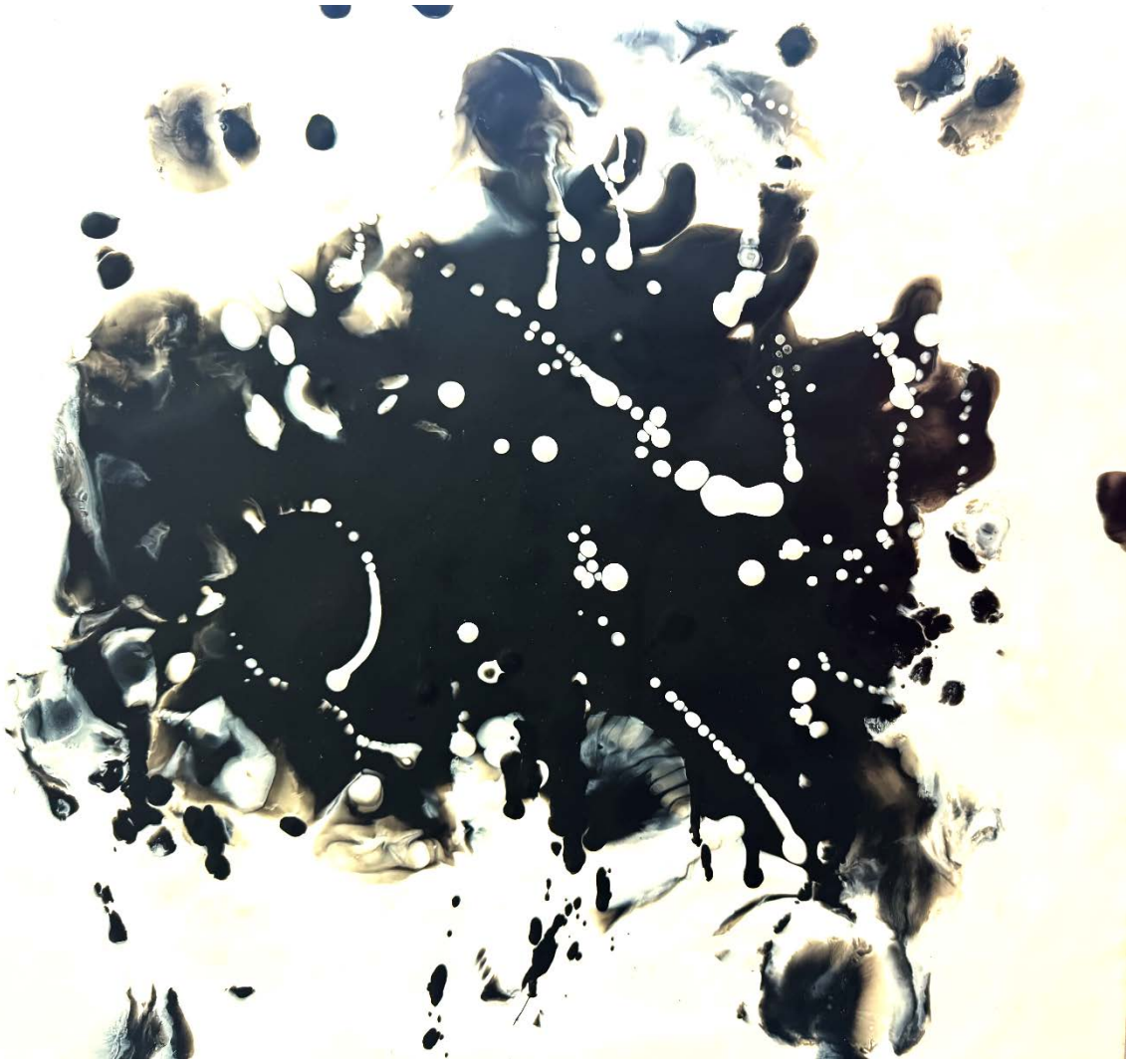

JOURNAL OF JUNGIAN SCHOLARLY STUDIES

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Cover art: *'Freud's Rorschach'*, 20x20, Encaustic Wax, pigment, and black ink produced from the Coprinus mushroom, also known as Shaggy mane. This ink was used for centuries to produce medieval manuscripts, by Patricia Bukur.

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Editor's Introduction

Catriona Miller

Welcome to Volume 20 of the *Journal of Jungian Scholarly Studies*, where the edition looks a little different. I am delighted to say that we have begun to include multimedia submissions in the journal. There is a video essay, two pieces offering more personal reflections in the *Conversations in the Field* section and one art video. These will not replace the more traditional text and image based submissions we are used to, but it opens up an exciting new way to communicate and explore Jungian ideas.

The original call for papers followed the 2024 conference theme which called for 'Theory to Action: Taking Jungian Ideas into the World' and there is no doubt that the theme and the conference raised a great deal of affect about the contemporary world which is reflected in the contents of this volume.

A central theme emerges across the volume regarding the nature of trauma and the inability to 'look' at some of the pressing issues facing us. This is explored through varied figures such as Medusa, Cerberus and even *Last Year in Marienbad*'s mysterious protagonist X (played by Giorgio Albertazzi). The articles, poetry and art explore personal experiences of acute stress, the grief associated with the death of a revered figure, but others reach beyond the individual to analyse global challenges through the lens of Jungian concepts - archetypes, repression, projection, and the Shadow. The climate crisis features in several articles, where our lack of response to its urgency is seen as a symbolic manifestation of unacknowledged collective psychological dynamics. Thus, in this volume, trauma is presented not only as individual psychological suffering but also as a collective phenomenon.

But the authors and artists also approach the possibilities of healing and psychological transformation, which the Jungian perspective suggests often involves courageous acts of witnessing to confront these repressed or disowned realities. To create change requires a turning inwards to recognise repressed or disowned psychic material, often involving a shift from purely rational or heroic approaches to a more relational, empathetic, and holistic engagement with suffering, both within oneself and in the wider world.

The journal falls into two parts. The first half offers a trio of textual analyses, beginning with Halide Aral's article which explores masculine initiation in Shakespeare's *Henriad* plays through the lens of the senex (old man) and puer (eternal boy). It contrasts the heroic path of initiation, exemplified by Prince Hal, with an alternative path followed by Falstaff, who represents the Trickster and Shadow of the puer. Falstaff's initiation occurs primarily through betrayal, which facilitates a reckoning with the anima and offers a critique of traditional masculine structures that can lead to a "loss of soul". Aral highlights

the concept of the puer senilis (a union of puer and senex) as an ideal often lost in such structures, which remains a disturbing cultural problem.

Matthew Fike's piece explores C.G. Jung's linkage between H.G. Wells's novel *Christina Alberta's Father* and Daniel Paul Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, focusing on Jung's view that repression leads to insanity. The article examines this through three perspectives: the relationship between Jung and both Wells and Freud; the dynamic between repression and psychological breakdown; and the way both texts discuss God, often involving the projection of unacknowledged inner psychological content outwards. Both the fictional character Preemby and the real Schreber illustrate how suppressing parts of the psyche results in distorted perceptions and difficulties integrating with reality.

Andrew McWhirter's insightful video essay explores the complex world of Alain Resnais's 1961 classic film *Last Year in Marienbad.* McWhirter examines the film's highly ambiguous plot where a stranger (X) tells a woman (A) they had a love affair the previous year, which she denies, while another man (M) seems to haunt them both. The film, viewed through a Jungian lens, suggests that the events shown are images within the conscious and unconscious mind of the protagonist, X, who may have suffered a great tragedy. From this perspective, the film, which has long baffled its audiences, is presented as a struggle between X's memories and repressions and an unconscious drive towards wholeness. The video essay format allows the commentary to unfold over images and sounds from the film in a highly illustrative manner.

While these three articles explore the nature of trauma and personal development within literary and filmic texts, the second half of the journal focusses on analyses of everyday reality. Heather Hines takes the myth of Medusa as a symbolic lens to understand the psychological dimensions of the climate crisis. She argues that the crisis is rooted in the patriarchal repression of the feminine principle, leading to collective dissociation from nature and the body, with climate denial viewed as an expression of the collective shadow. The myth reflects dynamics of trauma and the need to confront what has been cast out, suggesting that healing requires witnessing the repressed shadow to achieve psychic reintegration and restore connection with the Earth.

The next article, authored by Greg Mahr, Anthony Reffi, David Moore and Christopher Drake explores acute trauma and its effects through the lens of depth psychology. It defines trauma as an overwhelming event causing psychic upheaval and long-lasting effects, often leading to feelings of helplessness, both externally and internally. Psychological defences like denial, repression, avoidance, and affective numbing are employed to cope with unbearable emotions and memories, but the paper also discusses post-traumatic growth (PTG) - the positive changes that can result from trauma, using clinical cases to illustrate these dynamics, and the potential emergence of insight into the world's randomness that can lead to acceptance and meaning.

The final article from Eissa Hashemi and Maryam Tahmasebi explores the relationship between leadership psychodynamics and climate action from a Jungian perspective. It argues that unconscious psychological forces, such as the shadow, repression, and projection, significantly shape leaders' decisions regarding climate change, leading to climate action denialism, avoidance of accountability, and policy distortions. These dynamics are also conceptualised within an "organizational psyche". The authors propose that confronting these inner shadows and embracing integrated frameworks like

ensemble or resilient leadership are crucial for fostering responsible and transparent climate action

Our *Conversations in the Field* segment of the journal offers several personal reflections on growth and transformation. The two videos take advantage of the audiovisual medium to undertake a form of arts-based research. Evija Volfa Vestergaard tells the story of her own journey to re-balance the psyche. The work weaves together an archetypal perspective with underwater images captured by the author during scuba diving experiences. The video serves as an invitation to care for the diversity of the psyche and the biodiversity of the natural environment, asserting that both are crucial for survival. Ryan Bush also makes use of photography, using mandala-like, multiple-exposure photographs (best viewed with 3-D glasses) to chart a journey from unconscious wandering and suffering to awakening and illumination. The complex 3-D images are intended to facilitate deep focus, allowing viewers to transcend the ordinary mind and access a deeper self. Elizabeth Nelson's short story too is form of arts-based research, which enters on a girl's grief-stricken vigil for Cerberus, a dying monster who guards the entrance to the underworld. She feels helplessness and longs to help him but must wait for the "right moment". The goddess Hekate arrives to witness Cerberus's death and mourn the loss of the creature and the domain he protected, reflecting on how a "deaf, dis-eased world" has forgotten their significance. The narrative portrays his death as an "unfortunate death" or "slight matter of neglect" to indifferent "petty tyrants," highlighting a cultural disconnect from the old and dark aspects of life and the psyche

Themes of trauma, the natural world and our relationship with both are also present in the artistic work presented in this volume. Patricia Bukur's series of abstract images forms a body of work entitled *Forest of Enlightenment*. The images are the result of a fascination with mushrooms and a process that the artist describes as "Jung's Active Imagination, encaustic (beeswax), pigments, and fire". Rene Westbrook seeks to use the expressive potential art to explore intellectual ideas, and in the two paintings presented here, seeks the contradictions inherently present in today's post-Truth reality, while Jill Ansell's paintings seek to depict an inner world that straddles both dream and reality, where "fish, birds, deer, wolves, antelope, and winged mice are interwoven into narratives to stir the imagination".

The journal contains several poems this year, continuing the journal's intention to honour both the scholarly and the creative when engaging with analytical psychology. There are two poems from Belinda Edwards who describes her writing as quilting, taking an old fragmented western narrative and piecing together a new one. Joyce Victor's poem considers the difficulties of seeing past reflection and into true depths, drawing parallels between the natural world and human relationships, while Catherine Brooks' poem 'Pearl in the Dark' steps into a world where archetypally resonant imagery describes both a dream and an awakening.

Laura Lewis-Barr's video *The Telling Tale* leaves us with a dream-like visit to an old folk tale to bring the volume to a close.

Once again, I offer profound thanks to the entire editorial team for their persistence and hard work over the last year in bringing this volume to publication, especially Matthew and Dylan for copyediting so assiduously. I would also like to welcome Ryan Woods to our Editorial Team. Ryan will be working as our new Book Reviews Editor.

Contributor

Catriona Miller, PhD, is a Professor in Media at Glasgow Caledonian University, where she teaches on creativity and textual analysis. Her research interests include storytelling and the archetypal dimensions of science fiction, horror and fantasy genres. She published a monograph *Cult TV Heroines* for Bloomsbury in 2020 and has co-edited *Feminisms, Technology and Depth Psychology* (2024) with Leslie Gardner and Roula Maria Dib for Routledge. She was a section editor of *The Routledge International Handbook of Jungian Film Studies*, (2018) where her chapter on Jungian textual analysis opened the volume.

ESSAYS

Masculine Initiation in the *Henriad*

Halide Aral[1]

Abstract. This essay studies masculine initiation in the *Henriad*, in the light of James Hillman's conception of the archetypes of senex and puer. The plays basically present two modes of initiation in the persons of Hal, the senex, and Falstaff, the trickster, the shadow of puer. While the former develops his masculinity in the usual heroic mode, the latter initiates in a way that suits the puer's development. And the essay argues that Falstaff's initiation through betrayal is a serious parody of Christ's initiation on the cross. The senex-puer polarity as dramatized in these characters is shown to have significant ethical and political implications as well. The contexts of the plays raise the issue of *puer senilis*, but here *puer senilis* remains only as an ideal, bringing up the question of the inevitable loss of soul in an exclusively masculine senex-driven initiatory structure, a disturbing cultural problem we continue to face today.

Keywords: Masculine initiation, puer/senex, puer senilis, betrayal, trickster, *Henriad*

The *Henriad* is a series of four plays by Shakespeare that are set during the reigns of English monarchs from Richard II to Henry V. There is some discussion around the exact number of plays included, but generally the term refers to four plays: *Richard II* (written around 1595); *Henry IV, Part 1* (1597); *Henry IV, Part 2* (1598); *Henry V* (1599). This article focuses particularly on the three Henry plays where Prince Hal struggles between his reckless, carefree life with his friend, the roguish, overweight knight Falstaff and his eventual responsibility to his father, King Henry IV. *Henry IV, Part 2* continues this conflict with Hal's transformation into a more serious leader as he ultimately assumes his role as heir to the throne, while the kingdom faces internal unrest and the dying King's health deteriorates. As he becomes King Henry V, the young monarch matures into a strong and decisive leader as he unites his kingdom and heads to victory in the battle of Agincourt, cementing his legacy as a heroic ruler.

Thematically, therefore, the *Henriad* tackles masculine initiation within a network of father-son relationships that repeatedly involve the polar archetypes of the senex, or "old man," and the puer, "eternal boy," that Shakespeare uses to dramatize contrasting

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psychological attitudes to time and history. Early on, Falstaff, who, although older than Hal, is in many ways the puer, appears as the father figure, and Hal, though he is still a boy, is the senex-in-waiting to become the King who will repudiate Falstaff when he is done with the puer phase. The brief early friendship of these men, which eventually turns tragic, ultimately serves to initiate each of the men into different masculine roles than the one he first occupied. While Hal's development fits in the pattern of a hero's journey that involves a conscious relinquishing of the puer, Falstaff's initiation, following a different pattern, enables an ironic critique of the heroic mode, a certain development of anima grief, and speaks to our culture's search for different definitions of masculinity that need not do such injury to relationship. Therefore the essay will focus principally on the problematic development of Falstaff who, as commentators like Sitansu Maitra (1967), Edith Kern (1984) and Matthew A. Fike (2009), have also pointed out, prior to Henry V's repudiation of him, repeatedly enacts the trickster, the shadow of the puer, for a long time only playing at being a worldly-wise senex without the bitter wisdom that he will not actually own until he has experienced total rejection by his former tutee, Hal. Shakespeare presents Falstaff's initiatory betrayal as a quasi-religious experience, and I will argue in these pages that it is a serious parody of Christ's initiation on the cross. Here I must note that Cameron Hunt McNabb, too, works on the Christ connection and holds that Falstaff parodies biblical rhetoric and "casts [himself] as a parodic Christ figure" (McNabb 347). She also points to Hal's position "as a betraying Peter to a Christ-like Falstaff" (353). I had independently come to the same idea and composed my own account of how this symbolic connection works in Shakespeare's *Henriad* before coming across her essay, which anticipates and confirms my argument here: that the parodic Christ connection is not an idle amplification but one supported by the texts in which Falstaff engages with Hal. Whereas McNabb aims to clarify how parody serves to assure that the audience constructs a Christian meaning depending on its personal knowledge and opinion, I delve into the significance of parodic Christ association in terms of masculine initiation. My reading of the kind of initiation Shakespeare, as a Renaissance artist, is offering to these prototypic characters is, for the most part, based on James Hillman's (2005), radically perceptive conception of Jesus Christ as himself a puer figure his understanding of the healing power of betrayal and his concept of puer senex union (*puer senilis* in Latin, a trope that E. R. Curtius in 1973 introduced to literary analysis) as a divine alternative to mankind's more usual heroic masculinity, which attempts to separate puer immaturity and senex wisdom.

According to Hillman the polar archetypes of the puer and the senex, representing different attitudes to time, "provide the psychological foundation of the problem of history" (Hillman 35), and historical problems are essentially psychological problems caused by the split of these archetypes. The senex means being grounded in reality, with a strong sense of time while puer corresponds to imagination and creativity without feeling bounded by temporality. Any exclusive adoption of these attitudes results in a one-sided approach to life, and their division causes serious problems in social, cultural and political arenas. Senex without the puer results in what Hillman calls "soulless concretism" (Hillman 325), namely, concern with material gain or progress alone, and puer without senex becomes lost in fantasy and might end up in irresponsible action. As such, senex-puer polarity is interwoven with masculine initiation in the *Henriad*, and history in these plays evolves according to the preference of either attitude. Hal, the future king, slowly comes to embody the senex to consolidate the play's political structure across the course of the *Henriad*. The

presence of Falstaff as the trickster in a historical context where time is indispensable to action poses a threat to the senex structure that is Hal's by divine right. With his disengagement from time, Falstaff seems to be incongruous in the senex order, but a close look at the context discloses Shakespeare's insight into the nature of the socio-political change in his own day and clarifies the trickster character's accompanying relevance since he underpins the risks involved in an exclusively senex attitude to time. After exploring Falstaff's initiation, therefore, this essay will return to a more probing analysis of Hal's masculine development. It will also touch upon Hotspur as a puer figure and examine the father-son bonds that conclude the argument with particular emphasis on the urgency of keeping *puer senilis,* an underlying engram in the political context of the *Henriad*.

Psychoanalytical and Analytical Interpretations of Masculine Selfhood in the *Henriad*

Franz Alexander's 1933 Freudian reading of the nature of friendship between Falstaff and Hal psychoanalyses both characters as well as Hotspur. He holds that Shakespeare in Hal's experience dramatizes the characteristic development of masculinity. Hal, in the course of becoming a mature man, needs to overcome the polarization of Freudian libidinal opposites dramatized by Falstaff, who embodies "the principle of Eros in its most primary manifestation of narcissism" (Alexander 602), and Hotspur, who is Thanatos, "the exponent of destruction" (599). Hal must go beyond the fixation to the early pregenital stage that is ascribed to Falstaff and sort out the jealousy and hatred of the father as dramatized in Hotspur, and he ultimately manages to achieve both. Nonetheless, Alexander regards Hal's rejection of Falstaff as repression (598) and cannot help making an inquiry into Falstaff's appeal. Despite his hedonism, irresponsibility, and infantile character, Falstaff, he argues, with his justified disrespect for authority and disregard of social customs, serves as the signpost of "self-sufficient careless individuality" (605) that guards us against being lost in the collective like the termites.

Ernst Kris (1970) focuses on the father-son conflict as Shakespeare's central concern and explains Hal's masculine development in terms of the Oedipus complex. To summarize his account, Hal wavers between his father, the present King Henry IV, who is associated with regicide, and Falstaff, who "satisfies the libidinal demands in the father-son relation" (Kris in Faber 403) by being a playful and loveable friend. Neither father figure, however, provides Hal with the right role model for his own masculine development. His escape into debauchery in Eastcheap (a district in London known for its taverns and inns, with a disreputable reputation) serves mainly to shun his father's guilt and is in that sense an enactment of his own unconscious regicide and parricidal impulses. When he reconciles with his father, he transfers his unconscious hostility to his father onto Falstaff and hence rejects him severely: "Yet the Prince proves superior to Falstaff in wit and in reveling: he triumphs over both father and father substitute" (403). Perhaps to Kris who seems to have disregarded Falstaff's response to the Boy's report of the Doctor's response: "I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men" (*2 Henry IV*, 1.2.8−9).

M. D. Faber (1970) writes that he builds his own psychoanalytic argument upon those of Alexander and Kris to explore father-son conflict in the *Henriad* in the relation between Hotspur and Northumberland (Hotspur's father) as well as Hotspur's relation to Bolingbroke (or the future Henry IV) as a father figure. Faber works on the oedipal rivalry

in both relationships. Northumberland's envy of his son and his failure to give fatherly affection encourage rivalry between the father and the son and makes Hotspur an angry, rebellious man full of hatred against father figures.

In her feminist reading of the *Henriad*, Coppélia Kahn (1981) deals with the father-son bond and how the interaction helps constitute masculine identity in both the father and the son. She points to the similarity between the King Henry IV and Hal: "Neither man can freely express his true self, whatever that is, because each has something to hide . . . Hal hides his sympathy with his father, while Henry hides his guilt over the deposition and murder of Richard" (Kahn 74). Hal's taking shelter in Eastcheap, Kahn holds, is to deny his likeness to his father, but he comes to admit his love and loyalty in the scene where he takes the crown assuming that his father is dead. Peter Erickson (1985) also works on the similarity between the King Henry IV and Hal. He argues that both the father and the son have a theatrical sense of self, act with calculation and strategy, aim to impress the public, and are burdened with a guilty conscience. Being so preoccupied with theatricality, they cannot relate to each other with sincerity and openness.

Valerie Traub (1992) interprets the *Henriad* following a similar line of thought and is inspired by Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. Her Lacanian feminist reading designates Falstaff as a pre-oedipal maternal figure with his huge belly who thus poses a threat to the male psyche. Hal, to become an adult male in a phallocentric patriarchal order, needs to repudiate the maternal or the feminine, and since Falstaff represents the feminine, he needs to be rejected. Having differentiated himself from a figure associated with the feminine, Hal identifies with his father and thereby completes the process of heterosexualization.

A different psychological analysis comes from Maitra (1967) who takes a more Jungian approach to masculine initiation in the *Henriad*. He regards Falstaff as the trickster, Hal's shadow, and objects to a reduction of the shadow problem to an oedipal parricidal complex as the psychological motive. Hal, he argues, does not have an unconscious or repressed hostility to his father, of the kind that in analysis could come up in dreams or *faux pas* or even cause psychosis. Rather he displays an open, conscious opposition, which he admits before his father and his affection for Falstaff is not pretense. Maitra writes:

> In Prince Hal's case the dramatist not only does not say anything in confirmation of the father-hostility hypothesis but makes express statements in support of the thesis that the trickster in Hal got the upper hand for a time and after having contributed to the maturation of the Prince's personality abdicated in favour of the rational Hal. (Maitra 144)

Having passed the trickster stage, Hal rejects Falstaff and his rejection has the overtones of revenge on himself "for the indulgence he gave to the trickster in him" (136).

Kern (1984) acknowledges L. C. Barber's (1972) view that Falstaff is connected with the theatrical (clowning) and carnivalesque (folly) tradition. But she regards Falstaff as the American Indian trickster figure who is neither a scapegoat nor the Holy Sinner as Roy Battenhouse (1975) argues. Kern, however, is not interested in analysing Falstaff's psychological development. She just displays the character's link with the theatrical trickster tradition.

Fike (2009) brings fresh insight into Falstaff's development from a Jungian standpoint. He also points to the link between the trickster and the shadow and regards

Falstaff as a trickster who is "not only a shadow father figure but also an aspect of Hal himself" (Fike 67). Fike's analysis enables us to see the character's spiritual journey in a new light. He regards Falstaff as a dynamic character who can experience *enantiodromia*, that is, he can change into the opposite through recognition that comes with a disaster. He also works in detail on Falstaff's inflation that ultimately brings about humanization of the trickster and individuation. To make his point Fike analyses Falstaff's allusion to the parable of Dives and Lazarus, and how it betrays the character's dual nature. Until Hal's rejection Falstaff appears as Dives (feeling superior/positive inflation), but after that he changes into Lazarus (feeling inferior/negative inflation). The conversion into the opposite paves the way for individuation. Fike's meticulous study of Falstaff's deathbed experience sheds light on the view that by identifying with Lazarus the character moves outside the cycle of inflation and individuates. He then gains an access not only to the unconscious but also to the conscience and deserves salvation because "the banishment brings about a softer heart through greater awareness of what has been unconscious, which in turn enables him to accept the grace to which he alludes in *1 Henry IV*" (83).

Falstaff's Affinity with the Medieval Fool and Christ

According to Barber, Shakespeare's portrayal of Falstaff draws heavily on the Medieval tradition of carnival that owes much to the ancient Saturnalia, which had been a trickster solution to the problem of the senex aspect of the established Roman culture. These transgressive cultural practices were, in effect, closely connected to the mythical trickster figure. C. G. Jung in his essay on the trickster figure states that the trickster's ability to transform the meaningless into the meaningful raises him to the stature of a cultural savior, or in Catholic terms, a saint, and is the motif beneath the Medieval carnival and ecclesiastical customs that derive from the pre-Christian saturnalian tradition. Following the New Year, people held festivities with dancing and singing, and in the twelfth century these festivities degenerated into *festum stultorum* or the fools' feast and *festum asinorum* mainly held in France. Max Harris (2011) gives an account of ass festival as practiced in Beavoise in France where a girl with a baby in her arms walked into church to represent flight to Egypt. These celebrations according to Jung reflected the effort to associate the ass with Christ: "since, from ancient times, the god of the Jews was vulgarly conceived to be an ass—a prejudice which extended to Christ himself" (*Archetypes, CW* 9, par. 463). Although the Feast of Fools was primarily celebrated in France, more than any other country in Europe, Harris says, it was also practiced in England between 1222 and 1391 owing to the Norman invasion. The exact content of these activities is not very clear, but archbishops complained about the dissolute behaviors inside and outside the church. In 1390 William Courtney, archbishop of Canterbury, banned these practices. However, "boy bishops" (where the low-ranking choir boys chose a fellow choir boy as their bishop), continued to be practiced until Henry VIII's Royal Proclamation of July 22, 1541 to prohibit some of these celebrations. But in spite of the ban the Feast of Fools was practiced for a little longer.

Long after these ceremonies were banned for being blasphemous these Medieval customs were reborn as both Paul Radin and Jung have pointed out, on the Italian stage as Pulcinellas, buffoons, and clowns. Radin says that "many of the Trickster traits were perpetuated in the figure of the medieval jester and have survived right up to the present day in the Punch-and-Judy-plays and in the clown" (Radin xxiii). Falstaff, the trickster, as

Maitra and Battenhouse argue, belongs within this tradition of fools. In other words, he inherits his association with the savior from this Medieval saturnalian tradition and the mythical trickster that is behind these festivities. Harvey Cox in his *Feast of Fools* points out that Christ was a holy fool for the Medieval people and explains the aspects of Christ that resemble clown symbols:

> Like the jester Christ defies customs and scorns crowned heads. Like a wandering troubadour he has no place to lay his head. Like the clown in the circus parade, he satirizes existing authority by riding into town replete with regal pageantry when he has no earthly power . . . At the end he is costumed by his enemies in a mocking caricature of royal paraphernalia (Cox 140).

When considered in the light of the Saturnalia that links the clown with Christ, Falstaff has all these subversive and self-destructive characteristics of the clown, and this connection also reinforces, in a comic spirit, the Christ association. Falstaff is outside natural time as Hal says: "What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day?" (*1Henry IV*, 1.2.5−6). His indifference to time contrasts with the serious attitude of King Henry IV and his enemies who are committed to a power struggle and shape the course of history. Hence with his ahistorical stance in a historical context and with his refusal to partake in the adult world of responsibility, Falstaff is subversive of the senex attitude to life that rests on rational order, security and responsibility. He lives on borrowed money and legalizes theft as his vocation: "Why, Hal ′tis my vocation"; moreover, he refuses to settle down to a secure life and despite his old age feels young: "They hate us youth" (*1 Henry IV*, 1.2.100 and *2.2.83*). When Hal finally becomes King Henry V, he punishes this puer attitude very strictly with his public rejection of Falstaff. The corrupt rule of his father, Henry IV, who had departed from the Christian principle of righteousness by usurpation of the kingship, is the target of Falstaff's satire. Falstaff refers, with bitter irony, to the times that can afford this Machiavellian stratagem: "virtue is of so little regard in these costermongers' times that true valour is turned bearherd; . . . all the other gifts appertinent to man as the malice of this age shapes them, are not worth a gooseberry" (*2 Henry IV*, 1.2.167−72). And ironically, he cannot back his nonchalance with any real earthly power just as Christ could not. He takes Hal to be a true friend and counts heavily on his power as the future king. The recklessness that Christ and Falstaff have in common ends up in self-destructiveness. Neither Christ, who does not take any measures against Judas nor Falstaff can be prudent. Their imprudence stems from their being divinely disconnected from the human psyche and being cut off from the psyche causes a lack of containment or psychological leaking of their nature, which is spirit.

Jungian analyst William Willeford also underlines the Fool's Christ association. Some features of Christ's life, he holds, resemble those of the fool. Jesus like the clown is homeless: "His teachings contain much that is foolish to the wise (I Cor. I. 27), and he made a spectacle of his folly" (Willeford 230). In addition to these, "Holy fools" function as a satiric agent, especially about the deviations from the religious norm, and shift our attention to the values and the truth beyond those reason comprehends. It is for this reason that "In Shakespeare . . . the simpleton is a figure of simplicity and purity of heart" (232). Within this cultural context of the fool, Falstaff, the renegade, though he is a criminal and "rivals Dives for gluttony" (76), as Fike rightly points out, also partakes in Christ's purity

of heart. He is a "Barthelomew boar-pig" (*2 Henry IV*, 2.4.227), "the martlemas" (*2 Henry IV*, 2.2.97), the "christom child" (*Henry V*, 2.3.11−12) whom Shakespeare sends to Arthur's bosom: "he is in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom" (*Henry V*, 2.3.9−10). His innocence comes from his child-like unawareness, his adolescent state of mind, which cannot acknowledge responsibility of action or register the moral nature of his experience. Rather he rationalizes irresponsibility with his superb sense of humor: "Thou knowest in the state of innocency Adam fell, and what would Jack Falstaff do in the days of villainy?" (*1 Henry IV*, 3.3.163−65). We know that he has not forgotten what the inside of a church is like: "An I have not forgotten what the inside of a church is made of" (*1 Henry IV*, 3.3.7−8); nor has he given up faith. Falstaff's crimes, no matter how grave they are, do not weigh on us because he does not act with an adult sense of responsibility.

Falstaff's Initiation as a Serious Parody of Christ's Initiation

Some references in the text encourage a reading of Shakespeare's treatment of Falstaff's initiation, however parodic it may be, as a serious parallel to Christ's initiation. Falstaff's remark about Hal as a corrupting agent is revealing: "Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, a little better than one of the wicked" (*1 Henry IV*, 1.2.89−91). Richmond Noble reads these lines as a biblical reference and says: "Falstaff first compares himself to Adam . . . then, it might appear, gives a deadly thrust. Compare the crucifixion of Christ between the two thieves and Mark xv.28" (Noble, 170). Naseeb Shaheen, on the other hand, reads "of the wicked" as mimicry of Puritan idiom: "Compare the reference at *2 Henry IV*, 2.4.327−29 where the phrase 'of the wicked' also occurs. Falstaff is mimicking the Puritan idiom" (Shaheen 139). Yet Shaheen omits the "one," inclusion of which might further encourage Noble's reading. Another significant remark with Christ association comes from the Lord Chief Justice: "You are too impatient to bear crosses" (*2 Henry IV*, 1.2.226−27). Noble sees this line as a reference to Luke 14.27: "And whosoeuer doth not bear his crosse" (Noble 176). Similarly, Shaheen regards it as a refence to Luke 14.27 and Luke 9.23: "'Let him . . . take up his crosse daily, and follow me'" (158). The implication of crucifixion provides an ironic link between the crucified Christ and Falstaff, who has been reminded often of the gallows. Falstaff, the thief, is emotionally crucified by Henry V, the former Hal whom he loved so much, to die in utter disillusionment.

No matter how odd the Christ association seems, a reading of Christ's way of being on the basis of Hillman's conception of the puer archetype reveals Falstaff's ironic affinity with him. According to Hillman, as a puer Christ, the son of God, embodies the spiritual powers of psyche, and being connected with the spirit, he is concerned with the soul's eternity and perfection. He is therefore not for this world. With his complete trust in logos security, which means unbroken union with God, he flies in aspiration to heaven and falls like Icarus to drown in the unconsciousness of this world, which like Henry V knows him not. Having direct access to the spirit, he is "the inspiration of meaning and brings meaning as vision wherever he appears" (Hillman 54). Falstaff, the trickster, acts as the shadow of Christ's positive attribute but has much in common with him given the nature of his initiation through betrayal. Just as Christ on the cross voices how let-down he feels by his Father, Falstaff, the aged youth who up to now rejects all the responsibilities of maturity, is finally forced to enter the adult world of recognition of sovereign power through King Henry V's humiliating public rejection of him. Through the tragic initiation into a Lear-

like cast-out and powerless state, Shakespeare is able to symbolize in Falstaff's tragic initiation the disabling impact of Christ's example as an innocent lamb with complete trust that God (his royal father) will in the end sort out the difficulties of being a man for him. The image of Christ as a seductive assumption belonging to the adolescent stage of development, which cannot be sustained in an earthly way but can only be realized as a supernatural possibility, can block men who are not gods from their capacity to father themselves. This is how a man like Falstaff is castrated: he has not been forced to adapt to the adult world where a man needs to acquire integrity with "masculine virtues of skill, calculated risk and of courage" (Hillman 197). Instead, his anima can only complete his maturation as a man through suffering, betrayal, and abandonment. Falstaff's individuation is an ultimately lonely one. As a fun-loving, living nightcap, Falstaff is as innocent and vulnerable as Christ in his dealings with the children of other men with whom he plays, as it were, in the dark. That's why he trusts Hal despite his suspicion about his grace: "for grace thou wilt have none" (*1 Henry IV*, 1.2.16−17) until Hal, the divine patriarch, bleeds his heart with a fatal wound: "I know thee not, old man" (*2 Henry IV*, 5.5.47).

The experience of being cast off is, in Hillman's words, "a breakthrough onto another level of consciousness" (197). It signifies, as Hillman describes, a move into the adult world of responsibility. The puer, however, wishes to remain in the security of the paternal world where he is understood and taken care of by the omniscient God. In Christian terms the paternal world corresponds to the Eden of Logos where father and son, namely, God and Adam, are united without the interference of Eve, the feminine or the evil of Christianity. Christ, as Hillman remarks, has the puer attitude, and it brings about his crucifixion. He acts with absolute trust in God, and although he knows that he is being betrayed by Peter and Judas, he asks forgiveness for them. On the cross, however, he resentfully cries: "'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" (*Authorized King James version*, Matt. 27.46), not grasping the purpose of the God's design. The awareness of being let down is, for Hillman, not just a "delivery from the mother's breast" (Hillman 200) but also the breakdown of what he calls primal trust in the father. The bitter experience, however, is the ultimate purpose of betrayal for Christ and for Falstaff, too.

