

Earth Dead or Alive: The Matter in Synchronicities, and Dinesen's "Blue Stones" as Paradigmatic Example of Literature's Reanimating Power

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In his effort to establish the existence of the objective psyche, Jung privileges deformed rather than perceived images, a practice that unintentionally devalues the material aspects of synchronicities. Jungians and post-Jungians focusing on the material aspects of synchronicities can help heal what von Franz has identified as an illness. She proposes that as the collective lost its sense of matter and earth as animate, humans became possessed by matter in the form of materialism. This illness is a cause of human irrational degradation of the earth. Reanimating the earth in the collective psyche requires experiencing it as alive. Literature, according to Jung a way the creative unconscious counterbalances a culture's limitations, is a realm where imaginative experience of the earth as alive can occur. Isak Dinesen's "Blue Stones" is a paradigmatic example of this reanimating power.

When posed with visions of reality that ascribe intelligence to things conventionally regarded as inert, things such as gems and ships, the academic world typically discounts them as "fabulous." "Fabulous," in fact, is precisely how Isak Dinesen's short story, "Blue Stones," has been characterized (Smith, n. p.) Her story does in fact portray gems and a ship as alive and manifesting a kind of consciousness. In so doing, her tale inspires a number of questions having to do with matter, earth, consciousness, psyche, and synchronicity.

Dinesen's fable is illustrative of Jung's ideas about the function of visionary art. He claims that literature is to the collective as dreams are to the dreamer in that it offers compensatory vision for the limitations of collective conscious attitudes. He writes: "... just as the one-sidedness of the individual's conscious attitude is corrected by reactions from the unconscious, so art represents a process of self-regulation in the life of nations and epochs" (CW 15, par. 131).

Nations and epochs need self-regulation because of the inherent limits of cultural perspectives. Art, Jung believes, is a process originating in the collective unconscious and expressed through the individual artist, a process that attempts to compensate cultural limitations: "The unsatisfied yearning of the artist reaches back to the primordial image in the unconscious which is best fitted to compensate the inadequacy and one-sidedness of the present" (CW 15, par. 130). Our epoch, currently being termed the "Anthropocene" because of the determinative effects of human behavior upon the planet, is limited by the scientific judgment that inorganic matter lacks life and by the collective assumption that meaningful, intentional, symbolic effects are only created by the human form of consciousness or by transcendent gods.

Materialism = dead matter

These assumptions compose one aspect of the one-sidedness of our Anthropocene Epoch. Dinesen's fable is an example of how experience of the imagined realm of literature can reanimate in human perception what human cultures have deadened. To appreciate the import of her achievement, it is useful to review how matter went from being an expression of the Earth Mother to being dead object of human inquiry and use.

The theorist Marie-Louise von Franz offers a succinct history of western attitudes toward matter resulting in materialism, a collective attitude she diagnoses as a psychological illness. In "Psyche and Matter in Alchemy and Modern Science," she reminds readers that in the classical period of Greek thought, the seventh to fourth centuries BC, the split between matter and psyche as we know it did not exist. She explains

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that the Greeks perceived the “natural realm . . . as being animated by a World Psyche” (33). Further, astrological study of the stars from Asia Minor associated gods with emotional moods, and the metallurgy of Mesopotamia ascribed divine factors to copper, iron, and bronze. Von Franz concludes that “in late antiquity, the major part of what we call today the psyche was located outside the individual in the animated matter of the universe” (36).

She focuses on rationalism as the psychic development that led to an ongoing split in cultural perception of matter and psyche. She points out that the Sophists deprived the world of numinous psychic life when they claimed that the gods were illusions. This loss was compounded by what she terms the “patriarchal element in the Judeo-Christian religion.” She writes: “Because Christianity did not contain the feminine principle . . . matter was no longer included in the divine symbol of totality, [and a] compensatory materialism came into being, a vengeance, so to speak, of the rejected mother archetype. . . . Spirit became a hard dogmatic intellectualism—scholastic philosophy—and matter seduced man into a concretistic, materialist outlook” (39-40). In effect, as matter became conceived as lifeless, humans became *possessed* by materialism. The psychological use of the religious term “possession” refers to being overwhelmed with a particular form of unconsciousness. Had the concept been available to her, I suspect von Franz would have called materialism a Western cultural complex.¹

