

POSSIBLE BOOKS: Carl Gustav Jung: The Collective Dream, Part 6



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POSSIBLE BOOKS: Carl Gustav Jung: The Collective Dream, Part 5



SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1

The theory of literature that Jung propounded has been in existence now posthumously for more than thirty years and has inspired the production of a myriad of works of Jungian literary criticism long before the appearance of this published volume by “the master.” Most recently, we note the prominence given to the Trickster figure by Gary Snyder in his “New Nature Poetics” (*A Place in Space*, 1995, p. 171). By way of Marie-Louise von Franz, one of the theory’s major exponents for decades (through her books *Puer Aeternus* and *Shadow and Evil in Folktales*), images of primordial images have reentered literature consciously through the poems of Robert Bly and through his discourses with *The Shadow* (*A Little Book on the Human Shadow*, 1988). Directly from the works of Jung have come

the pattern of the novels of the Canadian Robertson Davies, who is in line of descent from Jung's German adherents, Herman Hesse and Thomas Mann, and the last collections of short stories by Jack London (*The Red One* and *On the Makaloa Mat*). Acquaintanceship with Jung's theories lend archetypal significance to the characters of the novels of D. H. Lawrence and Patrick White, and two plays by Eugene O'Neill, *The Great God Brown* (1925) and *The Emperor Jones* (1921), bear witness to the author's reading of Jung.

In the early 1920s, around the time that Jung himself first related archetypes and dream symbols to literature, other literary critics applied his science to literature in tentative essays. After these first beginnings, it took surprisingly long for Jungian criticism to develop. The two pioneering works were published by English women, Maud Bodkin and Elizabeth Drew. *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934), Bodkin's book, rich and sensitive, discusses her own responses, and those of some other well-known critics, to the archetypal patterns of rebirth, heaven, hell, devil, hero, and God in European writers like Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, and T. S. Eliot. For many years hers was the only extensive Jungian study of literature.

After the Second World War, when Jungian criticism slowly began to gain ground, more so in America than in England and Europe, the second landmark in Jungian literary criticism appeared: *T. S. Eliot: The Design of His Poetry* (1949) presents the perceptions of Elizabeth Drew on the major poetic achievements of T. S. Eliot in light of psychoanalytic theory. In the brutal figure of Apeneck Sweeney she sees the projection of T. S. Eliot's Shadow; in his famous long poem *The Wasteland*, she sees his archetypal quest for meaning amidst the spiritual aridity of modern society; in the poem "Ash Wednesday," she sees descriptions of a series of meetings with powerful positive anima figures; in *Four Quartets* she sees Eliot's poetic career come to a close with the

achievement of psychic wholeness expressed in symbols of quaternities and in the centering of the mandala in the image of the "still point of the turning world." Her book provides an example of what is possibly the most fruitful way to apply Jung's psychology to literature: illuminating, sensitive, and sensible interpretation that does not reduce the work of art to something else. In the work of literary critics like Richard Chase, Francis Fergusson, Philip Wheelwright, and the "archetypalist" Northrop Frye (author of *Anatomy of Criticism*, 1954), the influence of Jung's combination of psychology and myth is clear, but their studies apply only to plot patterns, genres, and literary conventions. Jung's most influential followers—Erich Neumann (*The Origins and History of Consciousness*, 1949; *The Great Mother*, 1955), Joseph Campbell (*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 1949; *The Masks of God*, 4 vols., 1959–1968), and James Hillman (*Re-visioning Psychology*, 1975; *The Dream and the Underworld*, 1979; *Healing Fiction*, 1983)—do not only apply Jung's idea of the "archetype" to literature as a structuring element, they study the psychological aspects of literary characters and symbols, both in themselves and as expressions of the author's collective psyche.

The great stimulus for literary application of Jung's ideas came in the 1960s through the radical questioning of the youth counterculture. In the 1970s we were given a number of Jungian studies of Shakespeare; two or more each of Blake, Melville, and Doris Lessing; a pleasant and witty book on Tolkien; and a brilliant study of H. P. Lovecraft's horror fiction. There are now Jungian books on Bunyan, Keats, the Brontë sisters, D. H. Lawrence, W. B. Yeats, E. M. Forster, Norman Mailer, Charles Olson, Patrick White, and Robertson Davies, but until the publication of *The Collective Dream: The Literary Criticism of C. G. Jung 1912–1961* there is not one by Jung himself!

In more recent years, a number of studies written from a Jungian perspective have contributed to the interpretation of

Poe, Emerson, Whitman, Dickinson, and Hawthorne. In 1975 the poet-critic Albert Gelpi published a study of the poems of the American Romantics (*The Tenth Muse: The Psyche of the American Poet*). His sensitive readings (he sees a poem as the poet's effort to integrate the conscious and unconscious aspects of his psyche) find fruitful support in archetypal psychology. Martin Bickman's excellent cumulative study *The Unsounded Centre* (1980) summarizes and extends some of the work done by critics in the 1970s. One of these critics, Barton Levi St. Armand, relates Poe's known interest in hermeticism and alchemy to interpretations of some of Poe's stories, which Armand sees as journeys toward the reconciliation of psychological opposites. Bickman himself uses anima theories to explore the feminine elements in Poe's work, and he argues that Poe's theme of psychic dissolution includes a complementary vision of psychic expansion.

Hermann Melville, the most mythical and symbolical of American authors, has been the subject of more than twenty Jungian interpretations, four of them of book length. In the one-hundred-page introduction that established his reputation as a Melville critic, Henry Murray gives an uncommonly thorough and perceptive analysis of Melville's wildly uneven novel *Pierre*. In *Ishmael* (1956), a fine Jungian study named for the narrator of the tale of Moby Dick, James Baird distinguishes six archetypal symbols; the most striking, of course, is the mythic "chaos-dragon," the white whale.

The entire history of Jungian literary criticism is reported by university lecturer Jos von Meurs in the introductory survey to his book *Jungian Literary Criticism, 1920–1980: An Annotated, Critical Bibliography of Works in English*. According to that report, there are excellent Jungian critiques written by literary scholars Evelyn Hinz, Lorelei Cederstrom, Nancy Bailey, Annis Pratt, and Stephanie Demetrakopoulos.