Betrayal, as Hillman explains, enables a man to separate from the puer trust and thus from any illusions about the enduring protectiveness of the mother. The breakdown of the illusion allows him to relate to his own psyche through the anima, which develops through the conscious experience of suffering. Only when a man has begun to create his own soul through such disappointment can he start to love truly without guarantee of maternal protection. The establishment of the anima relation is materialized through the feminine figures who surround Christ before and after the crucifixion—washing of the feet at supper; the silver that is associated with the feminine; the warning that comes from Pilate's wife; plenty of Marys around; the wound in the side, which signifies "the released fountain of life, feeling and emotion" (Hillman 201); and women's discovery of the risen Christ. The blood symbolism refers to the outpouring of the emotional side to connect man to the feminine, that is, to the source of life. Christ with betrayal becomes human, and "The puer God dies when the primal trust is broken, and the man is born. And a man is born only when the feminine in him is born" (201). Such a process of initiation is also true for Falstaff. When read in terms of masculine individuation, betrayal is expected to start off the integration of the trickster that is essential to advance to a higher stage of masculine consciousness. Falstaff, the trickster, now being wounded by Hal's rejection, needs to relate

to the anima and father himself in the adult world to be a man. Like Christ, he is accompanied by feminine figures who evoke anima relation explicitly: Doll Tearsheet and Mistress Quickly who acts as a mother and a nurse figure to give him care until his last breath. Being only a serious parody of Christ and having spent his life in the carefree life of the tavern without any emotional commitment to a woman, Falstaff can afford such feminine figures. Yet they sympathize with him. Mistress Quickly does not abandon Falstaff despite the serious troubles he created for her in the past. Her forgiveness is important in that she regards him as a naive, innocent man who deserves grace in the afterlife rather than a vice figure to be condemned.

There is, however, a remarkable difference between the attitudes of betraying love-objects. God as a caring father figure betrays Christ to teach him a lesson in growing up, and they ultimately unite in mutual love after the resurrection. Falstaff, on the other hand, is rejected by Hal, his paradoxical father-son figure, out of power drive to be comforted, so we hope, later in Arthur's bosom, and his resurrection is only a mock one in the battle scene. Hence betrayal for Falstaff is bound to end up in tragic isolation no matter how hard he tries to hide his wound and humiliation by glossing over the insult: "Do not you grieve at this; I shall be sent for in private to him. Look you, he must seem thus to the world" (*2 Henry IV*, 5.5.76−78). Shakespeare is bitterly realistic about the impact of rejection on Falstaff. What he will have to learn after this painful experience will be fatal, as Shallow says: "A colour that I fear you will die in" (*2 Henry IV*, 5.5.87). He is now to understand what it means to be an adult man, and that requires a bitter process of seeing through himself, admitting his lifelong refusal to take responsibility. His friends' account of Falstaff's state after rejection points to the fact that the trickster, with his woundedness, has finally become vulnerable. He can no longer be the man he was; that is, he can neither feel secure in his former tricksterish, reckless way of life nor enjoy carefree escapism. Falstaff bleeds emotionally and suffers: "His heart is fracted and corroborate" (*Henry V*, 2.1.124) because as Mistress Quickly says, "The King has killed his heart" (*Henry V*, 2.1.88).

His grief after banishment implies that the process of integrating the trickster has started. Falstaff who, despite his faith, could not relate to God as a man of integrity and who never had a Mary as a loving mother or God as a caring father who wisely guides his son's spiritual growth, turns to God as a father figure while he dies calling His name. In Christ's case the prevalent emotion on the cross is complaint, which is a sign of becoming human. As Hillman points out, "Puer comes into his own, but complainingly" (226). In Falstaff's case it is difficult to decide the tone of his address to God. What the Boy says about his cursing of wine and women ("and said they were devils incarnate" (*Henry V*, 2.3.30)) suggests that Falstaff's sense of reality has changed and that he is fully aware of how wasted his life. So it is very likely that "Falstaff's deathbed statements indicate a painful awareness of, and contrition for, his faults" (Fike 83), and he begs forgiveness from the Father. But when considered in terms of the betrayal theme, his cry might as well indicate a recognition of his vulnerability, his neediness and hence a complaint, a painful exclamation about his lot. God is now surely his sole refuge, and Falstaff recites Psalm 23 to express his wish to be affirmed and restored by God the Heavenly Father in the green pastures of Eden with complete trust and integrity.

Initiation of Hal, the Senex, and Hotspur, the Puer

Hal and Falstaff display dramatically opposite personalities and become adult men in different ways. Unlike Falstaff, who paradoxically represents the Eternal Youth, an orientation associated with perennial adolescence, Hal, who represents the senex, initiates in a way that fits the pattern of the hero's journey as described by Jung. In patriarchal self-organization, initiation means, as Jung holds, a man's becoming conscious, and Jung likens this process to the movement of the sun. The hero who symbolizes the libido "is the first and foremost a self-representation of the longing of the unconscious . . . for consciousness" (*Symbols*, *CW* 5, par. 299). The hero becomes conscious, that is, realizes himself by moving outside the mother's world of security and inertia, but the process of independence from her involves discarding the feminine. Then follows the phase of submitting to the anima in mid-life, which means facing the limitations of the heroic ego and not holding on to assertiveness any longer. In the two *King Henry IV* plays Hal, the young prince, succeeds in strengthening his masculine ego but fails in abiding by the anima and insists on competence in the later phase of his development as the King Henry V. Hal's senex traits further reinforce his heroic ego formation. Right from the beginning he is prudent, devious, and sober despite his biting, ungratious sense of humor: "Thou judgest false already. I mean thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves and so become a rare hangman" (*1Henry IV*, 1. 2.63−65). The scene where Falstaff and Hal act out the King Henry IV and Hal by exchanging parts also reveals Hal as a senex figure—indeed a Machiavellian one. He voices openly his plan to banish Falstaff, no doubt, when the right time comes: "I do, I will" (*1 Henry IV*, 2.4.468). Being a senex, he lives in a space-time continuum, and as a master of timing and calculation he deliberately isolates himself, patiently waiting for the right time to prove his merit: "I know you all, and will awhile uphold / The unyoked humour of your idleness" (*1 King Henry IV*, 1.2.185−86).

Hal's senex character is clarified not just in contradistinction to Falstaff, the trickster, but also to Hotspur, the puer, whose initiation has a different pattern than that of a hero. To understand Hotspur's route, it might here be helpful to recall Hillman's conception of the development of the puer's ego personality. Unlike a hero who realizes himself in opposition to the mother, "the puer takes its definition from the senex-puer polarity" (Hillman 115). The puer according to Hillman does not struggle with the *magna mater*, which means the mother in a magnified form. Rather, being himself spirit, he needs the matter to realize himself without aiming to affect it as a hero does. Hence, he is outside the mother complex and comes to know himself via another spirit. In other words, he needs the father, the spirit, to become a man, and the mother does not intervene to set any antagonism between the father and the son. The crux in a puer's development is his relation to the senex, namely, his ability to achieve *puer senilis*. If the puer is separated from the senex, he cannot develop a sense of survival and loses his sense of limit and order; his traits like inspiration, verticality, opportunism and independence become distorted, appearing to be the symptoms of a mother-bound psychology. The puer needs to avoid such distortion to restore balance in his psyche by integrating the senex or being affirmed by the father.

Hotspur has many puer qualities, but he does not come up as an ideal figure, one that embodies *puer senilis*. His very puer traits render him irksome. He is obsessed with honor and is vertical; that is, he is imaginative as is manifested in his boastfulness: "By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap / To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon" (*1Henry IV*, 1.3.200−01). In his analysis of Hotspur, Hillman comments on the character's

longing for eternity and his ironic death caused by time: "Dying from wounds, he feels himself caught by time, and slain not by his actual enemy and heroic counterpart, the other Henry, but by the senex (time, Chronos)" (160). Hal, the senex embodies Father Time and puts an end to Hotspur's claims to eternity. Although he is involved in a web of kinship bonds and is married, Hotspur does not feel related to anyone; he does not have a telos, a home to go back to, or any sense of belonging. His only loyalty is to the spirit that drives him beyond reality. Hence he easily dismisses his wife when she poses a threat to his pursuit of honor: "Away, away, you trifler! Love? I love thee not; / I care not for thee, Kate" (*1Henry IV*, 2.3.86–87). Not having incorporated his senex component, Hotspur is also imprudent and reckless. He refuses to doubt his father and his allies despite the letter of warning. He heads to the battle even when he is clearly let down by his father and Glendower. His consequent death on the battlefield is not a hero's tragic end but a puer fall (Hillman 172), which like that of Icarus signifies a preceding hubris or what Jungian psychology calls inflation. Puer's hubris does not, however, mean ambition like that of a tragic hero but an unheeding ascensionism, that is, an aspiration to be with the Gods, and the Gods punish the puer's ascensionism because it attempts to disturb the hierarchy of being. Hotspur does not know his place as a mortal man and finally pays for it.

While Hotspur is motivated by a longing for eternity, worldly order and power are Hal's major concerns. He does not waste time with sack like Falstaff, the trickster, or with boasting like Hotspur, the puer, but acts rationally. Action is definitely indispensable to the hero's way of being, but as Hillman holds, "For action the specific psychological attitude of literalizing is necessary" (150). Hal literalizes his ambition for the crown by killing Hotspur, his rival, to prove his competence at precisely the right time and on the right occasion. Yet in the process of consolidating his ego he "will have as part of this pattern the shadow of the hero—estrangement from the feminine and compulsive masculinity—foreshadowing the sterile and bitter senex . . ." (Hillman 138). Hal is the bitter senex who seeks political power alone and remains self-bound. Unwilling to care for others right from the beginning, be it his father or his friend, he can banish Falstaff without the least concern for his feelings and pride. Falstaff, however, with his warmth and unjudgmental care, helps Hal initiate into manhood by giving him love, which the war-torn, weary, and demanding King Henry IV cannot.

Fatherson

It is notable that the initiation of the two young men, Hal and Hotspur, is dramatized in the presence of the fathers. In *Fatherson,* Alfred Collins (1994) points to the significance the father-son bond and the basic dynamic of the relationship: "A son is an other self to the father, who addresses himself (and seeks a reply) in his relation to his boy. The converse is also true: the son hears himself speaking in his father's voice and wants to talk back to himself in him" (Collins 1). The relationship, however, is a complex one. To sum up Collins's account, the father-son bond is shaped by each one's desire for selfhood, and each loves himself in the other. Each idealizes the other and seeks recognition by him. But when the idealization is frustrated or one party fails to recognize the other, strife and contradictions shadow the bond, turning individuation into a painful experience. Apart from Hal and Falstaff's relationship, the *King Henry IV* plays introduce two different father-son bonds between Hal and King Henry IV and Hotspur and Northumberland. In the case of the former party, there is, right from the opening of *1Henry IV*, a contradiction

between the father and the son. King Henry IV is disappointed with his son because rather than conforming to his father's authority, he leads a dissipated life. But, despite the conflicts, the father and the son are finally reconciled, and we come to see how they are alike in their ambitious, calculating, and prudent personalities and how this likeness may have been the source of the contradiction between them. Hal, who genuinely cares for his father as his performance on the battlefield shows, desperately wants kingship. King Henry IV finally welcomes Hal when he is convinced about his loyalty and reformation: "God put it in thy mind to take it hence, / That thou mightst win the more thy father's love" (*2 Henry IV*, 4.5.178−79). Having reconciled with his father and internalized fatherhood, Hal settles down to his role as heir to throne and carries forward his mission.

In Hotspur's case, however, the father-son relationship is even more strained and complex. An undercurrent of rivalry defines the bond between the father and the son. The psychoanalyst Franz Alexander in his fine analysis of the father-son relation in the *Henry IV* plays points to the lack of affirmative fathering as the root cause of the conflict between the father and the son: ". . . Northumberland, far from being a father to his son, has resented and hated him, and that Hotspur has not known the fatherly affection so crucial to the development of a normal personality" (Alexander 436). Northumberland is not mature enough to father his son who overshadows him with his valor. Overcome by envy, he lets Hotspur go alone to a battle where defeat is certain and death, without support, is immanent. He openly betrays his son and being "crafty-sick" (*2 Henry IV*, 1.1.37) ignores the catastrophe in store for him as explicitly stated by Morton: "You knew he walk'd o'er perils, on an edge, / More likely to fall in than get o'er" (*2 Henry IV*, 1.1.170−71). The arrogant Hotspur, on the other hand, does not seek affirmation, nor does he ever display any wish to receive his father's blessings. Being his own man, he does not ask for his father's advice or try to benefit from his experience, which incites Northumberland's anger: "Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient fool / Art thou to break into this woman's mood, / Trying thine ear to no tongue but thine own!" (*1Henry IV*, 1.3.234−36). Hotspur's willfulness, however, is only natural because the puer is ruled by a drive to transcend the father who is bounded by time and history. The puer rejects the old because, as Hillman holds, "the wisdom of the old is worldly, learned from experience, learned from history, accumulated from time, and this blocks the puer's access to eternity" (Hillman 162). Hotspur believes himself to be better than his father−to be a potent warrior who knows the right course of action. But, especially as his catastrophe nears, he appears less than an efficient grown-up man because he cannot father himself which could only be possible through being initiated by the father.

The Failure of the Ideal of *Puer Senilis* in the *Henriad*

The play's historical and political contexts add a special dimension to the way Shakespeare handles such illusion-puncturing initiations. In a world where power struggle is central, Hal, with his heroic forward movement, is in tune with time and will succeed as a solar, daytime hero involved in shaping his own developmental history as well as that of his family and nation. Falstaff, with his a-historicity and indifference to time, dangerously ignoring, for instance, his advancing years, displays the opposite attitude and hence appears to be irrelevant in the world of ruthless power struggle, but his irrelevance is only seeming. That is, the *coincidentia oppositorum* of these two incompatible figures and their brief but unforgettable nights as friends outside historical circumstance in the liminal play-world of

drink and debauchery are not accidental. The coincidence of Falstaff and Hal serves as a moratorium from linear development and a move into depth to clarify a radical change in Western consciousness that occurs in the Renaissance for the first time since the West was Christianized. That change is the split between past and present, and Shakespeare as an artist intuits the future risks it involves.

In his study of the Western culture, Walter Schubart points to the change the West underwent between 1450 and 1550 and holds that the Renaissance was a time of transition from the the Gothic "to the Promethean era characterized by the heroic type of man" (Schubart 17−18). Then he gives an account of the heroic type: unlike the Medieval ascetic type, the worldly new man is no longer interested in "the sanctification of the soul; it had as its goal the ownership of the material universe" (18). Schubart names the era Promethean after the Titans who "were the cunning exploiters of the forces of nature" (18) and whose ambition was to design the world to their own advantage. His description of the heroic man accords with the Humanist ideal of the Renaissance, which displaces God and puts man to the center of the universe to the detriment of nature and soul in the long run. In the *Henriad* Shakespeare's handling of masculine initiation in a historical context accords with Schubart's concerns about the failings of the heroic mindset. Shakespeare seems to be well aware that the heroic and the Humanist ideals are a dead end. But in the *Henriad* he narrows down the broader implications of philosophical and cultural changes to political ethics alone. In Hal's person as well as in King Henry IV he displays his concern about divorcing politics from integrity. With a solar fire-stealing Promethean stance, Hal claims a traditional kingship and moves away from the old power politics to a dangerous new ethic of loyalty to humanism. He makes his way to the crown with a Machiavellian stratagem right from the beginning as many commentators on the *Henriad* notice, and unlike his father who at least is capable of the pangs of conscience, the self-bound Hal shows no sign of regret for deceiving Falstaff. The puer Falstaff, with his unworldy and unheroic stance, becomes for Henry V a subversive agent drawing him away from his destiny to reclaim the heroic archetype for contemporary man. That is, the integrity that would be involved in being loyal to the new spirit symbolized by Falstaff would be too much for the feudal Christian values Hal seemingly wants to keep alive, so he must make that spirit old and pretend that he is the redeemed new order. But his pledge of loyalty to the Lord Chief Justice as his mentor and new father figure leaves no doubt about the nature of his policy. He is in fact the senex assent of the ancient regime: "You shall be as a father to my youth, / My voice shall sound as you do prompt mine ear" (*2 Henry IV*, 5.2.118−19).

In such a context masculine initiation needs to end when a confident, conservative claim to power comes to the fore. Such are the political and ethical implications of division between the puer and the senex that Hal feels he must make at the outset of his kingship. He cannot tone down the hardness of senex with the refreshing "moist spark" of the puer (Hillman 54) and remains as a static senex man. By suppressing the puer, Hal ensures that his mature emotive world will be without soul and compassion. In other words, his masculine senex spirit will not be softened by the anima and imagination. The regressive heroic masculinity thus portrayed in Hal indicates a retreat from the possibilities of the Renaissance, which had the capacity to hold the tension of the opposites, that is, of senex and puer, but, like Hal, could not assure a lasting happy union of old (the Medieval) and new (the Ancient Greek and Roman thinking rediscovered to modify and replace the old). In other words, the Renaissance could embrace the *gloria duplex*, "keeping consciousness

of both sides" (Hillman 323), that is, the Medieval and the Ancient Greek and Roman cultures, but its potential for *puer senilis* is ultimately wasted by the imminent senex concerns for progress in material terms. In this respect, Falstaff with his imaginative power, his capacity for love and his mockery of worldly wisdom becomes for the audience a cautionary image of all that will be lost as the spirit of the Renaissance man, the puer, is forced, as Shakespeare the writer moves toward 1600, into an increasingly senex modernity. And what characterizes that modernity most of all is a repression of the soul to the realm of psychology rather than a consciousness of soul as an ongoing possibility. As depth psychological writers remind us, we must acknowledge the reality of psyche and return to what has been lost—a potential Falstaff carries for many of us even today.

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Three Perspectives on Jung, Wells, and Schreber

Matthew A. Fike[1]

Abstract. A single sentence in C. G. Jung's "Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*" links H. G. Wells's *Christina Alberta's Father* and Daniel Paul Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* as illustrations of the principle that repression leads to insanity. The essay demonstrates the following points: Jung (as previously noted) inspired the creation of Wells's novel; comments on Schreber illuminate the course of the Freud-Jung friendship; the books illustrate Jung's theory that repression leads to insanity; and projecting interiority onto God and believing the intrapsychic to be extrapsychic are problematic tendencies in both texts. Although Wells's main character, Edward Albert Preemby, and Schreber himself make some progress toward psychological wholeness, Preemby dies before he can enjoy his new perspective, and Schreber returns to the asylum for his final years.

Keywords: C. G. Jung, H. G. Wells, Daniel Paul Schreber, *Christina Alberta's Father*, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, Sigmund Freud, repression, insanity, God.

Introduction

Our starting point for this article is a key sentence in paragraph 53 of C. G. Jung's "Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*" (*Alchemical Studies*, *CW* 13). However, there is helpful context in the preceding paragraph where Jung states that if we deny "autonomous systems"—if we repress contents into the shadow and do not assimilate them—they continue to influence us below the level of conscious awareness via shadow projection, both personal and collective, resulting in "destructive mass psychoses" such as war (par. 52). What is repressed within manifests without. The next paragraph, our central concern, mentions two books written on opposite ends of World War I, a collective-shadow event, that illustrate Jung's point:

> Insanity is possession by an unconscious content that, as such, is not assimilated to consciousness, nor can it be assimilated since the very existence of such contents is denied. This attitude is equivalent to saying: "We no longer have any fear of God and believe that everything is to be judged by human standards." This hybris [sic] or narrowness of

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> consciousness is always the shortest way to the insane asylum. I recommend the excellent account of this problem in H. G. Wells's novel *Christina Alberta's Father*, and Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*. (par. 53)

Mental illness stems from possession by repressed content, and Jung thinks that Wells's 1925 novel and Daniel Paul Schreber's 1903 personal account illustrate this principle. The sentence about God is a bit obscure but is best understood as an analogy: it is as problematic to deny repressed content as it is to deny God, and as problematic to project unconscious content as to think that the human frame of reference is the *sine qua non*. Since the insane do not acknowledge interiority as the provenance of their illness, causality is projected onto God, and the divine becomes a reflection of one's own disavowed psychic contents. Blaming God for one's condition—elevating one's own issues to the level of divine causation—is hubris indeed.

Jung's view that insanity results from the refusal to acknowledge repressed content is illustrated in two texts that have not previously been considered together: an obscure novel by Wells about a minimus named Edward Albert Preemby and Schreber's nonfictional account of his own tutelage—"guardianship by the courts" (Goodrich and Trüstedt 69)—in asylums at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries.[2] A further reason to consider the two texts together is that Preemby and Schreber share a common goal. Dr. G. Weber, one of Schreber's doctors, makes a statement in his evaluation that characterizes Preemby equally well: the patient believes that "he is called to redeem the world and to bring back to mankind the lost state of Blessedness" (qtd. in Schreber 333; cf. Freud 16). Whereas Preemby feels an impetus to save modern civilization, Schreber believes that if he transforms into a woman, he will become pregnant by God's rays and create a new race: "my unmanning will be accomplished with the result that by divine fertilization offspring will issue from my lap" (258). Moreover, both works comment on God from the point of view of the insane and problematically attribute symptoms of mental illness to divine agency. As these details suggest, Jung's insight that insanity arises from repression is only the beginning of what may be gained from studying the two texts together.

Whereas *Christina Alberta's Father* has received virtually no significant analysis by literary critics (Jungian or otherwise), *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* has inspired extensive commentary. Rosemary Dinnage's statement that "Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* must be the most written-about document in all psychiatric literature" (xi) is demonstrated, for example, by the thirty-eight-page bibliography in Zvi Lothane's *In Defense of Schreber: Soul Murder and Psychiatry* (485–523). *Memoirs* is also "one of the most challenging texts of the century" in which "the reader is easily lost" (Crapanzano 739, 742) because "the *Memoirs* are extraordinarily difficult to read" (Butler 187). Therefore, the "book cannot be simply read: it must be studied" (Lothane 378).

My purpose here is not to overlook the many fine studies of Schreber's work but to draw attention to the linkage of the two texts in Jung's key sentence. The nexus gives rise to various questions that serve as an outline for what follows. What is Jung's relationship to the two texts? Is he correct that the two books illustrate his principle that insanity arises

[2] Schreber was in various asylums in 1884, 1893–1902, and 1907 until his death in 1911. *Memoirs* deals principally with his long middle stay. Franz Baumeyer's work with Schreber's medical records is particularly helpful in establishing a chronology, as is Freud's overview in *Psycho-Analytic Notes* (6–7).

from repression of non-assimilated content? Do Wells and Schreber portray the human relationship to God in the hubristic way that Jung mentions? This essay uses a Jungian matrix to unfold meaning in both texts, shows the centrality of *Memoirs* to Jung's relationship with Freud, demonstrates that the two books illustrate Jung's understanding of repression and insanity, and analyzes the authors' respective psychologizing of God. In support of these points, I will utilize three perspectives: Jung's friendships with Wells and Freud, the view that repression leads to insanity, and the works' respective comments on God.

One: Jung's Friendships

That the two texts have remained virtually unnoticed by Jungian critics is evident in the omission of both from Sonu Shamdasani's *Jung: A Biography in Books*. There is similarly no Jungian criticism on *Christina Alberta's Father* and very little on *Memoirs*; Karen Bryce Funt's "From Memoir to Case History: Schreber, Freud and Jung" is the only substantial Jungian study that could be found. Yet, as Michael Eigen states, although "Jungians did not explore the Schreber case to the extent Freudians did . . . Schreber's basic movement from a male position to death and rebirth through the feminine seems made for Jungian analysis" (qtd. in Lothane 355; cf. Eigen 254). However, Jungian critics *have* registered the friendship between Jung and Wells. Deidre Bair notes that Wells visited Jung in Zurich on several occasions (402), and E. A. Bennet states that Jung had dinner with Wells at his house in Regent's Park. That night, when asked about the genesis of schizophrenia, Jung stated that projection accounts for a person's delusions (Bennet 93). Ronald Hayman rightly observes that a main point of the evening's conversation—"the psychotic projected his own ideas onto other people and events"—prefigures and influences both *Christina Alberta's Father* and the appearance of a fictional Dr. Jung in Wells's 1926 novel *The World of William Clissold* (Hayman 261) where the conversation concerns the "super-mind of the species" rather than schizophrenia (Wells, vol. 1, 86). Apparently, Jung's association with Wells lasted beyond the publication of *Christina Alberta's Father* in 1925, for Jung's letter to Walter Robert Corti, dated September 12, 1929, mentions that Wells had recently visited his house (Jung, *Letters*, vol. 1, 69).

Much as Wells's novels reflect his friendship with Jung, Schreber's *Memoirs* informs Jung's friendship with Freud. Jung himself mentions Schreber as early as 1907 in *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox* (*CW* 3), which likely is one way that he called Freud's attention to *Memoirs*. Freud then wrote his treatise, *Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)* in 1911, the year of Schreber's death. Because Freud believed that "a printed case history can take the place of personal acquaintance with the patient" (9), he never met Schreber or interviewed any of his doctors. Consequently, Funt asserts that "Freud and Jung functioned as readers, not psychoanalysts" and that *Memoirs* "is a text and not a 'case'" (99–100). These distinctions are obviously black-and-white thinking; *Memoirs* is a text about a case, and the two men operated as both readers and psychoanalysts. Nevertheless, critics agree that Freud read Schreber's book as a literary text (Lothane 324, Crapanzano 738), meaning that Freud treated Schreber like a literary character and regarded *Memoirs* as a New Critical artifact whose content is complete and ready to be unlocked through agile reading. Although there is a falseness to *Psycho-Analytic Notes* because it is once removed from the man at the

heart of *Memoirs*, Freud presents a psychological analysis as though he were dealing with an in-person interview.

Freud's main points are easy to adumbrate. In general, "what was abolished internally [repressed content] returns from without [is projected]" (71), and (predictably) "the roots of every nervous and mental disorder are chiefly to be found in the patient's sexual life" (30). Accordingly, Schreber moves from sexual ascetism to voluptuousness (erotic feeling) and to the belief that he is transforming into a woman. Schreber's "outburst of a homosexual impulse" is Freud's central point (45): his long-repressed desire for his father and brother gets transferred first to his doctor (Dr. Paul Flechsig) and then to God. The upper God, Ormuzd, corresponds to the father and the lower God, Ahriman, to the brother. Even Schreber's relationship to God—"religious paranoia" (Freud 18)—may reflect desire for closeness with male figures. (As Vincent Crapanzano observes, Ormudz represents maleness, Ariman femaleness [763], a point that Jungians need to emphasize because it may be that Schreber's talk of dual Gods equals mythological projection of animus and anima.)

This brief summary of Freud's views serves as a basis for understanding the interactions he and Jung had in their correspondence regarding Schreber's *Memoirs*. William McGuire's edition of *The Freud/Jung Letters* includes twenty-one mentions of Schreber, including eight references to *Memoirs*. The correspondence tracks the progress of Freud's composition of *Psycho-Analytic Notes* and registers the genuine enthusiasm Freud and Jung have for Schreber's text. Freud gushes about "the wonderful Schreber, who ought to have been made a professor of psychiatry and director of a mental hospital" (Letter 187F, 22 Apr. 1910, 311). Later that year, Jung replies, "I was touched and overjoyed to learn how much you appreciate the greatness of Schreber's mind and the liberating [holy words] of the basic language [archaic German]" (Letter 213J, 29 Sept. 1910, 356). (Schreber himself calls the basic language "a somewhat antiquated but nevertheless powerful German, characterized particularly by a wealth of euphemisms" [26].) The next month, Freud mentions reducing the case "to its nuclear complex," which is that Dr. Flechsig is a father figure for whom Schreber has homosexual feelings. He states that he shares Jung's enthusiasm for Schreber and that he plans to introduce the basic language "as a serious technical term—meaning the original wording of a delusional idea which the patient's consciousness . . . experiences only in distorted form" (Letter 214F, 1 Oct. 1910, 358). Two months later, Freud declares that he is fully engaged: "I am all Schreber and will make a point of bringing the manuscript to Munich for you. I am not pleased with it, but it is for others to judge. All the same, a few points come out very clearly" (Letter 223F, 3 Dec. 2010, 377). Jung's next letter also mentions a meeting with Freud and Paul Eugen Blueler in Munich: "I am greatly looking forward to Munich, where the Schreber will play a not unimportant role" (Letter 224J, 13 Dec. 1910, 378).

Freud finished his treatise later that month: "My Schreber is finished. . . . I'll give you the whole thing to read when I see you. The piece is formally imperfect, fleetingly improvised [like the figures Schreber sees when he believes that he is the last person alive on Earth], I had neither time nor strength to do more. Still, there are a few good things in

it . . .” (Letter 225F, 18 Dec. 2010, 379–80).[3] Jung offers a high compliment a few months later and wishes that he had done more with Schreber prior to Freud’s efforts.

> Only now that I have the galleys can I enjoy your Schreber. It is not only uproariously funny but brilliantly written as well. If I were an altruist I would now be saying how glad I am that you have taken Schreber under your wing and shown psychiatry what treasures are heaped up there. But, as it is, I must content myself with the invidious role of wishing I had got in first, though that’s not much of a consolation. (Letter 243J, 19 Mar. 1911, 407)

Sounding more neutral, Jung writes three months later, “It seems that in Dem. praec. you have at all costs to bring to light the inner world produced by the introversion of libido, which in paranoiacs suddenly appears in distorted form as a delusional system (Schreber) . . .” (Letter 259J, 12 June 1911, 426–27). Introversion would soon become a centerpiece of Jung’s reading of Schreber’s mental illness.

At least twelve times in their letters, Freud and Jung playfully use Schreber’s terminology almost like a secret language. The phrase “fleetingly improvised,” which Freud uses to characterize his treatise in Letter 225F, appears again in Letter 212F (354). The basic language, which McGuire refers to as “Schreber’s jargon” (421, n. 4), appears in Letters 197F and 254J (327, 421). The word “miracles,” Schreber’s term for the symptoms he experiences, appears in Letters 186J and 333J (307, 531). Nerve contact appears in Letter 204J (342), and Letter 275J has “‘a bird loaded with corpse poison’” in quotation marks (449), a recollection of Schreber’s emphasis on the significance of birds and insistence that God deals only with corpses.

It is clear that Freud and Jung enjoyed their correspondence about Schreber and their use of Schreberisms, but that positivity soon became toxic. Comments on the *Memoirs* serve also to illustrate the rift between the two psychologists. For example, Jung writes: “That passage in your Schreber analysis where you ran into the libido problem (loss of libido = loss of reality) is one of the points where our mental paths cross [diverge]. In my view the concept of libido as set forth in the *Three Essays* needs to be supplemented by the genetic factor to make it applicable to Dem. praec.” (Letter 282J, 14 Nov. 1911, 461). Jung is critical here of Freud’s insistence that libido is purely sexual; libido, Jung believes, has other dimensions, and sexual libido is not automatically applicable to schizophrenia. Jung hammers away at the limitation of Freud’s libido theory a month later:

> As for the libido problem, I must confess that your remark in the Schreber analysis . . . has set off booming reverberations. This remark, or rather the doubt expressed therein, has resuscitated all the difficulties that have beset me throughout the years in my attempt to apply the libido theory to Dem. praec. The loss of the reality function in D. Pr. cannot be reduced to repression of libido (defined as sexual hunger). Not by me, at any rate. Your

[3] Freud quotes Schreber as stating that fleeting-improvised men are “‘human shapes set down for a short time by divine miracles only to be dissolved again’” (Letter 212F, 24 Sept. 1910, 354, n. 3). In Macalpine and Hunter’s translation, they are “transitorily put into human shape by miracles” (Schreber 61). Jung, in *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox*, mentions “‘fleeting-improvised men’” and “‘fleetingly deposited men’” (CW 3, par. 150 and n. 7). In addition, “a (miniscule) *Freudian* soul” is an “[a]llusion to the ‘little men’ (souls) who tormented Schreber by ‘nerve contact’” (Letter 215J, 20 Oct. 1910, 360 and n. 8).

> doubt shows me that in your eyes as well the problem cannot be solved in this way. (Letter 287J, 11 Dec. 1911, 471)

Freud addresses their disagreement in his reply, suggesting that "there is no reason to suppose that this scientific difference will detract from our personal relations" (Letter 319F, 13 June 1912, 510). He thinks that their relationship can endure a divergence of opinion on libido theory, but that was of course not the case.

That Jung's reactions to Freud's Schreber text reflect the two men's initial alignment and friendship, but later register their falling out, has not escaped the critics. Jung's opinion of Schreber's case emphasizes schizophrenia over paranoia as far back as the 1907 publication of *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox*, an interpretation he shared with Bleuler (Lothane 322–24), and builds upon Jung's definition of libido as broader than pathology or sexuality (Funt 107–08).There may be a slight contradiction, however, in Funt's comments on Jung's disagreement with Freud. On the one hand, "Jung seemed to have no basic disagreement with Freud's description, although he took great issue with the theoretical implications" (103). But then: "The rift between Jung and Freud became increasingly evident after Freud published his Schreber" (106). In other words, *Memoirs* became a focal point for a disagreement that had preceded all the letters about Schreber. As Lothane writes, "Small wonder Jung pounced to use the Schreber analysis to dynamite the libido theory" (339).

Jung offers two bluntly critical statements on Freud's approach. The first, a general critique that uses Schreber as an example, appears in "On Psychological Understanding." Jung argues that Freud has reduced "the fantasy-structure to its simple, fundamental elements. This is what Freud has done. But it is only half of the work. The other half is the constructive understanding of Schreber's system. The question is: what is the goal the patient tried to reach through the creation of his system?" (*CW* 3, par. 408). In other words, Freud's emphasis on Schreber's pathology does not consider the teleology of his mental illness. In *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung states, "The case was written up at the time by Freud in a very unsatisfactory way after I had drawn his attention to the book" (*CW* 5, par. 458, n. 65). And Jung emphasizes that "Schreber's case, which Freud is here discussing, is not a pure paranoia" (*Symbols*, *CW* 5, par. 192, n. 8). What, then, does Jung himself make of the Schreber case? The answer is a series of alternative interpretations.

Jung thought that Schreber was schizophrenic, probably because the madman states that "the senseless twaddle of voices in my head causes an absolutely unbearable mental martyrdom" (183; cf. 128, n. 63). Jung writes that Schreber's case involves schizophrenia ("Conscious," *CW* 9i, par. 494, n. 4), that the so-called bellowing miracle arises from schizophrenia (*Symbol*s, *CW* 5, par. 144), and that Schreber provides "[e]xcellent examples" of schizophrenics' "uncertain perception of their surroundings" (*The Psychology*, *CW* 3, par. 171 and n. 31). A second possibility is that withdrawal of libido from the outer world makes it appear unreal and leads the patient to create a substitute inner world that he considers objectively real. Jung confirms the first step, the withdrawal of libido, as follows: "The philosophical view conceives the world as an emanation of libido. When therefore the insane Schreber brought about the end of the world through his introversion, he was withdrawing libido [generally defined] from the world about him, thereby making it unreal" (*Symbols*, *CW* 5, par. 591; cf. *Freud & Psychoanalysis*, *CW* 4, par. 272–73, and Lothane 347). The new world that Schreber then creates is an elaborate projection, as Jung suggests: "There are patients who elaborate their delusions with

scientific thoroughness, often dragging in an immense amount of comparative material by way of proof. Schreber belongs to this class" ("On Psychological Understanding," *CW* 3, par. 410).

