

# **THE REALITY OF FRAGMENTATION AND THE YEARNING FOR HEALING:**

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**JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVES ON  
DEMOCRACY, POWER, AND ILLUSION  
IN CONTEMPORARY POLITICS**



**EDITED BY TOM SINGER AND  
ANDREW SAMUELS**

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# The Reality of Fragmentation and the Yearning for Healing: Jungian Perspectives on Democracy, Power, and Illusion in Contemporary Politics

Papers from the 2020 C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco Presidency Conference

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## Contents

### **Welcome**

Misser Berg (President Elect of IAAP) 8

### **Introduction of Bill Bradley**

Tom Singer 14

### **Guest Speaker**

former U.S. Senator Bill Bradley 17

### **Native American Poetry & Invocation: 'Calling Down the Mother'**

Kathryn LaFevers Evans/Three Eagles 24

## SECTION ONE: ANALYSIS AND ACTIVISM AROUND THE WORLD: PART ONE

### **Introduction**

Lynn Alicia Franco (US) 28

### Panel 1 - THE FUTURE OF POLITICS

#### **Towards collective psychosis - why new technologies are making the world a worse place**

Tine Papić (Slovenia) 34

#### **Corruption and individuation: Is it possible?**

Denise Ramos (Brazil) 51

### Panel 2 - OTHERNESS: POLITICAL AND PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC REFLECTIONS

**Violence and metamorphosis in the chrysalis of nationalism: Transformation's necessary unmaking**  
Carolyn Bates (US) 70

**Phantomatic forces in our political and institutional lives**  
Sam Kimbles (US) 86

### Panel 3 - ECOLOGICAL AND HEALTH CONCERNS

**Nebuchadnezzar's psychosis: Man-made ecological disaster and its possible cultural healing**  
Joerg Rasche (Germany) 100

**Am I My Brother's Keeper? Collective AIDS trauma mirrored in the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco**  
QiRe Ching/Michael Bala/Raymond Buscemi/Jeffrey Moulton  
Benevedes/Scott Carollo/Claire Costello/Paul Fishman (US) 109

**We were unable to prepare Jeffrey's conference remarks for this book but are including here a paper that he has prepared previously for ARAS: The Mandala as Portal to Healing**  
Jeffrey Kiehl (US) 122

## SECTION TWO: FOCUS ON THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

**Introduction**  
Tom Singer (US) 172

**Social Dreaming Matrix**  
Barbara Holifield (US) and Margaret Skinner (US) 183

### Panel 4 - LEADERS AND LED, POPULISM, THE MEDIA; NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

<b>Cultural stories and media storytelling</b>	
Betty Sue Flowers (US)	189
<b>Hope and dread in the two Koreas: Understanding North Korea as a shadow of free capitalistic societies</b>	
Nami Lee (South Korea)	201
<b>How the Narcissistic and Demonic Power of the Media can be countered by Jungian Arts-based Research</b>	
Susan Rowland (US/UK)	217

#### Panel 5 - SOME 2020 ELECTION ISSUES

<b>The 7th Circle: Racism, illusion and political violence</b>	Fanny Brewster (US)	228
<b>Western democracy and the necessity of the ‘illegal traveller’</b>	Michael O’Loughlin (US)	248
<b>Hermeneutic Ideals, Traumatic Realities – Can We Cross the Divide to Meet One Another?</b>	Khenu Singh (US)	260

#### Panel 6 - PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION IN THE U.S. COLLECTIVE

<b>The march from Selma to Montgomery and the nonviolent movement in analysis</b>	Renee Cunningham (US)	286
<b>Declining divisions: Non-binary gender identities and American cultural consciousness</b>	Nicholas Literski (US)	302

**Spirit and Matter in Law: Analytical Perspectives on Origins and Reforms to the U.S. Voting Rights Act (1965) in Shelby County v. Holder, 570 U.S. 529 (2013)**

Alan Vaughan, (US)

316

SECTION THREE: ANALYSIS AND ACTIVISM AROUND THE WORLD: PART TWO

Panel 7 - INEQUALITIES: PAST AND PRESENT, COLLECTIVE AND PERSONAL

**Yes - there are slave owners in the family: a narrative exploration of the implications of this**

Kathy Murphy (UK/New Zealand)

337

**The divided sky: War and wisdom**

Ursula Wirtz (Switzerland)

346

**Exploration of "Masks" from Personal to Archetypal Levels** Emma Ting Wong (Hong Kong)

360

Panel 8 - HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF POLITICS: CLINIC, PSYCHE. POLIS, ACTIVISM

**Expressive Sandwork with children in areas of conflict: 'Oh ... in silence... when there's silence outside, we can hear the voices that speak inside.'**

Ana Deligiannis (Argentina), Eva Pattis Zoja (Italy), Monica Pinilla (Colombia)

377

**Amazonia, burning self: A Jungian approach to our ecological crisis**

Hannah Hennebert (Brazil)

389

**Democracy and authoritarianism in the age of cyber-power**  
Elias Winterton (UK) 405

Panel 9 - MOTIVATION AND INSPIRATION, HOPE AND DREAD

**The danger of splitting - the importance of integration** Moshe Alon (Israel) 419

**The activism of the heart: Jungian practice when violence, racism and ancestral wounds prevail**  
Luciano da Silva Alencastro/Giany Bortolozzo/André L.R de Castro/  
Guilherme Lemos/Patricia Flores de Medeiros/ Marluce Marlucci  
Renz/ Leticia Schereirer/Cristina Maranzana da Silva  
(Brazil) 432

**Movement Workshop: Moving the Political Body toward Consciousness**  
Tina Stromsted (US) and Heba Zaphiriou-Zarifi (Palestine/UK) 444

CLOSING REMARKS:

**Reflection Groups and Conference Recap**  
Michael Bala (US) 453

**Psychotherapy and Politics: A Charter for the Future** Andrew Samuels (UK) 462

## Welcome Address

Misser Berg

Denmark



Dear friends and colleagues,

I had the privilege, as President-Elect of the IAAP, to give the welcome address to the International Analysis and Activism/Presidency conference on the current political climate from the perspective of depth psychology and activism. The conference was a combination of the 6<sup>th</sup> quadrennial San Francisco Jung Institute Presidency Conference prior to the November 3, 2020 US Presidential election and the 4<sup>th</sup> Analysis & Activism conference. It is now my great pleasure to warmly welcome this publication of the conference-papers.

First, I would like to wholeheartedly congratulate and thank the Program Committee consisting of Stefano Carta (Italy), Lynn Alicia Franco (US), Emilija Kiehl (UK), Andrew Samuels (UK), and Tom Singer (US) for making this event such a big success. I know how hard you all worked to create the most interesting and relevant program for all participants – and you have even had to do a dramatic reorganization due to the pandemic. It is commendable that you found a way forward for this important event to be held online, and on this special time and place: in the US with the upcoming election. The title itself “The Reality of Fragmentation and the Yearning for Healing: Jungian Perspectives on Democracy, Power, and Illusion in Contemporary Politics” was so relevant and needed right at the time for the conference. We now know the outcome of the election, but this has obviously not stopped the fragmentation and the necessity for healing.

Secondly, I want to give my many thanks to ARAS which has taken responsibility for editing and publishing this publication, which comprises papers on so many of the important subjects connected with analysis and activism. The papers include Jungian perspectives on violence, non-violence, racism, slavery, democracy, power, dictatorship, nationalism, collective psychosis, protests, as well as AIDS and

Covid19, climate crisis etc. Some papers are also particularly concerned with how we, as Jungians, can understand the phenomena through our theories about splitting vs integration, on how we can bridge differences and on how media plays an increasingly dominant role. The papers in this publication address the issues from various angles and will be an asset for further studies in the years to come.

Personally, this was my 4<sup>th</sup> Analysis & Activism Conference. I attended the first one in London, the second in Rome, the third in Prague and most recently this fourth virtually in San Francisco. I am sure that many like me had been looking forward to visiting San Francisco for this event, but this must be at another time, hopefully before long.

As President-Elect of the IAAP I strongly support conferences like this about analysis and activism. I find it to be an important part of our Jungian identity to be involved in psychological areas outside the traditional classical form and content of individual analysis. We need to leave our comfort-zone and reach out to other areas, geographically, clinically, and theoretically.

Since the foundation of the IAAP in 1955, the organization has undergone a huge geographical change from an organization based in Western Europe and North America to a world-wide organization with representation in all continents of the world (except Antarctica). And although Jung himself was very interested in other cultures, the growth of our organization has added a large amount of cultural understanding to our theories and practices. This extension has not come by itself; on the contrary the development has been fostered by pioneers who have made personal sacrifices in order to assist in building up new societies in areas where there had not been Jungian societies before. For the last 20 years this activity has been gradually systematized via the IAAP Education Committee which has resulted in a

remarkable growth of both new societies and new members. For me personally it has been and still is very meaningful to work for the dissemination of education to places where it is not accessible, and to assist in making education within our field possible for persons who did not have the possibility before. This extension has not only added to the numbers, but it has also added to our understanding of diversity within our members.

It was a pleasure for me to see that several of the presenters and a good number of the participants at the conference were from the “new” continents. And it is likewise a pleasure to see this reflected in the papers for this publication. They bring in important cultural and political views from areas outside the Western European and North American parts of the world. Such influence is crucial for the renewal of our Jungian community organizationally, theoretically, and clinically.

Holding the conference online has in fact facilitated the participation of members from our community who would not have been able to attend in person, for financial, geographical or for other reasons. This is something we need to think seriously about for the future, including possible hybrid solutions. Although it is wonderful to meet our colleagues from around the world in person (and I so much look forward to doing so again when it is safe), I have actually met people during the pandemic via online media whom I have previously corresponded with by email but whom I have not met “in person” online. It has been a true pleasure to see the faces of these people and hear their voices.

From its very first meeting in London in 2014, the Analysis & Activism conferences have systematically facilitated presentations on what Jungians can do and think when they are not confined to their classical analytical thinking and setting. This has resulted in a valuable extension of our theoretical and clinical field.

Some of the papers in the present publication address this and show us the way out of our clinics and into sociopolitical and environmental involvement where we, with our analytical background, can contribute actively by reinforcing positive development.

The IAAP certainly wants to back up the future Analysis & Activism conferences and to signalize being an organization which takes responsibility for social and environmental issues. In accordance with this policy, we support projects with psychological care for victims of natural disasters, and we also support activities to meet the challenges of climate change. I also want to mention, that we, for a long time have had the Non-Discrimination Policy posted in the “About the IAAP” folder on the website, but by autumn 2020 we extended the text and moved it to the frontpage of the website to underline its importance.

I had not myself attended any of the San Francisco Presidency conferences before, but it was a privilege and pleasure to attend it in the autumn of 2020. I have with interest followed the groundbreaking theoretical innovations within the Jungian tradition coming from San Francisco, and at the Vienna Congress in 2019 I was very moved when hearing the presentation on the long-term integrative work on diversity as well as by the personal conversations I had with members of the San Francisco Institute at this Congress and before that.

For me, the international Analysis and Activism/ Presidency Conference on the current political climate, from the perspective of depth psychology, and activism turned out to be an inspiring, thought-provoking, and innovative experience. I am so pleased that the hard work from the program committee, the organizers and the presenters now results in a publication of this quality. I am sure that it will prove to be of great importance for our community. Enjoy!

**Misser Berg** (Denmark). Education as Jungian Analyst 1985 - 1991 in Denmark, London and Berlin. Individual Member of IAAP in 1992. Co-founder of the Danish Society for Analytical Psychology, DSAP and president of DSAP from 2000 - 2005. Director of training at the C.G. Jung Institute, Copenhagen from 2005 - 2019. Member of the executive committee of the IAAP from 2010 - 2013. Honorary Secretary for President Tom Kelly from 2013 - 2016. Vice-President of the IAAP from 2016 - 2019. President-Elect from 2019. Chair of the IAAP education committee. Misser Berg has a private practice north of Copenhagen. Besides this she teaches and examines in both Denmark and abroad.

## Introduction of Bill Bradley

Tom Singer

Senator Bill Bradley has been a “man for all seasons” with a distinguished career in so many different areas including politics, sports, academics, business, and philanthropy that it is hard to know where to begin in introducing him. Perhaps it is best to start by noting that Bill has been a good friend to our Presidency Conference Series from the very beginning. He has spoken to us in 2000 and again in 2004. 2020 is the third time he has addressed us. He understands that psyche and polis or psychology and politics are intertwined in every possible way. What came to my mind as a way to properly introduce Bill for this particular event surprised me. I found myself thinking about a book Bill wrote in 1998 on playing basketball which he titled, *Values of the Game*. Perhaps it is time for us to revisit *Values of the Game* because our current American values of the game—in sports, in politics, in civic discourse and in the very living of our individual and collective lives-- are in need of radical re-vision. It seems timely to cite the chapter headings of Bill’s primer both as a way of introducing what he stands for and as a way of stating what our leaders and all of us as citizens need to embrace in a reaffirmation of who we Americans are as a people. These are the essential values that Bill cites in *Values of the Game*:

Passion

Discipline

Selflessness

Respect

Perspective

Courage

Leadership

Responsibility

Resilience

Imagination.

It is a great honor to introduce Senator Bill Bradley.



Guest Speaker

Former US Senator, Bill Bradley

United States

I ran for President twenty years ago. There is no experience like it. The intensity is all consuming. The press follows your every word and every action. When you stand before people at a town meeting you know what they're asking themselves: Do I trust this person with my life? Do I trust this person with my job? Does this person have a view of life that is similar to my own?

As I flew back and forth across America as a candidate, I'd think of the lives of all the 300 million people below---their dignity, their diversity, their setbacks, their invincible hopes. If I succeeded, I'd have the chance to make things better for them. I knew there was evil in the world but in those moments, I felt it was no match for our better angels.

But I lost the nomination—and lost it badly. Thirty-five years of dreams and expectations came crashing down. I felt disoriented.

Six months later I had the following dream: A 200 –foot tall giant strides across the countryside. He picks up a herd of elk in one hand and plucks giant trees from the soil with the other. While crossing the Amazon River, the giant's feet become mired in mud. Piranha swarm around him eating his flesh. He knows that when his flesh is gone, the piranha will attack his bones, he will fall and they will consume the rest of him. About that time a woman on a flying carpet passes over his head and drops white dust on him. When the dust hits him, he shrinks and falls into a boat that takes him to the other side of the river. In other words, he has shrunk from being a giant to just being human---and that's what saves him.

As I was thinking about what I'd say today I remembered a Leonard Cohen song, "Democracy". One of the stanzas says: "It's comin to America first; the cradle of the best and of the worst; It's here they got the range, the machinery for change; It here they got

the spiritual thirst; It's here the family's broken, here the lonely say; that the heart has got to open in a fundamental way. Democracy is comin to the USA.”

What this election is all about is “getting the heart to open in a fundamental way.” We need a president with more feeling and less cruelty, more of a uniter and less a divider, more someone who cares about us and less about himself.

American history is the story of advancing, then falling back, then advancing again further. It's the story of the light and the darkness. Both are part of our legacy.

The beauty and uniqueness of America is American diversity. We're the families of pilgrims, of native Americans, of former slaves, of immigrants still coming. As Vachel Lindsay once wrote, “All of these you are and each is partly you and none is false and none is wholly true.”

The Declaration of Independence proclaimed our values that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.” The U. S. Constitution, a living document, gave a structure to our society and a pathway to change. The Separation of Powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government was designed to be a check against the passions of the mob. In our representative democracy voting is the people's voice. As Lincoln said, “Ballots are stronger than bullets.”

The history of America is the history of voting. In 1800 only white men with property could vote. In the 1830s white men without property were allowed to vote. In the 1860s black men were given the right to vote. In 1919 women were given the vote and in the 1950's young people over 18 got the vote.

For many years after reconstruction in the Jim Crowe South African Americans were disenfranchised again and again. It remained that way for nearly a hundred years. Then in 1965 a Democrat President Lyndon Johnson and Democratic Congress passed the 1965 Voting Rights Act that finally gave all African Americans the right to vote. It was supported by Republicans and Democrats alike. And in 2003 George W Bush with overwhelming bipartisan support reauthorized the Voting Rights Law for 25 years.

Then in 2013 the Supreme Court gutted that law by striking the requirement that all laws related to voting in states that had a history of discrimination ( 8 Southern and 4 Northern states) had to be approved by the Federal Justice Department. In gutting the law, the court in its willful blindness argued that such a requirement wasn't needed because there was no longer discrimination in these states. But literally two days after the Supreme Court rendered this terrible decision both North Carolina and Texas passed state laws that discriminated against African Americans.

In 2016 Donald Trump ran for President. I have known Trump for 30 years. He felt that I was one of the four worst politicians in Washington--largely because I passed a tax law that made him pay more taxes as a real estate investor. I wear his designation with honor.

In 2016 Donald Trump was elected president. His support was not monolithic. There were six distinct groups that supported him. First were Republicans who will vote Republican no matter who is the candidate. Then there were the Evangelicals who made a deal with the devil on abortion, giving their support to someone who did not mirror Christian values in exchange for Trump promising to appoint judges who would end legal abortion. The third group were those Americans who had been adversely affected by economic change as the first decade in the new century saw 40,000 factories close

and 6 million people lose their jobs because of technology and trade. The fourth group were those who hated the federal government in Washington DC and who believed that Trump would, as he said, "Drain the swamp". The fifth group were the racists who had always been there in the Republican party since 1965 when Lyndon Johnson empowered African Americans with the vote . The sixth group were those who thought elites (media, academia and urban liberals), looked down on them--their big extended families, their religious faith, their allegiance to their small towns.

But more important to the voting story than who voted were who didn't vote--the 100 million Americans over 18 who were able to vote but didn't in 2016. When I was a senator I would often say that if you didn't vote you can't complain about what happens in Washington. As Jefferson said, "We don't have a government by the majority. We have a government by the majority that participate."

I have known Joe Biden for fifty years. I wanted him to run in 2016 and told him so. Biden is running for the right reasons. He clearly sees that after the parade of neo-Nazis and racists in Charlottesville one night in 2017 that we are in a battle for the soul of our nation. He also knows the workers (both middle class and poor) who have lost their jobs to technology and trade. He cares about them; respects them; and he will champion them-- not the rich.

We have a country where there is more and more economic inequality and environmental degradation, racism is on the rise and China is on the move. America's role in the world has eroded and democracy itself is potentially threatened. I think Joe Biden can help on all those fronts. Then it will take all of us to back him up.

A campaign has phases: primaries, the nominating convention, debates and the ground game in the days leading up to the election. We are in the ground game phase.

There are now 16 days left. Biden is ahead. I believe by enough to win. For Trump to win he has to have a massive turn out of his base, attract all the undecided voters and win back women and suburban Republicans. I don't think that is possible with only 5% undecided voters. But Trump will try anything to win because losing is what he fears most and has since childhood.

Due to the pandemic mail-in-voting and absentee voting will amount to around 30% of all votes. Most of those will be Democrats. For some reason many Republicans have chosen not to vote by mail. That is why Trump is trying to label mail-in voting as fraudulent. He will never admit defeat. The various far right militias will try to affect the outcome of the election in ways that are impossible to anticipate. There will be legal attempts to delegitimize the electoral college. It might even end up in the House of Representative as it did in 1824. What could overwhelm all these efforts to cling to power would be smashing victories for Joe in two of four battleground states such as Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Florida. I believe there will be an enormous turnout by those who want to take back their country from the forces of darkness.

Recently I had the following dream: "I'm walking in a park. A black clouds descends. I'm now tied down on the ground in a pit full of poisonous snakes. I remain very quiet but they sense my breathing and bite me. I feel the poison flowing through my system. I feel like I'm dying. I wonder what comes after death. I feel as if I'm going over when a lighting bolt strikes me and I ride it to a new place."

That lightning to me is the voting of the American people. They can take us out of the pit of poisonous snakes we've been living in. They are the ones who can take us as a country to a new place.

**Senator William W. Bradley** (U.S.), 77, is a Managing Director of Allen & Company LLC. From 2001-2004, he acted as chief outside advisor to McKinsey & Company's nonprofit practice. He was a Senior Advisor and Vice Chairman of the International Council of JP Morgan & Co., Inc. from 1997-1999. During that time, he also worked as an essayist for *The CBS Evening News* and was a visiting professor at Stanford University, University of Notre Dame and the University of Maryland. Senator Bradley served in the U.S. Senate from 1979 – 1997 representing the state of New Jersey. In 2000, he was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States. Prior to serving in the Senate, he was an Olympic gold medalist in 1964 and a professional basketball player with the New York Knicks from 1967 – 1977 during which time they won two NBA championships. In 1982, he was elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame. Senator Bradley holds a BA degree in American History from Princeton University and an MA degree from Oxford University where he was a Rhodes Scholar. He has authored seven books on American politics, culture and economy, including his latest book *We Can All Do Better*. Currently, Senator Bradley hosts *American Voices*, a weekly show on Sirius XM Satellite Radio that highlights the remarkable accomplishments of Americans both famous and unknown.

