi Valli (Jung 1992:102).
9 Di prossima pubblicazione. Grazie a Ernst Falzeder per la segnalazione.
10 Grazie a Sonu Shamdasani per il riferimento su Pauli.
14 giugno 1933, 11 ottobre 1933), è quello alla purificazione di Dante attraverso il fuoco, un aspetto i cui risvolti psicologici ed esoterici avevano lungamente occupato Jung durante i suoi esperimenti. Riportiamo il passo:

Per raggiungere una condizione di purificazione, è necessario attraversare quella zona di fuoco in cui ogni desiderio viene bruciato, con il risultato che tutte le ceneri inutili sono spazzate via come dal vento, lasciando soltanto il puro oro che regge il fuoco eternamente. C’è una bella espressione per questo simbolismo nella Divina Commedia di Dante. Nell’ultimo cerchio del Purgatorio, mentre si avvicina alla sfera celeste, Virgilio conduce Dante nella fiamma della purificazione. Lui stesso arretra, poiché in quanto pagano non gli è concesso attraversare la fiamma, ma Dante, battezzato come cristiano, può entrare nel fuoco del puro amore, dove tutto ciò che è terreno viene bruciato, e così finalmente ascendere al cielo. (Jung 1997:1055, trad. originale).

E ancora:

Per Dante fu necessario passare attraverso quella fiamma pura in cui tutto l’agglomerato terreno, il desiderio dell’ego, veniva consumato. Si tratta del fuoco sacrificale, e soltanto colui che è passato attraverso quel fuoco può essere completamente integro e forte e ottenere una condizione suprema. Se si prendono questi stadi come livelli di psicologia, la zona più bassa descritta da Dante corrisponde al muladhara; poi viene la zona mediana, il Purgatorio, che sarebbe la regione del diaframma; e allora la regione superiore sarebbe l’Inferno, in una psicologia o mitologia cristiana; il Purgatorio fu sempre caratterizzato dal fuoco purificatore, che sarebbe la zona manipura. Questo fuoco è l’anticipazione di una condizione di completezza in cui non c’è lesione o dissociazione. Ma nessuno può ottenere questa condizione se non è prima passato attraverso le fiamme del desiderio. (Jung 1997:1107-1108, trad. originale).

L’originale corrispondenza tra il simbolismo del viaggio dantesco e gli stadi del Kundalini Yoga ricorre anche nel seminario dedicato proprio alla Kundalini nel 1932. Qui, ricorrendo al consueto metodo comparativo, prima di tutto evidenzia le somiglianze tra l’inizio dell’Inferno dantesco e il testo medievale dell’Hypnerotomachia. Poi stabilisce un’analogia tra le
fatiche che i cavalieri del Medioevo intraprendevano per liberare l’Amata, e gli sforzi meditativi degli iniziati a Kundalini (Jung 1999:21). In entrambi i casi si tratta per Jung di simboli di energia femminile rigeneratrice riconducibili all’anima (Jung 1999:22). Più tardi, significativi riferimenti a Dante accompagnano anche il lungo seminario sullo Zarathustra nietzscheano. Lo fanno anzitutto nuovamente in relazione all’immagine dantesca della rosa mistica, simbolo per eccellenza del compimento dell’individuazione e di corrispondenza tra la spiritualità orientale e occidentale. In questo contesto, Jung sviluppa il tema seguendo un’originale analogia con l’esperienza visionaria di Nietzsche ai tempi dello Zarathustra:

Mr Baumann: Dante sperimentò tutto insieme a Virgilio. Erano in due in quel caso.

Dr. Jung: Questo è un buon esempio. [Dante] stabilisce una differenza tra sé e il dynamis, non si identifica con lo psicopompo. Virgilio è per lui certamente lo stesso archetipo, ma il tipo di insegnamento è differente. È il messaggio del Medioevo. Ma l’idea futura è già apparsa quando Dante raggiunge il Paradiso, poiché sulla cima del Paradiso l’individuazione è indicata dalla rosa mistica. Quella è la conclusione del mandala cristiano, la più alta realizzazione di quel tempo, e la rosa mistica è il futuro. Ed è Nietzsche, o Zarathustra, che continua, che riprende il filo eterno e lo conduce più avanti, portando l’idea della rosa mistica dentro l’essere dell’uomo. (Jung 1989:203-204, trad. originale).

Nel seminario su Zarathustra, Jung guarda a Dante anche per introdurre la questione fondamentale di Lucifero e dell’integrazione degli opposti. Qui incomincia a utilizzare una classica immagine dantesca, quella di Lucifero a tre teste, per descrivere il fenomeno della *umbra trinitatis*, ovvero lo spontaneo manifestarsi di un simbolo psichico di segno opposto a quello della trinità cristiana, volto a un necessario bilanciamento di un’immagine storicamente e psicologicamente troncata a metà. Più avanti, nello svilupparsi delle riflessioni di Jung circa l’esistenza e la consistenza del male, il riferimento al Lucifero dantesco si ripeterà in numerose occasioni, spesso affiancato per analogia a Ecate, dea greca a tre teste protettrice della magia, dei fantasmi, della notte, e della negromanzia.

Uno dei participanti al nostro seminario ha richiamato la mia attenzione sul fatto che nella *Divina Commedia* di Dante, il diavolo è rappresentato con tre teste. [...] In linguaggio cristiano,
questo corrisponde alla trinità infernale. (Jung 1989:1084)

Vi ricordate che qualche tempo fa abbiamo parlato della trinità infernale, ovvero del riflesso infernale della trinità celeste, il diavolo tricefalo. Nell’*Inferno* di Dante esso appare nella forma di Satana, con tre facce, una giallastra, una rossa, e una nera. Ora, da quel momento ho trovato in un trattato medievale un’altra formulazione in cui si dice più che chiaramente che c’è una trinità nel cielo, una nell’uomo, e una all’Inferno. Nietzsche diventa consapevole della trinità all’Inferno dal fatto che percepisce se stesso come una trinità, e tale sentimento gli viene dalla sua identificazione con Dio, la trinità celeste. Negando l’esistenza della divinità cristiana, prima si rende adatto a un processo di inflazione, e poi, per via di una sorta di riflesso a specchio, scopre nuovamente la trinità, ma una trinità in cui egli è incluso. Invece di Padre, Figlio, e Spirito Santo, questa diventa egli stesso, la vita, e la saggezza. (ibid:1172, trad. originale).

Sempre in questi anni, Dante figura anche ripetutamente nel seminario sui sogni dei bambini, in cui ricorrono alcune delle tematiche già delineate, come la funzione purificatrice del fuoco nel Purgatorio dantesco (Jung 2008:188-189), l’archetipo del vecchio saggio attraverso l’analogia Nietzsche/Zarathustra, Dante/Virgilio (Jung 2008:196), e il diavolo tricefalo (Jung 2008:203). Nel seminario sull’interpretazione antica e moderna del sogno, invece, troviamo un riferimento alla rosa come simbolo di totalità psichica (Jung 2014:167) e un interessante passaggio sull’anima:

Come dice Dante, “meditando, percorro il cammino dell’amore”. Li potete trovare la descrizione di come Dante segua la propria anima, ovvero, attraverso l’attesa del suo amore, dell’amore *in quanto tale*, non per ottenere ricchezze, ma come fine di per sé. Così colui che insegue l’anima come fine di per sè, questa sarà la sua Beatrice, essa diventerà un ponte, un passaggio, perché lei rappresenta una funzione relazionale, una relazione con quello che l’amore è in quanto tale. Ma se lui la ama per la sua dote, o per quello che lei potrebbe rendergli disponibile, costui eliminerà l’eros di torno e lo rimpiazerà ambiguamente col potere (Jung 2014:200, trad. originale).

In parallelo ai seminari, Dante accompagna in modo significativo
anche le lezioni tenute all’Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) di Zurigo tra il 1933 e il 1941, prima raccolte in parte da B. Hannah in un’edizione inglese accorciata (1959) e ora in corso di nuova pubblicazione in 8 volumi (di cui il primo, History of Psychology, ha già visto la luce) grazie al progetto della Philemon Foundation. Seguendo cronologicamente il piano di pubblicazione previsto, abbiamo riferimenti a Dante nel volume 6, The Psychology of Yoga and Meditation, con un riferimento alla rosa mistica (3 marzo 1939); nel volume 7, Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, con riferimenti ai simboli del chiostro del re e della regina coeli, e svariate citazioni dai Canti XXXI e XXXII del Paradiso (19 gennaio 1940); nel volume 8, The Psychology of Alchemy, con un’ulteriore menzione alla rosa mistica (28 febbraio 1941), e una alle tre teste del diavolo (4 luglio 1941). Per quanto riguarda le citate note di B. Hannah sulle lezioni all’ETH, invece, il nome di Dante figura in due contesti ravvicinati, la lezione del 7 giugno 1935 e quella della settimana successiva, il 14 giugno 1935. Nella prima, Jung riprende una prospettiva che aveva già avanzato nel seminario sulla Kundalini, ovvero un parallelo tra alcuni aspetti simbolici della Commedia dantesca e l’Hypnerotomachia di Francesco Colonna. In particolare, ad interessarlo sono ancora l’ingresso nella foresta oscura come il superamento della soglia mentale che conduce nelle profondità dell’inconscio, cui segue per prima cosa l’incontro con gli animali selvaggi (Hannah/Jung 1959:219). È tuttavia nella seconda lezione che troviamo uno dei più interessanti riferimenti a Dante in Jung. Poco prima di avventurarsi in un’analisi del passaggio di Dante sulle gambe di Lucifero come via verso la luce rischiaratrice del Purgatorio, una scena interpretata come esempio di enantiodromia (Hannah/Jung 1959:223-224), lo psicologo svizzero ha appena sottolineato quanto ‘si possa imparare davvero tanto da Dante’. E a questo aggiunge:

[Dante] iniziò a scrivere la Divina Commedia quando aveva 35 anni. Il trentacinquesimo anno è un momento di svolta della vita, ed è un fatto interessante che Cristo morì a 34 anni. [...] Un punto esiste, all’incirca al trentacinquesimo anno di età, in cui le cose incominciano a cambiare. È il primo momento del lato oscuro della vita, della discesa verso la morte. È evidente che Dante ha incontrato questo punto e coloro che hanno letto lo Zarathustra sapranno che anche Nietzsche lo scopri. Quando questo momento di svolta arriva, le persone vi vanno incontro in modi differenti; alcuni ne scappano, altri

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11 Grazie a Martin Liebscher e a Ernst Falzeder per questi riferimenti.
vi si buttano dentro; e qualcosa di importante accade ad altri ancora dall’esterno. Se non lo riusciamo a comprendere, il Fato lo fa al nostro posto. (Hannah/Jung 1959:223, trad. originale).

Sono molte le ragioni per cui questo passaggio suscita il nostro profondo interesse. Ma tra tutte, viene in mente il modo in cui Jung, circa 20 anni prima, decideva di incominciare il racconto del proprio straordinario viaggio nel profondo in un modo che stabiliva una naturale linea di connessione con le esperienze visionarie dantesche:


LA FASE TARDA (1941-1959)

Con la fine dei seminari dei ’30 e le lezioni all’ETH, si apre una fase differente ma altrettanto interessante della lettura dantesca di Jung. Uno degli aspetti principali è certamente quello dell’alchimia. Sappiamo che dal momento in cui Jung riceve da R. Wilhelm una copia del Mistero del Fiore d’Oro (1928), che egli considera un trattato alchemico, l’alchimia acquisirà un ruolo sempre più importante nei suoi studi, sviluppandosi negli anni ’30 e poi consolidandosi negli anni a venire. Per quanto siano svariate le connessioni che Jung stabilisce tra Dante e l’alchimia, non è del tutto corretto dire che la scoperta dell’alchimia gli permetta di tornare a Dante secondo una prospettiva, per così dire, alchemica. Al contrario, date le osservazioni fatte finora, è più corretto dire che sia proprio attraverso Dante che Jung giunge a discutere e a comprendere determinati aspetti alchemici tardo medievali.

La connessione tra Dante e l’alchimia suggerita da Jung sembra reggersi su alcune analogie fondamentali. Prima fra tutte, il fatto che tanto il viaggio dantesco per soglie, gironi, e scale celesti, quanto i diversi
stadi del processo alchemico, come quelli di *nigredo*, *albedo*, *rubedo*, descrivano diverse fasi di iniziazione corrispondenti a una progressiva trasformazione interiore. Il viaggio iniziatico incomincia sempre con il sacrificio dell’identità profana, la morte dell’Io, ovvero il sacrificio degli attaccamenti e dei desideri personali, che in Dante prende forma nella discesa agli inferi e nel linguaggio alchemico è descritta come *putrefactio*, o putrefazione del sé. Poi, il viaggio prosegue come un processo di graduale rischiaramiento interiore o illuminazione, volto a rinfocolare sempre più l’energia vitale ardente sotto le ceneri degli oscuramenti mentali. Infine, il viaggio culmina in un’esperienza di visione e unificazione celeste in cui misticamente non è più possibile distinguere, nella folgorazione della luce, il soggetto che percepisce e l’oggetto percepito, come nell’estatica contemplazione dantesca della rosa celeste alla fine della *Commedia*. Il secondo elemento di connessione tra Dante e l’alchimia è che lo strumento per eccellenza di tale trasformazione sia l’immaginazione attiva, l’occhio della mente, in grado, come nel caso dell’amore di Dante per Beatrice, di ricongiungere l’amore materiale e l’amore spirituale in un’unica, indivisibile forma di elevazione interiore. Infine, il terzo fondamentale elemento di connessione è che il motivo principale di questa trasformazione sia da cercarsi nell’unione degli opposti, nell’alchimia rappresentata dalla *coniunctio* del maschile e del femminile, Re e Regina, e in Dante raffigurato dal ricongiungimento divino con l’anima per via dell’amata, Beatrice.

ad Eranos due lezioni, in una delle quali, ‘Der Geist Mercurius’, notava una significativa differenza tra la visione dantesca e quella alchemica:

Gli alchimisti lo hanno perfino qualificato come unità trina, per dimostrare con ciò la sua perfetta corrispondenza con Dio. Come si sa, in Dante Satana è tricefalo, quindi una trinità nell’unità. Satana è una corrispondenza di Dio, ma come antitesi. Non è affatto questa la concezione degli alchimisti: essi vedono in Mercurio un’emanazione armonica con l’essenza di Dio o la sua creazione. (Jung 1942, GW13:§283).

Nei primi anni ’40, nel frattempo, registriamo anche due richiami a Dante nella lezione di Jung sull’*Aurelia* di Gérard de Nerval (Jung 2015:52,90). Sempre a proposito dell’alchimia, invece, ricchi e variegati sono i rimandi a Dante in *Psychologie und Alchimie* (1944). Troviamo qui anzitutto svariate immagini rappresentanti episodi della Commedia dantesca: un acquerello di Blake (*The Ascent of the Mountain of Purgatory*, 1824-7) in cui si vede Dante in rosso guidato nell’ascesa del monte del Purgatorio da Virgilio in blu, erroneamente frainteso in didascalia da Jung come l’anima o Beatrice (Jung GW12, fig. 19). Ancora Dante e Virgilio che scendono nell’aldilà, da una raffigurazione del 1400 contenuta nel *Codex Urbanus Latinus* 365 (Jung GW12, fig. 69). Dallo stesso *Codex*, una rappresentazione della rosa celeste, il fiore cosmico (Jung GW12, fig. 83). E poi riferimenti di contenuto, di cui il più interessante ricorre in una digressione sulla *nekyia*, in cui le narrazioni apocrifhe della discesa di Cristo agli inferi vengono associate con il materiale dantesco, una corrispondenza che gioca una parte particolarmente importante per la stessa *nekyia* di Jung ai tempi del *Liber Novus*:

*Nekyia*, *νεϰύια* da νέϰυς (cadavere), titolo dell’undicesimo canto dell’*Odisssea*, è il sacrificio funebre per evocare dall’Ade i defunti. *Nekyia* è dunque un termine adatto per il “viaggio nell’Ade”, la discesa nel mondo dei morti, ed è usato in questo senso anche da Dieterich (1913) nel suo commento al *Codice di Akhmim*, che contiene un frammento apocalittico del vangelo di Pietro. Esempio tipico sono la *Divina Commedia*, la “Notte di Valpurga classica” del *Faust*, i racconti apocrifi delle discese all’inferno di Cristo ecc. (Jung 1944, GW12:§61, n2).

Giusto un anno più tardi, nel 1945, Jung pubblicherà la prima

Ma tosto ruppe le dolci ragioni
un alber che trovammo in mezza strada,
con pomi a odorar soavi e buoni;

e come abete in alto si digrada
di ramo in ramo, così quello in giuso,
cred’io, perché persona sù non vada.

Dal lato onde ‘l cammin nostro era chiuso,
cadea de l’alta roccia un liquor chiaro
e si spandeva per le foglie suso. (Dante, Purgatorio, XXII, 131-138).

Notiamo che oltre a Jung, questa visione ha affascinato anche A. Coomaraswamy, che ne ha scritto tracciando paralleli con testi sacri indiani (Coomaraswamy 1987:340-341). Per quanto riguarda l’altra occorrenza dantesca in ‘Der philosophische Baum’, essa è parte di un passo sulla rosa mistica che menziona anche i Fedeli d’Amore, di cui Jung aveva appreso nel dettaglio dal testo di Valli:

Nell’ambito spirituale la rosa, in quanto rosa mystica, appartiene, come l’hortus aromatum e l’hortus conclusus, alle allegorie di Maria; il suo significato mondano è invece quello della donna amata, è la rosa dei poeti, i “fedeli d’amore” del tempo. Maria è allegorizzata da san Bernardo come “medium terrae”, da Rabano
Mauro come “civitas”, dall’abate Goffredo di Admont come “castellum” e come “domus divinae sapientiae”, e da Alanus de Insulis (Alain de Lille) come “acies castrorum”. Analogamente, anche la rosa ha il significato di un mandala, come è evidente nella rosa celeste del Paradiso dantesco. [Come nel suo equivalente, il loto indiano, la rosa è decisamente femminile.] In Matilde di Magdeburgo la rosa va intesa come proiezione dell’Eros femminile sulla persona di Cristo. (Jung 1945, GW13:§389).

Ancora dieci anni più tardi, a conferma di una ricerca diffusa sulle analogie tra principi alchemici e Dante, Jung riprendeva Dante anche nell’ultimo dei suoi studi sulle relazioni tra psicologia e alchimia, Mysterium Coniunctionis (1955/1956), con un riferimento particolare alla catabasi che dà avvio al processo di purificazione dell’alchimista e che Dante avrebbe sperimentato nella sua discesa agli inferi (Jung 1955/1956, GW14:§493).

Accanto a quanto detto sull’alchimia, c’è certamente un altro aspetto da evidenziare in questa sezione riguardante la fase più tarda dell’interessamento di Jung per Dante. Questo è il moltiplicarsi di riferimenti alla raffigurazione dantesca di Satana a tre teste, già citata varie volte anche in quest’articolo. Ecco la gloriosa apparizione di Lucifero nel Canto XXXIV dell’Inferno (Dante 1987:334-335), già anticipata da Virgilio a inizio Canto con una parafrasi che modifica l’inno di Vanenzio Fortunato alla croce, ‘Vexilla regis prodeunt’, con l’aggiunta di una sola terrificante parola, ‘inferni’, così da ottenere ‘si avvicinano i vessilli del Re . . . dell’Inferno’:

Lo imperador del doloroso regno
da mezzo ’l petto uscia fuor de la ghiaccia;
e più con un gigante io mi convegno,

che i giganti non fan con le sue braccia:
vedi oggimai quant’esser dee quel tutto
ch’a così fatta parte si confaccia.
S’el fu si bel com’elli è ora brutto,
e contra ’l suo fattore alzò le ciglia,
ben dee da lui proceder ogne lutto.

Oh quanto parve a me gran maraviglia
quand’io vidi tre facce a la sua testa!
L’una dinanzi, e quella era vermiglia;
l’altr’eran due, che s’aggiugnieno a questa
sovresso ’l mezzo di ciascuna spalla,
e sé giugnieno al loco de la cresta:

e la destra parea tra bianca e gialla;
la sinistra a vedere era tal, quali
vegnon di là onde ’l Nilo s’avvalla.

Sotto ciascuna uscivan due grand’ali,
quanto si convenia a tanto uccello:
vele di mar non vid’io mai cotali.

Non avean penne, ma di vispistrello
era lor modo; e quelle svolazzava,
si che tre venti si movean da ello:

quindi Cocito tutto s’aggelava.
Con sei occhi piangea, e per tre menti
gocciava ’l pianto e sanguinosa bava.

Da ogne bocca dirompea co’ denti
un peccatore, a guisa di maciulla,
si che tre ne facea così dolenti.

A quel dinanzi il mordere era nulla
verso ’l graffiar, che talvolta la schiena
rimanea de la pelle tutta brulla. (Dante,
Inferno, XXXIV, 28-60).

Il Satana di Dante deve davvero aver colpito Jung, comunque se
lo sia immaginato da questa lettura. Oltre che nei sopracitati richiami
nei seminari, lo troviamo in Die Psychologie der Übertragung (Jung
1946, GW16:§403). Di nuovo in ‘Versuch zu einer psychologische
Deutung des Trinitäsdogmas’ (1948), al cuore di questa riflessione:

Il volere cosa diversa e opposta caratterizza il diavolo, come la
disobbedienza caratterizza il peccato originale in genere. Come
già si disse, son queste le premesse per la creazione e devono quindi
essere iscritte nel piano divino e con ciò incluse nella sfera divina.
Ma la definizione cristiana di Dio come summum bonum esclude
il maligno fin dall’inizio, mentre secondo il Vecchio Testamento egli era pur stato uno dei figli di Dio. Così il diavolo, come simia Dei, rimase fuori dell’ordinamento trinitario e in antitesi con esso. Alla rappresentazione del Dio trino con tre teste corrispose un Satana tricefalo, come appare, per esempio, in Dante. Con ciò, analogamente all’Anticristo, si allude a un’antitrinità infernale, a una vera umbra trinitatis. (Jung 1948, GW11: §252).