The necessity of *reanimating* collective experience of matter and the earth

Von Franz’s insight that matter perceived as dead in the external world becomes alive as a form of possession in the human unconscious as materialism suggests that reanimating the earth in the experience of the collective is necessary to heal ourselves. In other words, reanimating the earth in our understanding is one way to address our current dilemma of exploiting, poisoning, and consuming our material world with little awareness of the psychic realities driving us. Such reanimation depends upon experience, and the realm of experience that potentially offers such reanimation is imagination, the connection between the collective unconscious and human consciousness. Dinesen’s “Blue Stones” is a paradigmatic reimagination of the earth as again alive. Through a series of portrayed synchronicities the tale offers a reading experience of a living earth responding to human psychic limitations. The effect suggests a kind of consciousness informing presumably inert stones and artifacts.

Is consciousness the same as human consciousness?

Jung identified consciousness with human consciousness. He writes in his essay “Mind and Earth”:

[In the psyche] everything is alive, and our upper storey, consciousness, is continually influenced by its living and active foundations. Like the building, it is sustained and supported by them. And just as the building rises freely above the earth, so our consciousness stands as if above the earth in space, with a wide prospect before it. But the deeper we descend into the house the narrower the horizon becomes, and the more we find ourselves in the darkness, till finally we reach the naked bed-rock. . . . Phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically we have grown up out of the dark confines of the earth. . . .” (CW 10, par. 55).

In this passage Jung clearly describes the earth as an influential foundation for consciousness, but not itself in any way itself conscious. Consciousness belongs to humans who “stand in space” and are no longer restricted to the “dark confines of earth.”

Thinking of earth as animate, however, means conceiving it as having a kind of consciousness unknown to humans. As long as humans identify consciousness with human consciousness, we remain blind to or incredulous of its other manifestations. If, however, a kind of intentionality and significance can be attributed to manifestations of earth and matter, then consciousness is no longer restricted to the kind humans have. Such an attribution can be made on the basis of its effects in the world, effects implying intent and meaning, effects such as synchronicities. Considering consciousness as inclusive of kinds of intelligence other than the human makes it possible to think of the earth as 1) originally latent with all forms of consciousness and significance, and 2) historically the source of the development of the various forms of consciousness and

experiences of significance, including the human form.ⁱⁱ

This vision of the earth is promulgated in *The Dream of the Earth* by Thomas Berry, a priest and cultural historian. Berry asserts that the human species, existing for only the tiniest fraction of earth's history, is part of earth's dream. That metaphor not only ascribes life to earth, but assumes an unconscious in earth that manifests in dreams that constitute the earth's generated realities, including the recently appearing *homo sapiens*. In that metaphor, earth has an unconscious psyche that is the progenitor of the human experience of relating to an unconscious psyche. His idea is remarkably similar to Jung's description of the collective unconscious. Jung writes: "I have nothing against the assumption that the psyche is a quality of matter or matter the concrete aspect of the psyche, provided that 'psyche' is defined as the collective unconscious" (*Letters II*, 540, qtd. in Sabini, 82). Here Jung and Berry are very close to one another, but with different priorities. Berry writes: "Just as the human body took its shape through some fourteen billion years of effort on the part of the universe and through some four and a half billion years of earth [sic] existence, so the human psychic structure and our spirituality have been taking shape over all these billions of years, beginning with the primordial atomic particles which held within themselves the destinies of all that has followed, even the spiritual shaping of the human" (117).ⁱⁱⁱ Jung names this singularity of matter and psyche the collective unconscious, thereby giving priority to psyche.^{iv} But for Berry, the earth is prior: the earth is "the primary mode of divine presence . . . the primary educator, primary healer, primary commercial establishment, and primary lawgiver for all that exists within this life community" (120). In other words, the animate earth is the source of human psychological life.

