

To Our Readers

Man is stumbling blindly through a spiritual darkness with the precarious secrets of life and death. The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we do about living. This is our 20th century's claim to distinction and to progress.

Army General Omar N. Bradley, November 10, 1948¹

In 1954, not even a decade removed from two cataclysmic World Wars that changed the world forever, Jung summed up the existential terrors that still threaten us:

The gigantic catastrophes that threaten us today are not elemental happenings of a physical or biological order, but psychic events. To a quite terrifying degree we are threatened by wars and revolutions which are nothing other than psychic epidemics. At any moment several millions of human beings may be smitten with a new madness, and then we shall have another world war or devastating revolution. Instead of being at the mercy of wild beasts, earthquakes, landslides, and inundations, modern man is battered by the elemental forces of his own psyche. This is the World Power that vastly exceeds all other powers on earth. The Age of Enlightenment, which stripped nature and human institutions of gods, overlooked the God of Terror who dwells in the human soul. If anywhere, fear of God is justified in face of the overwhelming supremacy of the psyche. (1954/1981, CW 17, ¶302)

The violence wrought by the Russian invasion of Ukraine reminds all of us of how fast a blitzkrieg can be mobilized, how far-reaching the actions of one nation can be, and how much human suffering can be initiated in a few days. Given the unrelenting series of catastrophes that appear in our newsfeeds every day, it is clear that we are living in a *chronic traumatic stress period* (CTSP). Jung captures the nature of the root of our chronic trauma so well as “the sickness of the age in which we live”:

If we are honest, we must admit that no one feels quite comfortable in the present-day world; indeed, it becomes increasingly uncomfortable. The word “crisis” so often heard, is a medical expression that tells us that the sickness has reached a dangerous climax.

When man became conscious, the germ of the sickness of dissociation was planted in his soul, for consciousness is at once the highest good and greatest evil. It is difficult to estimate the sickness of the age in which we live. (1964/1978, CW 10, ¶¶290–291)

So where does all of this leave us? There is only one thing I do *know* for sure. The monumental crises of our time continue to reduce (or elevate) us to our core, opening us into the great unknown about the future. Emotionally, we are shredded. Artifice, ego, and “knowing” are stripped away and we are left as helpless and vulnerable as children in a world raging

with danger. Our own vulnerability is reflected in the suffering of the Ukrainian people fleeing for their lives, their homes destroyed, families separated from those who must stay behind to fight, faced with finding refuge far from their homeland. The extent of their suffering is hard to fathom. Though most of us are not experiencing the same visceral pain as those immediately touched by this conflict, the images we see stir our own empathic suffering for their plight and expose us to our own pain and helplessness as citizens of a chaotic world.

Exposure to unrelenting trauma strips us bare. The crises of a global pandemic, growing authoritarianism, racial strife, and environmental degradation, which outwardly represent our modern sickness, are inwardly demonstrated by soaring rates of depression and anxiety across the globe. Now we face the renewed threat of nuclear annihilation as we witness the wholesale destruction of the Ukrainian culture in real time.

For many of us stripped bare by the AIDS crisis, silence became our psychic survival mechanism. Silence and hiding remained untouched by the ever-popular AIDS-era slogan: *Silence = Death*. Of course, we marched and agitated. But that agitation could not pry loose the frozen grief and terror in each of our hearts. And for many of us, myself included, that grief remained our sequestered suffering for decades.

Is there something we can do now? What is our responsibility? There is certainly the responsibility to identify our own current pain and grief. But beyond that is there something else we are to do?

In Jung's *Red Book*, undertaken in the war years as he recognized that he had lost his soul and feared he was going mad, he emphasized at the outset the unique and singular path each of us must take. "The way is within us, but not in Gods, nor in teachings, nor in laws. Within us is the way, the truth, and the life" (2009, 231). The answers we seek about what to do lie within each of us, in our own depths. But it's so much easier to think about finding our souls than to take the time, as Jung did, to actually search for them and, finding them, listen to how the soul wishes us to live each moment—for, as Hillman says, the soul is a process not a thing—to reconnect heaven and earth, above and below. In an increasingly soulless time, what could be a more potent medicine, or a more subversive one?

I am grateful for my own suffering caused by these external events as a reminder to continue to relate to the depths. I want to explore the solace of fierce internal landscapes where I seek God in the silence beyond language.² There I experience my brokenness, my vulnerability, and utter helplessness only to, hopefully, relate more deeply to my soul and see the world reborn. It is the place beyond language that is the cauldron of my soul work. I feel a glimmer of hope in the suffering that brings me closer to my core, and to others.

Jung's words bring some relief at a time like this:

... every psychic phenomenon is compensated by its opposite, in agreement with the proverb, "Les extrêmes se touchent," or, "There is no misfortune so great that no good may come of it."