E ancora in ‘Zur Phänomenologie des Geistes im Märchen’ (Jung 1948, GW9i:§425), nel contesto di un raffronto tra la trinità etonia che gli alchimisti pongono a completamento di quella celeste e il Lucifero dantesco. Come questi riferimenti testimoniano ripetutamente, la questione non era affatto secondaria. Infatti Jung si serve del diavolo dantesco principalmente come un esempio vibrante della metà mancante della Trinità cristiana, l’altra faccia di Dio che l’occidente avrebbe cercato di rigettare nel nome di un’illusoria scissione psichica tra summum bonum e infimum malum. Al contrario per Jung, la via verso l’unione degli opposti passa anzitutto attraverso l’integrazione del diavolo, poiché, come scriveva Blake nel Marriage of Heaven and Hell, il diavolo è energia, e senza energia non c’è movimento degli opposti, né progressione psicologica e spirituale (Blake 1906:7). Allora, che a rappresentare tale integrazione ci sia anzitutto il ‘Re dell’Inferno’ di Dante, non può passare inosservato. Come ha infatti brillantemente raccontato Marina Montesano nel suo ‘The Devil’s Hellish History: Satan in the Middle Ages’ (Montesano 2018), è proprio attraverso il Medioevo che il diavolo acquisisce tutt’un’altra identità in Europa, da angelo caduto o gregario perduto di Dio, a vero e proprio archetipo di sacralità negativa, degno di uno statuto paritario a quello divino. Su questa base, il viaggio di Dante nella Commedia offre un modello perfetto per il senso che Jung attribuisce all’integrazione del diavolo. Dante entra nel suo viaggio percorrendo un sentiero, la voragine infernale, formatasi dalla caduta di Lucifero al centro della terra. Sarà soltanto attraversando passo per passo la strada aperta dall’Anticristo, che Dante sarà infine in grado di superare e oltrepassare il gigantesco mostro satanico per avviarsi verso il primo passo di un rovesciamento mentale radicale. Anche Ellenberger, riprendendo il suo concetto di ‘malattia creativa’, scrive al riguardo:

Un elemento caratteristico di ogni viaggio attraverso l’inconsco è il verificarsi di ciò che Jung ha chiamato enantiodromia. Questa parola, che risale a Eraclito, significa “ritorno all’opposto”. Certi processi mentali si trasformano a un certo punto nei loro
opposti, come ad opera di una sorta di auto-regolazione. Questa nozione è stata esemplificata simblicamente dai poeti: nella Divina Commedia vediamo Dante e Virgilio che raggiungono il punto più profondo dell’Inferno, e iniziano poi da lì il primo passo verso l’alto, in opposta direzione verso il Purgatorio e il Paradiso. Questo misterioso fenomeno di spontaneo capovolgimento della regressione è stato sperimentato da tutti coloro che sono passati con successo attraverso una malattia creativa, ed è diventato un aspetto caratteristico della terapia sintetico-ermeneutica junghiana (Ellenberger 2018 [1970]:826).

Il diavolo tricefalo riflette dunque l’elaborazione di Jung circa il problema della realtà del male, un aspetto cruciale del suo pensiero che se a livello pratico era già profondamente emerso nel Liber Novus, a livello teorico trova forse le sue più importanti riflessioni in una fase tarda, culminante in Aion (1951) e Antwort auf Hiob (1952).


La giovane dama che era per Ibn ‘Arabī alla Mecca quello che Beatrice era per Dante, era una vera donna, per quanto fosse al

CONCLUSIONI

nel ‘ritrovamento dell’anima’ i capisaldi della discussione dantesca di Jung.

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ABBREVIAZIONI


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PHILEMON, KA, AND CREATIVE FANTASY: THE FORMATION OF THE RECONCILING SYMBOL IN JUNG’S VISUAL WORK, 1919–1923

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PHANÈS • VOLUME 2 • 2019 • PP. 59–103

ABSTRACT

Thanks to the publication of *The Red Book* (2009) and *The Art of C.G. Jung* (2019), we now have a substantial corpus of the visual works that Jung created between 1913 and 1923, a period when he was deeply engaged with *Liber Novus*, its transcription and elaboration into *The Red Book*, whilst at the same time formulating the core concepts of analytical psychology. This article identifies several previously unrecognised representations of two of Jung’s most important personifications, the ‘dominant fathers’ Philemon and Ka. I then trace their roles in some of Jung’s visual works that include the image of the cross-quartered circle and sphere, his prime example of the reconciling symbol of the creation of the new god, and of individuation. After examining two paintings in detail, *Amor Triumphat* (1920-21) and Cat. 66 in *The Art of C.G. Jung* (c. 1921-23), I conclude with Jung’s designs for Emma Jung’s memorial at Bollingen (1956), and his family tomb at Küsnacht (1957).

KEY WORDS

The real history of the world seems to be the progressive incarnation of the deity.
(Jung 1976:436)

Over the eighty years since Jung first anonymously published three of his mandala paintings in his commentary to The Secret of the Golden Flower (1929/1931:Plates 3, 6, 10; RB:159, 105, 163), a few more paintings from The Red Book and other visual works that he did over his lifetime gradually came to light. Viewed in isolation, they were often interpreted in ways that foregrounded their ‘universal meaning’: serving to illustrate Jungian concepts (typology, mandala, shadow, anima, wise old man etc.) as reified within the thematic format of the Collected Works, whilst remaining uprooted from their historical position within the chronology of Jung’s developing conceptual framework.

With the publication of The Red Book in 2009, however, students of Jung are finally able to examine contextually the visual images he created to illustrate the text of Liber Novus (1913-1917), and those that are independent of its narrative, relating to Jung’s further visionary experiences and experiments between 1917-1929/30. Now augmented by the works presented in The Art of C.G. Jung (2019), our knowledge of Jung’s visual imagery has increased extensively (save for that inside Bollingen).

This wealth of new material has enabled me to examine some of Jung’s paintings and sculptures within their proper chronological and historical context for the first time, and to highlight their unique role within
Jung’s ongoing conceptual explorations, thus confirming his statement in ‘The Way of What is To Come’, the introductory chapter to Liber Novus: ‘My speech is imperfect. Not because I want to shine with words, but out of the impossibility of finding those words, I speak in images’ (RB RE:123).

Not surprisingly, Jung’s newly enlarged corpus of visual works contains some surprises. In particular, I have been able to identify some previously unrecognised—and therefore unexplored—personifications of characters who first appeared in his Black Books and Liber Novus between 1913 and 1930, as well as paintings that explicate—and in some cases anticipate—concepts that Jung was transposing from image to word in his concurrent articles and books.

This article will review the emergence of the ‘fathers’ Elijah to Ka in Liber Novus and the published sections of the Black Books. Working from these sources and other related material, it is possible to identify five previously unrecognised images of Philemon and Ka. Their role is then examined in paintings that include the image of the cross-quartered circle and sphere, Jung’s prime example of the reconciling symbol, through which his new god, Phanês, appears, and to which he returns throughout his life. Amor Triumphat (1920-1921), one of Jung’s most moving paintings in The Red Book, epitomises the ability of the reconciling symbol to encompass complex hermeneutics, as do the figures in another of Jung’s paintings (Art:145, Cat. 66). After a brief discussion of the first round tower at Bollingen (1923), the article concludes with the two late works where Jung eternalised the cross-quartered circle in stone: Emma Jung’s memorial (1956), and the Jung family tombstone (1961).

THE ANCIENT FATHERS: FROM LIBER NOVUS TO THE BLACK BOOKS

During the first few months of Jung’s confrontation with the unconscious, between November 1913 and April 1914, he encountered three personalities who played an important part in Liber Novus, acting as teachers and guides during his initiation process and search for a new god-image. These were the prophet Elijah, the Babylonian Bull God Izdubar, and Philemon, magician and father of the prophets, who had given Jung the Seven Sermons to the Dead, and whom Jung came to recognise as his guru (Jung/Jaffé:174-177).1

1 Elijah first appears with his blind daughter Salome and the serpent in the historiated initial at the beginning ‘Mysterium. Encounter’, made during the autumn of 1915 (RB:HI v(v)). Izdubar is depicted twice in ‘First Day’: as the imposing giant that
Three years later, in 1917, another significant trio emerged in the fantasies that Jung recorded in his *Black Books*: Atmavictu, Ha and Ka. Atmavictu arrived first. On 25 April 1917, the serpent, Atmavictu’s companion over millennia, described his previous existences to Jung. He was first an old man, then an otter, newt, earth serpent, man, and the serpent-Atmavictu. He also transformed into Philemon (RB RE:367 n. 222). In another encounter on 20 May 1917, Philemon clarified that he had been Atmavictu; then, by error, he had become Izdubar, was paralysed and turned into a dragon’s serpent by man. After the serpent was consumed by fire, Philemon had come into being. Thus he was reinterpreting the events earlier narrated and illustrated by Jung in the Izdubar episode of *Liber Novus* ([1913/14], LN RE:372 nn. 231-232).

Ha—a ‘black magician’ and ‘father of Philemon’—materialised a few months later, on 7 October 1917. He explained the secret meaning of the runes that Jung had drawn in three mandala sketches whilst still on military duty at Chateau d’Oex the previous month, and would subsequently paint in *The Red Book* (LN RE:325-327 nn. 155-157). Ha was soon followed by Ka, who appeared on 22 October 1917. With eyes of pure gold, and a body of black iron, he was Ha’s soul. He had imparted the knowledge of the runes and the lower wisdom to Ha. Ka held a secret that Jung and his soul needed; this was love, the essence of all magic (RB RE:373 n.232). In a *Black Book* entry on 20 November 1917, Ka then called Philemon his shadow and herald. He states that he is eternal, and remains, whereas Philemon is fleeting and passes on. Ka returned on 10 February 1918 to inform Jung’s ‘I’ and soul that he had built a temple as a prison and grave for the gods (ibid).

In 1919, a year of intense work on *Psychological Types*, accompanied by professional activities, Jung began to craft visual images of some of these personages in *The Red Book* and as separate creations. From *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, we know that he made a painting of Philemon as a winged being with bull’s horns (Jung/Jaffé 1963:176). Although now missing, Jung’s sketch for it has survived, drawn on or after 3 January 1919,  

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2 See the Appendix A for the chronology of texts and art works discussed in this article.

3 The mandala sketches are reproduced in *Art*:197, Cat. 91 sketch 15 (1 September 1917), 203, Cat.23 sketch 23 (10 September 1917), 204, Cat.100, sketch 24 (11 September 1917). They were used for RB 89, 93-94, done after 15 October 1917 (Zervas 2019:196-209).
providing a terminus post quem for the painting (Art: 146-147, Cats. 64-65). He made two images of Atmavictu as a multi-legged dragon in The Red Book, completed sometime between April and November 1919 (RB: 117, 119). They were done around the same time as his two wooden statuettes of Atmavictu, portrayed as an old, bearded six-armed Kabir, carved when Jung was in England during that summer, and the stone copy he subsequently had made for his garden at Küsnacht (Art: 152-153, Cats. 67-69).

On 4 December 1919, Izdubar, Philemon, and Ka are described in the enigmatic inscription Jung attached to his Red Book Atmavictu as a petrified head:

> This is Atmavictu, the old one, after he has withdrawn from the creation. He has returned to endless history, where he took his beginning. Once more he became stony residue, having completed his creation. In the form of Izdubar he has outgrown and delivered ΘΙΛΗΜΩΝ and Ka from him. ΘΙΛΗΜΩΝ gave the stone, Ka the 〇 [sun] (RB RE: 372 n. 231).

Some five years later, Jung painted the Red Book Philemon, ‘Father of the Prophet’, together with the snake, his earlier manifestation (late 1924/25, RB: 154).

There seem to be no visual representations of Ha, and Ka has previously not been recognised in Jung’s Red Book paintings or other extant images. However, as the above descriptions and two other written accounts confirm, Jung depicted Ka at least five times during 1919 and 1920—four together with Philemon—while he was exploring the relationships between Philemon, Atmavictu, Ha, and Ka in his fantasies. Moreover, the ways in which Jung paired Ka with Philemon in four of these works highlight his efforts during this period to create a pictorial synthesis of his ideas about archetypal images and their representation in matter, and the reconciling symbol of the individuation process, which constellates the

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4 While working on The Red Book, Jung started to keep the right-hand pages free for his paintings, thus they were often completed before the calligraphic text he continued to transcribe on the left-hand pages. The two images of Atmavictu on RB 117, 119 were done between 22 March 1919, the date in the margin of RB 110, and November 1919, the date of RB 121.

5 The inscription is for RB 122, the reverse of RB 121, Lapis Philosophorum, Jung’s painting of the Philosopher’s Stone.

6 The large unpublished mural painting of Philemon in one of the bedrooms of Jung’s first tower at Bollingen is presumably slightly later, given the chronology of its construction.
new god and the Self. They are thus crucial visual counterparts to Jung’s written concepts in *Psychological Types*, or as more properly described in its English subtitle, *The Psychology of Individuation* (Jung 1923).

**FORMING THOUGHTS IN MATTER: PHILEMON, KA, THE RECONCILING SYMBOL, AND PHANÉS**

Before the publication of *The Red Book*, the main source of information about Ka was Jung’s account of Philemon and Ka as edited by Anelia Jaffé in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, which also includes a description of painting he made of them:

[. . .] Philemon became relativized by the emergence of yet another figure, whom I called Ka. In ancient Egypt the ‘king’s ka” was his earthly form, the embodied soul (*Gestaltseele*). In my fantasy the ka-soul came from below, out of the earth as if out of a deep shaft. I did a painting of him, showing him in his earth-bound form, as a herm with a base of stone and upper part of bronze. High up in the painting appears a kingfisher’s wing, and between it and the head of Ka floats a round, glowing nebula of stars. Ka’s expression has something demonic about it—one might also say, Mephistophelian. In one hand he holds something like a coloured pagoda, or a reliquary, and in the other a stylus with which he is working on the reliquary. He is saying, “I am he who buries the gods in gold and gems.”

Philemon had a lame foot, but was a winged spirit, whereas Ka represented a kind of earth demon or metal demon. Philemon was the spiritual aspect, or “meaning” (“der Sinn”). Ka, on the other hand, was a spirit of nature (*ein Naturgeist*) like the Anthroparion of Greek alchemy—with which I was still unfamiliar. Ka was he who made everything real, but who also obscured the halcyon spirit (*den Eisvogelgeist*), Meaning, or replaced it by beauty, the “eternal reflection.” (Jung/Jaffé 1963:177-178, 1971:206). Jaffé adapted this from Jung’s passage on active imagination and *The Red Book* in the interviews—*Protocols*—recorded for *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (*Protocols* [June 19, 1957]:23-25). They took place when

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Jung was still considering what to do with Liber Novus, hence he included frequent references to its text and characters (Shamdasani in RB RE:91-93). In the Protocols, Jung called Ka a ‘stone soul’ (Steinseele). Describing his painting, Jung stated that Ka is made of ‘stone or metal, like a metal herm’. Philemon hovered above in the light, his wing visible, but Jung did not mention a ‘round, glowing nebula of stars’ between the two figures. Ka holds a ‘surrealistically decorated (geschmücktes) object’ in his hand, not a ‘pagoda’ or ‘reliquary’.

Jaffé deleted the penultimate sentence in Jung’s original explanation of Ka, a quote from Goethe’s Faust, Part II. Jung had said: ‘He [Ka] who replaces meaning with beauty, with the “eternal reflection”. “That life is ours by colourful refraction”’ (’Am farbigen Abglanz haben wir das Leben’: Goethe, Faust II, line 4727). She also altered Jung’s last sentence about the consequences of Ka’s replacing meaning with beauty. He had stated: ‘But meaning, the master of the garden, is lost’; in Memories, Dreams, Reflections, Jaffé replaced ‘der Herr des Gartens’ with ‘the halcyon spirit’ (‘den Eisvogelgeist’—kingfisher spirit—in the German edition), probably because of the decision to exclude Liber Novus references, which would have linked ‘der Herr des Gartens’ with Philemon in ‘The Magician’ and the final section of ‘Scrutinies’ (RB RE:412, 552). In a later section of Protocols, Jung relates Philemon and Ka to the problem of the reconciliation of the opposites (Protocols:212).

Jung’s late reflections on Ka and Philemon intimated that their functions needed to be balanced. This conviction had taken root during the years of Liber Novus, and informs the new, moral aesthetic he presented in Psychological Types, in which idea (spiritual) and real (material), ugly and beautiful, good and evil, need to be included as part of the living psychological process in man’s psyche that that gathers up the opposites—esse in anima (1921, CW 6:§77).

Jung’s account of Ka in the Protocols and Memories, Dreams, Reflections is clearly related to his Black Book entries of 1917-1918. Whilst the painting he mentioned is lost, Philemon’s position and surroundings

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8 Paul Bishop intuitively surmised a connection with Goethe’s line when discussing Jung’s phrase ‘ewigen Abglanz’ in this passage of Memories, Dreams, Reflections (Bishop, 2009:33, 44).

9 Quoted below in ‘We Fear And We Hope’: The Grail And The Redemptive Feminine Vessel.

10 Jung developed his argument for a new aesthetics in Chapter II, ‘Schiller’s Ideas Upon the Type Problem’ in Psychological Types (1923:109-110, 160; CW 6:§§129, 206), a subject he first explored in two lectures for the Zurich Analytical Club in April 1918 (oral communication, Sonu Shamdasani).
Fig. 1. Mandala, RB 105, 27 January-21 March 1919. © used by permission of the Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich. Used with permission of the publisher, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.
are similar to the above-mentioned sketch and painting that Jung made in 1919, suggesting that he may have reused parts of it for the lost work.

Given the above descriptions of Ka, it is clear that Jung painted him together with Philemon in Red Book mandala 105, which was completed between 27 January and 21 March 1919, shortly after the Philemon sketch (Fig. 1). Philemon, representing ‘meaning’, the spiritual aspect, sits in a contemplative position in the upper roundel. The mandala’s inner circle contains a small blue sphere centred within two concentric stars, an eight-rayed white one and sixteen-rayed blue one, and set against a blue and gold cloud-like nebula. Ka, the embodying ‘stone-soul’, stands in the bottom roundel. The mandala’s vertical composition therefore reflects the configuration of the lost painting of Philemon and Ka described in Memories, Dreams, Reflections. Ka’s lower body is encased in a black herm-like column. He has a bronze torso, flaming red hair, and holds a temple decorated with tesserae in the primary colours of blue, yellow and red. He is a daimonic being who has emerged from the black earth, formed from matter’s hardest elements, stone and metal.

Similarly, Ka is the subject of a wooden statuette that Jung carved, probably close to the execution of Red Book 105 in 1919 (Fig. 2) (Art:119-121, Cat. 49). This was a period when, as his English colleague Maurice Nicoll later reminded him, Jung was experimenting with ‘the possibilities of psycho-material transformation—i.e. if a man puts his psychic genius into a bit of wood, the wood stands up to him and in fact it is an example of psycho-transformation’ (Pogson

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11 Philemon was not winged or horned when Jung first encountered him in January 1914 (RB RE:395-397).

12 When Jung anonymously published RB mandala 105 in his commentary to The Secret of the Golden Flower, he described the centre as ‘the white light, shining in the firmament’, and the roundel figures at the cardinal points as ‘masculine and feminine souls, both again divided into light and dark’ (Jung 1929, CW 13:ill. A6). In his unpublished 1937 Berlin seminar, the centre is ‘the blue heaven containing golden clouds’, the upper figure ‘an older man in a contemplative position’, and the lower one ‘Loki with red flaming hair, who holds a temple in his hand’ (1937:37, and Abbildung 29; the seminar is erroneously dated 1930 in 1934/50, CW 9, 1:355 n. 1). When Jung revised it as ‘Concerning Mandala Symbolism’ in 1950, he commented: ‘In the centre is a star. The blue sky contains golden clouds’. At the top is ‘an old man in the attitude of contemplation’, who corresponds to the ‘archetype of meaning, or of the spirit […], the Wise Old Man’. At the bottom is ‘Loki or Hephaestus with red, flaming hair’ holding a temple, […] the dark cthionic figure corresponding to the magical (and sometimes destructive) Luciferian element’ (1950, CW 9, 1:§682). Thus Ka remained an esoteric figure known only to a select few of Jung’s inner circle until the publication of Memories, Dreams, Reflections.

13 There, however, identified as Loki, and dated ca. 1920.
Fig. 2. Ka. Wooden statuette, ca. 1919. *Art*, Cat. 49. Jung Family Archive © The Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich.
Ka’s entire herm-based body is painted black, his face has a devilish expression, half-moon golden eyes, red eyebrows, flaming red hair, and he cradles a gold, gem-studded temple in his hands.

We now know that Jung had portrayed Ka and Philemon in another painting completed sometime before 15 October 1920, when he discussed it with Constance Long (see Appendix B). From her summary, we learn that Jung placed them on the two sides of the work; they are the ‘personifications of dominants’: the ‘fathers’. Ka (Dionysian), is the ‘creative’ father. He gives substance and is called ‘the one who buries the gods in gold and marble’. Ka has a ‘tendency to imprison the gods in matter’, ‘so they are in danger of losing their spiritual meaning and becoming buried in stone’. Thus the temple may be the ‘grave of God, as the church is the grave of Christ’; ‘the more the church develops, the more Christ dies’. Ka must be prevented from producing too much, because man must not depend on substantiation, although if too little substance is produced, ‘the creature floats’. ‘Ka is sensation’. Philemon (Apollonian) is the other ‘father’, the one who ‘gives form and law, the formative instinct’. He ‘gives formulation to the things within the elements of the collective unconscious, the idea (‘perhaps of a god’), which however remains ‘floating, distant and indistinct because all the things he invents are winged’. 14

Jung told Long that the transcendent function is the whole—not the picture or his rationalisation of it—‘but the new and vivifying creative spirit that is the result of the intercourse between the conscious intelligence and the creative side’. ‘Philemon is intuition’, ‘too supra-human’, Zarathustra, ‘extravagantly superior in what he says’, and ‘cold’. Ka and Philemon ‘are bigger than the man, they are supra-human. (Disintegrated into them one is in the collective unconscious)’ (RB RE:373-4 and n. 232).