Conceiving of the universe and of our planet earth as the source of psyche and of all human culture reasserts the earth-human relationship as our most fundamental reality. The framework for thinking about synchronicity that it provides emphasizes the role of matter in meaningful coincidences. The very concept of synchronicity requires connection between manifest matter and psyche, a connection that intimates a kind of intelligence, of signifying capacity, even of agency and purpose in the matter involved in the synchronicity. Joseph Cambray writes of how the concept of synchronicity implies an "objective" metaphorizing tendency of the world itself" that "offer[s] a glimpse of the interconnected fabric of the universe" (31). If psyche evolved from matter, as phylogenetically it has, then it is implicit in matter in ways we cannot fathom. We can, however, study how it functions in synchronistic events. Focusing on the role of the material element of synchronicities potentially animates matter in our understanding and resurrects it from materialism. This emphasis involves a reversal of Jung's practice of foregrounding imagined images when reflecting on synchronicities.

An unintended consequence of Jung's focus on imagined rather than perceived images

Jung's paradigmatic example of synchronicity offers an illuminating instance of his foregrounding psyche by shifting focus from the material scarab to its imagined image in the rebirth of the sun. As will be remembered, in his explanation of synchronicity as an acausal coincidence with psychological meaning, Jung spotlights the case of a woman patient he believes overly rational who tells him of her dream of a golden scarab as a beetle arrives beating at the window. Jung opens the window, takes the beetle in his hands, and presents it to his patient, thus shocking her out of her limited rational perspective which cannot account for such a coincidence. Jung theorizes that "the scarab dream is a conscious representation arising from an unconscious, already existing image of the situation that will occur on the following day, *i.e.*, the recounting of the dream and the appearance of the rose-chafer" (*CW* 8, par. 857). This interpretation supports his thesis that psyche objectively exists, contains knowledge, and is not bound by the ordinary experience of space and time.

Interpreting the symbolic significance of the beetle itself, Jung, using his method of amplification, shifts focus from the material beetle to an imagined sun-god myth, thus relegating the perceived image to the background as a take-off point for human imagination. He writes: "The scarab is a classic example of a rebirth symbol. The ancient Egyptian Book of What Is In the Netherworld describes how the dead sun-god changes himself at the tenth station into Khepri, the scarab, and then, at the twelfth station, mounts the barge which carries the rejuvenated sun-god into the morning sky" (*CW* 8, par. 845).

Jung's shifting focus from scarab to sun-god is a move from the material aspect of the synchronicity to

an imagined image. It illustrates Bachelard's distinction between perceived and imagined images,^v a distinction that, as Susan Rowland in *The Ecocritical Psyche*^{vi} points out, enables Bachelard to exalt the imaginative *deforming* of perceived images (54). No human sense has ever perceived the sungod turning into a scarab and later returning to his barge to again create morning light. But human sense has perceived the scarab rolling the earth between its front legs into mud balls and the eventual issuance of baby scarabs from the mud, presumably the basis for the scarab's being associated with rebirth. The privileging of *imagined images* serves Jung's purpose of establishing the objective existence of psyche, but it simultaneously pushes the *perceived image* into the background and thus fails to bring consciousness to bear upon the reanimating symbolic power of the material beetle. Thus his study of psyche has the unintentional consequence of removing focus from the meaning of the object experienced by the senses to psychic experiences that no longer attend to the perceived images. The foregrounding of *imagined images* thereby contributes to the collective's lack of focus on the psychic liveliness of the earth and its biosphere.

Jung's eventual entertaining of the idea that matter may indeed contain spirit

In 1936, Jung speculates that psyche is "essentially different from physicochemical processes. He writes: ". . . the psychic factor must, *ex hypothesi*, be regarded for the moment as an autonomous reality of enigmatic character, primarily because, judging from all we know, it appears to be *essentially different* from physicochemical processes" (CW 9.1, par. 118).

By 1954, Jung's thinking about the relation of matter and spirit had significantly shifted and anticipated von Franz's distinction between matter perceived as alive and matter perceived as dead. In his revised version of "Psychological Aspects of the Mother Archetype," he evaluates the Catholic Church's proclamation of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into heaven as a revitalizing of the relationship between spirit and matter. He writes:

Understood symbolically . . . the Assumption of the body is a recognition and acknowledgment of matter, which in the last resort was identified with evil only because of an overwhelmingly 'pneumatic' tendency in man. . . . It is exactly as formulated in classical Chinese philosophy: *yang* (the light, warm, dry, masculine principle) contains within it the seed of *yin* (the dark, cold, moist, feminine principle), and vice versa. Matter therefore would contain the seed of spirit and spirit the seed of matter. The long known 'synchronistic' phenomena . . . point, to all appearances, in this direction. The "psychization" of matter puts the absolute immateriality of spirit in question. . . . (CW 9.1, par. 197).

