

The End of Meaning and the Birth of Man

An essay about the state reached in the history of consciousness and an analysis of C.G. Jung's psychology project

One of the most persuasive voices that during the last century raised the question of the “meaning of life” or, as we might also say, the question of “mythic,” “religious,” or “metaphysical”¹ meaning, was that of C.G. Jung. His thoughts about this topic moved between two poles. On the one hand there is his relentless *diagnosis* that “No, evidently we no longer have any myth.”² “Our myth has become mute, and gives no answers.”³ Today “we stand empty-handed, bewildered, and perplexed [...]”⁴ “There are no longer any gods whom we could invoke [...]”⁵ Jung even went as far as to state that “it would be far better stoutly to avow our spiritual poverty, our symbol-lessness, instead of feigning a legacy to which we are not the legitimate heirs at all.”⁶ Jung was very much aware that modern man dwells with himself alone, “where, in the cold light of consciousness, the blank barrenness of the world reaches to the very stars.”⁷

The other pole of his thinking about meaning comes to the fore when to the quoted diagnosis of his (“No, evidently we no longer have any myth”) he immediately reacts with the surprising question, “But then what is your myth? The myth in which you do live?” Jung did not take “no” for an answer. He was of the opinion that meaning is indispensable and that the loss of meaning in modern times is the ultimate reason for neurosis. Neurosis is due to the “senselessness and aimlessness” of the lives of those who suffer from it.⁸ “Everything is banal, everything is ‘nothing but’; and that is the reason why people are neurotic.”⁹ “You see, man is in need of a symbolic life—badly in need.”¹⁰

Both the diagnosis of the loss of meaning and the idea of the dire need of meaning (which come nicely together in Jung's statement, we “cannot even get it into our heads that no myth will come to our aid although we have such urgent need of one”¹¹) are nothing new. They had already been experienced and struggled with in different ways for at least one hundred years prior to Jung. The 19th century had not only discovered what was to become known under the catch-word “nihilism,” defined by Nietzsche as the lack of a goal, the lack of an answer to the “What for?”; it had also desperately tried, in ever new utopian schemes, to provide a new, ultimate goal of life. To mention only three examples, Kierkegaard had pro-

1 I use “metaphysical” in two different senses, in a loose sense, where it is more or less synonymous with words like “transcendental,” “supernatural,” or “higher,” and in a strict sense, where it refers to the Western tradition of metaphysics as a First Philosophy, a tradition that began, say, with Heraclitus and ended with Hegel. The context should make clear which meaning the word has in each case.

2 MDR p. 171.

3 MDR p. 332.

4 Ibid.

5 CW 18 § 598.

6 CW 9i § 28.

7 CW 9i § 29. (The CW have “to dwell with itself alone,” where “itself” refers to “spiritual poverty.” It is, however, also possible (and, I feel, more likely) to understand Jung's phrase, “um bei sich einzukehren,” in his text as meaning “in order to dwell with oneself (alone)” or even better: “in order to hold communion with oneself” or “in order to search one's soul.”

8 Cf. CW 16 § 83. Also CW 11 §§ 509, 514, 516.

9 CW 18 § 527.

10 Ibid. § 525.

11 MDR p. 332f.

posed a leap into faith, Marx had promised the communist society, and Nietzsche had put all his hope onto the longed for advent of what he imaged under the symbolic name “Dionysus,” who would come to and inspire “Ariadne,” the deserted soul ready to receive Dionysus, thereby ending the sterility reached in the 19th century.¹²

1. The self-contradiction inherent in the search for meaning

One might think that the diagnosed loss of meaning is the cause, the search for meaning the result; further, that the loss of meaning is the “illness” while the sought-for meaning would be the cure. But “loss of meaning” and “search for meaning” have to be seen as rather the two sides of the same coin. Just as it is the sense of loss of meaning that creates a craving for meaning, so it is the idea of the dire need of a higher meaning that makes real life appear as intolerably banal and “nothing but,” merely “*maya* compared with that one thing, that your life is meaningful.”¹³ The more you long for meaning, the more banal life gets; the more banal you feel life to be, the more you will say with Jung: “My whole being was seeking for something still unknown which might confer meaning upon the banality of life.”¹⁴ There are not two phenomena here but only one. The search for meaning is the opposite of itself. It is what turns reality into that very senselessness that it intends to overcome; it is itself that symptom or illness the cure of which it claims to be. The longing for meaning is deluded about itself.

What is the delusion? The search for meaning seeks something that cannot be sought because any seeking for it destroys what is to be gained. Meaning is not an entity that could be had, not a creed, a doctrine, a world view, also not something like the fairytale treasure hard to attain. It is not semantic, not a content. Meaning, where it indeed exists, is first of all an implicit *fact* of existence, its *a priori*. It can never be the answer to a question; it is conversely an unquestioned and unquestionable certainty that predates any possible questioning. It is the groundedness of existence, a sense of embeddedness in life, of containment in the world—perhaps we could even say of in-ness as the logic of existence *as such*. Meaning exists if the meaning of life is as self-evident as the in-ness in water is for fish.

Myth, religion, metaphysics—they were never *answers* to an explicit and pressing question about the meaning of existence, such as when, e.g., William James in 1897 raised the question, “Is Life Worth Living?” No, they were merely the concrete *articulation* or *formulation*, in imaginal form, and, in the case of metaphysics, the *explication*, in the mode of thought, of the form of the *factually existing* in-ness in, or groundedness of, existence at each historical locus respectively. The tales of myth, the religious practices, doctrines or dogmas, the elaborate systems of metaphysics, spelled out in different modes the logic that factually governed a people’s lived life. They were the self-expression in consciousness of the meaning that was. This is why myths, rituals, and metaphysics simply told—and celebrated—the truth. That was their job. Just as fish could never seriously question the meaningfulness of being in water, so from the age of myth through the end of the age of metaphysics, i.e., through the time of Hegel and Schelling, man could not possibly have in all earnest raised the question, “Is Life Worth Living?” *as a real, more than merely rhetorical, question*.

12 See Claus-Artur Scheier, *Nietzsches Labyrinth. Das ursprüngliche Denken und die Seele*, Freiburg, München (Alber) 1985.

13 CW 18 § 630.

14 MDR p. 165.

If in the 19th century the question of the meaning and worth of life all of a sudden—or by and by—became possible, indeed serious and pressing, a radical change in man’s being-in-the-world must have had taken place. Man must have had stepped out of his previous absolute containment in life, so that he now was both enabled and forced to view life as if from outside, because only in this way could *the whole of life* become thematic in the first place. Now, with the question about its meaning and worth, existence as such had become a vis-à-vis, as it were, which is the opposite of in-ness. Man now for the first time had a *position to the world per se*.¹⁵ The question of meaning is the mark of the modern period after the conclusion of the age of metaphysics at the beginning of the 19th century.

Now we understand why the modern search for meaning is necessarily self-contradictory. The search for meaning is in truth, but secretly, the longing for a state of in-ness, but since the question about the worth and meaning of life has existence as a whole in its field of vision, it inevitably positions us outside and vis-à-vis life. The search for meaning unwittingly has to construe that which it desires to be the logic or *syntax* of life as a *semantic content*, as a kind of doctrine of wisdom or a creed or ideology, ultimately as a commodity. This is why today meaning exists in the plural of numerous competing meanings put up for sale on a large “meaning market” by a whole “meaning industry,” and why we are in the position of customers who have to make their decisions and choices about these “meanings.”¹⁶ Even if we “buy” a certain meaning and immerse ourselves in it, nothing can undo the fact that it is a secondary acquisition and that our in-ness in it, if it comes to exist at all, is like that in a house that we ourselves built or rented, not that kind of a priori and irrevocable in-ness that was actually sought.

In addition to the intellectual contradictoriness inherent in the question of meaning there is also an emotional contradiction: we could not even seriously *wish* to find in fact realized what our search for meaning is in truth seeking. The kind of in-ness that is longed for, if it were indeed realized, would be intolerable for the modern subject. It would collide with our inalienable insistence on emancipated individuality and rationality. It would necessarily be felt as imprisonment, as a nightmare, of which the 20th century experience in totalitarian states and with fundamentalist sects has given us a taste.

A few exemplary facts may serve as suggestive illustrations to evoke at least some sense of the unquestionable containment that once was, since I cannot give the elaborate exposition here that this topic would deserve.

2. In-ness as the reality of the pre-modern ages

We must distinguish between ancient conceptions and tales, on the one hand, in which the absolute in-ness has become expressly articulated, a content of conscious awareness, and, on the other hand, factual phenomena of the way life was lived that betray that man’s containment in nature was the prevailing actual reality.

15 “Aber das Neue dieses Vorgangs liegt keinesfalls darin, daß jetzt die Stellung des Menschen inmitten des Seienden lediglich eine andere ist gegenüber dem mittelalterlichen und antiken Menschen. Entscheidend ist, daß der Mensch diese Stellung eigens als die von ihm ausgemachte selbst bezieht [...] Jetzt erst gibt es überhaupt so etwas wie eine Stellung des Menschen.” Martin Heidegger, “Die Zeit des Weltbildes,” in: *Holzwege*, Frankfurt a.M. (Klostermann) 1972, p. 84. (The problem of this passage is only that Heidegger retrojects a modern [post-metaphysical, 19th century or later] situation already into the last epoch of the age of metaphysics, the time from Descartes to Hegel. On this retrojection see Claus-Artur Scheier, “Die Sprache spricht. Heideggers Tautologien,” in: *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung*, vol. 47, 1993, no. 1, pp. 60–74, here p. 69.)

16 Cf. the “selling God” concept of American social scientists.

Examples of the articulation of the sense of metaphysical in-ness are certain geographical and cosmological views of the mythological age. The earth was imagined as a circular disc surrounded by a stream (the Greek Okeanos, the Egyptian Nun) or a serpent (the Germanic Midgard Serpent) or a solid girdle or band comparable to the tire of a wagon wheel (the Altai mountain range). This “World Encircler” or “Bitter River” (as the Egyptians or Babylonians, respectively, called it) was the border between Being and Non-Being and created an inner space into which human existence was absolutely locked. No exit. Whereas the name Bitter River suggests the bond of necessity (Ἀνάγκη) that unrelentingly encloses human existence, the idea of the circle implies that existence is existence at a center.

Through this center went the World Tree that both held apart and connected the three levels of the cosmos: the underworld below, the earth in the middle (appropriately called “Midgard” in Germanic mythology) and heaven above. Midgard as the locus of human existence sandwiched between underworld and heaven is already suggestive enough of the sense of in-ness. But the widespread myth of the separation of the world parents, Mother Earth and Father Heaven, adds an even stronger and more dynamic note. The world parents were originally lying in eternal embrace upon one another. Their children had to live between their bellies in eternal darkness and without space and air to breathe, until one day an especially strong son brutally disrupted the *gamos* of the World Parents and lifted Father Heaven up into the heights so that that openness that we call the *world* of man, in contrast to the mere physical environment, was created. The interesting point here is that with respect to the question of containment the situation after this feat of the culture hero is exactly the same as before; his opening up of the world did not provide a release from the enclosure. The children of Heaven and Earth remain surrounded by their parents regardless of whether they are pressed between their united bodies or whether there is an open space or “clearance” between Heaven and Earth in which they can walk erect, breathe freely and orient themselves in their world. Both images represent a situation of absolute in-ness. It is therefore not surprising that the Orphics thought of the cosmos as a cave and of human existence as an existence in this cave, a conception that might be linked to the widespread ideas of heaven as a vault or tent. In such figures as that of the Greek Atlas whose task it was to constantly hold the vault of heaven up so that it would not crash back down upon the earth, the experienced inescapable in-ness of human existence has found its explicit expression.

Having the fiery heaven, the realm of the gods, above him, man was *essentially* upward looking. Worship, devotion¹⁷ was his nature. There was a fixed border above, the moon, which separated the sublunar sphere from the empyrean. This fixed limit gave a hold to the upward looking, made it determinate and concrete and prevented one’s glance from simply disappearing in the indifference of an infinite void.

The sense of embeddedness is also reflected in man’s ancient self-understanding. We have already heard that man conceived of himself as the child of Mother Earth or Mother Nature and Father Heaven, and his relation to all the gods was that of a child looking up to parents. The Greeks spoke directly of Father Okeanos and Father Zeus, Christianity of Our Father in Heaven. And the Catholic Church still perceives itself fundamentally as the Mother of all believers, thereby confirming the metaphysical child status of man

17 The etymological sense of “devotion” from Lat. *de-votio*, *de-vovere* seems to be in opposition to “upward looking.” In the ritual of *devotio* a warrior was consecrated (or consecrated himself) to the underworld, to death. But the literal direction is not essential here. There was an “upward looking” even in the devotion to the gods of the underworld (regardless of whether it was a case of literal *devotio* or of devotion in the generalized sense of worship). Without this upward looking, there would be neither gods above nor below.

and thus the stance of upward looking, the native stance of the child towards father and mother.

This ancient sense of containment is best expressed in the description with which Jung summarized what he learned from the master of ceremonies of a tribe of Pueblo Indians about their stance in the world. “They get up in the morning with the feeling of their great and divine responsibility: they are the sons of the Sun, the Father, and their daily duty is to help the Father over the horizon—not for themselves alone, but for the whole world. You should see these fellows: they have a natural fulfilled dignity.”¹⁸ They are “fulfilling [their] role, [their] role as [...] actors in the divine drama of life.”¹⁹ We have here not only the sense of containment and fundamental upward looking on account of their status as children or sons of a divine Father, but more fundamentally that of metaphysically being enveloped in a divine drama. Living life means to fulfil one’s role as an actor in this drama. We are *in* this greater drama and do not each have to live life merely on our own account.

The nature of the particular role to be fulfilled by these Pueblo Indians strikingly reveals their sense of being fundamentally enveloped in nature. They have to help the sun to wander across the sky. In other words, they have to ritually accompany or soulfully tune into a pre-given movement that is precisely absolutely independent of and unswayed by any human doings and attitudes, utterly beyond human reach, following as it does the relentless laws of physics, of natural necessity. The point of their ceremonies was obviously not a real help in the sense of practical effectiveness, but merely the humble, obedient synchronizing of the movement of the human soul with the unshakeable laws of nature. This corresponds to the fundamental sense of not empirical-practical, but metaphysical powerlessness that we find at this stage of cultural development. Man experienced himself primarily as a thread in the fabric of nature, without any arbitrary volition of his own (Heino Gehrts). Even where man interfered with nature, such as when tilling the soil, erecting a house, or, above all, in his sacrificial killings, these human interventions were, in a sense, decidedly not his own doings, doings, metaphysically speaking, on his own responsibility, but rather re-enactments of exemplary acts originally performed by gods. And even these re-enactments were ultimately not the work of the human actors, but rather of the gods who acted through them.

All the examples given so far mainly belonged to the archaic stage of consciousness and culture characterized by myth and ritual. But the sense of embeddedness *mutatis mutandis* prevailed also after the transition from the mythological or ritualistic age to the time of religion and classical metaphysics. We have already heard of the Christian Father in Heaven and the Roman Catholic’s existence in the fold of Mother Church. We can also refer by way of one single example to Romans 8:32f. in which the certainty is expressed “that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Christian man’s containment in the love of God is absolute. As to metaphysics (in the sense of First Philosophy) I will here only point to the logic of the judgment (*Urteil*), in which the copula is the abstract-logical analogue to the mythological-imaginal figure of Atlas who at once is keeping apart and uniting the opposites. The copula guarantees the real union of subject and predi-

18 CW 18 § 630. We should here, however, keep in mind that the necessity to help the Sun to continue to go across the sky and thus to prevent a general darkening (doom) of the world has a rather sinister side to it. With another people, the Meso-American Aztecs, this helping the Sun to be able to continue its daily course took the form of the sacrificial killing of people in huge numbers, whose hearts had to be cut out and offered to the gods.

19 Ibid. § 628.

cate, the universal and the particular, implying the Ground, or Being, that encompasses and produces both extremes and is in turn ultimately grounded in God. The thought of classical metaphysics possesses a fulfilled center.²⁰

The views in which the sense of in-ness articulated itself are one thing. As views, ideas, they could possibly be mistaken, superstitious, fictitious. But it can be shown that the articulated *sense* of in-ness in turn articulates the in-ness in fact inherent in the actual conditions of the practical reality of life at those times. Again I can merely mention a few points by way of suggestion.

First, the ethical and intellectual life of each present generation was embedded in the age-old tradition of the fathers. Each present derived its truths from what Eliade called *illud tempus* or from the ancients. All thinking and experience were enwrapped in the inherited views.

Second, the individual had his reality and substance not in himself but in something larger, logically speaking in a universal, be it the family, the clan, the tribe, or a corporation, which was the only true real and of which the individual was no more than sort of a fall-out, an emanation.²¹ He likewise had his Self and his soul not in himself, but in the king, the tribe's medicine man, the Pharaoh.

Third, there was the inescapable dependence on nature. The talk of Mother Nature was not so much a metaphor as a factual reality. Man was at the mercy of nature when it sent earthquakes, droughts, floods, and he relied on nature for his subsistence. To be sure, man was also a producer, but even in his own production he showed himself to be the child of nature, because his producing was only an alteration of things previously produced by nature, logs, rocks, sheep and cows, grain, etc. And the mode of human production was the imitation, *mimesis*, of nature's way of producing, which is even reflected in much of the Western pre-modern theory of art. Man's productivity was not yet conceived as creativity.

Fourth, the factual in-ness also showed in the unquestionable resigned submission of people to fate, to the vicissitudes and rigors of nature, to the whims of the rulers, to God's inscrutable ways.

Fifth and finally, if, as Jung claimed, the primitive Australians, e.g., sacrificed two-thirds of their conscious lifetime to what he called the "symbolic life"²² and if the public and private life of people in all other former cultures had similarly its center in their cults, we see that upward looking was more than an inconsequential subjective attitude, it was a practical reality. From a strictly financial point of view it is absolutely amazing how much, for example, the Egyptians invested in their pyramids and tombs that did not serve any immediate practical purpose for the living. It expressed their metaphysical devotedness to something larger in which human existence as a whole was contained.

20 The logic of the judgment in the context of the metaphysical tradition and in contrast to the modern logic of the proposition (Frege) has been analyzed and discussed in many writings by Claus-Artur Scheier. See e.g. his "Die Grenze der Metaphysik und die Herkunft des gegenwärtigen Denkens," in: *Abhandlungen der Braunschweigischen Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft*, vol. XLVI, 1995, Göttingen (Verlag Erich Goltze) 1996, pp. 189–196, as well as "Russels Antinomie und der Heraklitische Anfang der Logik," in: Rainer Enskat (ed.), *Erfahrung und Urteilskraft*, Würzburg (Königshausen & Neumann), pp. 43–54.

21 By way of one example I mention only the common phenomenon described in Acts 16:33: "[...] and was baptized, he and all his [...]" The head of the household is converted to Christianity and his whole family and dependents have to follow suit. Another example is the power that genealogy had over people's self-understanding and the use of patronymics (logically one had one's identity in being son or daughter of ...).

22 CW 18 § 649.

3. The end of in-ness

All that was described concerning man's metaphysical containment in nature during the ages of myth and metaphysics is no more. In the modern age that began with the 19th century, Atlas lost his job; there is no above and below in a universe in which the earth is no longer in the center, no longer Midgard. The ideas of the center, of above and below, have cosmologically become simply meaningless. Without Atlas constantly holding Heaven and Earth apart, the world parents have collapsed upon each other, into positivity, so that the metaphysical difference between Heaven and Earth, as well as the difference between the earth, the moon, the sun, the planets and stars has disappeared. The essential duality of this earthly world, on the one hand, and a transcendent one, on the other, is simply gone, a state which is reflected in the search for a *uniform* world formula. There is now positivistically only one metaphysically homogenous stuff out of which the "universe" (no longer *kósmos*!) as a whole is made up. The place of planet Earth in what was the *kósmos* has become absolutely indifferent and insignificant. Long before man's flight to the moon and the launching of unmanned rockets to other planets, the unsurmountable limit between the sublunar sphere and the fiery heaven as the realm of the gods had been abolished. Even with the aid of the largest telescope men will, Jung once said, discover behind the farthest nebulae no fiery empyrean, "and we know that our eyes will wander despairingly through the emptiness of interstellar space."²³ No world encircling Okeanos relentlessly encloses us with the bond of necessity in the here and now. We even have managed to look down upon the Earth from outside, from outer space.²⁴ The stance of a metaphysical upward looking has become impossible. The soul has left the Earth as its inescapable locus and thus lost the former sense of in-ness.

The opposite change seems to have taken place with man. The individual, the singular has established itself as the center and as the ultimate real. Corporations and society have lost their metaphysical substantiality and realness, having become reduced to "col-lectives," aggregations of atomic individuals on the basis of the idea of social contracts. Genealogy has lost the power it used to have in one's self-understanding; the modern individual no longer comprehends himself primarily as "son of ...," but as his own center and center of his world. To be "I" means to have established oneself as all by oneself being the *origin* of one's coordinates. Likewise, ideas and concepts have lost their former status of ultimate realness as "universals" in the neoplatonic sense, a realness superior to that of the particular and the concrete individual who had formerly only possessed reality to the extent that he *participated* in and was subsumed under the universal. The most easily accessible illustration is sexual liberation. Formerly there was a clear idea of what "a man" and "a woman," their true nature and accordingly their roles in society, were. The *concept* was *physei*, it immediately expressed, nay, *was* the nature and true reality of things and people. The particular individual had his or her truth and reality only in and through the concept, and this is why deviant feelings and inclinations, such as homosexual ones, were utterly "untrue," "not real," perverse, *despite* their occurring in fact. Today, what actually occurs in individuals in all their diversity *is* the only real, and ideas, concepts, roles are seen as no more than human constructs. The singular has emancipated itself from the universal concept, which is now in fact reduced to a *flatus vocis* or experienced as a mere human instrument of op-

23 CW 9i § 31.

24 Cf. our orientation on the earth via GPS, our remote sensing with earth observation satellites. Cf. also the proliferation of science fiction books and movies about star wars, etc.

pression.

In a similar way man has psychologically, even if not completely factually, emancipated himself from the vicissitudes of fate, from the rigors of nature and from the arbitrariness of rulers. Formerly these forces were experienced as self-evident aspects of the *nature* of the world that one had to helplessly let be: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21). Today there are strong ideas that logically, even if not always factually, man can insure himself against the blows of fate and that pain and illness, to some extent even aging and death, are unacceptable wrongs to be corrected by human technology. There is even the feeling that I have a *right* to a pain-free and happy life. Although empirically and practically our technical means are still ridiculously limited compared with the effects of weather, earthquakes, volcanos, floods, tornados, illnesses, etc., psychologically or logically, that is, as far as man’s *real* self-understanding and self-definition is concerned, there are no limits to what can on principle be done by man. Man, nobody else, is now the one who is in charge and holds the responsibility for the existence or non-existence of the world, the continuity of life on earth, the protection of the environment.