Supplement 2

Jung makes a similar statement about the dreams of individuals: "Dreams may sometimes announce certain situations long before they actually happen. This is not necessarily a miracle or a form of precognition. Many crises in our lives have a long unconscious history. We move toward them step by step, unaware of the dangers that are accumulating. But what we consciously fail to see is frequently perceived by our unconscious, which can pass the information on." ("The Function of Dreams," CW, Vol. 18)

Supplement 3

For details on this concept, see my note "The Possible Book and the Preface."

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POSSIBLE BOOKS: Carl Gustav Jung: The Collective Dream, Part 4



The Central Symbol

At the center of Jung's theory of literary criticism is his concept of the symbol. The symbol is brought to account for both poetry's mythic nature and its significance. A symbol is

the intimation of a meaning beyond the level of our present powers of comprehension. . . . When something is "symbolic," it means that a person divines its hidden, ungraspable nature and is trying desperately to capture in words the secret that eludes him.

The primordial image or archetype, whatever else it may be, is a mythological figure that constantly recurs in the course of history, and wherever creative fantasy is freely expressed, that fantasy appears in order to give form to the countless typical experiences of our ancestors. The recurrence of a mythical situation is always marked by a peculiar emotional intensity. We are stirred by an archetype expressed through the spoken word. Its impact summons up a voice that is stronger than our own. Whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices and transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind: that is the secret of great art and of its effect upon us.

The concept of the symbol is also brought to account for the rediscovery of authors. When a poet who has gone out of fashion is suddenly rediscovered, it means that our conscious development has reached a level at which the poet can tell us something new. That "something" was always present in the poet's work but was hidden in a symbol. The eyes of the poet's time, the eyes of the old society, could see only what they were accustomed to see, but when the spirit of a time is renewed, we are permitted to read the symbol's meaning anew. In his essay "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry," Jung warns us that experiences of this kind should

make us cautious.

Literary Analysis and Dream Analysis

Jung recognized the limits of psychological criticism, and he stated them clearly:

Whatever the psychologist has to say about poetry will be confined to the process of poetic creation and has nothing to do with its innermost essence. He can no more explain this than the intellect can describe or even understand the nature of feeling.

The creative aspect of life that finds its clear expression in a work of art baffles all attempts at rational formulation. And further:

The golden gleam of poetic creation is extinguished as soon as we apply to it the same corrosive method which we use in analyzing the fantasies of hysteria.

And finally:

In order to do justice to a work of art, analytical psychology must rid itself entirely of medical prejudice; for a work of art is not a disease, and consequently requires a different approach from the medical one.

For Jung, literary criticism, like dream analysis, is not so much a technique that can be learned and applied according to rule as it is a dialogical exchange between two personalities. The work of art, he says, “presents us with a finished picture, and this picture is amenable to analysis only to the extent that we can recognize it as a symbol.” To grasp the meaning of the work of art, “we must allow it to shape us as it once shaped him.” Psychology can do nothing toward the elucidation of the visionary imagery of the poet “except bring together materials for comparison and offer a terminology for

its discussion." In Jung's terminology, that which appears in the vision is the *collective unconsciousness*.

*

I hope my reader is now thoroughly convinced, if not of the complete viability of Jung's theory then at least of its great influence and fecundity. My initial claim, which may have sounded pretentious, is a legitimate one. The written material Jung has produced is undeniably substantial. Anyone who imagines that I exaggerate, or believes my claim is extravagant, has only to follow his or her own trail through these pages.

P.S. The volume I have been speaking of in this preface is, unfortunately, imaginary; that is, only a possible book. (See ***Supplement 3***) So far no publisher has accepted the task of constructing such a volume. This situation permits me to propose only the possibility of this possible book. The final arrangement of the book as yet remains to the reader, who may rough it out for him- or herself with the aid of the index entries that appear at the end of each volume of Jung's *Collected Works*.

R.G. Petrovich
1996

< [PART 5](#) >

POSSIBLE BOOKS: Carl Gustav

Jung: The Collective Dream, Part 3



Neurotic and Psychotic Analogs

The particular expressions of a vision, Jung tells us, can never exhaust the possibilities of that vision: "What is essential in a work of art is that it should rise far above the realm of personal life and speak from the spirit and heart of the poet as man to the spirit and heart of mankind. When a form of 'art' is primarily personal, it deserves to be treated as if it were a neurosis." Dante's presentiments are clothed in images that run the gamut of Heaven and Hell; Goethe brings in the Blocksberg and the infernal regions of Greek antiquity; Blake invents for himself indescribable eternal figures. In Gerard de Nerval's posthumously published prose poem *Aurelia*, the manuscript of which was found on the poet's body after his suicide, Jung unfolds a classic account of vision and psychosis proceeding in tandem. Nerval relates the history of his anima, and at the same time his psychosis, in a sequence of fantasy experiences that are largely descriptions of archetypal figures. The natural process of coming to terms with the unconscious which Nerval transfigures into poetry is the same process that occurs in the initial stages of certain forms of schizophrenia. Jung named it the "transcendent function" because it represents a function based on real and "imaginary" data. The transcendent process itself is a work that involves both action and suffering.

In James Joyce's *Ulysses*, too, Jung saw a suspicious resemblance to schizophrenic mentality, but, again, not the stereotyped and repetitious expressions that are characteristic marks of the compositions of the insane:

Joyce's inexpressibly rich and myriad-faceted language

unfolds itself in passages that creep along tapeworm fashion, terribly boring and monotonous, but the very boredom and monotony of it attain a grandeur that makes the book a Mahabharata of the world's futility and squalor.

In his amusing and confessional preface to the book, Jung calls it "a piece of technical virtuosity . . . a brilliant and hellish monster-birth" in which "every sentence rouses an expectation that is not fulfilled." He also calls it "cubistic"—the product of a modern artist who is following a current of collective life that arises from the collective unconscious of the psyche of modern man, "*who is in the process of shaking off a world that has become obsolete*" (emphasis is my own).