In fact, the description of this work corresponds exactly to a small painting in the Jung Family Archive, ca. 1919 (Fig. 3) (Art:126, Cat. 54). On the left, a monumental Ka with coned-shaped hair sits in a statuesque, Egyptian-type profile, formed by tessellated elements from the unconscious in tones of fiery red and gold. With his arm extended, Ka presents his gem-encrusted, golden temple, similar to those in Red Book mandala 105 and the wooden statuette of Ka. Bearded Philemon sits on the right side, with a small sphere floating above his head (symbolising the floating ‘idea’, ‘perhaps of a god’); both are composed of green-toned, tessellated elements. 15 He presents his book, ‘7 SERMONES AD

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14 This remark may refer back to Philemon’s comment ‘my form is appearance’ in the Black Book fantasy of 20 May 1917 (RB RE:373 n. 232).

15 This combination of Philemon and a floating sphere may relate to the mysterious
Fig. 3. Ka, Philemon, Priest holding the Winged Snake-Woman and Winged Bird-Woman, and the Reconciling Symbol, ca. 1919. Art, Cat. 54. Jung Family Archive © The Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich.
Fig. 3a. Detail, Winged Snake-Woman, ca. 1919. *Art*, Cat. 54. Jung Family Archive © The Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich.

Fig. 3b. Detail, Winged Bird-Woman, ca. 1919. *Art*, Cat. 54. Jung Family Archive © The Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich.
MORTUOS’ (*The Seven Sermons to the Dead*) a cosmology formulated in words. Between them, a priest in a red robe decorated with black and yellow motifs—‘The Man’ in Long’s summary—kneels, his back toward us, with raised arms. He represents the inferior function. ‘The colours are barbarous, and represent the four functions’. Jung compares the rite the priest performs to the ‘divine service for the “dead” (sermon ad mortuos)’ in the ‘Night of the Flaming Censer’ (in John Hubbard’s *The Authentic Dreams of Peter Blobbs*, 1916). In the painting there is no censer; ‘it is expressed in words; invocation, adorations of god, maybe speechless … here is a word (sermo) or prayer’, relating it to the book of *Sermones* that Philemon holds. In each hand he holds a small object bearing a flaming torch. The left one, on Ka’s side, is a black snake-woman with dark hair and green tessellated ‘wings’, a symbol of Ka’s substance-giving properties. The right one, on Philemon’s side, is a yellow bird-woman with light hair, a symbol of Philemon’s formative, winged inventiveness. As Jung discussed with Long, the snake and bird ‘is the same anima split into halves’. She ‘takes on the quality of the things with which she deals—with those “below” the snake or beauty, creature, and those “above” the bird or winged creature’. They are ‘feeling and thinking (as the hands of man), the figures [of Philemon and Ka] are intuition and sensation. When you get in touch with the unconscious they are like great gods’. They are also the chthonic snake and heavenly bird aspects of the soul/animas as narrated in *Liber Novus* and *Black Book 5* (RB RE:389 n. 252, 577), depicted by Jung in *The Red Book* (RB:HI ii (r) 1 and 2), and his 1916 sketch and painting of the *Systema Mundi Totius* (RB:364; Art:179), and they are related to the chthonic and spiritual aspects of the feminine in *Red Book* mandala 105.16

By holding the tension between these opposites with religious devotion, the priest has become a creative vessel for the birth of the mysterious symbol above him, in the space between Ka and Philemon.17 The heat from their torches has constellated a blue-toned sphere from the surrounding, multicoloured elements. A cross-quartered circle appears to surround the sphere, decorated in diagonal bands of black, red, and blue. Jung explained to Long that this circle has ‘four colours twisted around it,’ which are ‘snake ornaments’ that would ‘become snakes if the personality tessellated head with a sphere above and runes below in *Red Book* 133, completed in the autumn of 1922.

16 Jung later equated the snake-woman with the anima in the Zarathustra seminars (Jung 1989, 1:748-751), see Domenici (2018:5-6).

17 The theme of man as a vessel for the gods is developed in *Liber Novus*, and discussed at length in *Psychological Types* (1921, CW 6:especially §§393-406). See below, ‘*We Fear And We Hope*: The Grail And The Redemptive Feminine Vessel.'
should disintegrate’. The four colours are the four functions. Each function has two sides: subjective and objective, external and internal, introversion and extraversion, which are ‘constituents of individuality. . . .The individual monad is a part of the great world of eternity’. Within this circle is an invisible child, symbolising ‘onward formulation’, bound by the centre of the circle through which, ‘via an invisible point [one enters] an enormous space in which the child appears as a constellation in the great distance, i.e. in the future’. ‘The child is future’, but appears in the individual like a Kabir-man. Jung has created a visual image of creative fantasy, the activity that enables the transcendent function—‘a common function of real and imaginary factors’—to produce a living, reconciling symbol from the opposites of substantiation (Ka-sensation) and formulation (Philemon-intuition).18

Similar figures of Ka and Philemon appear in another of Jung’s paintings ca. 1919, which he subsequently gave to Helton Goodwin Baynes (Fig. 4) (Art:125, 130, Cat. 53). Their profiles materialise almost imperceivably from a background of large, irregular tesserae in subdued tones of blue and brown, although Ka’s red hairdo is clearly visible, composed of five flame-shaped segments. Ka’s temple and Philemon’s book almost touch the tips of the blood-filled, crescent-shaped gold bowl lifted up by the priest standing between them.19 The bird- and snake-women symbols in Cat. 54 are here replaced by two kneeling women in profile, dressed in robes of different contrasting colours, their hands raised in prayer. As in Cat. 54, a cross-quartered circle surrounds the globe of blue light that floats above the creative feminine vessel, emerging from the negative, scull-like space between the outlined figures of Ka and Philemon.

However, the Baynes painting also includes another figure: Phanês, the Divine Child and Jung’s new god. Jung had earlier made two nearly identical paintings of him, now in the Jung family archive (ca. 1917: Art:130, Cats. 50, 51).20 Two years later, he completed a similar image of

18 In ‘The Problem of Types in History’ in Psychological Types, Jung stated that fantasy ‘is intuitive just as much as sensational’, it is the ‘creative activity whence issue the solutions to all answerable questions’, the ‘mother of all possibilities’ (1923:69; slightly differently worded in 1921, CW 6:§78). Jung treated this theme more extensively in ‘Schiller and the Type-Problem’ and in ‘Definitions: Symbol’, where sensuality and spirituality are discussed as a pair of opposite functions to be reconciled (ibid.§§184-185, 174, 195, 200-206, 814-829). Jung told Long that by analysing the images of the unconscious, he gave ‘a new face to the old beliefs. This gift is the transcendent function’ (Appendix B).

19 The symbolism of the crescent and its feminine-vessel aspects were discussed extensively by Jung and Harding in the 1928-1930 Dream Analysis seminars (Jung 1984:367-389).

20 In both examples, Phanês emerges from a background of blue or blue green elemental
Fig. 4. Ka, Philemon, Phanês, Priest with Crescent, and the Reconciling Symbol, ca. 1919. *Arz*, Cat. 53. Private collection © The Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich.
Phanês in *The Red Book*, noting:

This is the image of the divine child. It means the completion of a long path. Just as the image was finished in April 1919, and work on the next image had already begun, the one who brought the Ω [sun] came, as ΦΙΛΗΜΩΝ had predicted to me. I called him ΦΑΝΗΣ, because he is the newly appearing God (RB:113).\(^{21}\)

The figural composition and positioning of Phanês are close in all three paintings. In the Baynes version, however, Jung placed Phanês on the right, in the space above Philemon’s *Sermon[es] ad Mortuo*[s], a visual reminder that, as Philemon had predicted, he would become Phanês (RB RE:358 n. 211). The black-and-white decoration of Phanês’ garment in the Baynes painting also differs significantly from those in the Jung family archive and the *Red Book*, perhaps a further indication that Jung designed it slightly later.

THE RECONCILING SYMBOL: THE BLUE SPHERE AND THE CROSS-QUARTERED CIRCLE

The Blue Star-Sphere

The blue spheres in Cat. 54 and Cat. 53 call to mind the ‘round, glowing nebula of stars’ that floated between Ka and Philemon in the lost painting described by Jung in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. They are undoubtedly related to the shining blue star of man, ‘who becomes through the principium individuationis’, and is also ‘the one God to whom worship is due’. The blue star/globe is the prime element in Jung’s cosmology as first expounded by his soul on 16 January 1916, and appears in his sketch, and in *Systema Mundi Totius* nine months later (RB RE:578-579; Art:110, 178, Cat. 42; RB:364; Zervas 2019:183-184). In the ‘Seventh Sermon to the Dead’, written on 8 February 1916, Philemon had described this ‘lonely star in the Zenith’, ‘the God and the goal of man’, adding later in the autumn of 1917 that it is ‘the blue starlight’ of the black and golden seed, life as duration (RB RE:534, 536, italics added). It appears as an eight-rayed blue star in *Red Book* mandalas 84, 86-97 (autumn 1917-January 1919); then as particles that diminish in size and coalesce to form an egg-shaped, speckled blue background, interspersed with gold tesserae, similar in technique to *Red Book* 72 and 79, done before June 1917.

\(^{21}\) The ‘one who brought the sun’ is Ka, as identified in the inscription of *Red Book* *Atmavictu* 122 mentioned above. For a discussion of Phanês imagery in *The Red Book*, see RB RE:358-359 and n. 211, and Zervas (2019).
the small blue sphere and surrounding stars in the centre of mandala 105 discussed above; and as an eight-rayed star in the centre of Mandala 107, both done sometime between January 27 and March 21, 1919 (RB:105, 107).

The Circle, Cross, and the Cross-quartered Circle

Jung first developed the image of the cross-quartered circle in *The Red Book*. Its textual source is the overwhelming vision in ‘Nox Tertia’ witnessed by Jung’s ‘I’ in the madhouse:

[…] the sun now rises in red glory, solitary and magnificent—in it is a cross from which a serpent hangs—or is it a bull, slit open, as at the slaughterhouse, or is it an ass? I suppose it is really a ram with a crown of thorns—or is it the crucified one, myself? (18 January 1914, RB: RE:350).

It is a symbol of the synthesis of the opposites, and of individuation, which Jung later called an elemental mandala. As he commented in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*:

The imagination attempts to sketch the image of the invisible as something which stands behind the phenomenon. I am thinking […] of the simplest basic form of the mandala, the circle, and its simplest division, the quadrant, or […] the cross. (Jung/Jaffé 1963:367-368).

Significantly, Jung introduced the circle and the cross in the elaborate historiated initial at the beginning of ‘Mysterium’, where his ‘I’ encounters Elijah, Salome, and the snake (RB: HI v (r)). Jung placed a small golden cross over Elijah, and in the blue-rayed shield in the lower left border; and a gold circle over Salome, and in the centre of the red cephalopodic form on the lower right border. They symbolise the opposites of foresight/Logos/masculine and feeling/Eros/feminine, which need each other and must be united (RB: RE:177 n. 161, 179-83).

22 The cross-quartered circle is constructed from a circle divided into quarters by two of its diameters that intersect each other at 90 degrees, forming an equal-armed cross, usually on the horizontal and vertical axes. See the amplification with numerous line drawings by Dr William Barret and Jung in the *Dream Analysis* seminars (Jung 1984:340-388).

23 See also Éveno 2015:18-21.
Fig. 5. Spheric Vision VI, 1919. *Art*, Cat. 61. © The Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich.
The circle and cross next appear together as a cross-quartered, gold-winged, sun disc in ‘Dies II’ in Liber Secundus, where it is one of several symbols of rebirth (RB:HI 22). Both were done in the autumn of 1915.

Sometime during 1919, the same year that he created Red Book mandala 105, Jung had a series of visions featuring a sphere, which he then painted. They include an eight-rayed blue star, and a blue sphere circumscribed by a gold cross-quartered circle, whose arms are highlighted in red or decorated with red and blue mosaics (Art:137 and Cats. 56-61). Their design is close to the cross-quartered blue sphere in Cat. 54 (Fig. 3), probably done at about the same time. In Cat. 61 (Fig. 5), Jung interpreted the Ka and Philemon energies necessary to achieve individuation more abstractly. Chthonic Ka is symbolised by an upright black cone with red flames at the bottom of the painting; spiritual Philemon by a descending yellow cone at the top, whose apex penetrates a blue circle.24 The energetic field generated between them produces the reconciling symbol: the blue sphere, circumscribed by a gold cross-quartered circle with red arms. Jung subsequently included it in Red Book paintings between 1920 and 1925.25

**AMOR TRIUMPHAT, 1920-21: REDEMPTION THROUGH THE LAW OF LOVE**

But God will come to those who take their suffering upon themselves under the law of love, and he will establish a new bond with them (RB RE:354 n. 203, italics added).

In his Red Book painting 127, Amor Triumphat (Love Triumphs) (Fig. 6), Jung chose the reconciling symbol of the cross-quartered circle as the vessel best able to synthesise the major themes that had emerged in Liber Novus and were then conceptually developed in

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24 They are thus related to the upper and lower sun cones that feature significantly in Jung’s imagery beginning with the runes in Black Book 7 (October 7, 1917) and RB Images 89, 93, 94 (RB RE:325-327).

25 It appears in RB 107; in the architrave in the floating temple in 123 (4 January 1920), over the blazing sun-disc in the upper section of 125 (25 January 1920), 127 (9 January 1921), HI 136 (late 1922–early 1923), and multiple times in the border of Jung’s Philemon, including directly below his temple, where a gold circle enclosing a red cross against a blue background floats above a gold crescent, with symbols for fire and water (elemental opposites) issuing from cones on either side (late 1924/1925, RB 154). See also Cat. 52 (Art 2019:130).
Psychological Types, particularly in Chapters II and V (1921). Begun in May 1920, when Types was finished, Jung only completed Amor Triumphat on 9 January 1921. He designed a separate iconic image for each section of the cross-quartered circle, setting them against a background of coloured opposites: blue arabesques on a red field. The inscription below the painting attests to the pain it had caused him:

[…] It expresses I know not what kind of grief, a fourfold sacrifice. I could almost choose not to finish it. It is the inexorable wheel of the four functions, the essence of all living beings imbued with sacrifice (RB RE:381 n. 240, italics added).

Unlike Jung’s 1917 mandala sketches and related paintings in The Red Book, and his patients’ mandalas that document the personal process of individuation and assimilation of the four psychological functions, Amor Triumphat is a multi-layered opus that presents a vision of the collective process of mankind and cultural history, integrated with the personal process of individuation, including that of Jung. The functions in Amor Triumphat are wounded gods that, having once been dominant, needed to be sacrificed. Jung had expressed this in the mantic section of ‘Splitting of the Spirit’:

Everything that becomes too old becomes evil, the same is true of your highest. Learn from the suffering of the crucified God that one can also betray and crucify a God, namely the God of the old year. If a God ceases being the way of life, he must fall secretly. (RB RE:160).

Once sacrificed, the gods remain repressed in the collective unconscious.

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27 Jung’s preface to Psychological Types is dated ‘Spring, 1920’ (1921, CW 6:v).

28 The 1917 mandala sketches and related Red Book mandalas document the ‘metabolism in the individual’ (‘Stoffwechsel im Individuum’) necessary for the birth of the self and the new god, Phanès, in Jung (Zervas 2019). For his later mandala studies, see Jung (1929, CW 13:§§1-84; 1934/50, CW 9, 1:§§525-626; 1950, CW 9, 1:§§627-712, and 1955a, CW 9, 1:§§713-718).

29 In Psychological Types, Jung agreed with Schiller that ‘culture, i.e. […] the differentiation of functions’ was responsible for the individual’s differentiation. Moreover, ‘breaking up of the harmonious co-operation of the psychic forces that exists in instinctive life is like an ever open and never healing wound, a veritable Amfortas’ wound, since the differentiation of one function among several inevitably leads to the overgrowth of the one and to neglect and crippling of the rest’: (Jung 1923:90-92, italics
Fig. 6. *Amor Triumphat*, RB 127, May 1920-January 1921. © used by permission of the Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich. First published by W.W. Norton, New York, 2009. Used with permission of the publisher, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.
Modern individuals (and Jung) must acknowledge their sacrifice, and come to terms with them, in order to reconcile the dominant and repressed opposites (Jung 1921, CW 6:§115). Hence Jung employed black—a colour of grief and mourning—for the outlines of the cross-quartered circle. Reintegration of the repressed gods is necessary for individuation, and for the creation of the new god through Man in the coming age.30

In ‘Nox secunda’, Jung had explained that one ‘should have reverence for what has become, so that the law of love may become redemption through the restoration of the lower and of the past [...]’ (RB RE:346, italics added). This occurs through the reconciling symbol produced by the transcendent function, as Jung himself had experienced during the years of Liber Novus, and subsequently explained (Jung 1916c, CW 8:§§131-193; 1916b:417, 436, 441; 1921, CW 6:§184). Amor Triumphat is Jung’s visual depiction of Christianity’s contemporary limitations, and a solution for the individual and religio-cultural future of western mankind. By continuing to honour and augment the law of love (RB RE:345-346, 353, 370), ‘Love Triumphs’. In the painting, Jung succinctly illustrates the argument that he would present two years later at the Polzeath seminars in Cornwall: ecclesiastic Christianity had repressed one’s relation to nature, the animal, inferior man, and creative fantasy (Jung/Harding 1923:16-18, italics added).

The ‘four-fold sacrifice’

In the lower left quadrant of Amor Triumphat, a pine tree has been nearly felled by the axe imbedded in its trunk, its wood chips scattered around the horizontal strip of grass. This icon denotes the pre-Christian era when men worshiped vegetation gods.31 The partially axed tree signifies man’s sacrifice of nature—the sensation function (green in Liber Novus and Jung’s later works) necessary for adaptation to ecclesiastic

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30 This process was described by Jung in a letter to Joan Corrie on 29 February 1919 (RB RE:535 n.123).

31 In ‘Psychology of the Unconscious’, Jung amplified the myth of Attis, the son-lover of Agdistis-Cybele who, driven mad by his mother’s incestuous love, castrated himself under a pine-tree. In an annual ritual, his effigy was hung on a garland-decked pine tree, which was then cut down and taken into Cybele’s cave. Jung noted that in some versions, Attis was equated with the pine tree, and cited an antique bas-relief where Attis grows out of a tree, symbolising the “life-principle” of vegetation inherent in the tree: (1912:401-402, revised with a different interpretation in 1956, CW 5:§§659-662). By depicting an axed pine tree in Amor Triumphat, Jung may thus also have alluded to Attis’s symbolic castration.
Christianity. It was also a function that Jung had sacrificed in himself. In the lower right quadrant, a bull lies wounded on the ground, pierced by the sword between its shoulder blades, its blood pooling on the arc of grass. This icon represents the pre-Christian era of animal worship. The wounded Mithraic bull symbolises man’s sacrifice of his animal nature that occurred during the Christian period: the sacrifice of the feeling function (red/blood), which Jung had also undergone, and was forced to acknowledge and redeem in Liber Novus. In Psychological Types, Jung presented the self-castrated Origen as an example of the sacrificium phalli in service of the Christian process (1921, CW 6:§§21-24). In nature, a castrated bull is an ox, a domesticated beast of burden.

32 Interpreted as a symbol of the libido sacrificed/castrated to the Terrible Mother in The Psychology of the Unconscious (Jung 1912:§§681-682; revised 1952, CW 5:§659). In Liber Novus, Jung noted that the Germanic tribes sacrificed their trees and nature gods when they converted to the Christian religion, concluding: ‘[…] their life force bade them to go on living, and they betrayed their beautiful wild Gods, their holy trees and their awe of the German forests’ (Murder of the Hero’, Layer 2 [1914] in RB RE:163). In Scrutinies, Philemon critiques these deeds: ‘What did they do with the admirable tree? […] would they have raised a murderous hand against their brothers if they had had worshiped the holy trees? ([1917], ibid:527). He gives a summary of his argument in a letter to Oskar Schmitz in May 1923: ‘every step beyond the existing situation has to begin down there among the truncated nature-demons […]. We must dig down to the primitive in us, for only out of the conflict between civilized man and the Germanic barbarian will there come what we need: a new experience of God’ (Jung 1973:39-40). During the Polzeath seminar in July 1923, he noted that when nature is repressed, it first manifests itself as a ‘nature demon’, a ‘Tree’, ‘The Noumen of the tree’, and at a later state of historical development, as nature gods, ‘particularly important because it was at this stage that the religious development of the Germanic peoples was cut down’, and ‘Christianity was grafted onto the stump’ (Jung/Harding 1923:11, 16-17, 22). Such associations suggest that Jung may also have alluded to Matthew 3:10 in connection with the axed tree in Amor Triumphat: ‘And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire’. My thanks to George Bright for posing the possible relevance of this verse.