The cult of the ancestors has been replaced by the idolization of childhood and youth; instead of the orientation towards the knowledge of the dead ancestors, the ancients and wise old men or women, and instead of the cultivation of and respect for tradition, modernity is characterized by the need for individual originality and constant innovation as well as the delight in irreverence and provocation (modern art!).

As to human productivity,²⁵ man has begun with the technical appropriation of the production processes that once were the unfathomable secrets of nature. This is most apparent in the area of genetic engineering and reproduction. Formerly the only way to improve or change animals and plants according to our human needs was by means of breeding. Today biotechnology has advanced to the possibility of creating new types of organisms by directly *designing* them. Similarly in the human realm it is now possible to have sex without children and children without sex. Before, reproduction could only be brought about by allowing *nature* to do *its* work of reproduction through, so to speak, one’s ritually re-enacting the marriage of Father Heaven and Mother Earth. Today it is more and more becoming possible to directly, technically, control the reproduction process. With the possibility of artificial in vitro insemination and even the feasibility of artificial uteri, the meaning of “blood relationship” (“blood is thicker than water”) has logically disappeared; the bond between family members will logically no longer be nature-based, but only social, psychological, contingent: it seems likely that one day not too far away babies will be designed, laboratory-produced from the best, healthiest but anonymous “raw materials,” so that a father will no longer be father because he fathered his child, but only because he held the office of “father,” and the sense that one continues in and through one’s children will have no basis in fact anymore; the very idea of “mother” and “father,” indeed of the mother and father archetypes, will have lost their integrity. Even if this mode of reproduction should prove practically too difficult, *logically* the fundamental rupture with the natural way of reproduction and the loss of innocence *has* already taken place.

But these are only the most blatant examples for a change that has been inherent in the Industrial Revolution from the outset. With the beginning of modern chemistry with Lavoisier at the time of the French Revolution, human production is no longer restricted to the mere alteration of the products of nature (*natura*

25 On the revolution of the form of human production and its philosophical implications see C.A. Scheier, *Ästhetik der Simulation*, Hamburg (Meiner) 2000.

naturata), but itself behaves like the *natura naturans* by, e.g., producing artificial substances that do not occur in nature. We have “designed matter” and even “intelligent materials.” Nature has abdicated as “Mother” and unfathomable origin; it is now a mere raw material for human production and partially itself already a human product, the borders between “natural” and “artificial” being fundamentally blurred, which corresponds to the other fact already mentioned that it is now man who has to protect nature as his “problem child.”

Where formerly man was entirely dependent on the sources of energy provided by nature, on horse power, wind and water, he now has technically appropriated the power to produce energy for himself when and where he pleases, earlier by means of steam engines, now also by means of various types of motors, batteries and atomic energy. It is a part of this change that *Nyx*, the Night, once a venerable, potent, substantial reality in her own right and a goddess, is now reduced to no more than an absence of daylight that can be compensated for, and fundamentally depotentiated, by electric light. The pun “the world is getting light” refers to the fact that whereas the earlier heavy industry had to rely on coal and steel machine tools, a process has now started where coal will slowly be replaced by hydrogen, the lightest element, as an energy carrier, and machine tools more and more by lasers, which are light.

Clearly, man’s embeddedness in nature is over. But since the meaning of “meaning” is nothing else but in-ness, it is obvious why the last two centuries had to experience a loss of meaning,²⁶ a sense of alienation and nihilism. As Jung stated, the “soul has become lonely; it is *extra ecclesiam* and in a state of no salvation.”²⁷ The soul is likewise *extra naturam*. With this insight we have returned in our discussion to, and provided an underpinning for, Jung’s initial diagnosis, “No, evidently we no longer have any myth.”

4. Two basic lines of reaction to “the end of in-ness”

In view of this fundamental change, two opposite stances are possible. One can *either* try to hold on to and defend the truth of the past *against* the real situation produced by historical developments *or* own up to the new situation into which history has placed us and allow oneself to be taught by it about how to think. Both reactions involve us in a dialectic. By allowing itself to be placed into the real situation the second option lets go of the *former* definition of in-ness, namely, the child status of upward looking and the sense of containment in nature, while in fact continuing the real in-ness, which however now happens to be the in-ness precisely in the situation of “meaninglessness.” According to this stance history is, as it were, the soul’s alchemical retort, and we collectively are the prime matter in this hermetically sealed retort and are transported through one phase of history’s alchemical opus after the other, each time finding ourselves in an entirely new world situation. – By longing for “meaning,” the first option defends, to be sure, the old sense of in-ness, i.e., the in-ness in the former situation, but therefore has to renounce what it actually most desires, in-ness as an actual reality, which, however, today would be the in-ness in the utterly new psychological situation of being *extra ecclesiam et naturam* and not the in-ness of old. Either way, a loss is unavoidable.

26 To avoid misunderstandings I want to point out that “meaninglessness” or “loss or end of meaning” refers only to meaning in the material sense (“meaning” as in: the meaning [*Sinn*] and worth of life, mythic or metaphysical meaning). “Meaning” in the formal sense (“the meaning [*Bedeutung*] of such and such a word, sentence, text,” etc.) remains of course unaffected.

27 CW 18 § 632.

Inasmuch as the first option tries to dictate *what* the kind of in-ness that it wants has to be, it must be comprehended as the egoic revolt against the soul's alchemical process, the attempt to remain exempt from having to undergo the transformations of the soul's logical life from stage to stage. It insists on having meaning, i.e., the status of in-ness, while itself *imaginally* placing and holding itself outside the containment in the alchemical vessel of history. From outside the vessel, it can prescribe and demand the status that it thinks should be and criticize and condemn what it thinks is intolerable about the situation that is. It is in this sense that, e.g., Jung, as we already heard, declared mythic meaning to be indispensable and meaninglessness to be the unbearable cause of psychic illness. When you are *extra ecclesiam*, so he stated as a veritable scaremonger, "then things really become terrible, [...] you are confronted with all the demons of hell"²⁸; before you "there yawns the void [*das Nichts*]," and you "turn[-] away from it in horror."²⁹

Threatening with the horrors of the void is one strategy of those who insist on meaning. Another favorite strategy for the same purpose is interpreting the change that occurred in terms of a psychology of blame. The change is viewed as a decline, decadence, a mistake, as sick; it is due to our fault, our hybris, our neglect and forgetfulness. It is all our guilt. The West has *squandered* its spiritual heritage, Jung stated.³⁰ We have been too rationalistic, too patriarchal, too one-sided. So now, this conception claims, we have to humble ourselves and turn again to the ignored unconscious as the true source of meaning.

This strategy operates with a structurally neurotic split between the soul and the ego, the soul and the rational intellect. It follows the thought figure "omne bonum a deo, omne malum ab homine."³¹ Even if Jung occasionally was ready to state that "I am convinced that the growing impoverishment of symbols has a meaning [...]," which would imply that it is a necessary development in the history or alchemy of the soul and thus the soul's, not our, doing, his dominant position was the one about our fault.

The problem with this view is that it represents the very arrogance of the ego that it decries and that the humble submission to the unconscious is only an *empirical* behavior, an acted-out attitude that conceals the inner *logical* pompousness of one's insisting on being something grander than what one happens to be. It is the insistence on being an actor in the divine drama, the sons of the Sun, the Father, like the Pueblo Indians, or "the 'age-old son of the mother'", "the 'old man,' the 'ancient' [...]" who has always been and always will be,³² like Jung. It is the insistence on a metaphysical or mythical garment that gives us a higher status.

The first option, a negative interpretation of the fundamental change from myth and metaphysics to modernity, does not work. So much has become clear. We have to turn to the second option, that is to say, to let ourselves be placed by the soul's process into the situation that is. It must teach us how to interpret our situation.

5. Jung's idea of the death of symbols

As a model for the general line of such an interpretation we can lean on a conception by Jung, a very different one that, however, seems to be rather isolated in his work and inconsequential for his further

28 Ibid.

29 CW 9i § 28.

30 Ibid.

31 Criticized by Jung CW 11 § 739.

32 MDR p. 225.

thought. It is his view of the symbol to be found in the section “Definitions” of his *Psychological Types* (§ 816).³³ Jung writes:

So long as a symbol is a living thing, it is an expression for something that cannot be characterized in any other or better way. The symbol is alive only so long as it is pregnant with meaning. But once its meaning has been born out of it, once that expression is found which formulates the thing sought, expected, or divined even better than the hitherto accepted symbol, then the symbol is *dead*, i.e., it possesses only an historical significance. We may still go on speaking of it as a symbol, on the tacit assumption that we are speaking of it as it was before the better expression was born out of it. [...] For every esoteric interpretation the symbol is dead, because esotericism has already given it (at least ostensibly) a better expression, whereupon it becomes merely a conventional sign for associations that are more completely and better known elsewhere. Only from the exoteric standpoint is the symbol a living thing.

Here, concerning the *meaning* of a symbol, Jung operates with the images of pregnancy and birth, and concerning the *interpretation* of a symbol, with the ideas of exoteric and esoteric standpoints. The symbol is only the unfinished embryonic form of a given meaning. As long as the symbol is alive its meaning is still unborn, has not fully seen the light of day. The birth of the meaning at once means the death of its former embryonic form, i.e., the death of the form of symbol, and it means that this meaning has received a *better* expression. The death of a symbol, inasmuch as it amounts to the birth of the better formulation of what it is about, is thus by no means to be viewed as an intolerable catastrophe. It is a transformation that, to be sure, goes along with a loss, but ultimately is a gain, a progress, just as in the case of the transition from biological pregnancy to birth. It thus is precisely the meaning’s *destination* to be born out of its initial enveloped form of mere pregnancy (implicitness, *Ansichsein*).

The *interpreting mind*’s movement is the converse to the movement of the meaning. As long as the meaning is still hidden in the belly of the symbol, the mind views or divines it from outside; this is what Jung calls the mind’s exoteric standpoint. The birth of the meaning out of the symbol goes hand in hand with the mind’s initiation into the meaning so that it understands the meaning from within itself and is fully conscious of it; the meaning then has become explicit, *conceptually* comprehended (= the esoteric standpoint), which, however, is naturally tantamount to the loss of its mystique. It has become demythologized and desacralized and now is merely an ordinary content of consciousness (Jung says “conventional sign”).

So we have to understand that “in-ness in meaning” (= the living symbol still merely pregnant with *its* meaning) and “exoteric standpoint” are descriptions of the same situation from opposite sides.

This passage by Jung about the symbol is one of the rare moments where he rises up to a truly dialectical thinking in terms of a Hegelian sublation.

Jung spoke here only of the history or fate of the meaning of individual symbols. In the case of the death of one individual symbol through consciousness’ transition from an exoteric to an esoteric standpoint toward it, it may well be that this loss is compensated for by the emergence of a new symbol pregnant with a different meaning so that there is a new fascination. This is what had in fact happened in history many times; there have been numerous periods of cultural crisis when the old gods or symbols had lost their conviction and new ones had not fully taken hold of people, but were slowly emerging. These times of transition were times of *empirical* and temporal suffering from the loss of meaning, while the fundamental, logical in-ness continued even across the period of its empirical absence. This type of change and predicament could be compared to the unrest during a removal, when one is no longer in one’s old home and has not yet

33 Cf. for a similar view CW 18 § 632. Cf. also: People “do not realize that a myth is dead if it no longer lives and grows.” MDR p. 332.

moved into one's new home.

But now, when we transfer what Jung said about the individual symbol to our topic, the question of the meaning of human existence as a whole, we are confronted with a historical rupture of an entirely different character and order of magnitude; this change is no longer comparable to a removal, which, being no more than a change of location or environment, does not immediately and essentially affect the identity of the person moving. It is more like the transformation in puberty, e.g., when there is a substantial change in the identity and redefinition of the person himself or herself from child to man or woman, respectively. The house may stay precisely the same. What is here, as it were, reconstituted is the person himself in that house. He all of a sudden wakes up still in the same unaltered house, but *as* another.

The notion of "change" has become "sublimated," reflected (interiorized) into itself: change here no longer means locomotion of an intact substance or subject, but rather internal ("alchemical") transformation of this substance or subject itself. The notion, one might say, is no longer acted out (nota bene: acted out on the conceptual level!), but "*erinnert.*" The movement has fully come home to that which formerly was merely moved around.

For the "symbol" that we are talking about now is meaning *as such*, Meaning with a capital M; it is myth, the symbolic life, the imaginal, religion, the grand narratives—not *this* myth or religion or grand narrative nor *this* meaning, but myth or religion pure and simple, Meaning altogether. And the "meaning" (lower-case) that has been born out of *this* "symbol" (i.e., out of Meaning capitalized) is Man himself or consciousness as such, human existence at large. Because consciousness has been born out of them, myth as such, religion altogether, higher meaning at large now possess only historical significance; they still exist, but in the plural, and shrunk into the reduced status of commodities—*dead* meanings. If they are nevertheless still used today to hold consciousness in their sway and thus to create a new secondary mystique or aura, a new sense of in-ness, then they can function this way because they now have the status of (spiritual) drugs used to numb consciousness or to give it its highs.

Myth, religion, the grand narratives as a constituting *form* of consciousness *have* to be dead: the birth of *their* "meaning," Man, out of them is tantamount to the fact that man's *interpretation* of this "meaning," that is, his interpretation of himself, has now become esoteric in Jung's sense. Man now understands and views himself *from within* his consciousness and thus *as* consciousness, *as* linguistic, *as* the process of interpretation and symbol-formation. To the extent that the interpretation has left the outside, exoteric, standpoint, the *contents* of consciousness (the former symbols, mythic images, religious conceptions) can no longer be naively taken at face value and believed in as objects per se, as primordial epiphanic phenomena. They can and must now be seen as products of the human mind, as "conventional signs," not symbols in the lofty Jungian sense; indeed as signifiers, ultimately as letters, as writing, *écriture*, to be read and interpreted, not to be believed in and to be given over to or enwrapped by.

Under the present conditions, when "symbolic life" or Mythic Meaning as such (rather than only this or that symbol) has become questionable, there could only be a new "symbol" pregnant with new meaning, a new "myth" or religion, a new in-ness of human existence, if we were willing to follow Nietzsche in his dream of the coming overman. If man, as Nietzsche claimed, is something that must be (and can be) overcome, if man is indeed a rope tied between animal and overman, then and only then can the old in-ness that has come to an end with the death of God and myth be superseded by a new in-ness, a new state of preg-

nancy with meaning. For the transition from man to overman is neither like a locomotion (a removal from one house to another) nor like a transformation as in puberty, in which there is a kind of redefinition or reconstitution of one and the same subject. It is rather a new *creation* of a new man and as such the *substitution* or *replacement* of the present logical substrate of consciousness, man as he has been known, by a different substrate, a radically new, other definition of man with a new, other mind; not a natural continuation of the evolution and history of consciousness, but a truly new start. The overman being an unknown future would be a new symbol whose “meaning” has not been born out of it yet for present man’s understanding. With respect to it the mind of present man which has become esoteric to itself would again be exoteric to this new definition of man.

Once consciousness has become conscious of, and esoteric in, itself, the condition of the possibility of a new in-ness would be a fundamental rupture, a discontinuity of the interpreting mind. But now we have to understand that the idea of a *discontinuity* in the definition of man given with the duality of man and overman and the succession from the one to the other is paradoxically a desperate attempt to rescue the *continuity* of the sense of in-ness in meaning as a constituent, and thus indispensable, part of the definition of human existence. Just as previously the succession of ever new symbols in the history of man had in fact guaranteed that man had never *fundamentally* (logically) fallen out of his sense of in-ness, despite the many periods of cultural crisis in which he was forced to suffer through the empirical loss of his *particular* in-ness in the respective old symbols.

However, since Nietzsche’s idea of the overman has become apparent to have been a utopia, even a phantom, we know we cannot hope for a possible successor to man. The inevitable continuity of man means that he will have to hold his place in the loss of in-ness in meaning and that this loss will fall upon him as a fundamental, irrevocable, *logical one*; no new double will relieve him of his having once and for all been born out of meaning and protect him from being initiated into this change by this change itself, when it comes home to him and works upon him alchemically (in the sense of a fermenting decomposition and reconstitution). *This* loss is not an interlude. It makes a *real* difference. But rather than inflating man into an overman, it forces man in his concept of himself to come down from his former lofty height and to live *without* being dressed in any splendid religious or mythical garments.

6. Man the unborn

According to a popular idea, man is the naked ape.³⁴ Many philosophers and anthropologists have pointed out that by comparison with animals, man is a *Mängelwesen*, a biologically deficient being. Human culture has been interpreted as man’s compensation for his biological deficiencies. Without refuting the biological legitimacy of such views and the underlying observations, I propose a different thesis. Harking back to Nietzsche’s idea of the overman, I call man, i.e., precisely man as he has been known, the “overanimal” and insist that it is in turn the animal, the ape, that is naked by comparison with man. Just as Nietzsche’s overman—if he had come into existence—would logically have been a new creation, while physically remaining man, so man has in fact logically been, and is, a new creation, while biologically remaining an animal.

34 Cf. Desmond John Morris, *The Naked Ape*, New York (McGraw-Hill Book Company) 1967.

The animal, as Plato already pointed out,³⁵ wears its blanket or bedding as its natural fur undetachably upon itself. Physically it is dressed in a protective cover. But logically or metaphysically, it is naked. It is directly thrust into and exposed to the environment and has to live all for itself, on its own account, for better or worse. There is nothing in between it and external reality. It is in itself complete, autonomous, self-sufficient inasmuch as it has everything it needs for adapting to reality within itself. It has been equipped by nature with its own laws, its instincts. Exclusively with what it has in itself and what it is, it takes life or the environment in its stride. The animal knows no fooling. No illusions, no hopes, no utopias, but also no meaning and no upward looking. This is its nakedness. The animal is very realistic, rational, and sober; as Jung stated, it is a well-behaved, law-abiding citizen in nature.³⁶ It is an absolutely mature adult, *and*: mature by nature, thus inalienably so.

So we can say that the animal is fully born into the world. Birth means the transition from the containment in a protective womb to the naked exposure to a cold, dangerous environment. Birth also means the transition from being automatically and constantly provided for to the experience of need, and to having to take care of one's needs all by oneself. Already the newborn baby all of a sudden has to do its own breathing and sucking; newborn animals already have to compete with each other for the most food, and often run for their lives, all the more so the grown up animals.

Literal birth is just the beginning of birth in a wider sense. To be *fully* born, and this will have to be kept in mind for the following discussion, is paradoxically synonymous with being fully adult, fully mature: neither dependent on parents, but all on one's own, nor shielded from the environment by any intermediary, but nakedly exposed to it. When this state is reached, then and only then has birth been concluded.

Turning here from animal to man, we immediately see that man prior to modernity is the opposite on both counts. He was fundamentally in a child status, upward looking to the gods, his world parents, or to God, his Father, and contained in the fold of Mother Nature, Mother Church, or some other uterine vessel. What was the cult of the ancestors other than the celebration of the "child's" respect for timeless spiritual parents? Metaphysically, man was not "man for himself"³⁷ and living on his own responsibility. Rather than carrying his laws as his natural instincts within himself, they had to come to him "written on tablets" from above and outside. The ultimate responsibility for his own doing, too, rested with the gods. Even as the mature adult that he certainly was *psychically*, even with that "natural fulfilled dignity" that Jung had observed in his Pueblo Indians, *psychologically* (logically or metaphysically) man was decidedly a child; indeed, that empirical dignity and maturity was precisely the result of the Pueblo Indians' logically being and staying the sons of the Sun, their Father; they derived their strength and authority from their "religious" relation to him. By the same token, the initiation rites at puberty, to be found in traditional societies in most parts of the world, had, to be sure, the task of transporting a person from childhood into social adulthood. But they fulfilled this task precisely by logically initiating the initiate into *metaphysical childhood*.

Man (I am here not speaking about the empirical individual, but, on the logical level, about Man at large, his "humanity": the *concept* of man as and in which we all live) is not born directly into the environment,

35 Plato, *Protagoras* 321 c 6.

36 C.G. Jung, *Visions Seminar I* (9 Dec. 1930), Notes of Mary Foote, p. 282, quoted in J. Hillman, "The Animal Kingdom in the Human Dream," in: *Eranos 51-1982*, p. 313.

37 Cf. Erich Fromm, *Man for himself* (1947).

not “thrust into existence,” as the 20th century existentialists thought. He is born first of all into and contained in myths, meanings, ideas, images, words, creeds, theories, traditions. They stand irrevocably between him and external reality, so that he is not naked, and it not either. Everything in the world is hopelessly enwrapped in mythical garments; nothing is just what it pragmatically is. Tools, weapons, things and events in nature, regardless of whether big or small, the activities of daily life: everything has its story about its primordial divine origin and cosmic significance, and this its mythical or metaphysical reality is its primary reality. Naked reality is fundamentally out of reach. When man came into this world, he ipso facto had entered into One ongoing, continuous, and all-comprehensive Dream, a dream from which there was no awakening since this dream was his real world and life, his “reality principle.” What we call consciousness is just as much part of *this* Dream as are the many particular literal dreams (which normally are thought to belong to “the unconscious”).

Or we could say he entered into One Sandplay, with the difference to ordinary sandplays in the context of sandplay therapy that it was not an event or intended performance *in* the course of life, but that life itself and as a whole (and not only one’s own life, but the life of people collectively, as it extended over millennia) was this Sandplay, the real world (nature, the cosmos) being its sandtray and the real people, animals, plants, things, events its toy figure. While a sandplay is played, while a dream is dreamed, they are absolutely real, the one and only reality. The reality of the waking mind simply does not exist for the dreamer and his dream. The dream has no other world outside of itself. In the same way, the One Dream or Sandplay as which life was lived did not have the problem of truth as *adaequatio intellectus et rei*. Truth was “absolute”; it *was*, existed: physically, cosmically. Things and events *were* the mythical, imaginal apperception of them, and myths *were* the real nature of reality. One might even claim: *Anima naturaliter realista* (“the soul is by nature a realist,” realist here in the sense of the medieval universals controversy).

Man is fundamentally unborn. Despite his literal biological birth, he has logically never left the in-ness in a womb. In being biologically born, he only *exchanged* the biological womb for another, a metaphysical womb, the womb of Meaning. Personalistically expressed, man managed to *in fact* take the logical sting away from birth (birth where is thy sting?³⁸), the logical (not emotional, not empirical) trauma of the radical and irrevocable rupture that birth meant for the animal in that birth ruthlessly expelled it from in-ness in a uterus into naked exposure to the environment. Man managed to logically defeat birth in its literal biological dimension and use it for a purpose not intended, *contra naturam*. With respect to its intended purpose (naked exposure to the world, expulsion into adulthood) birth was forced to miscarry. It was forced to simply lead into another state of unbornness, another childhood.