Jung's understanding of synchronistic phenomena moves him to the view that matter may contain "spirit." His describing this phenomenon as "psychization of matter" equates what he is saying about "spirit" with "psyche." Von Franz in *On Divination and Synchronicity* clarifies that Jung's circlings of the term "spirit" culminate in identifying it as "*the dynamic aspect of the unconscious*" (20). In that sense, his use of "spirit" in the passage above can be understood as entertaining the idea that matter is suffused with unconscious psyche.

The process of unconscious psyche becoming conscious becomes not only a human mystery, but one of matter and the earth. Humans need experience of a "psychized" earth to again assume it possesses a possibility of bringing unconscious material to consciousness. Thinking of the earth as inert matter obstructs that experience. Fortunately, one path widely available for experiencing a living earth is imaginative literature.

Literature: a realm in which earth may still be experienced as animate

Just as humans are too slow to experience the effects of rates of accelerated motion upon time in the macrocosmic world and too large to experience the effects of constricted space upon motion in the microcosmic world, we are too limited in our psychic apparatus to experience whatever forms consciousness takes in other species and in the material world. But we can imagine them.

Literature, fortunately, is a realm where we can imagine meaningful relationships between matter and

psyche both in writing and in reading. I wish to argue that in reading we can actually experience the earth as animate, experience it not only imaginatively, but in our bodies and feelings. Literature through its language appealing to the senses excites kinesthetic responses. Fictional literature through the excitements of its plotting particularly stirs bodily as well as emotional responses such as anxiety, hope, disappointment, sorrow, and joy.

Literature has at least two other significant advantages as a realm for experiencing the matter in synchronicities as alive. First, as a manifestation of psyche, literature finesses the problem of the knowability of matter.^{vii} Second, unlike case material or specialized scientific studies, literature is intended for general readers and thus has the capacity to affect collective attitudes.

Perhaps literature's most important power lies in its being a manifestation of the creative unconscious and thus a source of communication to collective consciousness (CW 15, par. 137-39). Recall that Jung claims "art represents a process of self-regulation in the life of nations and epochs" (CW 15, par. 131). *Self-regulation arguably now requires reanimating earth in human experience.*^{viii}

The examples of literary works bringing earth alive are legion. Focusing only on well-known works, I immediately think of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Melville's *Moby Dick*, Thoreau's *Walden Pond*, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and Atwood's *Surfacing*. To illustrate the simple point that I am trying to make, that focusing on the role of the material element of synchronicities potentially animates matter in our understanding, I want to work with Dinesen's "Blue Stones," a succinct,^{ix} paradigmatic instance of portraying synchronicities that reanimate matter and the earth during the reading experience.

"Blue Stones"

The tale begins by introducing a ship captain, called a "skipper," who so loves his own image of his wife that he has named his ship after her and has had the figurehead of his ship made in her image and thus follows his image of her in his travels across the seas. Jungians will have little trouble identifying this behavior pattern as a form of anima possession.^x As is frequently the case in anima possessions, there exists little identity between his actual wife and his infatuated image of her, a fact that becomes apparent when his desire for sex (sex being a pleasure the figurehead cannot give him), brings him back to port in Elsinore.

His wife is quite aware of the difference between herself and the figurehead, so much so that she is jealous of it. She says to him, "You think more of the head than of me." He responds with naïve denial, proclaiming the identity of the two in all except the figurehead's unfailing sexual appeal through its flowing hair:

"No," he answered, I think so highly of her because she is like you, yes, because she is you yourself. Is she not gallant, full-bosomed; does she not dance in the waves, like you at our wedding? In a way she is even kinder to me than you are. She gallops along where I tell her to go, and she lets her long hair hang down freely, while you put yours under a cap. (Dinesen 274)

In his travels, the skipper has a heroic adventure during which he rescues a king from traitors and is given two "blue precious stones" as his reward. These, the fruit of his heroism, he gives to his wife's image, placing them as eyes in the figurehead. This decision brings the difference between his actual wife and his image of her into direct conflict. When he informs his wife of his triumph and of how his ship now boasts his wife's blue eyes as well as her image in its figurehead, she demands the stones for her actual self. He responds: "No . . . I cannot do that, and you would not ask me if you understood" (Dinesen 274). Dinesen leaves the question of what is not understood tantalizingly unstated, but the plot is revelatory.