What Schreber creates is a *Weltanschauung*, a schizophrenic's projection of "a new-world system . . . that will enable them to assimilate unknown psychic phenomena and so adapt themselves to their own world" ("On Psychological Understanding," *CW* 3, par. 416). That adaptation aligns with Schreber's claim that he has a *nervous* illness but not a *mental* illness (237); he believes that what he perceives has objective reality as well as scientific and theological value. But he is stuck in a psychological trap because of his mental rigidity, which Jung neatly characterizes: "The fossilization of the man shrouds itself in a smoke-screen of moods, ridiculous irritability, feelings of distrust and resentment, which are meant to justify his rigid attitude. A perfect example of this type of psychology is Schreber's account of his own psychosis, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*" (*Symbols*, *CW* 5, par. 458).

On yet a different tack, Jung turns his attention to the archetypal background of Schreber's symptoms: "In the case of an anima-possession, for instance, the patient will want to change himself into a woman through self-castration, or he is afraid that something of the sort will be done to him by force. The best-known example of this is Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*" ("Archetypes," *CW* 9i, par. 82). Closely aligned with the possibility of anima possession is Jung's suggestion that the syzygy (the archetypal pairing of anima and animus) intertwines with Schreber's schizophrenia: "For the syzygy does indeed represent the psychic contents that irrupt into consciousness in the psychosis (most clearly of all in the paranoid forms of schizophrenia." "A classic case . . . is Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*" (*Aion*, *CW* 9ii, par. 62 and n. 12). Finally, continuing with the feminine motif, Jung mentions that "[t]he 'imaginary' child is common among women with mental disorders and is usually interpreted in a Christian sense. Homunculi also appear, as in the famous Schreber case, where they come in swarms and plague the sufferer" ("The Psychology of the Child Archetype," *CW* 9i, par. 270).

In summary, friendship highlights the way that Jung's association with Wells led to *Christina Alberta's Father* and the way that Schreber's *Memoirs* initially strengthened Jung's bond with Freud but eventually provided a context for divergence. Whereas Freud views Schreber as a paranoic whose sexual libido manifests as homosexual urges, Jung sees him as a schizophrenic whose libido, more generally defined, relates to a panoply of possible approaches to the case. Given the narrow application of Freud's libido theory versus the multi-directional alternatives in Jung's writings, it is no wonder that the case of the mad judge contributed to the rift between Freud and Jung but did not disrupt Jung's more casual friendship with Wells. The Schreber case is more subtle and diffuse than, for example, Freud and Jung's difference of opinion on Jung's dream of a multi-story house (Jung, *MDR* 158–59); but the account of their interaction in letters and other sources both reflects and contributes to their intellectual falling-out.

Two: Repression and Insanity

A deeper psychological interpretation of the two books under consideration affirms Jung's belief that insanity arises from repression of non-assimilated content. A partial plot summary of *Christina Alberta's Father* provides a helpful starting point.

After Albert Edward Preemby loses his wife Chris Hossett in 1920, he sells their business (really her family's business), the Limpid Steam Laundry in the parish of Saint Simon Unawares in east London (fitting place names for a character who but limply knows himself). He and their daughter Christina Alberta move to a boarding house where, during a séance, he is told that he is the reincarnation of an ancient Sumerian named Sargon, King of Kings. Primed by years of daydreams, vivid imagination, and interest in esoteric topics such as pyramids, Atlantis, astrology, and eschatology, he remembers his past life as Sargon and begins to assume his former personality, aiming to take over the world and right its ills by ending war, the exploitation of women, and the unjust distribution of wealth. After secretly moving to a new boarding house, Preemby sets out to recruit disciples but manages to get himself arrested at the Rubicon Restaurant (no turning back) and committed to an asylum. Robert Roothing, a sympathetic friend from his new residence, rescues him from that dire situation. Dr. Wilfred Devizes—"'a nervous and mental specialist'" (206), a reader of Freud and Jung (119), and Christina Alberta's biological father—teaches him to see that Sargon is a symbol of human potential and unity, that in truth everybody is Sargon (301). Preemby returns to sanity but dies before he can act on his intention to visit the planet's most interesting places.

Devizes expresses a diagnosis of Preemby that departs markedly from Freud's emphasis on paranoia and Jung's on schizophrenia in Schreber. "'A stupid doctor might mistake his imaginations for the splendour of paranoia or take his abstraction in reverie for dementia praecox or think he was a masked epileptic'" (220). Devizes believes instead that Preemby is one of the "borderland cases" (224), which of course resonates with Jerome S. Bernstein's argument that people like his client Hannah who feels animals' emotions are border*land* cases rather than border*line* cases (7–14). Here "borderland" indicates a nonpathological condition of ego permeability in which an individual experiences the suffering of the surrounding non-human environment. Like Devizes, the novel's critics shy away from such terminology as schizophrenia, but how *do* they diagnose Preemby's mental condition?

Some of the previous interpretations of Preemby are in sync with Jung's theory about how the insane create a "new-world system." Preemby, via the imagination (James 158), experiences "dual consciousness" by living in "two worlds (Batchelor 107), one of which is fantastic (Kemp 186). Another vein of interpretation coincides with Jung's point about the withdrawal of libido—"the individual consciousness respond[s] to the disordered outside world by withdrawing into insanity" (Batchelor 134); however, this interpretation does not accurately characterize Preemby who actively attempts to engage with the world. A better reading is that Preemby and Devizes are different aspects of Wells: the author as he fears to be seen (Preemby) and as he wishes to be seen (Devizes); the latter is "a tough-minded progressive thinker meriting trust and admiration" (Sherborne 271), whose rational call brings the little man back to normalcy.

At this point, a possible Jungian interpretation arises. Bennet notes that Jung considered Preemby to be a "literary example" of "a classical type of compensation" (93), and this characterization is true to what Jung says about the character in *The Collected Works*. For example, he describes compensation as "those subtle inner processes which invade the conscious mind with such suggestive force"; then he adds that "[a] most excellent account—taken from life, so to speak—of such an inner transformation is to be found in H. G. Wells' *Christina Alberta's Father*" (*The Relations, CW* 7, par. 270). That

is, the unconscious compensates by invading consciousness. A bit further on, Jung makes his longest statement on Preemby and compensation:

> Mr. Preemby, a midget personality, discovers that he is really a reincarnation of Sargon, King of Kings. Happily, the genius of the author rescues poor old Sargon from pathological absurdity, and even gives the reader a chance to appreciate the tragic and eternal meaning of this lamentable affray. Mr. Preemby, a complete nonentity, recognizes himself as the point of intersection of all ages past and future. This knowledge is not too dearly bought at the cost of a little madness, provided that Preemby is not in the end devoured by that monster of a primordial image—which is in fact what nearly happens to him. (par. 284)

In other words, the midget personality, who compensates by fancying himself a titanic personality at the meeting point of all times, barely escapes possession by an archetype—"that monster of a primordial image." The "tragic and eternal meaning" of Preemby's evolution will be discussed in due course, but it is, in brief, a more inclusive definition of what it means to be Sargon.

There is also plenty of evidence that Preemby illustrates Jung's theory that repression fuels insanity. To begin with a commonplace, Jung believes that a man explores his masculine side during the first half of life and his feminine side (anima) in later life. Preemby's wife Chris thwarts the proper progression by assuming the masculine role and forcing him to repress his masculine side. As a result, he assumes the submissive, feminine role in their marriage while cultivating his imagination and escaping from reality via the study of esoterica. His lifelong interests prime the pump, and after Chris passes away the séance prompts him to embrace a compensatory masculine identity, the King of Kings. Preemby is making up for lost time.

There is plenty of evidence in the novel of repression in Preemby's home life. In the Preembys' marriage, Chris plays the "Cave Man," causing him to repress his masculine side (15). "He did little except what he was told to do. He was carried over his marriage as a man might be carried over a weir" (16). Chris is "his masterful and capable wife," as a key passage illustrates:

> She was, he had discovered on his marriage, three years his senior . . . [she feels a] proprietary affection; she chose all his clothes for him, she cultivated his manners and bearing and upheld him against all other people. She dressed him rather more like a golf champion than he would have done himself if he had had any say in the matter. She would not have let him have a bicycle for many years, she was a little exacting about his ways of keeping the laundry accounts, she fixed his pocket-money at ten shillings a week, and she was disposed to restrict his opportunities for conversation with feminine members of the laundry staff. (17–18)

Thus, although Chris wants *men* to rule the world (27), she rules in the home with various results: obedience ("Long years of exercise had made him almost constitutionally acquiescent" [38]); female authority ("'Beware of women; they take the sceptre out of the hands of the king'" [103]); and prohibition (Chris "for the most part had been a concentrated incarnate 'Don't'" [228]). Moreover, she squashes Preemby's interest in psychic phenomena, as he tells Christina: "'And when your dear mother said a thing was

Nonsense, then it was Nonsense. It only made things disagreeable if you argued it was anything else'" (95). Consequently, he is like a seed, as Christina realizes: "Mother had kept him dried up for nearly twenty years, but now he was germinating and nobody could tell what sort of thing he might become" (39; cf. "the germination of a seed" on 75). Nevertheless, he admits that because of spousal domination he has until now allowed his life to slip away.

After lifelong repression of his masculine side, Preemby is primed and ready for compensation in the form of a massive inflationary enantiodromia: not just a swing from a feminine stance to a more masculine orientation but also a swing to a completely different personality and the potential for power and prestige. The transition is clearly present in honorifics such as "the Lord and Restorer of the Whole Earth" and "Sargon the First, the Magnificent One, King of all Kings, the Inheritor of the Earth . . . Lord of the Whole World" (138, 134). Although Wells is a good enough writer that the reader never fully discounts the possibility that Preemby really is Sargon's reincarnation, it makes more sense to conclude that Sargon is Preemby's imaginative departure from reality. Read in this light, the whole Sargon episode is the unconscious compensation for years of repression by his wife. Along the way, we have hints that the unconscious is on the move. For example, Preemby reads a book "called *Fantasia of the Unconscious* about the Lost Atlantis and similar things" (69; italics added). Given the phrase "the great change in his mind" (76), Preemby's transformation via the unconscious resembles a *metanoia*.

In the ways just described, Preemby's situation illustrates Jung's theory that repression leads to insanity. When his wife's overactive animus drives his masculine agency into the unconscious, he becomes the midget personality Jung recognizes. After she dies, the repressed masculine energy overcompensates by creating the fantasy that Preemby is an ancient ruler reincarnated to address modern ills. Repression leads to insanity via compensation.

A similar process, we may suggest, is at work in Schreber who, like Preemby, believes that he is reincarnated and that in previous lifetimes he was a Hyperborian woman, Jesuit Novice, Burgomaster, Alsatian girl, and a Mongolian Prince (that is, Genghis Khan, a direct parallel to Preemby's fantasy of being Sargon) (Schreber 88). Along with the reincarnation parallel, there is a need to address Freud's theory that homosexual feelings drive Schreber's paranoia—a theory based on Schreber's statement "that it really must be rather pleasant to be a woman succumbing to intercourse" (46). On that possibility Schreber's critics are wholly negative: the homosexual theory is a great mistake (Canetti 449); Freud projected his own homosexual feelings for Wilhelm Fleiss onto Schreber (Funt 105); Schreber was at most a cross-dresser and a pseudohomosexual (Lothane 333); and "he was surely representing his own life's devastation rather than expressing a homosexual wish" (Dinnage xiv). A much more likely theory appears in Simon Pummell's film, *Shock Head Soul: The Story of Daniel Paul Schreber*, which suggests that the fantasy of turning into a woman so that he can repopulate the world compensates for his wife Sabine's six miscarriages over a fifteen-year period.

Schreber's behavior in the asylum surely indicates that repressed material is manifesting in fits of inflation and grandiosity. Although he characterizes his experiences as divine miracles, the simple fact is that repressed content is manifesting. Grimaces, bellowing, rage, and sexual stimulation all suggest the release of repressed content (Lothane 386ff.), making Schreber "like an infant calling for his mother" (Baumeyer 71).

If repression of the feminine may also stem from Schreber's "imbalanced masculine perspective" as a superior court judge (Funt 111), then he overcompensates by fantasizing about turning into a woman. The stronger the repression, the stronger the compensation must be: Schreber does not just cultivate his feminine side; he believes that he is transforming physiologically into the opposite sex—an absurd exaggeration of Jung's idea that in the second half of life a man embraces his feminine side.

Various factors ratchet up the compensatory element of Schreber's delusions. First, his statement that "*everything that happens is in reference to me*" (233) shows his inflationary grandiosity. Second, he considers himself a singular historical figure because the "marvelous concatenation of events" that happened to him has "probably never before happened in the history of the world" (41). Third, he believes that his religious revelations—which are objectively real "supernatural matters" (191) and exceed what science and intellect could achieve in thousands of years (68)—will lead to "the overthrow of all existing religious systems" (258). Ironically, though, he undermines his own position. "I have no doubt whatever that my early ideas were not simply 'delusions' and 'hallucinations,'" and he asserts that "*there is something rotten in the state of Denmark*—that is to say in the relationship between God and mankind" (186). But in applying Shakespeare's language to his own situation, Schreber misses an important difference between himself and Hamlet: namely, Hamlet acknowledges the Ghost's objective reality because others see it, whereas no one else experiences what Schreber sees, hears, and feels.

The next interpretation aligns with Han Israëls's belief that the provenance of Schreber's disorder is the pressure of his being president of a senate of the Higher Regional Court in Dresden (173). When overwork ("mental overstrain" [Schreber 44]), the pressure of working with more experienced senior colleagues, lack of a social life, and insomnia thinned the veil that normally separates consciousness from the unconscious, repressed material springs forth in compensation for years of repression. But what exactly is the thing that is repressed? Schreber himself gives us one answer: "Whoever knew me intimately in my earlier life will bear witness that I had been a person of calm nature, without passion, clear-thinking and sober, whose individual gift lay much more in the direction of cool intellectual criticism than in the creative activity of an unbounded imagination" (69). Reason dominates passion and squelches imagination. He also attributes to himself "two qualities . . . without reservation, namely *absolute truthfulness* and *more than usually keen powers of observation*; no one who knew me in my days of health or witnessed my behavior now would dispute this" (221). He adds, "Few people have been brought up according to such strict moral principles as I, and have throughout life practiced such moderation especially in matters of sex, as I venture to claim for myself" (249). Because of the earlier repression of the body, Schreber experiences phenomena related to changes in his body. As William G. Niederland points out, his father, Dr. Daniel Gottlieb Moritz Schreber, was a medical school instructor who published books on child rearing techniques that he apparently applied to his own son—techniques that involved severe repression of emotion and actual physical restraints to correct children's posture (50−56). In fact, there is general agreement in the criticism of *Memoirs* that the father lies in many respects at the root of Schreber's nervous illness. Since "[s]uppression, control, [and] total obedience are the keynotes" of Schreber's upbringing (Dinnage xvi) and harsh discipline the norm (Schatzman 50), the roots of Schreber's paranoia lie in the enactment of his father's repressive system on the son's body (Kohut 256). If Niederland is correct that Schreber

was subjected to his father's gadgets, then, for example, "the so-called *compression-of-the-chest-miracle*" (Schreber 143) probably has its roots in Dr. Schreber's use of orthopedic restraints. Similarly, if the father's child-rearing system forbade complaints, the repressed emotions festered in the unconscious for decades and then manifested as the bellowing miracle when stress and insomnia thinned the veil, allowing the unconscious to compensate. In other words, Schreber's nervous illness compensates for both physical and emotional repression, much as Jung supposes in his statement in "Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*."

Many more examples could be given, for *Memoirs* is chock-full of details. But even this brief discussion confirms that Jung is right to suggest that the two texts illustrate the idea that repression leads to insanity. The present analysis has taken the parallel further than Jung did by identifying a contrast: Preemby's repression-in-marriage results in the fantasy of being a person of great masculine authority, but Schreber's repression of everything in childhood produces an exaggerated version of embracing the feminine during the second half of life. The two figures—Preemby and Schreber—are opposites in that respect. The analysis also reveals compensatory projection to be an enthymeme in Jung's repression-insanity dyad.

Three: About God

Wells registers his theological opinions in his short book *God the Invisible King*, which was published in 1917, eight years before *Christina Alberta's Father*. According to Wells, there is a living God who is personal and intimate. God resides primarily in the human heart, is finite, and is a single spirit, though possessing two aspects: the God of Nature (Creator) and the God of the Heart (Redeemer). Wells opposes the Trinity, doctrine, and creeds, favoring instead direct contact between humans and the Divine. As summarized by R. Thurston Hopkins, *God the Invisible King* suggests that God is not only finite, singular, and handicapped but also militant and adventurous (60−67).

There is great divergence among Wells's treatise on God, his treatment of God in the novel, and Schreber's statements about God in his *Memoirs*. But we begin with the foundational piece—Devizes's description of the psyche. There is good Jungian psychology here, and it helps inform the novel's statements on God. One suspects that the fictional character not only reads Jung but also echoes his psychology because the terminology in the novel matches Jung's ideas quite precisely. The primary self (shadow) is "the old instinctive individual, fearful, greedy, lustful, jealous, self-assertive." The social self (persona) involves deeper "social instincts and dispositions arising out of family life" (Wells 242). Devizes further juxtaposes ego ("'individual egotistical men'") and individuation ("'synthesis and co-operation . . . common aims'") (325). Devizes/Wells builds on the unity implied by synthesis and cooperation, and unity characterizes the theological position on which the novel eventually comes to rest.

Christina Alberta's Father offers a variety of spiritual approaches in the following order of appearance. There is Christina's "explicitly irreligious" position. "She did not believe in respectability, Christian morality, the institution of the family, the capitalist system, or the British Empire" (48). As a Communist, she favors Bolshevism. A second view is the naïve New Age credibility (runaway imagination) that Preemby embraces when he is tricked by the séance into believing that he is Sargon. There is a sense that God is infinite (157) and that Providence is active (164), but there is also Preembyism or "infinite

nothingness" (167). A fellow asylum inmate at the Gifford Street Infirmary espouses such nihilism by reciting a poem that makes the following points: God will take vengeance; atheism and theology are both wrong; God exists but has no face, so cannot show it; people think that he does not exist, but he is there; the speaker is "lost" but found God in the void "[u]nmasked and a little annoyed" (188). Other mad poems claim that life is about lust and pain, moves from dirt to dirt, and is meaningless (190, 192). (The idea that nature is filthy and that we are dirt anticipates Christina Alberta's statement: "'It's a dust-heap of a world'" [216]). Further on, the novel equates God and the Power, but there is dualism: Power and Supreme Power versus Anti-Power, the latter pushing toward Preembyism and confusion (184, 190–91, 260). But even in the extremity of his incarceration, Preemby pushes back against the mad poetry by stating, "'All things are joined together and work together and continue for ever [sic]'" (193), a position that anticipates the unity that Devizes emphasizes.

Along with adumbrating some basic Jungian psychological concepts, the novel affirms the principle of unity. Devizes schools Preemby to affirm all life's connectedness and an "'increasing'" or "'immortal mind,'" "'a common mind of the race,'" somewhat akin to the *unus mundus* (241). Devizes emphasizes "[t]he deep-lying continuity of life" (242), that which lies below the shadow and the persona. Preemby comprehends the implication of this unity: "'I am Sargon, but in a rather different sense from what I had imagined. . . . I wasn't only Sargon, but all the men and women who have ever mattered on earth. I was God's Everlasting Servant'" (301). Sargon and kingship are just terms for the potential within everyone, and God manifests in human connection. What emerges in the novel, then, is a solution to Preemby's *psychomachia* (soul struggle). On the one hand, we find Sargon, God, Power, Providence, meaning, order, and belief; on the other, Preembyism, Anti-Power, nothingness, skepticism, and a dust-heap world. The extended binary—a projection of Preemby's interiority—is absurdly played out on the pretext of saving the world. With the help of Devizes, however, he arrives at a new third view: not Preemby *versus* Sargon but instead Peemby *as* Sargon in a more universal and psychologically wholesome fashion.

Projection is also a suitable way to begin examining Schreber's position on God, for Jung quotes Freud's use of that concept. "'Schreber's 'rays of god,' which are made up of a condensation of the sun's rays, of nerve-fibres and of spermatozoa, are in reality nothing else than a concrete representation and *projection* outwards of libidinal cathexes; and they thus lend his delusions a striking conformity with our theory'" (*Symbols*, *CW* 5, par. 184, n. 23; emphasis added; cf. Freud 78). Schreber interprets celestial, biological, and emotional phenomena as God's rays projected upon him, but once again Freud espouses his reductive sexual theory—libidinal cathexes are the patient's homosexual attraction to Dr. Flechsig. As before, whereas Freud stresses homosexuality, Jung stresses schizophrenia: "Schizophrenia . . . infuses new life into the old usage, as in the case of the 'bellowing miracle' described by Schreber, who in this way gave God, sadly uninformed about the affairs of humanity, notice of his existence" (*Symbols*, *CW* 5, par. 144). Similarly, Jung says of Schreber that "the extraordinary happenings going on all around him compel God to 'move nearer to the earth'" (*Flying Saucers*, *CW* 10, par. 690). Jung's reading here is in sync with Baumeyer's sense that the bellowing should compel God to draw near, as though Schreber were "an infant calling for his mother" (71). Alternatively, Lothane asserts that the bellowing reflects "pain and rage" disguised as a miracle (341)—a psychological

reading that affirms Jung's sense that insanity arises from unintegrated shadow content. A romantic interpretation of the rays is also possible. In a section on the Cabala's "hieros-gamos fantasy," Jung notes a man's "'loving desire . . . for his wife'" and then in a note asserts "a parallel to this in the psychotic experiences of Schreber (*Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*), where the 'rays of God' longingly seek to enter him" (*Mysterium*, *CW* 14, par. 18 and n. 123).

These few comments by Jung go only a little way toward explicating Schreber's complex terminology in relation to God. Proper understanding of Schreber's theology requires careful definition of terms, an area where many previous critics have left a deep imprint. Most fundamentally, Schreber speaks of the Order of the World, which seems to mean natural law: "'*The Order of the World*' is the lawful relation which, *resting on God's nature and attributes, exists between God and the creation called to life by Him*" (67, n. 35). God is a prime mover, but he does not micromanage the physical world; nature progresses on its own. Thus, the Order of the World is the equilibrium of creation, a self-perpetuating system that follows its own rules apart from divine agency. Next, the soul or "acting center of the person" (Lothane 2) is contained in the body's nerves, but God's nerves are superior and can transform themselves into rays (Canetti 436). Nerves are physical, but rays are psychological (Lothane 392). Like the fleetingly improvised men, God's rays are attracted by Schreber's nerves, and he believes that he is the cynosure of God's attention. Regarding God himself, there are the two previously mentioned aspects: the lower Ahriman relates to Semites, unmanning, and brother Gustav; and the upper Ormuzd relates to Aryans, restored manliness, and Dr. Schreber (Freud 24; Niederland 67; Schreber 53 and 39, n. 19). These deities inhabit the posterior realm of God, whereas the anterior realm of God is known as the forecourts of heaven, a state of blessedness. The earthly state of voluptuousness—"a general sense of well-being of body and mind" (Lothane 403)—prefigures that heavenly blessedness. Death brings reunion with God when God enters the corpse and absorbs its nerves (Hendershot 23), but reincarnation is possible.

The problem that Schreber confronts is believing that God and Dr. Flechsig conspire to commit soul murder on him. The term soul murder means the destruction of reason (Canetti 450) or, more broadly, "destroying the soul, or mind or spirit" (Lothane 416), perhaps to the point where one "gives up on life" (Butler 174). But imagining that he was being influenced from without probably helped Schreber cope with his inner demons, and in Lothane's view soul murder is an apt term for the physical and psychological mistreatment that he received in asylums (52). Moreover, soul murder is a criticism of Dr. Flechsig's view in *Die körperlichen Grundlagen der Geistesstörungen* (*The Physical Basis of Mental Disorders*) that "'there are no independent disorders of the soul without disorders of the body'" (qtd. in Kittler et al. 6; cf. Butler 175). When Schreber says that God does not really understand living persons because he deals only with corpses, there is a relevant parallel to the fact that Dr. Flechsig, a pathologist, tries to reduce human existence to biological mechanics. In that sense, soul murder is Schreber-speak for scientific materialism. In addition, as Lothane points out, God is Schreber's way of scorning "the omniscience and arrogance of doctors" (69). According to Niederland, it is also very likely that God's remoteness and vulnerability are Schreber's way of reflecting on his experiences in his father's home—Dr. Schreber was sadistic but later withdrew after a traumatic brain injury. Schreber's claim that God deals only with corpses is "a reproach addressed by the sick son to the father" (70, 106).

What, then, can be made of Schreber's claims of mystical experiences? They are intrapsychic events that he interprets as extrapsychic. Lothane, for example, rightly states that Schreber was "in a prolonged dream trance" (381) and that "God became the equivalent of the dynamic unconscious: not I but God in me" (382). There is a distinction to be made here related to John Keats's statement: "The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream. He awoke and found it truth" (1274). When Schreber awakes, he believes his experiences to be truth because the alternative—that he is insane—is too difficult for a learned professional man to accept; again, that is why he insists that he has a *nervous* illness rather than a *mental* illness (237). Either way, Schreber's difficulties are instructive: *Memories of My Nervous Illness* equals what *The Red Book* would be if Jung had lost his connection to the external world.

Let us return to Jung's statement in the key paragraph of his "Commentary" and discern whether his God analogy is relevant to Wells and Schreber. "This attitude [denial of unassimilated content] is equivalent to saying: 'We no longer have any fear of God and believe that everything is to be judged by human standards.' This hybris or narrowness of consciousness is always the shortest way to the insane asylum" (*CW* 13, par. 53). Aside from the fact that "always" amounts to overgeneralization, the statement implies that insanity has spiritual implications that may apply to the religious references in Wells's novel and Schreber's *Memoirs*. Unassimilated content is characteristic of both Preemby and Schreber—suppressed masculine agency and childhood emotions, respectively. The character and the patient believe their intrapsychic perceptions to be extrapsychic and objectively real. But with respect to God, there is great divergence. Preemby corrects an inmate's nihilistic recitation, believes in a dualistic system of Powers, and embraces a holistic and unified view of Sargon. In contrast, Schreber has a highly developed understanding of what he *thinks* is God but what is instead an elaborate projection of his inner disorder. Applying a supernatural yardstick to psychological manifestations is an elaborate self-deception. Perhaps it is not until he eschews his tendency to theologize the unacknowledged content of the unconscious that he improves sufficiently to argue in court that he is capable of self-care. In an ironic twist, *Memoirs*, despite its elaborate fantastical machinery, becomes part of Schreber's argument that he can live independently. The act of writing helps ground him in reality, and the logical way he presents his experiences with God probably works in his favor.

Conclusion

When Jung mentions Wells's *Christina Alberta's Father* and Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* as illustrations, there is more afoot than meets the eye because the two texts are more important in Jung's writings than Jungian scholars have recognized. Regarding friendships, whereas Jung's insights on schizophrenia inspired Wells to write a psychological novel about Preemby's break with reality, Freud and Jung's relationship included many comments on Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* that both caused and reflected their break in relations. As regards Jung's suggestion that repression leads to insanity, Preemby exaggerates the repressed masculine by mistaking delusions of grandeur, inflation, megalomania, and runaway imagination for truth; Schreber projects his repressed feminine side and tries to justify himself by claiming that his experiences are objectively real and of scientific and theological value. Yet just as Preemby fancies himself an ancient king but mellows into a more inclusive understanding of Sargon, Schreber's blunt

assertions of objective reality evolve toward a less literal understanding—not the loss of "the stars themselves," he says at one point, but only "the states of Blessedness accumulated under these stars" (90). He searches below a literal interpretation of his experiences and begins to discern their deeper meaning. As both Preemby and Schreber illustrate by undergoing in-depth psychological self-exploration, the recovery of well-being lies in modulating the literal into the figurative or, in Jungian terms, sign into symbol.

Finally, regarding theological matters, Jung's suggestion that God has been reduced to human standards holds true in each case, and it may be that Wells's point in *God the Invisible King*, that God is within us, is also true in Schreber's *Memoirs*—true, that is, if much of what Schreber attributes to God is a projection of his own psychological dysfunction. In the end, his struggle with God is purposeful, as he suggests in chapter nine by including a poem his wife gave him that stresses the necessity of nigredo (blackness, chaos, the shadow). It states that for us to experience "true peace," God must strike, causing us to experience darkness, pain, defeat, loneliness, and wretchedness (119–20). The point resembles John Donne's assertion that for him to "rise and stand," God must first overthrow him ("Batter my heart," line 3). In that respect, Preemby and Schreber, though superficially very different, both successfully engage in psychological catabasis. Sadly, however, Preemby does not live long enough to enjoy his new perspective on Sargon; and Schreber, after being released from tutelage in 1902, returned to the asylum in 1907 to live out the last four years of his life.

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Reflection

Joyce Victor

My neighbor's pond mirrors the maples that lean over it.
No. These trees wrinkle when the breeze
waves the water. Through their branches, fish lift and fall.
Over bark and twigs algae drifts, unsnagged. The skittery
sun does not warm their watery branches. Nor do they bud
and burst into leaves, like the trees above. Though this,
the pond reflects. To love you does not make us one body.
The space between us shimmers with moving light. When
I try to fathom your depths, you're upside down.

Last Year at Marienbad: A scenarist, a director and a protagonist walk into some archetypes

Andrew McWhirter[1]

Abstract. As the 65th anniversary of the modernist masterpiece *L'année Dernière À Marienbad (Last Year at Marienbad)* (1961) approaches, we are reminded that this film demands a straightforward retelling. Because, in fact, nothing about this film is straightforward. The director, Alain Resnais (cited in Wilson, 2006:70), explains, 'In an international palace, a stranger meets a young woman and tells her the love story they lived the previous year. The woman denies this, the man confirms it and persists. Who is right?'. The film sees three characters inextricably linked together in a love triangle, nameless but for the knowledge of the script that describes them as A (Delphine Seyrig), the woman, M (Sacha Pitoëff), perhaps her husband or lover or guardian, and X (Giorgio Albertazzi), the man who is trying to win A for himself (Van Wert, 1977). The film remains one of the most talked about, owning to its many formal and narrative uncertainties. What actually did happen? What is the film even about?

Because the audiovisual essay is now an established form of scholarship (McWhirter, 2015), perhaps this form of analysis afforded by the digital age can shed fresh light on a complex piece of cinema history. This audiovisual essay pieces together the evidence to demonstrate that the film can be seen as a swim of images in the conscious and unconscious mind of the protagonist, X. These take place only in the pro-filmic time as the film unfolds. X has suffered some great tragedy – perhaps the death of the real A – but inhabits a stasis or purgatory and a physical space the spectator does not see. In what the audience does see, various archetypes adopt image representations (Anima as A; Trickster as guests; Shadow as M) with the purpose of having X heal and resolve his part in the tragedy and to move on with his life. The work is a battle between the memories and repressions of a conscious psyche versus the power of the unconscious seeking wholeness and unification. Who will win?

[1] https://doi.org/10.29173/jjs316s

Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWpY9EAFU6Y&list=PLkDy9Pm-dHrPrKjE8Sv4WDiW4RtD54mbZ&index=2

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Forest of Enlightenment

Patricia Bukur

Freud's Rorschach

20x20, Encaustic Wax, pigment, and black ink produced from the Coprinus mushroom, also known as Shaggy mane. This ink was used for centuries to produce medieval manuscripts, by Patricia Bukur.

Transcendent Function

36 x 36 encaustic wax and pigment on birch board inspired by the deadly Amanita panthera mushroom, by Patricia Bukur.

Neuronal Pathways

36 x 36, encaustic wax on birch board inspired by the process during which specific mushrooms such as Lion's mane (Hericium *erinaceus*) improve cognitive function by laying new neural associations in the brain, by Patricia Bukur.

Artist Statement

Forest of Enlightenment

Mushrooms are my passion. Offering vast diversity of qualities, fungi embody beauty, mystery, fear, and culinary delight. Some build our immune systems to fight disease, while some destroy our organs and result in death. Some expand consciousness by opening doors to perception. Fungi are complicated creatures with whom humans share a deeply symbiotic relationship.

For me, above all else, they are a guide into the world of abstract thinking and visual art. As a Jungian Psychotherapist focused primarily on Psychedelic Assisted Therapies, this work offers a glimpse into mushrooms as a portal to psyche.

"Forest of Enlightenment" is a body of work that examines fungal activity utilizing Jung's Active Imagination, encaustic (beeswax), pigments, and fire. The process begins in the forests, searching diligently up mountains, through fields, between logs, and on trees in search of species both common and rare. The work continues in my studio where I collaborate with mycologists to positively identify species and occasionally discover unknown mushrooms! Later, I communicate with the mushrooms, attempting to understand how they want to be presented. From beginning to end, the process of mushroom encaustics is co-creative.

Trained as a realist painter – focused primarily on portraits and landscapes – my journeys with mushrooms trained me to transition into the sublime power of encaustic abstracts. The alchemy of the wax, pigment, and blow torch beautifully mirrors the cycle of life, death, and rebirth found in nature and in human spirituality.

Mushrooms have taught me to think outside the box, and wax has taught me to let go of control so that the materials can be what they want to be. This body of work satisfies a large part of my soul: understanding the complicated entanglement that humans share with fungi, and dancing with the images as they develop from photos to paintings.

Depth Psychology and Acute Trauma

Greg Mahr
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Abstract. Understanding the acute response to severe and traumatic stress from a depth psychology perspective helps us understand the mechanisms of psychic response to trauma. The horror of trauma and its randomness deeply affects the psyche, creating feelings of helplessness, both internally and externally. Depth psychology offers unique strategies for dealing with acute trauma because it recognizes the archetypal aspects of the inner wounds of trauma. About half of trauma survivors experience what is called post-traumatic growth, or positive personal changes because of trauma (Tedeschi et al, 2018). Those who have stronger acute emotional responses to trauma are more likely to experience post-traumatic growth. Facing the emotional aspects of trauma early in recovery can lead to deeper personal growth. Depth psychology encourages a deep experience and exploration of emotional symptoms and may be an effective way of encouraging post-traumatic growth.

Keywords: trauma, post-traumatic growth, helplessness, nightmares, epoche, acute stress disorder

Introduction[2]

Acute trauma is an important public health issue. In 2020 there were more than 38 million injury-related emergency department visits in the United States (Cairns & Kang, 2022). Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a significant increase in exposure to trauma, with firearm injuries increased by more than 20% since 2019 (Zwald et al, 2023). Acute trauma deeply affects the survivor, 6 to 30% will develop acute stress disorder (Warren et al, 2016). A prior history of assault, as well as certain mechanisms of injury like stabbings, shootings, and intimate partner violence are risk factors for more severe emotional responses to trauma (Keane et al 2006).