33 Mithras sacrificed the bull by slitting its throat, as discussed by Jung in The Psychology of the Unconscious (1991:§§688-691; 1921, CW 6:§§659-667, and Plate XL). Here, as in the other scenes of Amor Triumphat, the wounded bull symbolises the wounded god, rather than the sacrificial act itself, and hence represents the Mithraic bull. In his 1941 ‘Transformation Symbolism in the Mass’, Jung stated that the ‘Mithraic sacrifice is essentially a self-sacrifice, since the bull is a world bull and was originally identical with Mithras himself’ (1941:293; revised and expanded in 1954, CW 11:§342).

34 Jung’s ‘I’ witnessed oxen among the ‘pressed multitude’ of the dead in ‘Death’ (RB RE:264). The theme of man’s repressed animal side occurs repeatedly in Liber Novus: in Scrutinies, Philemon commented: ‘Where is the atonement for the 7,777 cattle whose blood they spilled, whose flesh they consumed? […] would they have raised
In the upper right quadrant, a man hangs crucified on a three-peaked mound, wearing a blue loincloth, blood dripping from his wounds. This icon depicts Christ, the son of God who willingly sacrificed himself for man’s redemption.\(^{35}\) It symbolises man’s sacrifice of the thinking function (blue in Jung’s colour symbolism) in the service of Christianity. In *Psychological Types*, Jung presented Tertullian (with whom he closely identified) as an example of the *sacrificium intellectus*.\(^{36}\) However, by splitting himself from the Devil, Christ had rejected his ‘inferior brother’: evil and the inferior man were repressed. Hence the God-man must also be sacrificed to make way for the birth of a new god, suitable for the post-Christian age.\(^{37}\)

This is the subject of the upper left quadrant, where a man (similar to Jung’s ‘I’ in *The Red Book*) lies bleeding on a ‘bed of nails’ scattered around the four-curved section of grass. His torso and lower body bend beneath the weight of a red cross-quartered circle enclosing a blue sphere, whose outer circumference is rimmed in black, repeating that of the framing circle. A central star is hidden behind the intersection of the cross bars, but its rays emanate outward: man’s far-off and solitary star and the ‘one god’ a murderous hand against their brothers if they had atoned for the ox with the velvet eyes? (ibid:335-347, 377-378, 391). In ‘The Role of the Unconscious’, Jung reiterated that Christianity had suppressed the animal element in man, using a patient’s dream of an injured bull (1918, CW 10:§31). In the Polzeath seminars, he argued: ‘the animal is replaced in the same way as is nature […] As a brother of man the animal is a function of man […] The repressed libido for animal relationship is living in the unconscious […]’. [It animates divine images of a historical nature in dreams, when the dream speaks of animal it does so instead of saying divine’ (Jung/Harding 1923:17, 20-24). In the *Visions* seminars (1930-1934), he described the sacrificial bull as an ‘antique god’ that represents an ‘inferior feeling, an emotional condition’, a divine metaphysical transcendent principle, which can be symbolized as a god in the form of an animal’ (1997, 2:1112-1115). Writing before the publication of *Liber Novus*, Paul Bishop emphasised the Nietzschean and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* overtones in Jung’s early (pre-1913) Dionysian conviction that the ‘animal’ instincts needed to be recuperated from their suppression during the Christian era in order to ‘activate the whole man’ (1995:61-68; 2002:123-125). See also Bishop (2017:182-195); Domenici (2019:197-202).

\(^{35}\) Jung remarked in the *Visions* seminars: ‘The Christian cult had the great spiritual advantage over the Mithraic cult that it sacrificed not only the animal part, but the human-divine man in the form of Christ, which meant that the divine man as well as the animal man should be sacrificed.’ (ibid, 1:218).

\(^{36}\) Tertullian’s sacrifice ‘forced him to recognize the irrational *dynamis* of his soul as the foundation of his being’ [i.e. creative fantasy] (1923:21-23); differently worded in 1921, CW 6:§§17-21).

An icon of the individuated man, this is Jung’s vision of the coming era.\footnote{Its origins may be a dream that Jung had prior to 9 February 1914, which he mentions in “The Magician” \cite{Jung:Magician}: ‘I saw my body lying on sharp needles and a bronze wheel rolling over my breast crushing it. I must think of this dream whenever I think of love’ \cite{Jung:Magician}. Jung wrote in the Draft of Layer 2 of ‘Divine Folly’: ‘[Christ’s] own way led him to the cross for humanity’s own way leads to the cross. My way also leads to the cross, but not to that of Christ, but to mine, which is the image of the sacrifice and of life.’ \cite{Jung:DivineFolly}n. 164). The ‘image’ is the reconciling symbol—of sacrifice and life—weighing on man’s chest in this section of Amor Triumphat. Significantly, in the revised edition of Psychological Types, Jung added the following amplification to his original discussion of Christ carrying his Cross, as Mithras carried his bull, to the place of sacrifice: ‘The cross, or whatever other heavy burden the hero carries, is \textit{himself}, or rather \textit{the} self, his wholeness, which is both God and animal—not merely the empirical man, but the totality of his being, which is rooted in his animal nature and reaches out beyond the merely human to the divine. His wholeness implies a tremendous tension of opposites paradoxically at one with themselves, as in the cross, their most perfect symbol’ \cite{Jung:PsychologicalTypes}§460; it provides a late exegesis of this quarter of Jung’s painting and the reconciling symbol.} Having sacrificed Christianity’s god-image, recognised evil, and redeemed his inferior self and other repressed functions, Man—Jung—willingly suffers so that the gods can be born through him and made human:

> When the God enters my life, I return to my poverty for the sake of the God. I accept the burden of poverty and bear all my ugliness and ridiculousness, and also everything reprehensible in me […] with this I prepare the way for the God’s doing (‘Nox Quarta’, ibid:366-367).\footnote{See also Jung’s discussion in \textit{Scrutinies} (ibid:534-536, 548).}

This process has occurred through creative fantasy, the intuitive function that was only partially repressed during the Christian era, but continued as a procreative power in the unconscious, where it conceived the future reconciling symbol that would be born into consciousness by the transcendent function, through individuation \cite{Jung/Harding:1923:24}.

Although Amor Triumphat envisions a totality, it is also ‘the \textit{inexorable wheel of the four functions}, ‘the \textit{essence of all living beings}‘, which will continue to rotate. In ‘The Way of the Cross’, Jung had reflected:

> [T]he soul of humanity is like the great wheel of the zodiac that rolls along the way […].There is no part of the wheel that does not come around again […]. For these are all things which are the \textit{inborn properties of human nature}. It belongs to the \textit{essence of forward movement} that what was returns. […] The \textit{meaning}
Fig. 7. ‘We Fear and We Hope’, ca. 1920-23. Art, Cat. 66. Private collection © The Foundation of the Works of C.G. Jung, Zurich.
lies in the manner and the direction of the recurring creation’
(RB RE:394, italics added).40

‘WE FEAR AND WE HOPE’: THE GRAIL AND THE
REDEMPTIVE FEMININE VESSEL

The cross-quartered circle also features in Cat. 66 (Art:147), which,
based on style, Jung probably painted sometime between 1920 and
1923.41 A gold circle inscribed with a red cross on a green background
decorates the chest of the hooded figure who is clearly Parsifal,
holding the holy spear (Fig. 7).42 Placed between four other figures,
they float before the right arm of the monumental ‘father’ Philemon.

The conceptual background to the painting is sketched in
Psychological Types. Jung interpreted Wagner’s Parsifal in terms of
the suffering caused by the tension of the opposites represented by the
Grail (the ‘light, celestial, feminine’) in the keeping of Amfortas, and
the power of Klingsor, the magician who had stolen the holy spear (the
‘dark, earthly, masculine’) and kept Kundry (instinctive life-force and
the libido lacking in Amfortas) under his spell. The innocent Parsifal,
free from the opposites, rescues the Kundry-libido from its ‘state of
restless, compulsive instinctuality’, thereby becoming a ‘deliverer,
the bestower of healing and renewed life-force, the reconciler of
the opposites’. When he reunites the Grail and holy spear at the end
of the opera, Kundry dies, which Jung interprets as libido liberated
‘from its naturalistic, undomesticated form’, thereby enabling energy
to erupt as a new stream of life, symbolised by the glowing Grail.43

Jung linked the Grail with Gnostic vessel symbolism (1921,
40 This is also related to the twelve strokes of the world clock that Jung’s ‘I’ heard after
witnessing the red sun with an inscribed cross and its successive sacrificial victims
(snake, bull, ass, ram, the crucified one, myself) in ‘Nox Tertia’, an anticipation of the
imagery in Amor Triumphat (ibid:350-351).
41 Jung’s exquisitely layered technique for the globes and surrounding rings is
particularly close to Red Book 129 (begun before 9 January 1919), 131 (between
January 1919 and 1922), and 135 (completed 25 November 1922). See Mellick for a
masterly analysis of Jung’s painting mediums and techniques (2018:222-398, 2019:217-
231). At some point Jung gave the painting to Toni Wolff, and after her death he signed
it ‘AD 1923 Jung.sig. 1953’ (Art:147).
42 The Grail knight whom Jung encounters in an early dream before his break with
Freud wears a red cross on the front and back of his white tunic (Jung/Jaffé 1963:160).
43 Jung, ‘The Significance of the Uniting Symbol’ (1921, CW 6:§§371-372).
CW 6:§396, 401, 409), and to the relativity of God in man (i.e. God as a psychological value), which enables regression to a primitive condition that ‘keeps man in touch with Mother Earth’ (ibid:§415). After discussing the late 13th century German mystic, Meister Eckhart, and his concept of God in the human soul, Jung turns to the soul (anima) as perceived in analytical psychology: a personification of unconscious contents, the birthplace of God, and ‘a creative function [that] gives birth to its dynamis in form of a symbol (ibid:§§416-426).

In Jung’s painting, Parsifal bears the reconciling symbol on his tunic. He holds the reclaimed spear that has healed Amfortas in his left hand.44 An elderly ‘cleric’ stands to his left, dressed in a red cassock and scull-cap, his Latin pectoral cross a symbol of the outmoded ecclesiastical Christian era. He may be ‘the red pope’ cited in Long’s summary as related to Ka, the devil’s brother, and the Antichrist (Appendix B). A white-bearded man and wimpled woman are positioned behind Parsifal on either side: the exact identification of these three figures remains unclear.45

The female figure to Parsifal’s right, however, appears to be the redeemed Kundry; he places his hand encouragingly on the nape of her neck. Jung has clothed her in opposites: a simple earth-toned garment that is belted by a garland of roses, a flower associated with feminine spirituality. Kundry is clearly energised, associated not with her death in Wagner’s opera, but with the Grail’s ‘newly-streaming life’ (Jung 1923:270, slightly differently worded in 1921, CW6:§371). Thus Kundry represents the soul-image or anima, whose daemonic and divine aspects have been reunited by her redemption.46 This identification is confirmed

44 In Liber Novus, the pictorial motifs of grail- and spear-like elements first appear in the historiated initial for ‘Splitting of the Spirit’ (1915, RB:HI iv (r), then in the sketch and painting of Systema Mundi Totius (1916, ibid:364; Art:178). The Grail legend became Emma Jung’s particular subject of research, hence Jung’s limited treatment of the theme (Protocols:308, Jung/Jaffé 1963:205). For Emma’s work, cut short by her death in 1955, see Jung /von Franz (1970 [1960]). See above, note 29, for the reference in Psychological Types to Amfortas’s wound as symbolic of the differenniation of functions needing to be healed.

45 It is possible that the elderly pair represent Herzeleide, Parsifal’s widowed (wimpled) mother, and Gurnemanz, the Grail knight he meets at the beginning of Wagner’s opera, and who later becomes his mentor. However, this would not explain the presence of the ‘cleric’ figure, or of Philemon; nor do these figures relate easily to the narrative description of the Parsifal play as it unfolded in ‘Nox Quarta’ in Liber Novus (RB RR:363-364).

46 In various versions of the Grail legend, Kundry is the mysterious and sinister Grail messenger, a seductress, or a penitent, and also a serpent-like being, as interpreted by Wagner’s reading of Carlo Gozzi’s 18th century play La Donna serpente: see Kinderman (2003:47-49, 2005:13-19).
by her profile and hairdo, which are identical to those of the two anima
bird-women in Cat. 54 (Fig. 3), the kneeling women in Cat. 53 (Fig. 4),
and a painted wooden bust of a blue-eyed, black-haired woman carved by
Jung at around this period, later described as his anima (Art.107, Cat. 39).

The drama intimated, but not yet realised, in the painting pivots
around the enigmatic inscription Jung penned on the verso, which was
probably his own, as it relates to the painting, rather than to any identifiable
literary source:

We fear and we hope: will you sacrifice the laurel of eternity
to the bridal expectant earth? our feet stand in the void and are
granted no beauty and fulfilment. will the promise be broken?
will the eternal marry the temporal? (Art.147).

All five protagonists are indeed suspended in mid-air. Philemon
stares into the future, his open hand gesturing towards the two spheres
half embedded the watery depths below his feet. Parsifal and the ‘cleric’
gaze down apprehensively, but Kundry and the two rear figures have
turned to face the spheres. Kundry raises a multi-coloured wreath—
the ‘laurel of eternity’—in her right hand. Kundry-as-anima, as a
psychological function of man able to mediate consciousness and the
unconscious, is poised to sacrifice this symbol of the greatest value
to the ‘bridal expectant earth’ in order to liberate the newly formed
symbol below.47 By marrying the eternal, figured as the giant blue globe
decorated with red and overlapping dark blue forms, and the temporal,
figured as the smaller translucent sphere hovering before the blue one,
teeming with multi-coloured squiggles of life,48 the anima would unite

47 In ‘The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious’, Jung described the
transformation of the anima from an autonomous complex into a function of
relationship between the conscious and the unconscious; when achieved, the anima
is ‘no longer Kundry, daemonic Messenger of the Grail, half divine and half animal’

48 Careful examination of the spheres confirms that Jung first painted the large blue
sphere, then decorated it with the red forms, and then the blue, sometimes overlapping
ones. He painted the watery ‘waves’ over the lower half of the blue sphere. Then the
smaller sphere was made, using translucent pigments. The red spots on the blue globe,
and the eleven orange rays circumscribing its upper ‘risen’ half, rising through six
or seven of the surrounding circular atmospheric rings, could also be Jung’s visual
elaboration of an earlier dream he recorded on 17 January 1917, where he referred
to Incantation Image 58 (painted on the same date), red sun spots then present on the
sun, and, in his dream, a tongue of fire that begins to eat the dome of the ‘seven blue
heavens’ ( RB RE:302 note 129).
the above and below, God and man. The painting is poised on the brink of action, but its outcome remains unknown: ‘we fear and we hope’.

However, the unresolved drama in the painting also alludes to Jung’s intuition that man’s quest for the Holy Grail conceals a precious secret that, in Memories, Dreams, Reflections, he first dated to his youth, and subsequently linked with his alchemical studies of the exiled philosophers’ stone, unam vas, unus lapis (Jung/Jaffé 1963:160-161, 262-264). In the unpublished Protocols, Jung likened the eternal quest for the ‘unfindable’ Grail with the secret of individuation, a necessarily incomprehensible mystery, and an ‘inner process of dying before surrendering oneself’ (Protocols:308-309; see Kingsley 2018:110, 140; Bishop 2019:424).

In another passage from Memories, Dreams, Reflections, Jung related the Christian hero Parsifal to the magician Merlin, his exiled dark brother, ‘son of the devil and a pure virgin’, who continues to roam the forest in an unredeemed form (Jung/Jaffé 1963:216). This parallel is more extended in the Protocols, where Jung stated that Merlin is for Parsifal, what Mephistopheles is for Faust: the dark ‘brothers’, necessary for wholeness (Protocols:211-212). Hence as pairs they are similar to Christ and the devil, his ‘dark brother’, good and evil requiring reconciliation in the new god, and to Philemon as the inverse of Christ and Ka as the devil’s brother, the Antichrist (Appendix B). Most interestingly, Jung then brings in Philemon and Ka, the magician and the one ‘who makes things real’, as ‘the opposites brought together; hence the realisation of man and his shadow, the problem of the opposites. “I am both”! This is the result of incarnation’ (the temporal united with eternity) (ibid:212). Might the sacrifice of the ‘laurel of eternity’ in Jung’s painting be an attempt to redeem the vanished Merlin, thereby unifying the opposites of Parsifal and his dark brother, a marriage of the eternal and the temporal?

LATER FORMATIONS: 1923-59

Jung incorporated the cross-quartered circle into the design of the pavement for his round tower at Bollingen, also begun in 1923. One cross

49 This links back to the soul’s three-fold nature in Liber Novus and Black Book 5: ‘I bind the Above with the Below. I bind God and animal’ (RB RE:388-389 and n. 252; 577).

50 For a useful summary of Jung’s amplifications of Merlin, including Mercurius, see Jung/von Franz 1951:355-78. Shamdasani observes that Jung’s 1948 essay ‘The Spirit Mercurius’ (1953, CW 13) is also a ‘meditation’ on Ka (‘Art and Psyche’ conference, April 2019).
arm is aligned with the tower’s original entrance and a window opposite, and the other with the hearth and another window, thus encircling and orienting the ‘ground position’ that supported his ‘confession in stone’, linked with the maternal hearth and Emma Jung (Protocols:157, 211, 297; MDR:212-224). In the mandala created for the wall of Jung’s bedroom above, the cross-quartered circle forms the point of departure, generating the complex geometric figures and sixteen-pointed star that emanate outward (reproduced by Gaillard 1998:221). It was subsequently an essential element in Jung’s ‘mandala’ therapy of the 1920s and ‘30s, and figures repeatedly in his studies on alchemy and later writings, particularly Mysterium Coniunctionis (1941-54) and Aion (1959).

Most movingly, however, Jung immortalised the cross-quartered globe and cross in two late commemorative works in stone. Within the pediment of the memorial he devised for his wife Emma Jung at Bollingen (1956), he created a sacred coniunctio (Fig. 8). The cross-quartered sphere, Parsifal’s emblem in Cat. 66, and a prime symbol for Jung and his life’s work, rests on the upper rim of a chalice, symbol of the Grail, Emma, and her life’s work. The following year, he employed it for the four corners of his design for the Jung family tombstone, erected at his death in 1961 (Fig. 9: Art:169-170, Cats. 78 and 79, 171, Cat. 80 and Fig. 60). The imagery in both also links back to the border of the Red Book Philemon: the crescent-vessel and cross-quartered globe below his round temple (Philemonis Sacrum, a reflection of Jung’s tower), and the cross-quartered circles that mark the painting’s corners (RB 154; MDR:222 n. 5).

51 The first tower originally had an earthen floor; Jung paved it when he decided to add the upper story, after 1923. The cross does not indicate the tower’s geographical orientation. My thanks to Andreas Jung for providing this information.

52 Jung fashioned this mandala in the summer of 1928, in collaboration with Robert Edmond Jones, an analysand and friend who was a talented artist and stage designer who had resided in Küsnacht/Zurich ca. 1925/6-27 (Douglas 1993:145, 153, 155-156; Jung 1973:49, 71, 81), as we know from a letter Jung wrote to Christiana Morgan on 21 August 1928, sold at auction by Sotheby’s in 2006 (Continental Books & Manuscripts, 8 June 2006:Lot 19; personal communication, Sonu Shamdasani).

53 In his later writings, Jung referred to the cross-quartered circle/sphere as the circulus quadratus or quadratura circuli (1936, CW 18:§1331; 1937b, CW 11:§§108, 125; 1953a, CW 12:§§123, 176, 1955a, CW 9, 1:§713). The terms were derived from alchemy, and did not refer to the ancient geometrical problem of ‘squaring the circle’, i.e. constructing a square with the same area as a given circle by using a compass and ruler.

Fig. 9. Jung Family Tombstone, 1957/61 Küsnacht. © Diane Finiello Zervas, 2017.
CONCLUSION

By employing a contextual approach incorporating image and textual material, I have been able to identify the figures of Philemon and Ka in several Red Book paintings and newly published visual works by Jung that were developed concurrently or in response to Jung’s visionary material from 1917. This has enabled me to document the visual formation of one of Jung’s primary symbols of creative fantasy, the cross-quartered circle, as a product of the creative tension held between the two ‘fathers’, Philemon and Ka, and to trace chronologically and historically the way it remained a ‘living thing’ for Jung, a container able to synthesise visually some of his core concepts, including individuation, the transcendent function, sacrifice, the grail and the redemptive feminine vessel.

The forthcoming publication of Jung’s Black Books will undoubtedly reveal more about Philemon, Ka, and other personifications that he recorded and visually portrayed after the completion of Liber Novus. Meanwhile we can discover a great deal about their evolving attributes and interactions, and the creation and development of the reconciling symbol by studying Jung’s extant visual works of 1919-1923, which document his pressing need—and ability—to form in matter the thoughts that his soul gave him, by means of Philemon’s and Ka’s abilities: intuition and sensation.

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London 2019
dianezervashirst1@me.com

ABBREVIATIONS


REFERENCES


Hubbard, Arthur Jonh. 1916. The Authentic Dreams of Peter Blobbs and of Certain of his Relatives: Told by Himself with the Assistance of


*Protocols of the interviews conducted by Aniela Jaffé with C.G. Jung for Memories, Dreams, Reflections.* Library of Congress, Washington, DC.