How did this work? Through a fundamental inversion. Man gave up the instincts that belonged to him qua animal and *logically* extrajected the instinctual knowledge from within himself out into the environment, the whole universe—similarly to how we today *empirically-technically* launch satellites into outer orbits. He thereby gave up the fixedness, certainty and empirical realness of his natural knowledge as each individual’s private property for the openness, uncertainty and virtuality of mental conceptions belonging to the community of humanity at large. In this way a virtual uterus was formed, one encompassing even the external environment as a whole, a physical environment into which *biological* birth would still thrust man just as before. With this inversion the in-ness in a womb could be retained even across the event of factual

38 Cf. 1 Cor. 15:55.

birth, and the birth into mature adulthood, as it is obtained by animals, could be forever postponed. On the other hand man could become physically naked, unprotected, deficiently equipped with instincts, because metaphysically he never left the protectedness of the embryonic stage.

If in this way natural birth was, as it were, cheated out of its reward and used for another purpose, what then was the reward of this re-designation? It was the genesis of mind, soul, *logos*. By man's foregoing that his biological birth had the result of, and exhausted itself in, *his* full-fledged birth into the naked existence in the environment, i.e., into the maturity and adulthood of self-sufficient animal existence, his biological birth was freed to give birth to something else, something incredible and unheard of before: the invisible and intangible metaphysical dimension of meanings, the realm of consciousness. It is a virtual reality, and because it is virtual, it does not do away with the biological altogether. What is born here, is also the *difference* between biological and metaphysical birth, or in more general terms, the difference between the empirical ("literal," positive-factual) and the logical, between the psychic and the psychological.

So when man is born in the literal sense, he is not really born at all. He merely exchanges the biological womb of the mother for a second womb, the spiritual womb, the amniotic sac of the mind, images and meanings. Man is not born directly into the environment. He is "born" into his *being mind and soul*. Much like astronauts do not really venture into outer space, but stay in their spaceships or space-suits that protect them from outer space, so man, even when literally, biologically, born into the environment, is logically not directly exposed to the environment like an animal, but enters the environment only safely encapsulated in the space-suit, or should we say environment-suit, of his images, ideas, concepts, words.

When I just said that man was born into his *being* mind and soul, this was a bit premature. The space-suit image is more correct. It makes apparent that the person in the space-suit and that space-suit itself are in principle separable as two distinct "substances." Pre-modern man as individual was *in* mind and soul. He lived fundamentally cocooned in his images and conceptions. Mind and soul were outside, around him, in the *world*. As we have seen, ideas and concepts were immediately real, hypostases in the Neoplatonic sense. *They* were the true nature of things. On the other hand, there is a shortcoming in the image of the space-suit. It suggests something too rigid. So let us shift to another image and say that man was floating in mind and soul as in his secondary amniotic fluid.

The animal is driven from within itself by its instincts, as if from behind. Thus it is *fundamentally* unconscious; it has its laws contained in its bodily rooted innate release mechanisms always in its back. Man, by contrast, has the equivalent of instincts, the laws or the logic of his human nature and of his life, no longer in himself in the form of release mechanisms, but outside, as the *horizon* of his *world* (in the cosmos, in the stars, in the things and events of nature) and he has them in the *form* of divine figures and messages. And the knowledge about the logic of his nature comes to him fundamentally a posteriori, partly as spontaneous visions, revelations or apparitions, partly as something to be read in the world, partly and mostly through the age-old traditional store of images and conceptions of his people that have to be taken over and filled with new life by each new generation. This is why man is fundamentally conscious, by nature and inalienably so: the "laws" of his nature are *before* his mind, they have the *form* of *knowledge* for him; he sees them out there in the natural world as his mirror. He is "overanimal," man, human, *because he gave up the unconscious inside* (his instincts) *for* having his "laws" out there in the form of an enveloping horizon and because he gave up the mechanical nature of natural laws rooted in the individual body for the mental, no-

tional, cultural and communal form of *knowing* his “laws.” The ancient symbol of trees having their roots in the sky and growing down to earth might reflect the inversion discussed here.

The difference between the unconscious of the animal and human consciousness is *only* that the animal carries its laws and logic within itself as bodily rooted innate release mechanisms, while man has his laws and logic conversely out there all around himself as an horizon and thus as knowledge; but there is, at the outset, no difference as to the certainty of “knowing.” From the beginning man was, like the animal, adapted to the world and at home in it. Despite the logical a-posteriority of his essential knowledge (the knowledge concerning the logic of his own nature), human existence began with answers, not questions. No real questions, no puzzling riddles. Man was born into, and it thus began with, the answers; man was embedded in them on all sides. Puzzling questions are only the late result of a long cultural development. This is why human existence *logically* always had its place in paradise, while only *empirically-practically* being life “after the Fall.” Paradise and life outside the garden of Eden were only narratively, not logically, divided by a “before” and “after.” Logically they were simultaneous. The real division is between “logically” (or “metaphysically”) and “empirically” (or “positive-factually”); or between “in the depth of soul” and “in external reality”: Paradise or the Golden Age had been the *logical truth of man’s empirical* existence in the fallen world or the Iron Age, the Indian Kali Yuga.

The animal does not *know* what it is doing. It simply does what it has to do, without *conscientia, syn- eidesis*. This is the difference to the situation of man. Since he *is* (exists as) consciousness, he knows what he is doing, or has done, or has to do. However, to begin with man does not know about his knowing, he is not conscious of this consciousness of his; he views the contents of his consciousness—his truths—as if they were things, natural objects, external facts, rather than being aware of the fact that what he sees in nature as divine figures are the *mirror images* of the internal logic of his existence. This not-knowing came home to Jung when he was with an East-African tribe and asked about a ritual performed by them: “‘It has always been done,’ they said. It was impossible to obtain any explanation, and I realized that they actually knew only *that* they did it, not *what* they were doing. They themselves saw no meaning in this action.”³⁹ We could say that early man only knows the answers without knowing the corresponding questions and without knowing that they are *answers to* questions. “I am inclined to believe that things were generally done first and that only a long time afterwards somebody asked a question about them, and then eventually discovered why they were done.”⁴⁰ In other words, early man is not able to view the answers as logical (events of and within the mind, logos), but apperceives them only ontologically. Returning to our earlier image we could say that the space-suit despite being in principle separable, was not seen as separate. It was like one’s skin. There was no distance to it, much like the embryo is distancelessly at one with its amniotic fluid.

In the beginning there were the answers. But in contrast to animal instincts, the answers that man was living with were not absolutely fixed. They did not have the form of abstract universals, principles. They were concrete universals, reflecting the specific culture of each people, because although they were experienced like “stars” (as strictly objective entities, truths of nature, even as personified figures), they actually, though secretly, were “satellites”: having passed through the mind and having been launched by it up into

39 MDR p. 266, translation and emphases adjusted by me according to the German original.

40 CW 18 § 540.

the sky and out into the natural world. Since the form of the answers was mental, cultural and communal, there was room, within a certain range, for variety and development, from individual to individual, from one people or tribe to another, from eon to eon. And because human knowing came essentially from outside, rather than from inside the physical body, the condition of the possibility of a later development toward a distance to and a critical questioning of the images and ideas was inherent in this essential knowing from the outset.

The price, however, for the soul's and consciousness' birth into the world, for their becoming real, embodied, was that man stayed fundamentally unborn. And yet, this re-designation of biological birth was not without radical consequences also for him. It catapulted him into a new form of existence. Although his physical birth did not really bring about his *birth* in the full sense of the word, it nevertheless brought about the *begettal*, *conception* and thus the *embryonic* existence of man as "overanimal": as *human*, as a being living primarily neither in his animal body, nor in the physical environment, but in images and ideas, in myths and metaphysics, in creeds and ideologies, as his *contra naturam* womb. Man's body and the whole physical environment are *inside* his mind.⁴¹ They have been interiorized, integrated, *er-innert* so that *as external factual reality* they are nevertheless only sublated moments in consciousness.

7. The birth of man

Modernity is characterized by the fact that man has emerged from his in-ness in a horizon, from his containment in a womb; all the facts discussed in the chapter "The end of in-ness" above are evidence to this development. Of course I am here not speaking about empirical individuals. When I say "man" here, I am speaking about the general form of the logical constitution of being human, the concept or logic as the medium of the existence of a concrete empirical individual. Man has emerged from the ocean of meaning. He raised his head above the surface of the ocean and now has it out in the open. He has awakened from the One Dream or Sandplay that existence in the world had been and now is fundamentally and irrevocably extra ecclesiam, as Jung had pointed out, as well as extra naturam. He has lost his myths, his symbols. He now looks back down upon consciousness at large from outside. The flight to the moon and beyond to other planets, the observation of planet Earth from satellites, the looking back down upon the Earth from outer space: all this is the *technical* objectification of the *psychological* fact that consciousness has now taken a position outside itself and has become aware of *itself* and of man *as consciousness*. He has hatched from the Orphic world egg. The tell-tale sign for this in the history of thought is the "linguistic turn," the awareness that everything we are dealing with is first and foremost linguistic, semiotic, information, that man himself is language.

For the in-ness in the pre-modern situation had also been containment *in* language. When one has one's logical place *within* language, the words as positivities (phonetic sound clusters), as factual means of expression, are completely unobtrusive. They do their job, but do not push themselves into the foreground. Man is here completely given over to the *meaning* of the utterances; he dwells solely with the ideas or the things and events referred to, using the words and their sounds merely as something to push off from into the realm of meaning.⁴² Consciousness floats in meanings. The words and grammar, i.e., language as such,

41 Not inside his brain, his head: the mind is the horizon of the world!

42 Here meaning is obviously used in the formal (logical and linguistic) sense.

are taken for granted, much as fish take water as the element of their life for granted. Although the words, syllables, sounds of language do of course not do their job as *silent* servants, they nevertheless become audible for the sole purpose of immediately dying away again, because only *as* having faded away do they release their meaning. The death or sublation of the words as sounds *is* the meaning of the sentence. This and the fact that consciousness more or less exclusively dwelled with their meaning is why the word, the sentence, the poetic image are here immediately the true and the real.⁴³ They are *die Sachen selbst*. The call to be heard in the 20th century from Husserl, “To the things themselves,” would not have made any sense here. Language here is in itself symbolic (in the weighty sense that was also Jung’s), if not epiphanic (of course epiphanic on the mental or logical level, not experientially, religiously). This symbolic nature of *language* survived even the mind’s explicit emancipation in philosophical *thought* during the course of the Middle Ages from the Realism of universals and the emergence of Nominalism.

The modern situation, by contrast, is characterized by the fact that man has logically (not always experientially) fallen out of his containment in language, with the result that now language is first of all comprehended as an *instrument* for communication. As such it is an object vis-à-vis, it has become explicit. Man has been born out of it, too, and now views it from outside.⁴⁴ This division is paralleled by another one, that between the mind and the world, the “things themselves”: now consciousness has become fundamentally *intentional* (“being-directed-toward”). And a third split is brought by man’s having fallen out of language, namely, that the word itself falls apart into “signifier” and “signified.” The sign as such, the sound, the letter begin to be obtrusive, forcing themselves into the foreground, insisting on being something in their own right (“L’instance de la lettre”).⁴⁵ The sign that does no longer exist for the only purpose of having to die away drives a wedge between the mind and (linguistic) meaning. The understanding of language shifts from a symbolic to a semiotic one, and thought in general from the contents *in* the media to the awareness of and concentration upon the media themselves as well as from semantics to syntax, to logical form.

The image of outer space from which man is looking back down upon consciousness (and nature and language) is tricky, possibly misleading. For this looking back down upon consciousness occurs only *within* consciousness. There has not been a literal move out of consciousness. The move into the outer space beyond consciousness in order to see it from outside is dialectically the interiorization (*Er-innerung*) of the whole of the former consciousness into itself. It is similar to an involution. Consciousness only gets out of itself by pulling itself into itself. Reflection. Above I said that mind and soul, that images and concepts, were a kind of space-suit with which man ventured into the physical environment and that this pointed to an in principle existing separability of the space-suit and the person in it. Now, what has happened with modernity is that this separation has happened. Man has become capable of seeing this “space-suit” from outside as a vis-à-vis, as a system of *signs* used by him. However, man did not learn to see his space-suit from outside by stepping out of it and leaving it behind, but conversely, by now interiorizing, integrating

43 As I pointed out: *anima naturaliter realista*.

44 The statement by Theodore Savory in 1967, “There can be no doubt that science is in many ways the natural enemy of languages,” sheds a light on the extent of this alienation.

45 That this is not merely a fundamental shift in the deep constitution of the soul, but has obvious effects in practical reality can be seen from the incredible increase today of puns, of toying with words and signs (“4” for “for,” “I ♥ NY”) as well as the proliferation of acronyms instead of *words*.

mind and soul, his former amniotic sac, into himself via a fermenting corruption of its hard substantiality. He absorbed the sublimated or vaporized result of this disintegration process into the very definition or concept of himself, just as originally the entire environment had been interiorized into mind and soul as their sublated moments. Man has occupied, “cathected,” his space-suit or “uterus,” so that the “external” substance (the neoplatonic real universal, objective truths, as ontological) has transformed into the status of “subject” and man can now finally be said to really *be* mind and soul, to exist as mind and soul. He has now *in fact* comprehended himself as a sign-using, the linguistic being and (which is the same thing) that which formerly had been ontic (the *nature* of things as such) he has comprehended as *his* signs. Thus he also can be said to know not only *that*, but also *what*, he is doing.

This is the birth of man as the overanimal, his having come of age and become adult in his humanness. He has left “father” and “mother” to stand on his own feet; he has come out of the protective shell of the world egg, out of the in-ness in between Heaven and Earth, and, himself now *being* consciousness and comprising the former Heaven and Earth as sublated moments within himself, is for the first time ruthlessly exposed to life or reality *in metaphysical nakedness*. What nature brought about in the animal right from the start with the animal’s biological birth had been the fact that the born animal lost any protective womb and was exposed naked to the environment, all for itself, for better or worse. Modernity finally achieved the same situation in man *as human*, who had hitherto been on all sides enveloped in meaning. Now he has to exist all for himself, in what Jung once called the “illimitable loneliness of man.”⁴⁶ It is, figuratively speaking, the inevitable metaphysical loneliness of Aquarius, the water-bearer, the sovereign Lord of the media, who has left the former containment in the waters. It is, literally and figuratively speaking, man as fundamentally existing “extra ecclesiam,” in the fresh cold air out there in the open and in the soberness that this condition entails.

Of course “God is dead,” as Nietzsche has said, and of course “There are no longer any gods whom we could invoke to help us,” as Jung had said. How could there be gods, how an upward looking if there is no above and below in the metaphysical sense, no Atlas holding Heaven and Earth apart anymore, and if man *essentially* looks down upon planet Earth and himself from outer space? Gods can *be* only for the fish swimming in the water, for a consciousness still contained in the amniotic sac of its images and ideas perceived as *substances*, Neoplatonic hypostases, the truth of nature itself, things-in-themselves. Gods can only be for the man who still is in between Heaven and Earth and as such has to be fundamentally, that is, logically, an upward looking being. They could only exist as long as *nature* was the ultimate horizon and absolute limit of human production. The fundamental unsurpassability, immutability and transcendence of nature was their *sine qua non*, because such a nature was the condition both for the metaphysical child status of man and for the extrajection of the internal logic of human existence, first into the cosmos (myth), later into the status of objective hypostases (philosophy), and thus for the stance of upward looking. Once man has learned to interfere with nature itself, thus sublating it, taking charge of it, once the fish has emerged from the waters and transmuted into Aquarius, the whole logic or mode of upward looking as such is over. And ipso facto the very notion of “god” has become impossible, inasmuch as the gods *are* nothing else but the imaginal, personified figures into which the various distinct forms of upward looking or worship have congealed and become objective for consciousness. Aquarius looks back down upon the waters

46 *Letters 2*, p. 586, to Berann, 27 August 1960.

from which he emerged and also down upon the fish in it as discarded, outgrown elements of his former *history*. The condition of the possibility of the sacred, the numinous, of mysteries, of the symbolic life, of myth and religion—each taken according to its *highest determination*—has disappeared.

Why are the religious symbols and ideas obsolete, rituals at best commodities, the religious practice no more than a (lofty, spiritual) hobby? Because they are fundamentally sublated; they have no logical task anymore for consciousness. The task that religion once had had has been fulfilled. The “meaning” that it once was pregnant with has been born out of it, the “better expression” has been found: consciousness has caught up with the message that it had projected out as its contents, as symbols in Jung’s sense. Religion had been the objective representation, in imaginal or in conceptual form, of the inner logic of human existence. But now consciousness has integrated its former contents into itself as the form of its logical constitution. Whereas before consciousness had had its truth or logic, its self and highest essence, out there as its objective contents and ipso facto had had to be upward looking, this truth has meanwhile come home to consciousness itself; much like a sugar cube dissolves in coffee, so has what had formerly been seen as solid substance dissolved into the form of consciousness itself. Thus it seemingly vanished, but it is still there: it only disappeared as a concrete visible (or imaginable) object, while it is present as a quality: the sweetness of the coffee, the logical form of consciousness, its categories. Consciousness has recognized *itself*, its own structure, in its formerly projected or extrajected contents. It has comprehended them as the mind’s self-portrait.

The entire third epoch of Western metaphysics (from, say, Nicholas of Cusa via Descartes, Spinoza, etc. to Hegel) experienced, i.e., *thought*, the world-subject no longer as the Father (Zeus) as in Antiquity, nor as the Son (Christ) as in the Middle Ages, but as Spirit (in Christian terminology: the third person of the Godhead) and therefore as Subjectivity. And the *opus magnum* of this epoch was the completion of the logical integration and realization of the notion of spirit. As Spirit, God is no longer a substantial Being (Father or Son). He has, as it were, dissolved into spirit. He has been alchemically distilled, evaporated.

Therefore, to still preach religion in all earnest—instead of seeing, appreciating, and studying it strictly historically—means to carry coals to Newcastle. It is like making a present of a primer to a high-school graduate or, if we consider the oppressive and stultifying character of such endeavors, like squeezing an adult into a crib.

Just as on a personal level one cannot go back behind puberty (except—partially and seemingly—for the price of neurosis), so there is on the cultural level of consciousness no way back to the gods. Once the sugar cube has been dissolved in the coffee, it cannot be made undissolved. As Jung said (without, however, fully taking his own medicine), “We cannot turn the wheel backwards; we cannot go back to a symbolism that is gone. [...] I cannot go back to the Catholic Church; I cannot experience the miracle of the Mass; I know too much about it.”⁴⁷ This knowing too much about it is the sign that the meaning has been born out of the symbol that had formerly only been pregnant with it. It is the sign that Jung’s consciousness looks back down upon the miracle of the Mass as if from outer space, the sign also that Jung no longer knows only *that*, but also *what*. But the Catholic Church with the Mass is here of course only one example. Not only the semantics of one particular religion, not even all religions, but the syntax of religiousness as such has dissolved, because it has been integrated into the *form* of consciousness. Once Jung wrote about

47 CW 18 § 632.

the Gnostic at the beginning of the Christian era, “Longingly he looked back to the world of the Father, but it was lost forever, because an irreversible increase in man’s consciousness had taken place in the meantime and made it independent.”⁴⁸ The same applies to our modern situation, but with even more validity.

It has been said about Pythagoras, who believed in the transmigration of souls, that when he erected himself and craned his neck with all his mental powers he was effortlessly able to view every detail in his ten or even twenty former lives.⁴⁹ This is exactly the situation of modern consciousness, only that *it* does no longer have to act out this craning one’s neck subjectively, through particular acts, in the spirit and context of a mystery religion of personal salvation. As *inevitably* historical, modern consciousness is logically once and for all in the *status* of the “craned neck.” This status is objectified and institutionalized in the field of historical research, which has the task of extending and differentiating, quite soberly and far from any mystifying religious hope for salvation, our historical awareness so that we might be able to see before us, with ever higher degrees of sophistication, more and more different and ever earlier formations (*Gestalten*) of the human mind’s former lives. Even the biological theory of evolution is testimony to the fact that consciousness has fundamentally come out of the in-ness in the waters and is once and for all a historically backward looking one instead.

The gods have not become diseases, as Jung and Hillman wanted us to believe, they have become *memories*, memories of former modes of man’s being-in-the-world. I have been speaking of “former lives” and of “discarded, outgrown elements.” I could also speak of obsolescence. However, this needs some qualifications. What has been discarded is not the elements and contents themselves, but their, or our, claim to their being in the status of a present reality, of numinosity, of sacred mysteries. This they had for the fish. For Aquarius, they are all still there, and to be sure even as a source of inspiration, but only in Mnemosyne. They are *historical* presences.

8. The fate of God(s)

What is left of religion once its substance has been integrated into the logical form of consciousness is only the “conventional sign,” the conventional forms without living substance: the dead snake skin after the living snake has moved out of it into new fields. One can, however, inflate even a dead snake skin and replace the life that it does not have of its own account with one’s own breath. Even if the sugar cube cannot be got back from out of the coffee in which it has been dissolved, there is nevertheless still its paper wrapping that can be refolded so as to simulate the former sugar cube in its wrapping. Thus fundamentalism uses the old dogmas and fills them with the subjective zeal stemming from the feeling of lack and thereby gives a secondary rigid stability and seeming life to them. Or one can use the snake skin like an amulet; conventional forms of religion can serve as a kind of spiritual pacifier for want of a living truth; the fossil pointing to a former real life can be used as a *token* satisfaction of one’s need for a symbolic or metaphysical life; the appearance can be taken for the real thing, with the same kind of silent conspiracy that is found in the tale of the emperor’s new clothes. Or, a third possibility, one can use the old forms as a mere stimulant for an attempt to work oneself up into strictly subjective heightened emotional states that have very little to do with the experienced truths that the old forms in themselves were about, the religious

48 CW 11 § 203.

49 Empedokles, fragment 129.

origin of the stimulant sufficing to gloss over the merely subjective emotions, so that the impression is created that the religious or metaphysical needs are taken care of.

There is one, and only one, way how religion can today still be a *present reality* and not just a commodity and hobby. Under the conditions of modernity, the price for giving religion the status of present reality is, however, that it has to be reduced to the *zero grade* of itself, religion without any dignity, any substantial content and any conscious awareness. Where does religion as present reality show today? Only in the momentary acts of certain irrational, meaningless crimes: in the *action directe* of the bombings and shootings, e.g., of the Una bomber and the Columbine and Erfurt high school shootings, in certain cases of sexual abuse and murder of children, etc. Here, the numinous is an immediate reality, as a *tremendum* breaking through the indifference and “banality” of everyday life, and as an overwhelming power “religiously observed” by the individuals committing these crimes, who usually give up for their passion any hope for a future happiness. But the numinous is here a reality for only one short moment, without substantial dignified content, totally abstract and absolutely blind, bringing not the least spiritual reward (blessing, illumination, experience of meaning) for anybody. It is just the empty shell of religion, the abstract naked form of the sacred, and as such the legitimate form of religion as a living reality *today*.