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[2] *All clinical material was obtained from research subjects with their written consent. according to institutional protocols. Clinical material has been modified to protect anonymity.*

Acute stress disorder is a severe, immediate psychological response to trauma. Depending on the severity and type of trauma 6-30% of trauma survivors will develop acute stress disorder (National Center Trauma Institute, 2023). Acute stress disorder is often a precursor to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); about two thirds of acute stress disorder patients will develop PTSD. Acute stress disorder, like PTSD, is associated with nightmares, intrusive thoughts, affective numbing, and avoidance. Nightmares occur in about half of acute stress disorder patients. If severe symptoms persist for a month after trauma, patients are diagnosed with PTSD rather than acute stress disorder.

Depth psychology offers unique insights into the experience of acute trauma. Understanding acute stress disorder can help elucidate how the mind processes trauma. A depth psychology perspective can enrich this understanding.

What is trauma?

Laplanche & Pontalis (1973), in their classic text, *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (p.465), define trauma as "an event in the subject's life defined by its intensity, by the subject's incapacity to respond adequately to it, and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects it brings about in the psychical organization." Van der Kolk (2014), one of the great modern authorities on trauma, was trained in psychoanalysis. He describes trauma in similar language, as a terrible experience that cannot be integrated, so that it is relived rather than remembered.

Before the 1970s, it was felt that healthy individuals would simply recover naturally from trauma without long-term ill effects. The vulnerabilities of those who had problems after trauma were the focus of research; those who suffered long-term impacts of trauma were, in a sense, blamed for the impact of trauma on their lives. The modern paradigm shift in conceptualization of trauma focuses on the severity of the stressor rather than the perceived vulnerabilities of the victim (Jones & Wesseley, 2006).

Especially from a global perspective, trauma is nearly ubiquitous. Stories of wars, famines and refugees fill our headlines. It is estimated that 70% of the world's population is exposed to significant trauma. The are many types of traumas and important differences in the severity of traumatic injuries. Our clinical work focuses on the acute traumas that are common in urban settings in the US: namely, assaults, motor vehicle accidents and falls.

Depth psychology and trauma

The Jungian analyst Papadopoulos (2020) explored the painful depths of the traumatic experience. He identified two types of pain associated with trauma: the trauma pain and the "existential/ontological pain." Trauma pain is the physical pain associated with the adverse event, together with concomitant aspects of the traumatic injury, like loss of function, financial loss, and grief. Trauma also causes the pain associated with, in Papadopoulos's words, "the big unanswerable questions" (p. 3). These are the questions raised by the randomness and injustice of trauma, question like *Why me? Why did I lose everything? What is the point of life?* According to Papadopoulos, this aspect of traumatic injury is often more distressing to the trauma victim than trauma pain, but we lack the language and tools to conceptualize and address existential/ontological pain. Yet it is precisely this kind of pain that facilitates posttraumatic growth.

We, meaning the network of caregivers and victims, avoid this existential/ontological pain by reverting to what Papadopoulos calls "the societal discourse of the expert" (p.71). Human suffering is reconceptualized as psychological distress experts are assigned to treat that distress. The suffering associated with the existential/ontological pain is avoided. We see this mechanism played out in our clinical work in the acute care surgical setting. The families of a trauma survivor or the surgical caregivers will request that psychiatry or psychology be present at the bedside when a patient is told the bad news that a loved one has died in the accident that injured them. They imagine that the presence of the "expert" will somehow make the bad news more tolerable. In fact, it "psychologizes" the bad news which diminishes the authenticity of the suffering (Papadopoulos, 2020, p.34) . While caregivers psychologize, trauma victims somatize; that is, they experience their distress in the somatic realm instead of in the existential/ontological realm. Unanswerable questions are experienced as medical problems with potential solutions. Trauma survivors are offered false narratives that provide comfort to their caregivers instead of facing squarely the painful issues trauma raises.

Related to the existential/ontological aspects of trauma is the concept of moral injury. This term originally was used in military contexts, where a soldier, in obedience to his superiors was forced to commit acts that violate his internal moral code. Shay (1994) called this aspect of trauma a "betrayal of what's right" (p.6) that transcends the usual description of PTSD. Trauma survivors must face a form of this moral injury. The injustice of an assault violates internal, universal moral standards and forces the victim to realize that the just world hypothesis by which they, like most of us, lived was not in fact valid.

Post-traumatic growth

Post-traumatic growth (PTG) refers to the surprising psychological improvements observed in individuals' recovery from acute trauma. PTG can occur in as many of a third of trauma survivors. Women are more likely to experience PTG, as are those with the personality trait of openness to new experiences. The kinds of psychological changes noted in PTG include deeper interpersonal relationships, greater resilience, and an increase in spirituality. Paradoxically, those individuals who suffer a higher degree of emotional distress in the period of acute trauma recovery are more likely to have PTG (Tedeschi et al, 2018).

While PTG is very real, an excessive focus on it can serve as a way of avoiding the pain, suffering and grief associated with trauma. Caregivers must not collude with families and patients by pretending the trauma "wasn't so bad" or that "good will come of it." There is no "brightside" to acute trauma. If PTG does come, it comes because of squarely and authentically facing the horror of the traumatic event. Historical and literary case examples can help illustrate the process of PTG.

Frida Kahlo

At age 14, Frida Kahlo was riding home with her schoolmates on a tram in Mexico City. In one horrible moment a city bus crashed into the tram. Seven people were killed. A four-foot metal spike penetrated Kahlo's pelvis from the back, emerging out the front. Her young boyfriend, brave beyond his years, saved her life by pulling the spike through her body and out of her as she screamed in excruciating pain.

Kahlo spent months recovering in the hospital, then months at home. To the surprise of her doctors, she was able to walk again, though always with a significant limp. Chronic pain plagued her all her life. During her recovery she began to paint, and with her painting she both expressed and transcended her pain. "My painting carries with it the message of pain" (Kahlo 2008, p. 72) she wrote. She experienced post traumatic growth which expressed itself in her painting, and her painting helped her survive subsequent traumas, like a miscarriage that was nearly fatal.

Kahlo clearly experienced the moral injury associated with trauma and described it beautifully. In a letter to her friend Alejandro Gomez Arias a year after her accident she writes, "If you knew how terrible it is to know suddenly, as if a bolt of lightning elucidated the earth. Now I live in a painful planet, transparent as ice, but it is as if I had learned everything in a few seconds." (Kahlo, 2007, p.27)

Jung

In *Memories, dreams and reflections* Jung (1963) described a traumatic fall suffered in childhood. He experienced his trauma somatically and was disabled for several months with a variety of somatic symptoms. He and his father both ignored the psychological impacts of the trauma and viewed it purely medically, seeking the opinions of multiple specialists at great expense to the family. Jung finally realized that he had some voluntary control over his symptoms, then had a sudden flash of insight not unlike Kahlo's. ". . . suddenly for a single moment I had the overwhelming impression of having just emerged from a dense cloud. I knew all at once: *now I am myself!* It was as if a wall of mist were at my back, and behind that mist there was not yet an "I." But at that moment *I came upon myself*" (p.32). Jung's new identity included the experience of suffering and trauma.

Job

The story of Job begins with an offstage event in heaven, a wager between God and Satan. Because of this wager Job loses his flocks, his health, and his children. Job realizes that he is tormented because of events that he does not understand, that occur for no comprehensible reason. Like many trauma survivors, Job is isolated by his suffering. Job's friends are unsympathetic; they respond to Job's pain with blame and othering. They do not understand Job's insight and truth, that he is being punished for no reason. They try to convince Job that he must be to blame for his suffering because God only punishes sinners; they insist that unlike them he refuses to admit his sins and accept blame. Job's power is in his insistence on the truth that he has done nothing wrong. After many pages of dialogue with his unsupportive friends, God Himself intervenes, addressing Job from out of a whirlwind. God chastises Job's friends, saying that "they have not spoken rightly concerning me" (*English standard version Bible*, 2009, Job 42).

By insisting that God is always just Job's friends have not understood God. Job's friends also have not listened to Job, refusing to hear and accept his story. They have offered Job a false narrative and attempted to explain away his pain. God makes a dramatic entrance but offers no justification for his actions but insisting on his power and otherness.

Job is a heroic figure, realizing the deep truths about life and trauma. Job's suffering leads to post-traumatic growth, symbolized concretely in the fact that all his wealth is not only restored to him, but doubled. As Jung (1958) brilliantly pointed out in *Answer to Job*,

it is a moment of insight for God as well; God realizes his own moral failing through Job's suffering.

Trauma treatment and research program

The authors have been involved in a large trauma treatment program in a Level 1 Trauma center in Detroit, the Henry Ford Trauma Recovery Center. The program treats about 3000 acute trauma survivors per year and includes a research component with both qualitative and quantitative aspects. In the research context, we have collected over 100 posttraumatic dreams from trauma survivors. The study's population is 72% Black, 76% male and mostly low income (44% had an annual income under $40,000). Important preliminary data from this study have included findings that nightmares predict subsequent suicidal ideation in trauma survivors (Seymour et al., 2023). In this paper we describe some of the qualitative results of our clinical and research work from the perspective of depth psychology.

Qualitative findings

Case Study: The phenomenological experience of trauma

Mary was a student in an apprenticeship program in Detroit, living off campus. Her favorite hobby was working on her old car. She usually repaired it in the street in front of her apartment because she did not have her own garage. She was friends with many of the neighbors, but one evening when Mary was outside a loud group of strangers carried on across the street. Mary yelled, "Quiet down! Kids live in this neighborhood!" and went back to working on her car. Unbeknownst to Mary, one member of the loud group pulled his car around the block, parked in the alley, and approached Mary from behind. When he was within a foot or two, he pulled out a handgun and began firing. Mary was taken by surprise. Despite being defenseless, she grabbed the gun and pushed it down as her assailant fired. About a dozen bullets entered Mary's abdomen and lower limbs, causing severe injuries. Mary also suffered a severe thermal burn on the palm of her right hand; a gun barrel becomes white hot as multiple rounds are fired.

Mary never lost consciousness and called 911. Surgeons stabilized her bleeding (she required the transfusion of 12 units of blood). They removed several bullets, including one lodged next to Mary's spine. Mary survived. She spent about a month in the hospital, where we saw her almost daily. We helped her deal with her pain, her nightmares, and her family. We validated her pain and suffering and acknowledged the permanent life changes that she faced. We talked about the surgeries she had recovered from and the surgeries she would face.

The assault changed Mary's life forever. She went back to school but chose a different career, one in a helping profession. Mary's family was supportive but was never able to acknowledge the severity of Mary's emotional pain and distress. Mary came to realize her family's emotional limitations and learned to relate to them in a much more assertive and mature way. Mary began to make the first steps toward post traumatic growth. She grieved all she had lost but celebrated that which she had gained. "I know now that anything can happen, at any moment," Mary said. That realization was horrifying but liberating. "I know that my life matters."

Case Study: Nightmares and acute trauma

David stepped out of his home one rainy afternoon and was accosted by two males. One demanded David's wallet, which he had left at home. When David explained this, the second man pulled out a gun and shot him three times in the abdomen. When the men walked off, nonchalantly chatting, David attempted to crawl to another home but fainted. Luckily a passerby noticed David and called 911. David survived.

For a few weeks after his assault David was haunted by trauma-replicative nightmares. He slowly recovered physically, and he was treated in therapy by the trauma psychology service. Besides his nightmares, David struggled with the helplessness he felt trying to crawl to safety and the moral outrage he felt at the nonchalant indifference of his assailants. We explored his nightmares as internal experiences, as depictions of the traumatic experience running amok in his psyche. Spontaneously, David's nightmares began to change. The assailants were present, they pulled the same gun, but in his dreams he was able to flee or sometimes wrestle the gun from his assailant. The dreams no longer brought terror or woke him from sleep.

David made a good recovery, both physically and psychologically. After a year he was able to return to graduate school. His nightmares gradually disappeared, and he never developed symptoms of PTSD despite the severity of his trauma.

Discussion: Helplessness and moral injury

Detailed clinical interviews with trauma survivors revealed certain consistent patterns of trauma response. Mary's story is an example of moral injury and the questions it stirs, as well as a story of traumatic growth and recovery. Trauma stirs feelings of helplessness. In the words of our patient Mary, we realize that, through trauma, "anything can happen." The sudden awareness that momentous and permanent change can occur unpredictably violates the just-world hypothesis that informs our everyday lives; good actions are rewarded; bad actions are punished. Trauma is often random and unpredictable, affecting the lives of the guilty and the innocent, without regard for justice.

This helplessness is external, in relation to a world over which we suddenly realize we have no control, but also internal. Patients and families state that the grief, sadness, and anger is too much to bear. Initially at least, the pain genuinely cannot be processed. Trauma survivors feel despair about their own inability to cope. The ego comes face to face with its own limitations, helpless internally against feelings that it cannot contain.

To avoid those helpless feelings, trauma survivors blame themselves with "If only" thinking. Mary might think, *if only I hadn't been fixing my car*, *if only I hadn't called out to those people*. Terrible as that self-blame is, it is more tolerable than the feeling of helplessness in the face of a random world. This internal helplessness causes many of the cardinal symptoms that are symptomatic of trauma like dissociation, intrusive thoughts, avoidance, and affective numbing.

Aspects of the trauma experience are split off from consciousness because they are unbearable, becoming inaccessible to the ego. Dissociative mechanisms preclude the integration of traumatic experiences. Intrusive thoughts occur when unstable defenses against overwhelming affects like suppression and denial break down and the ego is forced to face unbearable feelings and memories. Avoidance can be external, like avoiding the corner where an assault occurred, but can be internal, like avoiding thoughts and memories that cause recollection of the traumatic event. Affective numbing is subtler, involving the

avoidance of feelings in general, because to feel at all might expose the ego to a burden it cannot bear.

The families and loved ones of trauma survivors face their own feeling of helplessness. Many respond by minimizing the tragedy, offering the trauma survivor false reassurance that "everything will be all right" and "everything will be back to normal." The trauma survivor sometimes feels very alone in his pain because those who love them cannot face the reality of the impact of the trauma.

The response to this awareness of helplessness is an important predictor of PTG and recovery. Acceptance also allows for the mysterious phenomenon of post-traumatic growth, where the trauma survivor makes important life changes because of the horrors of trauma. The historical examples cited, as well as the cases of Mary and David, show examples of post-traumatic growth. Post-traumatic growth can occur as a result of therapy or spontaneously.

Nightmares and recovery

Detailed clinical interviews with trauma survivors revealed certain consistent patterns of trauma response. Nightmares have an important role in processing trauma (Mahr & Drake, 2022) and about half of trauma survivors develop nightmares (Wittman et al., 2007). We collected a sample of almost a hundred post traumatic dreams. Patients were eager to share their dreams, even their nightmares. Using a sample of post-traumatic dreams, we made a phenomenological analysis of post-traumatic nightmare content.

We expected to find dreams that reproduced the trauma, since trauma-replicative nightmares are a common result of trauma. While we found many such nightmares, we realized that the concept of trauma replication is a complex one. Dreams tended to replicate the trauma but with significant and important variations. For instance, the trauma survivor dreamed of an episode in his past life when he was jilted. This dream replayed not the trauma itself but the feelings of helplessness and abandonment associated with the trauma.

David's dreams were initially trauma replicative, but later, as David improved, the dreams themselves changed. In his later dreams, he was no longer helpless but was able to flee or protect himself by grabbing his assailant's gun. As in Mary's case, David's helplessness was internal as well as external, and the dual nature of this helplessness is depicted in his dreams. His assailants ran amok in his dreams, just as they did in reality, but the assailants may represent the inner assailant of the traumatic experience itself. As David improves, he can flee and eventually master this inner assailant.

We found many examples of violent and frightening imagery, like violence and assault. We also found many examples, of dreams that provided insight and spiritual connection. These dreams of insight may suggest a foreshadowing of the PTG process.

Epoche

The historical and literary examples, as well as the clinical cases, suggest a unique kind of insight that can develop from the traumatic experience. What was it that Kahlo, Jung, and our patient Mary realized? This insight might go by many names. It involves the awareness that the world has its own plans, independent of our wishes. It involves a sense of moral injury, the insight that the world does not operate according to our ideas of right and wrong. Heidegger called it *Dasein*, the pre-personal, ontological "layer" *preceding* the ego (Heidegger, 2022, p.27). It could also be called epoche.

Epoche is a philosophical term referring to a suspension of biases and assumptions to understand the world in its own terms. For the trauma survivor, beliefs about a just world must be suspended so that the process of acceptance and a recovery of a sense of meaning can begin. Epoche involves the realization that the commonplace world of everyday experience is an illusion and that this awareness is the beginning of true insight and wisdom. In the case of trauma recovery, it may be the first stage of posttraumatic growth.

A more succinct way of expressing the insight that can lead to PTG is as follows: "Yes, the world is random, but it is not meaningless." Awareness of the randomness that can occur in the world does not contradict the search for meaning that is central to depth psychology; nor does it contradict synchronicity, the concept of meaningful coincidence. The awareness that randomness and meaning exist simultaneously is at the core of PTG.

Conclusion

The qualitative study of acute trauma survivors reveals important aspects of the trauma response. Key elements of that response include feelings of helplessness and an insight into the randomness of the world and human experience. An examination of post-traumatic nightmares confirms some of these insights. Depth psychology, because it acknowledges the depth of human experience, can be an important treatment modality in trauma patients and can facilitate post- traumatic growth.

Contributors

Greg Mahr, MD, is director of Consultation Liaison Psychiatry at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and is on faculty at the Wayne State University and Michigan State University. He has a long-standing interest in depth psychology. He co-authored *The Wisdom of Dreams: Science, Synchronicity and the Language of the Soul* with Chris Drake, published in 2022 by Routledge. He has collaborated with Heather Taylor-Zimmerman on *Dream Wisdom Oracle*, a handbook and set of dream cards, which will be published in August 2025 by Inner Traditions.

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Christopher Drake, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and sleep researcher. He has authored over 200 scientific publications and is a section editor for *The Principles and Practice of Sleep Medicine*. He has received research grants from the NIH and is a former Chairman of the National Sleep Foundation.

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Cracks in the Oracle Bone

Belinda Edwards

Shang dynasty bones of ancestors
exhumed from burial grounds —reburied
exhumed again, burned
messages from the fire's stress-cracks
utter sounds of spoken prophecies
utter sounds from the dead

cracks carved deeply into the bones
opened by fire
emphasized with ink
exist between words and music
Here I also hear the sound of the Babalu
spitting tobacco on his burlap mat
enticing ancestors to come and speak

He gathers the bones and throws them
they begin to sing
hidden rhythm
hidden meter
hidden language
of the ancestors
in these bones

In these bones, I see the priestess of Delphia
squatting over a crack in the earth
positioning her ear toward the ground
listening for whispered oracles of Phyton
between her thighs the divine snake mother speaks

In this crack the old ones— reside
the ones that leave their handprints on rock walls
the ones that whistle, bringing in the spirits
the ones that dance around the campfire

calling back the dead
calling back the water buffalo
calling back the old times
when meaning walked the earth in these signs

Hidden in these cracks
like the encoded secret script
of the *nüshu* women in the mountains of southern China
memory still sings

in the blue hands placed in the indigo vats
dipping and wringing fabric
creating the rhythm of the slave ships
sailing on restless waves

Hidden
in the cracks
consumed by fire
memory survives
the loss of language
the loss of land
the loss of history

Hidden in the cracks
where the bones sing
memory calls us
home.

Medusa's Gaze: Trauma, Transformation, and Environmental Resonance

Heather Hines[1]

Abstract. Through the symbolic lens of the Medusa myth, the climate crisis can be understood as rooted in the patriarchal repression of the feminine principle, resulting in a collective dissociation from nature and the body. Climate denial emerges as an expression of the collective shadow. Medusa's story reflects the dynamics of trauma and the imperative to confront what has been cast out. Healing, in this view, requires a process of witnessing the repressed shadow in order to foster psychic reintegration and restore connection with the living Earth.

Keywords: climate crisis, climate denial, collective unconscious, Hannah Gadsby, individuation, integration, Medusa, microactivism, patriarchy, shadow, trauma, truth and reconciliation, witnessing.

Introduction

The international Jungian community has shown a consistent commitment to addressing the climate crisis, engaging deeply with this global challenge through both intellectual inquiry and practical action, and applying the rich insights of analytical psychology to our ecological crisis. Jung did not separate the personal from the political, nor the individual from the collective, highlighting the unique capacity of Jungian thought to engage with issues of such magnitude. In this spirit, the myth of Medusa is examined as a symbolic lens for understanding the psychological dimensions of the climate crisis.

Originating in ancient Greek mythology, the myth of Medusa, a Gorgon with snakes for hair whose gaze could turn people to stone, first appeared briefly in *Homer's Odyssey* in the 8th century BCE (Homer, 1996). However, a fuller version of her story involving her beheading by the hero Perseus is found in *Hesiod's Theogony* circa 700 BCE (Hesiod, 2006) and later elaborated by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* (1st century BCE–CE), who adds the detail that Medusa was once a beautiful maiden transformed by Athena (Ovid, 2004). Like the climate crisis itself, Medusa is both paralyzing and revelatory, a terrifying force that demands that we face the unconscious roots of ecological collapse. Her corpse-like image, petrifying gaze, and violent beheading reflect cultural complexes: biophobia, death

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anxiety, and the psyche's split from soma and nature, all of which stem from the patriarchal repression of the feminine (Neumann, 1955; Hillman, 1975).

One of Jung's central approaches to understanding the relationship between the individual and the collective was through the exploration of myth. For Jung and his followers, myth serves to reveal the archetypal patterns that unite humanity, transcending the artificial divisions created by conventional social sciences. Through myth, analytical psychology seeks to uncover the deeper, shared truths that connect us all at the level of the collective unconscious. Analytical psychology is uniquely positioned to address the climate crisis, given its foundational emphasis on the interconnectedness of the psychic, cultural, and ecological dimensions of human experience. Such a perspective understands the climate crisis not merely as an external, political, or environmental phenomenon, but as a profoundly psychological one−rooted in unconscious dynamics, collective projections, and entrenched cultural narratives. Analytical psychology thus invites us to examine the ways in which our inner worlds shape, and are shaped by, the outer world, offering a rich framework for rethinking both personal and collective responsibility in the face of ecological degradation.

Medusa's narrative enacts a psychic wounding that reflects our collective relationship with the Earth. Ovid's image of her blood birthing snakes suggests trauma internalized into the planet itself−a metaphor for how unhealed wounds manifest as environmental devastation. Her transformation from a mortal being to a monster mirrors our cultural dissociation from instinct, embodiment, and the feminine principle.

Drawing from analytical psychology, this article argues that the climate crisis reflects a collective shadow in need of integration. Healing requires more than policy reform; it calls for a psychic reintegration of the feminine and a renewed balance within the collective unconscious. At the heart of this process is the archetype of the helper or healer in an emergent form—not as hero, savior, or fixer, but as witness. Such a figure bears the intolerable, listens with courage, and creates space for truth to surface. To examine this archetypal role, this analysis focuses on two contemporary expressions: truth and reconciliation commissions and Hannah Gadsby's *Nanette*. Both illuminate the psyche's teleological drive toward wholeness through narrative, emotional honesty, and, above all the transformative act of witnessing—a collective reckoning through which previously denied realities may be seen, named, and integrated.

Medusa's story, then, is not simply about paralysis, it also offers a path to healing. Her myth invites us to face the shadow, reclaim disavowed parts of the psyche, and renew our connection to the living Earth. As Jung (1959/1969) taught, wholeness arises through the integration of the unconscious—and in the face of the ecological crisis, there are hopeful indications that this process is already underway.

The Role of Myth

Jung's concept of the collective unconscious offered a profound lens for understanding both individual behavior and collective cultural dynamics. At the center of this theory were archetypes, understood as universal and symbolic patterns that have emerged consistently across time and cultures (Jung, 1968a). Archetypes such as the Hero, the Shadow, and the Self have shaped personal identity as well as societal narratives and mythological traditions (Jung, 1959/1969). For Jung, myths were more than folklore or early attempts at scientific

explanation; they were symbolic expressions of the unconscious. Myths gave form to psychological truths and served as a symbolic language through which the psyche communicated with itself and the world (Jung, 1964).

Segal (1998) underscored a fundamental distinction between Jung's interpretation of myth and that of earlier theorists such as Frazer. Whereas Frazer (1890/1996) regarded myths as primitive efforts to explain natural phenomena through allegory, Jung (1959) understood them as spontaneous expressions of the unconscious−emerging not to explain but to reveal. "Myths," Jung (1959) wrote, "are original revelations of the preconscious psyche, involuntary statements about unconscious happenings, and anything but allegories of physical processes" (para. 261). Segal (1998) expanded on this perspective, emphasizing that for Jung, archetypes are innate psychological structures that seek symbolic articulation through cultural forms. Myths, therefore, are not arbitrary fictions but manifestations of psychic reality; they are forms through which the psyche externalizes and communicates its internal dynamics. Such a framework endows myth with both psychological significance and cultural relevance: Myth originates from within the unconscious while simultaneously addressing the collective experiences of a community.

Symbolic communication, according to Jung (1960/1974), was purposeful and psychologically significant. He argued that the unconscious generated mythic material in the same way it produced dreams, as a compensatory mechanism for imbalances in the conscious psyche. As he explained,

> From all this it should now be clear why I make it a heuristic rule, in interpreting a dream, to ask myself: What conscious attitude does it compensate?. . .Only in the light of this knowledge is it possible to make out whether the unconscious content carries a plus or a minus sign. The dream is not an isolated event completely cut off from daily life. . .In reality the relation between the conscious mind and the dream is strictly causal, and they interact in the subtlest of ways" (Jung, 1960/1974, para. 610).

Within such a framework, myths serve as symbolic correctives−messages arising from deeper strata of the psyche that aimed to restore psychological equilibrium. Jung (1959/1969) did not consider the sacred merely a projection of inner content onto the world; rather, he regarded it as an archetypal reality, an expression of the psyche's innate drive toward meaning and wholeness. The sacred thus emerged from the collective unconscious, manifesting spontaneously in symbols, rituals, and mythic narratives.

In contrast, Abram (1996) offered a phenomenological reorientation. Rather than viewing the sacred as an inner archetypal impulse seeking outer expression, Abram located it in the dynamic interplay between self and world. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology and Roszak's ecopsychology, Abram emphasized embodied perception and the reciprocity between humans and the more-than-human world. For him, meaning arises not solely from psychic depths but also through sensuous engagement with the living Earth. In his view, the sacred is not an interior structure externalized through symbol but an emergent quality of relationship, something that happens between, not within (Abram, 1996). Thus, while Jung privileged an inward path to the numinous, one that reveals archetypal meaning through symbols and dreams, Abram pointed outward, locating sacredness in the relational and ecological field. Yet the two perspectives converge in one

crucial respect: neither treats meaning as a human invention. Rather, both see it as discovered, emerging from the deep structures of the unconscious or the living Earth.

Jung (1954) warned that "[t]he unconscious is not a demoniacal monster, but a natural entity. . . It only becomes dangerous when our conscious attitude to it is hopelessly wrong" (para. 329). Repression, then, is the source of both personal and collective pathology. When we ignore or deny unconscious contents, we risk being overwhelmed by them in distorted and destructive forms. The same principle applies to societies. Myths and archetypes provide a vital framework for understanding both individual psychological development and the underlying dynamics of collective crises, such as the ongoing ecological catastrophe.

Myths as Mirrors of the Unconscious

As suggested by Jungian theory, myths function as mirrors of the unconscious, externalizing internal dynamics and offering symbolic insight into the beliefs, fears, and values that guide both individual and collective behavior (Jung, 1959/1969). In this regard, the archetype of the shadow−the repressed, disowned, or denied aspects of the psyche−is particularly relevant to understanding the climate crisis. The climate crisis refers to the long-term shifts and extreme changes in global temperatures and weather patterns, primarily caused by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels. According to the United Nations (2023), it constitutes a global emergency that threatens ecosystems, economies, and communities, requiring urgent and collective action to limit global warming to 1.5° C above preindustrial levels.

Several Jungian thinkers have interpreted the ecological crisis as a reflection of a collective shadow—an unconscious psychic split that represses the feminine. In analytical psychology, the feminine does not refer solely to gender but also symbolizes qualities such as relationality, intuition, care, and embodiment—attributes systematically marginalized in Western, patriarchal societies that prioritize rationality, domination, and abstraction. For example, Hillman (1982) emphasized the loss of connection to the *anima mundi* (world soul), suggesting that ecological destruction mirrors our inner disconnection from soul and imagination. Woodman (1980) directly linked the repression of the feminine to the exploitation of the Earth and the disembodiment of the human psyche. Similarly, Romanyshyn (1989) argued that the ecological crisis reflects a technological worldview born from a psyche severed from the feminine and from nature. Estés (1992) echoed these concerns through her exploration of the wild feminine and its instinctual bond with the natural world. Together, these Jungian perspectives suggest that healing the Earth requires a reintegration of the repressed feminine within both the individual and collective psyche.

The symbolic relevance of myth finds strong resonance in ecological philosophy. For example, in *The Great Turning*, Macy and Johnstone (2012) emphasized the urgent need for a collective transition from an industrial growth society to a life-sustaining civilization. At the heart of this transformation lies a fundamental shift in narrative from paradigms of exploitation and control to those grounded in interconnection and reverence. Within such a framework, myths function as symbolic templates for reimagining humanity's relationship with the natural world, offering pathways toward collective healing and ecological renewal.

In the meantime, the collective repression of the feminine has contributed to an increasing psychological suppression of the climate crisis, accompanied by the activation

of the shadow archetype in the ecological domain. One of the most prominent manifestations of the collective shadow is the widespread denial of human responsibility for climate change. Despite overwhelming scientific consensus on the anthropogenic causes of global warming (IPCC, 2022; NASA, 2025), public opinion remains deeply divided. A Pew Research Center survey (2023) revealed:

- 46% of Americans believe that human activity is the main cause of global warming,
- 26% attribute it to natural patterns and,
- 14% deny global warming entirely.

The disconnection between evidence and belief is not merely a failure of education or communication; it is also a psychological defense. In Jungian terms, it is a projection—an avoidance of uncomfortable truths that reside in the shadow. Denial serves to protect the ego from guilt, grief, and the moral imperative to change. As Macy and Brown (2014) observe, this avoidance is reinforced by the rising levels of mental distress and alienation linked to environmental degradation, highlighting the psychic toll of collective repression.

Jung (2006) anticipated such developments when he observed, "The gigantic catastrophes that threaten us today are not elemental happenings of a physical or biological order, but psychic events... nothing other than psychic epidemics" (p. 3). Climate denial, therefore, cannot be dismissed as mere ignorance or misinformation; it signifies a deeper disturbance within the collective psyche, namely, a refusal to confront the shadow aspects of modern civilization. The ecological crisis stands not only as an environmental emergency but as a symbolic manifestation of a deeper psychic disorder: the repression of the feminine principle. Qualities such as relatedness, receptivity, and care for the Earth—hallmarks of the feminine—have been systematically devalued by a hyperrational, patriarchal consciousness that prioritizes control over connection.

To confront the climate crisis is ultimately to confront the psyche itself. Myths, rather than being mere remnants of antiquity, function as vital instruments for engaging the unconscious forces that shape human behavior. They offer symbolic frameworks through which both individual and collective shadows can be recognized, contained, and transformed. In an era of accelerating ecological collapse, the cultivation of mythic consciousness emerges not as a theoretical luxury but as a psychological necessity. Through figures such as Medusa, whose gaze compels us to face what has long been exiled, myth illuminates a path toward integration, revealing that genuine environmental healing must begin with a reckoning with the psychological, cultural, and ecological expressions of patriarchy and the repression of the feminine within the collective unconscious.

Medusa, Trauma, and Patriarchal Consciousness

According to Hesiod (2006), Medusa is the mortal daughter of the sea deities Phorcys and Ceto, distinguished from her immortal sisters Stheno and Euryale (West, 1988). Ovid emphasized her extraordinary beauty, particularly her flowing hair—a symbol later transformed into a site of dread and monstrosity following her rape by Poseidon in Athena's temple (Dexter, 2010). Instead of punishing the violator, Athena curses Medusa, turning her hair into serpents and marking her as monstrous. This transformation represents a violent fragmentation of identity, one that aligns with the Jungian idea of shadow

projection: the feminine, nature-bound, and violated aspects of the psyche are cast out and demonized.

Perseus's story, entwined with Medusa's tragedy, dramatizes the psychic, cultural, and ecological consequences of patriarchal dissociation. At its core lies a symbolic severance of the masculine and feminine principles—mirrored in the climate crisis, where technological solutions attempt to fix what is fundamentally a relational wound. Medusa's beheading becomes a central image of this psychic split: the repression of vulnerability, embodiment, and grief—qualities long associated with the feminine and the Earth (Jung, 1959a).

Perseus, born of Zeus's assault on Danae and raised in exile, emerges from patriarchal rupture. His conception denies feminine autonomy and prophetic wisdom because Acrisius imprisons Danae to avoid his fate. Divine intervention—not relational healing—secures Perseus's survival, setting a course defined by conquest rather than integration (Raeburn, 2004).

Polydectes manipulates Perseus into a hero's journey in service of patriarchal aims, demanding Medusa's head under the guise of a wedding gift (Raeburn, 2004). Lacking wealth, Perseus rashly vows to fulfill any request, setting in motion a quest shaped less by personal calling than by coercion. Armed with Athena's mirrored shield, Hades's helmet, and Hermes's sandals, he remains insulated from relational encounter. Hades's helmet, in particular, embodies what Corbett (2018), citing Verene, calls *dissociated aggression*—a wielding of power that evades accountability through abstraction.

Medusa, once a priestess of Athena, is transformed into a monster through rape and divine retribution, becoming an archetype of the violated feminine. Her petrifying gaze renders visible the unassimilated horror of trauma, confronting the viewer with unbearable truth. The mirrored shield enables Perseus to kill without seeing—enacting a psychic defense that mirrors contemporary dissociation from ecological grief and the repressed feminine.

From Medusa's severed head emerge Pegasus and Chrysaor, embodiments of poetry and power. This moment signifies both psychic fragmentation and post-traumatic creativity−new life born from the wound (Mento & Settineri, 2016). Perseus, aided by the gods, escapes the grief of Medusa's immortal sisters, leaving in his wake a mythic residue of unacknowledged sorrow. As Medusa's blood spills upon the earth, serpents arise−binding the traumatized feminine to the very ground of being, Gaia herself.

Medusa's head, weaponized by Perseus and placed on Athena's shield, becomes an apotropaic symbol protecting the very order that destroyed her. Ovid's account, retold by Raeburn (2004), underscores the irony: Perseus is celebrated as hero, yet what he slays is never integrated. Athena's adoption of Medusa's image marks a psychic freeze in which the dissociated feminine is preserved as a defense rather than reclaimed as a whole. This gesture signals a failure of individuation: the shadow is projected, not integrated (Jung, 1959a).

What remains are Medusa's sisters, immortal and mourning. Their grief marks the unfinished work of psychic reintegration. As Jung (1964) emphasized, wholeness demands a confrontation with the shadow, the disowned aspects of psyche that carry both suffering and transformative potential.

The Climate Crisis as Archetypal Drama

Perseus, as an emblem of the classical Greek hero, must evolve. His mythic role as monster slayer, defined by conquest, isolation, and divine favor, no longer serves in an age marked by ecological unraveling. Like the Medusa myth, the climate crisis reveals the psychic and planetary cost of dissociating from the feminine, from grief, and from the Earth itself. What is required now is not heroic mastery, but collective transformation. The healing we seek will not come from a solitary genius but from a shared willingness to mourn, to imagine anew, and to restore relationship with the living world. In this light, Perseus must be reimagined not as a conqueror, but as a witness to what has been exiled.