Unbeknownst to the husband, the wife has a pair of glass eyes substituted for the blue stones and takes the stones for a pair of earrings for herself. The skipper sails for Portugal, but his wife begins to lose her eyesight, and even the ministrations of a wise woman cannot help. Eventually the old woman tells her she has a disease for which there is no cure and that she is going blind. This prognosis leads to the only development of consciousness in the tale. The wife cries, "Oh God . . . that the ship was back in the harbor of Elsinore. Then I should have the glass taken out, and the jewels put back. For did he not say that they were my eyes?" (Dinesen 274—75)

The wife suddenly understands that the stones are somehow living eyes, but her new consciousness is

limited to a literal interpretation. She has no sense of the symbolic connection of the stones to psyche. She grasps nothing of the dynamic between her husband and herself, that is, her blindness to his projection upon her and his blindness to her separate personality. There is no opportunity for her to put even her limited understanding into practice, however, as she receives word from the Consul at Portugal that her husband's ship has foundered, killing all aboard. The Consul concludes his letter remarking on the oddness of the loss. He writes: "And it was a very strange thing . . . that in broad daylight she had run straight into a tall rock, rising out of the sea" (Dinesen 275).

The story contains more than one set of synchronicities, that is, of parallel and inexplicable but meaningful incidents. The skipper is as blind to the psychological reality of his wife as she is to his. He has no idea she is a deceiving, thieving materialistic woman. She has no idea his soul lives in an image his unconscious has created of her. No cause is offered for this mutual blindness, but it does suggestively prefigure parallel results. The psychological blindness is followed by literal physical blindness, both of the wife and of the ship. As Roderick Main indicates in *The Rupture of Time* (40), Jung does offer instances of synchronicity that include parallel psychic events without cause but with meaning (CW 8, par. 855) and parallel physical events (CW 8, par. 844, 850) without cause but with meaning.

The quickening force between these two sets of coincidences is the blue stones. The stones enter the characters' lives as the worldly reward of the skipper's heroism in preserving the king.^{xi} Their multi-leveled symbolic meaning connects matter, earth and psyche in the story.

Robert Langbaum, perhaps Dinesen's most comprehensive interpreter, a reader influenced by Jung's writings, sees Dinesen's use of symbol as revelatory of character. He writes: "[S]he . . . shows—and this is what makes her along with Yeats, Mann, Joyce, and Eliot, distinctively twentieth century—that it is through symbols that all phases of the self are made operative" (284).^{xii} Unconscious levels of character of both the captain and his wife manifest through their relations with the blue stones.

The skipper as a kind of oblation bestows them upon his projected anima, making them the eyes of his ship's figurehead. Thus he gives to them and through them to his anima the power of perceiving where he is going. The story implies that if his wife had allowed his projection to continue without the interference of her psyche, the skipper and his ship might have continued gaily sailing the seas. But she is an actual Other to his anima, a person totally ignorant of the existence of psyche in herself or her husband, and, being who she is, she steals the stones for her own adornment. The story thus suggests that the person projected upon is implicated in the consequences of the projection. The wife's living totally at the material level, that is, *being possessed by materialism in her attitude toward matter*, contributes to the blinding of both ship and herself. She is a figure exemplifying how failure to perceive psyche in matter leads to blindness and death and in that sense is a personification of Western materialism's potential fate.

Her fate is intertwined with her husband's entrapment in perceiving only psyche, his own. He has no sense that the material reality of his wife is also imbued with psyche. He unconsciously compensated for his own inability to see matter beyond his psychic projection by marrying a woman unable to see psyche in matter. Inevitably, his contentment in living his life with his anima projected onto his wife and his ship meets the reality of the wife he does not know in the crashing of his ship against the hard rock rising from the sea. This ship vs. rock encounter results not only in his own death, but in the sinking of the collective for which he is responsible, all the sailors on his ship. He is a figure of the failure to perceive the objective psychic reality of the Other and in that sense a personification of enthrallment with psyche *ungrounded* in matter.