From Jung's two volumes of professional responses to the fantasies of his patient and analysand, Miss Miller, a young American literature student whose tour of Europe touched off a bout of schizophrenia, we have received several of Jung's most detailed commentaries. There are forty pages on Longfellow's "Hiawatha" and two pages on the famous refrain of Poe's "The Raven," a poem whose atmosphere anticipates the fate that befell Miss Miller: spiritual benightedness. Reference to the neurotic woman's desire to stand aside from the dangerous struggle for existence drew from Jung seven pages on the symbology of the mortals, the angels, and the passion in Lord Byron's unfinished poem "Heaven and Hell." Beside Byron's poem appears the sonnet "Mon reve familier" from Paul Verlaine's *Poemes saturniens* (1806), a beautiful expression of desire for a mother's embrace, with a few lines of commentary.

Jung did more than cite the literary analogues of neurosis and psychosis and interpret their contents. He also theorized on their form. The real value of Jung's two works on psychological types and poetry ("Schiller's Ideas on the Type Problem," "The Type Problem in Poetry") is the exposition of his formal theory, although this is not readily apparent.

These two articles on their face present poets and their works categorically to exemplify a psychological theory; concerned neither with the fundamental purpose of poetry nor with the basic aesthetic instinct, they investigate “style” or “expression” more than they do symbols and archetypes. The rather extensive commentary on Schiller emphasizes Jung’s debt to that poet’s concept of the sentimental and the naive, which anticipates and approximates his own concept of introverted and extraverted types. In Jung’s view, Schiller’s poems, and most of his plays, give us a good idea of the introverted attitude: they are material mastered by the poet’s conscious intention. In these discussions, Homer is always tied to Schiller, who considered Homer a perfect example of the “naive” poet. Of types and literary criticism, Jung has this to say:

We must bear in mind these two entirely different modes of creation [the introverted and the extraverted, the psychological and the visionary] . . . for much that is of the greatest importance in judging a work of art depends upon this distinction.

Many of the critiques of the representative authors arranged in this collection are drawn from *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, *The Symbolic Life*, *Symbols of Transformation*, and *Psychological Types* (CW, Vols. 15, 18, 5, and 6, respectively) in complete, or nearly complete, form. Among these critiques are the handful of introductions that Jung wrote for literary works, including Linda Fierz-David’s interpretive study of Francesco Colonna’s *Dream of Poliphilo*. The Holderlin commentary is typical of Jung’s critiques on major authors and their works. Jung’s twenty-page commentary on Holderlin, which composes the first half of “The Sacrifice” (CW, Vol. 5, Chap. VIII, pp. 397–414), analyzes the pathological ecstasy and apocalyptic vision of nearly a dozen of Holderlin’s poems. English translations of the poems by Hamburger and Leishman appear in the text. To the main article are joined brief

commentaries from Jung's other volumes; these are included as endnotes. The articles on Schiller and Longfellow's "Hiawatha" are also of this kind.

Other critical articles are formed of brief excerpts, some almost little anthologies in themselves. Such, for instance, is the one on Dante and the *Divine Comedy*: More than twenty brief notes on the medieval Italian visionary, originally scattered through ten volumes written by Jung over forty years, have been synthesized into a single composite article. The inclusion of Jung's full lecture on Gerard de Nerval's *Aurelia* no doubt would have enriched this volume; unfortunately, the lecture exists only as an uncorrected twenty-four page typescript of a stenogram in the Jung archives and has never been translated into English; the one-page abstract by Jung that does appear in this volume discloses the lecture's argument.

< [PART 4](#) >

POSSIBLE BOOKS: Carl Gustav Jung: The Collective Dream, Part 2



Modes of Creation

The creative process of the poet, so far as Jung was able to follow it, consists in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image and its elaboration into a finished work. By giving it shape, the poet translates it into the language of the present and so makes it possible for us to find our way back to the deepest wellsprings of life. Primordial images, numerous in themselves, appear in works of art or in the dreams of individuals only when they are called into being by the waywardness of the general outlook; they are activated, one might say, "instinctively"; they come to light to restore the psychic equilibrium of the epoch. In dreams we can see this process quite clearly: The dream picture is "symbolic"; it states the situation indirectly "by means of a metaphor." The metaphor is not a deliberate disguise but, quite simply, a formation of emotionally charged language that reflects the deficiencies in our understanding. The similarity of the personal dream to the collective dream is made clear enough by Jung in a single sentence: "A great work of art is like a dream; for all its apparent obviousness it does not explain itself and is never unequivocal."

The creative impulse, according to Jung's theory, arises in the poet from the unconsciousness—strong, capricious, and willful. The process of creation is a living thing implanted in the human psyche. In the language of analytical psychology, this living thing is an *autonomous complex*, a split-off piece of the psyche that leads a life of its own outside the hierarchy of consciousness. The nascent work of art is a psychic formation that remains unborn or subliminal until its "energy-charge" is sufficient to carry it over the threshold into consciousness. The energy needed for such a transformation is naturally drawn from the consciousness of the poet, unless the bearer of that consciousness happens to identify with the complex and loses himself. Once born, the work of art can be neither inhibited nor voluntarily reproduced; it can only be perceived: therein lies its autonomy.

Representative Authors

Psychological Authors, Significant Authors, and Visionary Authors

"The Work of Art" (1930), excerpted from *Psychology and Literature*, is the essay which opens this collection. It is Jung's unofficial prologue. In it Jung distinguishes the two modes of literary creation, the psychological and the visionary. These two modes of creation are treated again more thoughtfully in the second essay, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry" (1922). Straight off, Jung distinguishes from the "psychological" those works of literature in which the author does not give a psychological interpretation of his characters. To this class of significant authors belong E. T. A. Hoffman's tales, with their scurrilous but magnificent imagery, the fantastic romances of Pierre Benoit, English fiction in the manner of Rider Haggard, including that vein that Conan Doyle exploited to yield the detective story, H. G. Wells's novels of inner transformation and mythical compensation, and Melville's *Moby Dick*.