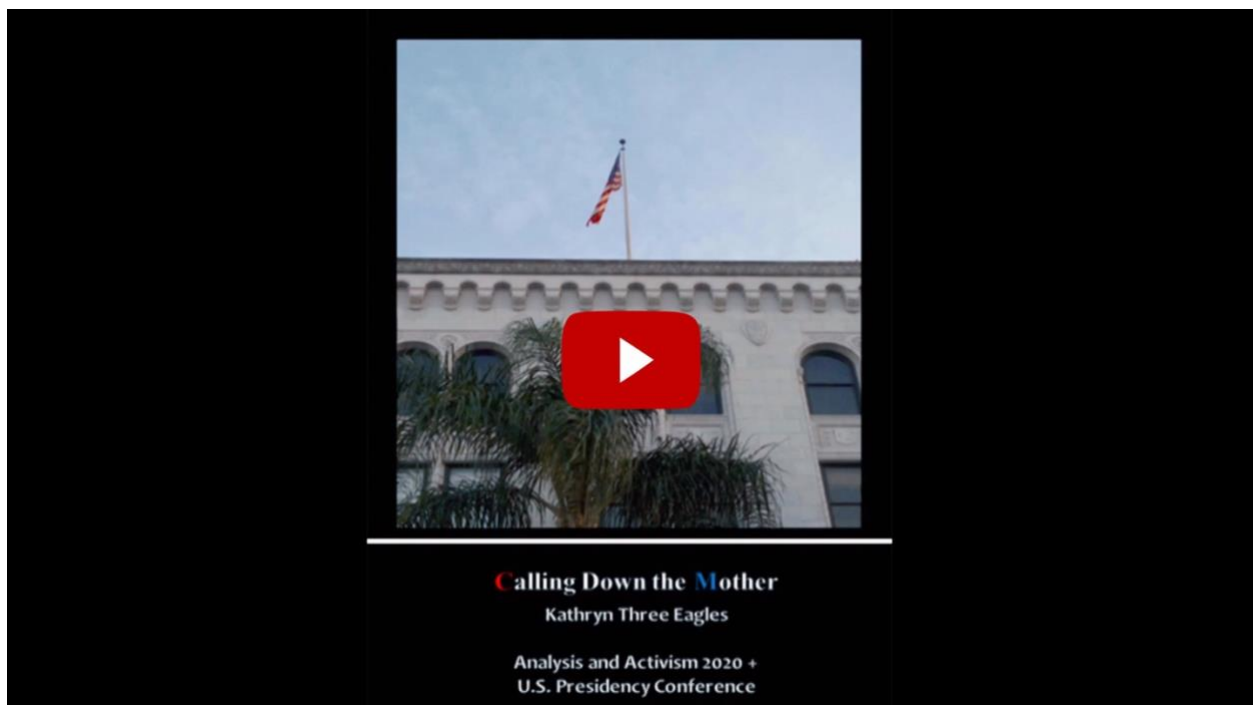
## Calling Down the Mother

Kathryn LaFevers Evans, Three Eagles

United States/Chickasaw Nation



*Calling Down the Mother* ritual performance invokes Tuchina O'si (Three Eagles), other incarnations of the Native American Mother Goddess, Chickasaw ancestors who offered shamanic adornments, and animal spirit guides. This multi-genre presentation includes original Native American music and poetry, as a cry against political extremism, religious intolerance, and abuse of Native American women.



**Kathryn LaFevers Evans/Three Eagles** (U.S./Chickasaw Nation) has taught at Pacifica Graduate Institute, and presents Jungian theory in practice at international conferences. These include “Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™ : A Shamanic Revolution via Renaissance Humanists, C.G. Jung, and James Hillman” at APA Division 32 Society for Humanistic Psychology Conference (2015), and “Practicing Depth Psychology through Medicine-Wheel-Vision-Quest™” at IAJS (2014). Publications include “Practicing Medicine Wheel for Holistic Healing” in *Holistic Treatment in Mental*

*Health: A Handbook of Practitioner's Perspectives* (in press), and “Shamanic Vision Quest: Native American Ritual, Depth Psychology, and Renaissance Natural Magic” in *NeuroQuantology Special Issue on Health, Healing & Consciousness* (2016).

[www.threeeagles.net](http://www.threeeagles.net)

SECTION ONE: ANALYSIS AND ACTIVISM AROUND THE  
WORLD: PART ONE

## Introduction

Lynn Alicia Franco

United States

‘We are living in times of great disruption: political passions are aflame, internal upheavals have brought nations to the brink of chaos’ (CG. Jung,1946.)

The state of the world appeared catastrophic to Jung at the end of World War 2. His same words may apply to our current inflamed passions and chaotic responses to a global pandemic, environmental crisis, economic upheaval and profound divisions within and between nations. The 4<sup>th</sup> Analysis and Activism and 6<sup>th</sup> US Presidency Conference,” titled, **“The Reality of Fragmentation and the Yearning for Healing: Jungian perspectives on Democracy, Power, and Illusion in Contemporary Politics”** was established to consider the question **of our own “great disruption”**.

The C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, which has presented five previous conferences on politics and psyche, each of which has come before every US Presidential election cycle since 2000, established a collaboration with the ground-breaking series of Analysis and Activism Conferences initiated in 2014 to produce this conference. This effort was supported by the International Association of Analytical Psychology.

Twenty-six analytical psychologists and social-cultural scholars brought their psychological focus to current social/political energies and conflicts. The goal has been to engage and contribute to a revitalization of today’s suffering planet. The conference’s program organizers, Andrew Samuels, Emiljia Khiel, Stefano Carta, Tom Singer and Lynn Alicia Franco, as Jungian Psychoanalysts, shared an underlying belief that what happens in the consulting room is not apart from the social, economic and political suffering we live in. They undertook to produce a conference that would approach these social/politics issues with constant reflection upon the relationships between ‘the spirit

of the depths’ and ‘the spirit of the times’, as well as attention to how the inner and outer realms and cultural forms interact with one another. Depth analysis and scholarly critique sit alongside activism and a passionate reaching out to others whose visions may differ but who also wish to examine the psychological and historical forces that have contributed to all of our suffering.

An original impetus in the idea of having an Analysis and Activism conference came from Andrew Samuels who envisioned “therapy thinking in politics” as a dialogue between psychologists and social scientist in concert with political activists. He understood political energy as needing to be “resacralized,” by which he imagined that a politics, when not driven by power motives, could be infused with visionary idealism. Such political energy could focus on socio-political problems in a creative manner. The conference was established from this perspective—to respect and value our individual and collective unconscious social-political struggles with an intention to alter the present damaging course in politics that assaults our human dignity. The presenters seek to consider and inform a social well-being that sustains life’s vitality for all.

The title of the conference emerged three years earlier in 2017 and disconcertedly continued to be pertinent in the fall of 2020: the fragmented world activated our communities’ yearning for vision and reality that heals. A desire and need for regeneration urgently asked that creative, interdependent and equitable visions be spawned which would engage our political energies. While fears of regressive and destructive divisions have polarized our world, with courage and strength, we pick up the gauntlet in order to consciously contain our dread so we may face the future with a humble anticipation of going on living, hopefully with new perspectives that support our collective generativity rather than our decaying in despair. How will we do this?

We have learned as psychotherapists "to stay with the trouble" (a phrase borrowed from philosopher Donna Haraway) while we listen to the stories embedded with unspoken emotions of history and significance. We attune to the darkness staying attentive with needed patience for a glimmer of light to reveal a portal wherein patterns and images may have coalesced, offering a bridge that intersects our differences and divisions toward new perspectives and understandings. We search within the silence and the outrage of swirling collective energies for the archetypal cores that may better help us understand the embedded cultural complexes that are possessing us in so many ways and in so many different parts of the world. We seek to discover patterns of cultural shadows that are rooted in buried fragments of hate, violence, shame, loss, and anguish silently disavowed or dissociated. We may even recognize how undigested communications of intergenerational traumas become mythologized to carry partial truths which powerfully organize the rationales for our actions.

Many significant cultural complexes, both within an individual's psyche and in our collective behaviour which are evident in group norms, codes, and systemic structures and values are addressed in this conference—those found in gender designation, in the racialization of differences, and in the inequity of economics. Some of these themes are explored in how a system of enslavement continues through patterns of economic accumulation and the social privileging of skin colour. Some presenters will look at exceptionalism as a legacy of colonial attitudes and how governing hierarchy is associated with a righteous entitlement to dominate. Some will examine how governing systems and cultural forms manifest in socio-political oppression and inequality. Other papers will examine how new technology is becoming part of our psyche and our governing systems. The conference seeks to develop a

psychological approach to these socio-political problems with the goal of accessing our own imaginative political energy.

**Lynn Alicia Franco** (U.S.) has practiced psychotherapy/analysis more than forty years. As an analyst member of the C.G. Jung Institute of S.F. and The Psychotherapy Institute in Berkeley, she serves as faculty and supervisor. Her interest in systemic and unconscious group dynamics relate to the psychological integration of the socio-cultural context. Recent publications include, “An Immigrant’s Transit: From a Multicultural Complex to a Multicultural Mind,” *Cultural Complexes and the Soul of America, Myth, Psyche and Politics*, edited by Tom Singer, Routledge and “The Catalyzing Influence of Immigrants’ Cultural Complexes for Developing a Multicultural Perspective in Psychotherapy Training Institutes,” *Analysis and Activism 3, Political Passions Further Social and Political Contributions of Jungian Psychology*, Routledge.



## Panel 1 - THE FUTURE OF POLITICS

Towards collective psychosis - why new technologies are  
making the world a worse place

Tine Papič

Slovenia

## **Introduction**

If not before, we all became aware of the effect that new technologies and social media in particular have on our society with the presidency of Donald Trump, when he won the election with their help and afterwards, he used them to rule and divide. It ended his presidency with the mob taking over the U.S. Capitol. How did this happen, how did we come to this point and what can analytical psychology say about it?

As shown in my paper “Emergence of Communism and Archetypes behind the Phenomenon” (Papič, 2015), social changes are not driven by ego consciousness and certain people, but by changes in the collective unconsciousness. Lenin had no idea that revolution would come, lecturing in January 1917, one month before the February Revolution, that he would probably not be fortunate enough to see the revolution in his lifetime, but that new generations might live long enough to see it. Similarly, people like Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, and Jack Dorsey, the founder of Twitter, had no idea a few years ago what kind of power they would create and have in their hands in the not-so-distant future.



*Image 1 Franz von Stuck Die Wilde Jagd, portraying Wotan hunting. The picture was painted in the same year as Adolf Hitler was born (1889) and is portraying what is happening in collective unconsciousness and consequently predicting as art is in many cases what will happen on a collective level in near future.*

## **Psychoanalytical view of society**

To understand the phenomenon, we have to first look at how society works. For this reason, I will look at the works of the British psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion, as he is one of the most original thinkers concerning group dynamics. Young Wilfred Bion worked at the newly established Tavistock clinic, where he started to work with groups of young soldiers returning from the first world war, suffering from shell-shock syndrome, as they called it at that time. Today we call it PTSD. As he had no idea how to work with groups, since there was no coherent psychoanalytic theory or method present at that time, he invented his own. To do this, he used his Kleinian psychoanalytic knowledge. He analysed a group as one would analyse a person. Kleinian theory puts great emphasis on the individual's internal world from the

moment of birth. The infant is perceived as the subject, the mother as the primary object. From the start the mother (or primary caregiver) is the omnipotent object, which represents the world to the little subject, who is full of archetypal content – fantasies, desires, anxieties. With fantasies we mean the way the infant experiences internal and external realities. The mother or the primary caregiver is here seen as the object, who is supposed to simultaneously fulfil the child's needs and to constitute a container into which it is possible to project all that is unbearable or difficult to contain, and hopefully transform it and return it in a bearable way. Bion's genius lies in the fact that he managed to transfer these ideas to the dynamics of the group, which is probably one of the most important contributions in group theory. In his view the group behaves as a regressive infantile subject, which regards its conductor as the omnipotent object, for better or for worse. As such, the group is no longer only the sum of its members, but it is also an entity existing beyond the individuals, with its own unconsciousness. (Biran, 2015)



*Image 2 Portrait of the English psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion in uniform in 1916.*

We can treat a group as a subject, although regressive in its nature. C. G. Jung came to the same conclusion separately, as he stated in his famous interview in late 1938 for the *Cosmopolitan* magazine by the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist H. R. Knickerbocker (Jung, McGuire, & Hull, 1977):

“I say, studying Germany as I would a patient, and Europe as I would a patient’s family and neighbours, let her go into Russia.”

In the same interview he also stated a similar observation on the regressive nature of a group:

“Don’t you know that if you choose one hundred of the most intelligent people in the world and get them all together, they are a stupid mob? Ten thousand of them together would have the collective intelligence of an alligator. Haven’t you noticed that at a dinner party the more people you invite the more stupid the conversation? In a crowd, the qualities which everybody possesses multiply, pile up, and become the dominant characteristics of the whole crowd. Not everybody has virtues, but everybody has the low animal instincts, the basic primitive caveman suggestibility, the suspicions and vicious traits of the savage. The result is that when you get a nation of many millions of people, it is not even human. It is a lizard or a crocodile or a wolf. Its statesmen cannot have a higher morality than the animal- like mass morality of the nation, although individual statesmen of the democratic states may attempt to behave a little better.”

As we can see from the above text, Jung saw a group similarly as Bion, as a subject. Here I have to remark that this idea of group behaviour does not apply only for psychoanalytic groups, but for any group in general. It can be a state, a nation, a local society, a family or a group of friends. We are all members of different groups and a group can have many subgroups, for instance a nation consists of many other groups, which can interweave.

Another great thinker that gives value to this idea is the sociologist George Herbert Mead. According to him (Mead, 1934), the individual self is the mechanism by which society becomes incorporated into the human psyche. Because the self is constructed out of relationships with others and therefore involves the

internalization of societal codes and conventions, it can be considered a miniature society within the individual.

From the text above we can conclude that it is feasible to use the idea of society as a subject. By doing so, we can apply our psychoanalytic knowledge and concepts derived from working with individuals to analyse large group dynamics, even nations. However, we need to apply this concept with special care, as oversimplifying it could be a great mistake. Each concept needs to be carefully rethought and re-evaluated when doing so.

### **Nation, newspaper and social media**

When we want to analyse society, we have to look at the phenomenon of nation. Here one has to rely on the works of Benedict Anderson and his seminal book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, written in 1983. Anderson argues that the emergence of the idea of nation is closely connected to the emergence of printed press. In his view the nation is actually imagined, it entails a sense of communion or “horizontal comradeship” between people who often do not know each other or have not even met. Despite their differences, they imagine belonging to the same collectivity, and they attribute to the latter a common history, traits, beliefs and attitudes, or, as he wrote it (Anderson, 1991):

“The concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion were inescapably confronted with the living pluralism of such religions,



and the allomorphism between each faith's ontological claims and territorial stretch, nations dream of being free, and, if under God, directly so. The gage and emblem of this freedom is the sovereign state.“

According to Anderson, the major role in establishing this was the emergence of the printing press, which enabled the sharing of this common fantasy of a nation among people.



*Image 3 "The Universal Republic". Lithograph by Frédéric Sorrieu. Published in 1848, it allegorically exalts republican, liberal and democratic values, which mobilize all the peoples of Europe.*

If the printed press was the original hub, the glue that connected people in sharing the identity and the idea of being part of a nation, in the middle of the twentieth century this role was taken over by television, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century the social media are slowly taking primacy in this role.

If the content of the printed press and television programs was carefully produced and controlled by the few in power, who skilfully produced the images and fantasies of the nation, social media is different. Its content is a jungle, where anyone with enough time can produce their own content, images and fantasies, which

represent their subjective version of reality, accessible to anyone. Not only that, when one uses the internet, a golem, a soulless artificial intelligence (AI) shows the people visiting the web the content they will most probably be interested in. The whole goal of AI is to keep one surfing on a certain social media site as long as possible, as it earns its money by showing ads. By doing so, one is deprived of information that might broaden their horizons and put their current worldview into question. The distribution of views is not evenly spread, certain content is more attractive and attracts more people. The algorithms take note of it and refer even more people to this content. Consequently, we start to get hubs, around which new subgroups emerge.

In this way, society as a group or imagined nation with its worldview splits into smaller subgroups, where the medium that conducts their fantasy of the group identity can be controlled and content is created by questionable people with questionable ideas. Inside a nation or a society different groups start to emerge, with different ideas and worldviews, or, as they are called, alternative truths.

To give an example, a person comes to a certain social media site. The page recognises the person immediately by so-called fingerprint technology – where each person with a computer has a unique trace on the web. As different web platforms share data about their visitors, AI will immediately know their interests, desires, complete psychometrical psychological profiles. It will guide and show content and ads that someone is interested in. The system, however, does not know right from wrong; it has no ethics or consciousness and does not care about society. People will be guided into virtual space where their thoughts will be confirmed by like-minded people, not questioning anything. Consequently, social subgroups or bubbles are formed in society.



*Image 4 White nationalists, foreground, clashing with counterprotesters, some of them members of the so-called antifa movement, in Charlottesville, Va.*

As history tends to repeat itself, we have to look back to see if something similar to this has already happened and what the consequences were to society. One does not need to look far back. At the beginning of the twentieth century in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America the press was controlled by a few, but in Germany there was a boom of different newspapers. By 1912 there were 4000 newspapers, printing 5 to 6 billion copies a year. All political parties had their own newspapers; for instance, there were 870 papers read by conservative readers in 1912, 580 aimed at liberal readers, 480 for Roman Catholics of the centre parties and 90 connected to the socialist party. This spread of newspapers locally, transmitting different worldviews and enabling extreme views to find their place, is society forming its own imagined subgroups. In the end, one of them took over power and consequently ended the pluralism of newspapers in 1935, exercising total control by using the printing press to put a whole nation under its spell. (Corey, 2010)



*Image 5 Hitler at a Nazi Party Rally , Heinrich Hoffmann 1934*

### **Analytical view of the problem**

Here we can use our analytical knowledge to get a specific view of the problem. If we look at society as a subject, then the various subgroups could represent different complexes that form the Self. Equivalent to the ego complex, which is a conscious-making, governing and opinion-making function, the media can be seen as reflective-consciousness with opinion-making functions and the governing institutions serve as the will of society. Through the emergence of social media, we can see the role of central media weakened, as there are subgroups that do not relate or report to them. In a psychological sense we could speak about the ego being weakened by subgroups or complexes, which are not relating. When these subgroups get too strong, they first form a sort of neurotic split: society is still a functioning

democracy, but with huge tensions and blockages in governing bodies. If this split and tensions among groups continue, a sort of disintegration starts. The governing bodies stop functioning and different subgroups take power, or chaos emerges in the form of civil war. One could compare this with a subject, where in case of huge tensions one could speak of neurosis: the ego is still functioning, though with huge tensions and blockages, but when a complex takes over and the governing body – ego disintegrates, one could speak of psychosis.

We can see this clearly with recent events in the United States: through social media, subgroups have formed with their own worldviews and identities, living in their own realities, which collide with the otherwise generally accepted worldviews. Without social media, these people would just be unconnected local weirdos, but here they are able to organise themselves into movements, which for a moment and in chaos were able to take over the Capitol. One could say that the United States went through a brief psychotic episode, where the governing institution was for a short period of time taken over by a subgroup or a complex. It is interesting that as the complexes in a person have their own archetypal cores, which could be described as having a feeling-tone and mythology, such sub groups also have a certain feeling-tone and their own mythology, which connects them.



*Image 6 Supporters of President Donald Trump enter the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Saul Loeb/AFP - Getty Images*

Another interesting phenomenon is the observation of our Jungian analyst Renos Papadopoulos, a leading expert in refugee care, who observed that in the worst-hit places of the world, the consciousness of people in extreme situations gets simplified and polarised. He used phrases such as “archetypal radiation”, “archetypal whirlpool” and “archetypal dazzle” to describe this phenomenon. He observed that polarisation and over-simplification spreads to most areas involved in a crisis. One can observe this phenomenon in war-stricken areas, where the other is always the oversimplified evil.

The coronavirus pandemic brought this phenomenon to most of the world. This encouraged splitting and generated many groups, which believe in different conspiracy theories. Let us look at this phenomenon more closely. In my view, stress and anxiety in such times consumes a lot of libidinal energy; consequently, the

defence mechanisms work insufficiently and more archetypal content comes to the foreground. Another angle to look at this phenomenon is from a Kleinian point of view. Conspiracy theories are usually fuelled by paranoid fantasies. When one tries to convince people obsessed with conspiracy theories with facts and reasoning, it is as effective as trying to talk someone suffering with paranoid schizophrenia out of their delusions. Both the paranoid schizophrenic and the person obsessed with a conspiracy theory are immune to any reasonable arguments. One explanation is that under a lot of stress and anxiety people regress into a paranoid schizoid position. Besides conspiracy theories being an aspect of group dynamics that gives one a sense of being a part of a group, the theories themselves work as a defence mechanism, bringing order to chaos and protecting against disintegrating anxiety. Often science, for instance, does not have clear answers and solutions to a problem. The scientific method is based on repeatable studies and on systematic doubt in its own theories which is mostly incomprehensible to the lay person. Conspiracy theories on the other hand are clear, simple, understandable and coherent. They give one a feeling of understanding how the world functions and a certain comfort in the false feeling that the world finally makes sense. They give people a feeling of being in control. One also feels good, as the shadow is always projected onto the other. A combination of AI-driven social media and stressful times that we live in provides a perfect combination for an outbreak of collective psychosis or, in other words, disintegration of society as we know it.

## **Possible solution to the problem**

When looking at our current situation it is hard to give any feasible solution. One thing that could happen is an Enantiodromia, similar to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Germany where the uncontrolled multitude of printed presses turned into a totally controlled one. Likewise, current control over content on the web could happen in the form of controlling AI and algorithms to suit the ruling parties, hopefully in the best interest of all. We can see such a tendency with the literal shutdown of Donald Trump at the end of his presidency, when a handful of internet moguls wiped him out of social media and his domination of a major part of collective consciousness in a moment. Although this move was done in a state of emergency with the best of intentions in an effort to de-escalate possible violence, it was still not conducted by any democratic institution and bears in itself a seed of possible future undemocratic dictatorship. When the founders of social media pass away and their companies will be owned by hedge funds and anonymous capital, we will not be able to count on the best intentions of those in charge, but can expect the dictatorship of capital.