For readers the tale thus makes possible an experience of the earth elements of stones, rock, and ocean as *intelligent agents*. In their working together through the psyches of the characters to capsize the ship, they signify *earth's reaction* to the mutual psychic blindness of the captain and his wife by bringing to fruition its consequences. Through the plotting of how the stones, the rock and ocean function, Dinesen's tale animates the earth in the psyches of readers, stirring wonder at and perhaps fear of a consciousness greater than that of the characters.

Dinesen's plotting of the synchronicities in this tale does not coincide with canonical Post-Jungian understanding of the purpose of synchronicities as posited, for example, by F. David Peat in *Synchronicity: The Bridge Between Matter and Mind* or by J. Gary Sparks in *At the Heart of Matter*, both of whom conceive of synchronicity as acausal expressions of psyche functioning to assist the development of those living them.

Peat claims that synchronicities “peak” when “psychic patterns are on the point of reaching consciousness” (27). Sparks claims synchronicities are part of an acausal healing process that: “points to a development in our life unfettered by determinism” (45). Neither the captain nor his wife become conscious of their respective psychological blindnesses. Instead of sparking individual transformation, the synchronicities in Dinesen’s tale reveal the consequences of the limitations of the characters. This plotting actually expands our understanding of the transformative power of synchronicities. Dinesen uses them to affect collective consciousness.

But can collectives be affected by what their cultures have taught them is incredible? The “Blue Stones” is a fable. Fables have been characterized not only as short tales with a moral theme, often using animals or inanimate objects as agents, but also as non-factual, false, “old wives” tales (Random House n.p.). Recall von Franz’s diagnosis of materialism as a cultural illness. Fables work against the materialist assumption that matter is inert. C. W. Smith thinks fables constitute a genre that is in “reaction against the demands of mainstream verisimilar fiction,” and he cites “Blue Stones” as a “seminal” example (n.p.). Since as a genre, fables ascribe life to inanimate matter, they are inherently a vehicle for reanimating the earth in the psyches of readers as we read. I would argue that that very power accounts for the rationalistic critiques of them as false “old wives’ tales,” for there would be no need so to characterize them unless there had been moments when they were psychically experienced as describing a kind of reality. Fables thus can be viewed as simply a particularly salient medium for the kind of transformative experience that fiction can generate. As Rinda West observes in *Out of the Shadow*, “An engaged reader of fiction creates living symbols from the text, allowing it to stimulate his or her own imagination, emotions, and intellect so that a novel changes the reader” (194).

Conclusion

The earth and its biosphere existed literally billions of years before humans began to exist. In one sense they are what they are regardless of human attitudes toward and conceptions of them. Yet human attitudes and conceptions toward them matter because human behavior affects our limited planet’s capacity to maintain life-sustaining cycles of rain, vegetation, and temperate warmth for creatures dependent on these conditions to survive, humans among them. If thinking of the earth as dead leads to materialism as a planet-degrading illness, then healing, it seems, must at least partially consist in reanimating the earth in collective consciousness. Jung’s development of the idea of synchronicity is his most promising vision of a world in which matter and psyche both manifest agency. The promise of synchronistic events for assisting the collective to again experience the earth as alive, I’m suggesting, can be furthered by foregrounding their material aspects, focusing on them in terms of how their liveliness relates to psyche.^{xiii} Noticing ourselves experiencing matter exhibiting psychic functions such as intelligence, agency, signifying capacity, and purpose in the portrayals of “perceived images” in synchronicities in literature, is a simple, modest step toward forwarding the collective experience of our earth as alive. Dinesen’s story is illustrative. It is like a prophetic dream, a narrative from the collective unconscious conveying the life and death significance of the ability to experience psyche alive in matter, alive in our earth.