Countless literary works belong, on the other hand, to the class of psychological creations: novels of love, environment, family, crime, and society; didactic poetry; the larger number of song lyrics; and drama, both tragic and comic. No obscurity surrounds their themes: the themes repeat themselves millions of times in daily life and are responsible for the monotony of their manifestations in social creations like the police court and the penal code. Jung calls their mode of creation "psychological" because nowhere do these works transcend the bounds of psychological intelligibility. The author of the so-called psychological novel, to whom the layman often goes for "psychology," attempts to reshape his material *consciously* in order to raise it from the level of crude contingency to that of psychological exposition and illumination.

The procedure of conscious tampering with the messages of the unconscious is not restricted to the novel. Jung points to

this procedure again when he compares the first and second parts of Goethe's *Faust* drama:

The two parts of Faust demonstrate by way of extremes the profound distinction between the two modes of literary creation. . . . The love-tragedy of Gretchen explains itself; in the second part, the richness of the imaginative material so overtakes the poet's formative powers that nothing is self-explanatory. It is a strange something from the hinterland of man's mind that suggests the abyss of time or evokes a super-human world of contrasting light and darkness.

This visionary mode of artistic creation exemplified in the second part of *Faust*, he says, "astonishes us, confuses us, puts us on our guard, even disgusts us. . . and we demand explanations and commentaries."

Jung finds such vision also in *The Shepherd of Hermas*, in Dante, in Nietzsche's Dionysian exuberance, in Spitteler's *Olympian Spring*, in the paintings and poems of William Blake, and in Jacob Boehme's philosophic and poetic stammerings. In the chapter on Dante, Jung shows us how the poet has smoothed out the approach to the vision by cloaking it in historical facts. Other writers, and Jung enumerates them, use the story as the primary means of giving expression to significant material. This much Jung makes clear: While we, in our everyday lives, strive to construct a safe and manageable world in which natural law holds the same place that statute law holds in a republic, the poets in our midst now and then glimpse spirits, demons, and gods and have presentiments of incomprehensible happenings in the pleroma. They, and Jung, see something of the psychic world that once struck terror in the primitive of antiquity and still strikes terror in a part of ourselves.

Visions of Love

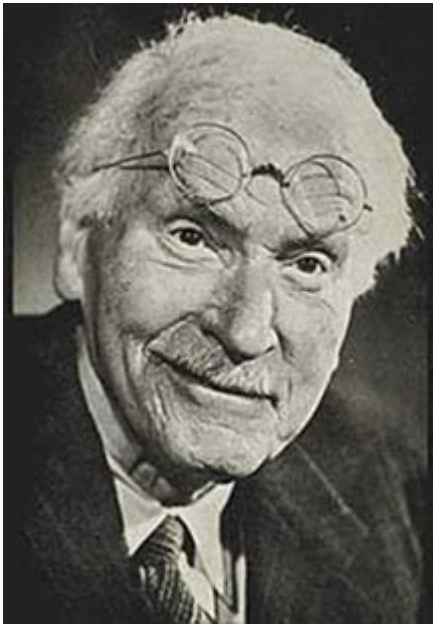
The reverberations of the initial love-experience, expressed

in *The Shepherd of Hermas*, in the *Divine Comedy*, and in the *Faust* drama is shown by Jung to be completed and fulfilled by a vision. The author of *Hermas*, Dante, and Goethe can be taken as three steps in a sequence that stretches across nearly two thousand years of human development; in each we find the personal love-episode to be not only connected with the weightier visionary experience but frankly subordinated to it. It seems as if the love-episode served as a release, as if the personal experience were nothing but the prelude to the all-important "divine comedy." This is the point: to reduce artistic creation to merely personal factors takes us away from the psychological study of the work of art and confronts us with the psychic disposition of the poet himself. The work of art is something in its own right, and the actual task is to interpret the work of art psychologically. For such an undertaking, it is essential to give serious consideration to the basic experience that underlies it—namely, to the vision.

< [PART 3](#) >

POSSIBLE BOOKS: Carl Gustav Jung: The Collective Dream, Part 1

From *POSSIBLE BOOKS*



Carl Gustav Jung: *The Collective Dream: The Literary Criticism of C.G. Jung, 1912–1961.*

EDITOR'S PREFACE

Out of the work of a lifetime has grown a complete anthology of literary criticism and, flowering at its center, an enchanting theory of literature. To introduce it to the reading public, and to justify it, is the purpose of this preface. The grandness of the task prevents me from heeding the otherwise good advice of Quevedo to keep a preface brief. My purpose requires that I employ instead the French mode, in which a book of one thousand pages is introduced by a preface of one hundred, without, I hope, the tiresome characteristics of that genre: structureless critique and self-centered analysis.

Until now this book has been largely unrecognized, embedded in the mountain of Carl Jung's *Collected Works*. (See **Supplement 1**) A petal of it was discovered by me through serendipity, the entire flower through many hours of reading and research. The author himself was probably not entirely aware of its existence. Ultimately, it is immaterial whether Jung recognized it himself or not. A corollary of his literary theory is that what an author has to say about his own work is

often far from being the most illuminating word on the subject: a work is an author's fate, which is best left to the judgment of others. Jung, like the visionary poets and the significant novelists he examined, was essentially the instrument for his work and subordinate to it.

It is a principle of Jung's psychology that the human psyche is the womb of all human arts and sciences. It is a principle in the psychological study of art that a product of the psyche is something in and for itself. Jung recognized both principles as valid, and he explored the perspectives of both. Yet all of Jung's literary commentaries were the results of clinical encounters and were written for professional purposes. This collection has one other limiting factor. The basically earthy nature of Jung the Swiss has shown a marked predilection for literature written in languages and composed by human natures close to his own. Never in the twenty volumes of his collected works do we find mention of Franz Kafka's atrocious fantasies of behavior and feeling; never the negative themes of Stephane Mallarme or the dark splendors of Charles Baudelaire and Thomas de Quincey, who dramatized their unhappiness in famous volumes; neither the admirable plots of Henry James nor the mortal chaos of the Russian novel; neither the joyous, semidivine hero of *Leaves of Grass* created by the man of letters Walt Whitman nor the resigned and insipid days remembered by Marcel Proust.