Two possible mistaken conclusions need to be discussed here. First, with respect to Nietzsche’s statement “God is dead” Jung pointed to the psychological fact that a psychological, especially archetypal, content does not simply get lost; if you declare an archetypal content, e.g. God, to be dead, you yourself become identical with that content that you declared dead; you become inflated by the God-idea and possibly psychotic.⁵⁰ However, this is only true under two conditions: first, that the doing away with God is only *semantic*, the elimination of one particular element in a system of thought that leaves the old syntax or the system itself, the logical constitution of consciousness, intact. It is a totally different situation if what is negated or rendered obsolete is the entire previous *syntax* or *logical form* of consciousness; if e.g., as in modernity, human consciousness has emerged from its containment in nature and is now looking back down upon it as if from outer space. Secondly, the elimination of God would have to be one’s personal doing (both personal, as by the ego, and active doing). The danger of inflation does not exist if, as during the 19th century, the “God is dead” dictum was the late, painful realization of a situation that had come over consciousness as an accomplished fact brought about by history, by “the soul” itself—“because an irreversible increase in man’s consciousness had taken place in the meantime and made it independent.”⁵¹

Another mistake is that frequently the ideas of the death of God and of the loss of meaning are not carried to their logical conclusion. There is, e.g., a Death of God theology, in other words, a theology that wants to heed the death of God and integrate it into theology, but nevertheless continue to exist as theology. This is a self-contradiction, one, however, that is already inherent in the statement about the death of God itself. This statement, while *semantically* declaring the death of God, *syntactically* posits God and preserves him beyond what is happening to him in this sentence. It could only be true as a transitional statement and for the short time of the transition. If one really gets the message that the statement wants to transmit, then the end of the sentence (the predicate) destroys and does away with the beginning (the sub-

50 “The tragedy of *Zarathustra* is that, because Nietzsche’s God died, he himself became a god [...] He to whom ‘God dies,’ will become the victim of ‘inflation.’” CW 11 § 142 (modified according to *GW*). Cf. CW 10 § 437 and *Letters* 2, p. 168, to Victor White, 10 April 1954 (“Through the negation of God one becomes deified, [...]”)

51 CW 11 § 203, where Jung, however, uses these words not with respect to the modern situation, but to that of the Gnostics.

ject) altogether: it is dead and gone. This means that once we have understood the meaning of this sentence, the *notion* of God no longer exists for us: the former numinosity implied by this word is simply gone and has no chance anymore, because the whole mode of upward looking, of which the experience of numinosity was the expression, is over. The notion of God has become demystified, maybe in the spirit that expresses itself in Lichtenberg's witty remark: „Just as one paints a zero above the heads of saints.“⁵² We then cannot even speak of the death of God anymore because such speaking would precisely evoke the notion of God once more, even while semantically declaring Him—him merely as sort of incumbent in the position of God—dead. The position, office, or throne of God would remain even after having become vacant. Psychologically, that is, for the soul, it never makes any difference whether you call something dead or alive, whether you love or hate it, support or combat it. The only thing that counts psychologically is whether its *concept* or *position* is important to you one way or another. But “God is dead” means that the *position* of “God” has disappeared. God can now, much like Ether or phlogiston, only be a content of historical knowledge.

Therefore the fear that through the death of God man becomes inflated or that through the fact that with the enormous advances in nuclear physics and genetic biology together with the corresponding technologies, incredible powers to destroy and create are now lying in human hands—the fear that man has become “godlike” or “equal to God,” is ungrounded. We find this fear expressed in Jung: “[...] never before was the power of absolute destruction given into the hand of man himself. It is a ‘godlike’ power that has fallen into human hands. The *dignitas humani generis* has swollen into truly diabolical grandeur.”⁵³ This fear in addition to being ungrounded also contradicts itself; it implies that the overcoming of upward looking as such, which is the specific message of the “death of God” statement, has not been allowed to happen at all; that instead a mere transferral is imagined: man is conceived as still upward looking, only now upward looking to himself instead of to God, and likewise as now assigning numinosity and an aura to himself. Not the *dignitas humani generis* has swollen into truly diabolical grandeur, but Jung uses blown up *categories* with which he interprets the historical change, one that he observes correctly. It is the consciousness which uses terms like “godlike” and “diabolical” for this technical advance and for the advance of consciousness that is inflated, a mystifying one. The acquisition of the destructive and creative power that is now in the hand of man is only quantitatively different from the conquest of fire and the invention of bow and arrow by early man, not qualitatively. It is not that the prehistoric advance was harmless whereas today's is diabolical.

The fear of man's inflation on account of the enormous increase in technical power is the opposite of what the insight into the death of God means and of what actual effect the fact of the increase in technical power has. Psychologically, this fact *objectively* makes more humble, makes “so disappointingly simple”⁵⁴ (quite apart from what people's subjective attitudes may be). The fact that “God is dead” merely means that man has become psychologically of age; it allows him to become more humane. It has its own logic.

52 Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, *Sudelbücher* I, Heft F, No. 167. In: Idem, *Schriften und Briefe*, vol. 1, ed. by Wolfgang Promies, München (Hanser) 1968, p. 485. My translation.

53 C.G. Jung, *Letters* 2, p. 225, to Pater Lucas Menz, 22 February 1955. Cf. also “[...] that the cosmic power of self-destruction is given into the hands of man and that man inherits the dual nature of the Father.” *Letters* 2, p. 167, to Victor White, 10 April 1954.

54 Jung used this formulation for his own “empirical standpoint.” *Letters* 2, p. 573, to Robert C. Smith, 29 June 1960.

The increase in power puts in fact the heavy burden of an unheard-of responsibility upon man's shoulders, a burden that *inevitably weighs him down* in his soul, rather than leading to a sense of grandiosity or to hybris. It even produces quite a bit of depressiveness. Man is more and more reduced to a functionary in the organization of society and an operator of machines, he *bedient* them (as their servant). Much of his own intelligence he has abdicated in favor of his computers, robots, artificial intelligence. He sits for hours in front of television, often watching downright stupid, utterly banal quiz and reality TV shows, etc. He wears the most casual clothes. When he has his picture taken, he prefers decidedly informal poses or spontaneous snapshots. All pompousness and sense of dignity (Jung's *dignitas humani generis*) is gone. The higher consciousness *objectively* goes along with a lower, more modest self-assessment. No need for moral exhortations in this regard. Moral exhortations do not reach the objective, logical level of man's constitution anyway.

Much the same as what has been said about the death of God idea applies to the idea of the loss of meaning. If we really listened to what it says, we would understand from it that meaning is simply no topic anymore. As a topic or notion it is dead and gone. We cannot even speak of its loss, because then we would secretly resurrect and hold on to it as a logical *category* that merely today happens to be empirically empty.

This vacuum would then necessarily create a craving, an obsession with the search for meaning. But the vacuum is only the result of the fact of the loss' having been reductively held down in the status of a semantic event and thus something particular. The vacuum, and with it the addiction, immediately disappear if the "loss," initially experienced as semantic, is allowed to infect and permeate the syntax of consciousness as such. The experienced "loss" wants to come home to consciousness, be integrated into it; it wants to "initiate" consciousness into the "loss" as its new truth, which initiation would mean the transformation of consciousness as a whole through a decomposition and reconstitution of it. But very often people prefer great and endless semantic/empirical suffering over logical transformation, over an initiation occurring once and for all.

So far I criticized the inconsistency in the two statements concerning the sentence *subject*, "God" or "meaning," respectively. But a corresponding inconsistency applies to the predicate, too, to the ideas of "loss" and "death." Both words suggest that what they name should actually not be and thus nourish our contrary expectations: death and loss should not have been. And therefore both statements try to make us aware of a new situation while viewing and evaluating it from the standpoint of the old situation. So the statements themselves implicitly *resist* that very transformation from old to new that they explicitly want to bring to awareness. The statements let themselves in for the new only as far as the (semantic) contents are concerned, but retain the old unaltered expectations and values, the old logic or level of consciousness. They give the information without letting themselves be informed by it. They present us with a disappointment, disillusionment, without leading to the necessary radical *dis*-illusionment: the destruction of the former illusory expectation; they invite us to a resignation, but do not advance to the *re-signation*. Resignation is the defense of the unaltered old hope together with the admission of its zero fulfillment (= the vacuum). Consciousness holds on to the *logic* of hoping while holding the experienced and admitted non-fulfillment down in the status of a semantic content, a mere piece of information about an empirical lack. Because the experience is sealed in this status of a particular, the syntax of consciousness is immunized against being infected by its own content. The *re-signation*, by contrast, replaces the old hope or thesis by a

new one (places life under a new sign) on the basis of what has been learned from experience. If the above statements about the end of God and meaning were allowed to go all the way, then they would decompose the very ideas of “loss” and “death” (in this connection) altogether.

So at this point I have to criticize my own use above of the phrase “end” or “loss” of meaning as a mere concession to the prevailing, but inappropriate interpretation of what is actually the phenomenon of a “birth” from the standpoint prior to the birth.

9. Critique of the feeling of loss and need

Apart from this destruction of the *notion* of loss itself, is the loss of meaning really a *loss* in the first place (simply on the phenomenological level)? Is it a *loss* that I have moved out of my parents’ house, the house of my childhood, and learned to stand on my own feet? Is it not a gain (a gain at least just as much as it may at first have been *felt* as a loss)? One does not have to go quite as far as St. Augustin who wrote, “But who would not recoil and, confronted with the alternative of either having to die or to become a child once more, would not rather choose death?”⁵⁵ in order to be fully convinced that the move from childhood to adulthood is a boon, that it “has a meaning” and “is a development that has an inner consistency” (to say it with the words with which Jung greeted the “the growing impoverishment of symbols”⁵⁶).

This insight presses the following questions upon us. Is it really so terrible to live without a higher meaning? Is it really the void that yawns before us when we are without it? After all, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Praxiteles, the Chartres cathedral, Leonardo da Vinci, Mozart, Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Hegel, etc. etc. remain—incredible, inexhaustible riches. Are they not enough, more than enough? What about the smile of the person who passed me this morning on the street; the rays of sunlight falling through the leaves of a forest; the happy events of a true meeting of minds, the friendship of a friend, the love of one’s spouse—are they all void, banal, “all *maya* compared with that one thing, that your life is meaningful,” as Jung wants us to believe?⁵⁷

Here we can return to the discussion of the correct understanding of “loss” and warn against mistaking the expressions “metaphysically naked” and “poverty.” “Poverty” does not refer to a state like that of the poor in Third World slums; “nakedness” not to the condition of the beggar who was clothed by St. Martin. The idea of “loss,” rightly understood, refers exclusively to the loss of an excess, of a grandiose self-stylization, of giving oneself airs, not to the loss of substance. This is why I cannot agree with Jung when he states that we are not the legitimate heirs of the Christian symbolism, because we have “squandered”⁵⁸ it. Of course we are the legitimate heirs of our Christian heritage and of our whole Western cultural tradition. The loss that occurred is not the loss of the substance of Christianity and metaphysics, but only of its “validity” (to use Jung’s word, see below page 32 with note 83), its numinous aura, that is to say of it *as a present reality* and *immediacy*. We have not outgrown our heritage, but the *immediacy* of its “possession,” our feeling *immediately* identical with it. We have lost the possibility to strut around in it as our true garment: to think that *it* is we or we it. We have only lost this pompousness. Everything else is still there. We

55 St. Augustin, *De civitate dei*, Book 21, chapter 14.

56 CW 9i § 28.

57 The idea of “that one thing” follows the paradigm of Matthew 13:46 (“Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”)

58 CW 9i § 28.

have only become conscious of it, no longer only knowing *that*, but also *what*.

Similarly, the “illimitable loneliness of man” is only the (metaphysical) analogue of the (empirical) loneliness of the individual who has left his parents’ home to stand on his own feet. As such, it is the precondition for human fellowship, friendship and love.

There is no need for “meaning,” for the state of in-ness, for myth or religion as a present reality. On the contrary, we can, now that the gods have become memories, devote ourselves to all the riches of Mnemosyne freely without having to hold our breath in awe. Let me mention just one example as an illustration. As long as the Bible has the status of a sacred book, one cannot read it freely on one’s own account. It makes on us an absolute metaphysical claim for submission and worship. One must hold one’s breath while approaching it. There is always the atmosphere of an “ought” enveloping us on all sides. Thus it is logically (not necessarily empirically) intimidating, and suppresses any natural curiosity in it arising spontaneously from within us as the real empirical persons that we are. What a relief when the Bible is discovered to be a historical book, a document in the history of the human mind or soul. Now it can be fascinating reading and stimulate an interest in its serious study, but only because it has been desacralized, demystified. Only what is on principle allowed to be liked or disliked, found interesting or boring, wise or stupid, is open to our genuine personal interest (in contrast to an imposed obligation to venerate). This is the gift of the sense of history.

By contrast, if today the Bible is still offered as Holy Writ or, in general, if religion is preached as a present reality and myths and symbols are presented as numinous presences, then they have necessarily become commodities, because they now are supposed to provide *particular* feeling-experiences or ideological views that, although they occur *within* the general state of a modern consciousness that has emerged from in-ness, nevertheless are supposed to simulate the former sense of in-ness that has precisely been outgrown.

One can, to be sure, agree with Jung when he states that, “Meaninglessness inhibits the fullness of life and therefore is equivalent to illness,”⁵⁹ *provided* one understands this sentence appropriately, reading it against the grain, i.e., against Jung’s probable intention. The feeling that there should be a higher meaning of life and that it is missing *is* the illness.⁶⁰ But this is not how the sentence is meant. Rather it interprets absence as an unbearable loss and the *need* for meaning as an anthropological constant and thus as self-evident and inescapable (whereas it is a “reaction formation” in response to the modern situation). But as the example of most people living in the modern world shows, one can live quite well without meaning, just as the normal adult can live quite well without parents. It is not *necessary* to process *neurotically* one’s leaving one’s parents behind oneself.

Furthermore: does the lack of “that one thing,” meaning, really make you neurotic? I claim there has not been one case where the meaninglessness of life was the cause of illness. Using a Nietzschean figure of thought I say, it is “a lack of philology: one constantly confuses the explanation with the text.” The suffer-

59 MDR p. 340.

60 A completely different phenomenon, the feeling of loss of meaning as part of serious (not-neurotic) depressions or grave personality disorders is of course also pathological, but it has nothing to do with our topic here, mythic or metaphysical meaning. It is a psychic (quasi biological) illness, a disturbance of one’s vitality, not a *psychological* illness, an illness of the soul or mind.

ing from the “senselessness and aimlessness” is “a formulation, not a cause,”⁶¹ of neurosis. It is the expression of a neurotic pretentiousness, a claim to metaphysical grandiosity. It is the delusion that life is only life if there is, like in dog races, that never-to-be-reached one thing, the sausage, to race after. Therefore, a person who seeks that one precious thing, meaning, “Is like a beast, on barren ground led around in circles by an evil spirit, while all around there are beautiful verdant pastures.”

Jung refused to see this. To be sure, he saw the danger of a pointless seeking. He once tells us that “On my many travels I have found people who were on their third trip round the world—uninterruptedly. Just travelling, travelling; seeking, seeking.” One such woman he asked, “‘What for? [...] What are you trying to do that for?’ And I was amazed when I looked into her eyes—the eyes of a hunted, a cornered animal [...] She is nearly possessed [...]” But then he continues, “And why is she possessed? Because she does not live the life that makes sense. Hers is a life utterly, grotesquely banal, utterly poor, meaningless, with no point in it at all. If she is killed today, nothing has happened, nothing has vanished—because she is nothing. But if she could say, ‘I am the daughter of the Moon. Every night I must help the Moon, my Mother, over the horizon’—ah, that is something else! Then she lives, then her life makes sense, and makes sense in all continuity, and for the whole of humanity.”⁶² And, we might add, then she would be cured.

What Jung does not realize is that his proposed cure is just a repetition of that illness that he himself diagnosed correctly, and not a cure at all. By mimicking the Pueblo-Indian model, he only prescribes more of the same: “Daughter of the Moon”—this is absolutely out of reach for a modern woman; it is precisely an idea that could *only* be sought in an endless, futile search. Thus Jung conjures up the very transcendence the longing for which is the cause of such seeking. Jung’s suggestion feeds her neurotic craving, her “addiction.” For what is she chasing after if not after some such mythical garment to dress herself in as in her “mummeries”⁶³? It is her very problem that while as a modern woman she *cannot* possibly say anything like what Jung suggested, she *nevertheless* thinks she ought to be able to; it is her problem that *on principle* there are no mythological garments that would fit her, but that she nevertheless is unconsciously convinced that it is indispensable to have one. This is the neurotic trap that turns her into the pointless seeker, the hunted, cornered animal which Jung saw in her eyes.

A real cure would have to move into the opposite direction. It would have to make her fully aware that unconsciously she obviously thinks she ought to be the daughter of the Moon or some such thing and that this is why she is desperately traveling, constantly seeking; in other words, that she—as does Jung here—tries to solve her problem on the semantic level while trying to keep the syntactic level intact. A real therapeutic move would have to make her aware that her problem is a syntactic or logical one and to confront her with the exaltedness, inflatedness of these unconscious demands and expectations, which—much like Kitsch—are the result of a semantics that is not covered by the scope, form and sophistication of the syntax. Why should she not be able, like everybody else, to find satisfaction⁶⁴, *contentedness*, in ordinary life? Perhaps by cultivating her garden, doing her daily duties, enjoying some good books and exhibitions, giving her neighbors a hand—perhaps also, and above all, by devoting herself to some useful task that

61 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die Unschuld des Werdens. Der Nachlaß*, ed. Alfred Baeumler, vol. 1, Stuttgart (Kröner) 1956, pp. 306f. (#953).

62 CW 18 § 630.

63 Cf. CW 9i § 27.

64 Lat. *satis* = enough.

would allow her to discover and employ *her* specific potential for being productive. Everybody surely can find some area where, some way how, to be productive. Why must she make such a fuss, unwittingly give herself airs as if she were perhaps a secret Queen in search of her missing crown insignia and the recognition due but denied to her? Why can't she be her ordinary self and find the way into the simplicity of life and of being human? Why can't she understand that there is nothing to be sought, nothing that would be somewhere else, be it in the future or in transcendence? Why can't she see that "this is it!" It is this real life of hers that contains everything it needs within itself. This life of hers here and now that has already been going on *is* the source and circumference of all happiness, productivity and fulfillment possible for her. Nothing needs to be sought at all. On the contrary, her seeking is her running away from her fulfillment.

Jung does not really listen to what the Pueblo Indian, whose model he was following, had told him and what he himself wholeheartedly had agreed with: "There is nothing to be looked for!"⁶⁵ There really isn't. It's all there. This message of the Pueblo Indian would have seamlessly fitted to Jung's own advice when he opted for spiritual poverty: "*um bei sich einzukehren,*" which *we* might render now as: in order to unreservedly enter one's own life "as it really is," (although Jung, as we have seen, had something else in mind in that passage: introversion, turning to one's unconscious, one's dreams, etc.)

Why is there nothing to be looked for? Because rather than their being the distant object of a quest, fulfillment and bliss depend on the *degree of one's own wholehearted dedication* to what *is* (whatever it may be) with one's specific productive powers (however great or small and of what nature they may be).

Jung once wrote, "The greatest limitation for man is the 'self'; it is manifested in the experience: 'I am *only* that!'"⁶⁶ Is this not enough? Do I really have to be *more* than I am, do I really need the higher orders of a "symbolic existence in which I am *something else*, in which I am fulfilling my role, my role as one of the actors in the divine drama of life"⁶⁷?

What a presumption! And conversely, what a disparagement of ordinary human life, which is cast away as "grotesquely banal, utterly poor." In 1959, two years before his death, Jung wrote about himself, "The journey from cloud-cuckoo-land back to reality lasted a long time. In my case Pilgrim's Progress consisted in my having to climb down a thousand ladders until I could reach out my hand to the little clod of earth that I am."⁶⁸ A charming statement. And yet, as long as one insists on being "something else" and playing one's "role as one of the actors in the divine drama of life" one is psychologically (logically) still up in cloud-cuckoo-land, still living with grandiose ideas. And the very formulation that Jung uses shows that he has not really come down. Because if one is really down, one cannot reach out one's hand to the little clod of earth that one is, inasmuch as being down means having *comprehended* that one *is*, and has always been, *just* oneself. As long as I want to reach out my hand to myself, I as the one who reaches his hand out still believe to be something else from, and above, the "clod of earth" whom I graciously befriend. The idea that I would have to come down and humble myself *is* already presumption, arrogance. The noble attitude of humility is the way in which the simple recognition that in truth I am and have always been down here is kept at bay. There *is* nothing and nobody to whom I could lower myself, because the so-called clod of earth is myself.

65 CW 18 § 630.

66 MDR p. 325. It must be noted, however, that Jung's next sentence shows him moving back into transcendence again.

67 CW 18 § 628. My emphasis.

68 *Letters I*, to Freud, 11.II.10, note 8, p. 19. From letter by Jung of 9.IV.59

On the other hand, the expression “clod of earth” puts me down far too much, in a similar way to how the formulation “grotesquely banal, utterly poor” disparages our ordinary earthly existence. I am not a clod of earth, but a human being with a mind. The implicit viewpoint from which Jung speaks in this statement is one high up from where he looks down upon himself, which contradicts his explicit message that he has come down.

In the “Retrospect” of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* Jung assentingly recounts the “fine old story about a student who came to a rabbi and said, ‘In the olden days there were men who saw the face of God. Why don’t they any more?’ The rabbi replied, ‘Because nowadays no one can stoop so low.’”⁶⁹ With this idea, Jung achieves two advantages, a “theoretical” and an “ethical” one. As to the “theoretical” advantage: by resorting to a trick, the trick of “stooping to conquer,” Jung can act as if in objective reality nothing had changed. The loss of God is only our fault, it is merely subjective. If only we stooped low enough, everything would be fine: God would still be visible, we could have his unmediated epiphany after all (“Urerfahrung”!). As regards the ethical stance, Jung sells indulgences: if only we concentrate all our efforts on the *subjective and positive behavior* of stooping and of in this way personally *acting out* a literal, external humility (this is the price for the indulgence), he dispenses us from the real, the *psychological* humility: the humility of objectively, logically—namely in our *knowing*—bowing to our truth; the truth that metaphysically we *are* already at the bottom, i.e., there where we know (not God, but) the very notion of God to have become untenable, let alone the possibility to see “Him” face to face. Thus Jung allows us to take refuge in happy unconsciousness; he lulls himself and us into a theological-metaphysical slumber. He does not realize that his holding on to the idea of the necessity of such a stooping *is* the very arrogance, *hybris*, that he blames modern man for. Just like a person’s putting himself on stilts does not make him or her great, so conversely the subjective (psychic, empirical, literal) act of stooping does not undo the objective (logical, psychological) presumption, but only conceals and thus affirms it.