### APPENDIX A

**Chronology of Jung’s Fantasies and Visual Images Relating to Ka, Philemon, Ha and Reconciling Symbol Mentioned in the Text**

*Superscripted numbers indicate works reproduced in the article*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SUBJECT/MEDIA</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>REFERENCE</th>
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<td>Red Book HI v(r) ∘and ⊕</td>
<td>Red Book</td>
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<tr>
<td>1915 autumn</td>
<td>Red Book HI 22 ⊕</td>
<td>Red Book</td>
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<td>1916 16 January</td>
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<td>Cat. 50 (Phanês)</td>
<td>Private Collection</td>
<td><em>Art of C.G. Jung</em></td>
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<td>Cat. 51 (Phanês)</td>
<td>Private Collection</td>
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<td>Ha mentioned</td>
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<td><em>Black Book</em> 7:25 ff.</td>
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<td>1918 10 February</td>
<td>Ka’s temple: the gods’ prison and grave</td>
<td><em>Black Book</em> 7:39</td>
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<td>51919 unknown date</td>
<td><em>Spheric Visions</em> ∗⊕</td>
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APPENDIX B

Constance Long’s summary of the discussion with Jung about his painting (Cat. 54) held on 15 October 1920 (Journal, 1920:31-37).1

The circle in the distance has four colours twisted round it. This is ornament. Snake ornaments, and would become snakes if the personality should disintegrate. The four colours are the four functions. Each function consists of two sides, subjective and objective, external and internal—introversion and extroversion. These constituents of individuality are the principles of different ways in the development of the libido into the individual function of adaptation. The individual monad is a part of the great world, a drop of eternity. The two figures in either hand, snake and bird is the same anima split into halves. The picture represents the state of things in the unconscious. The anima takes on the quality of the things with which she deals— with those ‘below’ the snake or beauty creature, and those ‘above’ the bird or winged creature.

The two figures on either side are personifications of dominants = ‘fathers’. The one is the creative father, KA. The other, Philemon, the one who gives form and law (the formative instinct). Ka would equal Dionysus and Philemon = Apollo. Philemon gives formation to the things within elements of the collective unconscious. It formulates backward not onwards. The onward formulation would be expressed as the child. The child is not represented within the picture. It is bound in the [centre] of that abstract child-circle. By that centre, and through it, via an invisible point you enter an enormous space, in which the child appears as a constellation in the great distance, i.e. in the future. The child is future. The child appears in the individual like a Cabir–man.

This is a ‘perception’, and not a formulated truth, but it resumes an enormous amount of individual experience, not only in myself but in my psyche. A woman had a dream of a Chinese monkish figure in a brown habit, on a pedestal inscribed ‘what you think impossible’. She lifted this figure, and found inside a small china figure like a Christ child, only sitting with his legs like Buddha.

1 I am grateful to Sonu Shamdasani for sharing his transcription of part of this entry with me, and to David Genty for allowing me to view a digital copy of Constance Long’s Journal. Long’s entries are made over several pages, some of which are her rough drafts (on the versos) of the final version on the rectos. My transcription has attempted to render the text readable, and therefore has expanded various abbreviations, etc.
Philemon gives the idea, (maybe of a god) but it remains floating, distant and indistinct—because all the things he invents are winged. But Ka gives substance and is called the one who buries the gods in gold and marble. He has a tendency to imprison them in matter, and so they are in danger of losing their spiritual meaning, and become buried in stone. So the temple maybe the grave of god, as the Church has become the grave of Christ. The more the church develops, the more Christ dies. Ka must not be allowed to produce too much—you must not depend in substantiation; but if too little substance is produced the creature floats.

The transcendent function is the whole—not this picture, nor my rationalisation of it, but the new and vivifying creative spirit that is the result of the intercourse between the conscious intelligence and the creative side. Ka is sensation, Philemon is intuition, he is too supra-human (he is Zarathustra), extravagantly superior in what he says, and cold. (C.G.J. has not printed the questions he addressed to Philemon nor his answer).

The Man is the inferior function, which is a priest. The colours are barbarous, and represent the four functions again. The snake and bird are feeling and thinking (as the hands of man), the figures intuition and sensation. The repressed things are inferior, even detestable, and they are the bigger in the unconscious. When you get in touch with the unconscious they are like great gods.

You call ‘stupidity’ a great weakness in man, all the same you put yourself on the actual standpoint of stupidity. Stupidity is a gigantic power, but you must keep away from it. But in allowing it you assume a gigantic power. It makes you formidable, inhuman and powerful. Through not understanding, you force people to super-human efforts to formulate for themselves. Our weaknesses thus used are tremendous forces in the world. We can lay aside our strength but not our weakness, because it is the more powerful. So that is why Ka and Philemon are bigger than the Man, they are supra-human. (Disintegrated into them one is in the collective unconscious).

It is the same motif as the ‘Swinging Censer’. In the night it fills the heavens as a flaming ball. The least unearthly, uninteresting or dead thing is the most powerful in the night (the unconscious). In that dream the audience are all antique people—dead folk, cave dwellers. sermon ad mortuos. It is a divine service for the ‘dead’. In the picture there is no

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2 This refers to the dream ‘The Night of the Flaming Censer’ in John Hubbard, *Authentic Dreams of Peter Blobbs* (1916); these had been the subject of Jung’s seminar at Sennen Cove, Cornwall, in the summer of 1920; see Jung (2014:216-217, 223 n. 9).
swinging censer—here it is expressed in words; invocations, adorations of god, maybe speechless. But here is a word (sermo) or prayer. You can invoke or adore god in many forms, in religious gestures. The public are the ‘dead’. Divine service can be *vis à vis* to the things in ourselves. This is ancestor worship—and worships that have proved an enormously strong motive in religion in past centuries. The ancestral things—the dead—need to be taken greatest care of lest we begin to suffer from ghost dreams, and we become incarcerated by the spirit of the dead (the collective unconscious).

C.G. J. gave a new face to the old beliefs through turning[?] to analysis of the images of the unconscious. This gift is the transcendent function.

If the person who paints such a picture is irrational the figures would be natural. The two human figures would be close to the man, and the bird and snake enormous.

Zarathustra’s two animals are eagle and snake, definitely intellect and feeling. The enormous powers would be the rational processes or powers. Nietzsche returned to the heights—6000 feet up to write *Zarathustra*. Philemon is the inverse of Christ. Ka is the brother of the devil, is the Antichrist—the Red Pope. Lenin.
**ABSTRACT**

This paper clusters around the problem of evil within the framework of depth psychology. The first part briefly introduces the narrative of the *Book of Job* as an example to contextualise how the ultimate question of God’s relation to evil remained unanswered and was left open-ended in Christian theology. The second part offers a historical reconstruction of the unresolved polemic over the nature of evil between Carl Jung and the English Dominican scholar and theologian Victor White (1902-1960). It explores their different speculations and formulations concerning evil and its psychological implications, until their final fall-out following White’s harshly critical review of Jung’s most controversial work on religion, *Answer to Job*. The final section of this paper introduces further reflections on a challenging theme that is no less resonant and relevant in today’s world of terrorism in the name of religion than it was in a post-war Europe struggling to recover from totalitarianism and genocide.

**KEYWORDS**

God has turned me over to the ungodly
and thrown me into the clutches of the wicked.

All was well with me, but he shattered me;
he seized me by the neck and crushed me.
He has made me his target;

his archers surround me.
Without pity, he pierces my kidneys
and spills my gall on the ground.

Again and again he bursts upon me;
he rushes at me like a warrior.

I have sewed sackcloth over my skin
and buried my brow in the dust.

My face is red with weeping,
dark shadows ring my eyes;

yet my hands have been free of violence
and my prayer is pure. (Job 16:11-17).

The Book of Job (600-300 B.C.) is part of the ‘Wisdom’ books in the Judeo-Christian Bible and has been universally admired as a ‘literary masterpiece’ of ‘the highest magnitude’ of poetic dialogues and narrative prose (Bishop 2002:3, Parsons 1981:213). Its composition most likely took place in the 5th century between the Babylonian holocaust and through the period of exile (587-538 BCE). The book is divided in five parts: a) the prologue on earth and in heaven; b) the symposium-dialogues between Job and his three friends; c) three monologues: poem to wisdom, Job’s
closing monologue, the speeches of Elihu; d) dialog with God; e) epilogue (Chase 2013:5). The figure of Job, in Jewish and non-Jewish contexts, has inspired many philosophers, religious thinkers, and intellectuals, as well as capturing the imagination of painters and musicians. Job’s exemplary virtue, with its ongoing variations in interpretation, from around the 6th century, has become a timeless model for contemplating the inscrutability of Divine Providence.

The Book of Job is a tragic story of suffering, misfortune and endurance. The righteous and faithful Job becomes a victim of a wager made between Yahweh and Satan (Job 1:6-12). During this trial Satan challenges Job’s piety and God allows Satan to afflict Job with severe physical pain, emotional loss and grief (Job 1:13-20; 2:7). Job sees no justice in his sufferings and yet tries to understand why he is being punished, since he has not sinned. Three friends, Elipahz, Bildad and Zophar, first come to comfort Job (Job 2:11) but then they argue that Yahweh is beyond human understanding (Job 22) and perhaps Job is suffering from a ‘hidden sin’ (Job 4:7-21; 11:7; 15; 18) (Parsons 1981:144). Once again Job protests his guiltlessness (Job 6:24-30; 7:11; 10:2). In the face of God’s silence and absence (Job 23) Job is aroused by anger and through his bitter complaints and endless torment (Job 16, 19), he disputes his innocence (Job 31), arguing his case ‘before God against a God’ (Job 13:3) who is indifferent to his plight (Job 27). In his revolt against God, Job hopes for vindication (Job 13:18; 31; 35) and demands to know where wisdom is to be found (Job 28). God ignores his plea (Job 30:20; 31:35). The only answer that Job receives is through the angry remarks of another friend, Elihu (Job 32-37), and through God’s appearance out of a whirlwind, showing aspects of His creation from stars to animals, including monsters like Behemoth and Leviathan (Job 38-41). After contemplating the cosmos Job repents and surrenders to the supremacy of God (Job 42:1-6). Yahweh then rewards him for his faithfulness and endurance; Job’s suffering is removed and his restoration includes health, twice as much property as before, new children, and an extremely long life (Job 42:7-17).

The Book of Job still provides a lifetime reflection on how a good God could produce evil deeds; furthermore, it portrays in a very individual way the nature of human suffering and addresses profound questions.

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1 For a comprehensive list of commentaries on the Book of Job, see Bishop (2002:4-14). For visual and musical examples see especially the nineteen watercolours illustrations and the twenty-two engravings of William Blake (1757-1827) of the Book of Job; Marc Chagall’s (1887-1985) two lithographs ‘Job Praying’ and ‘Job in Despair’, a tapestry called ‘Job’ dedicated to all the disabled in the world; and Vaughan Williams’ (1872-1958) piece, Job: A Masque for Dancing.
concerning rewards and punishments, the relationship between suffering and sin, faith and hope. Job as the innocent sufferer, on the one hand had to submissively endure a test of his sincerity, but on the other hand, as a rebel, he directly addressed God, questioning His unjust punishments. In this manner Job’s plight epitomised the undeserved suffering of mankind; his echoing cry challenging the divine-human relationship has never lost its vitality. It is this aspect of Job’s audacity that Jung further elaborated in his book *Answer to Job:* Jung believed that Job’s story and his questioning of God foreshadowed modern existential questions about a highly debatable all-good God who never gave an adequate answer to either the problem of evil, or His complicity in its origin and presence in the world.

The opposites of good and evil, psychologically speaking, correspond to positive and negative aspects of human nature. The question of destructive forces manifesting within individuals and as a group phenomenon has recently been discussed in two collections of essays: *Ethics of Evil: Psychoanalytic Investigations* and *Humanizing Evil: Psychoanalytic, Philosophical and Clinical Perspectives*, both edited by the psychoanalysts Ronald C. Naso and Jon Mills in 2016. They explore the controversies surrounding definitions of evil, the plurality of its manifestation in the world and the intrinsic link between human freedom and the potential for evil. In sharp contrast to the integrative depth-psychological approach of evil discussed in these collections, this paper reconsiders the compelling narrative of Yahweh-Job in which Jung moves from metaphorical considerations of God and evil to questions of collective responsibility. Jung declares that we are all not only capable of committing individual crimes, but are also collectively responsible for the destructive actions of mankind. A case in point, that will be discussed later, is his perspective on ‘the dark God [who] has slipped the atom bomb and chemical weapons into [man’s] hands and given him the power to empty out the apocalyptic vials of wrath on his fellow creatures’ (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW11:§747). For Jung, the possibility of universal destruction through the atomic bomb had granted man an ‘almost godlike power’,

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2 *Antwort auf Hiob* was first published in 1952 in Zürich. Then it was privately translated to English as *Answer to Job* by the Jewish analyst Dr. James Kirsch for a seminar held in Los Angeles in 1952-53 to a limited number of training analysts. In 1953 for the second edition of *Answer to Job*, Jung incorporated the corrections suggested by Kirsh. The current translation done by R.F.C. Hull was first published in London in 1954 and reprinted in 1956 by the Pastoral Psychology Book Club in New York. The book is now part of *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: Psychology and Religion West and East* volume 11 printed in 1958. For more see Jung *Letters*, vol. 2:104; Jung, CW11:vii; Lammers (2007a:254, n5).
but the question arises, do we have the moral maturity to handle such responsibility?

**ANSWER TO EVIL**

Naturally we can believe that God is different from the image of him that we possess, but it must be admitted on the other side that the Lord himself, while insisting on the Father’s perfect goodness, has given a picture of him which fits in badly with the idea of a perfectly moral being. (A father who tempts his children, who did not prevent the error of the immediate parousia, who is so full wrath that the blood of his only son is necessary to appease him, who left the crucified one to despair, who proposes to devastate his own creation and slay the millions of mankind to save very few of them, and who before the end of the world is going to replace his Son’s covenant by another gospel and complement the love by the fear of God.) It is interesting, or rather tragic, that God undergoes a complete relapse in the last book of the New Testament (Jung to Père Lachat, 27 March 1954, CW18:§1556).

Through his Christian upbringing, Jung had a long-standing engagement with the question of evil and its problem plays an important role in his depth psychology, being this particularly concerned with what is lurking beneath the surface of consciousness. Jung used the term ‘shadow’ to describe the hidden, dark and inferior parts of the personality. These contents, drives or impulses can be experienced as ‘bad’ or ‘evil’ and are thus repressed and split off due to their conflicting and incompatible nature with the personal values or/and collective moral codes. Jung believed that Christianity repressed the animal instinct and neglected the task of dealing with evil especially by its ‘tremendous compulsion towards goodness’ (Jung CW10:§20). His psychology offers a possibility of assimilation and transformation of evil by a process of psychologically integrating the compensatory significance of what lies in the shadow. Jung read the

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3 On Jung’s individual and collective shadow see Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, (1934/1954, CW9i:§§1-86); *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, (1951, CW9ii:§§13-19); ‘The Role of the Unconscious’ (1918, CW10:§§1-48); ‘After the Catastrophe’ (1945, CW10:§§400-443); ‘The Fight with the Shadow’ (1946, CW10:§§444-457). On Jung on conscience and ethical behaviour, see ‘A Psychological View of Conscience’ (1958, CW10:§§825-857) and ‘Good and Evil in Analytical Psychology’ (1959, CW10:§§858-886).
Book of Job for the first time when he was still a child and with a shock discovered Yahweh to be unjust, an evildoer with no consideration for human suffering (Jung, in McGuire 1977:225-234). In his ‘autobiography’, Jung recounts that if he had heard how ‘the overpowering God can work His terrifying will on helpless human beings’ it might have ‘opened his eyes’ to understand the question whether was God or the devil who confronted him with his dream of the man-eating phallus (between the ages of 3 and 4) and with a vision of God (age 12) destroying His own church by defecating on the roof of Basle Cathedral and shattering it (Jung, MDR:64; 26-28; 52-56). By the age of sixteen he was already ‘gravely doubting God’s goodness’, especially due to the fact that He Himself planted in Eden, ‘that poisonous serpent, the devil’, spoiling the glory of paradise. Jung finally discovered in Goethe’s Faust a confirmation of his feelings regarding the powerful sense of the reality of evil:

Here at last is someone who takes the devil seriously and even concludes a blood pact with him—with the adversary who has the power to frustrate God’s plan to make a perfect world (Jung, MDR:76-77).

Even though the narratives of Faust and Job are vastly different, their parallel is important because both are based on the same premise of a bargain being made with Satan. John Williams, one of the translators of Goethe’s Faust pointed out that Goethe used the ‘model laid down in the Book of Job (1:6-12) to suggest the possibility of Faust’s damnation’ (Williams 2007: xv). Jung also observed that ‘Faust is introduced like Job’ (Jung 1949, ‘Faust and Alchemy’, CW18:§1694). As a psychiatrist, Jung was not only concerned with the effect of evil in individual life and society, but also with the part it played in religion. His mature writings often criticised the naïve assumptions of the Christian doctrine of evil, along with his considerations on ‘the pending answer to the Gnostic

4 I am citing Jung’s Memories, Dreams, Reflections (hereafter MDR) aware of Shamdasani’s article ‘Memories, Dreams, Omissions’ (Shamdasani 1995), where he clarifies that Jung’s MDR should be read as a ‘biography’ instead of an ‘autobiography’.

5 For more, see Edinger (1992b:88); Stein (2007:313).

6 Jung’s first public polemic against the Catholic treatment of evil as a privation of good might have been his lecture ‘Zur Psychologie der Trinitätsidee’ at Eranos in 1940 ex tempore, the version printed in Eranos Jahrbuch 1947 had been reconstructed from the notes of his listeners. In 1947 he revised and expanded it for republication, now part of Psychology and Religion: West and East (CW11:§§169-295). Also cited in Lammers (2005:20, 79 n51).
question as to the origin of evil’ (Jung MDR:350), emphasising how the ‘lack of insight deprives us to deal with it’ (Jung CW10:§572). Jung was very interested in the thought of early Christian Gnostic writers who recognised the equality of good and evil:

The dualism of the Gnostic systems make sense, because they at least try to do justice to the real meaning of evil. They have also done us the supreme service of having gone very thoroughly into the question where evil comes from . . . in a monotheistic religion everything that goes against God can only be traced back to God himself (Jung 1942/1948, CW11:§249).

Jung’s initial encounter with the Gnostic tradition was in 1911 while working on Transformations and Symbols of the Libido (1911-1912) and he discussed Gnosticism throughout his writings. In 1952 the Institute in Zürich purchased one of the Gnostic manuscripts recently discovered at Nag Hammadi and it was named the ‘Jung Codex’ in honour of Jung’s significant research and engagement with Gnosticism. Shamdasani pointed out that the Red and Black Books made evident that Jung was searching for historical parallels to his own experiences in Gnostic writers when he further engaged with them during his military service in January and October 1915. In 1916 Jung wrote Seven Sermons to the Dead (Septem Sermones ad Mortuos), a ‘psychotheological’ cosmology similar to an ancient Gnostic myth. In Memories Jung later clarified: ‘Between 1918 and 1926 I had seriously studied the Gnostics, for they too had been confronted with the primal world of the unconscious’ (Jung MDR:226). For Jung the Gnostics were credited with having found suitable symbolic expressions of the self, of the conflict of the opposites and in the Abraxas figure he saw a representation of the union of the Christian God with Satan (Shamdasani 2009: 205-6). Jung’s open and public interest in Gnosticism has generated debate, commentaries and several misunderstandings.7

Jewish philosopher Martin Buber (1878-1965) accused Jung’s psychology of being a revival of Gnosticism and they were in a controversy after the publication of Answer to Job (Buber 1952:63-93, 131-139;

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7 For a comprehensive list of scholars who have written about Jung’s Seven Sermons and his connection to Gnosticism prior to the publication of the Red Book, see: Shamdasani (2009:346, n. 81). For commentaries post publication of the Red Book see especially: Maillard (2017; 2011:99-116; 2014:81-93); Owens (2010); Drob (2012:201-257). See also Ribi (2013:1-33), where Owens complements the earlier German edition, providing in his foreword a lengthy discussion of the Red Book and Jung’s initial encounter with the Gnostic tradition.

Jung 1952, CW18:§§1499-1513). For Jung, evil is a force in its own right and argued that the Church doctrine of *privatio boni*, where evil is merely the absence of good is a ‘desperate attempt to save Christian faith from dualism’ (Jung 1958, CW18:§1593) and further formulated it as a challenging metaphysical dilemma: ‘either there is a dualism and God’s omnipotence is halved, or the opposites are contained in the monotheistic God-image.’ (Jung 1958, CW10:§844). This topic shall be explored in the next part of this paper, since it was precisely the impasse over the nature of evil that was the main feature of Jung’s enduring debate with Victor White that culminated in *Answer to Job*.

Jung did not take either the relationship of evil to God or the negligence of man’s potential for being an instrument of evil, lightly. His engagement with the matter was set very much against the background of the world in which he lived—from the outbreak of World War I, when he came to the conclusion that his disturbing prewar visions had been prophetic, to the ‘catastrophic epoch’ of World War II, which saw ‘unprecedented fury of destruction’ (Jung 1916, ‘Preface to the First Edition’ of ‘On the Psychology of the Unconscious’, CW7:§§1-201), until the period preceding the end of his life in 1961, dominated by the economic ideological tensions and nuclear escalation of the Cold War, Jung was busy writing essays concerned with the meaning of apocalyptic events (Jung 1945/1946, CW10:§§371-487). He not only spoke about the mental condition of the West, addressing the pathological split in man that tended to ‘make his neighbour responsible for his own evil qualities’ (Jung 1916, ‘Preface to the First Edition’ of ‘On the Psychology of the Unconscious’), but also psychologically examined the metaphysical Christian view on evil that ‘exonerated man’s conscience of too heavy a responsibility.’ (Jung 1956/1957, CW10:§573). In a letter to Victor White in 1949 he spoke forthrightly and to the point:

As long as Evil is “non-being”, nobody will take his own shadow seriously. Hitler and Stalin go on representing a mere “accidental lack of perfection”. The future of mankind very much depends upon the recognition of the shadow. Evil is—psychologically speaking—terribly real’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:143).

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8 For a comprehensive account of the dialogue between Jungian and Gnostic studies, see Ribi (2013).