The commentaries Jung made on works of dubious aesthetic merit, which often held great interest for him as a clinical psychologist, are also excluded from this anthology by design. This collection of essays represents solely Jung's attention to familiar works of world literature, primarily those of the West, and primarily those in verse. Noticeably absent from this anthology as well are many of Jung's voluminous commentaries on Goethe and his beloved *Faust*. To include all of his personal feelings and insights here would have thoroughly changed the character of the present volume and

trebled its length. These have been retained for publication in a separate companion volume, *Goethe According to Faust*. Jung's important theoretical works on mythic archetypes written in collaboration with Karl Kerenyi are also absent. The scope of these monumental works disqualifies them, or even parts of them, from entry into this volume: folktales, cultural myths, and epic song cycles represent the expressions and spiritual excursions of collective authors; that is, whole cultures, not individual authors.

The commentaries that appear here on the vast literatures of alchemy, philosophy, and science are exceptional. Those that are included are short forewords written by Jung for books of other psychologists that happen to approach literary themes directly. In one, Jung absolves fantasy, and, by extension, fantasy literature, of its reputation as an unnatural and morbid activity (see the foreword to Wickes, *The Inner World of Childhood*). In another, he vindicates the function of poetry and recounts the archetypal and redemptive process represented in drama (see the foreword to Jung, *Configurations of the Unconscious*). In a third, he praises Cornelia Brunner's discussion of Rider Haggard, the Victorian spinner of yarns who developed the motif of the anima in the purest and most naive, if not the most aesthetic, form in his novel *She* (see the foreword to Brunner, *The Anima as a Problem in Man's Fate*).

The individual chapters of this book do not require extraneous elucidation; the method of their arrangement, however, does. A careful disorderliness, the method suggested by the narrator of *Moby Dick*, is the blameless order of this volume. The world proposed by this book of literary criticism is not systematic, and neither is Jung's manner of studying it. The chapters of Part I are sequestered in three major sections. The first section is theoretical and defines his views on the relation of analytical psychology to poetry. The second section examines the works of particular authors for evidence of the

psychic events that transpired in their creation; this section, titled "Critiques," is by far the longest section of the book and almost a critical anthology in itself; in it individual authors are arranged not alphabetically nor chronologically but according to the mode of creation they employ or the pathological process their works resemble. The third section exposes the central archetype of Jung's literary theory. The sequence of chapters listed in the table of contents may not appear inspired, but it is certainly not arbitrary: it constitutes an outline of Jung's thought on modern Western literature. The format of Jung's book portrays his aversions and recognitions. It also suitably obscures the boundaries of verse and prose. The lack of distinction made between genres adds a special texture to the collection and at the same time supports more essential distinctions. The intimate network of relations between Jung's theories and his application of them to specific works will become fully apparent to anyone who pursues a single topic of special interest through the extensive listings in the topical index of Jung's *Collected Works*. Finally, it should be mentioned that the editor has attempted to introduce each chapter and section of this book with the kind of care and understanding that Robert Bly has imparted to his charming anthologies.

Just as the first section of theoretical essays in Part I engenders the second section of critiques, those two sections together beget Part II, a statement of the essential theory behind them both: the equation of literature and dream. The necessary root of this equation, the poet who functions as dreamer, is clearly assumed. The authors who are examined individually in Part I are identified in Part II as the natural and active agents of a collective dream, a kind of congress of local representatives who speak with our voices. The poet, Jung says, has moods and a will and personal aims as a human being; but as a poet he is a "collective man," one who carries and shapes the unconscious psychic life of mankind:

*An epoch, like an individual, has its own limitations of conscious outlook, and therefore requires a compensatory adjustment. This is effected by the collective unconscious in that a poet allows himself to be guided by the unexpressed desire of his times and shows the way, by word or deed, to the attainment of that which everyone blindly craves and expects –whether this attainment results in good or evil, the healing of an epoch or its destruction. (See **Supplement 2**)*

In this statement lies the social significance of poetry: It is constantly at work educating the spirit of the age, conjuring up the forms in which the age is most lacking.

< [PART 2](#) >

“Religion as a Divine Communication & Healing Science”



PHOTO:
Scribd.com

Dr. Gary Robert Buchanan has published a new essay on Cosolargy as a religion and communication science at Scribd.com. The eight-page essay is downloadable from the

site.

Here's how it begins:

“Etymologically, the word *religion* comes from the Latin *religare*, to reconnect. Naturally, the question must be asked, ‘To what are we reconnecting?’ Also implied linguistically is the idea that there must be a pre-existent something, a lost state of higher Consciousness, Being, Intellect, and/or Form, from which humankind has descended. In religion we refer to this something as a spiritual realm, i.e., ‘Heaven,’ or the ‘Worlds of Light,’ whence we originated or to which we aspire. If we accept this rather universally held concept, then in order to reconnect we must follow some kind of ‘system’ to re-establish that primordial connection, via a system of communication, or communion, in a logical and, yes, scientific manner.”