A more positive way to tackle the problem would be to implement Renos Papadopoulos' idea, which he uses when working with people in extreme situations, where polarisation occurs. His idea is to reintroduce complexity, which has been lost through archetypal polarisation. This could be done by altering the AI systems and algorithms, so that one would not be confronted only with the content which was chosen to best fit a person, but also with a content which would challenge one's worldview and introduce complexity to social media. Although this could be done, it is questionable if it will ever really happen on a large scale. There are some platforms already trying to do this, but they are not really getting the attention they need. It



looks like people like to see only what they like to see. In the end, even if the future does not look too bright at the moment, we still need to stay positive and search optimistically for positive solutions.

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As an expert in the IT field, he was invited speaker at the University of Ljubljana and the University of Maribor and several major industry conferences across Europe. Besides that, he is working at Open Institute for Psychotherapy Ljubljana as an analyst, training analyst and supervisor in the router program. He is also a co-founder, lecturer and organizer of the Jungian program at Sigmund Freud University Vienna Ljubljana branch and one of the founding members of Open Institute for Psychotherapy Ljubljana. He is co-founder, advisor and supervisor in the government-sponsored program in the field of nonchemical addictions. He is also the current president of the Slovenian Society for Analytical Psychology.

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**Image 2** - <http://www.pep-web.org/document.php?id=apa.046.1280a>

**Image 3** - <https://entropicbits.wordpress.com/2009/04/29/%E2%80%9Cimagined-communities%E2%80%9D-constructed-through-media%E2%80%A6-deconstructed-through-global-media%E2%80%A6/>

**Image 4** - <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/17/us/antifa-left-wing-faction-far-right.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article>

**Image 5** - <http://100photos.time.com/photos/heinrich-hoffmann-hitler-nazi-party-rally#photograph>

**Image 6** - <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/trump-egged-rioters-capitol-he-needs-be-removed-office-now-ncna1253132>

## Corruption *and* Individuation: How Can That Be Possible?

Denise Ramos, Ph.D.

Brazil

Corruption is an abuse of power that has been entrusted to individuals or organizations for their private gains. It is considered a major cause of global inequality and has been blamed for its negative impacts on the well-being of societies, and for the wasting of resources that deprives the wellbeing of a community among other troubles. Although millions of dollars have been spent worldwide to combat this evil, up to now the results have been disappointing.

Numerous books and papers have been written with foci on law, ethics, social causes, applied psychology, control, and management of corruption. Together, they form a new field of knowledge, a new academic discipline: corruptology.

Studies based on applied psychology about the personality of a corrupted person suggest that ordinary and regular people, with mainstream ideas about morality and average non-deviant personalities, can engage in corruption without experiencing psychological distress. According to some scholars, findings up to now do not reveal a consistent relationship between personality traits and corruption (Zaloznaya, 2014), but demonstrate that a corrupted person tends to have a weak moral identity (DeCelles et al., 2012), coupled with strong pursuit of personal profit and accumulation of power and also a sense of solidarity with their friends (Stove and Shaw, 2012). It is really a grey area, as Giroux (2019) pointed out: “you don’t need to be a criminal to accept bribery” which may be even culturally acceptable. Corruption corrupts, as S. Shalvi (2016) says in his paper.

Studies comparing 37 countries suggest that corruption is very much a culture bond phenomenon and institutional regulatory measures without socio-cultural

reformation may not be successful in reducing the overall level of corruption (Park, 2003).

Zaloznaya (2014), based on an extensive review, supports the idea that corruption is heavily influenced by local cultures, and by the workplace ideology. “It is not an individual pathology but rather a socially constructed condition in which the individual gets socialized by fellow members. In this manner, studies on corruption should be based on the social context and on the interactional process that surround, encourage, and constitute the deviant act itself”. (Zaloznaya, 2014, p.194)

In my clinical practice and social life in Brazil, I frequently had to deal with corrupt acts performed by "good" people. I feel that most of them are unconscious of the deleterious consequences of their acts. They just want to solve a complicate situation or have more money/power. In their minds, they did not harm anyone. The money was “public”, and they are “smart”. In their psychotherapy process, corruption was a problem only when the fear of getting caught arose. They were good fathers/mothers, good friends. Although everything would seem normal in their lives, we could observe an obvious, defined, and elaborated disengagement in the majority of them (Bandura, 2008).

How this disengagement is lived and whether corrupt behaviors can jeopardize the individuation process is a complex question.

When values associated with disengagement or lack for empathy towards the suffering of others are part of the social ethos of a society, figures of power may be accepted exactly because they incorporate these values, even so under a false persona. The followers of a corrupted leader live under the same values and will defend the leader

with their own life, because upon him/her is project their own Self. These feelings reinforce a strong alliance quite difficult to break. In a culture where bribery is a habit of life and negotiation, deviant behaviors would be a natural adaption to society. Samuels (2001, p. 81) writes about the difficulty to let go emotionally of the idea of leader-as-hero, because if we erase the heroic projection, we spoil the pleasure of identification and will feel deprived, even when the leader is destructive.

But, at the end “if individuation leads to a natural esteem for the collective norm, (and) the orientation is exclusively collective the norm becomes increasingly superfluous and morality goes to pieces. The more a man’s life is shaped by the collective norm, the greater is his individual immorality” (C. G. Jung, 1971, par 761).

The conclusion is that when corruption is systemic, administrative reforms do not suffice if there are no overall and persistent social reforms that changes the relevant aspects of national culture and the epistemology of the people in the society. The research findings suggest that fighting corruption require a tenacious, holistic, and multidimensional approach to induce an overall social reform which will gradually transform the nature of the whole society. So, we need to study the culture of a country to understand corruption.

### **A Case Study: Brazil as a Patient and Corruption as a symptom of its Pathology**

Brazil, according Transparency International (2019) reached the rank 106 among 180 countries that has not improved over the last years. Almost every day, Brazilians

read in the newspaper scandals involving corruption and millions of dollars that have been unduly sent abroad, besides been troubled by lawbreaking or small bribes. This destructive behavior appears to be so engrained in the Brazilian culture that we have lost sight of its origin. The following old political cartoon illustrates this problem:



*Image 1 Roots of corruption. Yes, I know there are other clients' shoes before mine, but if you fix mine first, I will give you a "beer" (bribe).*

What are the psychological factors that could encourage this type of behavior in a culture? To answer this question, it's necessary to find a thread in Brazilian history that will help to understand why and how corruption has become so deeply rooted in the Brazilian psychological landscape: how corruption was established on Brazilian soil. The concept of the cultural complex developed by Singer and Kimbles (2004) allows us to examine a culture from the psychological point of view.

As we shall see, corruption is not only a matter of ethics or greed, but also a pathological symptom in collective identity and, in Brazil probably originates in an inferiority cultural complex.



*Image 2 Even you are laughing at my size!  
But what have I done?  
You put stairs for me just to reach the couch!*



## Locating the cultural complex

Reviewing the most important literature concerning the Brazilian identity, a quite intriguing subject stands out and indicates an implicit feeling of inferiority in the Brazilian people, something that is often referred as the “cucaracha complex” or the “underdeveloped Latin-American stigma”.

Although this is not always explicitly stated, examples of this inferiority are more evident in daily life, literature, myths, films, political cartoons and TV shows, especially when the middle class compare themselves with foreigners.



*Image 3 Meeting the “Big Ones”*

*(The President of Brazil asking for a seat among the “big” state leaders,1958)*

Taking into consideration these various ingredients in the “Brazilian pot”, our question is whether corruption can be considered a symptom of a marked feeling of inferiority?

Is corruption - as evidenced by the compulsive and chronic behavior of breaking the law and ignoring authority – the expression of some people that unconsciously feel too infantile, weak, or impotent to openly make a claim for its rights?

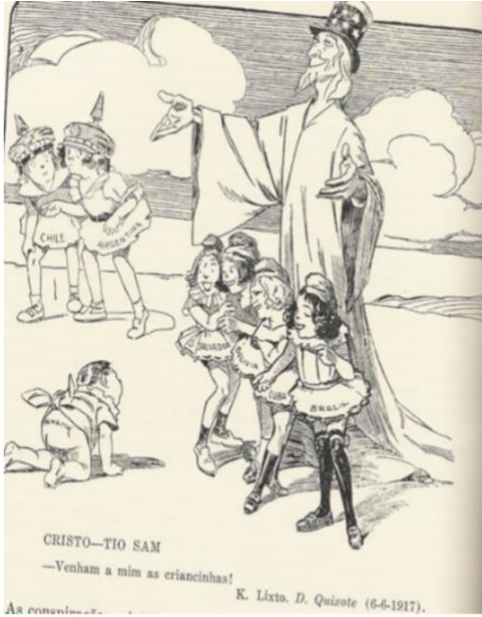
### **Field observation**

Bearing these questions in mind and based on psychological and sociological studies and on books and articles published by the media we observed that:

*Brazilian people, according to themselves,* frequently use derogatory adjectives when referring to their own nationality- denigrating their own image.

Comparisons are constantly being made with people of the “first world”.

*Brazilian people, according to foreigners:* in North America there is the symbol of “Uncle Sam” – a white strong male fighter; representing Latin America we have images of blacks, Indians, children, women, and poor people – individuals who are incapable of dominating nature.



Uncle Sam  
Came to me children (1917)



2019

Image 4

Along the same lines, during World War II, Walt Disney studios created a personality called Joe Carioca, who appeared in movies alongside Donald Duck to represent the Brazilians. Joe is a parrot who does not speak properly. He is weak, clumsy, lazy and a coward. He compensates for these failings with megalomaniac fantasies. Cartoons and movies with similar content can actually been seen on TV like *The Simpsons* and *Fantasia* by Disney, among others. There was no complaint from the Brazilian government (Ramos, 2004).

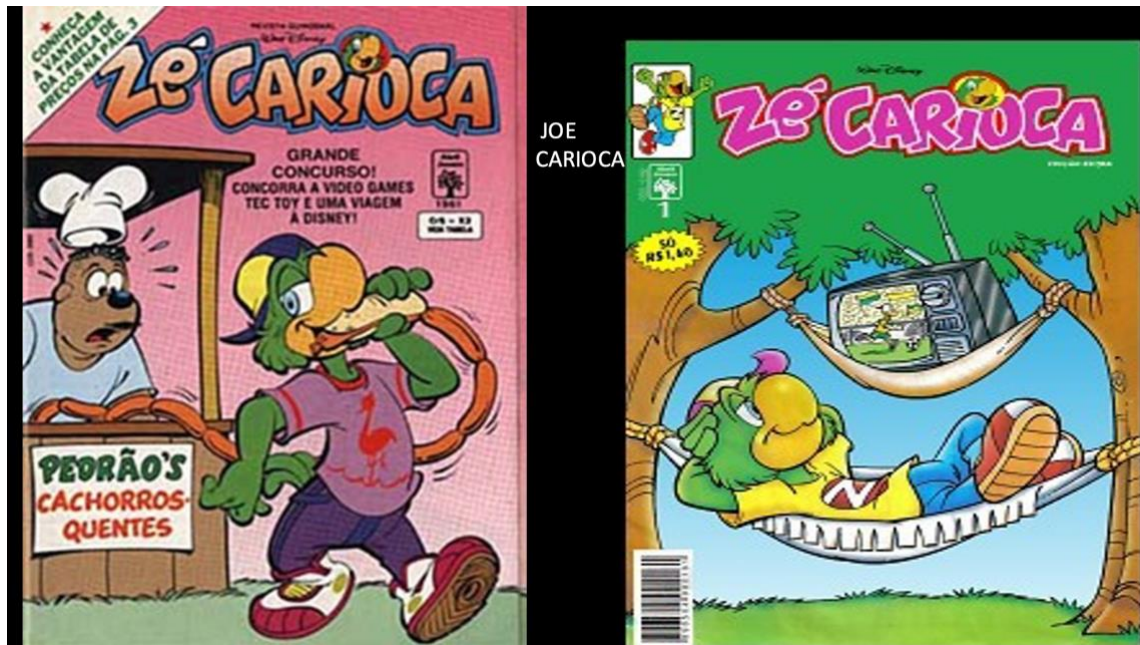


Image 5

This national inferiority feeling results from the comparison with developed nations, highlighting the continuous economic failures, the economic instability, and social inequalities. However, the real roots of the collective self-abjection, and this general embarrassment of being Brazilian, can be found in its historic origins.

### **Possible causes of the inferiority complex**

In the search for the basic conflict that may give rise to this complex, the history of the creation of the Brazilian nation is extremely revealing. Brazil was born out of trauma with two dominant threads: colonization and slavery.

*Myth of origin: Brazil as a tropical paradise in medieval imagination*

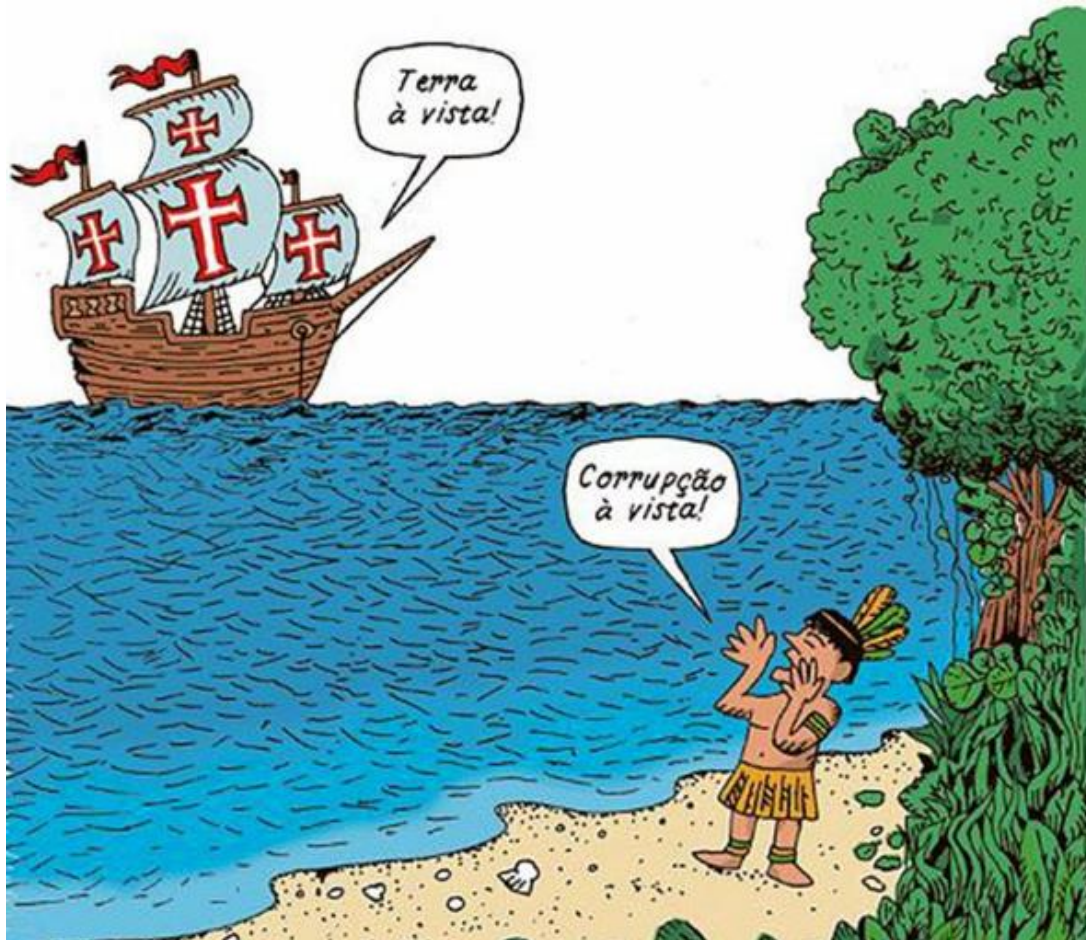
A significant projection onto Brazil as a paradise existed before its founding in 1500, thus affecting the basis upon which the collective identity was structured. Even the name has this meaning: *O`Brasile* meaning the land of the fortunate or happiness.



Image 6

### *Colonization*

Portugal never intended to establish a new nation; during centuries there was a predatory exploration. The sole intention was of taking the riches back to the king of Portugal. They never intend to engage in "nation building". The Portuguese arrived alone, leaving their families behind to exploit the new land and return to Europe. They raped and killed the natives; their children were rejected by the father and by the mother's tribe. There was no economic plan, no schools; rich children were sent to Paris to study.



*Image 7 I see land! I see corruption!*

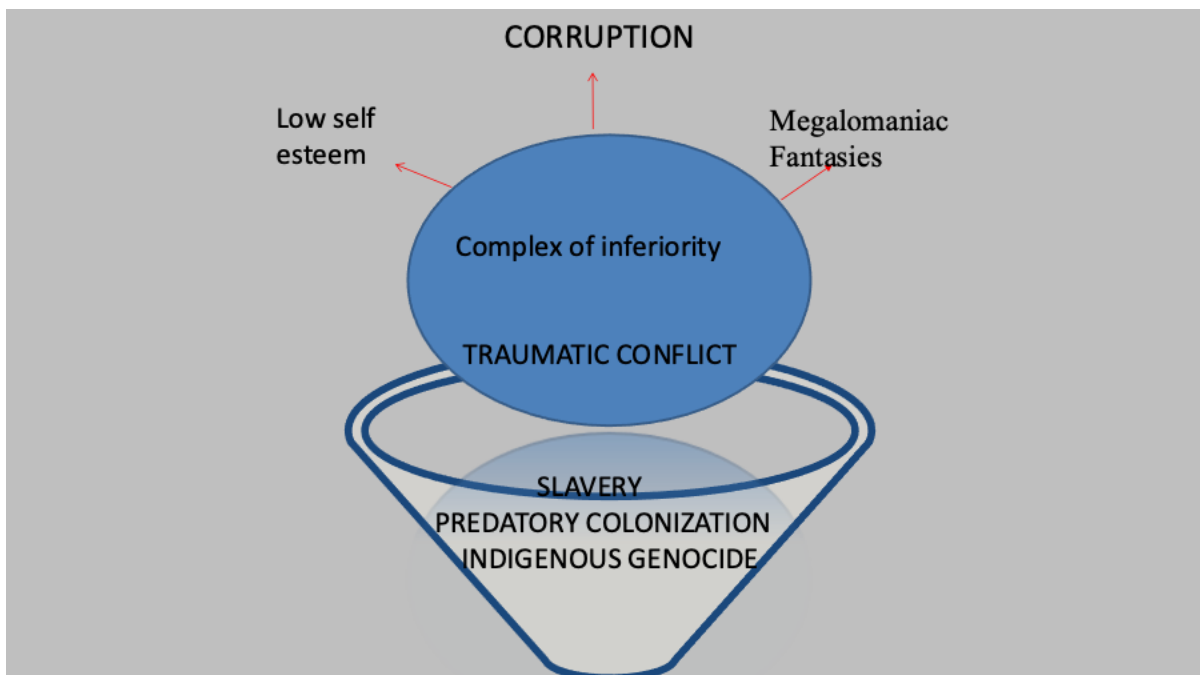
### *African slavery*

The other major thread of the trauma in forming Brazilian identity is slavery, which together with colonization resulted in almost complete domination. About 3 million African slaves were brought to Brazil to do the exhausting manual labor required on sugar plantations. Their descendants up to now represent the poorest and less educated part of the population.

## **Cultural Complex of Inferiority.**

In search of the original conflict (which would be at the heart of this inferiority complex), we have some main factors present in the formation of the country's identity: myth of origin; foreign projections; slavery and colonization (see Ramos, 2004 for the complete presentation of this research).

These traumatic factors plus the consequent lack of a national hero myth, form a cultural complex and its defensive symptom is corruption:



*Image 8 Trauma and the cultural inferiority complex*

## Conclusion

The myth of Brazil as a Paradise is continually reenacted in an attitude of permissiveness that is reproduced by the behavior and psychological processes of corrupt individuals, who have disdain for the law and feel a delight in civil disobedience.

The image of a European father whose only objective was to exploit the country and to become as rich as possible, is present today as some figures of authority seem to escape the shame by incorporating and reproducing the father-bandit roles: “nobody messes with me”- not even the law- unconsciously reproducing the exploitative behavior of the colonial father: nothing is to be established, built, or produced. The goal is “to take advantage”, to create a false superiority. Discourses of morality are swallowed up by the negative paternal complex.

The lack of a loving bond between father and son may partially explain recidivism in delinquency as well as corruption in leaders. They cynically use “affectionate protectionism” to impede complaints and uncovering of their corruption. How is it possible to complain about someone who abuses power while at the same time extends his/her hand to offer protection?

History is full of examples of how dictatorial regimes have filled the gap of the absent father. Political power imposed by force, by the firm and repressive hand can be more “affectionate” than certain democratic regimes, where affection has been displaced from parental complexes to an attitude of alterity.

The belief of the impossibility of overcoming the destructive father and the lack of knowledge about what constitutes the real strength of Brazilians are evident



consequences of the national inferiority complex, which, in turn, are compensated by fantasies of grandeur like ostentatious government projects and giant carnival parties.