When I am “*only that*,” I am without higher orders, even without the mythical garment of an endowment (be it by Nature or by the Creator) with the “dignity of man” or “inalienable human rights,” these inflated modern ideas. I cannot bask in the shine of an eternal truth, an absolute ideal, or higher values that would be in my possession. No such thing has revealed itself to me and claimed me. And yet, this does by no means mean that “anything goes.” I am not without truth, norms, values. But they conversely receive their authority and reality only from *my* being-so and *my* standing up for them. In this sense, they are fundamentally contingent, subjective; there is no essential difference to my liking this food or art or music and disliking that. What gives them their objectivity is the objective fact of my being-so. In the “Prologue” to *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* Jung wrote, “Whether or not the stories [that he was going to tell] are ‘true’ is not the problem. The only problem is whether what I tell is *my* fable, *my* truth.”⁷⁰ This is said in the spirit of truly being “*only that*.”

Certain things, views, possible behaviors, etc. happen to be incompatible with who and how I am. *This* is the only “proof” I have to offer for my truths. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. But here I *do* stand, and really *stand*.

In a way, I have, in metaphysical regards, returned to the status of hunters and gatherers. Metaphysically,

69 MDR p. 355.

70 MDR p. 3.

I live from hand to mouth. In some 19th century popular novel by Karl May, the narrator—all alone in the emptiness of the prairie in the Wild West—comes across another lone horseman. When this other person is told that the narrator is an author who writes novels about his travels for other people to read, he finds this very comical because, as he says, he for one would not dream of shooting game for other people, but only for his own sustenance. This is not an overly intelligent scene. Nevertheless, the point is well taken. I have to live *my* life on *my* own account, even with respect to my truths and values.

The reference to hunters and gatherers and to living from hand to mouth should not suggest that I find my values on the street like ready-made things or on the market-place “out there,” like commodities, nor that just any momentary impulse could be declared to be my truth. In order to find *my* truth and my *truth*, I have to perceive, alchemically speaking, as the *homo totus* and observe, while focusing on the *logos* as the soul of my world, my wholehearted responses.⁷¹

There is a point in Goethe’s *Faust* where old Faust assessing his life says, “So far I have still not fought myself out into the open. / Could I remove magic from my path, / Altogether unlearn the magic charms, / Were I standing, nature, in front of you one man alone, / Then it would be worth the trouble to be a human.”⁷² Our situation is different. *We* do not have to fight ourselves out into the open. *We* do not have to remove magic from our path. Magic, that is, the sympathetic world-relation, the mode of in-ness, metaphysics, is something *we* only know from hearsay. *We* have each long been standing vis-à-vis an “alienated,” sublated nature, and each of us one person alone and metaphysically naked. Should it not be true for us, too, that—precisely for that reason, precisely because the birth of man has been achieved—it is worth the trouble to be a human?

10. The logic and genesis of C.G. Jung’s psychology in the light of the question of meaning

THE PROBLEM AS IT PRESENTED ITSELF TO JUNG AND ITS SOLUTION or: SATURNIAN SWALLOWING

Jung’s root experience was that modern man is, both in the literal and in the wider figurative sense, extra ecclesiam: “no more protected,” “no more in the *consensus gentium*,” “no more in the lap of the All-compassionate Mother. You are alone [...]”⁷³ We have no myth anymore. An irreversible increase in man’s consciousness has made consciousness independent.⁷⁴ It has been born out of the containment in meaning.

This experience was his particular version of the experience shared by all the great thinkers of the 19th century, who had described the same historical rupture in other terms: as alienation, nihilism, loss of faith, etc.

Jung was well aware that this state of affairs, the loss of meaning, was the historically singular character of the modern world. “This is a new problem. All ages before us have believed in gods in some form or other.” The “impoverishment of symbolism” is “unparalleled.”⁷⁵ “[...] we have reached a significant turn-

71 On the relation of hunt and truth see my *The Soul’s Logical Life*, Frankfurt am Main etc. (Peter Lang) 32001 (1999), ch. 6 “Actaion and Artemis,” pp. 203–275.

72 Joh. W. v. Goethe, *Faust. Eine Tragödie*, 5th Act, Mitternacht, lines 11403ff., my translation. (“Noch hab’ ich mich ins Freie nicht gekämpft. / Könnt’ ich Magie von meinem Pfad entfernen, / Die Zaubersprüche ganz und gar verlernen, / Stünd’ ich, Natur, vor dir ein Mann allein, / Da wär’s der Mühe wert, ein Mensch zu sein.”)

73 CW 18 § 632.

74 Cf. CW 11 § 203, where Jung, however, used this formulation for the psychological situation at the time of Gnosticism.

75 CW 9i § 50.

ing point of the ages [...]"⁷⁶

Like the other thinkers of the 19th century before him who had experienced this loss or rupture, Jung too found it intolerable and wanted to overcome it. In his eyes, life after the end of meaning and the birth of man at bottom "is a life utterly, grotesquely banal, utterly poor, meaningless, with no point in it at all."⁷⁷ So the life task set for him was to restore meaning, "the symbolic life." His project had to be—here I use part of a formulation he used when quoting Freud's description of his, Freud's, concern—to erect "an unshakable bulwark against the black tide of"⁷⁸ mythlessness. And so it makes sense that late in life he could declare that, "The main interest of my work is not concerned with the treatment of neurosis but rather with the approach to the numinous."⁷⁹

But how could you restore something that had been lost? Jung's predecessors, the thinkers of the 19th century, Feuerbach, Kierkegaard, Marx, Nietzsche, had offered various *utopian* promises or hopes. None of these had had enough power of conviction to lastingly bind the collective mind, and especially after Nietzsche's collapse due to his realization that his expectation would and could not come true, the lesson of the 19th century about the untenableness of utopias had been learned. They were too airy, too exalted, too speculative (in the derogatory sense). The 20th century's thinkers were no longer utopian. Utopian thinking had meanwhile sunk to the level of political ideology and hard-core power politics. For Jung, too, the utopian solution was not workable. Coming after Nietzsche and his exalted, high-falutin style, Jung, in typical early 20th century fashion, now wanted a solution based on solid and sober science, empirically verifiable. The decidedly anti-utopian attitude of Jung's comes out most definitely in his programmatic profession, "Some seek gratification of desire and some others fulfilment of power and yet others want to see the world as it is and leave things in peace. We do not want to change anything. The world is good as it is."⁸⁰

Nor could Jung simply revive the past. "We cannot turn the wheel backwards; we cannot go back to a symbolism that is gone."⁸¹ "[...] the wheel of history cannot be turned back. Even the Emperor Augustus with all his power could not push through his attempts at reprimation."⁸²

The present was unacceptable; to expect a salvation from the future untenable; a reprimation impossible. The fourth possibility, a broken, reflected, historical relation to the spiritual treasures of the past, was absolutely insufficient for Jung: "In the end we dig up the wisdom of all ages and peoples, only to find that everything most dear and most precious to us has already been said in the most superb language. Like greedy children we stretch out our hands and think that, if only we could grasp it, we would possess it too. But what we possess is no longer valid [...]"⁸³ Jung was "greedy," he wanted to possess like children possess, with "validity," that is, with the sense of immediate, unbroken oneness with and in-ness in what one possesses. "My psychological condition wants something else. I must have a situation in which that thing

76 MDR p. 334.

77 CW 18§ 630, where Jung is, however, speaking by way of example about the life of one particular person only. But the implication of this example is universal.

78 MDR p. 150.

79 "Letters I, p. 377, an Martin, 20.VIII.45. (*Briefe I*, p. 465, gives the date of this letter as 28.VIII.45. Which is right?)

80 CW 18 § 278.

81 CW 18 § 632.

82 *Letters 2*, p. 226, to Pater Lucas Menz, 22 February 1955.

83 CW 9i § 31.

becomes true once more.”⁸⁴ Jung insisted on meaning as a *present, immediate reality*, as a numinous “Urerfahrung” or “Urerlebnis” (primordial or originary experience, directly from the source, not mediated by tradition or historical knowledge nor distorted by conscious reflection and elaboration), “Urerfahrung” here and now! Not only the meanings of former times contemplated in Mnemosyne.

How can consciousness, once it has been born out of the in-ness in meaning and its *irreversible* bornness has been fully realized, become unborn again? How can the essential thing become true once more if you neither have the option of the forward movement into utopian hopes nor of a backwards movement to the past, and on top of it are unrelentingly committed to empirical evidence? There is only one solution: to go within, to work with the distinction or split between outside and inside. Inside and outside are not opposites like left and right, lying next to each other. The one is within the containing other. Already on an abstract-formal level, the inner provides in-ness.

Therefore, in order to establish the division between inside and outside, consciousness had to be taught to be its own Kronos-Saturn. In personal union, consciousness had to be both Kronos (enveloping outside) and the child newly born to him by Rhea and swallowed by him (contained inside). Consciousness had to dissociate itself into the modern, adult consciousness, on the one hand, that realized and accepted its irrevocable bornness and, on the other hand, into itself as the just-born child, the innocent babe prior to its becoming aware of its bornness and being sicklied over with the reflectedness of modernity.

This is a second division, the split between substantial content and logical form, more specifically the dissociation into the *abstract form* of consciousness (its capacity of rational reflection, the scientific mind, the empirical observer, alchemically speaking the *vas*, the retort) on the one hand and into the likewise abstracted, cut-off traditional (mythical, imaginal, metaphysical) contents of consciousness on the other. As the fully born abstract-formal consciousness it was Kronos who swallowed itself (its contents) as the newborn. These contents were *newborn* because they were no longer the original contents firmly embedded in, and the property of, a living religious or metaphysical tradition. They were the contents already released from Mother Church or from the Western tradition of metaphysics, which is why Jung called them “autonomous,” “spontaneous,” and facts of *nature*: they were free-floating, contingent. The break with tradition had happened. The images and ideas (“the archetypal images” or what archetypal psychology would term “the imaginal”) were already the modern, abstract, uprooted version of the traditional contents (“Urerfahrung” and “arche-types”: sort of coming directly from heaven), much like the altarpieces in museums are the abstracted modern versions of the same altarpieces in the original churches and embedded in a living cult.

This act is the invention and manufacturing of “the inner” and “the unconscious.” Consciousness exists now twice, once as “the ego” or consciousness in the narrower sense (the modern rationalistic mind as mere form or vessel or function) and once as “the unconscious” (as a treasury of substantial images). By virtue of its having been swallowed and thus deprived of the possibility to participate in the practice of the job of consciousness (reflection, rational examination, which is *essentially* public), the swallowed consciousness is ipso facto *unconscious*, while the swallowing mind is, to be sure, consciousness in the narrower sense, but only an empty form, totally divorced from the contents it might entertain and on principle

84 GW 18/I § 632. “That thing”: immediately before, Jung had spoken of the miracle of the Mass and of his not being able to go back to the Catholic Church.

released from any intellectual responsibility for the unconscious images. The conscious mind is *only* the passive recipient of images from the unconscious. “We have simply got to listen to what the psyche spontaneously says to us. [...] Say it again as well as you can. [...] What is the great Dream? It consists of the many small dreams and the many acts of humility and submission to their hints.”⁸⁵

The inner is not utopian, because, e.g. in the form of dreams, it is “now,” immediate, and accessible to empirical observation. But being “now,” it is also not identical with the *real* modern present, the public world of today, because it has been set up in contradistinction to that present. It is ready to be the re-collection of the past *as* a (simulated) present reality—a present reality, however, which in turn, as *simulated* and by definition *unconscious*, secretly is in the logical status of “past.”

I compared the swallowed contents to items in a museum. But of course, the unconscious must not be conceived as a museum. The museum is, as it were, the institutionalized and objectified Mnemosyne. It is the expression of the *historical* relation to the riches and the wisdom of all ages and peoples. We cannot stretch our hands out and hope to grasp and possess the objects on display: the glass of the showcases or in front of the paintings makes us quite literally aware of our unsurmountable logical distance to them. *Only* by swallowing, interiorizing, the contents of the former tradition into “ourselves” as our unconscious could “that thing become true once more” without our either having to escape into a utopian future or having to try to turn the wheel back. Only by swallowing could one get meaning (in-ness) as a *present reality* (a so-called “Urerfahrung”) under the conditions of irretrievably having lost one’s in-ness. Only by swallowing could the impression be created that the images emerging from inside are absolutely spontaneous and pure, pristine nature, and our experience of them experience directly from the source.⁸⁶ For the Saturnian swallowing is nothing else but the creation of a state of secondary unbornness for Saturn’s children after the fact of their having been born and a freezing them in an embryonic state, in order to prevent their ever becoming part of public intellectual life. Similarly the imaginal contents have already been released from religion and metaphysics; but by confining them in the unconscious, they are once and for all prevented from “growing up”: getting out and taking part in public intellectual life and being in turn affected by its transformations. Instead, the intellect has to take them as indisputable facts of nature, not as its own property and productions, on the one hand, nor as something it is fully accountable for, on the other hand.

Kronos as *father* creates a secondary, unnatural womb for his already-born children. The invention of the unconscious is likewise the device how *modern* consciousness *as abstract form* can be used for the purpose of serving as a protective womb for traditional knowledge and imitating a sense of in-ness.

Jung could of course himself not be fully conscious of the fact that the logical origin of his “collective unconscious” was a strategic act of logical splitting and swallowing. After all, if he had been conscious of it, he could not have believed in the collective unconscious. Nevertheless it did not escape him that the unconscious is a result, the result of a downgrading and downsizing as well as an internalizing, privatizing of the contents of the former public traditional knowledge, of myth, religion and metaphysics. This comes out, at least indirectly, in such quotes as the following. “Since the stars have fallen from heaven and our highest symbols have paled, a secret life holds sway in the unconscious. This is why we have a psychology

85 *Letters 2*, p. 591, to Sir Herbert Read, 2 Sept. 1960.

86 “The richest yield of all is naturally to be found in the primary material [*Urmaterie*] itself, that is to say in the dreams, which are not thought up or “spun” like a yarn [*ersponnen*: hatched, contrived, devised]. They are involuntary products of nature, spontaneously expressing the psychic processes without interference of the conscious will.” CW 18 § 1282.

today, and why we speak of the unconscious.”⁸⁷ “When our natural inheritance has been dissipated, then the spirit too, as Heraclitus says, has descended from its fiery heights. But when the spirit becomes heavy, it turns to water [...]” We are “children of an age in which the spirit is no longer up above but down below, no longer fire, but water.”⁸⁸ “The rift in the metaphysical world has slowly risen into consciousness as a split in the human psyche, and the struggle between light and darkness moves to the battleground within.”⁸⁹ The work of the psychotherapist “is accomplished in a sphere in which the numen settled [or immigrated] only recently and into which the whole weight of mankind’s problems [*Menschheitsproblematik*] has moved.”⁹⁰

SACRIFICE OF THE INTELLECT AND THE EXCLUSION OF THE PROBLEM OF *FORM*

The image of the fallen stars is most revealing. Once visible for everybody and objects of public veneration and of a conscious upward looking that the intellect did not need to be ashamed of, they are, now that they have been sunk and logically entombed in the unconscious, inside and *fundamentally* unconscious, not admissible to public thought and not under the obligation of being the subject of a *lógon didónai* (rational accounting for). The intellect must not touch them. “You must not allow your reason to play with” them,⁹¹ says Jung with a formulation that betrays the total immunization of these contents from the point of view of the other, the intellect’s, side, because the intellect is devalued as “our playful intellect”⁹² and thus as per definitionem incompetent in matters of higher meaning: “Our intellect is absolutely incapable of understanding these things.”⁹³ No doubt, there is a type of intellect that is incapable of doing justice to such things, a positivistic, rationalistic, utilitaristic thinking. But why does Jung restrict himself to this narrow-minded sense of “intellect”? This would by no means be necessary. It is his choice. Therefore, despite the form in which his statement is presented, one must not mistake it for an innocent statement of fact, a mere observation. It is rather a refusal or prohibition: “do not touch symbols with the intellect! The intellect shall be excluded on principle!” Since the unconscious in Jung’s sense is the realm of symbols and archetypal images and has been declared off limits for the intellect, the notion of the unconscious *is* in itself a *sacrificium intellectus*, for it has the reverse that the intellect has to stay fundamentally blind with respect to them, as much as it may or is supposed to take note of them as *facts*. It is precisely their fact character that ensures the intellect’s essential blindness, impotence and immunity with respect to them. The intellect must not enter them thinkingly. This means that ultimately consciousness has to be in itself unconscious: both sides of the pair of opposites, consciousness and the unconscious, are *together* the unconscious.

The last quoted sentence about the absolute impotence of the intellect concerning rituals and symbols appears embedded in the following context. “The sad truth is that we do not understand it [the secret of virginity and the virginal conception] any more. But, you know, in former centuries man did not need that

87 CW 9i § 50.

88 CW 9i § 32. I changed “was” in “the spirit was no longer [...]” into “is,” because there is no apparent reason why Jung’s present tense “ist” in German should be rendered with a past tense.

89 CW 13 § 293. GW: “der Kampf des Lichtes gegen die Finsternis verlegt seinen Schauplatz ins Innere derselben,” viz., “der menschlichen Seele.” The interior of man is turned into the new, previously not existing battleground.

90 CW 16 § 449, translation modified. *Menschheitsproblematik*: not particular problems that might come up, but something like the problem of human existence as such.

91 CW 18 § 617.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

kind of intellectual understanding. We are proud of it; but it is nothing to be proud of. Our intellect is absolutely incapable of understanding these things. We are not far enough advanced psychologically to understand the truth, the extraordinary truth, of ritual and dogma.” What does this statement tell us? First Jung says we do not understand such secrets any more, which implies that in former times they were understood. But then he realizes that formerly, when ritual and dogma were still alive, there had not been a need for an understanding at all. We heard already from Jung that in primitive societies, people only knew *that*, but not *what* they do. “They see no meaning in their (ritual) actions.” “[...] things were generally done first and [...] only a long time afterwards somebody asked a question about them [...]” An understanding was simply not necessary at the ritualistic stage of consciousness. The need for an intellectual understanding arose only much later, but particularly in modern times. It arose due to the emergence of consciousness from its previous in-ness and at the same time it is a symptom of this change. It was a firm conviction of Jung’s that modern man needs to understand.⁹⁴ After all, Jung knew this need from his own youth. While in confirmation class, the catechism bored him terribly, except for the paragraph about the holy trinity. He reports how he waited impatiently for the moment when this topic would be explained and how terribly disappointed he was when his father, the minister, said that they were going to skip this section because he did not *comprehend* anything about it himself.⁹⁵

Inasmuch as Jung felt that we “are not far enough advanced psychologically to understand the truth [...] of ritual and dogma,” one would have expected that Jung would have had the wish to advance our intellect so that it might slowly become able to understand. Instead he systematically excluded the intellect. As excluded, it, too, was immunized. It did not have to fear to be affected, *in its own logical form*, by the unconscious contents it became conscious of. We have here a structurally neurotic split: intellect and contents are set up in such a way that they do not affect or infect each other.

Thus the notion “the unconscious” does not really mean a realm, region or agency in the psyche. It primarily is a label that declares the contents to which it is applied as *fundamentally* taboo, untouchable: inaccessible to conscious knowing and intellectual penetration. This label puts them into a particular *logical status*, the status of irrevocable un-consciousness. It erects an unsurmountable, namely logical, barrier. To be sure, consciousness is permitted to look at the “contents of the unconscious” through the glass pane of the logical isolation ward that they are now confined in, it is even permitted to use the method of “amplification” and morphological comparison upon them, in other words, it is allowed to know *that* (the facts, the phenomenology), but it is absolutely forbidden to know *what*. The barrier is only not noticed because our subjective feeling experience, our being emotionally impressed by their numinosity, feigns an immediate proximity, much like our empathy and compassion with a sick person behind the glass pane of an isolation ward seem to penetrate through the glass—without however being able to do away with it.

This split, in order to be possible, required a deeper unspoken split: the split between the semantic and syntax, between content and logical form. What Jung really excluded was the level of form. He semanticized both the unconscious contents and consciousness (the intellect⁹⁶). Only because the question

94 A general and for Jung unusually radical plea for “thoughtful understanding” (*denkendem Begreifen*, which is closer to “intellectual comprehension” or comprehension in stringent thought) is to be found in CW 11 § 170.

95 CW 9i § 30. MDR p. 52f.

96 The semanticized intellect is the intellect viewed as an abstract instrument and the semanticized consciousness is consciousness interpreted as *abstract* “form”: empty vessel.

of logical form was systematically excluded could the two sides of Jung's opposition, the conscious intellect and the unconscious images, be successfully immunized against each other (i.e., could the swallowing of the one by the other happen in the first place). An infection (be it one-directional or mutual) could only have occurred on the level of form. *It* is where (and how) the two could touch. The problem of form or syntax having been eliminated once and for all, both sides were safe (where "safe" also means fundamentally unconscious). Due to this semanticizing, consciousness is systematically restricted to the knowing of the "that" and blinded to the "what," for the "what" would be nothing else but the logic of the phenomenon. Ultimately, *the exclusion of the level of form* is at the bottom of the Jungian notion of the unconscious, and it is what renders his *entire* "psychology of the unconscious" (as Jung liked to name his psychology) itself unconscious. The phrase "[...] of the unconscious" is here, malgré lui, a genetivus objectivus *and* subjectivus.

In the passage in which Jung said that he cannot go back to the Catholic Church and cannot experience the miracle of the Mass because he knows too much about it, he continued: "I know it is the truth, but it is the truth *in a form* in which I cannot accept it any more. I cannot say 'This is the sacrifice of Christ,' and see him any more. I cannot. It is no more true to me; it does not express my psychological condition. My psychological condition wants something else. I must have a situation in which that thing becomes true once more. I need *a new form*."⁹⁷ Here Jung ran into the problem of the logical form, of syntax versus semantics. Semantically, the miracle of the Mass was still the truth for him; but history had catapulted him into a new situation so that the resulting "psychological condition" of his demanded a corresponding new form for the traditional metaphysical contents, too. And here we see that the *new* form was for him—the *psychologized*, interiorized, privatized version of the former mythical and metaphysical knowledge. Only as psychologized (i.e., turned into something *psychic* and precisely not left as something psychological), only in this "new form," could the past become true once more; the locus of "where the true action is" had to be transferred to the inner in positivized man.

"THE UNCONSCIOUS": DISCOVERED FACT OR MEANS TO AN END?

The statement, "Since the stars have fallen from heaven and our highest symbols have paled, a secret life holds sway in the unconscious. This is why we have a psychology today, and why we speak of the unconscious," tells us more about the origin of Jung's psychology and the necessities of Jung's intellectual development in particular than about the history of the soul at large. It lets us see that Jung did not *discover* the unconscious simply by in his work as psychologist having stumbled across certain facts that necessitated this concept. *He was not first a psychologist, who then also happened to discover the collective unconscious*. He was not destined, sort of by birth, to become a psychologist. He could have chosen and been great in all sorts of other professions. No, it is the other way around. *He had to become a psychologist because "the unconscious"* (in his sense), to be more precise: the invention and establishment of the idea of the unconscious, *was the only avenue open to him* for successfully tackling his project. He needed the unconscious, because (a) he had the one supreme goal of restoring, under the conditions of modernity, mythic meaning as a present reality—without either resorting to utopia or to a repristination, (b) because it so happened that this goal could only be achieved through the Kronos-like interiorization *into* the individual hu-

97 CW 18 § 632 (my italics).

man being (= through the psychologizing) of “the stars” (= the contents of the former myths, religion and metaphysics): “All the gods and demons, whose physical nothingness is so easily passed off as the ‘opium of the people,’ return to their place of origin, Man [...]”⁹⁸ Psychologism⁹⁹ itself—that is, the translation of all great religious and metaphysical ideas and issues from *world* or *cosmic* problems, and *public* problems, and problems of the *thought* of “the whole man,” into psychological, merely internal ones, ones *in* man (where man is conceived as a *positivity*)—was the solution to his problem. But only a *Notlösung* (an expedient, a stopgap, a subterfuge). It of course had to be a *Notlösung* because what was really sought (a new form of in-ness, a secondary unbornness) was a *contradictio in se*.