9 Jung was on active duty during WWI. His duties were: 1914, 14 days; 1915, 67 days; 1916, 34 days; 1917, 117 days. Cited in Shamdasani (2009:201).
Jung used biblical symbols as keys to interpret psychological agents in the human psyche, he believed that the possibility of universal destruction through the atomic bomb had granted man an ‘almost godlike power’ (Jung 1959, CW10:§879; also Jung 1952, ATJ, CW 11:§747) and that the consequences for having so much power over nature burdened him with a ‘high degree of ethical responsibility.’ (Jung 1946, CW10:§451). He was of the opinion that human beings could no longer afford to deny their fair share in evil deeds; that is to say, it is part of the human task to recognise that even the darkest shadow represents an aspect of each single one of us. The idea of evil being contained within God was anticipated in the chapters ‘Hell’ and ‘The Sacrificial Murder’ of Jung’s Red Book. There Jung realised that as human beings we are all not only capable of committing crimes, but also, responsible for their collective deeds. Jung used the analogy of the famous quote by the Roman playwright Terence (c.186-159 BC) that appeared in Heauton Timorumenos: ‘nothing of that which is human is alien to me’ to illustrate this idea. He even believed that it was his duty as a medical psychologist to be able to understand it (Jung 2009, RB:290, n149). Jung later elaborated this as an ‘unsatisfied criminal instinct in ourselves’ (Jung 1989:471). Jung elucidates: ‘God can be called good only inasmuch as He is able to manifest His goodness in individuals. His moral quality depends upon individuals.’ (Jung, Letters, vol. 2:314). For Jung, man is caught in the dynamism of the divine drama and we are now accountable for ‘incarnating’ the dark side of God. Seeing that Yahweh’s moral paradoxical nature is ‘not without consequences for humanity’, since we too are ‘obliged to struggle with the devil’, in the form of inner conflict that can destroy man’s integrity (Jung 1977:226, 230; also 186-189). Thus the divine conspiracy between Yahweh and Satan against Job served, psychologically for Jung, as an illustration as well as a warning.

ANSWER TO JOB

It is regrettable that you did not read my introductory remarks. You might have discovered there my empirical standpoint without which—I grant you—my little book makes no sense at all. Envisaged from a philosophical point of view without consideration of its psychological premise, it is sheer idiocy, from a theological angle nothing but downright blasphemy and from the standpoint of rationalistic commonsense a heap
of illogical and feeble-minded phantasmata. But psychology has its own proposition and its own working hypotheses based upon the observation of facts, i.e., (in our case) of spontaneous reproduction of archetypal structures appearing in dreams as well as in psychoses. If one doesn’t know of these facts, it will be difficult to understand what is meant by ‘psychic reality’ and ‘psychic autonomy’. I agree with you that my statements (in Antwort auf Hiob) are shocking, but no more, rather less so, than the manifestations of Yahweh’s demonic nature in the OT (Jung to G. A. van den Bergh von Eysinga, 13 February 1954, Letters, vol. 2:151-154).

After a long gestation period, Jung delivered *Answer to Job* in the spring of 1951 at the age of seventy-five, just after *Aion*, its older brother, had been published. In several of his letters Jung voiced the physical urgency and the emotional turmoil of the birth pangs in which the book came forth: it was ‘during the fever of an illness’ (Jung to H. Corbin, 4 May 1953, Letters, vol. 2:116) whereby ‘I was plagued by my liver and had to stay in bed and write *Job*’ (Jung to H. Württemberg, 30 August 1951, ibid:21); to his secretary, Aniela Jaffé, he described the process as having ‘landed the great whale’, but that it was nevertheless still going on ‘rumbling a bit, like an earthquake.’ (Jung to A. Jaffé, 29 May 1951, ibid:17-18). A few months later, with some distance he summarised the whole experience to her: ‘if there is anything like the spirit seizing one by the scruff of the neck, it was the way this book came into being.’ (Jung to A. Jaffé, 18 July 1951, ibid:20). Deirdre Bair recounts that it took Jung three months to revise the original text and that he wrote to the point of exhaustion (Bair 2003:528). Shamdasani remarked that neither the original manuscript nor the revised typescript are to be found in his papers at the ETH (Shamdasani 2012:210). Jolande Jacobi, one of Jung’s collaborator,

10 Shamdasani pointed out that the theology first articulated in Jung’s *Red Book* found ‘definite expression and elaboration’ in *Answer to Job* (Shamdasani 2010:ix).

11 Michael Fordham indicated that after Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism* (1939) *Answer to Job* was the most significant work on the Bible that had been published addressing the religious implications of psychology (Fordham 1955:271-73).

12 *Aion* is one of Jung’s most complex books. The title refers to the two thousand year cycle and the astrological conception of the Platonic month. The Christian aeon coincided with the sign Pisces and now two thousand years later, it is about to enter that of Aquarius. In this book Jung explored the historical transformations of Christianity, including the symbolic figure of the antagonism Christ-Antichrist, and specially addressed how the Christian doctrine of the *privatio boni* did not sufficiently deal with the problem of evil.
described him as ‘moody in a rude and crude way, like a peasant… furious all the time’ and his behaviour was ‘like a woman giving birth to a child’, or a man ‘who let himself go like an uneducated child.’ (Jacobi, in Bair 2003:528). To Marie-Louise von Franz, Jung remarked that he wished to have been able to rewrite all of his books apart from this one, with this one he was completely satisfied (von Franz 1998:161).

Jung’s *Answer to Job* was a small—only 108 pages—but nonetheless highly controversial and provocative book that managed to attract harsh criticism at several levels. In the prefatory note, Jung wrote that for many years he hesitated to give a more complete answer on the numerous questions he had been asked by patients all over the world than the one he gave in *Aion*, due to the storm it would raise (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW11, ‘Prefatory Note’). Aniela Jaffé has pointed out that had Jung used profane literature or patient’s material to make his point about the ambivalence of the God-image, he might not have outraged his readers that much (Jaffé 1975:101). *Answer to Job* is Jung’s only extended commentary on a biblical text. In it he discusses the *Book of Job*, the *Epistle of St. John*, the *Book of Revelation*, the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* (c.100 BC), the ‘Sophia’ of the Hebrew Bible and finally the dogma of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary (1 November 1950). It is beyond the scope of this paper to address all these issues, so the next section concentrates on Jung’s account of the consequences of Job’s engagement with of a God who could be psychologically experienced as evil as well as good poses to modern man.

Jung’s psychological reflections in *Job* beyond doubt ‘paid respect to the spirit of Protestantism’, which he argued had ‘the great

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13 A list of the earliest public responses to *Antwort auf Hiob* can be found in Bishop (2002:185, n113). For a Jewish study and a critique of Jung’s *Answer to Job* see Lévy-Valensi’s *Job: réponse à Jung*. For a Jewish perspective on the psychological problem of Jung’s Aryan Christianity in interpreting the *Book of Job*, see Corey’s ‘For the Sake of God: a Reply to Jung’. Corey also pointed out that Jung’s dependence on Christian translations of the Bible and his ignorance of ‘Oral’ Scripture that supplements and amplifies the ‘Written’ Bible have distorted his understanding of Job. He explained: ‘Job is, as the Talmud describes, ‘a parable’ of Israel’s redemptive destiny written according to Oral Scripture by Moses himself at the time of the Revelation on Sinai’ (Corey 1990:34).

14 Jung interpreted the Christian tradition in two essays that were first published in the *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 1940–41 ‘A Psychological Approach to the Dogma of the Trinity’ and ‘Transformation Symbolism in the Mass’. His mature views on the psychology of religion were continued in *Aion* (1951) and lastly in *Answer to Job* (1952).

15 Jung saw himself as a left-wing Protestant: ‘I am definitely inside Christianity and, as far as I am capable of judging myself, on the direct line of historical development… If the Reformation is a heresy, I am certainly a heretic too.’ (Jung *Letters*, vol. 2:334).
task of reinterpreting all of the Christian traditions.’ (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW11:§§752-755). In spite of the problems of Jung’s psychological-critical approach, his treatment of scripture has found a place in biblical interpretation. Some specialists voiced their opinion regarding Jung’s style. Theologian Kenneth Lambert pointed out early on that Jung’s position mediates between Catholic exegesis and Protestant hermeneutics (Lambert 1955:106-107). Jung previously acknowledged that his position started from a positive Christianity, ‘which is as much Catholic as Protestant…and tries to establish facts on which the two sides can unite’ and complemented it by saying ‘it is also the reason why I get kicks from both sides’ (Jung Letters, vol. 2:348-9). Professor of theology James Heisig has called it ‘psychotheology’ and considers Jung’s subtle motif in Answer to Job was to offer ‘an alternative to atheism and pious submission’, in spite of the ‘exegetical distortion and dubious logic of his argument.’ (Heisig 1973:231; Heisig 1979:82, 88). Protestant theologian Karl Barth argued that Answer to Job was a ‘humanly gripping document’ for the psychologist, but considered as a work of biblical interpretation Jung’s work was ‘unprofitable’ (Barth, in Heisig 1979:182, n61; Bishop 2002:46). Jungian analyst Murray Stein argues that Jung’s approach was a combination of ‘hermeneutics and sermonics’, and an Auseinandersetzung with the Biblical God. All in all, an unrestrained Jung argued his case against God at the same time he tried to understand and to explain the ‘defectuosity of the Western God-image’ to his readers (Jung Letters, vol. 2:434). God-image is a central concept in Jung’s psychology of religion, and it is seen a symbolic expression of an inner image that transcends conscious understanding, it is an image of God and not as He is in himself. Jung describes it as: ‘an engram or imprint which from the beginning of time has been the collective expression of the most overwhelming powerful

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16 The late Wayne Rollins, an Emeritus Professor of Biblical Studies in Massachusetts, created a new critical model in Biblical Studies and a new approach to Scripture in the 1960’s. He has reflected extensively on the dynamics of psychological biblical criticism and has incorporated models developed in depth psychology giving special focus to Jung’s insights of the value of psychological approach to scripture on biblical symbols. He termed this perspective ‘psychological biblical criticism’. For more see: Rollins (1983; 1999). Other important scholars include: Miller (1995) and Kille (2001). Professor of Theology and writer of Fr. Victor White OP: The Story if Jung’ s White Raven (2007), Clodagh Weldon teaches Jung’s Answer to Job to undergraduates in her course in biblical studies in the theology department at the Dominican University in Illinois (Weldon 2011:115-125).

17 A word that roughly means ‘a differentiating or clarifying encounter’ with an idea or a person, it is most commonly used in the Jungian lexicon as ‘coming to terms with’ (Bishop 2002:93; Stein 2007:313; Schlamm 2008:110).
influences exerted on the conscious mind by unconscious concentrations of libido’ (Jung 1921, CW6:§412).\(^{18}\)

To understand what Jung is doing in *Answer to Job* it is necessary to bear in mind a few important starting points in his interpretative framework:

1. Jung holds a Kantian subjective standpoint whereby all knowledge is mediated and we can only perceive God within the limits of our own psyche.\(^{19}\) Jung’s basic definition of God is:

   I make my patients understand that all the things which happen to them against their will are a superior force. They can call it God or the devil, and that doesn’t matter to me, as long as they realise that it is a superior force. God is nothing more than that superior force in our life (Jung, in McGuire 1977:250).

   His psychological analysis deals mainly with the image of God he observed in his own psyche and the psyche of his patients and refused to accept any sort of knowledge outside the psychological frame. Reinforcing his position as an empiricist,\(^{20}\) he clarifies:

   I can confirm and prove the interrelation of the God-image with the other parts of the psyche, but I cannot go further without committing the error of metaphysical assertion, which is far beyond my scope. I am not a theologian and have nothing to say about the nature of God (Jung to White, 5 October 1945, Lammers 2007a:9).

2. Jung conceived that the psyche exists in its own right as a phenomenal world in itself. His psychological stance reversed the rationalistic causal sequence, as he explains: ‘instead of deriving these figures from our psychic conditions, [we] must derive our psychic conditions from these figures.’ (Jung 1942, CW13:§299; also Jung 1931/1933, CW8:§§649-688). Psychic images are both a language and a dimension of inner experience,

\(^{18}\)See J. Heisig (1979).

\(^{19}\)For more on Jung’s Kantian philosophical background, see Nagy (1991). For a critique of Jung’s misuse of Kant see Brooks (2011).

\(^{20}\)Jung’s style of empiricism has been heavily criticised due to the impossibility of scientific verification and falsification of his approach. Jung’s pragmatism tests the truth of things by observing their effects. His logic is based on the fact that it is difficult to falsify a myth, a dream or an elephant; these phenomena can have psychological reality regardless of logical coherence. See Lammers (1994:121).
though not separate from the outer world. Hence, the mythical image of Yahweh is a representation of his reality in the psyche.

3. As a psychiatrist Jung valued the psychological significance of the symbolism of biblical narrative and was interested in how it could be translated into the life of the individual, since for him ‘myths of a religious nature can be interpreted as a sort of mental therapy for the sufferings and anxieties of mankind in general’ (Jung 1964:79). He interpreted the Book of Job as a ‘landmark in the long historical development of a divine drama.’ (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW 11:§560). For him Job ‘is no more than the outward occasion for an inward process of dialectic in God.’ (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW 11:§587). One could read Jung’s narrative as a product of an active imagination with the biblical figures, i.e., a representation of a clash between man’s consciousness (Job) encountering the unknown unconscious (Yahweh) (Schlamm 2008:109-121).21

4. Jung was of the conviction that his analytical psychology could contribute towards a process of religious evolution by ushering a new myth in the West (Dourley 2007:285); for this reason he felt it was his task to correct and complement the historical transformation of the God-image: ‘[M]y work deals in the main with the transformation of Christian tenets within the Christian era.’ (Jung, Letters, vol. 2:510f). Ann Lammers who wrote her PhD dissertation on the Jung-White relationship and was the editor of the Jung-White Letters (2007) suggests that Jung ‘operated both as wrecker and as a builder, tearing down parts of the standing order because he wanted to reconstruct it’ (Lammers 1994:155). In a letter to Victor White in 1953 he used the following metaphor to clarify the architectonics he had in mind: ‘Nobody will be so foolish to destroy the foundations when he is adding an upper story to his house, and how can he build it really, if the foundations are not properly laid?’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:222).

Having now laid out some of Jung’s methodological assumptions we can perhaps begin to appreciate the meaning he extracted from the images embedded in the Book of Job; considering that he believed that they pointed to a development beyond Christianity and contained a new dispensation for modern man (Edinger 1992a:59-60).

In Jung’s fiery revision of Job, he appeals to the reader to follow him in his intense confrontation with Yahweh. Moreover, by taking up the

crucial question: ‘whence evil?’ Jung seemed to be articulating several ‘answers’: Yahweh’s answer to Job, his own answer to both Jewish and non-Jewish patients in face of the war, and, last but not least, his most personal answer to and powerful argument with Victor White (See Dourley 2007; Stein 2007a). Both the content and intention of Jung’s psychological reflexions is to bring the ambivalence of the Judaeo-Christian God image to the spotlight. The essence of his interpretation of Job’s encounter with the paradoxical nature of God goes as follows:

Yahweh is personally involved in human suffering due to his relationship to Satan (ATJ, CW11:§616). He is both unaware of his brutality and insensibility to all the suffering he had inflicted, in spite of being omniscient. Job’s submission is not because God’s justice is a mystery not to be understood in human terms, but is rather a legitimate critique of his injustice (ATJ, CW11:§603). Yahweh’s answer coming out of the whirlwind is no real answer; he showed Himself to be a force of nature behaving just like one of the crocodiles or the Leviathans he had created (ATJ, CW11:§§599-600). Yahweh is to blame for his misuse of power and cruelty by betraying Job. Job is certain that he has not sinned and is also certain that there is another side of God to which he pleas in the hope of finding an ‘advocate’ in God against God himself (ATJ, CW11:§567). By standing his ground defending his sinless position, Job was able to see God’s double nature in which both His light and dark sides were exposed (ATJ, CW11:§§584, 608). This realisation produces a radical transformation: Yahweh is unfaithful, not Job (ATJ, CW11:§616). This precise act of consciousness elevates Job—a mortal man is raised by his moral behaviour ‘above the stars in heaven’; the creature has surpassed the creator (ATJ, CW11:§§595, 640).

Yahweh suffered a moral defeat in failing to corrupt Job (ATJ, CW11:§617). Now that God has done man wrong a compensation begins to take shape in the psyche for Job’s undeserved suffering: God must regenerate and become human himself (ATJ, CW11:§§624, 631, 640). But then a decisive separation takes place in the God-image—His dark side is split off because Yahweh identifies only with His light aspect when He incarnates on earth in Christ. Although Christ did become man his nature is more divine than human, he was not born of human father and his mother was a virgin (ATJ, CW11:§626). It is only at the moment when Christ cried out on the cross: ‘My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me?’ that God experiences what it means to be mortal (ATJ, CW11:§647). In this position, suffering and experiencing evil in the flesh God finally gives the answer to Job (ATJ, CW11:§647). Yahweh did not spare his son, on the contrary
He expected a human sacrifice and much in the same way, mankind now stands where Job and Christ stood—abandoned and with the paradoxical nature of God weighing heavily upon us. Due to the incomplete incarnation of Yahweh in Christ, who embodied only His good side, a new task is set on mankind: the resolution of the divine antinomy must take place in man (ATJ, CW11:§§655, 657, 690). Redemption does not come through faith in Christ, who has vicariously saved us, but in the awareness of the inescapable partnership of the divine and the human sharing responsibility for both the good and evil in the world (ATJ, CW11:§§659, 693).22

Job’s pivotal role served to further the Jungian myth of the continuing incarnation as a symbol for psychological development. Thus, by rejecting and revising man’s submission to a loving God, Jung on the one hand added a new level of understanding to the experience of suffering, and on the other hand he questioned the Church’s teachings that the incarnation was a unique historical event. He argued that it had not ceased with the Ascension but continued through the Holy Spirit in man. He called this process the ‘Christification of many’,23 whereby Christ is to be seen as a pattern to take place in each man and God is to incarnate in the ordinary human being. As could be expected, Jung’s insistence in placing good and evil as part of the essence of the creator Himself and his view of a new psychological dispensation for modern man were taken as an offense against centuries of theological reflection.

ANSWER TO JUNG

… Generally speaking it [Answer to Job] cannot be read. For Jung deliberately reads the Scriptures through a pair of highly distorted spectacles. Although he is not writing of God but of God-images, he is not writing directly even of Job’s images of God, but rather of his own images of Job’s images … Even an instructed Christian may expect an explosion when an adult, whose religious development had become fixated at the


23 Jung used this term for the first time in the last paragraph of Job, but this idea has its seed in the concept of his interpretation of the imitatio Christi in his Red Book. He has then elaborated it in the Collected Works ever since his lecture at Eranos ‘On the Psychology of the Idea of the Trinity’ in 1940 (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW11:§758; 2009, RB:292-6; Heisig 1979:184, n88).
kindergarten level of bourgeois morality ... becomes confronted with the realities of life, of the ways of God both in the Bible and in contemporary events. It is understandable that he feels a close kinship with the disillusioned, tortured Job ... The violence of the abreaction is understandable ... his grievance is hardly adult ... the only reaction is that of the spoiled child (White, in Lammers 2007a:353-354).

This was the death knell of the long-standing relationship between Victor White and Jung. White had been Jung’s most important theological collaborator for over fifteen years, and in a short period of time he had become a very close personal friend. Within a year of their first correspondence, White made the first of ten visits to Bollingen, the first was in August 1946 and the last one was in July 1952. The last time they met was in June 1958 but in Küsnacht this time. Jung made White full part of Jungian intellectual circle, he was invited to speak at Eranos conferences and in 1947 he also was invited to be one of the founding members of the C.G. Jung Institut in Zürich. Adrian Cunningham, Professor of Religious Studies and a Victor White specialist, pointed out in an interview:

Victor White was one of the very few, possibly the only person in the inner circle who really stood up to the old man [Jung], and slugged it out over a period of years until they were both exhausted with it (Arraj 2015).

Jung expressed his grief about White’s death: ‘As I have so earnestly shared in his life and inner development, his death has become another tragic experience for me.’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:303). The trajectory of Jung and White’s personal relationship is reflected throughout their discussion on the relationship between psychology and religion in The Jung-White Letters. The letters are authentically presented in a ‘close-knit’ dialogue with no editorial improvements. Both men were experts in their fields and in the thick of post-war years they hoped to create an alliance in which to foster spiritual health in modernity and to ‘transform the Christian West.’ (Lammers 2007b:253). However, as the Jungian-Christian dialogue progressed, their enthusiasm turned to rejection and collaboration into controversy, to the point of no return. Their incompatible views on God and evil could not be reconciled and the tensions that were present from the start became impossible to overcome following the publication of the English translation of Answer to Job in 1954. Lammers broke down

Victor White (1902-1960) was a catholic convert and teacher of dogmatic theology at the Dominican school, Blackfriars in Oxford, and due to a crisis of faith he opened up to Jung’s thought, starting analysis in London in 1939. White described this crisis of faith as:

I am by profession a theologian. But I am a theologian to whom, something happened. Suddenly, or perhaps not so suddenly, theology ceased to have any meaning to me at all … and so I was forced to turn to the psychologists … I did have a hunch that the method and approach of Jung might have something that spoke to my condition (White, in Weldon 2007:16).