*Image 9*

But technical skills and good taste in the elaboration of fantastic cars and costumes are not used in daily life. After Carnival, “kings and queens” return to their poor homes in the slums. There is no integration of these skills into personal development.

Many groups from large educational institutions (governmental and non - governmental organizations) have discussed this problem in search for educational and remedial measures. But, as long as there is no real awareness of the unconscious factors that contribute to the pathology of this cultural complex, public or private efforts will

have only a short-term and repressive effect. In this case, a puritan persona would be established whereas the neurotic core would remain untouched.

“Only a change in the attitude of the individual can initiate change in the psychology of the nation. The great problems of humanity were never yet solved by general laws, but only through regeneration of the attitudes of individuals” (Jung, C.G. ,1953, par. 4).

In the process of individuation, a real change will occur when the underlying conflicts are painfully faced, including the emotional acceptance of the tension between inferiority-superiority polarities. With conscious assimilation of the original conflicts around abandonment and rejection, new archetypal energies may be freed up to land their potential for creative renewal to shape a new collective self-image in the process of individuation. With self-esteem rescued, there will be no place for corruption as a pathological symptom of a cultural complex.

Perhaps then, corruption in Brazil might be once again restored to its natural role in the age-old drama between good and evil.

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Panel 2 - OTHERNESS: POLITICAL AND  
PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC REFLECTIONS

Violence and metamorphosis in the chrysalis of nationalism:  
Transformation's necessary unmaking

Carolyn Bates, Ph.D.

United States

## Introduction

In recent years, democracy in the United States has found itself encircled by the toughening membranes of both nationalism and tribalism, struggling within a fevered chrysalis of ideologies that would polarize what it means to be a U.S. citizen. This struggle has weakened democracy's ability to integrate its plural identities; as tribalism promotes the fantasy that legal, physical and fiscal barriers will protect this country from the invading "other" that would poison a collective way of thinking and injure a collective way of life.

Jung wrote that the United States, "the land of superlatives" has a tremendous shadow with which it must someday contend. And it appears we are doing just that: wrestling with the intolerable processes arising from within; processes that unmake, remake and unmake again a collective's identity. In my country, the colonial family that birthed US democracy continues to struggle with its original conflict: to whom is democracy allowed, from whom is it prohibited? It's fair to say that when we cage people at our borders, we cage something in ourselves. When we deny our original and ongoing crimes against the once enslaved and Indigenous peoples in this country, we deny all the ability to transform into the fullest expression democracy would allow.

The following analytic case – one born of Active Imagination – reflects how, in the midst of our current, internal un-making, there is no cooling this heat.

Case

Some 4 years ago, Democracy placed a call to my office requesting to come in for an analysis; feeling herself entrapped in the fearful disarray of a transformative time, knowing she was – politically and culturally – up to her neck in the heated *prima materia* of diffuse anxieties.

I wondered, as I confirmed our appointment, “What would she tell me? What trauma would she speak of, what crimes would she confess? And, as with any analysis, what mutual transformation might unfold?”

She was an intelligent, educated woman, but her spirit was frayed at the edges, her shoulders too stooped for someone her age, bowed from the burden of longstanding family strife; strife marked by severe violence and blindness to one another’s needs; strife fueled by collective projections between this group and that. Yet her eyes were piercingly determined, undiminished by despair. And her face mirrored the layers of her history: naiveté evolving through conflict, betrayal, and conflict anew; resolve, without the satisfaction of resolution. She was possessed, as Czech author Karel Čapek wrote, by “the rebellious outburst of the will to live.”

She came with a dream: “I see a group of older white men sitting around a table getting ready to sing in a choral performance. The one in charge tells the others to remove their wedding bands to better ensure their success. He hands the rings to me for safekeeping. I study each gold band and put them on my fingers. I know I mustn’t drop them.



Then the men leave and I see a piece of paper left on the table. There are five transparent chrysalises affixed to it. A single large ant is in each chrysalis. But the insects seem frozen, as if in stasis. I'm uneasy, afraid. Their curved stingers could make such a deep injury. Is their venom lethal?

But when I hold the paper up to the light and look at the largest ant's face, its mouth opens in a grimacing, silent scream of pain. I feel a mixture of horror...and compassion...pain is pain, and silent pain may be the worst of all! I don't know if the grimacing ant is moving through a process or caught in a phase that it *can't* move through. I don't know what to do with it, or for it. I put down the paper and leave for the concert. It's imperative that I hear what these men are singing, and how."

Democracy – caught in a silent scream, feeling horror, compassion, and the imperative need to know what songs are being sung. What valuable vows taken do those gold bands represent, and why have those in charge removed them, and left them in her safekeeping?

She knew the value of the rings. She also knew she was the ant in the chrysalis. Amidst unremitting political and civil unrest, she felt the dissolution of discourse, she felt the violent disassembling of her collective identity.

"Do you know what it feels like to be unmade?" she whispered. She described the churn and twist of being dismantled: her sense of stability disappearing, her longing for order disregarded, her reality dismembered – one loophole and law at a time. Her dream of white male choristers, and her need to

hear “what they are singing, and how” reflected her concern for the harmony and disharmony of her current state.

“So, what were the men singing, when you heard them?” I asked.

“Something like ‘Gimme That Old Time Religion,’” she said. “And they were singing off-key.”

“I have a problem with my family and now with my current lover. I don’t know what to do with them, and they don’t know what to do with me. My family is both tortured and torturous...and my survival completely depends on them.”

She offered two early memories. The first was strictly mentation without image, a disembodied, dawning curiosity about herself: Who would she become? Did destiny play any role? “I was birthed as a brainchild,” she said. “A mirror for another’s purpose. But I’ve grown beyond ideation now. I’ve become embodied in the rule of law.”

The second early memory was an uneasy sense of a split self. On the one hand she identified with the requirement poured into her by her father: that she would reflect purity of spirit, and remain unsullied. On the other hand, the puritanical shadow of original sin lapped at the edges of her awareness. Whose sin it was, and how she embodied it, would prove to be the hardest part of

reclaiming her shadow. It had to do with her mother's suffering, and it had to do with the chaos at hand.

She was of mixed ethnicity, heritage and race; a first generation American born to both immigrant and Indigenous parents. Her father, Western European patriarchy. Her mother, all that that patriarchy disavowed: the enslaved, the indentured, the displaced, the annihilated. Both parents, in overt and indirect ways, shaped her understanding as to whom she could extend herself, and with whom she could affiliate. Her father required order in the service of procurement; her mother, maligned and neglected, lived in the shadows of a disenfranchised world.

“This is where people get it wrong about me,” she said: “They describe my birth arising only from a founding patriarchy, like Athena born from Zeus' head.”

“What does that narrative overlook?” I asked.

“Their ambivalence about the fact that I was also born of my mother. There are significant implications – if what was done to her, if what is still being done to her – is acknowledged. Recompense, truth and reconciliation. Debts to be paid. Projections to be withdrawn...I was kept from my mother for too many years.”

“So is that haunting you now?” I asked. “Parts of your heritage you weren’t allowed to embrace, demanding to make themselves known?”

“Yes,” she nodded sadly. “My early dissociation from my mother has made for devastating consequences.”

Her father was a possessive taskmaster, early in her life controlling her through excessive doting and excessive critique, with intense suspicion around any individuating steps she took. Despite this, she took many.

She dared to explore beyond her original design. She dared to extend herself, through the provision of just law, into sexual and reproductive autonomy, into multi-racial and trans-curious relationships. But each time she was fought over so caustically that her unfolding identity was left singed and bruised.

She never married, but took many lovers – 45 to be exact – and she depended heavily on each of them. And while she wrestled with many and each left his mark on her, she felt that each lover had respected what she called her “fundamental and fundamentally flawed constitution” – until recently. The patriarchal control she knew in her early life had left her vulnerable to manipulation, and she now found herself with a lover who had mastered the art of projection, who bartered in shame, and who, she realized, suffered from such delusions of grandeur and self-absorption, that she had concluded “I am an ‘It’ to

him, an object to be used, an Echo to his Narcissus. He's a highly troubled consort and something about his trouble threatens me."

"Has it occurred to you that something about you threatens him?" I asked.

She nodded. "Perhaps that explains his belligerence toward any limit I try to set. But it's become claustrophobic. I'm pinned in – by his needs, his hungers. He sees me as his possession, says he's entitled to me, to everything about me. He says I was born to serve him...to *service* him...and he feeds on me, not for growth but because he feels entitled to feed, regardless of the cost. He's not alone; many in my family think the same way, they simply use different tactics, different words."

"Yet despite this," I asked, "when you have evolved, what would happen?"

"Infighting in my family, ferocious infighting at each evolutionary turn. For some it was 'What new freedoms might I bring?' Others worried 'What chaos might unfold?' Some would hold me back from where I want to go."

"Where do you want to go?" I asked.

“Where I want to go...no...where I *need* to go, is to my mother’s house. I need to know her, to understand her. I’m cut off from her ancestral roots and thus from my own as well. I need to honor her water Goddess, Yemaya, in whose seas and rivers lived my mother’s hope. Hope once thought drowned. I need to honor her Goddess, Grandmother Spider, who wove and re-wove the strands of my mother’s denied history. I need to honor how her Indigenous people’s Great Law of Peace informed my own origins.”

“But this threatens some branches of my family, and my lover over-reacts, and in his rage, he has weaponized hate. When I don’t comply, he enacts a thousand tiny violences...as if to displace me from my own mind. He builds walls around me, walls of ignorance, wealth, projection and fear. I feel them closing in. There’s a name for it, I’m sure.”

“Fear of annihilation?” I asked.

“Fear of *suffocation*” she specified. “Either way the outcome is the same, I’m pinned in, like the ants in the dream. What if I’m caught in stasis and there’s no way out?”

“What does he not want you to see, this lover of yours?”

“The thing he can’t see in himself, the thing many in my family don’t want to see in themselves: the continued crimes against my mother, the denial that she remains disenfranchised. So, he distracts the family and fuels the fighting: over inheritance, faith, inclusivity and exclusivity, over whose body is granted autonomy and whose is not. They’re still fighting my parents’ fight! Who will be oppressed? Who enslaved to the other’s agenda? It’s all shadow-dance and evacuating shame into one another based on the assumption that it’s a zero-sum game.”

“Where does that leave you?” I asked.

“Fearful of their fear. Fear of loss haunts their dreams. So, they keep running to avoid atoning for our collective crime. They would have me collude in the systemic denial of my mother’s oppression through minimizing and abasing narratives.”

“So, your mother’s silent screams haunt the family as well,” I said.

“If I cannot graft my mother’s history onto my heart, I’ll never be who I’m meant to be. Her trauma is as much a part of me as is my father’s patriarchy. Reclaiming it means a *necessary* violence, a shredding that would dismantle

normalized oppression; that would withdraw projections grown too stale, too untenable to maintain.”

Nightmares plagued her: macabre clowns threatening assault. Riots, rape, and conflagration. Dreams of hands around her throat, finding herself unable to give voice. And dreams of her mother...in the streets...running...running away, running toward. Dreams of her mother’s children being torn apart.

“How can I witness such injustice and not be changed by it?” she asked.

“I think that’s the point,” I said, “that we let it change us. What is the cost if we don’t allow ourselves to be changed?”

“Stasis,” she said, “like the ant, caught in the scream. But must I be unmade so completely in order to evolve? Will my sinews knit together again? Will I emerge more conscious than before?”

Untethered from her original identity, Democracy felt the pull for regression to the known. But she knew there was no safe haven in regression. She painfully explored the ambivalence seeded in her younger psyche: white privilege, what she called “lavish plunder” had benefitted so many aspects of her youth.



“They mulled over what they had, and they wanted more,” she said. “But I cannot un-see what the thirst for wealth has done...I *must* go through this reckoning.”

“And the cost to you if you do?” I asked. “If you do honor your debt to your mother?”

“Did you know the word chrysalis comes from the Greek *chrȳsós*?” she asked. “It means “gold,” like the golden sheen of a butterfly pupa. The gold rings that the men took off – they were symbolic reminders of their vows, easy enough to forget when one rids oneself of the reminder. They took a vow not to abandon me. They forgot.”

“Then it’s important that you don’t,” I said.

In her final session, she asked “Given what has been, given what is coming, will the center hold? What emerges when the center cannot hold? What old way of being dislodges and dissolves?”

“When the center doesn’t hold, what do you fall out of?” I asked

“I fall out of my family’s monomyth. *That* is what’s being dismembered in me: the monomyth that we are indivisible in our power and our might. But that monomyth was fractured from the start.”

“And what do the fractures offer you?” I asked.

“The understanding that in my evolution I might reclaim those fractured projections, that they might actually intersect, interconnect, interlock.”

“And the result of that?” I asked.

“A multi-verse of ideologies,” she answered, “a plurality of personhood...I’ve been meaning to confront you...what’s this business about having gendered me a “she” in this Active Imagination?”

“It’s how you originally appeared to me,” I said.

“And why do you think that?” Democracy asked.

“Because I too am a daughter of the patriarchy” I said, “and gendering you female evokes feelings of protectiveness. I must feel protective of you.”

“As do many in my family” came the reply. “But there’s a shadow to patriarchal protection. It implies ownership of me, and we know how that can morph into oppression. It doesn’t fit, it *mustn’t* fit, this ‘she’ you’ve imagined me to be.”

“I think I understand,” I said. “You’re meant to be multi-dimensional, polymorphous, polyphonic, not limited by bias or prejudice or singular identity.”

“Yes,” came the response, “I must emerge from this chrysalis as a plural self. It’s different than a schismmed self, you know? I’ve been schismmed, I know the difference. I must emerge with conscious connection between the disparate parts within me, extending myself to all the parts that live in me. I have to survive not as *me* or *I* but as *us*. As *we*.”

“We?” I asked. “We...as in?”

“We, as in We the People” they said.

And with that, Democracy stood up, and strode out of my office, preparing to reclaim that which was lost.

### In Closing

Peace was never the goal of Democracy's treatment. No Eden awaits. Only the striving, the enlarging, the continued willingness to remain unfinished, always in the chrysalis of transformation, always unmaking and remaking, and within each remaking meeting the possibility that these currently dis-United States might integrate into themselves the vital parts of their disavowed history, and in doing so, might save themselves from a suffocating stasis.

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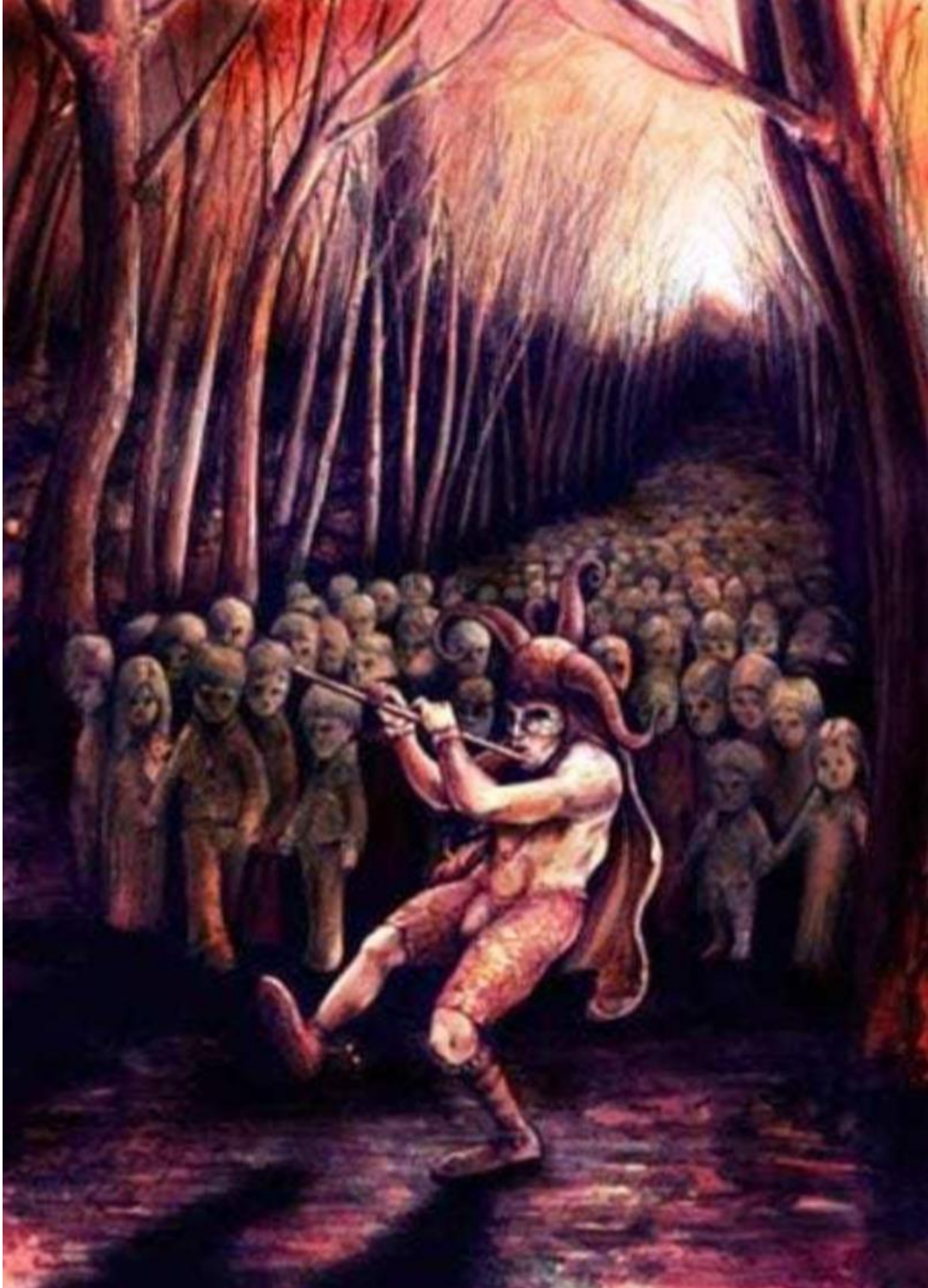
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# Phantomatic forces in our political and institutional life

Sam Kimbles, Ph.D.

United States



*The Pied Piper of Hamelin from the German Middle Ages*

“If we dare look beyond our willed innocence. If we look around unflinchingly, then we can step forward to our larger darkness as human beings”.

James Baldwin

There are many expressions of phantomatic forces in our political and institutional life: sociocultural forces such as Nationalism, National identity, intergroup conflicts, mass psychology, immigration, persecution, authoritarianism, psychological needs for underlying fascist systems of thought as well as conspiracy theories and their ideological underpinnings. These are all unconscious expressions of phantomatic group forces. Today I will focus on the phantomatic forces expressed in racialized phenomena and what the pandemic helps us to see about race. My presentation is in three parts:

1. A brief presentation of the theory of cultural complexes and phantom narratives as phantomatic forces.
2. Two examples of phantom narratives expressed as phantomatic forces recently in American cultural life.
3. And summary and implications.

### **Brief Theory**

My use of the term phantomatic is a continuation and elaboration of my work on the concept of cultural complexes and phantom narratives. Cultural complexes are expressed at the level of the group. This approach is my attempt to



offer to analytical psychology a unifying concept with which to explore the cultural unconscious more systematically. Thinking of unconscious cultural assumptions and behaviors as based in the theory of complexes reconfigures the opposition between the personal and the archetypal levels of psychological functioning in three ways:

First, this shift provides a dynamic approach to “factors” that operate at the level of the group that are manifested as cultural processes such as rituals, memorials and of course politics.

Secondly, this shift in attitude allows for an understanding of specific aspects of group life in terms which show how culture processes are transmitted both for better and worse in the unconscious of both individuals and groups.

Three, group life itself is independent of the various ways in which sociopolitical processes are manifested.

My way of thinking about these “factors” is to understand them as psychic forces operating at the level of the cultural unconscious, structured by cultural complexes and expressing archetypal story formation or phantom narratives in our individual, institutional, and sociocultural life.

When activated, cultural complexes, expressed through phantom narratives, already indicate that emotional processes have been transmuted into group assumptions that are structuring our fears and anxieties around differences and similarities. Also, it is at this point that we find collective shadow processes being expressed.

To quote Jung, “the mere act of enlightenment may have destroyed the spirits of nature, but not the psychic factors that correspond to them, such as

suggestibility, lack of criticism, fearfulness, propensity to superstition and prejudice---in short, all those qualities which make possession possible (Jung, vol. 10, para., 431, pp. 211, ). Possession is a key term in Jung's quote which I connect to phantomatic forces.

Seeing psychic processes as phantomatic allows for an attitude that may open us up to recognize both our subjective responses to broader social situations and the power of group forces that we both express through our personal responses relative to our place, role, identifications. We are both a part of and a participant, implicated, co-conspirators in the phantom narratives we inherit from past generations and in their manifestation in our contemporary times. Phantom narratives show how cultural libido is being channeled as a narrative (ideologies) that has powerful and at times compulsive influences on our attitudes and behavior, thoughts and the symbols and images that reflect our responses.

Though Jung was very concerned about the "modern person" losing his or her individuality in a mass society, I feel that best support for individuality is for us to learn how to take on and work with group processes in an effort to become more conscious. We need to take on the psychological potential of becoming conscious of how to hold and work with group tensions and processes. as we are deeply in need of psychological ways to deal with group life.

### **Racialized Complexes and Covid as Phantomatic Forces**

'All men are created equally and endowed with inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" is an expression of America's aspirational goals. Those

goals have not been met. We continue to struggle with how to make these ideals real for people of color and other minorities.