Thus it was the fact that “psychology” provided the only way remaining for Jung’s goal to become possibly reached that determined the profession he chose.

DOWN-sizing AND PRIVATIZATION

One major disadvantage of this psychologizing from *our* point of view is that it has to be psychologistic. Jung could not really comprehend the soul as logical life. He could not move from the level of semantics to that of syntax. He could not see that the “subject” of psychology is not the individual person and his or her inner feeling experiences, but “man at large,” the notion of man, consciousness at large: the logic of our concrete being-in-the-world in a given historical situation. Jung had to downgrade and downsize the *opus magnum* to the *opus parvum*. Thus he was quite one-sidedly of the firm opinion that, “If the individual is not really changed, nothing is changed.”¹⁰⁰ The reverse of this, namely, that nothing is changed if *only* the individual is changed and *not also* and even predominantly the logic of being-in-the-world at large, he was not able to see.¹⁰¹ Jung wrote: “[...] does the individual know that *he* is the makeweight that tips the scales?”¹⁰² “Essential is, in the last analysis, only the life of the individual. This alone makes history, here alone do the great transformations first take place [...]”¹⁰³ “[...] that *he* [the individual] is the one important factor and that the salvation of the world consists in the salvation of the individual soul.”¹⁰⁴ But how can the individual really change, if the logic has not changed—the logic, which is the heart and soul, and as such also the all-pervasive medium, of reality, of real human existence?

Part of the following statement has already been quoted above. The psychotherapist “is not just working

98 CW 18 § 1366.

99 Jung defended himself in anticipation against the charge of psychologism in CW 11 § 751 with footnote. But the concept of psychologism he addresses himself to is very different from the charge raised against him here. I agree with Jung that he is not an adherent of psychologism in the sense that he has in mind.

100 *Letters* 2, p. 462, to James Gibb, 1 Oct. 1958.

101 Jung’s early insight (1912) that “the apparently individual conflict of the patient is revealed as a universal conflict of his environment and epoch. Neurosis is thus nothing less than an individual attempt, however unsuccessful, to solve a universal problem [...]” (CW 7 § 438; cf. CW 7 § 18: “Neurosis is intimately bound up with the problem of our time [*dem Problem der Zeit*] and really represents an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the individual to solve the general problem in his own person.”) was not revoked by him, but did not have any further consequences. At least here Jung moved away, in the general form of his thinking, from a personalistic view. Here for once he stresses (a) in contrast to the inner or the unconscious in man the environment, the real world in which we live, and (b) in contrast to an abstract (archetypal) universal the conflict of the epoch, the historical moment. However, the particular content of his thesis is debatable. I doubt that *neurosis* is indeed an attempt to solve a universal problem of *the epoch* and thus an addressing of the true problem of the age. I tend to think that in neurosis a battle is fought that has long been decided by history. The problem of neurosis would then not merely be that its attempt happens to be unsuccessful, but that the attempt is a priori not all that important as Jung wants to believe.

102 CW 10 § 586. According to § 523, “the individual human being” has to be “in the centre as the measure of all things.”

103 GW and CW 10 § 315, the first sentence is my translation.

104 CW 10 § 536.

for this particular patient, who may be quite insignificant, but for himself as well as his own soul, and in so doing he is perhaps laying an infinitesimal grain in the scales of humanity's soul. Small and invisible as this contribution may be, it is yet an *opus magnum*, for it is accomplished in a sphere in which the numen settled [or: immigrated] but lately and into which the whole weight of mankind's problems [*Menschheitsproblematik*] has moved. The ultimate questions of psychotherapy are not a private matter—they represent a supreme responsibility."¹⁰⁵ This cannot stand uncontradicted. We see here how Jung inflates the significance of, and mystifies, the therapist's work in the consulting room, while downsizing the *opus magnum*. Not unlike the primitive who went to the altar of his god with a chicken under his arm saying to the god, "Behold, here I am sacrificing a beautiful goat to you," Jung wants to pass off the private matter as a publicly significant one, the *opus parvum* as the *opus magnum*. He believed the psychology of the unconscious to be the *fundamental* science (the science of the ground of all sciences¹⁰⁶) and by attending to the unconscious to have arrived directly at the place where the real action is: "[...] the real problem will be from now on until a dim future a psychological one."¹⁰⁷ The psyche, the unconscious within, is thought to be the true "battleground"¹⁰⁸ where the ultimate decisions are made. To be sure, the work of psychotherapy has its own significance and represents a responsibility. But there is no fundamental difference to the significance of other significant occupations, like those of the teacher, the judge, the garbage man, the merchant, the factory worker, the doctor, the secretary, etc. Of course, if it is a question of no more than an *infinitesimal* grain that is put in the scales of humanity's soul, then Jung is right in asserting that psychotherapy may make such a contribution—because any action, omission, thought might be such an infinitesimal grain; psychotherapy is here not privileged. But as far as the *Menschheitsproblematik* is concerned, psychotherapy is insignificant. It is fundamentally a private matter, fundamentally *sublated*, *disengaged*, belonging at best, as it were, into what Husserl called the "life-world," but more appropriately expressed into the sphere of spare-time entertainment, into a playground (that playground that often is, with an ennobling word, called *temenos*). The *opus magnum* is somewhere else: in those works that articulate and change the *logic* of our being-in-the-world.

But Jung wanted to rely on semantic events: experiences from the unconscious, personal dreams and the like. As we already heard: "What is the great Dream? It consists of the many small dreams [...]"¹⁰⁹ What a letdown! A few sentences earlier Jung had—correctly, I think—still said, "It is the great dream which has always spoken through the artist as a mouthpiece." The "great dream" as conceived in this statement is precisely not the sum of the private "small dreams," but a totally other phenomenon: the work of *great art*, which is a priori public, belonging to the whole nation, if not humanity,¹¹⁰ and the product of the whole man (*homo totus*), including his wakeful consciousness and all his intellectual power. Great art and, by the same token, great thinking, do not come out of "the unconscious" conceived naturalistically and

105 CW 16 § 449, translation modified.

106 "Every science has so to speak an outside; not so psychology, whose object is the subject of all science [the subject that produces and as such is behind all science]." CW 8 § 429, translation modified, the text within the square brackets is my elucidation.

107 *Letters* 2, p. 498, to Werner Bruecher, 12 April 1959.

108 CW 13 § 293. GW: "der Kampf des Lichtes gegen die Finsternis verlegt seinen Schauplatz ins Innere derselben," viz., "der menschlichen Seele." The interior of man is turned into the new, previously not existing battleground.

109 *Letters* 2, p. 591, to Sir Herbert Read, 2 Sept. 1960.

110 Once Jung expressed as much: in the sphere or at the stage of artistic creation it is "no longer the individual who experiences but the whole people [...]" GW 15 § 162 (my translation; this phrase is missing in CW).

positivistically as a mysterious anthropological constant and a reservoir of timeless archetypes, not out of the personality of the individual (his interior). They come out of *the real, concrete historical situation* of each respective time, out of the fundamental truths, the open questions and deep conflicts of the age that press both for an articulate representation and an answer. *They* (the truths, questions and conflicts of the age) are the source, the *prima materia* and the real subject of production (“creativity”). And they are neither individual nor “collective” but—logical (which takes us into a wholly other dimension), and as such (only as such) they are “as above, so below,” as inside, so outside. In them and in the great works produced by them, not in himself, not in his “unconscious,” man has his *soul* and this is why the locus of “the whole weight of mankind’s problems” is those great works. In them and their succession we find the *opus magnum*.¹¹¹

The great artist, the great thinker is consequently he or she who (not as person with his or her interior, his or her unconscious, but *as homo totus*) is reached by them or, the other way around, in whom, because he is reached and claimed by them, the great questions of the age ferment and can work themselves out. The great artist or thinker is no more than an alchemical vessel in which the great problems of the time are the prime matter undergoing their fermenting corruption, distillation, sublimation and of course articulation. And the real artifex of the work is ultimately the mercurial spirit stirring from within the *problems* of the age themselves. The great thinker and artist is thus he or she who can allow the Mercurius in the great questions of the age to do its stirring within himself or herself.

For Jung, however, all this is different in three regards. (1) The battleground is within, *Man* as individual person being for him, in true psychologistic manner, the “place of origin”¹¹² and the locus where the numen and where the expression of the present state of the great questions of human existence are to be found today; (2) the prime matter or mankind’s problems are decidedly atemporal (timeless archetypal patterns); and (3) he refused to accept as fundamental the difference between the great and the minor, the exceptional and the commonplace,¹¹³ the *opus magnum* and the *opus parvum*. He refused to see that archetypal images do not per se indicate and guarantee greatness¹¹⁴ and that the small dreams of the ordinary individual are only of private, personal significance. He assigned to dreams as well as to the work in the consulting room a completely exaggerated, almost religious significance far beyond the *limited personal* importance that they do indeed have. *They* are the new locus of the numen for him. Almost anybody can have dreams. Thus it was Jung himself who prepared the way for the condition of today’s Jungianism: for the prevailing subjective,¹¹⁵ *fundamentally* amateurish and popular character of the typical Jungian publication, on the one hand, and for the inflated, phony spirit in which use is made of symbols and myths as well as of words like “the sacred” and “the numinous,” on the other. Which is the one side of a coin whose other side shows in the fact that Jung’s work did not attract and inspire great minds, thinkers, writers, artists, in obvious contrast to Freud’s work, and academically stayed a non-entity.

111 One single time Jung saw it the same way: The work of art “rises far above the personal and speaks both *from* the mind and heart, and *to* the mind and heart, of mankind.” GW 15 § 156, my translation. “[...] the poet expresses the truth of all people,” *ibid.*, § 159, my translation.

112 CW 18 § 1366.

113 Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries of the Renaissance*, revised and enlarged edition, New York (The Norton Library) 1968, p. 238.

114 Archetypes occur also in the popular and trivial and in banal works as well as in Kitsch. The archetypal character of something is no criterion of greatness and psychological importance. Anything can be archetypal.

115 Psychological thought as each person’s free associating, free fantasizing from out of his or her own “psyche.”

A part of and precondition for this was the substitution of truth by *Erleben* (the feeling experience). The abstract feeling experience, regardless of what it was the experience of, was what ultimately counted, as long as it was an experience from the unconscious and as such “pristine nature.” The content could be anything, inasmuch as for anything an archetypal or mythical paradigm can be found. Here Jung’s scientific empiricism and his subjectivism (personalistic, anthropological stance) join forces.

What is the problem with the feeling experience (*Erleben, Urerfahrung*)? It is that it systematically excludes and abstracts from the logic of the situation: from the implicit, unspoken logical (or ontological) premises inherent in the constitution of consciousness as well as in the historical locus one happens to be in. What really counts, the psychological ground of our existence at the given historical moment, is a priori kept out. It is not put at stake, does not enter the process. The feeling experience thus precisely excludes the soul of the situation, trying to pacify us instead with abstracted semantic contents (images), on the one hand, and, as their counterpart, with likewise abstracted subjective emotional reactions, as a bait. Emotional events such as “primordial experiences from the unconscious,” as impressive and moving (“numinous”) as they may be, are essentially *idiosyncratic*.¹¹⁶ Psychically¹¹⁷ they may be important, psychologically they are irrelevant.

In what Jung said about the immigration of the numen and the relocation of the *Menschheitsproblematik* shows again very clearly his mode of reacting to, and disposing of, his own awareness that human consciousness has emerged from its former containment in meaning. Three aspects can be distinguished.

First, instead of letting this fundamental change really come home to “the numen” itself as *its* decomposition, sublation, fermenting corruption, *its* “death,” he lets it merely suffer a locomotion that allows to hold the numen as such intact despite this radical change of place. He responds to the emergence of consciousness with a submersion of the (unaltered, unaffected) numen: “It is one of the self-delusions of our time to think that the spirits do not ride again [...] We are removed only from the place of such happenings, carried away by our madness [*Wir sind nur von dem Ort solchen Geschehens entrückt oder verrückt*]. Those of us who are still there, or have found their way back again, will be smitten by the same experience, now as before.”¹¹⁸ Nothing really happened: “[...] nothing changes but its name, [...] Our consciousness only imagines that it has lost its gods, in reality they are still there [...]”¹¹⁹ The phrase, “Those of us who are still there” points of course to the (secondary restitution of) unbornness, the attempted denial of the emergence of consciousness *after* the fact of the insight into the emergence.

Second, by opening up a new battleground for the numen or the whole weight of the *Menschheitsproblematik* inside man, Jung deprives the public sphere of its status as the real and only battleground, the place of the soul’s *opus magnum*. What happens out there is now devalued as “nothing but.” The real place where the action is, where the soul is, is supposed to be the unconscious. All psychological attention is diverted away from what is going on in art, philosophy, technology, economics, etc. and channeled to the unconscious of the individual and its private products, above all dreams.

When Jung said that “this particular patient” “may be quite insignificant,” he caught a glimpse of some-

116 The term “collective unconscious” must not blind us!

117 The psychic life in man is part of human biology, ethology (“the behavior of the organism”). The soul, by contrast, is fundamentally *contra naturam*. It is logical life.

118 *Letters 2*, p. 612, to Olga von Koenig-Fachsenfeld, 30 November 1960.

119 *Letters 2*, p. 594, to Miguel Serrano, 14 September 1960.

thing important. But we have to generalize his comment. Not this particular patient is insignificant, while certain other ones might not be. To the extent that we *all*, qua individual persons, are patients (literally or deep down or at least potentially), we *and what goes on in us* are indeed quite insignificant. Jung also saw that what ultimately counts is what is in the “scales of *humanity*’s soul.” He even entertained the idea of an “individuation of *humanity*,” as A. Jaffé stressed. Here he was very close to true psychology, to the logical dimension that is the soul’s home. But all this he nevertheless stuffed into the individual, thereby miniaturizing it. All significance was projected into what Jung *in nuce* had already seen through as “quite insignificant.” He did not free his view from its personalistic, anthropological fetters. Even the individuation of humanity was ultimately seen as occurring only in the personal individuation process, that in turn was pretty much conceived as a process of personal salvation.¹²⁰ The latter was what Jung put all his hopes upon. To be sure, he conceived of a *transpersonal* and *objective* psyche, but what kind of transpersonality and objectivity was this? The notion of transpersonality was locked into the *semantic* sphere: the archetypal images occurring in the *personal* psyche were said to be of a transpersonal nature and part of the objective psyche. *Syntactically* Jung did not allow his term “transpersonal” to break out into the open, to a transpersonality that was *in itself* transpersonal, impersonal, objective (instead of subjective-personal): mercurial, the inner logic of the historical situation that we are in.

The question arises: If he was so close to the insight that not the individual but the objective, transpersonal Mercurius or the *logos* is the actual subject of psychological life (and therefore, by the way, also the subject-matter of psychological research¹²¹), why could he not free himself from the personalistic and miniaturized? Why could he not break out into the open, into the realm where the invisible soul’s real battlefield is: the realm of thought, culture, art, science, economics, etc.? Why could he not look for the stirrings of the hidden Mercurius there? The answer is: Because then it would necessarily have become obvious (and he would have had to let himself in for the insight) that meaning, in-ness, myth are once and for all over. He would have had to enter modernity without reserve and allow man to be *born*, to have escaped from any uterine vessel and mythical garb, as well as allow the spirit to have escaped from the bottle. But of course, the very purpose of his psychology project was to seal the spirit again in the bottle after its escape¹²² and to swallow the already born children—in order to simulate the *salus* that exists only inside the *ecclesia*. Furthermore, he would have had to entrust himself to the truly (even syntactically) *objective* (impersonal, suprapersonal) logic of the soul’s life and give up the longing for a subjective, personal individuation and salvation process with personal experiences of “meaning.” He wanted to *have* meaning, immediately possess it. After all, his was a counter-factual rescue project. So on both counts his psychologistic move was consistent and indispensable.

Third, the new duplicity of battlegrounds goes along with a structurally “neurotic” dissociation: The public arena with all the philosophical, art and other cultural, social, political developments is the place where *in fact* the action is—but it counts as “nothing but,” mere “ego”-stuff, in the last analysis as a place of delusion and madness (cf. the phrase “carried away by our madness”); the private arena of the processes in the unconscious is the place where supposedly the numen has settled and the ultimate human questions are

120 Cf. for example the already quoted statement, “[...] that the salvation of the world consists in the salvation of the individual soul.” CW 10 § 536. (The German word that Jung used was not *Erlösung*, but *Rettung*, rescue.)

121 In contrast to the study of people’s psyche as part of human biology in the widest sense (“behavior of the organism”).

122 Cf. CW 13 § 250f.

decided, the *opus magnum* is accomplished—but it is irrelevant in the real world, nobody cares about, or notices anything of, it (except maybe for a few enthralled Jungians and their analysands).

PRIVILEGING THE RAW

Another aspect of the tendency away from great art or thought was that Jung usually privileged the productions of “subculture”-type movements (like alchemy)—the raw (i.e., rather inferior texts by mediocre authors) over the refined (i.e., products of the greatest minds and artists).¹²³ Similarly, he privileged the unconscious, the spontaneous (dreams, visions, paintings from the unconscious). The rawness of dreams or alchemical writings was of course so important because Jung, after all a contemporary of Surrealists like André Breton and André Masson with their automatic writing technique, believed to be allowed to see in spontaneous and unconscious production the hallmark of immediacy: the direct, unfiltered *revelation* of “the unconscious” as pristine nature and ultimate origin (this is why he spoke of *Urerfahrung*, *Urerlebnis*, *Uranschauung*). Jung was guided by the naive belief that the raw or immediate were truer than the great, than the refined and developed, the exceptional in Edgar Wind’s sense. “Why have we not long since discovered the unconscious and raised up its treasure-house of eternal images? Simply because we had a religious formula for everything psychic—and one that is far more beautiful and comprehensive than immediate experience.”¹²⁴ The idea that the far more beautiful and comprehensive religious formulas, the late result of a long cultural development and the product of the thinking of generations, *is* the true origin (the “archetypal” in the strict sense), whereas immediate experience is only a deficient and preliminary mode of it, did not occur to Jung. He (as psychologist, not private citizen) precisely preferred in art only “the purest and most naive form,” “the simplicity and naïveté of presentation, which is entirely devoid of any ‘psychological’ intent”¹²⁵ as well as, we might add, entirely devoid of any cultural refinement and mental processing. As far as I can see there is only one place where Jung came close to admitting that the cooked—the distilled, refined, sublimated—is primary and the raw secondary. This was in a passage about the artist and the work of art. There he said, “That which in the last analysis is the subject that wills in him [the artist] is not the man as person, but the work of art.”¹²⁶ The work of art, the final product, as the first cause of the production.

Alchemy could have taught him: *Quod natura relinquit imperfectum, ars perficit*, a statement frequently cited by him, but not properly understood and heeded. What does this statement tell us? Not the *prima materia*, not *Urerfahrung*, not the “small dreams” (as spontaneous “nature products”¹²⁷) are the true essence, but the accomplished *result* of the *Work*, the result of the prolonged¹²⁸ human effort at *processing* the prime matter: the *lapis*, the *quinta essentia* [...] It is precisely not enough “to say again as best one can” what the “small dream,” which Everyman can have, says. Only through artful processing and refining can

123 Cf. Graham Hough, “Anima and Poetry,” *Spring 1973*, pp. 85–96, esp. p. 87, and David L. Miller, “Fairy Tale or Myth?,” *Spring 1976*, pp. 157–164.

124 CW 9i § 11.

125 CW 18 § 1280.

126 GW 15 § 157, my translation. The wording in the English CW is too unspecific.

127 I ignore here the fact that in reality dreams are not as innocent (“pure nature”) as Jung would have it. Their phenomenologically obvious spontaneity is the result of the obliterations of the mediation and human reflection that brought them forth. Theirs is a secondary, produced immediacy.

128 *Ars longa, vita brevis est*.

the small dream obtain the depth and importance that it can possibly have (for the individual) and only through the *greatness* of the mind (*artifex*) that performs such processing can perhaps the quintessence, the Mercurius, be reached.

The “anima”-only definition of the soul makes our modern real world and our intellectual products appear as the opposite of, or external to, soul. Jung was generally not willing to consider the possibility that the move *away from* myth and into modernity occurs *within* the soul and *as* her work,¹²⁹ so that precisely *other* phenomena than those of the “symbolic life” and dreams and visions might express the need of *today’s* soul, and so that the notion of soul would have to be expanded to include the anima’s other, the animus.

PERMANENT STOREROOM OF IMAGES? NO, “JUST IN TIME” PRODUCTION!

On the other hand, as far as dreams and visions are concerned, Jung was not ready to consider the possibility that they are the very way in which the Saturnian swallowing takes place. The way Jung imagined dreams, one would have to think of the unconscious as a kind of sack full of archetypal forms and of dreams as what leaked out of this sack into consciousness. But there is no such sack. There is no unconscious as a stationary container, nor as a place, a layer (realm) or agency. The unconscious is the *temporal (momentary) process* of a redefinition, reconstitution of specific contents: the act of Kronos’ swallowing. The unconscious is not ontological, not an entity, but *performative*. It is *only in* the production and the products (the dreams, etc.) and their *interpretation* as contents of the unconscious, and it is produced in each such interpretation anew. There is not a substantiated unconscious as their producer *behind* the dreams. Again, Jung did not listen to his Pueblo Indian who had shown the way by saying, with respect to the visible, phenomenal Sun, “This *is* the Father; there is no Father behind it. [...]”¹³⁰

The act of Saturnian swallowing, as which the unconscious exists, must not be imagined as a literal translocation from outside to inside and the storing there of the translocated contents. No, it is merely the *transformation* of the respective contents out of one *logical status* into another. It is the act of assigning to contents the logical status of being absolutely unknowable to the intellect. It (and thus the unconscious) is the momentary act itself of dreaming, of *pro-ducing* dreams (visions, etc.) and viewing them *as* expressions of “the unconscious.” In and through this productive and interpretative act alone the modern soul “swallows” the contents of our cultural, spiritual heritage, contents of public thought and engagement, and translates them into the form of its own pristine property, as pristine as if they had directly fallen from heaven. It reproduces them (a) in the form of unique *events*, as *my private, subjective experiences*, and (b) as contents of *the unconscious* (as absolutely spontaneous nature products and as fundamentally inaccessible to the public mind, the intellect). The process as which the unconscious exists is dialectical: it is only the *production* (bringing forth) and *expression* or *emergence* of the images (from inside out) that is their *interiorization* (from outside, from the public mind, in). Their “rebirth” as consciously remembered dreams from “out of the unconscious” *is* the way in which they receive their status as contents of the unconscious and thus as secondarily unborn. Both movements occur “at once.” They are only one self-contradictory movement.