[Read or download “Religion as a Divine Communication & Healing Science” online at Scribd.com.](#)

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POSSIBLE BOOKS: “The Possible Book and the Preface”



Jorge Luis Borges
circa 1976

On November 26, 1974, the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges formulated the first theory of the prologue in his own “Prologue of Prologues.” (This title is not to be read as meaning a “superlative” in the manner of the Song of Songs, the Night of Nights, or the King of Kings but is the name of a page that preceded a collection of his own diverse prologues to actual books by actual authors that he wrote between 1923 and 1974, a prologue to his prologues, as it were.) Borges makes these preliminary observations:

*The prologue, in the sad majority of cases, borders on after-dinner oratory or on funereal panegyric and abounds in irresponsible hyperboles, which the incredulous reader accepts as conventions of the genre. There are other examples—we recall the memorable study which Wordsworth prefixed to the second edition of his **Lyrical Ballads**—that state and reason out an aesthetic. The moving and laconic preface to the essays of Montaigne is not a page less admirable than his admirable book. Of many works which time has not wanted to forget, the preface is an inseparable part of the text. In **The Thousand and One Nights**—or, as [British orientalist Richard] Burton calls it, **The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night**—the initial fable of the Sultan who orders his Sultana to be beheaded each morning is no less prodigious than the fables that follow; the procession of pilgrims who narrate, in their pious cavalcade, the*

*heterogeneous **Canterbury Tales** has been judged by many to be the most lively story of the volume. On the Elizabethan stage, the prologue was the actor who proclaimed the theme of the drama.*

He follows this exemplary passage with a proposition:

When the stars are propitious, the preface is not a subaltern form of dinner toast; it is a parallel species of critique.

This proposition introduces his real motive. On the same page that Borges recounts the tradition of the conventional preface, he offers to the world of literature the possibility of a new literary genre: the preface to the possible book. Thomas Carlyle, he notes, had “simulated” the genre more than a century before in *Sartor Resartus*, when he invoked the authority of a certain German professor who had published a learned volume on the philosophy of appearances: Carlyle invented the professor and presented his own book as a partial translation of the professor’s vast work, then defended the professor’s philosophy in his commentary. The genre envisioned by Borges, which he was able to see only vaguely, would apply an analogous process: an entire work composed of a series of prefaces to books that do not exist but would abound in exemplary citations from those books. He suggests that the plots introduced in those prefaces should be the impalpable substance of “pages which shall never be written” and of a kind that “offer themselves less to laborious writing than to the pleasures of imagination or indulgent dialogue.” It would be a good idea, he thought, to avoid parody and satire and to make the texture of those stories the kind that our mind accepts and even craves.

Later on the page, Borges offers the plan for this possible book “to whomever desires to carry it out” because to execute this plan himself would demand “hands more dexterous” than his own and “a tenacity that had already left” him. He was

seventy-five years of age when he expressed that thought. Borges, the craftsman, had already dreamed universes free of time and space ("Pascal's Sphere"); Borges, the master of impeccable syntax, had already conceived of the unlimited rhetorical possibilities of the principle of unity ("Note on Walt Whitman") and practiced them ("The Flower of Coleridge"); Borges, the artificer, had already written a review of an imaginary book ("The Approach to Al-Mu'tasim) and fictions that were not inventions at all but crafted elaborations upon the scant facts of the lives of real characters ("Story of the Warrior and the Captive," "The Enigma of Edward FitzGerald," "The Wall and the Books"). Before he passed out of this world in 1986, Borges lived to author dozens of other works—but not the one he had conceived on that day in 1974.

Borges no doubt expected, as I do, that any author who dares to attempt this genre will imitate the literary procedures that Borges himself had applied to form the series and inlays of his own mosaic works—the quest for symmetries, faceted sentences like cut stones that throw more and more light as they turn before the reader's eye, themes that interlock and recur in variations, brevity that only *seems* fragmentary, generalizations that echo the argument and project it onto other planes, succinct catalogs that comprise paragraphs, allusions to a larger whole that is unnameable, harmonic enumeration of diverse parts, the addition of postscripts and afterthoughts (those structures in which literature is able to extend or enclose itself)—these, or other equivalent procedures. To my knowledge, no one has yet taken up his offer.

Reexamining this all-but-forgotten page written about a new form of fiction has suggested to me the plan of another genre, the preface to another kind of possible book, a species of nonfiction that is parallel to the one conceived by Borges: an editor's preface to a book whose passages have already been written and published but which, strictly speaking, does not

exist in a single ordered volume. This genre has no precedent, yet it is possible to imagine the sets of elements it would share with other kinds of writing. As it is now beginning to appear to me, such a work would share with the scholarly review the virtues of evaluation and accuracy; with the investigative essay, the strategies of exposition and scrutiny; with the white paper of science, the clarity of significant figures; with the tally sheet, the satisfaction of a completed inventory of contents that allows one to make projections; and with the detective story, the hidden geometry that becomes clear in stages and prefigures what is finally obvious.

This new genre of nonfiction, in its features and aversions, would resemble its relative conceived by Borges but with two notable exceptions: First, its documentary method and inherently truthful nature would require no "suspension of disbelief" to serve as antidote to the duplicity inherent in fiction; second, perspective, and not plot, would be the substance of its pages—a perspective that perceives and draws together what years and an insignificant number of intervening pages have held apart. The author of such a work, in the persona of "editor," would assemble, or combine into an essence, a collection of valuable passages in a single new and miniature body of exquisite text and present it to the reader as if in the palm of his hand. It would seem to me beneficial to apply a method that effects Socratic schemes, shared by the author and the reader, that can be continued outside the text for personal transformation.

The work I am imagining would be made of themes and images in the same fashion as a necklace or a ring is made of milled precious metals and polished stones: the materials remember their essence but not the veins of the mountains from which they were extracted. A few examples of this kind of work already come to mind: the preface to an anthology (that does not yet exist in published form) of significant short stories

or visionary poems by an author who is due to be “re-discovered” in our time; a preface to the book of literary criticism that the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung has in effect already written but which lies embedded, unnoticed and unformulated, in the twenty formidable black volumes of his *Collected Works*; a preface to the “Essay on Man” that was unfortunately never written by Alfred Russel Wallace, who codiscovered, with Charles Darwin, the theory of natural selection, but who, unlike Darwin, recognized the spiritual nature of Man. These prefaces, like some other short pieces of prose—the fable, the parable, the note—would be small bright tokens of something else.