As a country, we Americans have not dealt with the original sin of slavery. The problem of slavery, says Cornel West, is like the “a black serpent wrapped around the legs of the table upon which our Declaration of Independence was signed by our founding fathers-many of whom were slave owners.” Their legacy is our uncompleted work. We can see this contradiction in the image of the black serpent through the lens of four hundred years of white terrorism on black and brown citizens from slavery through Jim Crow period to the present day shooting of unarmed young black and brown citizens and the genocidal destruction of Native peoples. In contrast to the aspirational goals of the Declaration of independence, for many people of color,

“We don’t see any American dream,” Malcolm X said in 1964. “We’ve experienced only the American nightmare.”

“A nightmare is essentially a horror story of danger, but it is not wholly a horror story. Black people experience joy, love, peace, safety. But as in any horror story, those unforgettable moments of toil, terror, and trauma have made danger essential to the black experience in racist America. Black Americans are constantly stepping into the souls of the dead. Because they know; They could have been them; they are them.” Ibram X. Kendi, *The Atlantic* (June 2020). This is a description of affective experiences of an intergenerational trauma.

President Lincoln said "A house divided against itself cannot stand" in a speech around the slavery issue given on June 16, 1858. Looking at our sociopolitical situation today, we can see that not only is our national house divided, but fragmented.

All this happening as the world struggles with Covid-19 and structural racism. Today, virus is the signifier for both structural racism and Covid.

Though these two viruses are invisible their effects are very real and deadly. Covid has exposed from its own vantage point the health care disparities in terms of who gets infected and who dies from it. In addition, social media, from the White House to the daily news are viral super spreaders that disseminate disinformation and stokes our fears and vulnerabilities influencing as it reveals the unmet health needs and income disparities that make access to health care difficult or impossible for many. Both viruses spread through physical contact and psychic contagion (psyche to psyche). Because of the group phenomena, e.g., we are all vulnerable and to that extent we are in this together. In addition, our groupishness of being together generates its own collective anxiety: fears of being swallowed up by the group or separated from the group, losing one's identity in the group, the fear of catching the virus and/or contacting the other as shadow. Covid, political forces, global warming, economic devastation, unemployment, conspiracy theories have generated apocalyptic fears about the coming end of the world or the wish and hope that finally we'll see the light and come together into some kind of cultural transformation that affirms our interdependency bringing together individual and cultural transformation.

In putting these two viruses, Covid which threatens bodily death and systemic racism which threatens our cultural and political body through social deaths, we arrive at a third force: the reality of the psyche. The reality of the psyche is a Jungian way of describing the common and irreducibility of turning outer and inner events into experiences. It is an autonomous process, just as what is seen by the eye is turned into a something by the brain that can then be labeled, studied and potentially understood.

What are the psychological issues that act as obstacles for us taking up these complicated issues? Generally, when we think of psychological issues with regards to race and pandemics, we think of individuals or politics, economics and policies. Though these are very important, I make the case that in addition, to these approaches a psychological approach is needed in order to work with the emotional dimensions of our failed American experiment with democracy.

This is primarily because the unresolved, unacknowledged violence and terror that has been background for white Americans and foreground for people of color in America have generally been thought about through the lens of political, economic and sociological lens. From these points of view, we continue to reproduce structures that privilege whites and exploit black and brown bodies. Even psychoanalysis as a Eurocentric import did not until more recently begin to deal with cultural and psychological context created by slavery and its ongoing impact on mental health and more seriously its creation of social death. The psychic structures of self and other are deeply impacted by societal power structures based on a racial hierarchy.

Psychologically, both cultural complexes and phantasmatic narratives are activated at the level of the cultural unconscious. Phantom narratives as a hybrid term is my way of linking personal and social activity through unconscious story formation (images) that show the psychic's ways of narrating its relationship to the group, through the expressions of cultural, social, and political issues. Phantom narratives are the psyche stories that help us to see what personal and collective story we're in and living out. I suggest, this is a basis for a psychological approach to our cultural problems.

We analytical psychologists think in terms of a psyche which as Jung described it is as an autonomous self-regulating set of processes that seek emotional and spiritual balance in individuals and in groups. I hope this concept will help us to think psychologically about the issue of race.

**An example:**

Hopefully, this example will help open up spaces for our imagination to work on issues around race through the lens of phantom narratives. This situation is the light side of a dark cultural complex that could have easily gone deadly. A white woman, Amy Cooper, was walking her dog off leash in Central Park. She was asked by a black man to leash her dog, since dogs were not permitted to be off leash in that area. Instead of doing that, she called the police saying that she was in imminent danger from an African American man, becoming more hysterical as she talked with dispatch. Thus, Amy weaponized her tears and placed the man in danger by pulling out a cultural complex that included the psychic awareness that the responding officer(s) would side with her perception of the dangerous black man. What was the unconscious thinking expressed in this situation? She assumed that the police would be racially biased to take her side—a black man attacking a white woman. Since she was an urban, educated, well-employed woman likely she saw herself as race free i.e., consciously she would not think of herself as racist. I assume that she would see herself as not racist. However, she was acting on her moral credentials i.e., the right kinds of beliefs “I am not a racist”. But structural racism permits this action and the belief that I am not a racist because these set of thoughts cover over a set of unexamined white privileges. This is an example of racism without being a racist.

The point of this example is to show how complicated are the racial waters that we swim in most of which are unconscious for us. The cultural complex as the psyche's response to racialized situations allow us to examine both our group level identification (structural racism} and our individual implicit biases and the meaning for us individually.

### **Implications of working with phantom narratives around racialized Cultural Complexes**

America's original sin of slavery must be acknowledged along with its historical consequences of domestic terrorism against people of color. Unless this happens, we cannot begin to look at and acknowledge the role of the belief in white supremacy in perpetuating the violence and inhumanity. We are haunted by ghosts of the past that need our recognition in order that we may begin to do the work of transforming our present. Hans Loewald, a psychoanalyst stated "Those who know ghosts, "tell us that they long to be released from their ghost life and led to rest as ancestors. As ancestors they live forth in the present generation, while as ghosts they are compelled to haunt the present generation with their shadow life'. And finally, there has to be some reparation. Not necessarily, materially, but taking responsibility collectively and personally for what has happened and what is happening today.

In Jungian psychology we call this confronting the collective shadow. The collective shadow constitutes the unacknowledged, unrecognized, denied aspects of our cultural history. They are the repressed elements that are inconsistent with our ideals but this whole process is denied.

I will close with this guttural voice of the poet: Leslé Honoré (August 2020)

America come get your children  
The ones you are so proud of  
The ones wearing Stars and Stripes  
Buying guns like candy  
The ones dripping with  
White privilege  
That you created with  
Red blood from brown skin  
America come get your children  
Come get your kids  
The ones flying flags of defeat  
Of history long dead  
Of a life they wish they had  
Of superiority they believe they have  
The lies you whispered in their ears  
As you rocked them to sleep  
“Look away look away look away Dixie land”  
America come get your children  
The ones terrorizing this country  
The ones terrorizing the world  
The ones never called a terrorist  
Come get  
Your rapist  
Your misogynistic  
Your appropriating  
Hating  
Bigoted  
Offspring  
You know...



the apples that didn't fall far from the tree  
America come get your children  
The ones running the country  
The ones too cowardly to speak up  
The ones that shoot into protests  
Churches  
Light torches  
Run cars into peace  
Come get your diseased infants  
Entitled children in men's bodies  
Jealous girls screaming in women's voices  
Come get this disgusting basket of  
Deplorables  
That you nurtured on  
Manifest destiny  
The pale pink faces  
In utter disbelief  
That even though you put your knee  
On every Brown and Black neck you saw  
We have fought back and risen  
Casting shadows on your children  
And they rage when they learn  
That being a white mediocre man  
Is no longer enough  
America come get your children  
Before they burn this stolen land down  
And you with it.

**Sam Kimbles** (U.S.) is a psychologist, analyst member of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, a clinical professor (VCF) in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of California, San Francisco. He has served as president of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. He is a clinical consultant to groups and organizations. His previous book focused on cultural complexes in psyche, society and groups. *Phantom Narratives: The Unseen Contributions of Culture to Psyche* explores the themes of psyche in groups in society and his recent book accepted for publication is *The Suffering of Ghosts: Intergenerational Complexes in Analytical Psychology*.

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## Panel 3 - ECOLOGICAL AND HEALTH CONCERNS

Nebuchadnezzar's Psychosis: Man-Made Ecological Disaster  
and its Possible Cultural Healing

Joerg Rasche

Germany

I want to speak about two issues which are closely linked:

The madness of a leading and powerful politician, and an ecological dilemma.

### **1. Madness – Nebuchadnezzar’s Psychosis**



*Image 1 William Blake's Nebuchadnezzar (1805)*

Imagine: The most powerful man in the world becomes mad. One day he leaves his palace, he walks on four legs, he starts eating grass like the animals, he sleeps outdoors under the sky and becomes wet from the dew. He neglects his body, doesn't cut hair and nails, and finally he looks like the beggars and homeless people he never knew about. This goes for "7 times", maybe 7 months or 7 years. Then one day he wakes up and returns in his former position. He even writes about the strange eclipse that happened to him.

I am not speaking about the U.S. President. You can read the story in the Bible, in the Book of Daniel. The fallen mightiest man of the world was King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon who lived around 700 years before the Christian era. The king had, and this is different from Trump, a psychotherapist, who analyzed his dreams and was his councilor. This man had warned the king of the pending psychosis. It was Daniel, a Jewish man who lived as a war prisoner with his Jewish people in Exile in Babylon.

The unhappy fate of Nebuchadnezzar was not a simple madness or crisis of a dictator, a “Caesarenwahn”. It was, as I see it, a mental collapse and eclipse as a result of a cultural dilemma and vicious circle.

## **2. The problem of water**

Mesopotamia, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in what is today known as Iraq, is a paradigm of a human made ecological crisis. It was and is about water, the source of life. Mesopotamia in this regard was different from ancient Egypt: In Egypt the Nile, flowing from Central Afrique in the South to North, brought fertility with the annual flood in early spring, and the entire Egyptian mythology reflected the positive role of the Nile River. In Mesopotamia, the big rivers Euphrates and Tigris flew from North to South. The flood with melting water from Anatolia came in June; it was not calculable, often destroying the crop on the fields. But even worse: the country is so hot and flat that the waters evaporate faster than they flow through the land. The result is that the minerals from the earth come up und the soil becomes salty and infertile.



*Image 2 Map of Ancient Mesopotamia*

This was the problem in Southern Mesopotamia for 6000 years, from the earliest settlements, the Sumerian cities of Uruk, Ur or Lagash, on up till Nebuchadnezzar's time. Rain is not sufficient for agriculture there, and the only way to cultivate crops was to build dams, water channels for artificial irrigation and basins to retain the precious water of the rivers. But this led to a vicious circle. Modern techniques of drainage were not known (and not possible in the flat land?). The more you use irrigation without drainage the faster the soil becomes salty and infertile. In the centuries the growing of wheat was replaced by the more salt-resistant barley, and the centers of habitation and political power moved step by step upstream: from the old Sumerian settlements close to the sea upwards to Babylon, Assur or Nineveh. The Mesopotamian states were among the first in the history of civilizations to develop

water management. They developed not only the art of counting and writing, but also a harsh centralistic and often incredibly cruel social system. Nebuchadnezzar, one of the last kings of Babylon, was the heir to that age old ecological problem – and the symbolic and ritual means of a cultural coping with it.

### **3. The killing of the Mother**

The dilemma was symbolized in the images of the gods. The former water goddess Tiamat, once the mother of all beings (like Gaia in old Greece), became a kind of a salt monster. She wanted to kill and destroy all her children and grandchildren. In an annual ritual this dragon (the famous Dragon of Babel) had to be overcome and slaughtered by the God-King Marduk. King Nebuchadnezzar, like the kings before him, had to fulfill Marduk's killing ritual of Tiamat every year at the New-years-fest of Akitu. The former mother goddess had to be killed, and out of her body the world had to be created again – this was to happen every year in a 12-day collective ritual. If the king was not successful the entire world was lost and time would end. During the annual ritual chaos, extinction anxiety filled the city and the state with panic and horror. During that ritual even the God-King was defeated and wounded, but reanimated by his wife Zarpanitou. At the end of these twelve days the King celebrated the Holy Wedding (Hierosgamos) with Marduk's wife/the priestess on the top of the Tower of Babylon, the Ziggurat 90 meters above the flat ground!

### **4. Vicious circle and cultural coping**

King Nebuchadnezzar was very proud of his water management. He prized himself in having built many dams, water channels, dikes and walls against the destructive aspect of the water. He built Babylon up to be the most famous city in the world - but he was not able to fundamentally modify or heal the salty soil problem of his



kingdom. Also, his many extended wars to conquer other countries and seize their resources (like Israel and Egypt!) could not help with this problem. He made the dikes as high as possible, but the waters of his unconscious became even more dangerous. In his madness or psychosis I see the collective madness of his culture in its futile effort to manage the water problem through harsh practices. And - what should the people do if their gods became sadistic and destroyed the basis of the life of plants, animals and humans? This nightmare situation might remind the reader of Melanie Klein's scenarios of the double bind dynamic of schizophrenic relationships.

In the short space of this paper, I cannot develop the many details and aspects of the thrilling story of the 12 days Akitu-Ritual. As we heard the wife of God Marduk, called Zarpanitu, played a role in the drama. She loved her husband and reanimated him, and as the high priestess she celebrated the Hierosgamos with the King – at the top of the highest tower in the world which was built to link heaven and earth. But in the days before, a collective panic possessed the people. What if Tiamat would win the battle, what if the soil of the country became salty and infertile again and forever? This was the big cultural complex and repetitive trauma of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. Today with Tom Singer we call it Extinction Anxiety.

## **5. Conclusion for us**

The king becoming mad, walking on four legs, eating grass like an animal, sleeping outdoors in the morning dew – this was a warning for his culture. Nebuchadnezzar was warned by his therapist, the prophet Daniel: Do penitence, don't forget that your power was given to you from heaven, don't abuse it! Put an end to toying with or violating nature!

Imagine for a moment that our politicians, the shareholders of the big companies, all those responsible for today's Ecocide, would read the story of Nebuchadnezzar in the Bible's Book of Daniel. Can we imagine their being able to anticipate consciously the psychotic madness of Nebuchadnezzar and its meaning for their civilization? Can we imagine this for our own civilization?

Shall we all try to learn from and to anticipate the collective madness of our own relationship to the natural world? Maybe, we all are already walking on four legs without knowing it. To realize this would be a lesson in humility, or to feel the dew on our skin. Otherwise, the manmade destruction of our world will overcome us and we will be thrown out of our kingdom without return.

It is a strong image: To feel the dew on the skin, the soft humidity of the early morning; or to walk on four legs, to have the closest contact with the soil, instead of our mind-oriented rationalistic psychology - to come down, to renew our connection with what we call the Ego-Self-Axis. To learn how animals feel. Nebuchadnezzar's madness appears to be a kind of healing. In the madness itself is the healing. As Jung said: If you don't follow it voluntarily, your fate will pull you against your will. The psychotic crisis leads Nebuchadnezzar and could lead us back to a restored relationship to nature.

By the way: Nebuchadnezzar, after "7 times" became sane again. He woke up and returned to his position as king. He honored his therapist Daniel and praised Daniel's G-d.

There is another parallel story, contemporary to that of Daniel. It is the Book of Jonah, the reluctant prophet, who was sent to preach in the city of Nineveh to urge a dramatic change in how it was living. Some of you know it from the liturgy of Yom

Kippur. As you remember, Jonah was swallowed by the whale (another water-monster!). But after 3 days and nights he was ready to get a second call by G-d: Go to Nineveh! On his inner journey Jonah now was ready to follow the call.

Nineveh was saved because G-d felt compassion for the animals and the children. Let us hope that we, too, will get a second call!

\* \* \*

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Am I My Brother's Keeper?  
Narratives from Two Pandemics

QiRe Ching, Presenter

Raymond Buscemi, Jeffrey Moulton Benevedes, Claire Costello,

Michael Bala, Paul Fishman, Scott Carollo

United States

The stories that make up the narrative of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, as well as the larger International Association of Analytical Psychology (IAAP), convey who we are as a community of Jungian analysts. This constructed account of our origins, and our struggles, repeated and disseminated, lends a sense of reality, continuity, and cohesion. Elements deemed worthy are incorporated into our aspirations and values, and are seen as expressing the soul of our group. These aspirations and values contribute to a collective identity. Undigested elements are relegated to the borders of the group unconscious and are rendered alien, unreal, and non-sensical. In the nineteen-eighties, San Francisco was ground zero for the AIDS epidemic. Two member analysts died of AIDS. Many from our institute community had lost loved ones and/or had clients who had been infected or impacted by the epidemic. And yet we seemed to have no institutional memory of this time. A number of us were engaged in AIDS activism during the height of the crisis. The ensuing search for spirit and meaning, influenced our trajectory into Jungian psychology. The biases we found in the institute environment however, led us to downplay this involvement to avoid being seen as other, insufficiently psychological, unconscious, unidimensional, and over-identified with a social and political agenda.

Thirty-five years ago, some of us broke away from the therapeutic models we learned in our graduate programs. We conducted our work away from the insulation of an office, to respond to the crisis that had gripped our city. This work has never been recognized as part of our institute's history. Nor have the stories about the epidemic's impact on individual members and our community been adequately told. Why have we, who lived through the decimation of a generation of gay men, remained silent. Those of

us who were directly engaged in the communities impacted, including the members of the panel that I am representing, have rarely referred to that time.

Two years ago the seven of us began meeting to discuss our experiences during the height of the AIDS crisis. Our discussions resulted in an institute forum held early in 2020. Excerpts from that presentation at the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco are presented here. I highlight statements made by each member of our group.

Ironically, a week after that program, our institute abruptly closed its doors in response to another pandemic: COVID-19.

## ***Reflections on the AIDS Epidemic in San Francisco***

### ***Raymond Buscemi***

I don't know what to say. I've thought about what I might want to say and I tried to organize it, to bring it into focus, to produce something tangible, something that might offer a glimpse into the past, into my past, and my own experience of the AIDS epidemic. But I don't really know what to say because I don't know the words to capture the confusion and grief and anger, the terror and joy, and the raucous love that define that time for me. I don't know what to say because there is nothing worse than trying to reconnect with these feeling memories—memories that I have actively and unconsciously tried to outrun, only to find myself, here, *here*, trying to find some words now as I write this. I don't want to disappoint you. These are the words I was able to find; there are more words I might discover; and there are words I will never know—and that is at the heart of what I lost to the epidemic: men I knew and men I didn't know and men whom I wished I had known.

Being here today is a chance for me to be as present as I can with these memories, without distraction. This is the closest I can get to telling you what my experience was and is in relation to an epidemic that stole so much from us and denied so many the right to grow old. I remember guys who looked as though they had aged thirty years in a matter of weeks as the virus destroyed them. I remember thinking of someone out of the blue and then remembering that he was dead and it was as though he died all over again. That still happens. Trying to find words to share with you today has been painful. What words could do justice to the fact that I turned away from someone I loved and who loved me and who was sick and dying. Someone who asked for me and wished I'd come see him, to say goodbye.

### ***Jeffrey Moulton Benevedes***

Teenage Chad had been told to leave his mother's home in Portland when she found out he was gay. He rode a bus to San Francisco, living on Polk Street as a very adorable prostitute turning three tricks a day in the early 80s and infected with AIDS before we even knew that the virus existed. Placed by Catholic Social Services with my partner and me, he was our gay foster son. Such a cheerful boy given what he had experienced. Chad came of age, had a boyfriend, and left with him to travel across the United States. It was only upon his return to the city that Chad informed us that he had AIDS, infected by someone who bought him in the early days of the silent spread of the disease. His death soon thereafter was as surreal as any I experienced. His innocence extinguished, and his death a marker of his mother's shame and humiliation about having a gay son, and what life on the streets meant for gay kids in those early years of



the epidemic. The grief of his death became a frozen heartache that was only finally thawed this last year, nearly thirty-five years later.

The world of AIDS became everything in my life for ten years. But it was a life that felt sequestered in a protective silence. To open up about the disaster to non-gay people—to straight people—to people who might be judgmental—was unimaginable. They couldn't understand the tragedy we, as gay men, experienced as our vital and emerging community was cut down in its nascent years and further stigmatized by a disease associated with homosexual sex. Silencing and quieting my experience existed as an unconscious collusion with majority culture as it fled from the frightening effects of this biologically and socially infectious disease. For that, I still feel angry . . . at myself and, honestly, at the collective of heterosexual others. The wound is not healed, and how will it ever be?

### ***Claire Costello***

I witnessed all of my patients slowly deteriorate, become debilitated, succumb to horrible infections, get worse, get better, become disfigured, blind, swollen, demented, and ultimately slip into semi-comatose states and eventually let go. I mourned the deaths of two hundred beloved men. It took everything within me to find a resilient inner capacity and spiritual attitude from which to do my work.

Through the presence that grows within us as we live in dialogue with that which awes us, we continue to grow new cultural attitudes that influence the transformation of consciousness.

Something happened.

Something happened that has been incorporated into the fabric of our being and within the fabric of our culture. Something we need to bring to the surface so we can savor it, make use of it, and move forward.

We share experiences of life on the edge, of encounters with the non-ordinary states of consciousness often experienced near death. We glimpsed into mysterious and numinous moments that transformed those who lived and died in a time of extraordinary human suffering, heroism, and compassionate action. We recognized something to hope for, to be nourished by, to build strength in.