129 Except in a few isolated comments, such as those quoted above, see footnote 148.

130 CW 18 § 688.

DISSOCIATION AND THE RESCUE OF UNBORNNESS

The metaphor of the stars having fallen from heaven allows us to add an essential qualification of our image of the swallowing Kronos. This image, coming from the pre-modern, even the mythological age, still operated with a simple binary division, putting the father on the one and the children on the other side. But now, in the modern situation, it is no longer as simple as that the father swallows his children. What is swallowed now is the *whole concept of childhood* as such, i.e., the whole “human child – divine parent” *relationship*, the stance of upward looking per se, the entire relation of above and below. That which used to be the whole former *kósmos*, the whole mode of being-in-the-world, has been *sublated*, reduced to an internal moment within a new, larger mode (or constitution of consciousness). Man has interiorized his entire former in-ness into himself. He as modern consciousness is the new “Kronos” who swallowed the entire old “Father Kronos – his children” relationship, thereby establishing his “unconscious.” But we could also turn it around and say: by reducing what used to be its whole world-relation to a sublated moment within itself, consciousness pushed off from this world-relation and catapulted itself to a formerly unheard-of new level. The fish swallowed the “water – fish” relation and thereby turned into Aquarius, who has emerged from the waters.

The image of the stars having fallen from heaven makes us aware of the *pivotal nature* of the unconscious. The stars—the goal of man’s upward looking—are no longer above, but down below in the unconscious, a toy version of stars and heaven. So we have to look down upon the stars now, down from the height of modern consciousness. We speak of “introspection,” which is the looking from outside (in)to inside, from ego (in)to self, from consciousness (in)to the unconscious inside ourselves. This is the one perspective. But the stars contained in the unconscious are still *stars*. So there is a new starry heaven, a new above and below, a new God-image. From the point of view of “the unconscious,” we have to and are able to look up to them again. There is thus also a new in-ness, a new stance of upward looking to a new transcendence (although one that as a whole is internalized, sublated).¹³¹ The unconscious is in this sense the former (relation to the) mythic or metaphysical heaven, *only in little and in image*, and no longer cosmic, all around us and part of official public knowledge and reflection. It is the swallowed, miniaturized, but also check-mated, truth of former ages. Thus, what had admittedly been lost in full size and in real could be recovered in little and in image by means of “the unconscious.”

Instead of a full-fledged sublation (reduction to a sublated moment) we get a dissociation: two simultaneous, but mutually exclusive truths between we can switch. The negation that had historically happened could not be totally denied—it was too obvious—, but Jung refused to go wholeheartedly through with it. He insisted, as we heard, on having “a situation in which that thing becomes true once more” in “a new form.”¹³² With the introspective direction, consciousness as fully born looks down upon the former stars from outer space; as the swallowed consciousness on its night-sea-journey, conversely, it has a (Disneyland kind of, simulated) heaven and God-image above itself and is in the mode of upward looking. Empirically, for the dreaming ego, there are still the stars, still the numinous and luminous god-image(s)—but interned into the *unconscious*: the very light of the stars and gods has in itself become fundamentally, namely logi-

131 That it was a new *upward looking* and *in-ness* shows that it was precisely the *old form*. However, that it was a *new* (internalized, psychologized) upward looking suggested a “*new form*” to Jung.

132 CW 18 § 632.

cally, occluded, obsfuscated.

The notion of the collective unconscious, which has modern consciousness (“the ego,” “ego-consciousness”) outside itself, is thus *in itself* witness to the fact that the birth *has* happened. As the swallowed *notion* of childhood, it is the positivized negative (in the photographic sense) of accomplished adulthood. It is a compromise formation between the acknowledged existence *extra ecclesiam*, after the emergence from in-ness, on the one hand, and the refusal to be unreservedly informed by this existence because of the insistence on achieving a new in-ness, Saturnian style.

This pivotal sense of the unconscious is best illustrated by the way it was literally acted out by Jung in the organization of his life. I am referring to the two places between which Jung divided his life, his ordinary house in Küsnacht and his “tower” in Bollingen. Although they are literal places, I also consider them concretized metaphors for psychological *topoi*. Küsnacht was the place of truly modern consciousness that had “emerged from the waters.” Here Jung while working at his desk had to stare into the face of Voltaire, whose bust was on his desk. Here Jung was the scientist who dug up facts, nothing but facts, about the soul. Here Jung abhorred any speculation transgressing beyond the Kantian “barrier across the mental world,”¹³³ especially any hypostatizing, sternly insisting that he only presented hypotheses (or, even more modestly, that he only named and described phenomena).

By contrast, “At Bollingen I am in the midst of my true life [*in meinem eigentlichsten Wesen*, lit. “in my truest nature (or essence)”), I am most deeply myself. Here I am, as it were, the ‘age-old son of the mother.’ That is how alchemy puts it, very wisely, for the ‘old man,’ the ‘ancient,’ whom I had already experienced as a child, is personality No. 2, who has always been and always will be. He exists outside time and is the son of the maternal unconscious. [...]”¹³⁴ “At times I feel as if I am spread out over the landscape and inside things, and am myself living in every tree, in the plashing of the waves, in the clouds and the animals that come and go, in the procession of the seasons. [...] here is space for the spaceless kingdom of the world’s and the psyche’s hinterland.”¹³⁵ These feelings, where they occur, may be authentic and beautiful experiences. But whereas for the truly modern consciousness they would, *as* these authentic experiences, be not more than particular subjective events in one’s personal psychology, contingent and metaphysically indifferent, Jung gives them an ontological status as expressive of his “*eigentlichste Wesen*” and of “the spaceless kingdom of the world’s and the psyche’s hinterland.” Clearly, at Bollingen, Jung is still unborn. “Bollingen” is the place (*topos*) that has the function of allowing Jung, although he is on the literal level already born, nevertheless on the logical level to return into a state of unbornness.

The superlative form (*in meinem eigentlichsten Wesen*, in my truest nature) is revealing here. The relation of Küsnacht and Bollingen, outside and inside, is not that of false and true, but of true and more true (or truest), *eigentlich* and *eigentlichst*. One would expect that “*eigentliches Wesen*”, “true nature,” would be enough. But Jung uses the superlative, which has the unintended effect of weakening the meaning and at the same time suggests that the Bollingen experience is not the innocent self-display of his truth, but a secondary stylization. “Bollingen” is only a small oasis in the middle of the modern world, a tiny private psycho-Disneyland. “Küsnacht,” by contrast, is everywhere. And Bollingen is not an authentic, original

133 CW 18 § 1734.

134 MDR p. 225.

135 MDR p. 225f.

remains of the former world amidst the modern world. It is—obviously—an artificial construction *by the Küsnacht Jung*. So it has its secondariness written on its face.

While in Küsnacht Jung is consciousness at the Aquarius level, at Bollingen he is the fish swimming in the waters. It is noteworthy in this context that Beckett recounts having heard Jung make the following comment, after a lecture about the case of a young girl, “In the most fundamental way, she had never been really born. I, too, have always had the sense of never having been born.”¹³⁶ His psychology, which he often termed the “psychology of the unconscious,” is the worked out *theory* and program of unbornness.

Jung comes to us in the scientist’s clothing, but inwardly he is dressed in the glory of the mythical garment of the “age-old son of the mother.” Officially he is the (psychologically) fully adult modern man, but privately he is the archetypal mother’s grandiose child. Officially he shows himself in his metaphysical nakedness, but within himself he harbors the majesty of an “actor in the divine drama of life.” Is he not himself the very “beggar who wraps himself in kingly raiment, (the) king who disguises himself as a beggar,”¹³⁷ that he warned against?

JUNG’S SEMANTICIZING THE PROBLEM OF THE “NEW FORM”

Above I pointed out that Jung had run into and become aware of the problem of form (“I need a new form”). But after what we have worked out we see that he did not at all take up the challenge of the problem of (a new) form. As I showed, he even radically eliminated the level of form from his psychology. The new “form” that he did discover or gave to things (psychologization) was only a downgrading and downsizing (and a change of location: “no longer above, but below”), that is to say it remained external. The *internal logical form* of the contents themselves was precisely not touched. But of course, the whole project of Jung’s psychology served the purpose of evading the real problem of the internal or logical form: the new form *had* already been provided by the real historical situation and was what Jung rejected, obviously had to reject, in favor of his “flight into the unconscious.”¹³⁸ What was this really existing new form? That all the contents that he was interested in were in the status of historical presence and no longer in that of a present reality (“no longer valid”). Jung, not being able to go the way of a re-creation nor to content himself with having mythic meaning only in Mnemosyne, needed to *smuggle* the traditional metaphysical contents *in their traditional logical form* into the new situation and to palm them (in their old form) off on himself—himself in what he called “my psychological condition,” which was the condition of modern consciousness that could not return, e.g., to the miracle of the Mass because it “knew too much.” In order to achieve this he had to surreptitiously replace the idea of “new form” by the idea of a “new vessel, container, wrapping.” A vessel is an external form. If form is taken as a vessel, then form itself has been semanticized, turned into its very opposite: a thing, substance. The new vessel that Jung invented for the mythical images was “the interior in man,” “*the unconscious*.” It is the so-called new “form” in which modern consciousness (“my psychological condition”) can receive the old contents (*in their old form!*) into

136 Quoted from the dissertation (Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2003) on *The Absence of Myth* by Sophia Heller, who cites James Olney, *Memory and Narrative*, Chicago (Chicago Univ. Press) 1998, p. 325, who in turn quotes Beckett directly from Charles Juliet, “Rencontre avec Beckett,” see Charles Juliet, “Meeting Beckett,” tr. Suzanne Chamier, in *TriQuarterly*, 77 (winter 1989/90) p. 14.

137 CW 9i § 27.

138 W. Giegerich, “The Flight into the Unconscious: A Psychological Analysis of C.G. Jung’s Psychology Project.” Psychology at the Threshold. UCSB, Santa Barbara, CA. September 2000.

itself without either having to give up its own modern form or having to criticize these contents for their old form, be it by simply rejecting them altogether as superstition and obsolete or be it by taking them merely historically or deconstructing them. Here we see one root of the amazing fact that Jung denied himself any access to the level of logic, syntax and logical form, logical status, although only in them can be found what can be called the *soul* of real life.

What at Bollingen are revelations from the unconscious is, for the intellect of the Küssnacht Jung, simply provable observed facts, facts sealed in “unconsciousness,” that is, in mindless factuality, in the prohibition to *think* them: the prohibition to allow the mind to be “infected” by them and to turn object (or content) into subject. The sugar cube is sealed in plastic foil so as not to dissolve in the coffee. The unconscious contents are deposited in the unconscious as in a CASTOR® container that, under penalty of either psychosis or of disqualification because of metaphysical transgression, is forbidden to be opened. They must not be released into the unfathomableness of their truth. The unconscious is indeed a “casket for storage and transport of radioactive waste,” as it were, but not because archetypes and Gods are allegedly still alive and thus as dangerous as radioactive materials, but only because *if we, as* the modern consciousness that we are, would nevertheless still believe in them and take them *as* present realities, we would then, and only then, be threatened by inflation or psychosis. Their “radioactivity” is nothing else but the discrepancy between *their old logical form* and the logical form of *modern consciousness*. This form discrepancy alone is what makes the old contents threatening in the sense of inflation or psychosis for a consciousness inevitably informed by the new logical form. For a pre-modern consciousness, whose logical form had been that of in-ness and upward looking *anyway*, they had not represented a fundamental problem. The situation is totally different for a consciousness that is in “outer space” vis-à-vis itself, in other words, for whom the level of logical form or syntax has become indispensable.

What in Küssnacht—outside the CASTOR container—are merely “statements of the psyche,” e.g. merely *God-images* in the soul,¹³⁹ at Bollingen—inside the container—are transcendent realities (a *vox Dei*¹⁴⁰) that require our service (“to serve a god is full of meaning and promise because it is an act of submission to a higher, invisible and spiritual being”¹⁴¹). This fundamental duplicity has two advantages for Jung. Since as the scientist, Jung does not have to take *intellectual* responsibility for his inner existence as the age-old son of the mother, the danger of becoming *personally* inflated or psychotic from his entertaining such a self-definition is warded off. And yet, since at Bollingen he is in his *truest* nature and the scientist has psychologically just the status of his façade, being ultimately just *maya*, “a good exterior ‘dans ce meilleur des mondes possibles,’”¹⁴² he can psychologically reap the benefit of the grandiosity and metaphysical meaning that it entails.

The subject that is at Bollingen cannot be infected by the “radioactive” (inflation-causing) material inside the container because it left its modern mind and its intellectual responsibility back in Küssnacht. As long as one is logically only *dreaming* “at Bollingen” (dreaming the myth onwards), one is safe. “Dreaming” here means: experiencing with a fundamental mental reservation, with the knowledge that it is *only* a “dream,” an “Urerlebnis,” only a *statement* by or *image* from the unconscious, and that the “dream” has

139 “When I say ‘God’ I mean an anthropomorphic (archetypal) God-image and do not imagine I have said anything about God. I have neither denied nor affirmed him [...]” *Letters* 2, p. 54, to Haberlandt, 23 April 1952.

140 Cf. CW 18 §§ 603 and 601.

141 CW 13 § 54.

142 *Letters* 1, p. 171, to Hermann Hesse, 18 Sept. 1934. The original formulation is: “eine gute Exoterik.”

outside of itself the “outer space” of modern consciousness and “real life” as the unquestioned real reality and reliable ground of our existence. “Dreaming” means to be at least implicitly aware of the fact that what is seen and felt in this state has its place only in a kind of segregated psycho-Disneyland. The real, even though unspoken, logical premises of our modern existence have been put between brackets so that they do not enter into the “Urerfahrung.” But the moment one’s neurotic dissociation is not airtight and one happens inadvertently to be present with one’s whole waking mind that takes intellectually *seriously* what it experiences, the moment one unreservedly stakes even one’s sense of reality and of one’s real existence—ultimately one’s real ontology and logic—: then one is in danger of being exposed to the contents’ radioactivity.

As far as Jung’s deepest need and supreme interest, the restoration of meaning, is concerned, psychology is an emergency stopgap. It is not an advance to a new level of consciousness, not an opening up of a fundamentally deeper mode of comprehension of the problem at hand. It moves thought to a sidetrack and a fenced-in private playground rather than continuing, and contributing to, the historical evolution of the mind: because it did not provide an answer to the question of logical form *on the level of logical form*. Jung *saw* the problem of form, but answered it on the semantic level.

We should, however—this is essential—not make the mistake of interpreting this duplicity personalistically as Jung’s idiosyncrasy. Rather we have to comprehend that it *had to be this way* if Jung wanted to solve the task he was confronted with: the problem of meaning as it was set for him at this particular historical moment. And thus we have to comprehend that it is merely an illustration of the concept of man underlying Jung’s psychology of the unconscious. The split and the pivotal character are part of the program. Jungian psychology wants to teach us to comprehend ourselves in the same way and to live our lives accordingly.

If one wonders why Jung had to have this project of establishing “a situation in which that thing becomes true once more” in “a new form,” despite of its having obviously been rendered obsolete by the history of the soul and what the historical purpose of such a futile project might have been, my answer is that the factual obsolescence was probably not enough. The attempt to re-establish or rather to simulate the former situation had to be made for the sole purpose of *objectively* carrying it to absurdity. Consciousness had to learn in practice, by experience, the hard way, that it does not work. Only in this way is the wish to hold on or return *really* (and not only *in mente*) worked off and has consciousness unreservedly arrived in the modern world.

TOKEN ADULTHOOD

It fits to the attempt to rescue unbornness that Jung could conceive of “(psychologically) fully growing up” (on the personal level) only as an *exchange* of the (childish) dependence on literal parents for the (mature) dependence on higher, divine parents. Above I mentioned that puberty rites in traditional cultures initiated into empirical adulthood precisely by logically initiating into metaphysical childhood. It is as if Jung’s thinking about the transition from childhood to adulthood went along the same lines. Neurotics, he says critiquing Freudian psychoanalysis, “can only regain their health when they climb out of the mud of the commonplace. [...] How are they ever to emerge if analysis does not make them aware of something different and better, when even theory holds them fast in it and offers them nothing more than the rational

and ‘reasonable’ injunction to abandon such childishness? That is precisely what they cannot do, and how should they be able to if they do not discover something to stand on? One form of life cannot simply be abandoned unless it is exchanged for another.”¹⁴³ And this “something to stand on,” this other form of life to be exchanged for the neurotic or childish one, is—according to Jung—the awareness and attitude of being the child of divine parents. “[...] The fantasy of sacrifice means the giving up of infantile wishes. [...] But man cannot leave his previous personality and his previous objects of interest simply as they are, [...] Here religion is a great help because, by the bridge of the symbol, it leads his libido away from the infantile objects (parents) towards the symbolic representatives of the past, i.e., the gods, thus facilitating the transition from the infantile world to the adult world.”¹⁴⁴ The move from literal parents to their symbolic representatives is most distinctly expressed in Jung’s statement already quoted above about the ever seeking traveling woman, “But if she could say, ‘I am the daughter of the Moon. Every night I must help the Moon, my Mother, over the horizon’—ah, that is something else! Then she lives [...]”¹⁴⁵ A real birth of man, such as the birth of the symbol’s meaning out of the symbol, is unthinkable for Jung. Childhood cannot really be left behind. It can only be transformed (or transported) from a literal to a logical or symbolic level. A successful transportation of the *childhood* status to the symbolic level is then—oddly enough—called maturity: “transition to the adult world.”

Despite his insight into the “illimitable loneliness” of man, Jung was not ready to comprehend logical adulthood as the self-contradictory task of *oneself* having to *be*, to *exist as*, the very ground and the only ground one is standing on (just as personal adulthood means that I myself have to be my own mother and father for myself). No other ground, no uterine vessel. To be sure, he raised the rhetorical question, “Or is there something in ourselves that commands us to go in for no mummeries, but perhaps even *to sew our garment ourselves?*”¹⁴⁶ But what he did and wanted us to do was the opposite: to slip into some ready-made archetypal garment to be discovered in the unconscious, in our private dreams. If there was anything that Jung did *not* want us to do then it was to really sew our garment ourselves. He was not even ready to uncompromisingly comprehend adulthood as metaphysical nakedness, which would be the prerequisite for really wanting to sew one’s own garment, a garment that as self-made would be an ordinary outfit, not a majestic archetypal one. He thought that you simply cannot do without divine parents; you need to find some other, transcendent ground to stand on (although now of course, in the 20th century, this transcendent ground was *internally* “transcendent” for him: psychologized).

In this way the *logic* of the child-status stays the same, whereas the revolutionary fact that we have reached the age of personal-biological as well as cultural-historical majority is theoretically taken care (and disposed) of by a mere substitution of the *incumbents* in the office of parents, in the personal case, and, in the cultural case, by a mere substitution of one place and dimension of the parents (the public world of thought about, first cosmic, later metaphysical realities) for another (the interior of private images and feeling experiences). And “sewing one’s garment oneself” was secretly reversed to mean the *personal* introspective search for a garment in *one’s own* inner second-hand shop, the unconscious. Tailoring was out of the question.

143 MDR p. 166.

144 CW 4 § 350.

145 CW 18 § 630.

146 CW 9i § 27, my italics.

Jung declared his readiness stoutly to avow our spiritual poverty, our symbol-lessness; he even spoke of a vow of spiritual poverty in analogy to the monks' vow of worldly poverty.¹⁴⁷ This shows once more his whole ambivalence or duplicity. The exalted language ("vow," with the associations of the life of monks, which is a metaphysically rich life *ad majorem dei gloriam*, and of heavenly reward for earthly poverty) contradicts the semantic message ("spiritual poverty"). The consciousness that is speaking is still up in the clouds; it is still firmly informed by the logic of religion and metaphysics, but *what* it is saying is that it wants to avow its metaphysical nakedness and renounce all riches. The point that needs to be made is that there is nothing to be renounced. Nothing needs to be done. We do not have to come down from cloud-cuckoo-land, we do not have to stoop low (as Jung had suggested): because we in fact *are* already down on the earth, we *are* metaphysically naked, *really* naked; we do not have any symbols or myths that we could still give up. Jung's (to be sure casual) fantasy of a vow is another small indication that he remains stuck in personalistic and egoic thinking, here a thinking in terms of our efforts for the right way, ultimately for personal salvation. He does not advance to the truly *psychological* level: to the understanding that all that is needed, but also required and indispensable, is the conscious *recognition* of the logic that is and the accompaniment by us, with our *wholehearted feeling* and *intellectual comprehension*, of this logic in its self-movement. Earlier I pointed out that Jung sells indulgences. Egoically he demands a psychic attitude or behavior (i.e., an acting out) in return for which he dispenses himself and us from having to respond psychologically, which here would mean our simply suffering the *truth* of the situation to come home to, permeate, and transform consciousness.

In one of the rather rare instances where Jung does not blame us, the ego, or the conscious intellect, for the historical development, but appreciates it as stemming from the soul,¹⁴⁸ he himself says that "the darkness of our soul" "hollows out and hacks up the shapes of our culture and its historical dominants. We have no dominants any more, [...] Our values are shifting, everything loses its certainty, even *sanctissima causalitas* has descended from the throne of the axiomata and has become a mere field of probabilities."¹⁴⁹ We simply *have* nothing. How could the really poor take a vow of poverty and renounce (be it worldly or spiritual) riches? All we have to do is to refrain from secondarily pretending something else: from giving an inflated and thus phony significance to our personal dreams, to symbols and myths; from using the words "gods," "archetypes," "numinous," etc. lightly, for commonplace motifs and experiences. The fantasy of a vow shows that Jung's is only a token admission of the poverty that is. And indeed, just as the monk exchanged his worldly riches for spiritual and heavenly riches, so Jung's psychology exchanges the conscious riches of our cultural, religious and philosophical heritage, the riches present only in Mnemosyne, for the riches of or in the unconscious. This heritage he had, as we have seen, precisely systematically cast away (as having been "squandered" by us), for the very reason and the only reason that it was present *only* in Mnemosyne and thus "no longer valid"¹⁵⁰: not a present reality.

147 CW 9i § 28 and 29.

148 As also in the statement from CW 11 § 203 already quoted above and in a letter: "Man is compelled by divine forces to go forward to increasing consciousness and cognition, developing further and further away from his religious background because he does not understand it any more." *Letters* 2, p. 436, to Kelsey, 3 May 1958.