Robert Petrovich, 1996/2012

The Human Face of Alfred Russel Wallace, Part 3

III



Pierre Teilhard de
Chardin

The third version of the idea I shall mention, the most mystical of all, is the invention of a writer much less splendid than Spengler, although he was more gifted with those classical virtues usually called "rational." I am referring to the author of *The Apparition of Man*, the distressed but obedient Jesuit priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. When he died, he left unpublished (because disallowed by the Roman Church) the manuscript of *The Human Phenomenon*, a variation or expansion of *The Decline of the West*. The human which Spengler imagined is, ultimately, no more than an aggregate of parallel subspecies rooted in humus, an accumulation of the humble vassals of the earth, grown over millennia on distinctive soils like varieties of vintage grapes, unequipped to live outside of Time, with no sense of the Immortal and no sense of the Eternal except as a Return. Teilhard's human is semidivine, a prolonged but terminal creature of mind deployed within the expansive realm of the demiurge, hovering between earth and Heaven—but never reaching the Eternal, the Immortal. Both processes are limited; but Teilhard's is more centripetal. In *The Human Phenomenon* the nexus between the historical and the spiritual is not the physical face generated out of the past, as in the previous parables, but a disembodied countenance from the future that mysteriously represents the human.

In biological terms every organism depends upon the process of cephalization, the differentiation of the head as the guiding region of the body, to become first an individual and then a person (a consciously transcendent individual). Before Teilhard passed away in 1955, he announced his discovery that mankind is now converging in such a blossoming complex. The "pessimist" (Teilhard's term) reduces history, the particular slice of six thousand years or so for which we possess written or dated documents, to a number of civilizations which have fallen into ruins one after the other. Teilhard saw beneath these successive oscillations the great spiral of life following the master-line of its evolution, thrusting up

irreversibly in relays toward an ever more highly organized consciousness of the universe. He saw this convergence manifest first on the genetic level, slender and granular as this first membrane may be, when increased interbreeding among all human variants resulted in the type man, and *Homo sapiens* differentiated into distinct races (subspecies), practically covering the earth with a mosaic of cultures (inter-thinking groups). In the traditions that became organized, and in the collective memory that developed, Teilhard distinguished a common pool of thought beginning to close in on itself and encircle the earth; he also recognized that, however hominized the apparition of political and cultural units may appear, this form of the history of mankind really only prolongs the organic movements of life. Only in the Neolithic Age did he detect the forces of a new kind of coalescence beginning to manifest above the genealogical verticils: a complex of psychical groupings—geographical distribution, economic links, religious beliefs, social institutions—that submerge “the race” and begin to react among themselves. He saw increased numbers and improved communications leading these new units over time into an accelerated process toward the union of the whole human species into a single culture based on a single self-developing framework of thought. It was obvious to him that this great binding of human elements has never stopped; for Teilhard, the periods called “historic” are nothing else than direct prolongations of the Neolithic Age. It was also obvious to him that, during historic time, the principal surviving axis of anthropogenesis has passed through the West (See *Footnote 1*); Teilhard proposed that a neo-humanity has been germinating round the Mediterranean during the last six thousand years and precisely *at this moment* has finished absorbing the last vestiges of the neolithic mosaic, thus budding another layer of inter-thinking humanity, the densest of all.

Teilhard imagined the sphericity of man’s environment—the banal fact of the earth’s roundness—to be the cause of this

intensification: Man's thought confined to spreading out over the surface of the earth's sphere, idea encountering idea where previously race encountered race, has resulted in an organized web of thought. This piece of evolutionary machinery, capable of generating high cultural energy, has become the bounding structure of evolving man, marking him off from the rest of the universe yet facilitating his exchange with it, like the membrane of an animal cell. With his genius for fruitful analogy, Teilhard pointed out that the process of evolution on earth is itself now in the process of being cephalized: The development of humankind into a single inter-thinking unit is *providing the evolutionary process with the rudiments of a head*. Teilhard's formulation implies that we should consider inter-thinking humanity to be a new type of organism, whose destiny is to realize new possibilities for evolving life on this planet. He thus makes of the human precisely at this moment an incomparable terminus a quo, a creature who proceeds from the boundary of the present because it is destined to do so; its evolution toward the future a condition for its existence in the present.

Quite possibly Spengler was not acquainted with Wallace's text; Teilhard perhaps knew and did not admire the text of Spengler. If the doctrine that all people are pale imitations of immortal Spirit is valid, such facts are insignificant. Strictly speaking, it is not necessary to go that far; each of these authors has his precursors, others who recognized the same facts and presented the essential facets of their sciences before they did. Spengler's precursors are poets: I have found reference to the eye as glance in the verse of Guiraut de Bornelh ("The eyes are the scouts of the heart"), to the eye as visage in a sonnet of Dante ("The eyes are the windows of the soul"), to the mouth expressive of understanding in Whitman's "Song of Myself" ("I carry the plenum of proof and everything else in my face,/ With the hush of my lips I confound the topmost skeptic"), and to the head as the throne of the nonvegetative side of life in Thoreau's

Walden ("My head is hands and feet. I feel my highest faculties concentrated in it"). Spengler contradicts none of these earlier expressions. The writers of scripture who recorded the Fall of the Heavenly Host no doubt inspired Wallace to respond to the significance of that allegory with courage and science. More obtrusive, at first appearance, is Teilhard's overwhelming image of the universe, in which the survivors of the human phylum he envisioned have persevered in the same way as flowers or trees or animals or individual humans; that is to say, as have "the other thoughts of the Creator of this world." In the final analysis, Teilhard's cerebral metaphor is nothing else than the expansion or prolongation of Spengler's cultural archetype within the monistic limits predetermined by the councils of the Church of Rome.