We offer this to individuals and groups, living in fear and isolation, that it may give them a chance to respond, with integrity and an open heart, to the current issues of our day.

### ***Michael Bala***

Recently we, these colleagues and friends on this panel, were meeting. Someone asked each of us, “What motivated you to become active in AIDS work?”

This was my answer: I was motivated to do AIDS work because I feared genocide. What the hell did I mean? I had been holding inside, tucked deeply away, profound genocidal anxiety. I was thinking primarily of gay men in early days of AIDS. Much of what motivated me was fear that I and my gay brothers, could easily be rounded up, detained, quarantined, put away in camps to protect society. Eliminated.

In the early day of the epidemic, HIV hadn’t yet been identified. Terms like “gay cancer” and “gay plague” were bandied about in the media and on the streets. Fear of contagion was widespread. I had learned in school of the Holocaust. And I had learned something about the genocidal treatment of Native Americans, Black Americans, and

genocides throughout the world and throughout history. It didn't seem so far-fetched that we, the fags, could so easily be the next group to be singled out and locked up.

***Paul Fishman***

When I first came across the phrase “queer diaspora,” I was only slightly troubled by the thought that a powerful cultural complex would so direct the lives of another group of which I am a member. Like my grandparents and great-grandparents who left Eastern Europe a century before, I needed to find a better home. I would have been more troubled by the phrase had I known diaspora's other meanings. Whereas in contemporary usage, *diaspora* denotes the involuntary mass dispersion by a dominant power of an unwanted population from its indigenous territory; in biblical usage, it connotes the participation of the population in divine retribution. Diaspora's first appearance is as a punishment for transgressing Mosaic law. Worship other gods, buck the collective, think for yourself, and you are asking for it. You will be forever scorned and banished. In other words, the force causing diaspora is the archetype of the Self, awakening us to oppositions and providing us with opportunities to split or to individuate.

Caught in powerful personal and cultural complexes thirty-five years ago, we—our institute and I—failed adequately to “kindle a light in the darkness” of those times, to hear and respond to the call for a more timely emergence of cultural competency. For my part, it seemed necessary to hide in order to survive the fear of scornful judgments, sensed or imagined. Rather than speaking my truth to power, I was overwhelmed by it.

***Scott Carollo***

How can we distinguish between an acknowledgment of difference, which is an act of recognition, and an acknowledgement of difference as unconscious disavowal and projection? By unconscious disavowal and projection, I refer to the ways in which culturally derogated but, nonetheless, universal aspects of being human—derogated aspects of sexuality, for example—are located in the “other.” The other acts as container of that derogated aspect for the collective. The person with this identity carries the association with these aspects, creating a social vulnerability. We can ask ourselves when difference is acknowledged, does it enact a social othering or does it serve to make space in the collective, not just for that unique individual, but also for what this person represents for all of us? Does vulnerability remain a shared group experience, or does it then have to be carried exclusively by the one who is different?

AIDS was a *natural disaster*, which gave rise to certain growth opportunities: it was a time of coming out and coming together, taking care of one another; it engendered the mobilization of political agency. But AIDS, as scene of natural disaster, also opened up the opportunity, culturally, for the vulnerable queer mind and body to become the dumping ground for hatred, revulsion, and all of our deep confusions, anxiety, and shame about gender and sexuality, enacted with a force, I believe, even more destructive than the virus itself.

***QiRe Ching***

I was traveling to Europe every year in the nineteen eighties, tracking paintings depicting scenes of the lamentation. While at the Prado museum in Madrid, I was

startled by a painting by El Greco. I stood immobilized for over an hour, unable to place the image in a cultural context that was at all familiar to me. Titled *The Holy Trinity*, it was a depiction of a Pietà. However, instead of the Blessed Mother it featured a grieving God the Father, the corpse of his son draped over his lap. The image seemed to embrace the immense sadness hovering over my entire thirties. Young bodies ravaged by illness; surviving partners deprived of hospital visitation rights and without the legal protections to stop blood relatives from laying claim to the property of their departed lovers.



*The Holy Trinity, El Greco*

Over the years, I've thought many times about El Greco's painting, hoping that I would, somehow outside of the museum, encounter a corresponding likeness that could help me bear a sorrow that has been constant and unending. Although the culture has seemingly moved on from AIDS, the loss continues to announce itself, not so much in relation to a presence, *but an absence*. I can never know how the lives of the men who died might have otherwise turned out, or make amends for hurts caused, when youthful awkwardness left much unsaid.

Recently, it occurred to me that, with the passing of time, I myself had gradually been assimilating El Greco's image. It was now living inside me, had become a part of me, as I steadily aged, grieving over the son I had once been and all the sons I had lost.

### ***Reflections on AIDS and COVID-19***

Thirty-five years ago, the mobilization of our grief, and anger into acts of defiance and protest, became an important rallying point in queer culture. The tone emerging from the current COVID-19 epidemic by contrast has seemed schizoid, characterized by societal fragmentation, and the dismemberment of the body politic. With sheltering in place, the absence of social contact has left people without the links that connect them to others and a sense of having a shared fate. In this present reality, the air we breathe, every surface we touch, or person we approach, have become potential threats to our safety. And then in June 2020, George Floyd was murdered. We have known all along that Black men have been disproportionately killed or incarcerated. It was a statistical fact that we had learned to tolerate, even accept as the rest of us went on our busy lives. But this time, while sheltering at home, we saw the images, and took notice.

The French writer, Herve Guibert wrote: “...AIDS isn’t really an illness, and to call it one is a simplification, for it’s a state of weakness and surrender that uncages the beast within...The microorganisms responsible for both pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, that boa constrictor of the lungs, and the brain-destroying cysts of toxoplasmosis may be present inside each one of us but are kept in check by a healthy immune system, where AIDS gives them the green light, opening the floodgates of destruction.”

Our focus has been on one particular segment of the population impacted by the AIDS epidemic. Every story we tell implies an omission, and necessitates an adjustment, an addition - the inclusion of another story, to fill in the gaps, thus setting off a chain reaction, a continuous process of creation, one that is ever moving, expanding and marked by the untidiness that is a function of multiple viewpoints.

Today, we are witnessing a beast unleashed again as the coronavirus has laid bare pre-existing societal ills.

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**Michael Bala** (U.S.) is an analyst member of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco where he serves on the Executive Committee/Board of Governors and is the Extended Education Committee, Chair. Michael practices tele-therapy from rural Sonoma County, CA. He has taught depth psychology at San Francisco Bay Area colleges and universities. Michael has published in *The Jung Journal: Culture and Psyche*, *Cahiers Jungiens de Psychanalyse*; and in *Kudos* magazine. His email is [mbalamft@gmail.com](mailto:mbalamft@gmail.com).

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and *The Dialectics of Otherness and Belonging*. His interests include spiritual and musical practices.

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## **The Mandala as Portal to Healing**

**Jeffrey T. Kiehl**

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## **Living in Chaos**

We find ourselves immersed in chaos. The current pandemic due to the appearance of the COVID-19 virus is causing major disruptions to people's lives with a tragic number of deaths. The disintegration of everyday life under lockdown and sheltering-in policies has led to massive unemployment and collapses in local and global economies. People feel helpless in the midst of an invisible invader that rode into our lives like the apocalyptic horsemen of pestilence and death. Yet, these are not the only horsemen riding during these times. Climate chaos with all of its associated disruptions remaining ever present. This horseman, who has been riding for decades, is not going away until we turn and face it directly. We are tasked with being amidst immense chaos and working with it [Kiehl, 2016a].

## **Spirit of the Times**

The threat of the climate horseman began with the Industrial Revolution and burning fossil fuels. It is a threat that has been understood and forecast for many decades. Our reliance on fossil fuels has created an imbalance between the flow of the Sun's energy available to Earth and the energy our planet emits out to space. Burning fossil fuels causes continual increases in carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, which increases Earth's greenhouse effect and causes the planet to warm. As long as we burn fossil fuels, we will continue to increase the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and inhibit the planet's ability to stay cool. The end result of 150 years of this is a warmer planet and acidification of our oceans. This massive warming has led to

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additional problems, including melting of polar sea-ice and of Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets with an associated rise of sea level, intensification of storms with associated flood damages and coastal storm surges, intensification of hurricanes and heat waves, and shifts in global wind patterns leading to unusual weather phenomena. Changes in rainfall patterns have also led to more severe droughts, expansion of forest fires and catastrophic destruction of human and non-human life. Extinction of species connected to climate change is accelerating. The shifts in climate are causing changes to flowering plants and migratory patterns for birds. All of these disruptions trace their origin back to human behaviors that force Earth to be out of balance. To date, we have warmed Earth by 2° F, which may seem small until you reflect on all of the local damages that have occurred due to this seemingly ‘small’ warming. If we do not change our behavior, in other words, eliminate our reliance on fossil fuels, the planet will most likely warm by an additional 4 °F over the next 80 years, which will bring catastrophic changes to human civilization and the non-human world. Recently, a scientific study [Xu et al. 2020] predicts that over the next 50 years, 1 to 3 billion people will experience unlivable conditions due to this warming. Allowing this to happen would not only be tragic, but a crime against life of unprecedented proportions. Climate chaos is the greatest threat humanity has ever faced. If we do not act now, we are delivering future generations into destruction.

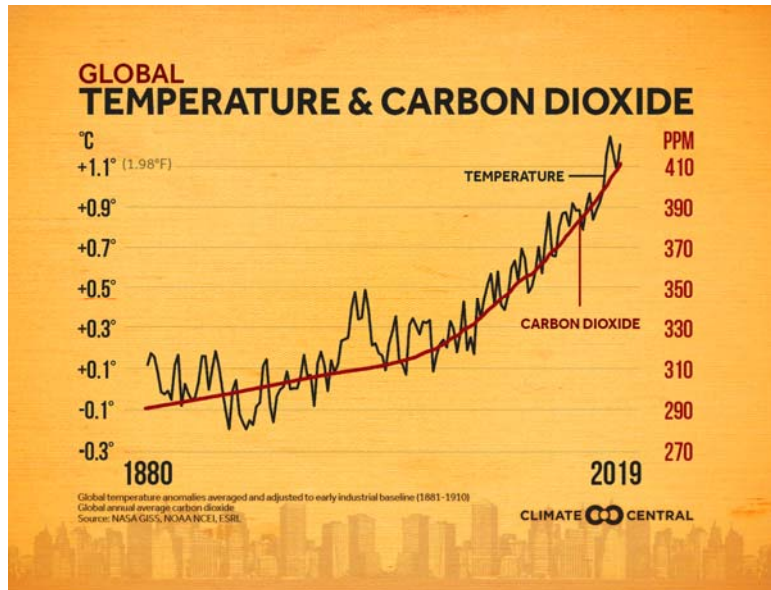
Let me be clear: I view global warming as a symptom, just as I view COVID-19 as a symptom. While these symptoms lead to tremendous disruption, they are not the ultimate source of these *dis-eases*. From my perspective, the ultimate source of our disruption is our collective state of psychic dissociation, or psychic imbalance, which in the words of Jung [CW 9ii, § 390, n.79] appear as a ‘psychic infection.’

For Jung, dissociation is an absence of wholeness, due to a state of one-sidedness or imbalance. Inner dissociation means a disconnection between one's consciousness and the unconscious, while outer dissociation arises from a myopic approach to perceiving the world. Inner disconnection originates from a lack of relation to one's instincts and archetypes, while outer disconnection arises from a devaluing of the world, which ultimately leads to its destruction. The more we lack connectiveness to inner and outer "other", the more likely we project our shadow out onto the world. Projection continues to isolate us from action on climate chaos. As long as we have someone else to blame for the chaos, why should we do anything about it?

In the spirit of the times, let us address three questions in relation to climate chaos: Where are we?, Where are we going?, and Why? To start, it is important to review the scientific facts of climate change, for we must all face the facts. As Jung [CW 9ii, § 44] declared, "One cannot dispose of facts by declaring them unreal."

## **Where Are We?**

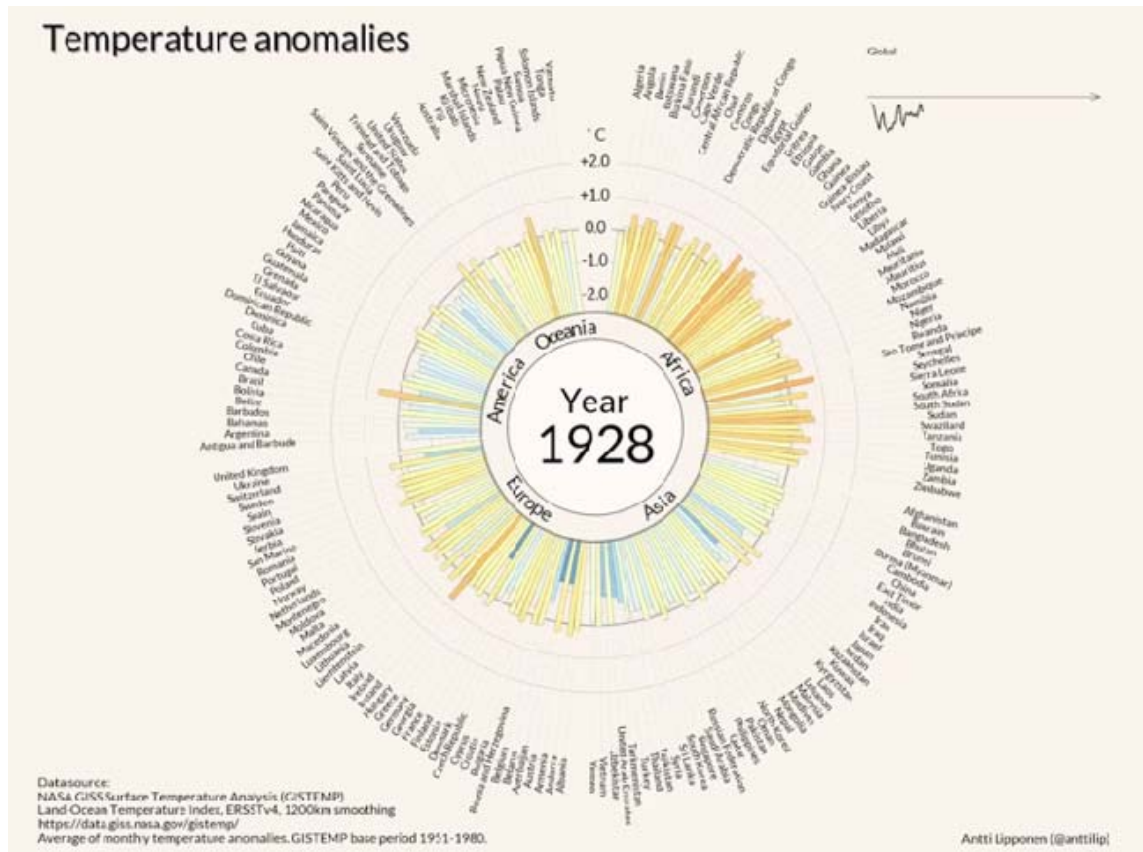
Science provides us with a clear picture of where we are with regard to Earth's temperature changes. Shown here is the evolution of global annual mean temperature from 1850 to present.



**Figure 1** Global anomaly in surface temperature (°C) since 1880 (black curve) and level of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere over this same period.

The temperature (°C) is recorded as the deviation (anomaly) from the long-term average of Earth's temperature. Up until 1970 the year to year temperatures just vary randomly, while after 1970 there is a dramatic increase in surface temperature. The planet has now warmed by 1.1 °C or 2.0 °F, since the pre-Industrial period. All of this warming is due to a strengthening of the greenhouse effect due to increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. As noted, this means that it is more difficult for Earth to cool off by dissipating the heat energy into space. It is like throwing more blankets on yourself, making it more difficult for your body to lose heat to the surrounding air, thus, more blankets cause you to feel warmer.

Here is an interesting way to visualize these same temperature deviations through time. It is an image mandala of temperature deviations for countries around the world through time.



**Figure 2** Animation of surface temperature change for countries around the world. (Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/150411108@N06/35471910724/>, Antti Lipponen). Please click on the image to see the video.

This ingenious, temporal mandala clearly illustrates how different regions of the planet have warmed over the past 90 years. Watching this video a number of times, it is possible to see how different places are warming at different rates. The colors of the lines indicate temperature, e.g. redder lines mean warmer temperatures. This is a good example of how one can connect people to scientific data through the use of mandala images and art.

As noted, increased annual mean warming is only one symptom of an increased greenhouse effect. Melting of polar ice sheets, rising sea levels, increased incidences of

forest fires, heat waves, drought, while other regions experience increases in rainfall and flooding, are occurring around the world.



**Figure 3**

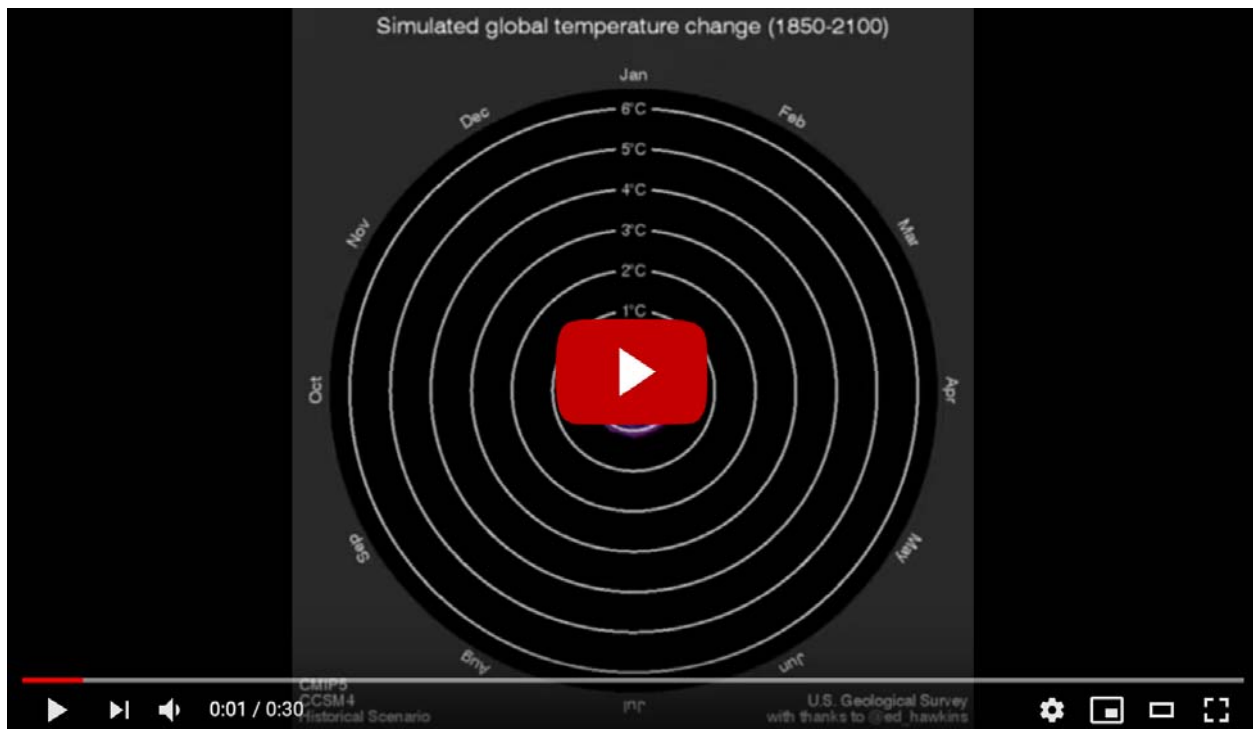
## **Where Are We Going?**

As long as we continue to rely on fossil fuels as our major source of energy, we will continue to emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and, thus, warm the planet. Exactly how much we warm the planet depends on a number of factors including how much energy we use over the coming decades. The best estimate of future warming lies at around 3 °C or 6 °F by 2100. Again, these may sound like small numbers, until we

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realize what destruction 1/3 of this level of warming has already led to. A three-fold increase in warming over the next 80 years will be catastrophic for life on the planet. The amount of carbon dioxide will reach levels not seen for 40 million years and the climate of Earth at that time was extremely warm with massive increases in sea level due to the absence of ice sheet at either pole. Earth's history clearly tells us what happens when you elevate carbon dioxide to high amounts. The magnitude of such severe warming which has occurred over only 80 years (the life-time of a human being!) is unprecedented in Earth history. The ability of species (including humans) to adapt to change is dependent on the rate of the change, not just the magnitude of the change. The predicted rates of change over the coming decades will stress all life forms on Earth, with many unable to adapt to such changes.



**Figure 4** Changes in global average monthly surface temperature from 1850 to 2100. (Source: <http://www.climate-lab-book.ac.uk/spirals/>, Jay Alder) Click on the image to view the video.