The climate crisis mirrors the myth of Medusa—not only through her power to petrify, but through her symbolic role as both a source of dread and a paradoxical guardian. In later mythological iterations, Medusa's image was used apotropaically to ward off evil, reflecting the archetypal complexity of her figure. She embodies a profound contradiction: she is both the horror that paralyzes and the guardian who demands confrontation with what has been denied.

This duality between the urgency to act and the emotional toll of fear-based messaging parallels the psychological landscape of contemporary climate discourse. Apocalyptic narratives, such as those critiqued by Sideris (2020) as "collapse porn," often attempt to galvanize awareness through shock and despair (p. 4). Figures like Wallace-Wells (2019), for instance, have been accused of sensationalism. While such accounts may aim to motivate public response, their emotionally overwhelming content can instead trigger psychic dissonance and paralysis. Ironically, the very effort to awaken consciousness may intensify the dissociative defenses it seeks to dismantle.

The myth of Medusa, steeped in trauma, monstrosity, and transformation, reveals the psychological dynamics that shape our collective responses to climate change. As an archetypal figure emerging from the collective unconscious in times of cultural crisis, she dramatizes the split between knowing and doing, between cognitive awareness and embodied response. Her severed head, still capable of petrifying even in death, symbolizes what occurs when facts about ecological collapse are cut off from emotional integration. Disembodied knowledge becomes inert, lifeless symbols of catastrophe that are unable to inspire meaningful action.

Athena and the Origins of Patriarchal Consciousness

The iconography of the gorgon—a grotesque hybrid of woman and snake—can be found on Greek pottery, such as a vase from 490 BCE depicting a bloated face, tusks, protruding eyes, and a lolling tongue encircled by snakes (ARAS, n.d.). These features, evocative of corpses, echo cross-cultural archetypes linked to death and transformation. Similar imagery appears in Mayan, Hindu, and Tibetan traditions, suggesting an archetypal link between the monstrous feminine and the liminality of death (Gilmore, 2012). This projection reflects a patriarchal worldview that aligns the feminine with mortality, danger, and nature, a projection foundational to Western civilization's separation of culture from the natural world

Athena's birth is among the most psychologically charged myths in the Greek canon and lays essential groundwork for understanding the archetypal split that plays out in the Medusa narrative, and, by extension, within the climate crisis. According to Hesiod

(2006), Zeus, fearing a prophecy that any child born of the goddess Metis would one day surpass him, swallows her whole while she is pregnant. Metis, whose name signifies cunning wisdom and intuitive intelligence, had counseled Zeus toward prudence and self-restraint. Rather than integrating her guidance, Zeus consumes her, silencing the feminine voice while appropriating her power (West, 1988). In Jungian terms, this act signifies the repression of the Sophia archetype: the embodied, relational wisdom of the feminine principle. What results is not true integration but domination masquerading as assimilation (Jung, 1959a).

Thus from psychic violence, Athena is born, not from a womb but from Zeus's skull, fully armored and issuing a war cry. Hephaestus, the divine blacksmith, assists in her cerebral birth by splitting Zeus's head open with an axe. The imagery is potent: a goddess of intellect and strategic warfare, emerging not from nature or the maternal body but from the fortified citadel of patriarchal reason. Athena thus embodies Logos severed from Eros—a distillation of rationality, order, and civilization, untempered by the somatic, emotional, or instinctual dimensions of being. Though she inherits Metis's intellect, she is stripped of her mother's depth, becoming wisdom in service of control (Jung, 1971).

Athena's origin story is not merely mythological; it is also archetypal. Her armored birth from the head of Zeus signifies the rise of a dissociated logos consciousness, one that is disembodied, strategic, and abstract (Jung, 1971). Such a psychic configuration, which privileges mastery over mutuality, continues to shape modernity's technocratic responses to the climate crisis. The very structures responsible for ecological collapse, including industrialism, rationalism, and the myth of human exceptionalism, now attempt to resolve it using the same disembodied logic that gave rise to the problem.

Climate humanists such as Heise (2016), Ackerman (2014), and Brand (2009, 2013) have extended this pattern. Heise redefined species as networks of lived relations, yet still described the environment as inanimate, unconsciously reiterating patriarchal assumptions of a dead world. Ackerman marveled at humanity's power to terraform and resurrect, proposing biotech as our saving grace. Brand dismissed ecological grief as sentimental pessimism, offering de-extinction and geoengineering as solutions.

While technological interventions are undoubtedly necessary (IPCC, 2022), they remain insufficient to address the psychic dimensions of the climate crisis. At a symbolic level, the current moment reflects an inflation of the Hero and the Promethean Trickster, archetypes of control that, when severed from Eros and the *anima mundi*, perpetuate the very split they purport to heal. What is required is not greater mastery but a resymbolization of relationship: a return to psyche, to embodied imagination, and to a renewed reverence for the living world. Only through such a shift can the archetypal wound underlying ecological collapse begin to heal.

Athena's punishment of Medusa reveals the psychological consequences of dissociation in the aftermath of trauma. Rather than confronting Poseidon, an archetypal embodiment of unintegrated, instinctual masculinity who violates the sacred space, Athena displaces the wound onto Medusa. Her retaliatory act becomes a striking instance of shadow projection, the feminine turning against itself under the internalized logic of patriarchy. The betrayal transcends the interpersonal and takes on an archetypal dimension.

As a goddess born from the suppression of Metis, wisdom devoured by Zeus, Athena unconsciously reenacts the violence that severed her from her maternal lineage. By casting Medusa into monstrous form and banishing her from the polis, Athena externalizes

what Olympus cannot contain: the unbearable chaos, sorrow, and rage that follow violation. Refusing to witness the shadow reveals the psyche's collusion in violence and its inability to reckon with the grief that arises when the autonomous feminine is suppressed. Medusa, transformed into a monster for enduring trauma, becomes a scapegoat, a vessel for the very energies the collective refuses to hold. In a parallel pattern, nature in the climate crisis has also been cast as both threat and victim, demonized for its volatility while simultaneously mirroring the consequences of human excess.

Athena's mythic birth functions not merely as the story of a goddess but also as a foundational narrative for a cultural psyche marked by fragmentation, a consciousness that privileges domination over relationship and knowledge that is untempered by humility. The unfolding climate crisis exposes the consequences of such fragmentation. Like Medusa, the Earth has been violated, vilified, and exiled; its warnings dismissed and its voice feared rather than heard. Only by reclaiming what was suppressed with Metis, including embodied wisdom, cunning intelligence, and the generative power of the feminine, and what was rendered monstrous in Medusa, qualities such as mortality and the transformative aspects of the feminine, can the collective psyche begin to heal.

Athena's curse, transforming Medusa's hair into serpents, evokes deep-seated biophobia, an instinctual fear of life forms perceived as threats to human safety. According to Stanley (2008), such fear frequently emerges in phobic reactions to snakes, spiders, rodents, and blood. The snake-haired Gorgon thus embodies a symbol of creeping, uncontrollable horror and represents a breakdown of the boundary separating the human from the non-human. Medusa's metamorphosis parallels Deleuze and Guattari's (1986) concept of becoming-animal, wherein identity disintegrates and enters a liminal realm beyond structured, anthropocentric narratives. The horror lies in the very dissolution of the ego's boundaries.

Modern horror narratives frequently draw on biophobia. Films such as *The Wolfman* (Waggner, 1941), *The Fly* (Neumann, 1958), and *Alien* (Scott, 1979) dramatize the terror of losing one's humanity to animalistic or monstrous forms (Dodds, 2011). These stories echo the mythic paranoia surrounding the devouring goddess described by Campbell (1949) and expose a deeper anxiety about merging with the natural world, a fear that continues to inform anthropocentric responses to ecological collapse. The fear of transformation, of relinquishing the privileged status of the human, parallels the collective dread provoked by climate change. As the planet warms and ecosystems destabilize, the human ego is forced to confront its own fragility, powerlessness, and complicity. The suppressed feminine and the repressed wild return not only in the form of serpents and storms but also as symptoms of a culture and collective psyche in crisis.

Medusa's Gaze

The defining feature of Medusa's story is her petrifying gaze, an image that perfectly encapsulates the psychological dynamics of climate paralysis. Medusa's name, meaning guardian, highlights the paradox of her curse in which she is both a danger and a protector (Mento & Settineri, 2016). Her isolation in a cave, removed from society, becomes a metaphor for the inward-turning journey of trauma survivors, who seek solitude to process psychic wounding. The cave, long associated with the unconscious in Jungian symbolism, functions as both tomb and womb: a place of mourning and of potential rebirth (Jung, 1971).

The withdrawal may be understood as a symbolic act of psychic defense, a therapeutic gesture that initiates the slow alchemy of transformation. In exile, Medusa is no longer merely a figure of rage and trauma; she becomes an image of the soul in retreat, engaged in the arduous process of individuation in the aftermath of trauma. Her petrifying gaze, often perceived as destructive, can instead be seen as a boundary setting mechanism that interrupts the compulsive repetition of violence and intrusion. Like the archetypal stare of the unconscious, Medusa's gaze compels the intruder to confront what has been disowned within, their own shadow. She emerges not as a monster to be feared but as a mirror of reckoning, an agent of psychological truth.

Lertzman (2012) refers to the complexity of climate emotion as Trickster energy—a force that resists linear solutions and unsettles the ego's desire for control. The trickster, like Medusa, disrupts illusions and exposes contradictions. Similarly, Einstein (2018) observes how responses to ecological disaster often swing between apocalyptic despair and shallow optimism, both of which prevent deeper engagement. These polarities mirror the archetypal tension between denial and transformation—between Perseus's heroic conquest and Medusa's painful grieving.

However, Medusa's wrath, often interpreted as monstrous and destructive, can also be seen as profoundly generative. Her serpentine crown and petrifying gaze not only signify terror; they also mark the thresholds of boundary, agency, and unacknowledged grief. As a symbol of the *vagina dentata*, she embodies more than castration anxiety; she also stands at the liminal edge where patriarchal consciousness confronts the power of the unconscious feminine. The heroes who attempt to conquer her (mirroring the ego's drive to dominate nature and repress the instinctual psyche) are themselves turned to stone: frozen not only in fear but also in their refusal to integrate the shadow.

To approach the climate crisis from a depth psychological perspective requires a confrontation with the shadow. Rather than projecting fear, rage, or despair outward, Jung invites us to turn within—to face the Medusan aspects of the psyche that terrify because they demand transformation. Medusa is not merely the monster in the cave; she is the wounded guardian of the threshold, whose gaze forces us into stillness and self-reflection. Her myth thus reveals an ecological and psychological imperative: to move from dissociation to integration, from fragmentation to wholeness.

Isolation of affect, a classic defense mechanism, enables individuals to recount traumatic events without emotional resonance, functioning as a protective gesture that splits thought from feeling. Dissociation frequently renders the body a repository for unprocessed emotion, a pattern evident in somatization disorders. Davoodi et al. (2018) emphasized this mind-body disconnection, linking early trauma to the emergence of physical symptoms that convey what the psyche could not express.

Medusa's repeated persecution may be understood as a psychic enactment of repetition compulsion, a compulsive return to the site of original trauma where healing and integration remain foreclosed. As Mento and Settineri (2016) observed, the stone garden that surrounds her is not simply the residue of her vengeance; it is a symbolic landscape of frozen affect, a visual metaphor for somatized trauma and emotional paralysis. Her decapitation, the final severing of head from body, psyche from soma, signals not only her defeat but also her dehumanization. In Downing's words, she becomes "the personification of oblivion" (C. Downing, personal communication, December 7, 2019).

And yet, Medusa's archetypal power does not dissipate in death. Once fixed to Athena's shield, her image becomes a talisman, no longer a living being but a potent symbol wielded by the very order that destroyed her. This gesture can be read both as a patriarchal appropriation of feminine power and as an unconscious elevation of the shadow it sought to deny. The Medusa archetype is not vanquished but enshrined, feared and revered, weaponized and preserved. In confronting her image, we are invited to confront what we have cast out: the feminine, the instinctual, the ecological, the grieving, and the enraged. Through such integration, her petrifying gaze no longer paralyzes but reveals, a mirror of psychic truth reflecting not only our fears but also the latent possibilities of transformation once we dare to see.

Medusa's story, then, invites us into an archetypal rite of passage, one that beckons not toward conquest but toward remembrance, witnessing, and inner reconciliation. It is a descent into the underworld of the psyche, where the forgotten, the silenced, and the exiled aspects of the feminine await integration. By reimagining the values embedded in her myth－shifting from domination to integration, from silencing to expression, from petrification to embodied presence—we approach the symbolic threshold of a more whole and conscious relationship with both the living earth and the depths of the Self.

The climate crisis is not merely an environmental or political dilemma; it is a symbolic manifestation of a profound psychic imbalance－specifically, the global repression of the feminine principle rooted in care, receptivity, relationality, and emotional depth. These qualities have long been devalued and exiled from the collective psyche under centuries of patriarchal domination. When such essential dimensions of being are denied, the consequence is not only ecological devastation but also psychological fragmentation, unresolved trauma, and an inner world estranged from the possibility of integration. Addressing the climate crisis, therefore, requires more than policy reform or technological innovation; it demands a symbolic and psychological reckoning, a restoration of the disowned feminine. As Jung observed, "The world hangs on a thin thread, and that is the psyche of man" (Jung, 1977, p. 303). Healing the planet therefore begins with healing the soul.

Witnessing the Wound

In clinical contexts, individuals who experience profound feelings of invisibility, neglect, or isolation frequently exhibit symptoms associated with depression, anxiety, or suicidal ideation. Such presentations should not be regarded solely as pathological disorders to be eliminated; rather, they may be understood as manifestations of deeper intrapsychic distress, emissaries of the unconscious seeking recognition, integration, and healing. As Hillman (1975) observed, "We need to see symptoms not as something wrong with us, but as expressions of the soul's suffering－the psyche's attempt to speak through the body and the emotions" (p. 57).

When we apply the understanding of individual disconnection to the collective level, a similar pattern becomes clear. Maté (2018) explains that when disconnection becomes systemic and entire societies are alienated from their emotional and spiritual roots, it results in outward manifestations such as ecocide. In this context, the destruction of the Earth is not only an environmental crisis but also a symbolic expression of a deeper

psychological wound. The way the Earth is treated reflects the way the feminine has been treated throughout history: objectified, violated, and discarded.

Here, the myth of Medusa becomes especially relevant. Medusa—once a sacred guardian of feminine power—was transformed into a monstrous figure whose gaze turns others to stone. When the feminine is silenced, it does not disappear; it becomes distorted, feared, and projected outward. The Medusan gaze, then, can be seen as a reflection of a wounded collective psyche, frozen in fear and shame. The path to healing lies not in slaying the monster but in witnessing the wound it represents.

To offer a more personal perspective, I often find myself overwhelmed by the enormity of the climate crisis. The scale of collective transformation required can feel paralyzing, and the charismatic force necessary to galvanize such change frequently brings me into contact with my deepest insecurities. Yet when my attention shifts to the local and immediate, a sense of agency begins to reemerge. Picking up my neighbor's recycling, scattered by the spring winds of New Mexico, may appear inconsequential, but the act carries symbolic weight. It engages the ethical dimension of my life and enacts a form of relational care. In a patterned universe where the part reflects the whole, even seemingly minor gestures possess the potential to influence larger systems. Through the principle of isomorphism, individual acts of repair echo across relational and ecological networks, reminding us that small-scale interventions can meaningfully contribute to broader healing. Nelson (E. Nelson, personal communication, June 13, 2024) invokes the Jewish concept of *tikkun olam*, the practice of engaging in small, deliberate acts of repair to restore balance in the world. She describes this as *microactivism*, a term I find both psychologically and spiritually resonant. Such acts are not merely ethical imperatives; they function as symbolic rituals that restore alignment with the Self.

A powerful form of microactivism is the act of witnessing. To listen with presence and without judgment, to offer a containing space in which another's experience can be received and dignified, is to engage in a deeply archetypal mode of healing. The myth of Medusa illustrates the consequences of its absence. Following her violation in Athena's temple, Medusa was not met with compassion but cast out and vilified. Denied the sanctuary of the cave and the supportive presence of her Gorgon sisters, who themselves were repeatedly disrupted by heroic incursions, she was left isolated. Rather than recovering, she became a symbol of unintegrated trauma: her petrifying gaze reflecting the emotional paralysis of pain left unacknowledged. Her transformation into a monster thus serves as a profound representation of how the absence of witnessing compounds the original wound, embedding it more deeply within the psyche.

The image of Medusa offers a powerful symbolic framework for exploring these ideas, as her image reflects both the monstrous effects of trauma and the absence of the archetypal helper, the figure who might have witnessed, contained, or transformed her suffering. Her story points beyond pathology to the lack of a healing function. The absence of this archetype, whether in the form of a therapist, elder, or conscious other, allows trauma to harden into the symbolic petrification associated with the Medusan gaze.

Medusa's monstrous form may be interpreted not only as an expression of rage but also as the outward manifestation of unacknowledged grief. Repeatedly targeted by figures seeking to assert their heroism in the classical Greek tradition, Medusa was subjected to continual violation and exile. Despite the constancy of her immortal sisters, her trauma

remained unwitnessed and uncontained. In the absence of a holding presence capable of receiving and metabolizing her pain, the psychological wound congealed into a complex, one marked by frozen affect, shame, and isolation. When the vessel of psychic containment is lacking, or is compromised by judgment, neglect, or indifference, the psyche fragments. The imaginal realm withdraws, and shame is left to intensify in silence.

Jung (1971) recognized the archetypal dimension of this process, observing that "...when a problem which is at bottom personal, and therefore apparently subjective, coincides with external events that contain the same psychological elements as the personal conflict, it is suddenly transformed into a general question embracing the whole of society" (para. 80). In other words, the amplification and symbolic universalization of private suffering can relieve the isolating burden of shame. When personal experience is mirrored by collective reality, suffering is no longer a mark of individual deficiency but becomes a reflection of a deeper archetypal truth. Witnessing, in this context, is not limited to clinical technique but becomes a symbolic act that restores coherence and connection. In analytical psychology, active listening functions not merely as a therapeutic skill but as an expression of the Self acting as a container. It establishes a psychic vessel in which unconscious material can emerge and be named, amplified, and held with dignity. Through this process, suffering is given symbolic form and transformed into meaning.

Remen (1996.) described active listening as a sacred act through which individuals may recognize and validate their own narratives, often for the first time. In such moments, the listener serves as an alchemical vessel, helping to transform suffering into symbolic meaning. Wiesel's *Night* (2006) exemplifies the profound impact of testimony. His witness to atrocity extended beyond the personal realm and entered the mythic. By giving voice to the unspeakable, he invited the collective into a shared act of moral remembrance. Through conscious witnessing, private pain was transfigured into public memory, a gesture that ultimately earned him the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Inheritance of Silence

As a therapist, I am daily confronted with the power of the untold story. Angelou's (2009) insight, "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside of you" (p. 1), testifies to the psyche's longing for symbolic recognition. Through practices like genograms, clients come to see how trauma repeats across generations: patterns of addiction, abuse, and silence carried like invisible heirlooms. Mapping these patterns becomes a symbolic act of remembrance, calling the ancestors into the healing field. Such ritual witness initiates the work of reintegration.

The unspoken story holds a potent psychic charge, one increasingly recognized by those working at the intersection of trauma, culture, and the environment. Duran (2008) described trauma as contagious, spreading relationally and unconsciously across generations. Unwitnessed trauma festers in our most intimate relationships, perpetuating the same dissociation that underlies our environmental crisis. The Western psyche remains burdened with ungrieved collective traumas: witch hunts, colonialism, genocide, slavery, and the nuclear threat. Volkan (2017) called these psychic burdens "*intergenerational deposits*"—emotional residues that manifest in collective neuroses, cycles of violence, and moral anesthesia (p. 17). Maté (2018) argued that the climate crisis may be one such projection, a symbolic enactment of unacknowledged rage and loss in which the Earth

becomes the scapegoat for our unprocessed grief. In Jungian terms, what is not made conscious will be lived out as fate. Thus ecocide is not merely an environmental issue; it is also the collective expression of a dissociated, traumatized psyche crying out for integration.

Hampton's (1969) assertion that "theory without practice ain't shit" highlights the necessity of embodying symbolic insight in everyday life. His leadership in the Black Panther Party, especially through community care initiatives such as free breakfast programs, exemplifies archetypal energy in motion. These actions were not only political strategies but also rituals of repair that reawakened repressed archetypes of nurturance and dignity within the public realm. They reintroduced the feminine principle, long marginalized, into collective consciousness. In parallel, therapy functions as a modern ritual space where the archetype of the wounded healer carries out the work of restoration through relationship. To witness suffering with presence and compassion is to invite the psyche into its natural movement toward healing, integration, and self-remembrance.

Seen symbolically, Medusa's cave becomes a sanctuary for buried grief. It is an imaginal landscape where the frozen complex begins to thaw. Whether through therapeutic dialogue, restorative justice circles, or subversive counternarratives such as Hannah Gadsby's *Nanette* (discussed in more detail below), truth-telling and truth-receiving become ritual acts through which the hardened structures of culture and psyche begin to soften. These acts of witnessing, both personal and collective, invite the helper archetype back into the story.

The next section will explore restorative justice as a contemporary ritual of archetypal significance: a space where collective wounds can be named, contained, and grieved. If the myth of Medusa reveals the shadow of disconnection, it also points to the path of healing—through witnessing, remembrance, and the restoration of right relationship with the Earth, the feminine, and one another.

Cultural Trauma

The climate crisis may be understood not merely as an ecological emergency but also as a symbolic expression of Medusa's grief, an archetypal reflection of unacknowledged trauma and the long-standing repression of the feminine (Jung, 1968a; Romanyshyn, 2007). In the original myth, what is subdued is more than Medusa herself; it is the potential to witness and hold her suffering. Her sisters, though present, are rendered impotent, their witness silenced by the hero's relentless pursuit of destruction. The story enacts a deep psychic pattern: the sacrifice of empathy and relational presence in favor of domination (Jung, 1969). As Jung taught, healing begins through symbolic witnessing. To meet Medusa not with fear or violence but with reverence is to reclaim the capacity to contain and dignify pain (Jung, 1968a; Romanyshyn, 2007). Such an act softens the frozen structures of the psyche, both personal and collective, and reopens the path toward transformation and integration.

Cultural trauma arises when a collective wound is so profound that it alters a group's identity and its relationship to the future (Alexander, 2021). Rather than remaining confined to a singular historical event, such trauma takes on an archetypal character, entering the collective unconscious and calling for symbolic engagement. Analytical psychology provides a distinctive lens for understanding such dynamics, highlighting the

importance of containment, integration, and symbolic interpretation. When trauma is neither witnessed nor expressed through symbolic form, it persists in the unconscious, reemerging through repetitive patterns and intergenerational transmission.

Scholars such as Volkan (2017) have demonstrated how unresolved large-group traumas—such as war, colonization, or genocide—become embedded in the psychic fabric of nations and ethnic groups. Yellow Horse Brave Heart (1998) described how forced relocation and cultural suppression inflicted deep and enduring wounds on Indigenous communities, leading to what she termed a "historical trauma response" (p. 288). Caruth (1996) and van der Kolk (2014) argue that trauma disrupts linear memory and embeds itself in both body and psyche, complicating direct narration. Drawing from Jungian tradition, Kalsched (2013) showed how early psychic wounding gives rise to protective inner structures – what he called self-care systems – that preserve the ego's integrity but often undermine vitality, relational capacity, and psychological growth. When these defenses become culturally amplified, they may manifest as ideological rigidity, denial, and collective fragmentation.

The climate crisis reveals the same underlying pattern. Macy (2007) and Albrecht (2019) have provided language for the psychological impact of ecological devastation. Macy's (2014) *Work That Reconnects* highlighted the importance of grief rituals and a sense of planetary belonging, practices that help root the psyche in something larger than itself. Albrecht (2019) introduced the term *solastalgia*, a homesickness without physical displacement, as an archetypal response to the desecration of one's ecological ground. These experiences reflect more than emotional distress; they signal a deeper rupture in the symbolic order. In this light, the myth of Medusa offers a powerful map. Her monstrous transformation, rooted in rage, isolation, and psychic petrification, mirrors the psyche's reaction to uncontained trauma. She embodies the wounded feminine, cast out from cultural awareness, her grief long ignored. Reentering right relationship with Medusa means reconnecting with the Earth, the body, the emotional world, and the sacred. Witnessing her pain becomes an act of psychic justice, a ritual that invites reintegration

Such rituals are already taking place, both in personal healing contexts and in the cultural sphere. Analytical psychologist Samuels (2001) has advocated for a more politically engaged Jungian psychology, one capable of serving as a symbolic mediator of collective trauma in public life. For example, in 1997, he encouraged British Prime Minister Tony Blair to issue a formal apology for the government's role in the Irish Famine, framing it as a necessary act of symbolic reparation and integration of the national shadow. The apology marked a rare instance in which political leadership drew upon the psychological insight that collective healing requires acknowledgment of harm in both material and symbolic dimensions. Similarly, Dunlap's (2008) concept of the cultural practitioner offers a model for a new kind of psychological actor, one who moves fluidly between personal healing and public accountability. For Dunlap, the cultural practitioner understands that the unconscious is active not just within individuals but also within social systems. This figure must be able to hold moral complexity, resist inflation, and facilitate symbolic repair in real-world contexts. The cultural practitioner thus serves as an agent of individuation, advancing psychological development at both the personal and collective levels.

Both Samuels and Dunlap have articulated a vision of psychology as an ethical and civic practice. In a world increasingly shaped by cultural trauma, such a vision is not only valuable but indispensable. Analytical psychology, with its deep attunement to the symbolic dimension, the workings of the collective unconscious, and the process of archetypal integration, is uniquely equipped to meet this moment. Unlike approaches that seek resolution through control or technical mastery, analytical psychology offers a framework for symbolic reckoning−a mode of understanding that honors complexity, ambiguity, and the necessity of descent. The climate crisis, as explored throughout, demands precisely such a response: a collective act of witnessing what has long been denied or disavowed. Whether expressed through restorative justice, political apology, or therapeutic ritual, the essential gesture is not domination but presence. The task is no longer to slay Medusa, but to face her with courage and receptivity−softening her into image, into memory, into meaning.

The Drama Triangle as Archetypal Map

To deepen our understanding of cultural trauma - particularly as it manifests in the climate crisis - it is helpful to draw on symbolic models that illuminate unconscious dynamics. One such model is Stephen Karpman's (1968) drama triangle. While originally conceived to describe patterns in interpersonal conflict, its relevance extends far beyond individual relationships. It reveals enduring archetypal patterns that recur across cultural, ecological, and mythological domains. The triangle comprises three roles: perpetrator, victim, and rescuer - energetic positions that emerge within both the individual psyche and collective systems.

These roles are not fixed identities but archetypal constellations shaped by unconscious shadow dynamics. The victim and perpetrator represent polarized expressions of helplessness and aggression, while the rescuer often acts out a compulsive impulse to intervene, control, or redeem. Yet the rescuer also carries latent symbolic potential: when this role shifts from reactive action to conscious witnessing, it can become a vessel for transformation. As each role is transfigured: when a victim reclaims agency, a perpetrator seeks repair, or a rescuer surrenders control in favor of presence, a process of individuation begins, integrating disowned aspects of the psyche into a more unified whole (Jung, 1959b).

The myth of Medusa enacts the archetypal drama triangle, yet with a crucial absence. Medusa is not punished for wrongdoing but for surviving violence. Her transformation into a monster reveals a cultural refusal to acknowledge her trauma. Instead of witnessing her pain, society casts it as something monstrous. Her suffering, uncontained, becomes a spectacle of horror. The gods, as distant perpetrators, represent a patriarchal order that cannot tolerate the presence of wounded truth. Acting through Perseus, they arm him to perform a symbolic severing−not just of Medusa's head, but of the possibility of bearing witness.

The rescuer, the one who might have witnessed rather than slain, is repressed. Yet traces remain in her immortal sisters, who grieve her death, and in the cave itself, a womb-like space capable of holding sorrow. These figures embody exiled aspects of the feminine -- the power to feel, to contain, to see. By banishing the rescuer, the myth dramatizes a

deeper rupture: the loss of the witnessing function that could have healed instead of petrified.

In the era of climate collapse, Medusa's image returns with haunting relevance. Like Medusa, the Earth has been violated, objectified, and rendered monstrous. Her rage is not mere wrath, but also a cry for recognition: an eruption of long-denied grief. She speaks through fire and flood, through rising heat and ancestral storms, through the silence of disappearing species. To turn away is to remain frozen in dissociation. To meet her gaze—truly and consciously—is to begin the work of reparation: to witness what has been exiled and respond not with domination but with care.

There is a danger in allowing the victim/perpetrator binary to dominate our symbolic lens. Framing humanity as the perpetrator and the Earth as a passive victim risks archetypal inflation. Jung (1968b) warned that inflation occurs when unconscious content overwhelms the ego, resulting in either paralysis or moral grandiosity. In such cases, diffuse guilt clouds discernment and undermines a sense of personal responsibility. As Hickel (2020), Klein (2014), and the Climate Accountability Institute (Griffin, 2017) have demonstrated, the climate crisis stems not from humanity as a whole but from specific historical actors: fossil fuel corporations, colonial regimes, and industrialized powers. Precision in identifying these forces is essential; otherwise, the drama triangle loses its symbolic power, and the true shadow−rooted in extractive systems and disowned power−remains unrecognized and unintegrated.

It is essential to name clearly: the Global North, and especially Western industrialized nations, bears a disproportionate share of historical and ongoing responsibility for the ecological crisis. Analytical psychology, rooted in Western intellectual traditions, shares in that legacy and must be critically examined accordingly. Yet it also offers tools for reckoning with it. Through the archetype of the witness, analytical psychology can contribute to a more ethically grounded engagement by cultivating the capacity to dignify and hold the pain of others—especially those in the Global South whose communities and ecosystems have borne the brunt of extraction. Such witnessing is not passive. It is an active, symbolic gesture that demands accountability not only from individuals but from collective and cultural consciousness as well.

Analytical psychology provides a symbolic lexicon through which the shadow may be engaged. As Jung (1970) observed, "the alchemical process was interpreted as a parallel to the individuation process: what happened in the matter also happened to the alchemist as a person" (para. 792). The climate crisis is not solely an external catastrophe; it is alchemical in nature, a collective *nigredo*, the blackening that signals dissolution as a prelude to transformation. Within this crucible, Medusa reemerges−not as a force of petrification, but as a harbinger of awakening. The gaze must turn inward. Rather than brandishing Medusa's head as a trophy, we must ask: what has been silenced, scapegoated, and exiled? What wisdom resides in the wounded feminine, the Earth, the rage of the violated? The hero must yield to a presence that listens, mourns, and restores.

Such witnessing must be collective. The climate crisis cannot be resolved through a Promethean fix; it calls for a communal reckoning, a resymbolization of care, responsibility, and relationship. As Woodbury (2019) notes, the ecological crisis destabilizes both natural systems and humanity's mythic identity. Effective response requires more than political will; it demands symbolic depth. In Jungian terms, the feminine

must be restored not as a passive victim, but as an archetypal teacher, a guardian of thresholds, and a voice of the Earth.

Seen through this lens, the drama triangle becomes a map for psychic movement. We are not doomed to enact the same roles if we bring them to consciousness. Medusa shows us where the shadow lives. She asks us not for pity but for integration. When we stop turning away—when we meet her gaze with the reverence formerly reserved for the hero—the true alchemy can begin.

From Savior to Witness

Within the symbolic descent into Medusa's cave, the symbol of the rescuer takes on renewed importance, not as a messianic fixer but as the witness. The new rescuer is not heroic in the traditional sense but relational: one who listens, who stays, who attends to pain without attempting to bypass it. The therapist, artist, teacher, elder, and ancestor each become vessels for cultural healing. Such a shift reflects the deeper symbolic rebalancing demanded by the climate crisis; a movement away from domination and toward presence, from fixing to holding, from severance to connection.

We see the movement from savior to witness enacted through broader contemporary rituals of restorative justice. Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) in South Africa, Canada, and Germany attempt to hold collective wounds in symbolic containers. While these efforts are far from perfect, often limited by political compromise or lacking material reparations, they represent a public facing of shadow, a willingness to bring the unconscious into the light. In South Africa, Desmond Tutu's model of truth-telling without vengeance created space for grief and dignity (Gibson, 2006). In Canada, Prime Minister Harper's 2008 apology for the Indian Residential Schools was a historic acknowledgment of cultural genocide. President Obama's 2011 apology to Native Americans, while criticized for its quiet presentation and legal limitations (Capriccioso, 2010; Hamilton, 2019), was nevertheless a symbolic gesture of reckoning.

During my internship at the Sky Center for Family Therapy in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I witnessed these same principles in microcosm. Family systems work that involve guided apology, intergenerational storytelling, and shared witnessing became rituals of repair. These interventions were inspired by the work of Madanes (2006), whose strategic family therapy emphasizes healing through symbolic acts and restructured relational dynamics. In some cases, even the identified abuser was invited into the process, not to be excused but to bear witness to the impact of their harm. These symbolic acts of rehumanization echoed the *coniunctio*, Jung's (1970) image of opposites reconciled through conscious engagement.

As Jung believed, the psyche has an innate drive toward wholeness. What is now required is a cultural willingness to see: to witness, to contain, and to grieve. Only then can we begin the work of thawing the Medusan freeze through mourning, creativity, and renewed connection with the sacred. Jung (1970) wrote,

> The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate. That is to say, when the individual remains undivided and does not become conscious of his inner contradictions, the world must perforce act out the conflict and be torn into opposing halves (para. 126).

In this light, the climate crisis and the collective traumas we face may be understood as outer manifestations of our inner fragmentation−symptoms of a collective unconscious crying out to be seen. Healing, then, becomes not only a psychological imperative but also a cultural one: to make conscious what has been repressed, to mourn what has been lost, and to restore connection with what is most deeply human and sacred.

Such acts suggest that healing is not confined to the personal but reverberates outward through the collective field. They affirm the idea that the climate crisis reflects a symbolic expression of the repressed feminine principle−embodied in the figure of Medusa−and that transformation requires bearing witness to what has long remained ungrieved. Just as the myth lacks the figure of the witness, so too does the modern world lack sufficient containers for cultural pain. Yet where witnessing occurs, whether in the therapy room, in truth commissions, or in ritualized community healing, transformation begins.

The concluding section engages a contemporary case study: Hannah Gadsby's 2018 one-woman show *Nanette*, which premiered on Netflix. Celebrated for its emotional candor and formal innovation, *Nanette* departs from the traditional cadence of stand-up comedy, creating space for unprocessed grief and righteous fury. As Donegan (2018) noted in *The New Yorker*, Gadsby's refusal to conceal her anger became central to the show's impact, expanding the expressive potential of comedic performance. In *Nanette*, Gadsby channels the archetypal force of Medusa: not to petrify but as an invitation to bear witness.