White also attended a study group with a few of Jung’s earlier followers facilitated by his analyst, the anthropologist John Layard (1891-1974), who was trained by Jung himself (Lammers 2007b:255). White had been studying Jung’s work for five years when, encouraged by Gerhard Adler (1904-1988),24 he wrote to Jung for the first time just after the end of the war in 1945, enclosing a few essays in which he connected church doctrines and Jungian psychology: ‘The Frontiers of Theology and Psychology (1942), ‘St. Thomas Aquinas and Jung’s Psychology’ (1944), ‘Psychotherapy and Ethics’ (1945), and a ‘Postscript’ to the latter, reviewing a book by a Freudian psychotherapist on the ethical implications of psychotherapy. (Lammers 1994:35). Jung had just celebrated his 70th birthday and saw White’s arrival as an invaluable contribution. Jung described this: ‘Excuse the irreverential pun: you are to me a white raven inasmuch as you are the only theologian I know of who has really understood something of what the problem of psychology in our present world means.’ (Jung to White, in Lammers 2007a:6). He had been waiting for years for a theological partner with whom ‘to discuss on equal terms matters of vital importance’ and to help him refine his interpretation of Catholicism (Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2:450n; Lammers 1994:36), which Jung valued very much, since for him it was a ‘treasurehouse of patristic wisdom’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:5). Ann Lammers has called attention to the fact that even though White was 27 years younger than Jung he was not, in any sense, the junior

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24 Gerhard Adler, of German-Jewish descent, was the editor of the English translation of Jung’s *Collected Works*, the founder of the Association of Jungian Analysts, co-founder of the Society of analytical Psychology and a founding member of the International Association for Analytical Psychology.
partner in this encounter. He could read ‘fairly easily’ French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Latin and by 1940 White was known as a first-class Thomist: he was among the English Dominican scholars who worked on a new, annotated translation of the *Summa Theologiae*, and was granted in 1954 an STM (Master of Sacred Theology), the highest theological degree awarded since medieval times as ‘a sign of exceptional merit as a scholar and teacher of theology.’ (Lammers 2007a:16, n50). White soon expanded his knowledge and also became versed in analytical psychology, he held the opinion that religion and psychology ‘shared a common territory and a great many concerns … and this common territory is what religion calls the human soul and what psychology calls the human psyche.’ (White, in Cunnings, ‘Victor White, a Memoir’, in Lammers 2007a:321). In his encounter with Jungian psychology White hoped to construct a synthesis and build a theoretical bridge between the two systems of thought, whereby Thomism would supplement and complete analytical psychology with Christian truth and psychological insight would be used as a pedagogical tool for the church and its clergy (Lammers 1994:55, 71; Stein 2011:601).

Attracted by the religious element in Jung’s system, White genuinely believed that he could supplement its metaphysical deficiency (Weldon 2007:20, 22). He wrote several articles and reviews on Jungian psychology clarifying and articulating both the differences and points of contact between theology and psychology. An important common ground they shared was a far-reaching concern with the suffering human being, since both disciplines accept practical responsibility for the *cura animarum* (Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2:553). Another point that brought the clergyman and the psychologist ‘shoulder to shoulder’ was the question of good and evil.

25 For an account how Jung’s relationship with White is an attempt to continue the theological debate with his father and for a parallel between the Freud-Jung relationship with the Jung-White relationship see Stein (2007:303-14).

26 The *Summa Theologiae* was the work which immortalised Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). It is a manual of Christian doctrine and a textbook for the study theology; it has been used for more than seven hundred years. Aquinas systemised theology establishing the relations between faith and reason. St. Thomas is considered as the ‘Christian Aristotle’ for combining Aristotelian philosophy to ecclesiastical orthodoxy.

(Jung 1932, CW11:§504). Regrettably, the idea of a compatible theoretical coordination tragically failed precisely as they tried to educate each other on their opposing views about the nature of evil.

But before we move to the next section it will be useful to contextualise the background of their dispute, since lying behind them there were major contrasting points of departure. The first one was a theoretical barrier of two totally different philosophical fields of association: White was a traditional logician, his thinking grounded in Aristotelian intellectualism, in St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas’s philosophical thought. By contrast, Jung’s thinking had been shaped by Kantian subjectivism, post-Schleiermacher Protestantism and Jamesean pragmatism (Lammers 1994:16-17, 114-132). No wonder that the philosophical discrepancies of authority of dogma, supported by tradition versus authority of the individual, endorsed by experience would become an ‘insurmountable obstacle’ between them.

Second, White was bound to ecclesiastical authority by his vow of obedience. Jung, in turn, was in a privileged situation with a great degree of professional autonomy, which allowed him to be independent ‘without endangering his very existence’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:264). This point is particularly important to stress, as White’s association with Jung would have serious consequences for him as a Thomist scholar. The political scenario of Catholic scholarship in White’s time was an oppressive one, with neo-scholasticism, the modern revival of Aquinas arising in the mid nineteenth century as a reaction against secular knowledge. This conservative movement endorsed a return to the scholastic theology of the thirteenth century as a way to protect against the heresy of ‘Modernism’ and to further condemn those who contradicted the magisterium.28 Episcopal vigilance, the Imprimateur permission for publication; condemnation of censured titles with their inclusion in the Papal Index, swearing of the anti-modernist oath and excommunication were some of the drastic measures used to enforce obedience to ecclesiastical authority.29 White, for his part, was among the theologians who tried to create a more vital theology; he

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28 The war against modernism was an institutional battle within the Catholic Church generated by the fear of historical change ‘infected with Kantian spirit’ that could endanger faith and morality. In 1864 Pope Pius IX published the Syllabus of error against faith. In the twentieth century Pope Pius X characterised modernism as the ‘synthesis of all heresies’, he condemned Catholic scholarship with modernistic tendencies and ordered all clergy to compulsory swear their loyalty to the anti-modernist oath. See Livingston (1997; 2000).

29 For an example, see http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-x/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_19070908_pascendi-dominici-gregis.html
was a ‘modern Thomist’ who identified with Aquinas not as an ally against modernity, but as a model for integrating different understandings of truth. Aquinas himself found truth also in the Muslim philosopher Avicenna and Averroes, the Jewish Rabbi Maimonides and the pagan philosopher Aristotle (cit. in Weldon 2010:178). It was this predisposition that made him not only susceptible to Jung’s psychology, but also to theological conflicts within his Order and with the impositions of the Roman Church.

THE ARENA OF DISPUTE: THE SCHOLASTIC AND THE JUNGIAN VIEW ON THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

The doctrine of evil as the privation of good appears to have been first proposed by St. Augustine in the fifth century, particularly in his defense of monotheism against Manichaean dualism, which viewed good and evil as mutually exclusive principles; the philosophical roots to this idea, however, reach back to Aristotle. But it was Aquinas who later developed and systematised the doctrine of the privatio boni more fully in the thirteenth century (Aquinas 1993:284-289; Davies 2001:55-119). This definition rests on the conviction that God, as the summum bonum, is a supremely good God who created all things, but not evil. Evil has no ontological status, it is not a created being and has no source of power; it can be understood as a lack, a distortion or even a parasite of the good. The denial of the substantiality of evil and its subordinate relation to the good still is ‘widely held and taught in Catholic tradition’ (Lammers 1994:289, n29). Furthermore, in both classical philosophical and theological notions of evil as privation there is a phenomenon of reduction and its interpretation is wholly negative. Conversely, as mentioned in the earlier part of this paper, for Jung, evil is a positive component of reality and an equal contrary to good—the symbols of Christ and Satan being the paramount examples of the split between good and evil and of the contradiction of the Christian myth. White repeatedly tried to clarify the Thomist logic to Jung in letters and written papers on the subject: ‘Good and evil, in the abstract, are indeed opposites, but they prove on reflection to be not two positive contraries—äquivalente Gegensätze as Jung calls them—but contradictories.’ (White 1960:153). He could agree with Jung that they were opposites, but not equivalent contraries.

In the beginning White thought that the difference was ‘unimportant

30 In Metaphysics Aristotle argued that goodness is the governing principle of the universe, he listed various types of privation and evil as privation of good. See Aristotle Metaphysics, book IX; as for St. Augustine’s view, see Augustine Confessions, book III.
and academic’, but as their discussion on these matters took shape he came
to realize that it ‘affected his value-judgements of almost everything.’
(White, in Lammers 2007a:182). Jung’s ambivalent God-image disturbed
his belief and the orthodox depiction of a perfect and good God beyond
the opposites of good and evil, until in 1949 White, for the first time,
publicly corrected Jung’s ‘inferior theology’ in his Eranos lecture ‘Über
das Selbst’:

An elementary study of (for instance) St.Thomas’s sections in
the Prima Pars On the Good, On the Goodness of God, On Evil,
and On the Cause of Evil, should suffice to dispel Dr Jung’s
misunderstandings and misgivings, and to supply a metaphysic
which would account for the phenomena which concern him at
least as satisfactorily as the quasi-manichaean dualism which
he propounds. These somewhat confused and confusing pages
might be dismissed as just another infelicitous excursion of a
great scientist outside his own orbit … It is regrettable indeed
that, supported only by such naïve philosophizing, the most
pregnant movement in contemporary psychology should be
burdened with an irrelevant association with Gnostic dualism
(White 1949:399).

This happened to be a crucial turning point in their relationship and
warning of a ‘storm to come’––the impasse over the nature of evil had
spilled over from their private correspondence into the public arena: Jung
had more forcefully attacked the metaphysical definition of evil in his
lecture ‘Über das Selbst’, which was then followed by White’s critical
review; Jung’s lecture later became chapters four and five of Aion, where
he responded to White’s criticism in a footnote:

My learned friend Victor White O.P. … thinks he can detect a
Manichean streak in me…In addition to this my critic should
know that how very much I stress the unity of the self, this central
archetype which is a complexio oppositorum par excellence,
and that my leanings are therefore towards the very reverse of
dualism (Jung 1951, CW9ii:§112, n74).

From this point onwards their correspondence got ‘caught up
in linguistic disputes’ about God and evil in a most ‘obstinate point of
difference.’ (White 1960:75). White continued to propose theoretical
and conceptual distinctions, but the grounds of his arguments were not sufficient to convince Jung. They were still friends, but inevitably, one became more and more critical of the other. The following section addresses the course of their controversy chronologically, revealing the crescendo of the process until its culmination in White’s ‘Jung on Job’. Within six years both men would be dead, reconciled as friends in the end, but evil remained an intellectual dispute never to be resolved.

In March 1952 White published a series of revised lectures and essays in his book *God and the Unconscious*. Still making an effort at bridge-building, but nevertheless bluntly criticising Jung, White carefully considered:

There are very understandable reasons which have made it difficult for theologians and philosophers to take Jung’s work seriously. The obstacles to understanding are considerable, and should not be minimized … Regarding evil as having (apparently) some positive existence and reality of its own, Jung logically enough requires the admission of evil, not only into the “self”, the human totality, but also into the Godhead itself … which orthodox Christians must find quite inadmissible (White 1952:65, 75).

Jung, who had written a forward for this White’s book, continued to address some of the important differences between psychology and theology and used this opportunity to explain his criticism of the doctrine of the *privatio boni* once again: ‘Hence I feel at liberty to avail myself of the right of free criticism, so generously offered me by the author, and to lay my argument [on the *privatio boni*] before the reader.’ (Jung 1951, CW11:§456). At this point in spite of refusing to agree with Jung and defending the classic doctrine, White still considered the possibility of reaching some understanding after the overcoming of ‘strong resistances’:

Jung has our keenest support and sympathy in deploring the minimizing of evil which leads to its repression, with its devastating results for the individual psyche and society; but we are unable to find evidence that the conception of the *privatio boni* has contributed to this (White 1952:75-76, n1).

Two months later, in the Spring 1952, Jung sent White the manuscript of *Antwort auf Hiob* and White’s first response was very positive: ‘Thank
you a million for “Hiob”… I can hardly put it down. It is the most exciting and moving book I have read in years.’ Then, in the same letter he complained: ‘I do wish we could somehow resolve this deadlock about privatio boni,’ and towards the end he concluded in a most warm way: ‘I’ll be eternally grateful to you, whatever befall this difficulty with privatio boni.’ (White, in Lammers 2007a:181-182). As shown in the example of the letter above, their intellectual debate carried on in the midst of sharing profound mixed feelings and anxieties between friends. Throughout this year their discussion concerning the problem of evil reached its peak.31

During the years of 1953 and 1954 White was again plagued by doubts considering whether to stay in or leave his Order and the Church and confided to Jung:

… their God simply isn’t my God any more: my very clerical clothes have become a lie … I am just indescribably lonely, and it’s some relief to me to tell you … I must confess there are times when I wish to heaven I had never heard of your psychology (and some of your disciples!); and yet I tremble to think what would have happened if I hadn’t! (White, in Lammers 2007a:216-217).

Jung’s psychology held an attraction-rejection paradox for White: the closer he got to understand it, the more threatening it was to his faith and the more incompatible it was to his theology. Supported by Jung, White decided to remain a Dominican and signed the anti-modernist oath once again. Soon after this he received his STM degree, a prerequisite for his next career move as Regent of Studies in Oxford. This was a position that White very much looked forward to, as he would be responsible for the curriculum and training of new generations of Dominicans and, more importantly, he would have ‘great influence’ in how Aquinas would be taught at Blackfriars. Regrettably, because his professional life had been entangled with his friendship with Jung, a new conservative neo-Thomist was appointed to the job instead, and White was sent to California ‘in exile’ for five months.32 He was never to teach at Oxford again.

Meanwhile, the ongoing polemic with Jung and evil continued

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31 See especially their correspondence in April 1952, 30 June 1952 and 9 July 1952. White also stayed in Bollingen for ten days in July 1952 where the discussion between them carried on. Cit. in Lammers 2007a:293, n5.

in California, and both men began to anticipate the possible difficulties *Answer to Job* would bring in. In January 1955 White expressed:

> I am frankly relieved that “Answer to Job” has not yet appeared in the USA! … Already of course I am getting perplexed and indignant letters from England asking “What the hell…” It cost quite some sleepless nights, trying to write an article to explain what I think … I hope you find the result (which I will send you if and when is published) not too distressing; and especially that you will take into consideration for whom it is written (White, in Lammers 2007a:254).

To which Jung replied: ‘I know you will have some difficulties when my “Answer to Job” becomes public. I am sorry.’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:256). But none of them would have imagined how deeply the blow would cut and how painful the consequences would be for both of them. In March 1955 White wrote his review ‘Jung on Job’ for the journal *Blackfriars*. In it he publicly charged Jung with taking personal interpretation of scripture to an extreme, and in what amounted to an *ad hominem* attack included called the book ‘destructive and childish’, and accused Jung of being paranoid and questioning:

> … is he, after the manner of his own “Yahweh” duped by some satanic trickster into purposely torturing his friends and devotees? Or is he, more rationally, purposely putting them to test to discover how much they will stand rather than admit the fallibility of their master—or how many, more Job-like, will venture to observe that the Emperor has appeared in public without his clothes? (White 2007:352).33

Some of the reasons why White lost his ‘rhetorical control’ have been pointed out by several scholars (Lammers 1994, 2007a; Weldon 2007; Cunningham 1981, 2007). First of all, although he had been trained as a priest to obey, he had not fully accepted the humiliation of having his appointment as Regent set aside by the office in Rome. Second, he was extremely frustrated after having spent ten years in attempting to translate Jungian psychology to theologians to have his efforts hindered, and third he was deeply hurt for no longer being trusted as teacher within his Order.

33 In 1959 White also criticised *Job* in his review of Jung’s *Psychology and Religion*, but in a more balanced way this time.
Thus, the anger White felt for having his career jeopardized within his Order was outwardly directed at Jung (Lammers 2007a:258-265; 1994:101-109; Weldon 2007:181-187; Rutte 2009:308-310). Nevertheless, White is not consistent in his attack and before the review was published he wrote to Jung asking for forgiveness: ‘[…] there are some passages I would now wish to have kept to myself […] and I am penitent that I have laid my criticism on so thick.’ (White, in Lammers 2007a:259-260). Two weeks later Jung responded to White:

I am grateful for the fact that you call me to order and that your judgment—be it correct or not—does not spare me, so I assume God will listen to a mortal voice, just as much he has given His ear to Job, when this little tortured worm complained about His paradoxical, amoral nature. Just as Job lifted his voice so that everybody could hear him, I have come to the conclusion, that I better risk my skin and do my worst or best, to shake the unconsciousness of my contemporaries. […] in our time everything is at stake, and one should not mind the little disturbance I am causing […]. I have hesitated and resisted long enough, until I have made up my mind to say what I think (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:261-262).

Jung then gave White a psychological reading:

Your criticism, of my motive concerning “Job” is certainly unjust and you know it. It is an expression of the mental torment you had to undergo in USA—and in Europe […]. Having chosen the life of a monk you have separated yourself from the world and exposed yourself to the eternal fires of the other. Somewhere you have to pay the toll either to Man or to God and in the end you will discover that both overcharge you (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:263).

Here Jung pointed out that because White was ‘being fed by an institution for services received’ he had to be cautious of the way he expressed himself. An important point that confirms this was made by another priest who was expelled from the Dominicans as he was advised by his canon law attorney: ‘You must remember that taking on the Vatican is like standing in front of a train. You cannot win; no one ever has.’ (Rutte 2009:50). White remained in his Order and realised that it was
impossible to reconcile the Jungian position with traditional theology. The ramifications of their differences were too deeply rooted and there was no possible compromise: for White theology was ‘the queen of sciences’; thus it had primacy over psychology and—God, not the psyche—had the ultimate authority (see Weldon 2007:219).

Despite all this, White apologized for attacking Jung so harshly: ‘I do indeed deeply regret having published that article without any regard for your feelings or my own feelings for you.’ (White, in Lammers 2007a:268). He, nevertheless, still continued to write antagonistic letters, and one of which included a list of several ‘Problems Arising from the Publication of Answer to Job’:

*Answer to Job* is presumably to be read, not as an essay in theology, metaphysics or exegesis, but in practical psychology… What then is its practical psychological content and implication? First and foremost it seems to be this: God (not me) is unconscious, divided in himself, moody, capricious, purposeless—but notably evil as well as good. Evil is an ultimate and irreducible constituent of reality to be accepted—not a privation which can be supplied by good, or out of which good can be brought. My ‘evil’ is no more my concern. It is ‘all God’s fault’ and I can and should lay all the blame there … the personal shadow is transferred to the ‘divine’, ‘collective’ sphere and left there. If these are not the psychological implications of the book, they are the obvious ones which in fact are being drawn, and urgently need the author’s corrections (White, in Lammers 2007a:268-272).

Thus in spite of voicing his regret towards his friend, and later having removed several passages in the edited version of ‘Jung on Job’ in his book *Soul and Psyche* (1960) (White 1960:233-240), the publication of White’s review was a blow that cut both ways: he separated himself definitively from Jung’s framework and damaged the friendship for good:

For myself, it seems that our ways must, at least to some extent, part. I shall never forget, and please God I shall never lose, what I owe to your work & your friendship … ‘I hope you do not doubt my friendship, wrong-headed & heartless though it sometimes is. Poor Job at least had friends—however stupid (White, in Lammers 2007a:273).
White continued to write to Jung (three letters in 1955, one in 1956 and two in 1958), but Jung did not reciprocate anymore. At this period Emma Jung was diagnosed with terminal cancer and the grieving Jung, consumed by her illness, asked White: ‘Please put conventionality aside and do not feel under any obligation… a conventional call means nothing to me, and a straightforward talk may be painful and not desirable.’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:266). White’s last effort to clarify his polemic with Jung was the essay ‘Kinds of Opposites’ which appeared in the Festschrift in 1955 for Jung’s 80th birthday, where he discussed Aquinas’s treatment of good and evil and provided the vocabulary of his main intellectual difference between him and Jung (Lammers 2007a:255-256, n10). It was written within weeks of his public reaction to Answer to Job.

After a three-year break the two men met briefly and for the last time in 1958 in Küsnacht. In April 1959 White had a near fatal scooter accident that seriously impaired him, which coincided with the Roman Curia taking steps towards suspending the sale of his God and the Unconscious. After hearing about White’s accident Jung contacted him for the first time after their fall out: ‘Concerning my doubts about your general attitude I must mention, in self defense, that you expressed yourself publicly in such a negative way about my work that I really did not know what your real attitude would be.’ (Jung to White, 21 October 1959, in Lammers 2007a:282). To which White replied:

I am somehow moved to send you the assurance of my love for you… I have been, & still am, sorely perplexed to understand when & where I am supposed to have done this… and, although [there are] matters on which I cannot see eye to eye with you, I would never question your sincerity (let alone publicly), as you have appear to question or deny mine… (White to Jung, 18 March 1960, in Lammers 2007a:283-284).

Both men took steps towards reconciliation but still could not avoid the points of discord.

In March 1960 White was diagnosed with intestinal cancer and

34 In the spring of 1955 Emma Jung discovered that her cancer was inoperable, she was able to take part in Jung’s 80th birthday celebration and died on 28 November 1955.

35 White fractured his skull, four ribs, a scapula, lost his vision on the left eye and the left hearing. When his book was out of print Rome attempted to have its Imprimatur withdrawn because of the preface written by Jung, but the book was not suppressed in the end (Weldon 2007:210, 293, n137, 197; Lammers 2007a:110-111).
Jung, who was not that well himself, having had a heart embolism a month earlier, and not aware of White’s cancer being terminal, continued their dispute. This time he addressed White as Job, perhaps suggesting that the painful experiences White was going through had to do with the dark side of Yahweh:

Since you are very much in the situation of the suffering Job
I shall not play the role of his friends, not even of the wise Elihu. I humbly submit the suggestion, you might apply your personalistic point of view to your own person.

After a long psychological explanation Jung ended the letter in a most friendly way: ‘I think of you in ever lasting friendship … thus I ask for your forgiveness, as it is incumbent on one, who has given cause for scandal and vexation.’ (Jung to White, 25 March 1960, in Lammers 2007a:284-286). White was extremely pleased to hear from Jung again and during the final weeks of his life he wrote two more letters still striving for some intellectual closure. In the first one he explained that once *Antwort auf Hiob* had been published it had to be considered objectively because it raised very many difficulties and problems for many people besides myself… I think these questions cannot be disregarded by anybody who is keen on spreading and continuing the wonderful work you have begun, and which “Antwort” seems implicitly to repudiate (White to Jung, 6 May 1960, in Lammers 2007a:289-291).