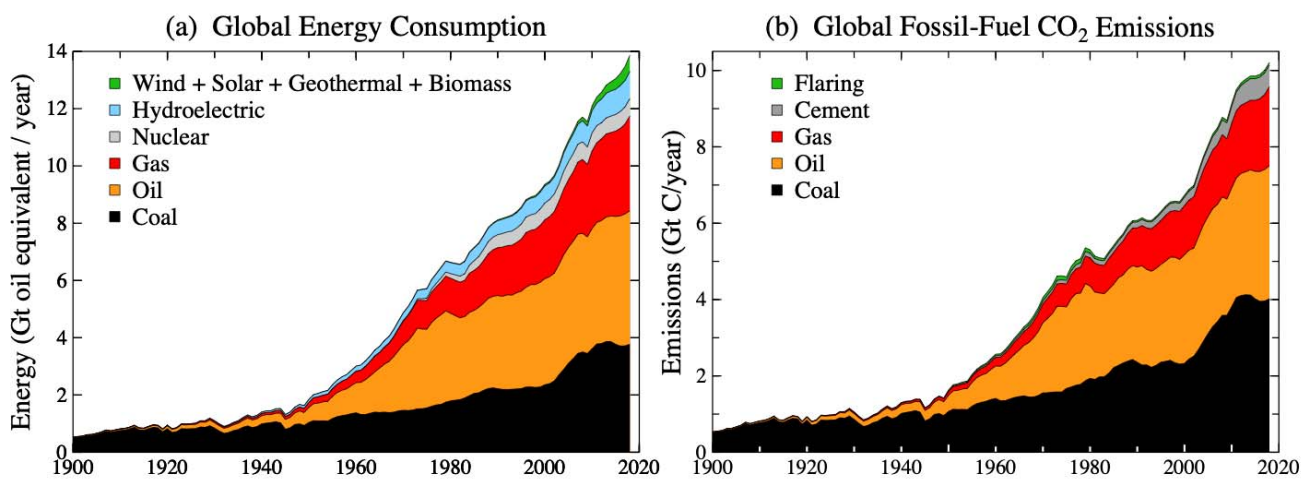
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This particular scenario of energy use predicts 10 °F of warming over the next 80 years! These are images of awakening for those who have eyes to see and psyches to accept the facts of climate chaos.

### Why is this happening?

As I have stated, the physical cause of planetary warming is an imbalance in energy flow directly tied to the burning of fossil fuels. We burn these fuels to generate energy, which drives our increasingly complex societies. For centuries we relied mainly on the burning of wood to generate energy, then in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries we discovered coal and oil as cheap, readily obtainable sources of energy. With these discoveries, the global consumption of energy through the burning of fossil fuels has increased dramatically since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as shown here

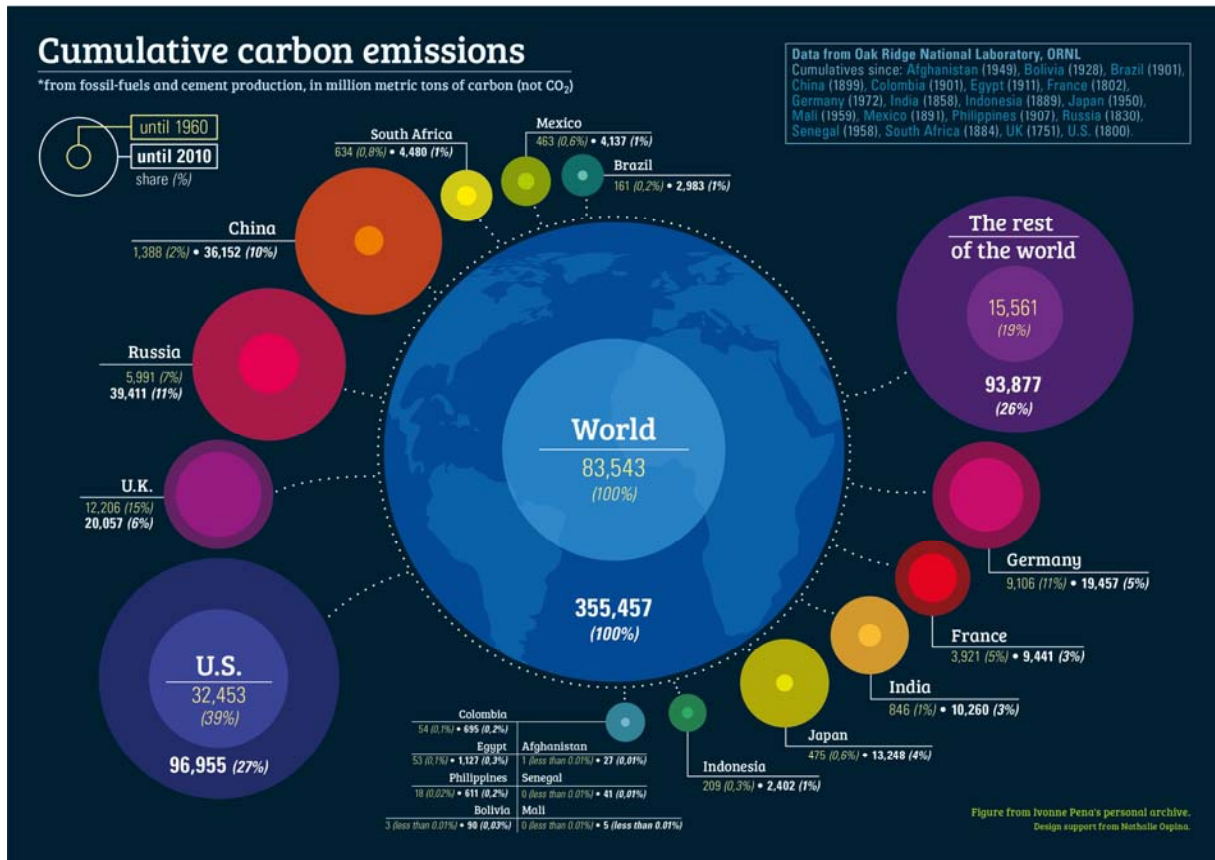
[\[http://www.columbia.edu/~mhs119/CO2Emissions/\]](http://www.columbia.edu/~mhs119/CO2Emissions/),



**Figure 5** Global energy use per year by source, Global emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> by source.

The left-hand figure shows global energy consumption through time, while the righthand figure presents the rise in global carbon emissions. Since the late 1950s, there has been a dramatic rise in energy use tied to two major factors, first, an exponential increase in global population, and second, the fact that people are using more energy over time. Not only are there more people on Earth, but individual people are consuming more each year. We are caught in a cycle of rampant consumerism that is now spreading globally. This spread is reflected in the fact that the United States is no longer the major emitter of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. China has now surpassed US emissions. However, warming of the planet is due to the cumulative amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, Earth's accumulation of emissions over a century, which until recently has been dominated by US energy use. So, although China is the current major emitter of carbon into the atmosphere, to date, the United States has contributed the bulk of climate disruption. As such, the United States must assume responsibility, along with other developed nations, for the existing climate chaos. The following mandala of accumulated carbon emissions makes this point

[\[https://energycentral.com/c/ec/who-most-responsible-climate-change-infographic \]](https://energycentral.com/c/ec/who-most-responsible-climate-change-infographic):



**Figure 6** Cumulative carbon emissions from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to 1960 and 2010.

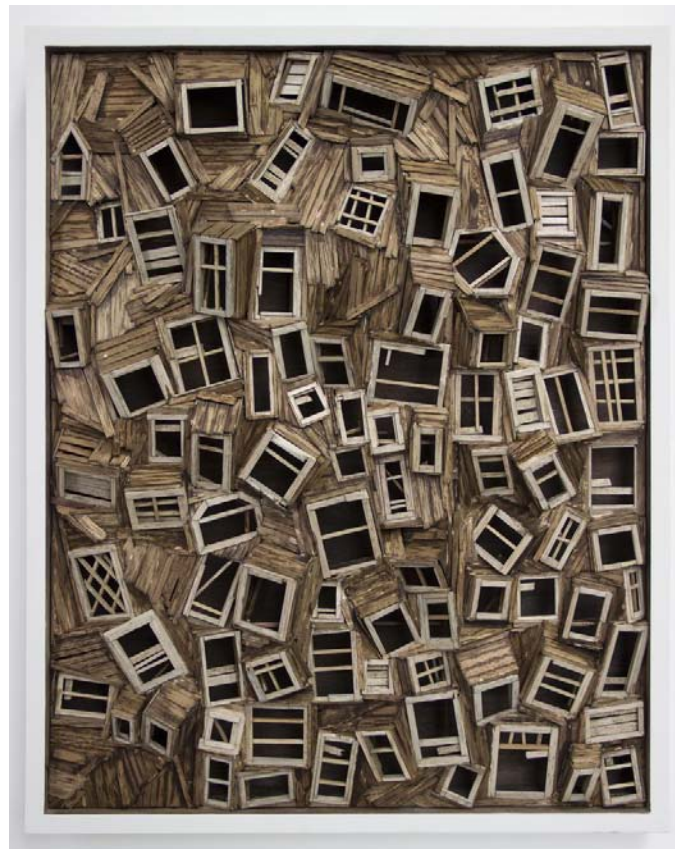
The mandala breaks cumulative emissions down by country and by two time periods-- 1960 and 2010. Notice how the size of the inner shaded circles (up to 1960) radically changes to the larger circle area (up to 2010) indicating the enormous rise in energy use over this 50-year period. This figure also conveys the fact that the developing world in the Southern Hemisphere has contributed very little to climate chaos, yet these countries have and will continue to suffer the most from the impacts of climate disruption. This figure is a mandala of climate impact inequity which the developed world must face.

## Spirit of the Depths

### Collective Dissociation

*“Nations have their own peculiar psychology, and in the same way they also have their own particular kind of psychopathology. It consists in the accumulation of a large number of abnormal features, the most striking of which is a suggestibility affecting the entire nation.”*

C.G. Jung (CW 10, § 466)



**Figure 7** Fragmentation by Seth Clark

How do we understand our continued path of world destruction? Science tells us what is happening to the planet, including the physical forces driving the observed climate chaos. There is no question that humans are causing planetary warming, including all the effects linked to the warming. The scientific facts are incontrovertible, yet we have done far too little to avert increased catastrophic destruction. Of all the nations in the world, the United States is the only country currently not participating in the Paris Accord, which is the international planning body committed to eliminating fossil fuel use. Even with the Paris Accord, most nations are not acting fast enough to reduce their dependence on these fuels. Atmospheric carbon dioxide is at levels not seen in millions of years and will continue to increase until we abandon our use of fossil fuels.

Humans have an amazing ability to avoid facing threats, especially, if addressing the threat requires changes to their views, beliefs and/or personal behaviors. We have known about climate change and its cause for over a century. Over the past 40 years scientific evidence has only strengthened our certainty of human-caused climate disruption. Yet, we continue to collectively resist taking needed actions to deal with this global threat. Unfortunately, the longer we wait to act, the more difficult it will be to address the issue. Had we begun to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels forty years ago, the transition would have required much less sacrifice. Our collective avoidance is similar to someone who has been diagnosed with a life threatening, but treatable illness. The actions necessary to treat the illness are known and available, yet the patient refuses to carry out these actions. The person fears implementing the required changes because they require too much change, over too short a time period. Some part of them chooses inaction, rather than action. They find themselves split between knowing what to do and not wanting to do it, i.e. they find themselves in a state of *dissociation*. (Note that the

root meaning of dissociation is ‘to be apart from comradeship, or a state of sociality,’ while the antonym of dissociation, *association*, has the root meaning of ‘to be joined together in partnership, or a state of sociality.’) We are at odds with one another around action on climate change both internally and externally. Jung [CW 10, § 290] observed that,

“... just as for the individual a time of dissociation is a time for sickness, so it is in the life of nations. We can hardly deny that ours is a time of dissociation and sickness. ... 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 which always tells us that the sickness has reached a dangerous climax.”

I believe we are suffering from a collective dissociation, a collective sickness around climate chaos. Most people, even in the United States, admit that climate change is a serious threat to them and the world at large. Most want someone to do something about it. Yet, when asked what they personally are willing to sacrifice or change, most people are reluctant to commit to such changes. This is dissociation writ large and nowhere is this more evident than in the United States, the country that has historically contributed most to the problem and is thus most responsible to help to address the problem [Kiehl, 2020].

What does analytical psychology have to say about dissociation, from whence does it arise? Perhaps most importantly, is it possible to heal such dissociation? Analytical psychology provides a unique pathway to explore these questions. Of course, exploring collective problems requires us to expand our interests outside of the

consulting room to include larger social spheres. As Jung [MDR, pp. 233-234] noted for, "... a collective problem ... The cause of the disturbance is not to be sought in the personal surroundings, but rather in the collective situation. Psychotherapy has hitherto taken this matter far too little into account." Jung wrote these words more than 60 years ago, and unfortunately, the ability of psychotherapy to deal with general social problems has not progressed much since then. Social psychology has helped us study how groups behave under various circumstances. It has gathered much data on how cultural belief systems influence counter-productive behaviors, but these studies do not investigate the deeper psychic layers that create our state of dissociation.

In order to do this, we must enter the realm of collective complexes and archetypal dynamics populating the unconscious [e.g. Singer, 2018]. In terms of analytical psychology, Tom Singer has creatively led the effort to apply Jung's concepts of complex and archetype to social issues. Other areas of research that could be integrated into an analytical perspective include the field of systems dynamics which tells us that group behavior is not captured by a simple, linear sum of all individual behaviors within the group [e.g. Klemm et al. 2003, Castellano et al. 2009]. The internal dynamics of social groups are non-linear, within which whole new phenomena can spontaneously emerge from them. These new phenomena are *coherent patterns* of behavior that could never be deduced from a simple, linear perspective of individuals interacting within a group. Collective dissociation is more like an iterative fractal structure of social fragmentation on multiple scales ranging from the individual up to nation states.



Jung [CW 13, § 51] notes that, “Our true religion is a monotheism of consciousness, a possession by it, coupled with a fanatical denial of the existence of fragmentary autonomous systems.” Our one-sided focus on consciousness at the expense of the unconscious is our living myth. It is a myth that denies the importance of our ‘fragmentary autonomous systems’, i.e. complexes, archetypes and instincts. It is a living myth leading us to believe we can fix any problem through sheer will, a living myth leading to ideas like perpetual economic growth, which requires infinite energy and consumption of the Earth. It is a living myth at the root of our collective sickness.

By denying the reality of the archetypal realm we force ourselves into a state of disequilibrium, which manifests in the form of climate chaos. Disequilibrium denotes imbalance. Interestingly, as already noted, global warming arises from an imbalance between the amount of energy received from the Sun and the amount of energy exiting the planet in the form of thermal (infrared) radiation. By disrupting the greenhouse effect, which modulates how much thermal energy leaves the planet, we have upset the flow of energy to and from Earth. Psychologically, this outer energy imbalance mirrors our inner psychic energy imbalance. As above, so below say the alchemists. Jung [CW 16, § 394] puts it this way,

“... the further the conscious situation moves away from a certain point of equilibrium, the more forceful and accordingly the more dangerous become the unconscious contents that are struggling to restore the balance. This leads ultimately to a dissociation: on the one hand, ego-consciousness makes convulsive efforts to shake off an invisible opponent (if it does not suspect its next door neighbor of being the devil!), while on the other hand it increasingly falls victim to the tyrannical will of an internal “Government opposition” which displays all the characteristics of a daemonic subman and superman combined.”

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This astute observation points out our tendency to find someone else to blame for our disequilibrium. We find someone to blame or some way to discount what is taking place in us. Hence, some deny the existence of human caused climate chaos (or even a global pandemic), or they foist the blame of the disruption on others, e.g. ‘China is now the major emitter of greenhouse gases, so why should we in the US do anything about it until they do.’

Thus, the answer to our first question about the deeper source of climate chaos is: psychological dissociation, which is a denial of the existence of the other within us, the unconscious with all of its archetypal and instinctual forces. The destruction we wreak on Earth is a direct reflection of our inner split, our discomfort with ourselves as individuals and as a society. This split activates – in non-linear ways – our complexes both individual and cultural.

Our second question focuses how analytical psychology can help us address our collective dissociation. Jung [CW 18, § 581] notes that,

“No wonder the Western world feels uneasy, for it does not know how much it plays into the hands of the uproarious underworld and what it has lost through the destruction of its numinities. It has lost its moral and spiritual values to a very dangerous degree. Its moral and spiritual tradition has collapsed, and has left a worldwide disorientation and dissociation.”

If our collective dissociation is rooted in the destruction and loss of the numinous, then perhaps one way to address our sickness is to reconnect to ways that reconnect us to the

spiritual, numinous dimensions of life. If dissociation means being apart from the other, then perhaps we need to foster experiences of being a part of the other.

## Healing through Mandala Symbols

### Jung & Mandala



**Figure 8** From the Red Book (p. 107)

*“Mandala symbols appear very frequently in moments of psychic disorientation as compensatory ordering factors.”*

C.G. Jung (CW 3, § 582)

*“... mandalas mostly appear in connection with chaotic psychic states of disorientation or panic. They then have the purpose of reducing the confusion to order ... At all events they express order, balance, and wholeness.”*

CW 9i, § 645

Here, I briefly review Jung’s relationship to the mandala. For more detailed explorations of Jung and mandala, I recommend the following works: Finiello Zervas, 2018, de Moura, 2012, Harms, 2011 and Jeromson, 2006, 2007. Jung’s portrayal of mandalas began with his psychological descent to the unconscious and the creation of *The Red Book* [Jung, 2009]. After his intense experience, in 1916, recorded in the *Seven Sermons of the Dead*, he painted his first mandala. He called this mandala the *Systema Mundi Totius*, ‘the system of the whole world.’ It represents Jung’s own cosmology at that time. Jung [MDR, p. 195] writes,

“It was only toward the end of the First World War that I gradually began to emerge from the darkness. ... [in which a] ... principal event was that I began to understand mandala drawings. This happened in 1918-19. I had painted the first mandala in 1916 after writing the Septem Sermones; naturally I had not, then, understood it.”

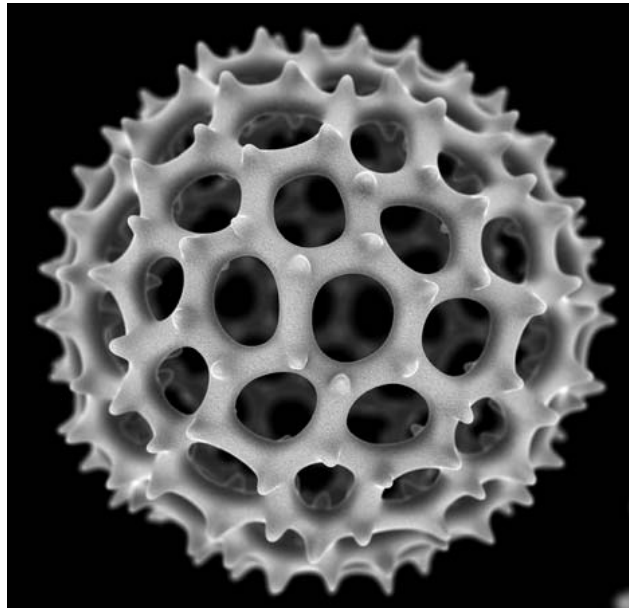
Here we see the critical role Jung gives the mandala and also how he grappled with the meaning of the mandala. Clearly, his deep experiences with mandalas played a critical role in his ascent out of his darkness.



**Figure 9** Jung's first mandala (1916) Published in *Du*, 1955

Although he drew his first mandala in 1916, Jung's experiences with this symbol appeared much earlier in his life. Jung notes [MDR, p. 85] that while trying to decide on a career path, circa 1898, he dreamt that, "I was in a wood ... I saw a circular pool ... half immersed in the water lay the strangest and most wonderful creature; a round animal, shimmering in opalescent hues ... it was a giant Radiolarian..."

Here is an electron micrograph of a radiolarian.

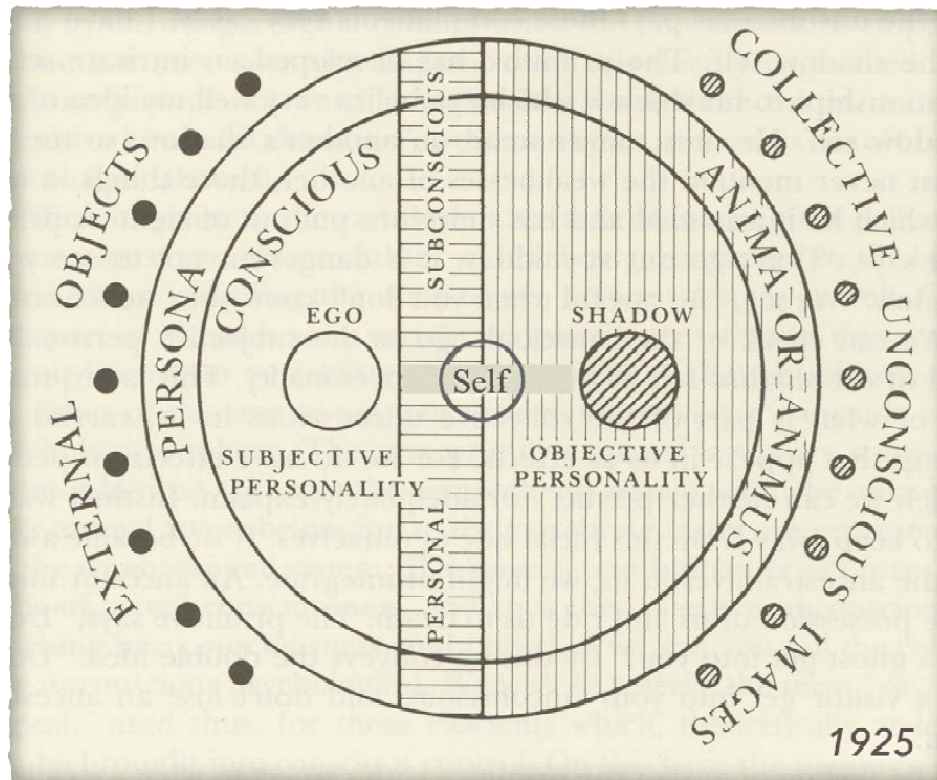


**Figure 10** Radiolarian

Interestingly, the radiolarian is related to foraminifera which play a critical role in the ocean's ability to absorb and bury carbon dioxide. As the levels of carbon dioxide have increased in the oceans, it is more difficult for these tiny life forms to survive. Given they are at the bottom of the marine food chain, their demise is of great concern for life on the planet.