The Transformative Journey of *Nanette*

Nanette marked a turning point in the landscape of stand-up comedy, resonating powerfully with the #MeToo movement's broader call to surface silenced anger—particularly women's anger—and to reclaim narratives historically shaped by humiliation and suppression. Yet *Nanette* was not universally lauded. Some critics pointed to a perceived contradiction: Gadsby invited the audience into an intimate personal narrative while simultaneously disrupting the comedic contract to entertain (Hopkins, 2020). But this tension is precisely the transgressive strength of her work. By breaking the genre's conventions, Gadsby mirrored the psychic structure of trauma: fractured, unresolved, and often silenced.

Comedy, in Hannah Gadsby's hands, became a symbolic mirror of Medusa's beheading−a cultural mechanism for severing what is too painful to face. While Medusa's story is a tragedy, her decapitation enacts a patriarchal demand for emotional control: a silencing of the monstrous, the wounded, the feminine. Likewise, Gadsby revealed how comedy often compels marginalized voices to offer relief rather than truth, trading depth for punchlines. Laughter, when misused, becomes dissociation disguised as healing. Gadsby refused this inversion. Instead of release, she demanded recognition.

Donegan (2018) reflected on this dynamic, noting how Gadsby exposes the emotional labor required of those who are othered: the choice between isolation and self-humiliation. In archetypal terms, the comedian becomes a modern-day trickster-clown—masked, wounded, and split between vulnerability and performance. But *Nanette* broke this cycle. Gadsby refused to finish the joke. The performance pivoted sharply into testimonial, confronting the audience with a painful account of sexual assault and the

complicity of silence: "That tension? It's yours," she declares. "I am not helping you anymore" (Gadsby, 2018).

This moment marks a transformation of archetypal role. Gadsby, once positioned as entertainer, stepped into the symbolic function of Medusa: feared, misrepresented, yet potent in her unflinching gaze. Like Medusa, her storytelling paralyzed, not to punish, but to reveal, her refusal to offer resolution becoming both an ethical transgression and an invocation.

Gadsby's choice to disclose her trauma without adornment was both courageous and intentional. She openly acknowledged the potential risks of retraumatization, both for herself and for her audience, yet ultimately prioritized visibility as a lifeline for others who suffer in silence. *Nanette* transcended the bounds of performance to become a ritual act of storytelling, one that did not seek applause but accompaniment. Rather than merely asking the audience to listen, Gadsby invited them to witness, to enter into a moral relationship with the truths she laid bare. This invitation reached its most poignant expression in her closing story about Vincent Van Gogh, where she dismantled the romanticized myth of the suffering artist. When an audience member suggested she stop taking antidepressants to improve her art, Gadsby, drawing from her background in art history, responded with clarity and compassion. The *Sunflowers*, she explained, were not masterpieces because Van Gogh suffered, but because he had a brother who loved him. His art emerged not from isolation but from relationship. "And that… is the focus of the story we need. Connection" (Hopkins, 2020, para. 10).

Here, Gadsby's (2018) symbolic role as a contemporary Medusa was clarified. She is not a monster but a truth-teller who refuses to avert her gaze. Her plea: "Please help me take care of my story"－was a sacred appeal for containment, a request that we receive her story not with pity but with presence. Through her invocation, she steps beyond individual experience into collective resonance. She became a bearer of mythic consciousness, a wounded feminine figure returning from exile with the alchemical fire of truth. In allowing her pain to speak unflinchingly, Gadsby does what myth never permitted: she gave Medusa a voice. Through her, we hear not the hiss of a monster but the testimony of the silenced feminine: wounded, wise, and asking not for vengeance, but for witness.

Nanette performed a symbolic function urgently needed in our time: the transmutation of personal pain into collective awakening. In the context of the climate crisis−an existential rupture that exposes our profound dissociation from the feminine, the Earth, and our emotional lives−Gadsby's performance offered more than individual catharsis. It also enacted a model of archetypal healing. Such healing does not arise through conquest but through relationship: between self and shadow, story and witness, human and world. Within this frame, storytelling and witnessing become sacred forms of activism, subtle yet potent gestures of reconnection amid a culture of fragmentation. Like Medusa, Gadsby met our gaze and did not flinch. She insisted that we see not only her but ourselves. And in that act of seeing, the possibility of healing begins.

Conclusion

To meet Medusa's gaze is to confront the shadow in its full complexity: personal, cultural, and ecological. It requires facing the truths repressed by a psyche fractured through modernity -- the grief of a violated Earth, the rage of silenced lineages, and the severing of

the feminine from its instinctual, embodied, and relational depths. Medusa symbolizes the wounded feminine, cast as monstrous precisely because she bears what the conscious ego cannot yet hold. Yet her gaze holds more than danger; it offers revelation. Rather than destroy, she exposes. Her image, long contorted by patriarchal narrative, becomes a mirror reflecting the cost of psychic fragmentation and the urgent call to descend into the underworld of mourning, feeling, and symbolic renewal.

Viewed through an archetypal lens, the climate crisis is not merely an external catastrophe but a manifestation of inner fragmentation, an ecological symptom of a collective psyche severed from the feminine, from eros, and from the sacred interdependence of all life. It marks a kairotic moment, a rupture that demands more than technological innovation; it calls for symbolic reorientation, a turning toward the exiled dimensions of the psyche that carry the potential for healing. By reclaiming what has long been cast out−vulnerability, interconnection, and reverence for the more-than-human world−we begin to reimagine heroism not as conquest but as the capacity to witness and to contain. This is the very terrain in which Jungians are uniquely equipped to serve. We have long cultivated the symbolic literacy, depth orientation, and archetypal imagination needed to navigate the threshold where personal and collective individuation meet. The task before us is not resolution but relationship -- and this is our work.

The myth of Medusa illumines a foundational principle of analytical psychology: the psyche is not merely reactive, but self-regulating and purposive. It holds a teleological orientation, an innate drive toward healing, wholeness, and integration. The eruption of the repressed feminine across myth, culture, and ecology may be viewed as a compensatory response from the unconscious, a symbolic effort to restore balance in a world dangerously out of alignment. Seen through this lens, the climate crisis becomes the living counterpoint to Medusa’s annihilation−a manifestation of what unfolds when the feminine is severed, silenced, and unmet. Her return, far from monstrous, serves as a summons, calling us to reckon with the psychic and ecological consequences of disconnection.

In turning toward what is most feared, Medusa’s gaze becomes a liminal portal through which the trauma of separation is alchemized. She invites a new way of seeing, one that encounters the Earth, the feminine, and the soul of the world as partners in a shared process of becoming. No longer a symbol of death, Medusa marks an initiation into a mode of perception attuned to the symbolic, the relational, and the ecological nature of psyche itself.

Contributor

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Hieroglyphics of Hate

4’x4’ (12”x12”) panels acrylic on canvas, 2020, by Rene Westbrook.

Deliverance

4’x7’ acrylic on canvas, 2020, by Rene Westbrook.

Artist Statement

I'm a multimedia artist who's been working professionally for five decades. This odyssey into various art forms has resulted in my work being recognized with awards in painting, sculpture, and photography.

My artwork has been exhibited on both coasts and my eclectic use of various techniques has created a diverse portfolio that lends itself to a variety of creative innovations. I enjoy the journey of exploring intellectual concepts and then harnessing different media to create the visual experience for the viewer. I believe the artist is the trusted vanguard in society that brings artistic transparency to issues that confront us daily, and I'm privileged to be a vital witness.

To this end, I am compelled to explore the contradictions inherently present in today's post Truth reality. I seek a workable narrative that can address the seamless loss of historic memory, morality, and values that threatens to twist the thorny web of deceit into enough rope in which to hang ourselves.

As an artistic alchemist, I hope to engage the viewer as a visual Oracle of creative ideas that stimulates the senses and harnesses different vehicles to unravel hidden mysteries.

Several years ago, I decided to explore new digital tools when reassessing my portfolio. Once I realized I could use my own original artwork and overlay them in a unique way, the resulting imagery added a fresh perspective on work that was once limited to its original meaning.

Fascinated by this unique reinvention, my paintings, collages and photography became the catalyst to a new direction of inquiry for my digital compilations. I skillfully take parts of my original work and redefines them into a new image through a rupture of color and content. It's clear these altered elements can bring about a shift in just how far the current work might ascend.

As I approach my 75th year, I'm proud of the longevity of my art career. It takes grit and guts to hold onto the exceptional standards I insist upon in my work to keep going. James Baldwin, a close friend at that time once told me that when the house is on fire, the artist can't sit it out. He was adamant that our spotlight on social injustice was paramount to the soul of a nation.

Subsequently, l continued to heed that call with the "Black Lives Matter/White Lies Shatter" artwork, Hieroglyphs of Hate and Deliverance.

Interview with Rene Westbrook, Black Lives Matter Grantee, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, WSU - YouTube

Psychodynamics of Leadership and Climate Action: A Jungian Perspective

Eissa Hashemi
Maryam Tahmasebi[1]

Abstract. This article explores the relationship between leadership psychodynamics and climate action through the lens of Jungian psychology. It argues that unconscious psychological forces—such as repression, projection, and the shadow—significantly shape leaders' decisions concerning climate change. Extending these dynamics to the organizational level, the paper conceptualizes an "organizational psyche" shaped by collective shadows and cultural narratives. It suggests that climate action denialism is often underpinned by deeper psychological patterns, particularly the shadows of control and scarcity, which manifest in the avoidance of accountability or the strategic manipulation of environmental messaging. The essay further examines how leadership complexes—such as attention, opportunity, and cultural complexes—can reinforce performative or opportunistic responses to environmental crises. Drawing on contemporary frameworks including ensemble leadership and resilient leadership, the analysis highlights leadership models capable of addressing these underlying dynamics through shared responsibility and emotional maturity. The article concludes by emphasizing the ethical imperative for leaders to confront their inner shadows in order to foster relational transparency, mutual accountability, and a collective shift toward intergenerational climate responsibility.

Keywords: Jungian psychology, shadow dynamics, climate action, environmental psychology, climate denialism, climate resilience, ensemble leadership, projection and repression, cultural complex, organizational psyche.

Introduction

This essay explores how leaders' responses to environmental disasters—particularly climate change—can be understood through the lens of Jungian psychology. While grounded in a modern western analytical framework, this analysis builds upon Jungian

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concepts such as the collective unconscious, repression, projection, complexes, and the shadow. The underlying premise is that organizations and societies, like individuals, can be viewed as psychologically dynamic entities with unconscious processes that shape collective behavior.

Jungian analysts have extended these insights beyond the individual, suggesting that societal systems can mirror internal psychological dynamics (Hillman & Ventura, 1992; Stein & Hollwitz, 1992; Pearson, 1996). Pearson (1996), for instance, conceptualizes the "organizational psyche" as a collective psychological field subject to repression, denial, projection, and complex formation—forces that often manifest in leadership decisions. These dynamics include not only affective responses like anxiety and shame but also structural reactions such as inaction or performative policy-making. Just as the unconscious operates in individuals, institutions can enact shadow processes by denying inconvenient truths, projecting responsibility, or repressing moral insight in the pursuit of legitimacy or stability.

Importantly, leadership is never a one-directional function. It exists within a reciprocal dynamic with followership whereby leaders shape and are shaped by and shaping the emotional tone, defenses, and collective imagination of those they serve. In the context of climate change, leaders are often tasked with representing and regulating collective anxieties, while followers project hopes, fears, or doubts onto them. When such exchanges are unacknowledged, unconscious forces such as projection, denial, or idealization distort both leadership actions and public responses. Leadership and followership, then, function together as carriers of the organizational psyche, mutually reinforcing its conscious values and unconscious defenses.

This essay examines how climate denialism, avoidance of accountability, and environmental policy distortions are linked to psychological defenses embedded in leadership (Weart, 2011). While these behaviors are often discussed in political or strategic terms, they can also be understood as unconscious reactions rooted in deeper psychic patterns. When viewed through the Jungian lens, leadership is not only a functional role but also a symbolic and affective channel through which collective anxiety, projection, and repression operate. Organizations are not neutral systems but psychologically active fields—places where unconscious fears, cultural myths, and symbolic identities shape how problems are defined and responses are structured. When the organizational psyche remains unexamined, decisions risk being driven not by rational deliberation but by shadow material—unacknowledged desires, anxieties, and blind spots that shape leaders' moral and strategic reasoning.

The essay proceeds as follows: section 2 introduces foundational concepts from Jungian psychology, including the unconscious, shadow, and complex and describes how these operate within the organizational psyche. Section 3 applies psychological insights to climate perception and environmental attitudes, linking individual and collective defense mechanisms to climate inaction. Section 4 explores contemporary leadership models and introduces the leadership triangle—power, influence, and people—as a framing tool. Sections 5 through 7 examine core Jungian defense patterns—repression, projection, and complex formation—and analyze how these shape leadership decisions, public trust, and climate policy. Section 8 then proposes psychologically integrated leadership frameworks, including ensemble, servant, and resilient leadership. Finally, Section 9 reflects on the ethical imperative of shadow integration and shared responsibility in climate action.

Jungian Psychology and the Organizational Psyche

Jungian psychology begins with the premise that much of human behavior is governed not solely by conscious thought, but also by the unconscious—a vast inner realm composed of forgotten memories, instincts, archetypes, and emotionally charged complexes. In Jung's theory, the unconscious is not only reactive but also purposeful (Jung & Hull, 1968). It seeks integration by what Jung called the process of individuation through which a person becomes psychologically whole by confronting and assimilating previously unconscious material.

Denial or repression is a form of psychological defense mechanism where an individual unconsciously rejects uncomfortable or distressing aspects of reality, protecting their conscious mind from discomfort (Hollis, 2005). Repression, closely related to denial, involves the active but unconscious process of pushing distressing thoughts, memories, or desires out of conscious awareness to maintain psychological equilibrium (Jung, 1969). In an organizational and societal setting, denial or repression can be seen as cultural or political opposition against certain notions or narratives (Yeager, 2024). For example, a political party in the United States can deny or try to suppress historical notions of racial injustice to appeal to their inherent cultural racism. Given that the psychological dynamic is examined on a broader societal scale rather than an individual level, the significance of unconscious patterns within societies must be emphasized (Pearson, 1996). Societies, like the human psyche, have conscious and unconscious realms. This concept could be seen in the historical pattern of denialism or rejection in a social context (Leka & Furnham, 2023; Norgaard, 2011).

One of the most striking differences between conscious and unconscious realms in societies lies in the question of why. When a decision or concept has a clear rationale and is well-explained to society, it is less likely to be unconscious. Instead, suppose such concepts are covered with vague explanations or one-sided perspectives that might be rooted in cognitive dissonance. In that case, the idea has fallen into the unconscious. One of the examples of such a notion is how capitalism has shifted its intention from a customer-centered system to a profit-centered system (Sinek, 2024). Adam Smith's idea of a system based on production and customer preferences has shifted to a business that maximizes profits, which Milton Friedman suggested (as cited in Sinek, 2024). In the new unconscious direction of capitalism, since the main objective is to maximize profit, the line between ethics and care for higher values becomes shady and subjective. Therefore, society unconsciously shifts to more economically justified environmental degradation and even focuses their moral conviction on denying their responsibility for ethics, the environment, and future generations (Cardarelli & Pomper, 2024).

Another central figure in this process is the shadow—the part of the unconscious that holds the traits, thoughts, and desires that individuals find undesirable or incompatible with their conscious identity. These might include aggression, fear, dependency, or selfishness—impulses that are disowned and repressed but continue to influence behavior indirectly (Zweig & Abrams, 1991). Shadow material tends to erupt in emotionally charged situations, distorting perception, fueling interpersonal conflict, or being projected onto others. Jung insisted that unless the shadow is acknowledged and integrated, it controls the psyche from the background: "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate" (Jung, Adler, & Hull, 1969, p. 237).

While Jung's early work focused on the inner life of individuals, later theorists extended his ideas to larger systems. Just as individuals possess an unconscious, so too do groups, organizations, and cultures (Hollis, 2007). These collectives develop their own psychic defenses—mechanisms such as repression, denial, projection, and splitting—which operate beneath formal rules or stated values. When a government consistently avoids confronting ecological degradation, or when a corporation frames environmental responsibility as someone else's problem, these responses can be interpreted not only as strategic but also as psychological defenses rooted in collective fear, guilt, or shame.

The term organizational psyche was developed by theorists like Stein and Hollwitz (1992) and further elaborated by Pearson (1996) to describe the unconscious field of shared values, anxieties, fantasies, and moral dilemmas that structure institutional behavior. Psyche acts as a container for both creative vision and psychological defenses. Just as individuals might repress uncomfortable truths about themselves, so too can an organization repress environmental risk, project blame onto outside actors, or develop shadow myths that rationalize harmful behavior.

These unconscious dynamics do not arise in a vacuum. They are shaped by cultural narratives, historical trauma, and collective identity structures. For example, in many industrialized nations, the cultural shadow may contain unacknowledged feelings of ecological guilt, anxiety over scarce resources, or suppressed knowledge of colonial exploitation—each of which can unconsciously shape climate policy, public messaging, or institutional behavior (Allan et al., 2023).

Recognizing the collective shadow allows leaders to move beyond reactive or performative responses and begin addressing the deeper psychological patterns that sustain climate denial or policy paralysis. When leadership and policy are informed by awareness of these dynamics, it becomes possible to foster a more integrated and ethically grounded approach—one that engages not only with external data but with the inner architecture of belief, fear, and resistance embedded in organizational life (Kiehl, 2023).

Understanding Climate Change: A Psychological Perspective

Environmental psychology explores the relationship between humans and their surroundings, with particular attention to how individuals perceive, respond to, and emotionally process ecological threats. When applied to climate change, this field offers crucial insights into the disconnection between scientific awareness and behavioral engagement. Though the existential risks of climate change are well documented and broadly communicated, public and political responses often remain inconsistent, delayed, or symbolic. These inconsistencies reflect not only structural or political constraints but also deep psychological tensions embedded in how individuals and societies relate to environmental uncertainty (Steg & DeGroot, 2018).

The gap is particularly noticeable among leaders, whose beliefs and values significantly shape the development and implementation of mitigation and adaptation strategies, which are the cornerstones of climate action. While many leaders publicly acknowledge the urgency of climate change, their actions often fall short of their stated commitments. This discrepancy cannot be fully understood through a rational or policy lens alone. Psychological research shows that values, emotions, identity, and social context profoundly shape environmental behavior—even in the presence of clear information (Steg & DeGroot, 2018).

Given the complexity of such an environmental concern, Steg (2023) distinguished beliefs about climate change from climate actions to combat the problem, stipulating that there are major climate change beliefs that people would adopt according to their societal conditions. They would perceive it as real (a natural occurrence), believe that it is caused by humans, or believe that it carries more negative consequences than positive ones. These three layers of beliefs show the predisposed notion of human-caused interaction with nature and how people perceive its concept. This article suggests that Steg's assertion of individual belief in climate change could also be applied to societies. Leaders, like all individuals, interpret climate data through filters of cultural meaning, cognitive bias, and emotional defense. These factors can unconsciously drive decisions that appear contradictory, ineffective, or even evasive.

One of the central concerns of environmental psychology is how individuals respond to large-scale, abstract threats such as climate change. As a global, complex, and often invisible phenomenon, climate change presents unique psychological challenges—eliciting a mix of cognitive dissonance, emotional overwhelm, and moral conflict. One of the most telling manifestations of such an internal conflict is the shift from "old denial" to "new denial**"**—a change that reflects not just evolving rhetoric, but also deeper psychological strategies of avoidance. In the old paradigm, climate change was outright rejected—viewed as a hoax or scientifically unfounded (CCDH report: The new climate denial, 2024; Yeager, 2024).

Today, however, explicit denial is less common, particularly in leadership and institutional spaces. Instead, what emerges is a subtler form of psychological defense: leaders acknowledge that climate change exists, but they minimize its implications, delay necessary actions, or overemphasize individual responsibility while deflecting structural accountability. This "new denial" is marked by emotional distancing, abstract framing, and overly optimistic narratives that downplay the severity or urgency of the crisis. In this way, acknowledgment becomes a façade for inaction.

The mentioned phenomenon reveals the operation of defense mechanisms like repression and rationalization—where difficult truths are intellectually accepted but emotionally disengaged. Leaders may publicly affirm climate science while privately resisting policy measures that threaten economic growth, institutional stability, or political capital. This form of defense allows individuals and organizations to appear responsive while avoiding the deeper ethical and systemic changes required to combat the climate emergency.

Environmental psychology helps decode these tensions by highlighting the emotional and cognitive ambivalence at the heart of climate response. Feelings of helplessness, guilt, or grief often underlie patterns of disengagement or delay. Without conscious reflection, these feelings may be redirected into symbolic actions, rhetorical performance, or administrative postponement. In such a context, climate inaction is not simply a failure of will—it is also a manifestation of unresolved psychological conflict (Steg, 2023).

Understanding such a dynamic is especially important for leadership, where public expectations and systematic pressures amplify unconscious defenses. Leaders are often caught between the need to respond decisively and the temptation to preserve the status quo. Their actions, or lack thereof, serve as psychological signals to the public, shaping how followers interpret and internalize climate risk. A psychologically aware framework

enables us to see these behaviors not just as policy gaps, but also as expressions of deeper affective and symbolic struggles around identity, responsibility, and future loss.

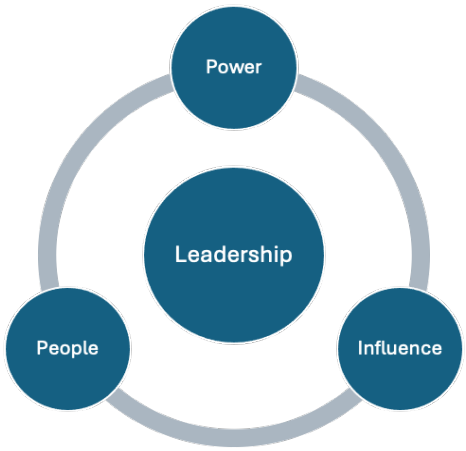
Leadership in the Context of Climate Change

Leadership theory has evolved significantly over the past century, reflecting changing social values and organizational needs. Early leadership models, such as transactional leadership, emphasized formal authority, reward structures, and role clarity—focusing primarily on compliance and stability (Mintzberg, 2009; Northouse, 2016; Yukl & Gardner, 2019). As organizations became more complex and value driven, transformational leadership emerged, highlighting vision, inspiration, and the capacity to motivate followers through shared goals and ethical alignment. In recent decades, the focus has expanded further toward contemporary models such as servant leadership, authentic leadership, and relational leadership, which emphasize emotional intelligence, humility, moral accountability, and inclusivity (Riggio, 2023).

These shifts are particularly relevant to climate leadership, which requires both strategic coordination and deep psychological awareness. The complexities of climate change—its uncertainty, moral ambiguity, and long time horizon—demand more than technical problem-solving. They call for leadership that is self-reflective, ethically grounded, and capable of navigating not only data and policy but also emotion, fear, and collective resistance (Cardarelli & Pomper, 2024).

To better understand the psychological dynamics of leadership in this context, the paper introduces the leadership triangle—a framework consisting of power, influence, and people. These three dimensions interact constantly in leadership decisions and relational processes (Figure 1). Power refers to the ability to set direction and control resources; influence reflects the capacity to shape others' perceptions, motivations, and values; and people refers to the relational field in which leadership occurs—followers, constituents, communities, and co-leaders. When any corner of this triangle becomes overemphasized or repressed, shadow dynamics emerge: control becomes domination, influence turns manipulative, and relationships are reduced to transactional roles or symbolic tokens.

Figure 1
Three Pillars of Leadership



Contemporary leadership theories such as servant leadership and authentic leadership offer pathways toward more ethical and psychologically integrated leadership. Servant leadership, originally developed by Greenleaf (2008), places the needs of others, especially the most vulnerable, at the center of leadership action. It emphasizes humility, listening, and the moral imperative to serve. In climate leadership, this model aligns with community-based action, environmental justice, and long-term stewardship. For instance, initiatives like the American Climate Corps demonstrate servant-leadership principles in practice, mobilizing volunteers for ecosystem restoration and public awareness (AmeriCorps, 2023).

However, from a Jungian perspective, servant leadership also carries inherent risks. Leaders who outwardly present as humble and service-oriented may unconsciously suppress their own authority, leading to passive decision-making or vulnerability to projection. In polarized or skeptical contexts, servant leaders may be misread as weak or manipulative, resulting in mistrust or backlash from communities that expect more assertive action. These reactions often stem from collective shadow dynamics, where anxiety and disempowerment are unconsciously projected onto leadership figures.

Authentic leadership, similarly, emphasizes self-awareness, transparency, and moral clarity (Hickman, 2016). Authentic leaders strive to act in alignment with their values, even in times of crisis. However, the theory is not without complexity. Scholars such as Verhaal and Dobrev (2022) describe the "authenticity paradox" in which rigid notions of personal integrity can hinder adaptation, communication, or collective responsiveness. In the climate space, where unpredictability and collaboration are essential, excessive emphasis on individual authenticity may undermine organizational learning or create blind spots. From a Jungian view, such a paradox reflects a deeper tension between ego identity and shadow integration: when the persona of authenticity becomes a fixed ideal, it can obscure the unconscious fears or biases that require reflection and transformation.

Both servant and authentic leadership models have the potential to support psychologically mature climate leadership. However, their true effectiveness depends on a leader's capacity to work with their own shadow material, respond relationally to collective dynamics, and remain open to discomfort and contradiction. Climate change is not only a scientific and political problem—it is also a psychological challenge that confronts leaders with their deepest values, fears, and ethical limits. Leadership must move beyond charisma, aesthetics or compliance toward what Jung might describe as an individuated form of leadership—a style grounded in both conscious responsibility and the courage to confront the unknown.

The Role of Psychological Dynamics in Climate Action Denialism

Denial and repression are among the most prominent psychological responses to the existential threat posed by climate change. These mechanisms operate both at the individual and collective levels, serving to manage the anxiety, guilt, and moral discomfort associated with environmental degradation (Steg & DeGroot, 2018). From a Jungian perspective, denial and repression are not simply failures of awareness but also active psychic strategies that prevent the ego from confronting realities that threaten its stability. In the climate context, this concept means that scientific evidence and ecological signals may be intellectually acknowledged but emotionally disowned, resulting in performative

concern, delayed action, or outright resistance (Hamilton, 2024; Nogaard, 2011; Williams & Graham, 2021).

Interestingly, such a perspective ties to an assumption mentioned in environmental psychology (Steg & DeGroot, 2018) on how humans perceive environmental problems. Humans are more prone to reject any inconveniences caused by their actions and instead celebrate the pleasant results of that problem. Since the impacts of global warming are not necessarily immediate, evident, and consistent, it is challenging for leaders to understand the environment as a comprehensive and complex system. Therefore, they will either normalize, minimize, or, in some contexts, deny any related plans or actions (Mendy et al., 2024).

Repression, in the current context, often emerges when climate realities evoke overwhelming feelings—grief over biodiversity loss, fear of societal collapse, or shame about personal or national contributions to carbon emissions. These emotions, when unintegrated, are pushed into the unconscious where they begin to influence behavior indirectly. Repression may appear as policy avoidance, technocratic distraction, or an over-reliance on vague optimism (Clayton, 2019).

Leaders might promote the rhetoric of sustainability while continuing to support extractive industries, not necessarily out of deceit, but because their deeper emotional ambivalence remains unresolved. One of the reasons leaders would choose to deny climate action is the feeling of shame associated with the responsibility of action and plans. Emotional dynamic could also be the root cause of other reactions. For example, in the case of "Black Summer," the 2019–2020 bushfire season in Australia, the government was under significant criticism for downplaying and denying the role of climate change in such a disaster due to the emotional burden of accountability in governance (*Commonwealth of Australia*, 2020).

Shadow and Climate Action Denialism

Climate action denialism is one of the significant concepts where the Jungian concept of the shadow becomes particularly pertinent. The shadow represents the disowned aspects of the self—qualities, urges, or insights that are incompatible with one's conscious identity. In the case of climate leadership, shadows often take the form of two interrelated patterns: the shadow of control and the shadow of scarcity.

The shadow of control is expressed in the impulse to dominate or rationalize complex climate issues through authority, order, or technocratic expertise. This shadow seeks to suppress uncertainty by asserting managerial dominance over nature, treating ecological systems as problems to be fixed rather than relationships to be healed (Williams & Graham, 2021). Leaders operating from shadow of control often avoid shared governance or participatory models in favor of centralized decision-making, justified through urgency or efficiency. They may repress their own vulnerability, presenting as calm and authoritative while unconsciously resisting more collaborative or emotionally attuned approaches (Gross, 2020).

The mentioned type of shadow is especially evident in how some governments respond to environmental crises such as wildfires. For example, in the case of recurring wildfires in California, state responses often prioritize damage control and risk management over preventive strategies that would require deeper societal changes in land use, consumption, and emissions (Swain et al., 2025). These patterns reflect a reluctance

to face the systemic causes of climate disruption, revealing a shadow dynamic masked by bureaucratic resolve.

The shadow of scarcity, on the other hand, emerges from deep cultural fears about loss, lack, and insecurity. It expresses itself in climate debates in zero-sum thinking, nationalist rhetoric, and resistance to redistribution (Riggio, 2023). When societies feel threatened by scarcity—whether of water, energy, or resources—they may turn toward exclusion, competition, or denial as a form of psychological defense. Leaders shaped by this shadow may emphasize economic growth over sustainability, avoid discussions of reparative justice, or resist climate agreements perceived as threatening national autonomy (Soleki et al., 2024).

A particularly relevant example is the way carbon credit systems are used as a symbolic solution to climate responsibility. While designed to incentivize emissions reduction, these systems can also allow powerful actors to project moral responsibility elsewhere—offsetting guilt without addressing structural overconsumption (Chaudhry, 2024). Such mechanisms become tools not only of market logic but also of psychic displacement, allowing individuals and institutions to manage discomfort without integrating it.

These shadow dynamics also help explain cultural and political resistance to climate policy. When climate change challenges core identities such as autonomy, prosperity, or moral innocence, it activates defenses that make honest engagement difficult (Allan et al., 2023). Repression and projection become ways to avoid ethical reckoning. Leaders may frame environmentalism as elitist or radical, not necessarily because they misunderstand the science but because they are defending against a perceived threat to their values, power, or worldview (Clayton, 2019; Smith & Leiserowitz, 2014).

By understanding denial and repression not as ignorance but as psychological processes shaped by shadow dynamics, we can better grasp the emotional undercurrents of climate inaction. Leadership in the current context requires more than rhetorical commitment—it demands psychological courage, ethical reflexivity, and the willingness to confront what has been disowned.

Projection and Climate Responsibility

In Jungian psychology, projection is the process by which individuals unconsciously attribute their own unwanted, disowned, or unresolved feelings, desires, and aspects of themselves to others (Hollis, 2005). This mechanism enables the ego to displace discomfort or moral tension outward, preserving a stable self-image without confronting deeper emotional conflict. As Hollis (2016) succinctly put it, “We see the world not as it is but as we are” (p. 7). Projection not only distorts perception but also influences interpersonal and systemic dynamics, especially in leadership where responsibility and identity are publicly negotiated. Groups, organizations, and nations, like individuals, often project internal contradictions or failures onto others. In the context of climate change, it becomes a potent psychological strategy for managing moral discomfort, delaying accountability, and reinforcing geopolitical inequities.

Leaders and institutions often unconsciously project responsibility for environmental degradation onto other actors—be they foreign governments, rival industries, or the general public. This can take the form of whataboutism, scapegoating, or moral grandstanding. The term is referred to in debates when one party uses the topic’s

complexity against an honest response to redirect and distract from the core problem (Aikin & Casey, 2024; Bowel, 2023). For instance, political leaders may downplay domestic emissions while criticizing other nations for their lack of climate action. Corporations may market themselves as sustainable while shifting responsibility to consumers through behavioral campaigns that emphasize recycling or individual carbon footprints. These practices reflect a deeper psychological impulse: the desire to dissociate from guilt or complicity by displacing it onto others (Singer & Kimbles, 2004).

From a Jungian perspective, such displacement is a form of shadow avoidance—a refusal to integrate the darker or inconvenient aspects of one's own environmental impact. When leadership becomes fixated on the failures of others, it can evade meaningful self-examination and ethical transformation. Projection thus operates as a barrier to true climate responsibility. It not only distorts public discourse but also fosters division, resentment, and paralysis—especially when used to justify inaction or blame-shifting at the systemic level.

The mentioned dynamic is especially visible in global climate negotiations. Nations in the Global North, which have historically contributed the most carbon emissions, often emphasize the current or future emissions of the Global South as a rationale for delaying ambitious reforms. Such projection of accountability reflects deeper psychological mechanisms. Developed countries, grappling with collective guilt or unconscious shame (Yeager, 2024), may project responsibility onto developing nations, arguing that their lack of progress, poor governance, or industrial emissions are primary obstacles to global climate goals (Mullen & Widener, 2022; Allan et al., 2023). Conversely, leaders in developing countries may resist climate obligations until historical responsibility is acknowledged—insisting that developed nations address the ecological debt created by centuries of extractive industrialization.

These mutual projections entrench stalemates and obstruct genuine collaboration. Rather than confronting their own complicity, leaders externalize blame, deflect responsibility, and perpetuate resentment. Psychological dynamics such as cognitive dissonance, cultural defensiveness, and displacement further hinder consensus, fostering emotional distance between policy commitments and global realities (Steg, 2023).

Moreover, psychological projection feeds into polarized narratives. It fosters the belief that climate failure stems from the apathy, ignorance, or irresponsibility of others—be they political opponents, developing countries, or noncompliant populations—rather than recognizing shared complicity or structural entrenchment. Such a division often reduces climate discourse to moral binaries, eclipsing the complexity and interconnectedness of the crisis. In doing so, it creates psychological distance between leaders and the systemic change they are tasked with advancing.

Jungian analysis invites a different approach. It urges leaders to recognize and retrieve their projections—to see in "the other" the qualities they have disowned or suppressed. Applied to climate leadership, accepting institutional complicity, acknowledging ethical ambiguity, and committing to shared responsibility rather than judgment would mean such a shift. This requires emotional maturity, cultural humility, and a willingness to confront one's own shadow—qualities not often associated with geopolitical discourse, but essential for long-term climate collaboration.

By identifying projection as a core psychological mechanism in climate inaction, the following section highlights the need for leadership grounded in reflexivity and moral

integration. Only when leaders are willing to recognize their complicity—and resist the temptation to assign blame—can truly cooperative and transformative climate responses emerge.

Leadership Complexes and Their Impact on Climate Action

In Jungian psychology, a complex is defined as an accumulation of unresolved psychic energy centered around emotionally charged experiences or themes. Hollis (2005) has described a complex as "an autonomous, unconscious constellation of feelings, thoughts, memories, and behaviors" (p. 58). When projected onto leadership and institutional behavior, complexes can distort decision-making, block ethical reflection, and foster cycles of inaction or inconsistency. In the context of climate action, leadership complexes reveal how unresolved emotional, cultural, or symbolic material manifests in public narratives, policy choices, and social resistance.