One last observation. All three authors—Wallace, Spengler, Teilhard—either inadvertently or with conscious intent, have exposed the wrinkles in the human countenance and mankind's blemish on the Eternal. None of them, through his science, has provided a new solution to the universal problem of the ancients: to discover the way out of the gross fate of physicality. The complex process that Teilhard described involves not only humankind but the entire universe in an organic folding in on itself, which leads in turn to the evolution of a progressively more conscious—more highly organized—Mind. Past the final point of convergence, where self-developing Mind meets itself, Teilhard did not venture. In his optimism, however, he did predict that this convergence—the union of the whole human species—is inevitable, and he left us with the hope that this union may contract for new terms. The cosmos of History of which Spengler conceived is a kind of repertory theater where humans improvise their Destiny in the forms of stock characters and in the outline of a mortal plot which they play out again and again in Time (Immortality is outside of Time and, therefore, outside of History). Within these dramatic limits Spengler

was, of course, correct. That he considered these limits satisfactory is another matter. In the Cosmos of the ancients, Destiny is a function of Immortal Life and History merely a counterfeit. Wallace imagined that we may be growing in countenance more and more like the Angels who guide our development; but in the context of ancient doctrine, his hypothesis, carried to its logical conclusion, would lead us (or a portion of us) to resemble the Dark Angels who are our nearest spiritual ancestors. Avowedly ignorant of spiritual cosmology, Wallace made his proposition without any ill intention, of course; he simply could not conceive of the possibility that man is consciously able to form another kind of spiritual body, one that is immortal, a body like that of the Angels of Light, the Heavenly Host.

The problem remains. If it cannot be solved from the dark biological side, perhaps we shall have better luck from the bright spiritual side: As mere mortal creatures, we are the offspring of higher dimensions but not part of them. We require spiritual assistance to hold our own against the Powers of Darkness, and we can free ourselves only as spiritual beings. This is the universal doctrine of Salvation.

Robert G. Petrovich, July 1995

FOOTNOTES

(1) In Book Three, Chapter II of *The Human Phenomenon* Teilhard compared the progress of hominization in the course of these six thousand years to the whole series of cases, situations, and appearances usually met with in any phylum in a state of active proliferation: a gradual falling away of the oldest splinters; the accentuation and domination of certain other stems, more central and more vigorous, that attempt to monopolize the land and the light, some branches withering, some sleeping, some shooting up and spreading everywhere, here and there disappearances that cause a thinning out, here and there fresh buddings that make the foliage more dense. Later in the same chapter, Teilhard noted that Old China lacked the

inclination and the impetus for deep renovation and was still Neolithic well into the nineteenth century; that India allowed itself to be drawn into metaphysics and was lost there; that the old American centers, too isolated, were completely extinguished; that the Polynesian center, too dispersed, continued to radiate in a vacuum. These considerations led Teilhard to the conclusion that, at the present time, all the peoples of the earth, to remain human or to become more so, are inexorably led to formulate the hopes and problems of the modern earth in the same terms that the West has formulated them.

The Human Face of Alfred Russel Wallace, Part 2



Oswald Spengler

The second text I shall quote is *The Decline of the West*, the sensational history that brought fame to its author, Oswald Spengler. He wrote his virile pages from 1912 to 1917, six obstinate years spent starving in a gloomy tenement room in Munich. His pages were uncontaminated by the hatred of those years. Around 1915 he finished the revision of the first volume. In the summer of 1918 *The Decline of the West* appeared in Vienna. Fame began around 1920. With this book Spengler continued and renewed an illustrious Germanic tradition: the creation of a grandiose and perfect System intended

to represent, or eventually correspond with, the impure and disorderly universe. In the enormous dialectical structure of the first volume, Spengler invented the human being as a being of history. For Spengler, History is a second Cosmos, different from Nature in structure and complexion; its essence is Destiny—the instinctive, dream-sure logic of Time (a logic as necessary to the organic as the logic of cause and effect is to space). One of the axioms of Spengler's theory is that Race, like Time and Destiny, is a decisive element in every question of life. He found it impossible to exaggerate the formative power of the living pulse that coins the same living features ("family traits") over and over again for centuries toward the perfection of a type. It is a corollary of Spengler's axiom that Race concentrates on the head and face—the flesh, the look, the play of feature. The *living* flesh carries nine-tenths of the expression, not the bone of the face but its mien. (The race expression of a human head can associate itself with any conceivable skull form.) Preeminent, the organs of the outer sheath gather to themselves more and more race expression: the eye, when it is

seen as glance and expressive visage; the *mouth*, when it expresses understanding through the usages of speech; and the *head*, with its lineaments formed by the flesh, which has long been the throne of the animal side of life.

Individuals, however, form only one variety of the human. Spengler observed that Cultures, those superlative human organisms in which the History of humankind fulfills itself—like humans—are born of races and live fate-laden for an allotted time through the same cycles, repeating again and again general biographic archetypes. In the same terms we speak of individual persons, he spoke of the mien and speech of Cultures, and with the same meaning. For him the immense history of the Chinese or the Classical Greco-Roman Culture is the exact equivalent of the history of an individual human, animal, tree, or flower. The world history he envisioned is a collection of the biographies of cultures like a set of Rembrandt's self-portraits, a kind of Goethean autobiography of man. With the transnatural outlook of Dante and Wolfram von Eschenbach, Spengler envisioned great days to come when all sciences would be part of a single, vast physiognomic of all things human, when scientific experience would be equivalent to self-knowledge of the human spirit. Where those who are blind to the world find only a senseless turmoil of events, Spengler saw a Divine Comedy, a drama played for a god.

In Western humankind, or more specifically, in the human of the North, the human of Germanic Europe and America, who changed the face of the current world, Spengler noted a physiognomic abundance. He saw it in the soul of the racial spirit that craves for a style that drives through walls into the limitless universe of space and makes outside and inside the complementary images of one and the same world feeling. He saw it in the painting and sculpture of the artist who transforms every act into a portrait, who even in a landscape develops the background into a definite locale, into a representation of the soul of that locale, and thus endows it

too with a face. He saw it in the design of the architect who brings the outer form of a building into relationship with the meaning that governs the arrangement of its interior (a meaning undisclosed by the Arabian mosque and nonexistent in the Classical temple). Such a building has no mere facade, but a head, a visage that greets the beholder and tells him its inner meaning. With its characteristic wealth of windows, the motive of that visage dominates not only the major buildings but the whole aspect of the streets and plazas and towns. This is a second version of Wallace's image. More sublime than a changing face selected by natural law or the face of an animal is the face refined by a culture, a living face whose features are already assembled and now express the secrets of the race.

< [Read Part 3](#) >