Thus, the sickness of dissociation in our world is at the same time a process of recovery, or rather, the climax of a period of pregnancy which heralds the throes of birth. (1964/1978, CW 10, ¶¶292–293)

Many of us lay our faith in the transformation of the psyche, which we experience and witness in the practice of Jung's psychology. Could we imagine, for instance, how our world could change if some fraction of our shadow projections worldwide were withdrawn? Perhaps we will be moved to have faith in each other and our shared vulnerability as we struggle with the challenges of a world aflame. If we are lucky, we may achieve a measure of gratitude for the gifts the psychological and emotional hardships of these times might bring.

Of Joan Logghe's poems that grace this issue, Poetry Editor Frances Hatfield describes Joan's work in her own beautifully poetic terms: "Reading Joan Logghe's poems, I keep thinking about how she makes writing poetry seem so easy, the way Olympic skaters make twirling four times around in the air and landing perfectly on thin blades on the ice look easy. Like her apple in 'Golden Delicious' with a small waterfall, acacias, and the workers who clear them, a painter with her brush, horses, and earthworms all tucked inside, each poem is a unique jewel that contains decades of writing and teaching poetry and a deep love of her life in the New Mexico high desert. She has a gift for braiding together bits of the quotidian, conversational, and stream-of-consciousness into a radiant kaleidoscope of ineffable power, with an emotional depth that opens us to an immediate experience of the preciousness of each moment. She welcomes us into her poems with a generous warmth and sly humor that nonetheless cuts to the heart of this mystery we call life. She begins 'Pandemic' with 'Every time I see you I think it's the last/so let's start by saying goodbye,' and then tells us 'We have to attack time today/Like a prisoner with violins.' In 'Ode to the Guest' she praises how her guest arrives

... carrying illness gracefully
as one would carry a delicate basket
woven of reeds and the flowers inside
deny that they are dying, mystery
and beauty in one swallow.

She does indeed, as she proclaims in 'Our Lady of Sorrows Fiesta,' 'walk the razor's edge between dark and light,/the beauty way.' I keep going back to her poems, turning over the lines in my mind like stones, mostly for the pleasure of it, but also perhaps to learn how she makes that look so easy."

Daniela Boccassini begins her article, "At the Roots of Jung's Alchemy: *The Red Book's* Alchemical Quaternion," with an epigraph from Jung: "In the last resort there is no good that cannot produce evil and no evil that cannot produce good" (1944/1968, CW 12, ¶36). Here, Boccassini has chosen to highlight Jung's wisdom regarding the shadow and affairs of the world so relevant to what I've written about. In this scholarly piece, Boccassini asks and answers the question about what readied Jung to devote himself to the systematic study of the European alchemical tradition at the beginning of the 1930s. Shedding light on Jung's long-standing interest in rituals and processes of death and rebirth, which culminated in his 1932 Ravenna vision, this article traces Jung's earliest understanding of alchemy back to the pages of *The Red Book*. A close reading of a sequence of four illuminations, which Jung painted in the fall of

1919, allows us to see how profound his understanding of alchemy as an experience of inner rebirth was then and how powerfully those early images reverberated through Jung's later alchemical writings.

In a radical departure from affairs of the outer world, "The Potential of Emptiness," by Dragana Favre, challenges readers to delve into one of the deepest aspects of psyche, that of emptiness. Favre describes how we fill what might be considered the void with unlimited projections nourished by shadow and innumerable personal complexes. Her intriguing and compelling argument is that the *presence of emptiness* signifies that *emptiness symbolizes something* and the effort to give it the "place" of a symbol has confused and vexed people for centuries. I found this paper fascinating for its brain-twisting content as well as Favre's gentle guidance through its challenging philosophical terrain.

In "Archetypal Tarot: The Art of Seeing Through" Jessica K. Fink provides a fresh take on the tarot, discussing encounters with archetypal images that engage the unconscious and open doors to imaginal ways of knowing. Integrating Hillman's archetypal psychology, the paper explores tarot reading as providing a repository of images that allow the unconscious to express the individual's deeper life story. Within the space of a tarot reading, the process of "seeing through" occurs without the need to fix anything. What is created is a space for soul-making. As Fink describes it, "Hillman's move of psychologizing or seeing through tries to solve an issue through *dissolving* it rather than *resolving* it. Dissolving allows the fantasy to emerge that has been stuck inside the perceived problem." As such, soul is revealed. "Hillman described soul as a perspective or a viewpoint rather than a substance or a thing itself. Soul refers to the imaginative possibilities in our personalities; it is reflective and mediates between us and events through a process of differentiation." In grounding her thesis in examples of tarot readings, Fink illustrates the psychological process occurring between the reader, querent, cards, and the unconscious.

In a highly creative venture, "New Techne of the Ancient Zodiac," Kalen Boyd reimagines the historical Western zodiac in terms of significant and sometimes troubling technologies, reconnecting those technologies to the archetypal drives and desires that underlie their creation. In twelve collaged paintings, with accompanying interpretive texts, Boyd demonstrates that the products of our technological world are not symbolically empty, value-neutral, or devoid of meaning; they are expressive of our deepest values and drives. Boyd created an updated zodiac that allows people to reexamine the meaning of technologies via symbols with which they commonly identify. If psyche informs and creates through us via archetypal energies, then it follows that our culture and technologies are also expressions of who we are. His work gives us a fresh perspective on symbols of the modern world that were chosen randomly but are symbolically relevant—the nuke, the pen, vaccine, zero, and numerous others.