The Attention-Complex

One form of the Jungian complex that could be speculated is the attention-complex, where performative gestures substitute for meaningful change. Leaders may issue climate declarations, attend global summits, or launch public-facing campaigns while avoiding substantive policy transformation. This complex is not merely strategic—it also reflects a psychic defense mechanism. By focusing attention on optics and symbolism, leaders can gain legitimacy while repressing their internal ambivalence, fear of backlash, or unconscious resistance to change. In doing so, they channel public anxiety into highly visible but low-risk actions that maintain the appearance of concern while deferring actual accountability. The attention-complex also thrives in highly mediated political environments where visibility becomes a currency of influence (Graham et al., 2016). Leaders consumed by such a dynamic may begin to equate visibility with virtue, believing that awareness campaigns, declarations, or symbolic gestures suffice to meet the ethical demands of climate leadership. Such performative leadership often evokes temporary public reassurance while contributing to long-term frustration, disillusionment, and climate fatigue.

The attention-complex could create resentment in followers based on how much focus and attention that attitude has received. Moreover, specific emotions and behaviors could be associated with climate actions regarding human interaction with nature and create negative consequences. Obsession, constant guilt, a sense of inferiority, and powerlessness could be examples of such feelings as the result of such a complex (Steg, 2023).

It is important to note that part of such a complex is rooted in a heuristic mindset, in which people believe that, since there are fewer negative tangible consequences of climate change, they would minimize the impacts and severity of such a phenomenon (Steg, 2023). A complex of this nature would adversely affect policies and leadership decisions regarding climate change. It also emphasizes the shadow of rejection and creates resentment in followers as it makes them more responsible and accountable for their actions. A leadership complex can create antipathy, especially in agriculture and carbon mitigation markets. One of the best examples of such a complex is the German farmers' protest of policy implementation, economic pressure, and environmental regulations. In the fall of 2024, German farmers protested the government's environmental policies, putting them under extreme economic pressure. Even though farmers faced the consequences of

climate change, they demonstrated their distance from such policies (Bienvenu et al., 2024). That is to say, German policymakers could be seen as having an attention-complex because of the protest.

In addition, the attention-complex could result from advanced approaches to an environment that would create a list of emotions, such as collective guilt, shame, resentment, and sadness, because of facing climate change impacts. It can also stem from the need for more awareness in both leadership and followers regarding their responsibility and interchangeable dynamics with nature. The attention-complex could be expanded for industrialized and developing countries since it creates a vision of equal accountability, attention, and urgency.

Another form of attention-complex is when leaders follow a preferred perspective on climate actions, dismissing or ignoring the existence of other factors. Such a complex could stem from a leader's economic interest in not seeing reality. It may also reflect the core concept of political leadership, where leaders, thanks to their interpretation of the philosophy of power (Jost & Sidanius, 2004), would adopt confirmation bias and look at reality with a premeditative assumption. In this type of complex, leaders don't deny their responsibility or refuse accountability. Instead, they partially focus on environmental concerns. As a result, they appear to be caring for climate impact action plans, but their preferred vision could create ambiguity in their climate initiatives. The notion of ambiguity, where leaders address a problem but not its entirety, is a byproduct of attention-complex.

Opportunity-Complex

A second form is the opportunity-complex, where climate discourse is co-opted for personal or political gain. Leaders may use environmental language to position themselves as progressive, while simultaneously advancing policies that maintain the status quo. This dynamic can also emerge across political transitions, where successive governments reverse climate commitments to differentiate their platform or appease economic stakeholders. Fo example, debates about Germany's *Energiewende* ("energy transition") illustrate how public resistance to renewable energy infrastructure, like wind farms, reflects practical concerns and deeper psychological resistance rooted in local identity, disrupted worldviews, and ecological ambivalence. (Federal ministry report, 2021). These dynamics are shaped by a cultural complex of loss, where shifting environmental priorities threaten familiar modes of economic stability and place attachment.

The opportunity-complex shows leaders how to mitigate or adapt strategies to increase their profit and expand their impact. The nuance of such a complex is that, in hindsight, it might be very beneficial to have an opportunistic leader who follows the policy and creates new lines of inquiry. Even if it may look advantageous for the equity and inclusion strategies, since the levels of access to resources and community engagement matter for their objectives. However, it creates a chance to manipulate the influence or the information to increase the opportunity.

Leaders may exaggerate or minimize some impacts of products or climate initiatives to achieve financial or political party benefits. The best example of this type of complex is electric vehicles. Leaders are very interested in investing in creating infrastructure for charging stations and encouraging consumers to purchase electric vehicles (Woodley et al., 2013). Instead, they would ridicule or ignore the costly environmental degradation that cobalt and lithium excavations will cause to the

environment. In other words, leaders facing this type of complex are unwilling to see their climate initiatives' ecological footprints.

The nuance of this type of complex is that it creates a chance for a leader either to manipulate or to overemphasize a particular climate strategy. The manipulative aspect of such a shadow can create several social and cultural complexes. Such aspect can be tied to political disinformation and misinformation about climate change, as well as public mistrust of politicians and scientists about the consequences of climate change. Consequently, the complex of opportunity creates room for leaders to seek their personal or political advantages and to ignore the reality of climate change.

Cultural Complex; Economics Growth vs. Ecological Sustainability

The most entrenched dynamic, however, may be the cultural complex—a collective psychological field shaped by myth, memory, and historical trauma. Cultural complexes manifest when shared values, anxieties, and symbolic attachments prevent a society from adapting to new realities. In the context of climate impact, one of the most significant is the unresolved tension between perpetual economic growth and ecological sustainability (Singer & Kimbles, 2004). Many nations remain psychologically invested in growth as a symbol of prosperity, security, and success. Climate policies that challenge this growth imperative often provoke unconscious fears of scarcity, decline, or collapse. These fears are rarely addressed explicitly, but they animate resistance to degrowth frameworks, carbon regulation, or redistribution mechanisms. The cultural attachment to GDP metrics, industrial dominance, and consumer expansion acts as a symbolic reassurance that progress continues—even if such progress undermines long-term planetary health. As a result, policies advocating for ecological balance are often dismissed as unrealistic, threatening, or regressive. Thus, the cultural complex of growth operates as both a narrative and a psychic defense—protecting collective identity while undermining adaptive capacity. Until these myths are consciously examined, societies may remain locked in a psychological loop that prioritizes short-term gain over ecological responsibility.

At the leadership level, these complexes create barriers to moral clarity and strategic coherence. Leaders navigating complex cultural terrain may find themselves caught between conflicting loyalties: to economic stakeholders, cultural myths, or international expectations. They are often expected to provide certainty and inspiration in moments of ecological uncertainty—shouldering the burden of public hope while concealing their own fear, ambivalence, or lack of clarity. This dissonance can produce internal psychic pressure, where leaders unconsciously adopt reactive strategies—fluctuating between performance, opportunism, and avoidance. Leaders may project decisiveness outward while feeling increasingly alienated inward, especially when policy decisions are constrained by political cycles, lobbying pressure, or public ambivalence. In such conditions, they may default to symbolic leadership—deploying emotionally resonant narratives or policy gestures that provide comfort but avoid systemic risk. These patterns are not signs of individual weakness but symptoms of deeper unresolved energy within the organizational psyche. Leaders risk becoming carriers of unresolved societal tension and expressing collective confusion rather than vision.

Polarization in society would be one of the significant outcomes of the cultural complex (Singer & Kimbles, 2004). Leaders would create the contrasting factor among different groups of people, demonizing their values and downplaying their ethical

responsibility, carrying the agenda of capitalized industrial values. Consequently, when leaders were faced with significant environmental disasters, they would identify with one side of the problem and project the other side onto other groups or countries. One of the most recent examples of this concept is the Los Angeles wildfires in January 2025, where over 57,000 acres and 18,000 structures were burned ("A state under siege", 2025). The different reactions between the California governor and the United States president on addressing wildfires as the consequences of climate change are the best example of cultural complex, where one side talks about the state's resources to fight climate change and the other side downplays to lack of enough water resources ("**Trump threatens federal intervention"**, 2025).

Fostering Effective Climate Leadership Through Jungian Insights

In the modern era, the general premise of leadership revolves around the heroic leadership theory (Spector, 2016), which posits that an individual who possesses exceptional qualities and abilities embodies a heroic figure with a vision and charisma that inspire and influence others. Leadership is understood as a position embedded in a psychological and cultural field, constantly interacting with collective fears, hopes, histories, and defenses. This essay has conceptualized leadership through the triangle of power, influence, and people, a framework that illustrates how psychological energy accumulates around these relational dynamics (Figure 1). When leadership becomes fixated on one dimension—clinging to control, seeking influence through performance, or disconnecting from the needs of people—unconscious distortions take hold. These distortions often manifest in the form of shadow dynamics, including denial, projection, or complex formation.

In the case of the environment and climate change, this essay advocates separating science and politics. However, leaders will react to scientific findings that impact their influence or power, even if it means minimizing the impact of climate change or insinuating skepticism on environmental activism. They'll acquire the resources to fight against such a narrative.

Effective climate leadership must therefore begin with an awareness of these unconscious forces. Performative behavior, moral exceptionalism, and reactive policymaking can be signs of unacknowledged shadow dynamics, not merely strategic failures. Leaders who cannot recognize these dynamics risk becoming agents of the very confusion and fragmentation they seek to solve. A psychologically informed model of leadership must recognize that inner conflict and systemic complexity are inseparable—and that progress requires holding contradiction, not erasing it.

Alongside that, the concept of resilient leadership becomes essential. Resilience, in this sense, does not mean stoic endurance or optimism but a psychological capacity to hold tension, recover from failure, and metabolize fear into ethical clarity. Resilient leaders are emotionally intelligent, self-aware, adaptable, and grounded in the communities they serve (Coutu, 2002; Hickman, 2016). They do not react reflexively but respond relationally, balancing vision with humility, and urgency with inclusivity. Research on leadership resilience also emphasizes the role of crucibles—transformational moments of challenge—and highlights the importance of values, integrity, and relational awareness in navigating high-stakes situations (Hashemi, 2019; Kelly & Hashemi, 2022).

This vision of resilience is incomplete without attention to community resilience—the ability of communities to adapt to trauma, inequality, and environmental disruption

(Norris et al., 2008). Climate change impacts are unevenly distributed, and resilience often resides in marginalized groups like Indigenous peoples, women of color, and frontline communities. These groups hold vulnerability, wisdom, experience, and alternative ecological relationship models. (Tahmasebi, 2021). Leadership that is resilient in a climate context must center these perspectives, not as symbolic inclusion but as essential to the process of truth-telling and power-sharing.

Theories such as servant leadership contribute meaningfully here, particularly in their emphasis on ethics, humility, and service orientation (Greenleaf, 2008). Servant leaders prioritize the needs of others and act with long-term integrity rather than short-term gain. However, servant leadership—like any model—carries shadow risks. Without awareness of psychological dynamics, it may become a mask for avoidance, passivity, or moral fatigue. Similarly, authentic leadership, which emphasizes transparency and moral conviction, can become distorted when authenticity becomes rigid or performative. Scholars have identified a paradox of authenticity: when leaders over-identify with their self-concept, they may resist change, ignore complexity, or unconsciously suppress dissenting views (Ibarra, 2015; Ladkin, 2021; Verhaal & Dobrev, 2022).

Effective climate leadership requires psychological literacy—tracking shadow behavior, shedding light on projection, and working with conflict. It cultivates reflexivity, humility, and emotional containment, rather than idealizing harmony or authority. This leadership welcomes discomfort as a path toward integration and views ethical failure as a site for reflection and repair.

In Jungian psychology, the goal of an individual's journey in learning the concept of archetypes and knowing oneself is to find the equitable balance between among all archetypes inside and to create a moment of peace within through individuation. Such a balance could be achieved at the societal level through the shared distribution of power and influence. When influential leaders share decisions and their implications, it could lead to a balanced form of leadership. Interestingly, this type of leadership has a collective implication in indigenous cultures. They have a shared decision-making structure at the leadership level, known as ensemble leadership (Rosile, Boje, & Claw, 2018). The Iroquois Confederacy, a longstanding alliance of Indigenous nations in North America, could be a viable solution to climate change. Founded on principles of collective governance, consensus decision-making, and shared leadership, it served as a sophisticated model of democratic organization that influenced modern political systems and emphasizes harmony, balance, and responsibility among its member nations (Rosile et al., 2018).

One promising alternative is the shift towards ensemble leadership—a model rooted in Indigenous traditions and systems thinking. This leadership theory emphasizes shared decision-making, collective wisdom, and distributed responsibility. Instead of placing authority in a single heroic figure, ensemble leadership views leadership as an emergent, relational process. The essential antidote to the shadows of power is the shared decision-making process, which, given the complexity of climate factors and the diversity of climate action, the shared decision-making process is the essential antidote to the shadows of power. When there is a lack of shared responsibility among industrialized and developing countries regarding carbon accountability, the ensemble leadership will help balance the power distribution and ensure the that policies and action plans are adopted for impacted communities.

An ethical principle in decision-making suggests that fairness is best achieved when both parties are involved in determining the outcome. For example, if a cake is to be divided equally between two people, one person cuts the cake while the other chooses their piece first. This structure incentivizes the person cutting the cake to act fairly, knowing that any bias will disadvantage them. In the context of climate policy, this principle implies that when powerful political actors design environmental frameworks, the most vulnerable communities should have the authority to evaluate and prioritize the outcomes.

Ensemble leadership decentralizes complex systems, fostering reflection, shared responsibility, and emotional integration. By acknowledging and working with psychological complexes, leaders can create adaptive, resilient, and ethically grounded climate action. Inspired by Indigenous governance systems and relational worldviews, ensemble leadership emphasizes shared power, mutual responsibility, and collective wisdom (Rosile et al., 2018). It views leadership as a dialogue-driven process, not positional authority, inviting difference, nonlinearity, and uncertainty without chaos.

Fostering effective climate leadership involves institutional transformation and inner work. It requires confronting uncertainty without repression, grieving without collapse, and sharing responsibility without losing one's voice. Jungian psychology reminds us that the task is to integrate the shadow into conscious life. This integration makes leadership more ethical, effective, and responsive to the world it seeks to serve.

Integration and Conclusion

This essay has argued that climate leadership cannot be fully understood or ethically practiced without engaging the unconscious psychological dynamics that shape action, avoidance, and denial. Drawing on Jungian psychology, it explored how repression, projection, complexes, and the shadow influence leaders' perceptions, decisions, and narratives in the face of ecological crisis. These psychological mechanisms aren't limited to individual pathology; they also manifest at collective levels through organizational culture, political framing, and national identity. Reframing leadership through this lens reveals that climate inaction isn't just a political or logistical failure but also a psychodynamic event rooted in unintegrated shadow material that hinders relational, ethical, and systemic transformation.

Across the leadership triangle—power, influence, and people—unconscious distortions arise when one dimension dominates or is cut off from the others. Such a distortion often results in performative climate action, moral disengagement, or displacement of responsibility. Shadow dynamics such as denial, control, and scarcity frequently surface in these imbalances, reinforcing extractive logics and hierarchical decision-making that contradict the urgency of collective climate responsibility. These shadows are not abstract; they shape real-world patterns such as delayed policies, growth-at-all-costs ideologies, climate blame games, and leadership paralysis in the face of emotional and ecological overload.

Jungian shadow appears at any point of contrast, including too much attention or intense repression in an individual's life experience. These contrasts often take the form of rejection, projection, denial, and complex. At the societal level—particularly within leadership cultures that elevate the heroic, individualistic ideal (Riggio, 2023)—shadows frequently emerge as misjudgments, reactive decisions, or ethical disorientation. When a multifaceted crisis such as climate change arises, it often invites a leader's unilateral

response that prioritizes immediate interests or institutional survival over long-term ecological justice. In turn, these decisions trigger new rounds of denial, projection, and fragmentation across society's psychological landscape.

The essay has shown that sustainable leadership must combine external solutions with internal psychological integration. Without confronting their own projections and internal contradictions, leaders risk perpetuating the very fragmentation they aim to resolve. When shadow material remains disowned, it becomes embedded in political systems and cultural narratives—repeating cycles of moral dislocation and ecological harm. In contrast, leaders who engage in inner work—acknowledging uncertainty, fear, and historical trauma—are more capable of fostering relational transparency and mutual accountability.

Ensemble leadership was offered as a practical alternative to hero-centric models. Its emphasis on shared responsibility, distributed authority, and Indigenous-rooted relationality diffuses individual shadow dynamics and supports systems that can hold contradiction without collapse. Likewise, resilient leadership, grounded in emotional intelligence, adaptability, and inclusion, offers a pathway to respond to climate disruption without succumbing to despair, dogma, or domination. These models aren't just stylistic preferences; they're psychological containers that can hold the magnitude of the climate challenge with humility and ethical clarity.

In the final analysis, climate leadership is not simply about vision or innovation; it is also about psychological maturity. The challenge of climate change demands more than policies—it requires leaders who have confronted their inner shadows and integrated the unconscious forces that influence perception and action. By doing so, they create the conditions for relational transparency, mutual accountability, and an expanded ethical field in which shared responsibility becomes possible. This orientation fosters a societal shift toward recognizing not only present obligations but also intergenerational equity as a central principle of climate justice. When the principles of Jungian psychology are integrated into leadership practice, they illuminate the deepest obstacle to climate action: not a lack of knowledge but the unexamined shadow. Only by confronting what has been denied—within us, our institutions, and our cultures—can we begin to lead with the clarity and courage that this planetary moment demands.

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CONVERSATIONS IN THE FIELD

Rebalancing the Psyche and Care for the Environment: Scuba Diving and Underwater Photography as a Mode of Jungian-Arts-Based-Research Into the Individual and Collective Unconscious

Evija Volfa Vestergaard[1]

Abstract: The video is a personal and an archetypal story. It tells about an individual psychological journey of re-balancing the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche and how that led the author to a heightened awareness about the natural world and to her ability to hear corals "speak." The narrative is weaving the perspective of Jungian psychology that sees water as the symbol of the unconscious psyche and the underwater images captured by the author during her scuba diving experiences. The video exemplifies Jungian arts-based research into individual and collective unconscious and urgent environmental matters. It serves as an invitation to the viewers to care for the diversity of the psyche and the biodiversity of the natural environment, both of which are needed for survival.

Video

https://youtu.be/_2Jw2BrfMlo

[1] https://doi.org/10.29173/jjs317s

Contributor

Evija Volfa Vestergaard, PhD, president of the JSSS, an independent researcher exploring a variety of topics through the lens of Jungian psychology. She has written on the topics of cultural complexes, trauma and transformation, consciousness, and body-mind continuum.

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Death of a Monster, a short story

Elizabeth Èowyn Nelson[1]

Warm wind rises at owl light, rattling the leaves of the tall Eucalyptus trees standing guard along the crest of the distant hill. Below the treeline, a girl waits in the dark, moist forest crouched in the earth's depression, a vale of old growth that has protected this place for centuries. The girl is collapsed in grief. She knows she cannot wait much longer, the lament of the creature so piteous. Every night of her vigil the howls had grown softer, an agony of loneliness and hunger.

The girl feels rage rise within her: *Does no one else care? Does no one else hear?* Her rage dissolves into despair, then reignites, and she wonders if this is what the animal feels, sliding towards death then discovering one last reason to fight for its life.

She longs to run to him, to bring him a honey cake according to the ancient ways, but it is not yet dark enough, the night not deep enough—and her feet still bear the fresh scars of moon acid. One more day until the sliver of light high, high above is swallowed in an immense black sky. She must wait. Yet, by then, would Cerberus be able to accept the offering, have the strength to eat? Or could the agony only be healed by death?

The howls of the hound penetrate the girl's flesh, tremble in her bones, and swell her heart with the tears she knows she must choke down yet again lest someone hear. Oh yes. Someone might notice human tears, though most would cringe at her grief before skittering away in fear. A few others might draw close, recognizing the sorrow of their own kind. No one hears him. Her solitary vigil is sufficient proof of the deaf, dis-eased world that no longer recognizes Cerberus and, more ominously, the domain he guards. Still, she never ceased to wonder how anyone could ignore the desperate, mournful keening of a fellow creature.

The night before, when it was two days until moon dark, the girl nearly darted from the trees and crossed to the mouth of the cave. A few hundred yards of open ground, no more, but beyond the protection of the forest the dim moonlight kindled the fallen leaves underfoot, a silver like acid on the flesh of her feet, feet still scorched from a reckless, painful attempt to reach the opening before it was time. She knew the signs. She must wait until the three days of moon dark, but oh, his mournful cries, fading.

The right moment. It was always, and ever had been, about the right moment for those who still respected the rhythms of time and night and the treasures to be discovered in the vaults below.

[1] https://doi.org/10.29173/jjs308s

Another night. One more night. *Please*, she prays to the creature. *Please live one more night*.

* * *

Beyond the silvered opening in the earth, down and down the rocky path, barring the gate to the underworld, the monster lies on his side, ribs heaving in a jagged rhythm. His paws flick. A memory of running, the floppy length of his stride, the feet too large for his adolescent legs. Yet the freedom, the joy. Now only a dream of another time, long past, when he was healthy, young, well-nourished, when some of them brought honey-cakes. The paws flick again. Once, twice. The running stops.

* * *

Hekate leaves the forest for the first time in 1,956 dark moons, followed by her pack of baying hounds who pace alongside their mistress in utter silence. She partitions the pack, chooses three to join her, asks the rest of their kin to return. Soon they are lost in the gnarled trunks. The pack makes no sound as it glides past the sleeping girl curled at the base of a large tree, a nest of roots her bed, as they have glided past the girl night after night.

One of the hounds pauses, dips his head to the girl's feet, notices the blood. He knows the terrible pain of moon acid on human flesh, understands her sacrifice. His tongue darts out, licks the skin without waking her, a healing. In the morning she will be without pain.

As the pack melts into the forest, they smell the sap flowing like turgid blood through old veins, not rising but descending through the flesh of the tree trunks into the roots, past the soft humus, past the layer of clay, and into the black black earth.

Hekate knows what she will find. She has found it before when the petty tyrants inflated with self-importance thought anything old and dark and silent and animal were worthless. But here, in this place, listening to the Eucalyptus leaves clatter in the wind, her hope had surged. It was moments ago, 50 years perhaps, when she saw two men, the Warrior and the Piscean, begin to imagine what they might build. The old woman had watched them walk the land with reverence, following its contours and sensing its depths. Neither man could foresee the terrible struggle ahead, the dreams their creation would nourish as well as the abuse it would attract. In the excitement of the birth they did not imagine its death. After all, once the seedlings have flown on the wind, what purpose the husk? But she could have warned them.

The old woman and her three hounds move past the entrance, noticing how narrow it has grown. Down, down they go, into his realm. And hers, of course, as it always has been; life with the dead endlessly soothing. She knows what she will find, has found before in other places, at other times. The memory and the foreknowledge breaks her heart all over again but her face remains unreadable, a small sacrifice until she can spend a private moment with the one they imagine a monster.

She will be able to preserve the mask of calm serenity—her signature face in every story they know—until the moment she cradles his large square head in her lap, yet again,

pressing her fingers gently against the still-warm fur, lowering her nostrils to his, a soft inhale, willing him to sense her, scent her, their souls mingling. Then the old woman's serene mask will break apart under the weight of rage and grief just as it has done at other times, in other places. When they forgot.

* * *

Hekate arrives at the place, kneels down by his emaciated form, runs her hands along the jutting pelvic bones, the cage of ribs, and gently massages the jowls that droop to the hard-packed earth. She notices that once again, just as when he was a puppy, his soft paws are too large for his body. Gently, oh so gently, she lifts his beautiful square head into her soft lap. Watching. Waiting.

This time, no breath passes between them. Even her hounds are still, standing at attention, honoring their kin. The only movement in the cavernous vault are Hekate's tears, sliding down her seamed face, dripping off her chin, a final blessing on a unique creature, her beloved.

* * *

An unfortunate death, to the petty tyrants; after all, only an animal, possibly a monster. A slight matter of neglect. Soon, they will forget the creature, forget the underworld he guarded, forget even the entrance. They will speed through their bright lives, frantic to forget what their flesh remembers because the vaults below, and its creatures, cannot be so easily forgotten.

Neglect. The one thing the gods cannot abide.

Contributor

Elizabeth Èowyn Nelson, PhD, teaches courses in research design, process, methodology, and dissertation development as well as dream, archetypal psychology, and technology at Pacifica Graduate Institute. Her books include Psyche's Knife (Chiron, 2012) and The Art of Inquiry (Spring Publications, 2017), coauthored with Joseph Coppin. She is currently co-authoring a new book with Anthony Delmedico, The Art of Jungian Couple Therapy (Routledge, 2025). Dr. Nelson teaches and speaks internationally and has published numerous scholarly papers and book chapters on subjects including animals, dreams, feminism, film, mythology, research, somatics, and technology. She has been a professional writer and editor for 40 years, coaching aspiring authors across many genres and styles.

Haunting: Communing with Trees

Belinda A. Edwards

Outside of Corsicana on Interstate 45
I pass a grove of Water Oak trees
a breeze—
a disturbance
a ghost image of bodies
hanging from limbs
leaves turn red

In this moment
were you supported?
Did reciprocity of fungi, relationship—
soothe your soul?

I imagine mycelium network
vast underground fungi, connecting
tiny threads weaving through forest
wrapping around tree roots—
sharing resources
sharing secrets
soothing your soul

or did trauma pass
from generation to generation—
with saplings dreaming—
nightmares?

I come to you
to ground
to tell my secrets—

but today I listen to yours.

From Wandering to Illumination: 3-D Photography as a Path to Awakening

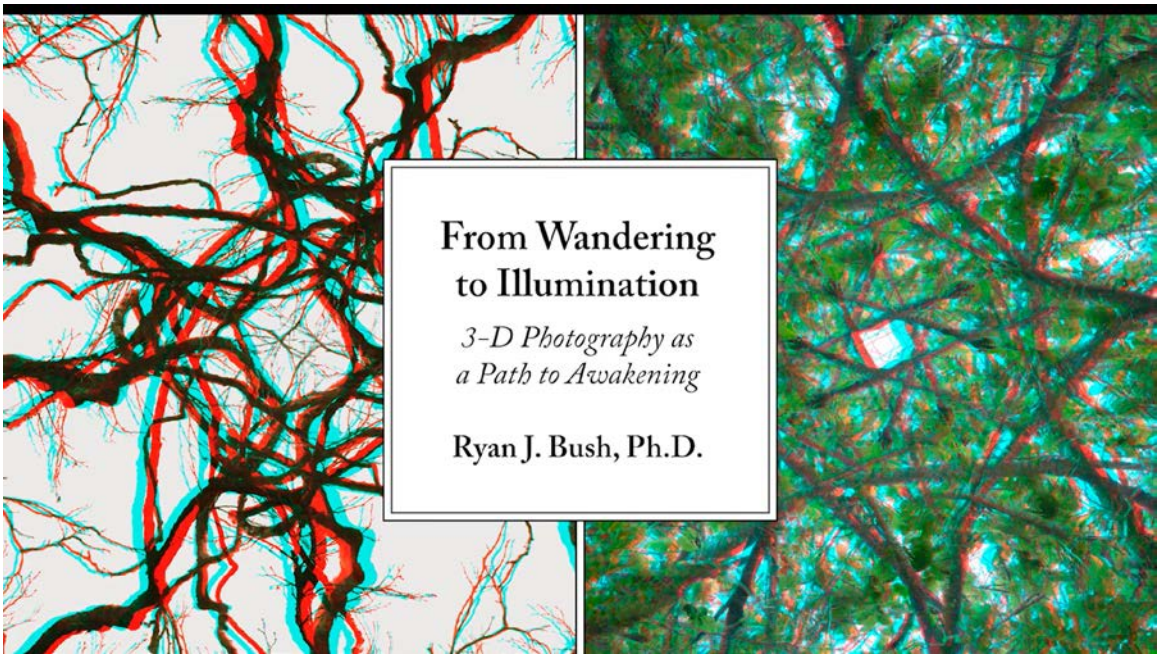
Ryan J. Bush[1]

Abstract. This video shares my mandala-like, multiple-exposure 3-D photographs of trees from the series *From Wandering to Illumination*. For the full experience, search on Amazon and Etsy for 'red/cyan 3-D glasses'. Starting with black-and-white photographs of bare trees in winter, the video takes us on a journey from the ordinary way of being, down through the lower levels of wandering and suffering, then emerging into the rebirth of spring and summer, with vibrant color photographs evoking the heights of awakening and illumination, and ending in a vision of the great Tree of Life, the radiant Oneness that joins us all together. This series was inspired by a vision of the World Tree in 2014, which made me realize I needed to invent a new photographic technique to evoke the immense power of visionary experiences. By weaving together the immersive images with narration and music, this video shows how art can help us connect with soul in direct, experiential ways that can be completely life-changing. Given the state of the world today, and how cut off from soul and meaning that so many people are, we need as many tools as possible to go from Wandering to Illumination. It's time for us to take the next step in our evolution and finally start living up to our name of *homo sapiens*, the supposedly wise humans. Far more is possible than most of us realize!

Keywords: art, photography, 3-D, trees, mandala, consciousness, Self, shadow, transcendent function, illumination, awakening, satori, transformation, soul, numinous, sacred, oneness

[1] https://doi.org/10.29173/jjs322s

Video



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Contributor

Ryan J. Bush, PhD is an artist, linguist and Reiki master/teacher based in Aptos, CA. In his 31 years as a fine-art photographer, he has used abstraction, multiple exposures and 3-D photography to explore themes like consciousness, visionary experiences, and the sacred hidden in the mundane. Bush earned a BA from Swarthmore in 1995 and a PhD in Linguistics from UCSC in 2000, and is the author of *The Music of Trees, A Singing Wire*, and *From Wandering to Illumination*. His work is in several collections including the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the Stanford Medical Center, and the CG Jung Institute of San Francisco.

A Tribute to Matthias

Acrylic on canvas, 36" diameter, by Jill Ansell

Shattered Dream

36 x 48", acrylic on canvas, by Jill Ansell

The Last Supper

19 x 40", acrylic on canvas, by Jill Ansell

Artist Statement

The work is at once dream and reality. Fish, birds, deer, wolves, antelope, and winged mice are interwoven into narratives that stir the imagination. One is transported into the night sea of death and resurrected in the realm of the sacred.

Having painted since age fourteen, I have always been fascinated by the language of symbols and the internal landscape. My journey has taken me to areas of exploration ranging from intense suffering to ecstatic joy, experiences that occur over a life well lived. This work reflects these journeys.

My most recent body of work is an exploration of Tibetan sacred lands and the reclamation of this land as a metaphor for reclaiming sacred spaces within ourselves. These works should be viewed as a metaphor of inner space as well as a place in conventional reality. Animals, dancers, nomads, and clear open space, as well as the colorful motifs that exhibit the joy of this culture are present in this work.

Another intention of this series is to share the depth of the view of the sacred that I have personally gained from my study and practice of Tibetan Buddhism. This view has become available to Westerners only recently through the profoundly tragic diaspora of the Tibetan people. Many of the elder Lamas, such as my teacher, Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen, have gladly passed on the depth of this tradition to cultures that hunger for inner peace and ritual that connects one with deep meaning. The Tibetan lands and people, in my view, are the quintessential example of a culture at risk of losing the "old ways" that are so deeply precious to a world ravaged by war, imperialism, and environmental devastation.

If, through these paintings, I can make a small contribution to honoring this culture through conveying its richness in both the inner and outer realms, then my work will be well done.

Pearl in the Dark

Catherine Brooks

Last night, I dreamt
He came when I called.

The Invisible One found me in the dark.

Wearing a suit as black as moonless night
He reached toward me holding a handful of pearls.

Across a great distance and through eons,
We fell into an ephemeral embrace.

The dreamworld is also the underworld.

An ancestress sat in the corner at her loom
Weaving the filament of time.

One by one she took pearls from his hand.
And threaded them into a net of stars.

A pearl slipped from her fingers and fell to the floor,
Breaking my slumber.

Birdsong and sunbeams streamed in.
The dark dissolved.

I rose and spent the morning between worlds.
Outdoors I stepped barefoot onto dew damp grass.

And there, at my feet,
I found a pearl.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* by Roger Willoughby

Willoughby, R. (2024). *Freud's British Family: Reclaiming Lost Lives in Manchester and London* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032652023

Reviewed by Dr. Edward Bloomfield[1]

This book is clearly a labour of love by the author and was over a decade in the making. It is academically rich, thoroughly researched, containing careful and scholarly documentation. There are often meticulously described details of Freud's life and circumstances. The academic rigour does not detract, and the author's narrative style has a consistently human quality to it. The writing has a compelling quality, and I found this an absorbing read.

The book is intriguing in its psychologically nuanced focus and piquant observations. One gains a sense of becoming more closely acquainted with Freud and the familial and cultural context and circumstances that forged the man and his ideas. One of the frequently recurring gems of this book are the thoughtfully observed and insightfully narrated descriptions of daily family life, where episodic details (like screen memories) are interwoven and suggestively linked to broader aspects of Freud's psychological makeup and his theoretical orientation and key concepts. This approach, of emphasising the importance of specific biographical details, is congruent with Freud's own examination of formative life experiences that constituted the core of his self-analysis and were the foundations for his subsequent development of psychoanalytic theories.

Often using a psychoanalytic framework and concepts, Willoughby (2024) intriguingly highlights the importance and deeper meaning inherent in events and contexts of Freud's everyday life. These are artfully exemplified at various stages in the book when narrating circumstances, incidents and encounters between Freud and his older half-brothers. Willoughby's own inferences, hypotheses, or even interpretations of the importance and significance of these biographical details are never delivered in a heavy-handed or unilateral fashion. They are offered in a balanced, thoughtful and thought-provoking way. Alternatives and supportive evidence are often provided for different perspectives. As a reader, I found this piqued my curiosity and imagination. This was one of the more enriching and satisfying experiences I had while delving into this book.

The book's explorations start from Freud's childhood and early adulthood, characterised by financial instability, hardship and the precarious social circumstances in

[1] https://doi.org/10.29173/jjs319s

Freiburg, and subsequently Vienna. This was a situation aggravated by antisemitic attitudes, prevalent and significant during those early stages of Freud's life. The financial austerity of his younger years clearly affected Freud's fear of poverty and his determined efforts to avoid it through a strong work ethic and emphasis on industriousness, which lasted throughout his life.

Freud's family set up is characterised by a marginal, gentle and equanimous, but largely financially unsuccessful father and a more central, and somewhat domineering mother and an increasing number of siblings, of whom Freud was the first and eldest. Freud also had two considerably older half-siblings, Emmanuel and Philipp from his father's previous marriage. The book's primary focus is on Freud's hitherto less well documented later associations with these two older half-brothers, who migrated with their families to Britain in 1859, settling in Manchester. Willoughby (2024) suggests these two half-brothers exerted an important influence on Freud's emotional life. The significant age gap is postulated by the author to have added an Oedipal dimension to the sibling relationship with his older half-siblings, partially conflating vertical (parental) and horizontal (sibling) dynamics.

The younger of the two half-brothers, Philipp, had less of a relationship with Freud. Willoughby (2024) comments that Freud saw Philipp irregularly and only briefly in his adult years. Although their relationship was cooler, Freud recognised and admired certain qualities of the younger half-brother, such as his endurance and determination; the capacity to do what is necessary, often in the face of adversity. He comments on Philipp's grit, which he contends: "made Philipp into something of a Joycean hero, who exhibited considerable psychological strength and endurance across his life, characteristics the young Freud also endorsed in 1875." (Willoughby, 2024, p. 99).