149 *Letters* 2, p. 590, to Sir Herbert Read, 2 September 1960. Much the same had already been observed by Karl Marx a century earlier: "All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind," Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, in: Marx & Engels, *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. by Lewis S. Feuer, Anchor Books edition, 1959, p. 10.

150 CW 9i § 31.

KRONOS SWALLOWS NOT ONLY HIS CHILDREN, NOT ONLY CHILDHOOD AS SUCH (THE WHOLE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP, THE MODE OF UPWARD LOOKING), BUT ALSO HIS CHILDREN'S BIRTH

“Bollingen” as well as “the unconscious” are secondary and insular. The modern world is all around them. Birth has already happened. But part of the logic of “the psychology of the unconscious” is that the secondary is declared to be primary (the second-hand shop *as* the place of *Urerfahrung*) and the late historical result is declared to be the secret origin. “Probably it [viz., the unconscious or the hinterland of man’s mind] was always there, in every culture. [...] But no culture before ours felt the need to take this psychic background as such seriously.”¹⁵¹ Today “All the gods and demons, whose physical nothingness is so easily passed off as the ‘opium of the people,’ return to their place of origin, Man [...]”¹⁵² The thesis is that the 20th century idea of the collective unconscious is actually the (formerly unknown) origin of all.

To represent this idea of primordial origin is also the function of Jung’s ahistorical “archetypes” (as anthropological, if not cosmic, constants: synchronicity!). At a time when de Saussure (1906) had demonstrated that in the system of language the function of signs is not determined by substrates of meaning, but by differences, Jung resurrected, with his concept of archetypes, the idea of subsisting units of meaning: meaning as natural facts, not product of the activity of the mind (and thus not the mind’s own property); meaning ontologized and hypostatized, timeless constants. The mind is conversely imagined to be the product of, and passively informed by, the archetypes.

The statement about all the gods and demons returning to their place of origin, Man, could have been the insight into what I described under the title of the birth of man, into man’s having come of age, his having outgrown his metaphysical parents—if the inserted clause polemicizing against the “opium of the people” idea did not betray that it is used in the opposite direction, for rescuing the divine parents by psychologically stuffing them into the unconscious that is inside Man. So this one sentence shows the Kronos strategy in action, the bornness *and* the swallowing of the born, the re-mystification of what has already been seen through as the mind’s own production.

The secondary is assigned the status of the true origin. This is the first inversion. Similarly, the fundamental privacy and idiosyncrasy of the unconscious is hidden and compensated for by declaring it to be in itself *collective*. But the Jungian term “collective” is not the public, not the official, not the communal, not “the soul’s” *logical* life! It is the a priori *swallowed, done-in* public. The real public remains unaffected outside, taking its own course.

This leads us to a third inversion. Although the unconscious is insular in the world of consciousness, we as conscious personalities are said to be surrounded on all sides by the unconscious. The fantasy of being surrounded by the unconscious on all sides had only become possible because Jung had *systematically excluded* major conscious and public areas of modern reality (and cultural history at large) from being considered as relevant parts of the *phenomenology of the soul*: Philosophical thought was put down as merely intellectual speculation; the art of his time (e.g., the Cubists) was simply ignored by Jung; “Marx” and the whole economic reality remained outside, as did the advancement of technology, industry and the changes in the structure and organization of society; other modern phenomena were dismissed as mere mass phenomena (which they of course often were; but even *as* mass phenomena they are an indirect expression of the modern soul, too). By contrast, dreams, visions, myths, symbols were privileged as the true documents

151 CW 10 § 161. I altered the translation of the second sentence according to GW 10.

152 CW 18 § 1366.

of the soul, soul thereby reductively limited to its “anima” aspect.¹⁵³ “Only the symbolic life can express the need of the soul.”¹⁵⁴ Only the raw shows the soul in its unfiltered truth, as we saw above. For this reason probably, Jung could conversely *mystify* other modern banal mass movements and appropriate them for his archetypal theory, if only they seemed to be loaded with enough primitive emotion. Thus he misinterpreted the Nazi movement as expressive of an archetype, even a god (Wotan), and thereby attributed a psychological depth to it that it surely did not have.

Likewise, while the contents of the unconscious are actually the abstracted historical past, a task for the future is nevertheless attributed to the unconscious. “That is modern psychology, and that is the future,”¹⁵⁵ Jung said at the end of his talk about “The Symbolic Life.” And somewhere else, as we already heard: “[...] the real problem will be from now on until a dim future a psychological one.”¹⁵⁶ Jung’s “myth of consciousness” needs to be mentioned here in particular. According to this myth God wants to incarnate, and become conscious, in man. Now, what goal for the future is this? It is a goal that history already reached with the conclusion of the age of metaphysics and the entrance into modernity at the beginning of the 19th century. That very consciousness that previously had been extrajected to the horizon and objectified in the idea of God in heaven has already been integrated into the form of consciousness. Why else would modern consciousness have experienced the death of God? “God” could only die if the meaning of this symbol had been born out of it, only if what consciousness previously had still needed to *have* in the form of a semantic content or substance (“projection”) had meanwhile come home to consciousness itself, that is, had entered its own syntax or logical constitution, its own *being*. The “death of God” experience is precisely the indication (the symptom) of the fact that God’s incarnation in man has happened.

Today, this new consciousness has existed as an objective societal or cultural reality (even if not so much subjectively) for about two centuries. But it is declared to be the future goal. However, the future goal only in little and in private: only as the goal of the inner process of the unconscious, cut off from the real development of consciousness in public cultural life.¹⁵⁷ Jung wanted an onwards movement, but one where we dream the myth onwards¹⁵⁸: (a) *dream*, (b) the *myth*. It is the fish or unborn consciousness that “dreams,” that in fact *does* not only dream (as a specific activity or event), but whose whole existence *is* one Dream. Aquarius or born consciousness has awakened from this Dream and no longer dreams (which does not preclude its still having literal dreams); because it has integrated the content of the former Dream into its form of consciousness, it *is* itself, and has to *be*, what the Dream used to be about.¹⁵⁹

This move was a necessity for the project of Jung’s “psychology of the unconscious.” Since the point of this project was to have in-ness come true once more in a “new form,” the really existing state of bornness in the sense of Aquarius consciousness had to be put down as utterly banal (or, of course, as unbearable or dangerous). But it could not simply be rejected and left outside. The idea of the “higher,” born conscious-

153 See my *Animus-Psychologie*, Frankfurt am Main et al. (Peter Lang) 1994.

154 CW 18 § 627.

155 CW 18 § 639.

156 *Letters* 2, p. 498, to Werner Bruecher, 12 April 1959.

157 One has to see this also in connection with Jung’s idea of a “secret history,” sort of a hidden undercurrent under that history that is accessible to the public mind.

158 CW 9i § 271: “The most we can do is to *dream the myth onwards* [...]” GW 9/I § 271: “Man *träumt* bestenfalls den Mythos weiter [...]”

159 Once awakened, consciousness can reflect about (“interpret”) the dream that it had had (= our spiritual heritage) in all its details, and treasure it in Mnemosyne.

ness, of awakening from the dream, of Aquarius consciousness had to be appropriated by the unconscious as its own property so that the really existing Aquarius consciousness would through this privation be in fact depotentiated and could no longer threaten the position of the unconscious with the claim that it, public consciousness, was the “higher” consciousness and the unconscious, as it were, “old hat.”

By the same token, the unconscious had to bring the idea of future development under its control. It could not leave the promise of future resting with the official (public) intellectual and social history. The potential of “future” and of “advancing to a new, higher consciousness” had to be taken prisoner for¹⁶⁰ the unconscious as the exclusive locus of the course of what for Jung was the *real, essential, deep, hidden* history. Declaring the stage of consciousness that has already been reached in the present to be the distant goal of the future is how Kronos swallowed not only this or that newborn child, but *bornness as such*; how in-ness “pocketed” its own opposite, “being born out of it.” The birth of higher consciousness is now defined as an event *in* the unconscious. Only with this fundamental swallowing has “the unconscious,” and thus the sense of in-ness, become absolute.

The future, in this way logically entombed in the unconscious, is an a priori defused future, a literally *past* future, a future that from the outset has already been overtaken by real developments. Just as the Jungian unconscious is the metaphysical past *as* a seeming new present, but a present that has the real present (“Küsnacht”) outside of itself, so *this* future is actually our really existing present. But since it is our present only as image, as reconstructed within the enclosure of the miniaturized inner world that simulates the former state of in-ness (to have overcome which and pushed off from which is the very character of our *real* present), it must necessarily appear *as* the great future goal for mankind to strive for and the goal of human history at large.

For Jung the *real* (already existing) Aquarius consciousness is in psychological outer space. This becomes apparent from his interpretation of two of his late dreams, the one about the UFOs with the magic lantern pointing straight at Jung and the other one about the meditating yogin who had Jung’s face. As to the first, Jung comments, “Still half in the dream, the thought passed through my head: ‘We always think that the UFOs are projections of ours. Now it turns out that we are their projections. I am projected by the magic lantern as C.G. Jung. But who manipulates the apparatus?’”¹⁶¹ Jung takes the dream image of the UFOs literally, on the “object-level.” By hypostatizing them, he gives them a “metaphysical” interpretation, which as the natural scientist in “Küsnacht” he would have to abhor. He even toys with the idea of a mysterious mastermind behind the scene that is not suggested by the dream at all. He never considers the possibility that the UFOs in the dream represent his own Aquarius consciousness from which he dissociated himself, extrajecting it into psychological “outer space” and reducing it to a mere technical apparatus (cf. his view of the intellect as an arbitrary, more or less irresponsible function of thinking things up, or as mechanical function in the sense of formal logic), and that it might be the purpose of this dream to re-establish a connection, to heal the dissociation: to allow Jung to comprehend himself as thinking self-relation.

Much the same can be seen in his reaction to the second dream. “I started in profound fright, and awoke

160 I take this phrase “to take prisoner for [...],” which goes back to Gregory of Nazianzus (“we take prisoner every thought for Christ,” in: “In Praise of Basil” [*Pat. Gr.* 36, 508]) from James Hillman’s “Psychology: Monotheistic or Polytheistic,” in: *Spring 1971*, pp. 193–208, here p. 202 with note 15.

161 MDR p. 323.

with the thought: ‘Aha, so he is the one who is meditating me. He has a dream, and I am it.’ I knew that when he awakened, I would no longer be.”¹⁶² Again he takes the dream naively literally, metaphysically, as a dream about the question of his life or death. He sees a transcendent being in the yogin whom he identifies with his self, his “prenatal wholeness,” that “meditates my earthly form,” which in turn would have no more than the status of Maya, in keeping with Eastern philosophy.¹⁶³ A *psychological* interpretation, by contrast, would have to see the dream as expressing the idea of the soul’s self-relation. We might say that the dream tries to make him aware of the fact that the yogin is his own, but disowned and exoticized (yogin!), modern consciousness. A modern consciousness, however, that is dreaming and not awake, as it would be befitting for the Aquarius stage of consciousness. The “yogin’s” dream invents or stylizes him, Jung, as the author of the “psychology of the unconscious,” as, say, the “Bollingen” person,¹⁶⁴ as the “unborn.” And *this* person and along with it “the unconscious” would naturally disappear when this self-definition or self-stylization is given up. The ultimate telos of the dream, this Jung’s own reflection shows, is the waking up out of the state of dreaming with the result that “I would no longer be.” This death of the Bollingen person would be the final birth of man, the emergence from the waters. But again this thought came to Jung only as an unconscious one, in the form of a dream and as a possibility of, and projection into, the future, a post-mortal potentiality¹⁶⁵ (that Jung could not even envision as solution, redemption, but only as the literal death of himself as human being).

ARCHETYPAL PSYCHOLOGY (JAMES HILLMAN) or: ABSOLUTE SWALLOWING

From here I want to have a quick look at the only important further development of Jung’s psychology, archetypal psychology, in order to describe its logical genesis. Its origin had been Jung’s standpoint. Rather than deserting this standpoint in favor of a personalistic developmental, clinical orientation, but also rather than being faithful to the letter of the Jungian *doctrine*, like orthodox Jungianism, archetypal psychology was faithful to the *dynamic and telos of the movement* performed by Jung: it radicalized Jung’s move to a situation in which the past (mythic meaning) becomes true once more, figuratively speaking: the move to “Bollingen”; this move now became a one-way journey. Jung’s psychology had been elliptic, it had had two focal points, “Bollingen” and “Küsnacht.” Hillman abolished, as it were, the “Küsnacht” position altogether: he abolished from his theory Jung’s scientific claim, the theory of compensation, the “archetypes in themselves,” the interpretation of images as “symbols,” Jung’s “theology,” even the Jungian interest in “meaning” (the big question of the meaning of life). Now “Bollingen” has no counterpart, no opposite any more. It is limitless, absolute, total, while with Jung it had still been insular and only one “half” of the whole truth. For archetypal psychology “Bollingen” is everywhere, now infinitely extended to comprise even its former opposite, “Küsnacht.” This is why archetypal psychology was able to make the move “from

162 Ibid.

163 Ibid. p. 323f.

164 Or, to be more exact, as the Kusnacht person who, after all, is defined as being no more than the “exoteric” shell around the Bollingen person as the true self. The problem of the Kusnacht person is that, because he always has Bollingen and his unbornness as his ultimate truth in the back of his mind, he does not à corps perdu give himself over to modern (Aquarius) consciousness, which for that very reason can imaginally only appear as the figure of a kind of alien belonging to outer space.

165 Jung was very “impressed by the fact that the conclusion of *Faust* contains no conclusion[.]” (MDR p. 318). “[...] Faust’s final rejuvenation takes place only in the post-mortal state, i.e., is projected into the future.” CW 12 § 558. “It is an unconscious reality which in Faust’s case was felt as being beyond his reach at the time, and for this reason it is separated from his real existence by death.” *Letters I*, p. 265 (to Anonymous, 22 March 1939).

mirror to window,”¹⁶⁶ the move from introspection and the consulting room into the real world at large, the city. But of course, thus subsumed under its opposite, *this* Küsnacht ipso facto is “Küsnacht” no more. It is the bollingenized city, the city absorbed into “Bollingen,” the city seen romantically—mythically, imaginally, aesthetically, poetically, in terms of beauty and sensual certainty. It is no longer that city (the modern world *as* modern, *as* abstract and alienated, *as* devoid of Gods) in hard contradistinction to which Jung had erected his fantasy world out of stone at Bollingen as the bulwark against the banality and meaninglessness of “Küsnacht.”

It is as if the naive puer who had been swallowed by Kronos (the position of Jung) now in turn decomposed the swallowing Kronos from within and absorbed him, so that only the swallowed puer remains. But this disintegration of Kronos is paradoxically the final victory of Kronos, who in this context is nothing else but the wish to retroactively prevent the birth that has already happened and to forever keep the puer in his naivety and secondary unbornness. If the swallowed children disintegrate and absorb that which swallowed them, then the swallowing has, to be sure, not been undone (this would have had to be their being disgorged again) but become invisible, obliterated and thereby immunized; it is no longer a special act nor does it require a separated-off place (“inside”); furthermore, due to the incorporation, it has become the swallowed children’s own attitude (similarly to how hostages of terrorists often take over their abductors’ views in the sense of an “identification with the aggressor”). Kronos no longer needs to have a separate existence, he and his swallowing now fulfill themselves through his counterpart, his first victim: the swallowed puer, himself. Kronos’ swallowing has been carried to its ultimate conclusion, has now become complete: absolute and eternalized. The swallowing has swallowed *itself*.¹⁶⁷

Thus, by sublimating, evaporating the Jungian “Bollingen” (as a special literal place and a special intellectual *topos* in contradistinction to “Küsnacht”), archetypal psychology has turned the swallowing/unbornness into the logical character of the whole, into a “perspective,” a “style” that, e.g., allows the modern “universe” in the sense of science to be seen *as* (as if it were) the “kósmos” of old,¹⁶⁸ the modern world at large *as* the world in little and in image, the real present *as* the once-more-come-true past, the world full of Gods. Archetypal psychology does not need to take the Gods ontologically and theologically as Jung did; it takes them “psychologically,” “metaphorically,” “imaginally.” The upward looking is correspondingly no longer a literal and subjective act and attitude; archetypal psychology itself *is* now the *sublated*, *distilled* upward looking, an upward looking which has receded from the level of behavior or psychic phenomenology into psychology’s objective logical *form*. It is now, as it were, “institutionalized.”

Although archetypal psychology moved from introspection and the consulting room out into the real world of the city, it did not truly get out into the open. What appears as a move out into real life, in truth is conversely a pulling in of all of reality. The world seen as image (image in this sense) is inside Kronos’ stomach, secondarily unborn. It has all been taken prisoner for Kronos. Archetypal psychology is the logical *completion*, not a revision or reform / revolution, of the Jungian undertaking.

Archetypal psychology abolished Jung’s distinction between the archetype in itself and the concrete archetypal image without getting rid of the archetypal altogether, just as it kept on talking about the Gods

166 James Hillman, “From Mirror to Window. Curing Psychoanalysis of Its Narcissism,” in: *Spring* 49, 1989, pp. 62–75.

167 The swallowing completes itself via four stages (or moments), the swallowing (1) of the children, (2) of the child-parent relationship as a whole, (3) of (the children’s) *birth* as such, (4) of the swallowing itself. The swallowing obliterates itself, becomes invisible. Thus a new seeming innocence (sensual directness) is artfully produced.

168 James Hillman, “Cosmology for Soul. From Universe to Cosmos,” in: *Sphinx* 2, 1989, pp. 17–33.

without wanting the Gods to be taken theologically. For this reason, the “image” in archetypal psychology is—as far as its self-interpretation is concerned—not like the image in *medial* modernity. The medial image has no archetypal depth to it, no Gods in it. It is plain show. The logical origin of the notion of image in archetypal psychology, by contrast, is (a) the reflection (interiorization) of Jung’s “archetype in itself” into Jung’s “archetypal image,” so that the difference between them is canceled, and (b) the explosion of the “archetypal image” from its status of literal image as psychic event or phenomenon (image in the narrower sense or *symbol*, e.g., dream symbol), so that it now would be enabled to “swallow,” and thus encompass, all the real phenomena and events out there. But of course, if seen through, archetypal psychology’s “image,” its “imaginal,” its “metaphors” *are*, while seeming to be its opposite, in themselves the very “*impoverishment* of symbols” that Jung spoke about, the *celebration* of this impoverishment, and as such nevertheless an expression of medial modernity. What in the world of industry and economy and consumerism is *Ware*, commodity (Marx), in archetypal psychology is “image.”

Everything in the world has its archetypal depth and its God within itself. It is in itself image in this new sense: contained in “the imaginal.” In-ness or unbornness now does not only have nothing outside itself, it has also incorporated the very idea of “external reality ‘outside the window’” into itself and has thus brought it logically under its own control: in-ness has become absolute. This is what is reflected in archetypal psychology’s notion of *beauty* (which is not literal beauty in opposition to the ugly, but the phenomena’s absolutely unchallenged containment in the imaginal). “Beauty” here takes the place that “meaning” used to have for Jung. It is the successor concept of “meaning,” its further determination, its sublimated, distilled, evaporated: *sublated* form.

Thus Hillman followed, just like Jung did in his own somewhat different way, the old neoplatonic impulse that attributed the higher (or even exclusive) reality to the universal idea and allowed the singular to be considered real only in a secondary sense, namely inasmuch as it participates in the truly real. In themselves the phenomena are *maya* (for Jung) or caught in literalism and part of the “fallen world” (for Hillman); they need to be compensated for by special experiences (dreams, archetypal *Urerfahrung*) in the one case and “returned to the Gods” (*epistrophé*) in the other.

Since in archetypal psychology the singular as such has its archetypal depth or its God within itself, no longer outside and above itself, the pressure upon the individual to conform to an external norm so characteristic of former (pre-modern) times is simply gone. As shown above by way of one example, homosexuality was formerly seen as perverse, as a violation of the *idea* (*concept*) and thus the *true reality* or *nature* of “man (male)” or “woman.” People *had* to quite practically “return” their individual lives to this universal idea. In archetypal psychology, by contrast, each individual inclination or behavior, even if it is distorted, pathological or perverse, is in itself an archetypal image with its own beauty,¹⁶⁹ and to “return” it “to the Gods” means now to find the gods in whose mythology such pathological or perverse behavior occurs and who for that reason authorize it archetypally.

Here it is easy to see that two fundamental tenets of archetypal psychology follow directly from its basic move beyond Jung, from its exclusively settling in the “Bollingen” position and reflecting the archetypal into the now “aesthetic” image. These tenets are the polytheistic stance, which goes along with an emphasis on “eachness,” and the idea that pathologizing *is* soul-making. Each individual *feature*, as distorted and

169 For Hillman, beauty is, as I pointed out, not to be literalized!

pathological as it may be, is a phenomenon or image in its own right and with its own archetypal depth. As great as the difference of the empirical-practical consequences of this type of theory is to those that the former type of neoplatonic attitude had, the fundamental logic is structurally the same in both. It has only been a bit more sublimated, distilled.

Jung had needed to put his fantasy, because it was a counter-world to the real “utterly banal” world of his time, literally into stone¹⁷⁰ in order to give it solidity and conviction for himself as the immediate “present reality” that it was supposed to be. Having distilled and sublated the Jungian position, archetypal psychology no longer has this need. A “stone character” (here called “sensual certainty”) comes for it from the real world “outside the window” (which as a whole has been absorbed into “the imaginal”) as well as from the indisputable realness of each phenomenon, while the poetic or imaginal character of this world comes from the bollingenizing vision in which archetypal psychology cocoons what it takes note of or with which it coats it. Both aspects come together in archetypal psychology’s particular theory of the “aesthetic.”

* * *

There have been those who try to make Jungian and archetypal psychology appear as “post-modern.” They don’t see that both psychologies are, in slightly different ways, attempts to avoid modernity, to avoid having to unreservedly experience *transformation, initiation* into the modern form of consciousness.¹⁷¹ To be more precise, both psychologies semantically indeed take note of modernity, while syntactically or logically they try to hold onto (or to secondarily recreate, i.e., simulate) a decidedly pre-modern level of consciousness. The dialectic of this split between the semantic and the syntactical, between the imaginal and the logical form, is that precisely with the very wish to rescue or simulate the old level of consciousness they syntactically are themselves very much subject to and exponents of modernity, whereas their semantics is the semantics and (sublated, semanticized) syntax of the past (their “myths,” “gods,” their Gnostic, alchemical, Renaissance models, their sense of meaning or, more distilled, of the “aesthetic”). ☹

170 His tower and stone monuments at Bollingen. “Word and paper, however, did not seem real enough to me; something more was needed. I had to achieve a kind of representation in stone of my innermost thoughts [...]” MDR p. 223.

171 And yet this is so obvious. Jung’s unrelenting concern for the quest for meaning, his belief in archetypes as subsisting units of meaning, his theology, his idea of the individuation process with its confirmation of the subject, his commitment to “center,” “self,” mandalas, to “the circumambulation of the center,” his insistence on direct experience (*Urerfahrung*) and thus presence should dispel any doubts.