In a similarly image-rich presentation, "Assemblage of the Birds," Heidi Carver Collier provides the reader with a well-crafted take on the "Persian Sufi poet Sheikh Farīd ud-Dīn Attar's (1145–1220 CE) vast allegorical poem *Conference of the Birds*. In the story, a flock of spirited birds crosses the sky seeking the Simorgh, the great mysterious bird that is a king or God, symbolic of the human search for the self. They ascend together, lifted and propelled by

the strength of many wings.” From the poem Carver Collier artistically exemplifies the challenge to our collective complacency and our desire to resist change. Attar’s poem describes how we live in the world attached to our creature comforts, how we resist psychic change (a soul awakening that facilitates growth). The poet’s message is just as true of human culture now as in the twelfth century when the poem was written. In a moving description of the relationship of the artform to her personal history and her spiritual strivings, the author-artist describes her creative process in the creation of assemblages to honor the epic poem. She describes the components she selected, the Japanese obi and hand-carved brooches, as she elaborates on their relevance to the shrines. The reader is inspired by the mytho-spiritual allegory by a twelfth-century Sufi mystic and a host of images representing the winged spirit of the seeker.

Stacy Hassen provides the readers with another inspiring ARAS and *Jung Journal* collaboration in the presentation of Juana Alicia Araiza’s *The Spiral Word*. As she reminds us, 2012 was the year of the Mayan Calendar prophecy of the end of an era and the beginning of a great shift in consciousness. In that year, Araiza painted the accompanying murals on the interior walls of the Xicanx student center at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. In poetic detail, Hassen describes the meaning of the place and content of the murals and how they might inspire us today when we most need to relate to archetypal images that transport us into the depths of the collective story.

Reviews Editor Helen Marlo presents us with two reviews in this issue of the journal. In the first, “I am his. Even in his Absence,” Henry Abramovitch reviews Susan E. Schwartz’s, *The Absent Father Effect on Daughters: Father Desire, Father Wounds*. Here, Abramovitch presents a work that he describes “as intelligent, passionate, insightful, and likely to become a Jungian classic”: “[It] explores, in depth, the destructive impact of paternal absence on women. Each chapter combines deep familiarity with psychoanalytic and Jungian theory, alongside telling amplifications from fairytales, mythology, biblical and literary sources, with detailed and sensitive clinical illustrations. Susan E. Schwartz presents focused discussion on central topics, such as narcissism, archetypal father, as-if personality, puella, and more. Her discussion of the life and poetry of Sylvia Plath is particularly memorable.” If anyone has experienced the pervasive problem of absent fathers or knows someone who has (which is all of us), Schwartz’s work will be on a “must purchase” list.

In the second review, Shaoming Duan reviews *Jung and Chinese Culture*, by Shen Heyong and Gao Lan. Duan describes how Heyong and Lan used interdisciplinary and cross-cultural methods to examine the differences and similarities between Jungian thought and Chinese culture. Jung not only admired the depth and wisdom of Chinese culture; he also incorporated it into his psychological theories. The authors of the book systematically examine the influence of Chinese culture on Jung as well as the Chinese cultural elements and philosophical principles present in analytical psychology theory. The book also highlights the profound and significant psychological thought expressed in various forms of Chinese culture. In what was a very eye-opening conceptualization, Duan describes Heyong and Lan’s contention that “the greatest influence on Jung’s psychology was neither Freud and his

psychoanalysis, nor Paul Eugen Bleuler or Pierre Janet, but Richard Wilhelm and Chinese culture.” I found the review captivating and the idea of Jung being most strongly influenced by the East, intriguing.

This issue encourages our immersion into the fascinating map of Jung’s development and interest in alchemy, an important philosophical polemic, art, culture, poetry, and reviews. These contributions remind me that life continues to bloom even in the midst of grave worldly events. We still meet with each other, enjoy art, expand our knowledge, and appreciate the finer aspects of human existence. Perhaps the greatest medicine for the sickness of our times is to be found in beauty—the beauty of poetry, art, images, and ideas—shared with one another.

Jeffrey Moulton Benevedes, Editor

ENDNOTES

1. Omar N. Bradley, “No Armistice,” *New York Times*, Opinion, November 11, 1986. General Omar N. Bradley, who died in 1981, delivered the remarks excerpted in Boston, Massachusetts, on November 10, 1948.
2. This notion of the solace of fierce landscapes is inspired by Belden Lane’s book (1998) by the same title.

NOTE

References to *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* are cited in the text as CW, volume number, and paragraph number. *The Collected Works* are published in English by Routledge (UK) and Princeton University Press (USA).

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