The eldest of the two half-brothers, Emanuel, is portrayed as a desired alternative, younger father figure. Emanuel comes across in these pages as authoritative and strict (bordering on controlling), but effective and decisive. These traits, although also potentially problematic, are described by the author as having likely to have been a counterbalance to disappointing aspects of Freud's experiences of his own father, Jacob. Emanuel is also described as an enthusiastic advocate and staunch admirer of Freud. Willoughby (2024) argues, for Freud, Emanuel was therefore not only an admired older brother but functioned also as an important father figure. Emanuel, in this respect, is described as confident, assured, pragmatic and successful in building his business in the UK. The book argues coherently this is likely to have been influential in the earlier years of Freud's burgeoning career and ambitions.

As Freud established himself and gained his own identity, his relationship with Emanuel seems to have changed in later years, with Freud being able to acknowledge more consciously that Emanuel's character could be quite difficult, resulting possibly in less enthusiasm in the latter years to meet up with Emanuel, prior to his death at the age of 82; resulting from an accidental fall from a train in 1914. The author speculates that "Freud's complicated grief over the loss of Emanuel seems likely to have informed his key text 'Mourning and melancholia', which was verbally delivered to the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society on 30 December 1914, ten weeks after Emanuel's death**."** (Willoughby, 2024, pp. 134-135).

Freud visited his half-brothers twice in England, in 1875 and 1908. The book outlines how these encounters and associations with his British half-brothers, Emanuel in

particular, influenced Freud's Anglophilia and were ultimately influential in his decision to choose Britain when seeking refuge from Nazi persecution in 1938. The chronology of Freud's visits in 1875 and 1908 interestingly also charts the progression of Freud's developing reputation. From an early stage, both in Vienna and in Britain, the Freud family viewed him in almost messianic terms, prophetically anticipating great things from him. The reader's access to the everyday family context, interactions and correspondence provides an interesting backdrop and contrast to Freud's trajectory to international renown. It is interesting that during his visit to London in 1908, Freud, despite being well into his middle age (52), had not yet reached the international fame he would subsequently achieve. Around 1908, psychoanalysis was on the cusp of achieving international recognition. The 1908 visit contrasts with Freud's subsequent time in the capital, 30 years later, which is described in more detail later in the book. The author comments poignantly, regarding the 1908 visit to London, that "had his visit been timed just two or three years later, Freud might have had a very different social and professional experience in London." (Willoughby, 2024, p. 112).

As the reader progresses through the chronology, the book also outlines the 1918 postwar economic blockades and austerity, which again reintroduced financial deprivation to Freud's daily life. Foodstuffs and commodities were in short supply. The situation was further aggravated by hyperinflation in Austria. Despite Freud's, by now international, reputation, severe food shortages meant Freud himself experienced hunger and even malnutrition at that time. His nephew, Samuel, sent him food parcels from the UK, before Freud was able to restore greater financial stability, indefatigably rebuilding his private practice, predominantly through international (mostly English-speaking British and American) patients, who could pay in sterling and dollars and thereby offset the impact of hyperinflation on the devaluation the Austrian Krone. We learn that Freud employed at that time a language coach to improve his English, which had already been greatly assisted through his associations with Emanuel and his extended British family.

As the book moves through the years, we become aware of the ominous rumblings of a politically shifting landscape. By 1933 Hitler had come to power. In that year two of Freud's sons, Oliver and Ernest, had to flee from Berlin. Ernest settled in London. The persecution of Jews increased and many German psychoanalysts, the majority of whom were Jewish, fled the country between 1933 and 1936. We learn that Freud himself delayed departing to London, until it was almost too late (impossible) to leave. Aside from the oral surgery for cancer in 1923, Freud's health had been declining since 1931, further compounded by heart complications in 1933, leaving him considerably weakened. Freud left Vienna in June 1938, shortly after Nazi Germany annexed Austria in March of that year, his life being at significant risk under the Nazi regime. For four of his sisters, Dolfi, Rosa, Pauli, and Mitzi, it had become impossible to leave. Freud's attempts in 1938 to rescue them, by removing them from Vienna, failed. They tragically later died in concentration camps between 1942 and 1943. The book powerfully conveys the mounting menace and direct threat to the Freud family. The concerted diplomatic efforts and negotiations to secure the safety and evacuation of the Freud family are also described.

Willoughby (2024) argues that Freud's choice of Britain, as the country to emigrate to, was strongly influenced by his prior visits to the UK and close ties with his British half-brothers and their families. Freud's son, Ernst, who had settled in London since 1933, assisted in finding a property in the capital. Freud finally settled in Hampstead, which

remained his abode for the final months of his life and is now the location of the Freud Museum. Hampstead exerted a gravitational pull for psychoanalysts, many of them asylum seekers from Austria and Germany, where psychoanalysis had already taken root before the Second World War. It became a hub for the discipline and remains influential to this day. Despite successfully gaining asylum in the UK, Freud remained a person of interest to the Nazis and was on the Gestapo list of people to be automatically arrested, in the eventuality of success of German's planned invasion of the UK.

Willoughby comments that: "for an 82-year-old, with very serious debilitating health problems, and constant pain and discomfort, Freud still managed to use his time creatively." (Willoughby, 2024, p.180). Freud's pertinacious and unwavering work ethic persisted, as he dedicated himself to his final significant works: *Moses and Monotheism* (Freud, 1939) and *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* (Freud, 1940). Freud also maintained his psychoanalytical practice, although this was severely reduced as a result of his move to the UK and his deteriorating health.

This book benefits from a detailed account of his last year in exile to London in 1938. Freud had distinguished visitors and patients. These include, among others, H G Wells, Salvador Dalí and Virginia Woolf. These encounters are described and explored, accompanied and interspersed with interesting observations and reflections by the author. The reader also gains a sense of loss and mourning for the life that Freud had left behind in Vienna. The grim tidings of family members that had remained behind and the growing recognition of the powerlessness to help, as Viennese Jewry were subjected to increasing anti-Semitic persecution.

The concluding chapter of the book, and of Freud's life, is both poignant and moving. In September 1939 war is declared against Germany and Freud would have witnessed the preparations for the impending air raids. Freud's own battles with cancer and his own impending mortality also overshadowed these final months of his life. Willoughby (2024) gives an intimate account of Freud's life and a new perspective on previously unexplored associations between Freud, his two older half-brothers and his extended British family. The book gives a fresh emphasis on the psychological and historical significance of these relationships, leading Freud, in his final year, to seek asylum in London.

Freud is universally recognised as a man of significant historical stature, as the founder of psychoanalysis. A genius and a pioneer, he was one of the most influential thinkers of the last century. His intellectual and cultural significance reverberates to this day. As someone less familiar with Freud's biography, I gained, from Willoughby's book, a true appreciation of the adversity, and tragedy that featured recurrently in Freud's personal life. Willoughby's writing style has a consistently personal quality to it. While reading, I developed a strong sense of Freud's human qualities of sensitivity, resolution, endurance and strength of character.

Contributor

Dr. Edward Bloomfield is a Jungian Analyst and Consultant Clinical Psychologist and has trained as a practitioner in Cognitive Analytical Therapy. He has an MA in Jungian and Post-Jungian Studies. He works part-time in the NHS and has a private practice in London.

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Review of *Jung and the Epic of Transformation Volume 1: Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Parzival" and the Grail as Transformation* by Paul Bishop

Bishop, P. (2024). *Jung and the Epic of Transformation Volume 1: Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Parzival" and the Grail as Transformation*. Asheville: Chiron Publications.

Reviewed by Leslie Gardner[1]

Paul Bishop is well known for his forensic and illuminating exploration of Jung's intellectual milieu, particularly his two volumes Friederich Nietzsche and Weimar Classicism from 2004 and Analytical Psychology and German Classical Aesthetics: Goethe, Schiller, and Jung Volume 2: The Constellation of the Self from 2009. Having just finished reading this latest book on Jungian themes and German literature, I can attest to its witty and lucid presentation of numerous provocative issues.

The book is intended as the first in a series of four publications, intended to explore key texts in German literature that influenced Jung, beginning here with an exploration of Wolfram von Eschenbach's thirteenth century epic poem, *Parzifal* (von Eschenbach, 1477/1980). Subsequent volumes promise to examine Goethe's *Faust* (Goethe, 1808/2014), Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (Nietzsche, 1883/1974) before turning to Jung's own work *The Red Book* (Jung, C.G. 2009).

Parzifal (von Eschenbach, 1477/1980) tells the story of the Arthurian hero Parzifal (or Percival in English) and his quest for the Holy Grail, reputed as the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper, but von Eschenbach's is one of many versions that have explored this story well into the twentieth century and beyond.

The provocative issues that Bishop presents are literary, aesthetic and psychological. Literary because he uses early German epics to track the grail - its impact, and its attraction. Aesthetic in the correlation of frameworks and patterns across artworks and literary sequence to directly symbolise human psychological endeavours. And psychological because the end goal of the book is to track 'individuation' in Jung's parlance, as it is exemplified in the grail legend. Bishop pursues these themes and correlates them to biographical moments in Jung's works, particularly to his ideas of projection, transformation and Individuation.

However, the theme that is most difficult to keep tabs on is that of 'transformation' which is the sub-title of this book. Is Individuation (the end-goal of the quest expressed in language that is deliberately correlated to Jungian ideas) a transformative progress or is it

[1] https://doi.org/10.29173/jjs318s

an unfolding of what is already there, suggesting an emergent self as an individuated self? Bishop shows that Jung perhaps has it both ways.

In the first part of the book, Bishop (2024) traces the history of the epics. In a crucial section, correlating the epic as psychology, he points out that "In their mania for categorising and classifying different types of epic, literary critics tend to overlook the experiential dimension of literature - as well as its philosophical importance" (Bishop, 2024, p.35). Thus, Bishop (2024) recounts von Eschenbach's *Parzifal* (1477/1980) in this vein, citing controversial and best-selling Luc Ferry's (2011) argument of Homer's Iliad and Odysseus, that epic is the 'birthplace' of philosophy. Ferry (2011), he points out, equates the ways of referring to moral and spiritual mores in other than mythic forms as 'secularised', not referring to religious belief or of the gods - as a 'new' form of philosophical discussion, the 'miracle' of what occurred in Plato's discussions.

Unaccountably the theoretical issues that make Ferry's (2011) 'secular humanism' controversial are not referred to by Bishop. Broadly speaking Ferry's (2011) rejection of religious dogma and superstition as irrelevant to prevalent human emotional and thinking modes which he claims are not viable touchstones, he often maintains, are not explored by Bishop that I note. But I would argue that these ways of receiving literature are essential to the experience of listening or reading. Strangely Ferry's (2011) points here are contrary to another controversial scholar Bishop refers to: Peter Kingsley - more on that later.

In *The Wisdom of the Myths: How Greek Mythology Can Change Your Life* (Ferry, 2014) - part of his series on 'Learning to Live') Ferry (2014) reinterprets classic stories from Greek mythology, including Homer, to uncover their philosophical insights. So 'epic as psychology' is given grounding as a viable tract, rather than as evidence of the combination of creator and audience psychologies, contextualised in the language and place of delivery. Elsewhere, in *A Brief History of Thought* (Ferry, 2011), Ferry both suggests that there are more efficacious secular avenues than spiritual solutions (or, as he says, 'superstition') to 'learning to live'. Ferry (2011) certainly opposes Jung's ideas that Christianity or other religious solutions may well be beneficial for people seeking meaning in their lives.

Although Bishop (2024) points out that there were many other classical schools, he primarily refers to Plato, although he does not allude to Plato's awareness of affect as operative communicative strategy (see 'Gorgias' and Helen's plaints at being blamed for the war, and her lack of love for her estranged and controlling husband; sounds 19th century romantic; but it's there). Further what is lacking in Ferry's (2011/2014) analysis is awareness of audience impact which is critical in Homer's epics - which were oral recountings, after all. Alluding to Ferry, Bishop (2024) says that Homer's epic poetry was a sort of philosophical tract engendered by rationality and logic.

Brilliantly, however, Bishop (2014) makes us aware of the respective, crucial differences of von Eschenbach's darker epic fairy tale rather than the psychological thriller that became Wagner's operatic version *Parsifa*l (1882). By this discussion, he implies at Jung's fascination in the epic as a young man. Bishop (2024) refers then to Nietzsche's impact on Wagner's epic, before moving onto Jung's references to both works not only in his psychological writings in *Aion* (*CW*, 9ii), but also in *Answer to Job* (*CW*, 11) and in *The Red Book* (Jung, 2009). We are reminded that Jung read von Eschenbach's epic as a 15-year-old and was amazed by it and reread it many times. It was a sort of deep guide to living for him.

Citing Jung's writings in letters and notes to Aniela Jaffe, and in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (Jaffé 1963), Bishop (2024) builds a case for Jung's self-assessment as a prophet, one who recognises the value of the vessel (the grail) and its vital, deep authority for one (like Jung) who knows what to find. The resolution of transformation is Individuation, and the epic form holds the pattern and transformative trigger for scientific and 'natural' sources of projection too. In fact, projections are dissolved by the prophet Jung, who knows - the king who is transformed. Individuation is the goal.

Bishop (2024) frequently cites another controversial mystical writer and former Jungian therapist, Peter Kingsley as the book continues. Based on Kingsley's (1997) commitment to mystical interpretations, Kingsley's (2021) reading of *The Red Book* which Bishop points to, reveals a form of transcendence that is synecdoche rather than simple allegorical likeness. It is a genuine and finally altered otherness, a new individual, who is driven to seek out change as Bishop explains 'Parzifal' does, as aligns with Jung's ideas. In other words, the symbol has material presence yet the grail, the vessel takes up space and time without metaphysical coordinates undermining its 'truth'.

Kingsley's (1997) earlier writings on pre-Socratics are widely respected, but as he went on, he diverged from standard academic formulations, and rather 'reads into' writing in radical ways - particularly of modern writers such as Jung. I think this needs to be set out.

While the contexts of Parmenides' writings Kingsley wrote about brilliantly may be seen as recognition of a culture redolent of fully committed other-worldly coordinates, Jung's world is/was not. Even the mediums Jung encountered who may have purported to attain to metaphysical significant communication, lived in a world that had more-or-less eschewed such components in a way early Greeks had not. Kingsley's (2021) application of those factors seems untenable even to consideration of *The Red Book.* If Bishop (2024) is to use Kingsley's arguments, they need to be defended or at least pointed out to readers.

From the beginning of the volume which comprehensively explores to the contexts of the grail literature, and von Eschenbach's (1477/1980) variations, the question of what 'transformation' is, and how it works in a Jungian framework is explored. It seems to me a formulaic progression - thereby rendered static - and yet is also presented as a revelation of what is dynamically integral to what the grail is, and so a bursting-forth, an integral presence, already 'there' and not in that sense 'new'.

This is the same question we ask of what Jung might mean by individuation: a gradual evolution of a self, a change? Or a sudden unpeeling of what's *already* there but hidden? The grail functions in these (and other) varieties of ways and the poets in these cases use its broad meanings to propound their world views.

In part, this is down to the aesthetic genre itself which requires steps in sequence to greater meaning through hardship and struggle. But is it only that? Or are there also different meanings of transformation: a core modification of a personality, thus a personal change which Parzifal goes through? My question is whether this is a core alteration or indeed simply another face of self-presentation where multiple personalities worn for purposes of expressing valour, or mystical engagement, or religious piety where the many stages of the story are displayed in each work of the grail stories.

Bishop (2024) points to Jung's creative and persuasive ploy to explore his communicative effectiveness. There is a duality. On the one hand, the use of adornment

(allusions to hollowness of attractive 'other' mystifying, transcendent meanings) and on the other to 'natural sequence', common sensical, and material presentation.

Jung is engaged in de-projections of metaphysical ideas, trying to get at grounded, material attributes of the grail and its vessels. The goal of individuation is akin to the king's journey: unhappy and yet stripped of the world's disfiguring and unnatural projections onto his personality. This prevailing unhappiness is persistent. We are told that Jung acknowledges those scholars who indicate that this inherent natural sequencing in the king is the inspiration for scientific enquiry. But the God has filled a vessel with emboldening liquid (knowledge) - that only the prophet can access, and Jung is one - as he expresses it in the Red Book (2009). Who but only Jung can follow this?

The notion of literary form as psychology is intriguing, and its possibilities as triggers of the movement of intellectual enquiry is persuasive, but individuation for Jung must also accommodate the common presence of multiple personalities - so what personality is 'uncovered'? Which is the 'integrated' one? - if we are born with a personality, and the potential for others in certain circumstances, is it a matter of developmental integration or a matter of revelation? What transformation is, and Jung's contentious ideas of individuation bear further exploration. However, Bishop's use of literature is a brilliant pointer to why Jungian discussion of literature and film, for example, are so appropriate and fruitful.

Contributor

Leslie Gardner PhD is the convenor of biannual feminisms conferences and classics and depth psychology conferences. She is a Fellow in the department of psychosocial and psychoanalytic studies at the University of Essex, and has published numerous chapters in collected volumes, as well as edited collections of essays with co-editors Frances Gray, Catriona Miller, Paul Bishop, Terence Dawson, Richard Seaford. She is the author of *Rhetorical investigations: GB Vico and CG Jung* (Routledge 2014) based on her PhD. An upcoming commissioned volume on ghostwriting is due out next year, to be published by Routledge. Leslie also runs an international literary agency, Artellus Ltd.

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The Telling Tale, **a five-minute stop motion film**

Laura Lewis-Barr

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zR7gXEoK_1k&list=PLkDy9Pm-dHrPrKjE8Sv4WDiW4RtD54mbZ&index=2

Author Statement

"The fairy tale's typically supernatural world can be regarded as the best possible metaphor for the actual arena of psychic happening which we confront within ourselves in the course of our reaching, groping or growing towards becoming more fully human…From the attitudes and decisions of both successful and unsuccessful heroes we learn practical and vital facts about spiritual life, that life which is our real inner "environment" and which holds the key to whatever ultimate meaning we find" (Hart, 2001, p.vii).

I create stop motion short films through a Jungian lens. Groups and individuals use my films for active imagination, and inner work. My films are like dreams. They are based on fairy tales and thus have the wisdom of those tales.

After many years of studying fairy tales (and Jungian thoughts on these tales) I've noticed that my ability to speak the language of symbols is improving. Fairy tales also offer healing wisdom.

I have personally found fairy tales to be immensely helpful in my own healing. I'm often surprised to realize that my own inner struggles are reflected in the project I'm working on. *Phone Gal* reflected part of my personal exploration of the sad fairy tale, 'Little Match Girl'. My most recent film, *Dumpling* offered medicine to me as I navigate stuck places in myself.

I am an award-winning filmmaker and screenwriter. I make zero-budget stop motion films in my basement in Chicago. I make these comedy adaptations for everyone, but especially for those interested in Jung's work and the wonderful work of Marie Louise Von Franz. My background is in the theatre and I'm self-taught as an animator. I've made 16 short films. Most are a bit longer than 5 minutes. *The Telling Tale* is one of my earlier films.

My website is https://psychescinema.com/

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CONTRIBUTORS

Biographies of the 2025 Authors, Poets, and Visual Artists

Jill Ansell. At the artist's discretion, a biographical statement has not been included.

Halide Aral is a retired instructor of English Language and Literature with an MA in the same subject and a specific interest in Shakespeare. She is Turkish.

Edward Bloomfield is a Jungian Analyst and Consultant Clinical Psychologist and has trained as a practitioner in Cognitive Analytical Therapy. He has an MA in Jungian and Post-Jungian Studies. He works part-time in the NHS and has a private practice in London.

Catherine Brooks is an artist, writer, and doctoral student of counseling psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute. Catherine creates at the crossroads of depth psychology, feminine spirituality, anthropology, mythology, and embodiment. Through painting, poetry, essays, and fiction, Catherine explores the Mysteries of the Unconscious and the Great Mysteries of sex + birth, death + rebirth. The following poems are inspired by and extended from personal dreams of the Animus.
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Patricia Bukur is an artist, author, and Jungian based therapist certified in Psychedelic Assisted Therapies (PAT). She facilitates psychedelic journeys privately and in groups and is a micro dose consultant. Her book, "Microdosing Magic" will be published in 2025.

Patricia attended Pacifica Graduate institute and the Jung Institute of Colorado and holds an MA in Depth Psychology with a Jungian Emphasis. She is a contributing author and photographer of "Foraging Mushrooms in the Colorado Rocky Mountains" (2024, Falcon Press) and author of a soon to be published book about the spiritual benefits of microdosing magic mushrooms.

Patricia serves as a board member of the Colorado Mycological Society and the Aspen Indigenous Foundation. She leads summer mushroom forays in Colorado and will be leading a mushroom workshop in Bhutan in the fall of 2025. Her mushroom art will be exhibited at the Denver Botanic Gardens in 2026. Visit forestofenlightenment.com for more information.

Ryan J. Bush, PhD is an artist, linguist and Reiki master/teacher based in Aptos, CA. In his 31 years as a fine-art photographer, he has used abstraction, multiple exposures and 3-D photography to explore themes like consciousness, visionary experiences, and the sacred hidden in the mundane. Bush earned a BA from Swarthmore in 1995 and a PhD in Linguistics from UCSC in 2000, and is the author of *The Music of Trees, A Singing Wire*, and *From Wandering to Illumination*. His work is in several collections including the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the Stanford Medical Center, and the CG Jung Institute of San Francisco.

Christopher Drake, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and sleep researcher. He has authored over 200 scientific publications and is a section editor for *The Principles and Practice of*

Sleep Medicine. He has received research grants from the NIH and is a former Chairman of the National Sleep Foundation.

Belinda A. Edwards. is an African American writer, who was nominated for the Pushcart Prize for a piece published in *Santa Fe Literary Review* Fall 2021 issue. She has also published pieces in *Mocking Owl Roost* and *On the Seawall* literary magazines, *Sage Woman* magazine, *Mother Tongue Press* and others. She is also a regular contributor for *Mocking Owl Roost*.

She was a member of Jerome Bernstein's Borderland group for over five years and was in the last group that actively interacted with him before leaving Santa Fe, NM. At the 2024 JSSS Conference, Belinda was one of three speakers from the Borderland group who spoke in tribute to Jerome Bernstein. Bernstein often described his journey from the medical model of psychotherapeutic cure to a model more comfortable with mystery, client uniqueness, and connection to natural entities. He was optimistic about the evolution of the psyche, rooted in Jungian understandings of a collective unconscious guiding human societies.

The group focused on their dreams on a personal level before then expanding into what they were communicating in a larger perspective. Belinda also had the opportunity to be included in a ceremony with the Navajo medicine man Bernstein studied with for over forty years. Her writing has been affected by the time with Jerome and her attempt to include voices in her writing that are often excluded, such as ancestors and the natural world.

She is currently working on a collection of poems and essays that explore social justice and anti-racism issues through the lens of the ancestor, the natural world, dreams and personal experiences. By weaving threads of familial and community memories with the threads of current and past national events, her writing, much like quilting, will take an old fragmented western narrative and piece together a new one, supporting the new psyche which continues to be birthed into the world.

The poem “Haunting: Communing with Trees”, (p. 117, 10/3/2024), was influenced by Corporeal Writing organization yearlong *Mushroom School - Mycelium Network.*

The poem “Cracks in the Oracle Bone” (p.60, 11/5/2023) was inspired by poet Brenda Hillman 2006 lecture “Cracks in the Oracle Bone: Teaching Certain Contemporary Poems” delivered at the University of California at Berkeley as part of the Judith Lee Stronach Memorial Lecture Series.

Matthew A. Fike, PhD, is a retired Professor of English at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC, where he taught courses in the human experience, critical thinking, and Renaissance literature for twenty-five years. He is the author of five literary monographs and over forty articles.

Leslie Gardner, PhD is the convenor of biannual feminisms conferences and classics and depth psychology conferences. She is a Fellow in the department of psychosocial and psychoanalytic studies at the University of Essex, and has published numerous chapters in collected volumes, as well as edited collections of essays with co-editors Frances Gray, Catriona Miller, Paul Bishop, Terence Dawson, Richard Seaford. She is the author of

Rhetorical investigations: GB Vico and CG Jung (Routledge 2014) based on her PhD. An upcoming commissioned volume on ghostwriting is due out next year, to be published by Routledge. Leslie also runs an international literary agency, Artellus Ltd.

Eissa Hashemi is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Organizational leadership in the I/O Psychology Department at The Chicago School. His research contributes to the holistic approach to authentic leadership, diversity and inclusion, resilience, depth psychology, and environmental psychology. He has over 15 years of scholarly contribution including teaching and publishing on leadership studies and organizational Jungian perspectives.

Heather Hines, PhD, LCSW, is a clinical social worker based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She holds a doctorate in Depth Psychology and specializes in the intersection of psyche, collective individuation, and ecology. She leads climate grief support groups and is currently writing a book that explores abandonment trauma, annihilation anxiety, and ecological consciousness. Her work explores the psychological dimensions of the climate crisis, and she has presented on these themes at Jungian conferences.

Laura Lewis-Barr is an award-winning writer, filmmaker, and educator. She was a graduate student in clinical psychology but eventually switched majors and earned her M.A in theatre. In 2019 Laura began making stop motion films focused on fairy tales.
Laura's focus is on animating fairy tales and mythic stories for personal and collective transformation. She is inspired by the work of Marie Louise Von Franz, Joseph Campbell, Carl Jung, and Michael Meade. Laura's films are made in her basement in Chicago. Her screening events are filled with heart and questions for the soul.

Greg Mahr, MD, is director of Consultation Liaison Psychiatry at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and is on faculty at the Wayne State University and Michigan State University. He has a long-standing interest in depth psychology. He co-authored *The Wisdom of Dreams: Science, Synchronicity and the Language of the Soul* with Chris Drake, published in 2022 by Routledge. He has collaborated with Heather Taylor-Zimmerman on *Dream Wisdom Oracle*, a handbook and set of dream cards, which will be published in August 2025 by Inner Traditions.

Andrew McWhirter is a Senior Lecturer in Media, Communication and Journalism at Glasgow Caledonian University. He is the author of books such as *Film criticism and digital cultures: Journalism, social media and the democratization of opinion* (Bloomsbury, 2016) and *Learning, teaching and social media*: *A generational approach* (Routledge, 2024). Andrew has published on films, video games, and on audiovisual pedagogies, with more recent research interests in the intersecting space between climate change, media and technologies. He served as the film section editor in the pages of the *International Journal of Jungian Studies* and has contributed to *The Routledge International Handbook of Jungian Film Studies* (Routledge, 2018). He has studied under and works alongside Jungian scholar Professor Catriona Miller.
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Catriona Miller, PhD is a Professor in Media at Glasgow Caledonian University, where she teaches on creativity and textual analysis. Her research interests include storytelling and the archetypal dimensions of science fiction, horror and fantasy genres. She published a monograph *Cult TV Heroines* for Bloomsbury in 2020 and has co-edited *Feminisms, Technology and Depth Psychology* (2024) with Leslie Gardner and Roula Maria Dib for Routledge. She was a section editor of *The Routledge International Handbook of Jungian Film Studies*, (2018) where her chapter on Jungian textual analysis opened the volume.

David A. Moore, PsyD, is a Senior Staff Clinical Health Psychologist and the Director of Trauma and Acute Care Surgical Psychology Services at Henry Ford Hospital. He is on the faculty at Michigan State University and is the Chair of the Henry Ford Hospital Ethics Committee. David is working with Greg Mahr on a book entitled *The Psychology of Acute Trauma: A Clinician's Guide to Healing and Recovery,* which will be published in 2026 by Elsevier.

Elizabeth Èowyn Nelson, PhD, teaches courses in research design, process, methodology, and dissertation development as well as dream, archetypal psychology, and technology at Pacifica Graduate Institute. Her books include Psyche's Knife (Chiron, 2012) and The Art of Inquiry (Spring Publications, 2017), coauthored with Joseph Coppin. She is currently co-authoring a new book with Anthony Delmedico, The Art of Jungian Couple Therapy (Routledge, 2025). Dr. Nelson teaches and speaks internationally and has published numerous scholarly papers and book chapters on subjects including animals, dreams, feminism, film, mythology, research, somatics, and technology. She has been a professional writer and editor for 40 years, coaching aspiring authors across many genres and styles.

Anthony N. Reffi, PhD, is a clinical psychologist with expertise in trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He is a researcher at the Thomas Roth Sleep Disorders and Research Center in Michigan, as well as the Henry Ford Acute Trauma Recovery Center, and has received a NIH grant to study trauma.

Maryam Tahmasebi is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Psychology at Los Angeles Pierce College and The Chicago School. She has a Master of Science in Agricultural and natural resources economics and an MA and PhD in Community, indigenous, and ecological psychology. Her multidisciplinary work includes experiences of climate crisis in indigenous agricultural communities, decolonial psychology, feminist psychology, and public education.

Evija Volfa Vestergaard, PhD, president of the JSSS, an independent researcher exploring a variety of topics through the lens of Jungian psychology. She has written on the topics of cultural complexes, trauma and transformation, consciousness, and body-mind continuum.

Joyce Victor, lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Her poems appear in *The Ekphrastic Review*, *Appalachia*, *Friend's Journal*, *Slippery Elm*, and *Connecticut River Review* (forthcoming).

She was a finalist for the Slippery Elm Poetry Contest, 2024. She was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She's a nominee for *Best New Poets*, 2025.

Rene Westbrook is a native New Yorker has worked as a multimedia artist for five decades. A graduate of Boston's Massachusetts College of Art, René has gone on to become an award winning recipient in sculpture, painting, and photography.

Her most recent acquisitions and awards include artwork to be used on the season 3, Netflix series, the Diplomat, 2025; a six month scholarship at Community Print, 2025, the Merit Award Juried Exhibition at SPSCC, 2024, the OlyArtspace Alliance Grant, 2024, the SOLA Award, 2023 Artist Trust; US Embassy in Barbados art selection 2023, Olympia Traffic box art selection, 2023; Artist Trust GAP, 2022; ArtsWalk Cover Artist, 2022; and Jordan Schnitzer Art Grant, 2020.

Rene is preparing for a large group exhibition this April, 2025 at the Leonor Fuller Art Gallery, at SPSCC in Olympia, Washington.

Artist Statements

The Art of Patricia Bukur

Forest of Enlightenment

Mushrooms are my passion. Offering vast diversity of qualities, fungi embody beauty, mystery, fear, and culinary delight. Some build our immune systems to fight disease, while some destroy our organs and result in death. Some expand consciousness by opening doors to perception. Fungi are complicated creatures with whom humans share a deeply symbiotic relationship.

For me, above all else, they are a guide into the world of abstract thinking and visual art. As a Jungian Psychotherapist focused primarily on Psychedelic Assisted Therapies, this work offers a glimpse into mushrooms as a portal to psyche.

"Forest of Enlightenment" is a body of work that examines fungal activity utilizing Jung's Active Imagination, encaustic (beeswax), pigments, and fire. The process begins in the forests, searching diligently up mountains, through fields, between logs, and on trees in search of species both common and rare. The work continues in my studio where I collaborate with mycologists to positively identify species and occasionally discover unknown mushrooms! Later, I communicate with the mushrooms, attempting to understand how they want to be presented. From beginning to end, the process of mushroom encaustics is co-creative.

Trained as a realist painter – focused primarily on portraits and landscapes – my journeys with mushrooms trained me to transition into the sublime power of encaustic abstracts. The alchemy of the wax, pigment, and blow torch beautifully mirrors the cycle of life, death, and rebirth found in nature and in human spirituality.

Mushrooms have taught me to think outside the box, and wax has taught me to let go of control so that the materials can be what they want to be. This body of work satisfies a large part of my soul: understanding the complicated entanglement that humans share with fungi, and dancing with the images as they develop from photos to paintings.

The Art of Rene Westbrook

I'm a multimedia artist who's been working professionally for five decades. This odyssey into various art forms has resulted in my work being recognized with awards in painting, sculpture, and photography.

My artwork has been exhibited on both coasts and my eclectic use of various techniques has created a diverse portfolio that lends itself to a variety of creative innovations. I enjoy the journey of exploring intellectual concepts and then harnessing different media to create the visual experience for the viewer. I believe the artist is the

trusted vanguard in society that brings artistic transparency to issues that confront us daily, and I'm privileged to be a vital witness.

To this end, I am compelled to explore the contradictions inherently present in today's post Truth reality. I seek a workable narrative that can address the seamless loss of historic memory, morality, and values that threatens to twist the thorny web of deceit into enough rope in which to hang ourselves.

As an artistic alchemist, I hope to engage the viewer as a visual Oracle of creative ideas that stimulates the senses and harnesses different vehicles to unravel hidden mysteries.

Several years ago, I decided to explore new digital tools when reassessing my portfolio. Once I realized I could use my own original artwork and overlay them in a unique way, the resulting imagery added a fresh perspective on work that was once limited to its original meaning.

Fascinated by this unique reinvention, my paintings, collages and photography became the catalyst to a new direction of inquiry for my digital compilations. I skilfully take parts of my original work and redefines them into a new image through a rupture of color and content. It's clear these altered elements can bring about a shift in just how far the current work might ascend.

As I approach my 75th year, I'm proud of the longevity of my art career. It takes grit and guts to hold onto the exceptional standards I insist upon in my work to keep going. James Baldwin, a close friend at that time once told me that when the house is on fire, the artist can’t sit it out. He was adamant that our spotlight on social injustice was paramount to the soul of a nation.

Subsequently, l continued to heed that call with the “Black Lives Matter/White Lies Shatter” artwork, Hieroglyphs of Hate and Deliverance.
Interview with Rene Westbrook, Black Lives Matter Grantee, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, WSU - YouTube

The Art of Jill Ansell

The work is at once dream and reality. Fish, birds, deer, wolves, antelope, and winged mice are interwoven into narratives that stir the imagination. One is transported into the night sea of death and resurrected in the realm of the sacred.

Having painted since age fourteen, I have always been fascinated by the language of symbols and the internal landscape. My journey has taken me to areas of exploration ranging from intense suffering to ecstatic joy, experiences that occur over a life well lived. This work reflects these journeys.

My most recent body of work is an exploration of Tibetan sacred lands and the reclamation of this land as a metaphor for reclaiming sacred spaces within ourselves. These works should be viewed as a metaphor of inner space as well as a place in conventional reality. Animals, dancers, nomads, and clear open space, as well as the colorful motifs that exhibit the joy of this culture are present in this work.

Another intention of this series is to share the depth of the view of the sacred that I have personally gained from my study and practice of Tibetan Buddhism. This view has become available to Westerners only recently through the profoundly tragic diaspora of the Tibetan people. Many of the elder Lamas, such as my teacher, Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen, have gladly passed on the depth of this tradition to cultures that hunger for inner peace and

ritual that connects one with deep meaning. The Tibetan lands and people, in my view, are the quintessential example of a culture at risk of losing the "old ways" that are so deeply precious to a world ravaged by war, imperialism, and environmental devastation.

If, through these paintings, I can make a small contribution to honoring this culture through conveying its richness in both the inner and outer realms, then my work will be well done.

The Art of Laura Lewis-Barr

"The fairy tale's typically supernatural world can be regarded as the best possible metaphor for the actual arena of psychic happening which we confront within ourselves in the course of our reaching, groping or growing towards becoming more fully human…From the attitudes and decisions of both successful and unsuccessful heroes we learn practical and vital facts about spiritual life, that life which is our real inner "environment" and which holds the key to whatever ultimate meaning we find" (Hart, 2001, p.vii).

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