In the last letter, written two days later, White concluded:

I am more convinced than ever of the importance of your pioneer work for humanity, even for those who cannot agree with every word you say but have to take part in the “dialectic discussion” with you … I do not know if it is true that you have been a “petrus scandali” to me (as you say you have), but to the extent that you may have been, I think that I can honestly say that I am grateful for it (White to Jung, 8 May 1960, in Lammers 2007a:291-292).

Victor White died two weeks after this letter, at fifty-seven years of
The trajectory of the Jung-White personal relationship and their intellectual collision over the nature of evil led to substantial losses and suffering. The degree of their involvement, the intensity of their discussion and the magnitude of their interaction led to the psychological hypothesis that the crucial events that happened around them were not unrelated to the phenomena they were discussing. Lammers has written of a force-field in which they were both caught and theirs was a shared tragedy (Lammers 2005:9). White scholar and chair of the theology department at University of Lancaster, Adrian Cunningham, believes that White’s life was shortened by the discussion and disagreements with Jung (Cunningham 1981:324). Catholic priest and Jungian analyst, John Dourley sustains Jung’s view that White could not make the transition offered by psychology and chose the transformation of death (Dourley 2009:85).

So is it valid to speculate that the Jung-White polemic became a living testimony of the ‘pleromatic drama for which mankind serves as a tragic chorus’, as discussed in *Answer to Job*? (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW11:§686) What it is possible to affirm is that the impact of Jung’s argument against the *privatio* was enormous for White. With the publication of *Answer to Job* the problem of evil had been forced onto God and it was impossible for White to accept that there was evil in the transcendent God of his faith. Goodness and Being were interchangeable in White’s theology and Jung’s insistence on making evil real, made it good. The implications of such a position, of understanding the split between good and evil as reflective of a contradiction in the creator himself, proved to be incompatible with

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36 Victor White died on 22 May 1960 and Jung on 06 June 1961.

37 It started with Jung’s heart embolism a year after meeting White in 1946, followed by the gradual wrecking of White’s career, then Emma’s Jung terminal cancer and death in 1955, White’s near fatal motor scooter’s accident in 1959, Jung had another heart embolism in 1960, finally White’s cancer and early death in 1960.

38 Jung described this in a letter about White: ‘I have now seen quite a number of people die in the time of a great transition, reaching as it were the end of their pilgrimage in sight of the Gates where the way bifurcates to the land of Hereafter and to the future of mankind and its spiritual adventure.’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:306).

39 Lammers offered an important conceptual distinction on the problem of evil in Jung’s writings that would have helped White to better understand Jung. She distinguished two types of evil: the evil of myth and the evil of history. For Jung, the former holds a dynamic interplay of the opposites that are in need of each other, like the left and right hand of God and the symbol of yin and yang. The latter consists of all the horrors of historical events and wars, which show the human capacity for destructive actions and actual harm. ‘Mythic evil must be attended to, so that historical evils might be fought against.’ (Lammers 1994:180-184).
his religious view, since the belief in God’s goodness is absolutely vital and central for Christian faith. In *Job* Jung corrupted the Christian truth that evil arises with men not in God, and inverted the traditional doctrine of man in the image of God, to God in the image of man. Thus Jung’s heretical interpretation posited the idea that mankind is set against the polarities and the contradictions of the God-image and, by the same token, they correspond to positive and negative aspects of human nature.

For White the transformation of the Western God image applied to human beings not to God, but for Jung the Western God-image had both a dark side and potential for transformation. Even though their discussion ‘generated more heat than light’ (White 1952:75, n1) and the distance between their thoughts could not be bridged, it was the incompatibilities of their viewpoints and their efforts in educating each other that helped Jung formulate his mature thought (Stein 2007:x). White, as a catalyst and the ‘spark that ignited’ (Stein 2003:16) Jung’s passionate disapproval of the *privatio boni* and their extended dialogue, appear to have been a ‘formative influence’ on *Answer to Job* and on Jung’s late alchemical work (Dourley 2007:283). Notwithstanding White’s accusations, Jung never was a dualist, and was ‘deeply convinced of the unity of the Self’ (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:142); indeed his psychology responded to the dualism that he observed ‘lurking in the shadows of the Christian Doctrine.’ (ibid.). One perhaps could say that his religious imagination of the Self as a *complexio oppositorum* makes him a dual-aspect monist whereby the evolving myth of the necessary incarnation of God no longer attributes the opposites ‘God’ and ‘man’ as it was before, but rather the opposites within the God-image itself (Jung, MDR:370-371).

**CONCLUSION**

The question as to whether evil is a human phenomenon or whether it has a metaphysical structure still hovers over a post-Christian and a post-Jungian world. Be that as it may, psychologically speaking *Answer to Job* can be experienced as a ‘cup of suffering’ being passed to the ordinary, mortal, modern man in which the ‘bill of the Christian era is presented to us’ (Jung, CW18:§1661). Christianity inherited Yahwistic contradictions personified in the metaphysical opposition between Christ and Satan (Dourley 2007:284). In this split Christ incarnated the good side of God and presumably delivered mankind from evil. However,

the dark God has slipped the atom bomb and chemical weapons into [man’s] hands and given him the power to empty out the
apocalyptic vials of wrath on his fellow creatures. Since he has been granted an almost godlike power, he can no longer remain blind and unconscious (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW11:§747).

These telling lines announce the new dispensation: mankind has become an essential component of the divine drama and is forced to become responsible for how the dark side of God manifests through the human nature. The battle of good and evil, the ‘raging conflict of opposites’ is to be fought within the soul of the individual (Jung, in Lammers 2007a:264-265; Stein 2007:315). That is, to come to grips with evil more consciously means, not only, the acceptance that each person contains both darkness and light, but also, the self-knowledge of ‘how much good we can do and what crimes we are capable of.’ (MDR:362).

Today we are still, individually and collectively, striving to understand the pathological motivations for evil acts and the connection of violence with religion. Both history and the current political climate show that when evil breaks out, violence escalates, and what would be normally repressed becomes acceptable; and in the end countries go to war. What is more, the consequences and the aftermath of evil acts are just what they have always been: death of innocents, marginalised communities, millions of refugees with very little hope for realistic resolution.

Lying at the heart of Jung’s Answer to Job was a pressing message, valid in his time and still valid today:

We have experienced things so unheard of and so staggering that the question of whether such things are in any way reconcilable with the idea of a good God has become burningly topical. It is no longer a problem for experts in theological seminaries, but a universal religious nightmare, to the solution of which even a layman in theology like myself can, or perhaps must, make a contribution (Jung 1952, ATJ, CW11:§736).

This concern brings the topic closer to contemporary research and debate about a new Anthropocene epoch.40 Simon L. Lewis (Professor of Global Change Science) and Mark A. Maslin (Professor of Earth Systems

40 Combining the Greek words for ‘human’ and ‘recent time’, scientists have named this new period of time the Anthropocene. It describes when Homo sapiens became a geological superpower, setting Earth on a new path in its long development. The Anthropocene is a turning point in the history of humanity, the history of life, and the history of the Earth itself. It is a new chapter in the chronicle of life and a new chapter of the human story (Lewis and Maslin 2018:5).
Science), both at University College London, have pointed out that the chemical signal from nuclear fallout is one of the many human impacts on the environment. In 2015, a new model was proposed which recognised the first demonstration of a nuclear weapon as marking the death of a previous epoch, the Holocene, and the beginning of a new one, the Anthropocene: ‘the nuclear blast conducted on 16 July 1945 in the Jornada del Muerto desert, New Mexico, is the ground zero of the Anthropocene’ (Lewis & Maslin 2018:291). The scientific evidence that the power of human actions has created a new geological epoch, somehow confirms Jung’s view that even the darkest shadow represents an aspect of every single one of us.

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The importance of the lectures given by Jung at the ETH in Zurich does not need to be highlighted. The lectures were delivered a few years after Jung’s period of self-experimentation, and at a time when Jung had begun the study of alchemy, and after he had resumed the academic career that he had abandoned in 1914. The spectrum of knowledge covered by the cycle of lectures is impressive, as shown already in this first volume, which covers the course delivered during the winter semester 1933-1934 on the history of modern psychology.

Jung begins the lectures with his own version of the history of modern psychology, which for the first time offers a different narrative than the Freudocentric one, thus representing, at the time, a significant contribution to the fields of history of ideas and history of psychology. Unsurprisingly, this version of history is given from Jung’s perspective, because Jung saw the development outlined here as culminating in his own psychology. Beginning with a reference to astrology, and continuing with Descartes’ views on the soul and the monopoly of the idea of soul by the Church at that time, Jung outlines the development of ideas about the mind by philosophers from the 17th century onwards: first in Germany by Leibniz, Kant and Hegel, among others; he then follows with an outline of English 18th century philosophers and French Enlightenment thinkers. Jung’s narrative then moves through Carus, Schopenhauer, von Hartmann, arriving all the way to the late 19th century and the contribution of thinkers like Ribot, Janet and William James. All of this extensive historical account is given at breakneck speed in the first five lectures.

The second part of this cycle of lectures (beginning with the fifth lecture) consists of an introduction to analytical psychology, two case studies (the Seeress of Prevorst, published by Justinus Kerner, and Helene Smith, made famous by Théodore Flournoy in his From India to the Planet Mars), and the presentation of a diagram on the localization...
of consciousness. In this second part, Jung also discusses the major ideas of his mature work: the objective reality of the unconscious, the atemporality and a-spaciality of the unconscious, the archetypes, and even mentions the transcendent function—a concept that Jung had written about in an essay from 1916, but which was only distributed within the Psychological Club in Zurich and was only published in 1957.

Five lectures (lectures 5 to 9) are devoted to the Seeress of Prevorst and two to Helene Smith (lectures 12 and 13), which is of considerable importance, given the influence these two case studies exerted on Jung’s thought and work. In particular, these two works were seminal for his interpretation of mediumship, and for the seances he conducted with his cousin, Helene Preiswerk, as can be seen from the first volume of CW. These lectures will thus be particularly useful for those interested in Jung’s views on parapsychological phenomena and visions, as they provide information about his thoughts on mediumship in the 1930s.

Interestingly enough, toward the end of the lectures Jung offers a diagram on the localization of consciousness, which the editor, Ernst Falzeder, considers to be complementary to the psychological typology published in 1921. The diagram places the subject at the intersection of inner and outer worlds, each of which is composed of several diametrically opposed layers, in which consciousness can be located. These layers go from the subject to objective reality, passing through the domains of the objects and ideas. The final objective reality, be it internal or external, is here ‘the concept of God’.

Thus, this diagram allows one to locate the attitudes or psychological forms of consciousness and to follow potential movements of consciousness, for instance from the experience of the shadow to mystical experience, according to the five layers of the interior experience outlined in this model. In this context, Jung explains the way in which he leads some of his patients towards the unconscious. He clarifies this diagram with the examples of the Seeress of Prevorst and Helene Smith, whose cases he had just presented and analysed, as well as those of Freud, Rockefeller, the ‘normal man’, Niklaus von der Flüe, Goethe and Nietzsche. The relation between depersonalization (or here: de-subjectivisation) and inner or outer objective reality is here emphasized in an unprecedented way. These lectures are a must read, if only for this model of the mind, which Jung does not present anywhere else.

Furthermore, readers who are more broadly interested in altered states of consciousness, or in the application of psychedelics and meditation to psychotherapy will find a captivating echo in Jung’s speculations, as these may help them work through their own models of interiority.
The lectures also show Jung as a brilliant orator and capture some of the sparkle of his humour and wittiness—something that is not always seen from the Collected Works. Thus, one can for instance read: ‘Probably, this idea also informs cannibalism. Ladies and gentlemen, cannibalism, however, is not practiced just for the fun of it! Nor is it due to a lack of meat, nor the cultivation of cuisine. In actual fact it is magic’ (25). It is also worth highlighting the abundance of patient cases he presents—some of them familiar from other works—according to the motto ‘Psychology consists of good stories!’ (88).

I must here also point out the incredible editorial work that the editor, Ernst Falzeder, has undertaken for this publication. As no manuscript exists for these lectures, the lectures were reconstructed from different shorthand notes, written in German, as well as from the English notes edited by Barbara Hannah and Elizabeth Welsh, so as to deliver the content as faithfully as possible, with a concern for transparency: whenever several versions differ or are not clear enough, and the editor cannot decide, he gives the content of each version—and sometimes fills in the gaps with his own research when it is a question of a particular work (for example the complicated issue of the solar circles described by the Seeress of Prevorst).

The critical apparatus adds an important dimension to the text: the footnotes sometimes take more space on the page than the original text, but this does not deprive the reading of its fluency, but rather complements Jung’s discourse, which tends sometimes to be superficial because of the extent of the topics he covers. For example, in the first two lectures, Jung treats of the works and ideas of a plethora of thinkers: Descartes, Burchardt, Leibniz, Wolff, Tetens, Wundt, Hartley, Kant, Hegel, Schelling, Berkeley, Hume, Priestley, Reid, Hamilton, Stewart. Sometimes, Jung himself makes a mistake, which is dutifully corrected by the editor: for instance, on the origin of the concept of the ‘unconscious’ (32, footnote 158).

The cross-references are greatly developed, which is significant for any reader studying Jung’s work. On this point, one finds a copious amount of references to the CW, as well as comments based on unpublished and archive material, such as letters and papers found in the ETH archives, the Protocols to Memories, Dreams, Reflections, the Zofingia Lectures or the German Seminar of 1931, soon to be published by the Philemon Foundation. The linguistic skills of the editor are also extraordinary, notably in Latin, French and of course in German. These skills allow him to bring to the readership elements of knowledge that are not available in English alone (but only in the Gesammelte Werke for example), to rectify some translation errors (for instance in the case of the Seeress of Prevorst) and to deliver original
translations from these languages. Furthermore, some mistakes in the original student notes are also clarified and likely alternatives are proposed. In conclusion, one finds in this volume, which is of first-rate importance in Jung History, a thrilling content, brilliantly edited by Falzeder, despite the mountain of difficulties we imagine he must have faced. One can only hope that the next instalment of ETH lectures will be as exciting as this one, and that it will build a meaningful bridge towards Jung’s publication of *Psychology and Alchemy* in 1944, shedding a new light on its composition.

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He who seeks shall find, but only after he has surrendered his being to
the guidance of the gods.

L. Klages (RR, p. 253)

Hermann Hesse felt so ‘deeply moved’ by the psychological profundity of Klages’s *Of Cosmogonic Eros* (*Vom kosmologischen Eros*) that he claimed that in that work ‘something almost inexpressible has found the right words’ (Schröder 1972:78). Oswald Spengler, the German philosopher mostly known for *The Decline of the West* (*Der Untergang des Abendlandes*), pointed out that ‘in the field of scientific psychology, Klages towers over all of his contemporaries, including even the academic world’s most renowned authorities’ (Spengler 1963:605). Alfred Kubin considered Klages nothing less than ‘a scientist of the highest rank’ and ‘the most important psychologist of our time’ (Schröder 1972:82). Karl Jaspers even compared Klages’s work to C. G. Jung’s, only to affirm the superiority of the former: ‘Jung […] lacks the impressive vividness of Klages and his work has nothing like the same weight. He is the deft master of all the means of interpretation but the inspiration is missing. Klages has inspiration. […] As the reader emerges from many of Klages’s pages, he is struck by a winged quality which is lacking from the work of Jung’ (Jaspers 1963:334). The question that inevitably follows from this is: how can it be possible, that a figure of such weight for his contemporaries has ended up entirely forgotten, or at best, glossed over in our time? Paul Bishop’s latest book (2018) attempts to fill this gap by giving us the very first comprehensive introduction to Klages’s work in English, thus beginning to tackle what years ago Richard Sheppard told the author himself in Oxford, at the time of his research on Jung and Nietzsche: ‘no one realises how important Klages really is’ (xxvi).

Ludwig Klages (1872-1956) was indeed an exceptional figure. In
the bohemian quarter of Munich, Schwabing, he became involved with the George-Kreis, centred around the activities of the Symbolist poet Stefan George, and the Munich Cosmic Circle, based on the visionary ideas of Alfred Schuler. He mastered the study of hand-writing analysis (graphology), from which he developed a science of ‘expression’ (Ausdruckswissenschaft, 53) leading to an in-depth psychology of ‘character’ (Charakterkunde, 57) or ‘characterology’. Akin to Jung’s Psychological Types (Psychologische Typen, 1921), he built up an entire typological system, based on the recognition of the driving forces of ‘self-assertion’ and ‘self-devotion’ (60-61) as the two fundamental attitudes of man towards life, also identified as the masculine ‘spirit’ (der ‘Geist’) and the feminine ‘soul’ (die ‘Seele’). Klages’s entire philosophical system largely inclined to the latter, and could be characterised by its capacity for enthusiasm and its ability to unleash the vital forces—by a Nietzschean disposition to ‘say yes’ to life (Ja-Sagen) beyond the narrowness of rationality and egocentric purposes. On this basis, Klages, a forerunner of modern ecology among other things, developed a strikingly profound Lebensphilosophie, a vitalistic project aiming to restore the force of nature and life to the heart of Western philosophy.

Paul Bishop lists six main reasons why an outsider like Klages may have disappeared from the European intellectual scene after the Second World War. Among them, he ‘was never a big player within the academy’, he ‘had never been a “public intellectual” in the conventional sense’, his works were scarcely available in the bookshops (neither are they today), and his philosophical discourse was ‘simply too difficult’ to engage lay readers (38-39). In addition to that, two other important aspects should be taken into account. That the name of Klages has been wrongly and superficially, as once and for all demonstrated by Bishop, associated with National Socialist ideology (34-35). And that, quite simply, Klages’s work has been hardly available in English at all! This is, in fact, we believe, an outstanding merit of Bishop’s book: that it provides the reader with original translations of many passages (which were previously only available in German) and of key philosophical terms from Klages’s works. Given the exceptional complexity and richness of Klages’s use of German, the importance of this contribution cannot be emphasised enough.

As the title suggests, Bishop regards his book as a ‘toolkit’, nay, a ‘vitalist toolkit’. He explains this in two senses, as follows: ‘first, because it provides us with the conceptual tools required to understand Ludwig Klages’s Lebensphilosophie or philosophy of life; and second, because those concepts in turn can be used to construct a life based on vitalist principles.’ (xx). Following this ambitious plan, the book is divided into
three parts. Chapter 1, ‘Life’, offers a meticulous overview of Klages’s life and intellectual roots, based on an impressive historical research concerning the events, figures, achievements, and failures that took place in his career. Bishop gives a prominent place to the philosopher’s highly ambivalent reception of Nietzsche, in which a profound sense of affinity comes to terms with the recognition of the ‘devastating self-contradiction’ that ‘the same thinker who, like no-one else, reveals the crimes perpetrated against life by the will-to-power, should try to understand life itself as precisely this will-to-power’ (22). Interestingly, Bishop suggests that Klages, like Nietzsche, ‘understood all too well the power of the daimon: but whereas he […] had been able to come to terms with his daimons, Nietzsche for his part, had struggled—and ultimately succumbed’ (28). Chapter 2, ‘Works and Key Ideas’, consists of nine ‘conceptual tools’ corresponding to nine of the most important Klagesian ideas, namely the ‘science of “expression”’, the ‘study of “character”’, the ‘theory of the will’, the ‘genesis of consciousness’, the ‘doctrine of “the reality of images”, the ‘opposition of “spirit” and “soul”, ‘Schablonisierung’—‘the problem in the modern world of “becoming stereotyped”’ (94)—, ‘images’ as ‘elementary souls’, and ‘specific happiness’. Each ‘Conceptual tool’ is carefully introduced and scrutinised by Bishop, guiding the reader via an exhaustive, yet somewhat contrived, attempt at covering the whole of Klages’s thought. Finally, Chapter 3, ‘For Advanced Readers — Selections from Ludwig Klages’, takes us even more deeply into the breadth of Klages’s philosophy, by presenting a further selection of passages from his works, originally chosen by Hans Kern, expanded by Hans Kasdorff, and published as Of the Meaning of Life (Vom Sinn des Lebens, 1940; 1943; 1982). This section lets Klages’s exuberant voice speak more plainly than the previous ones, allowing the reader to directly enjoy the vibrant, Dionysian language which characterises his ‘cosmogonic reflections’. The book’s narrative is beautifully accompanied by rare pictures of Klages collected by the author from the Deutsches Literaturarchiv, in Marbach am Neckar.

All in all, Bishop’s monograph makes for compelling reading for all those who are interested to know better the life and vitalist principles of this very unconventional German thinker. In this respect, the reader finds in the referred toolkit-like structure of the book an optimal companion, strongly bringing out the qualities of exhaustiveness, ease of consultation, and clarity of exposition. Nevertheless, Bishop’s book presents not only the strength of a ‘toolkit’, but also, arguably, its contraindication. Namely, the risk of losing much of the spontaneous beauty of Klages’s writing and originality of mind, which is, first of all, deeply ensconced in his expressive power.
BOOK REVIEWS

He is above all a rhythmical proser of Dionysus’s party, an inspired poet-philosopher constantly in search of the word in harmony with the erotic movement of nature, categories at best expressed in aphoristic, radiant writing. We are afraid that this is something which a ‘toolkit’ and, more generally, a scholarly work, can hardly contain, without running the risk that vitalism will take revenge on the very rational attempts at systematising what vitalism first defends. As Bishop himself quotes from Goethe at the very beginning of his book, ‘the point of life’ is not a philosophical statement. It is just life. It is very hard for us rational jugglers, therefore, not to recognise ourselves in what Bishop correctly acknowledges towards the end of his work: ‘the difficulty we have in understanding Klages’s argumentation might even be seen to confirm his thesis: we are so saturated with Geist that we can no longer hear what the Seele is telling us’ (81).

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