Notes

Von Franz published this essay in 1975 and died in 1998. Thomas Singer and Samuel L. Kimbles published their anthology *The Cultural Complex* in 2004.

ii See, for example, the description of the development of different kinds of consciousness in Chip Walter's *The Last Ape Standing*. Walters gives descriptions of the many human species preceding *homo sapiens*. In particular note the chapter "The Voice Inside Your Head" which includes detailed comparisons of ape and human capacities with regard to symbolic and recursive language.

iii Berry's use of "spirit" is not precisely equivalent to Jung's use of "psyche," but it is like Jung's term in its ineffable existence as the realm of knowledge, emotions, ethics, and subordination of the ego. In comparing the thought of the two men, I use it as the best equivalent to what Jung meant by psyche.

iv Readers may note that Jung's concepts of archetype and psychoid, two of his most earnest efforts to account for the relationship of psyche and matter, do not appear in this essay. I choose not to use them in this effort to help reanimate earth and matter in our understanding because they claim creativity for archetypal influence and fated, instinctual behavior for psychoid influence. Jungians addressing the relationship of matter and psyche through Jung's concepts of archetype and psychoid therefore seem to me to underestimate the creativity of the material world. Further, the concept of the psychoid does not illuminate Dinesen's tale which ascribes to the blue stones a vitality that manifests as a discriminating responsiveness to the characters rather than as predetermined, instinctive behavior.

v See G. Bachelard, *Earth and Reveries of Will: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter*, Dallas, TX: The Dallas Institute, 1947/2002: 3—4, qtd. in *The Ecocritical Psyche*, 44.

vi In her extraordinary synthesizing and groundbreaking work, *The Ecocritical Psyche*, Susan Rowland argues that one of the foundational creation myths, that of Earth Mother, has been submerged, allowing for the other foundational creation myth, that of Sky Father, to become so dominant as to be toxic (161). Rowland's book seeks a Phoenix-like resurrection of Earth Mother in our consciousness. Her book provides many approaches to such a re-enlivening as she weaves together theories of tacit knowledge (36), biosemiosis (37—8), complex adaptive systems (CAS) (76—77), emergence and co-evolution of psyche and an intelligent nature (90). Rowland's perspective, however, can be read as accepting Jung's privileging of psyche as the generator of matter: "[Jung's] unconscious is the *source* of being, and is embedded in both body and nature . . ." (21).

vii Jung was a student of Immanuel Kant's metaphysics and accepted the idea that the material world could never be known in itself; only our perceptions of it could be known, and in that sense all knowledge is psychological (Hartman 66 ff).

viii This task is made more difficult by the dominance of aspects of Christian history. Rowland points out that, in contrast to previous animistic beliefs of the sacred residing in matter, a prevailing Christian vision of matter is that it must be transcended to reach the divine. In her focus on work, for example, she writes: "Hence, *work*, in the dominant forms of Christian society, became the great task of perfecting matter, of achieving the transcendence of the divine *from* nature" (28).

ix "Blue Stones" exists as a two-page story within the larger story, "Peter and Rosa."

x For those who may not be familiar with Jung's contrasexual theory: he proposes that a version of the opposite sex exists in the psyche of each individual. In men, he thinks of this contrasexual figure as the man's soul, and he names it the anima. He explains that men unconsciously project this inner figure onto actual women and that part of a man's becoming whole involves taking this projection back so that his anima becomes "a function of relationship to his unconscious" (CW 7, par. 387). See also CW 6, par. 809; CW 7, par. 297.

xi In a discussion during the 13th Conference of the Jungian Society for Scholarly Studies held in June, 2015, at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, "On Nature & the Feminine: Psychological & Cultural Reflections," Susan Rowland expressed an interpretation of the story as an implicit critique of the heroic. The story does indeed support such a reading, as it also supports a reading that sees it as criticizing the colonial relations of Denmark, India (the site of the betrayed and rescued King), and Portugal, relations which manifested in the colonial trade route followed by the "skipper."

xii Langbaum also suggests that Dinesen's work conveys a sense of the interconnections of psyche and matter. He writes: "Dinesen salvages the romantic idea of the self by showing that the self is not simply autonomous, but that it emerges—through the connection of consciousness with living, and even with nonliving, unconsciousness—from social roles and archetypal identities that themselves emerge from internal instincts that have their external origin in those earliest tremors of earthly life that were themselves transformations of sunlight, air, and water" (284).

13 I am, of course, not arguing that focus on the material elements of synchronicities should exclude considering the imagined images that follow upon them, only that this latter reflection should not render nonexistent the animation and symbolic significance of the material elements. Both angles of interpretation enrich understanding.

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