Jung's dream contains two mandala images – one for the the circular pool of water and one for the animal, both of which are symbols of wholeness. This dream convinced Jung to go into medicine and eventually psychiatry. Then, in 1900, Jung drew a mandala based on information his cousin, Helene Preiswerk, provided him. This cosmology arose from trance states his cousin was experiencing during séances, the records of which became the source of Jung's doctoral dissertation.

In 1925, Jung gave a seminar on his psychological ideas to a group of English-speaking students [Jung, 2012]. He created many figures to illustrate his theoretical ideas, including the structure of the psyche,



**Figure 11** Jung's mandala of psyche as drawn in 1925 [Jung, 2012, p. 138]

At the center of the mandala is the Self (which Jung called the individual in the original drawing). The mandala unites outer and inner worlds and represents a balanced picture of these two worlds. It is a mandala of psyche and world in equilibrium with one another. Placing the Self at the center of the mandala is perhaps the first hint of how Jung viewed mandala as the image of the archetype of the Self. This discovery between mandala and Self is described by Jung in MDR [p. 196],

“My mandalas were cryptograms concerning the state of the self which were presented to me anew each day. In them I saw the self—that is, my whole being—actively at work. To be sure, at first, I could only dimly understand them; but they seemed to me highly significant, and I guarded them like precious pearls. I had the distinct feeling that they were something central, and in time I acquired through them a living conception of the self.”

In 1927, Jung had a dream from which he painted the mandala called the ‘Window of Eternity.’ Then, in 1928, he painted his ‘last’ mandala based on a powerfully numinous dream set in Liverpool. This dream made him realize [MDR, p. 199] “that the self is the principle and archetype of orientation and meaning. Therein lies its healing function.”



**Figure 12** Mandala painted in 1928, Jung’s last mandala (The Red Book, p. 163)



At the time of painting the Liverpool mandala, Jung received a manuscript entitled, *Secret of the Golden Flower*, from the Sinologist Richard Wilhelm and Jung turned his attention more towards alchemy. Jung [MDR, p. 199] writes that, “After this dream I gave up drawing or painting mandalas.”

Of course, Jung continued to create mandalas not with brush, but through carving stone,



**Figure 13** Jung's stone carving at Bollingen

At the same time that Jung was discovering the power of the mandala through his personal work, many of his clients were drawing their own mandalas [see, de Moura, 2012]. Jung [CW 9i, § 645] notes that,

“... mandalas ... have the purpose of reducing the confusion to order, though this is never the conscious intention of the patient. At all events they express order, balance, and wholeness. Patients themselves often emphasize the beneficial or soothing effect of such pictures. ... Most mandalas have an intuitive, irrational character and, through their symbolical content, exert a retroactive influence on the unconscious. They therefore possess a “magical” significance, like icons, whose possible efficacy was never consciously felt by the patient.”

Thus, through personal experience and work with his clients Jung realized the power of the mandala as a portal to healing. Of course, the mandala was more than a personal experience. Jung recognized the essential archetypal nature of this symbol and devoted much time to exploring the transpersonal dimension of the mandala in his writings.

### **Mandala as Archetype**

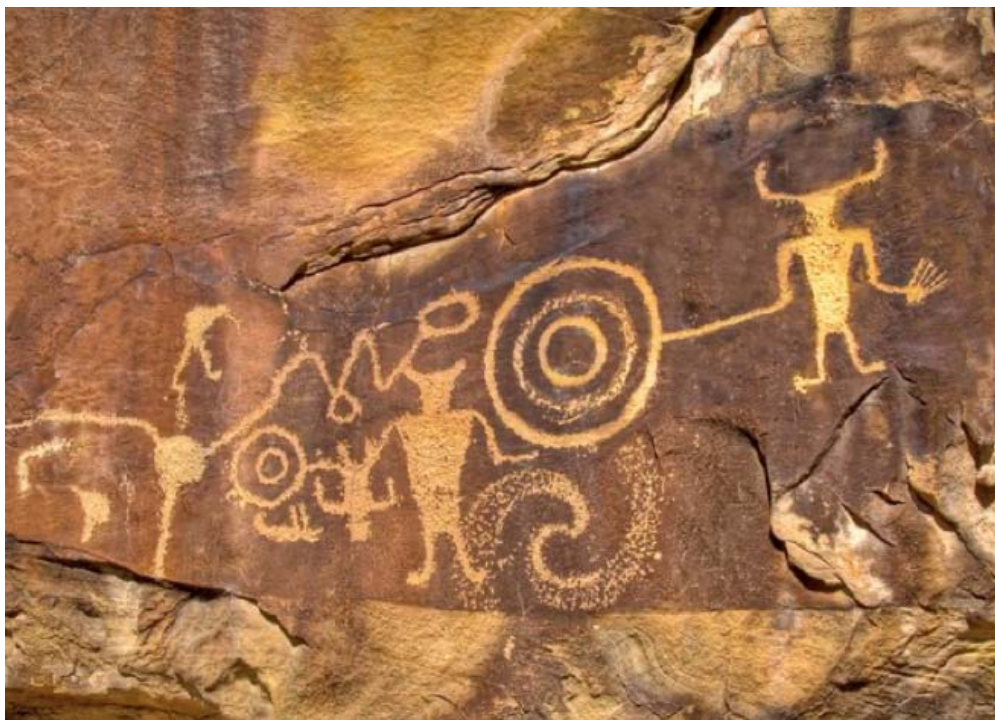
Mandalas are ubiquitous across space and time, and, as such, appear throughout the world. Some of the earliest mandalas were created by indigenous peoples in the form of rock paintings, stone engravings, burial mounds, and astronomical stone structures.

Jung [CW 9i, § 712] notes that,

“Knowledge of the common origin of these unconsciously preformed symbols has been totally lost to us. In order to recover it, we have to read old texts and investigate

old cultures... And when we penetrate a little more deeply below the surface of the psyche, we come upon historical layers which are not just dead dust, but alive and continuously active in everyone— maybe to a degree that we cannot imagine in the present state of our knowledge.”

Below is a petroglyph in the western United States that dates back over a thousand years. Note the many mandala forms in this image.



**Figure 14** Petroglyph in Moab, Utah

Perhaps, the oldest known mandala is the recently discovered circle of stalagmites created by Neanderthals in what is now southern France [Jaubert et al, 2016]. Some of these stalagmites weigh more than a ton and were dragged long distances to form the circle. The radiocarbon dating of this structure is around 175,000 years old, which predates the cave painting of early homo sapiens by more than 140,000

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years. This phenomenal discovery provides evidence that Neanderthals were expressing symbolic thinking, and that the archetype of the Self was manifesting itself far earlier than the cave painters.



**Figure 15** Circle created by Neanderthal 175,000 years ago

When I read the story of this archeological discovery, I was reminded of the following statement by Jung [CW 8, § 435], “Because it is a question of characteristically human modes, it is hardly to be wondered that we can find psychic forms ... which occur ... in other epochs with which archaeology provides the only link ...” This discovery shows how mandala has resided in the psyche of hominids for well over 100,000 years.

Of course, mandalas are ubiquitous in nature, too. Consider the manifold symmetries in life forms throughout evolutionary history, e.g. the radiolarian. Many of these natural mandalas evoke within us a deep sense of reverence. How is it possible

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that the world is so full of these numinous patterns? Science has shown how these forms spontaneously emerge from the inherent complexity of nature. It seems as if nature feels compelled to generate symmetries. Extending our gaze away from Earth out to the heavens, we see that the cosmos is full of beautiful symmetries. Pictures from the Hubble space telescope show how symmetry abounds in the cosmos. The mandala is ever present, providing us with a pathway to numinous wholeness be it through nature, science or the arts.

Finally, what, if anything, is the archetypal *purpose* of a mandala? This question has, no doubt, many answers, but from a depth psychological perspective, the mandala emerges from the unconscious to heal our dissociation. As such, it plays an integral role in the self-regulation process that Jung identified as a key element of psyche. Jung [CW 16, pr. 330] states,

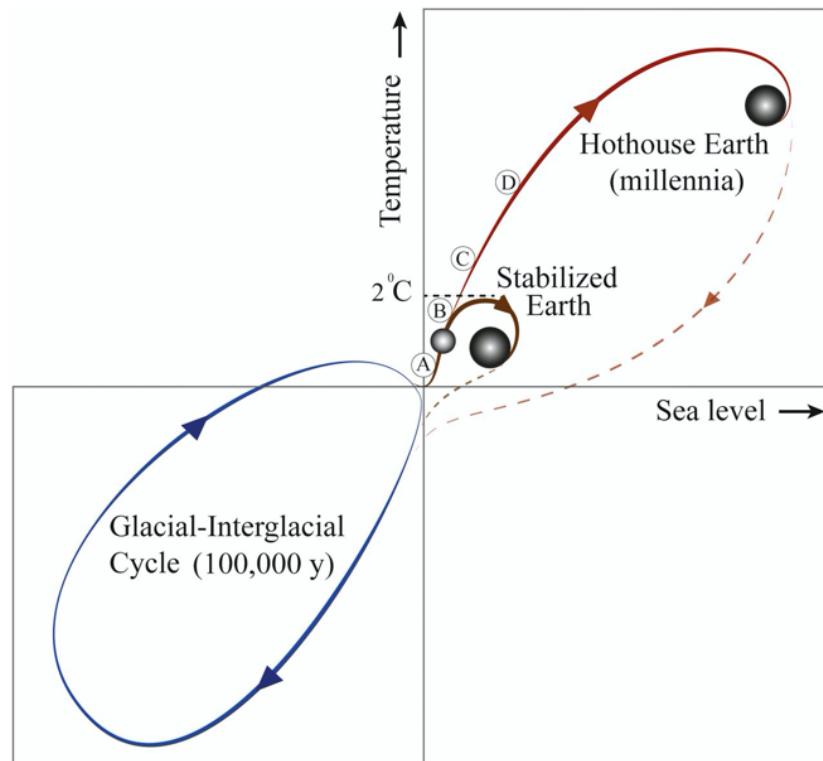
“The psyche is a self-regulating system that maintains its equilibrium just as the body does. Every process that goes too far immediately and inevitably calls forth compensations, and without these there would be neither a normal metabolism nor a normal psyche. In this sense we can take the theory of compensation as a basic law of psychic behavior. Too little on one side results in too much on the other.”

If this is the case, then mandala is a symbol facilitating this ‘law of psychic behavior.’ As Jung [CW 9i, § 714] notes, “As a rule a mandala occurs in conditions of psychic dissociation or disorientation...”

In terms of psychic self-regulation, imagine a time when a symbol was truly living and provided meaning and orientation to the collective, and then, after some time, the symbol lost its numinosity. It no longer provided a sense of orientation to the group. An

historical example of this would be the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance [Kiehl, 2016b], in which the center of meaning moved from a god above, to the measure of man. Humanism re-centered our collective cosmology opening the doorway for the modern sciences. In such a situation, a new symbol than emerges, often first in the arts which unifies and provides a new living meaning for the collective. The process moves from a state of integration, through dis-integration, to a re-integration. I believe we are in a time of dis-integration in which we lack living symbols to provide a sense of collective meaning. As Thomas Berry [1988, p. 123] put it, “We are in between stories.” Climate chaos and the pandemic are symptoms of this state of dis-integration. Is there a new symbol that could re-integrate us? As I argue in the next section, I feel that the mandala can help us in work towards a new symbol.

Jung’s hypothesis for self-regulation extends well beyond psyche. Self-regulation appears in many dynamic systems [Capra, 1996]. Earth’s climate system can be viewed as a system containing processes that insure stability [Steffen et al. 2018]. From a dynamic systems viewpoint various feedback processes ensure the system reaches a set point of stability.



**Figure 16** Earth's climate states in terms of global temperature and sea level.

Shown above [Steffen et al. 2018] is a description of how Earth's climate has oscillated, through geologic time, between states of cold temperatures and lower sea level to states of hothouse temperatures with high sea level. In cold states, glacial ice grows locking fresh water on land, while in warm states there is little glacial ice resulting in high sea levels. For millions of years, Earth has moved through these two cycles, a sort of Earth climate mandala. For the past 10,000 years Earth has been near the center of this Earth system mandala, but through our actions we are now propelling Earth onto the hothouse trajectory, which appears in the upper right box. The usual transit time for the cold to hothouse states is many millions of years. Our actions are accelerating us along the red hothouse curve far beyond this natural time scale; we are hurtling along

the hothouse curve at an unprecedented rate. If we act in time, we can keep Earth close to the center of the mandala and thus avoid climatic catastrophe.

This is just one example of mandala as regulator. The Gaia Hypothesis proposes that the stability of the planet, the oscillations in the figure above, is regulated by life itself. If so, this would be a Great Mandala. Regulating phenomena occur also in ecological systems between the abundance of predators and prey. Given the plethora of regulating systems, perhaps it is not surprising that Jung discovered a similar phenomenon in the human psyche. (Note that neuroscience also has viewed the interaction between the prefrontal cortex and the sympathetic nervous system as a homeostatic self-regulatory process [e.g. Siegel, 2018].)

### **Mandala as Path Forward**



**Figure 17**



For a balanced psyche, we need to maintain a conscious relationship with the unconscious, not just as individuals, but as a collective. We need to be aware of the archetypal presences appearing in the world and the cultural complexes that are appearing in their varied forms. We need to be conscious of our instinctual nature. Considering conscious and unconscious as the primary dyadic manifestation of opposites, Jung [CW 14, § 201] notes that with the union of opposites,

“we are dealing with an eternal image ... Whenever this image is obscured one’s life loses its proper meaning and consequently its balance. So long as we know that we are the carrier of life ... then the mystery of our soul lives ... But if we no longer see the meaning of our life in its fulfillment ..., then we have betrayed and lost our soul, substituting for it a madness which leads to destruction...”

In a dissociated state, the world is alien to us and we no longer value its inherent beauty. We live a soul-less life rife with destruction. Jung [CW 10, § 290] notes that, “... just as for the individual a time of dissociation is a time for sickness, so it is in the life of nations. We can hardly deny that ours is a time of dissociation and sickness.” Indeed, we can hardly deny this. Here, is a list of some opposites that need to be a part of our healing, i.e. our wholeness process:

<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<b>Image</b>	<b>Instinct</b>
<b>Idea.</b>	<b>Value</b>
<b>Sensation</b>	<b>Intuition</b>
<b>Independent</b>	<b>Interdependent</b>

Action	Receptivity
Mundane	Sacred
Rational	Transrational
Matter	Spirit

Many of these dyadic aspects are represented in Jerome Bernstein's [2018] description of the dominion and reciprocity states of psyche. Bernstein argues the Western world has been living a one-sided life, skewed far towards the dominion psyche and that our survival depends now on bringing back and honoring reciprocity psyche. In this process, we do not reject the dominion psyche, but integrate it with reciprocity psyche, i.e. our task is to bring the two states of psyche into balance with one another.

How does mandala help us live in such a balanced state? Is it realistic to expect humanity to connect to the archetype of wholeness to avoid catastrophic environmental (and social) collapse? At this point, I make a transrational leap to answer these questions. Since the beginning of the scientific revolution, we have confined ourselves to solving problems using one-sided approaches. We either use a one-sided approach centered on conscious rationality, or a one-sided approach immersed in unconscious compulsive emotionality. Yet, as Einstein's apocryphal quote goes, "we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used to create them." The complexity and enormity of the problems we now face, e.g. climate chaos, pandemic, social inequality, cannot be solved by purely rational, linear, thinking. Nor can they be avoided through irrational compulsivity. I am not saying we can dispose of rational thinking! We need science and technological innovation to create a carbon-free future. We need well thought out strategies and planning to get off of fossil fuels. If we were to ignore science, as our

current president and his followers have, then we live a compulsive one-sided, destructive lifestyle. Rejecting reason creates imbalance. I am arguing for balance in which our technological solutions are coupled with the valuing of nature: a balance that recognizes the compulsive tendencies of the unconscious, a balance rooted in wholeness that includes a deep sense of the sacredness of Earth. All one-sided approaches come with a shadow and we should never forget that.

How do we solve problems more integrally? How do we include other ways of knowing in addressing climate chaos? Jung [CW 18, § 599] states,

“As any change must begin somewhere, it is the single individual who will experience it and carry it through. The change must indeed begin with an individual; it might be any one of us. Nobody can afford to look round and to wait for somebody else to do what he is loathe to do himself. But since nobody seems to know what to do, it might be worthwhile for each of us to ask himself whether by any chance his or her unconscious may know something that will help us.”

The unconscious transcends space and time, holding unimagined creativity. We need to place ourselves in a state of humility before such a reality. Jung further states, [CW 7, § 275], “... the unconscious produces contents which are valid not only for the person concerned, but for others as well, in fact for a great many people and possibly for all.” Thus, we are not just doing our own work when we seek guidance from the unconscious, we may be helping ‘possibly all.’ Such statements fly in the face of rationality, which is why they are called transrational. Also, note that individuals working together form complex interactions through which positive transformations can

occur, and, yes, destructive ones, as well. However, the more conscious we are in balancing ourselves collectively, the better we can work with the destructiveness.

From an environmental perspective, I encourage us toward a balanced, ecological psyche that honors the wonder of the world around us. Such a psyche is beautifully rendered in the following sculpture by Kate MacDowell.



**Figure 18** Kate MacDowell

If we open ourselves to the wisdom of psyche and trust in its self-regulation process, then perhaps mandalas will emerge leading us to more holistic ways to live on Earth. As Jung [CW 10, § 293] noted, “... 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.” Is this mere fantasy? Yes, but remember that all creativity

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arises from the play of fantasy images. So, I ask us to play with images to see what mandalas arise that speak to us individually and collectively around the issue of climate chaos.

Let me give you some examples of mandalas that have emerged over the recent past. The creative work of Andy Goldsworthy brings psyche and the environment together through mandala. Shown here is one of his installations at the Presidio in San Francisco,

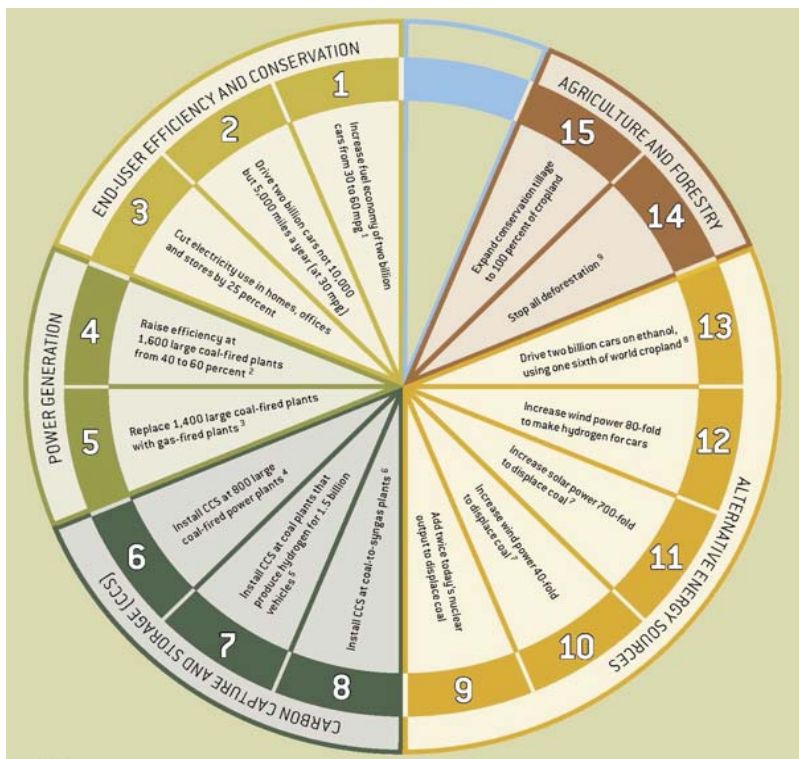


**Figure 19** Andy Goldsworthy

Many of Goldsworthy's installations ingeniously weave together natural environments and have the symmetry of mandala. They show how we can be in balance

with the environment, rather than at odds with the natural world. They are playful and transitory, reflecting the dynamic dimensions of the natural world.

Mandalas have also appeared in the exploration of paths to create a future fossil free economy. Here is a mandala-like image of ways to reduce carbon emissions [Socolow and Pacala, 2006]. Each slice of this mandala, if implemented, would reduce carbon emissions by 25 billion tons over 50 years. We get to choose which of these solutions to implement. Unfortunately, we have not acted aggressively enough to reduce our emissions since this paper was published, so now we need more slices of the mandala to address climate change. The more we wait the more slices required to avoid climate chaos. If we wait too long, there will not be enough slices to address future climate chaos.



**Figure 20** Ways to reduce our use of fossil fuels

Finally, mandalas are emerging around social action on climate chaos. At the center of this mandala is the Swedish teenager, Greta Thunberg. Her protest to reduce carbon emissions has galvanized youth around the world. Millions of school children now take Fridays off from school to publicly demand action on climate chaos. This rapid, self-organizing rise in activity is how archetypes constellate and emerge quickly. The presence of the feminine, and the child archetype with its association with the future are indicative of what is required now to change our collective behavior. As Thunberg eloquently states it is the children's future that is most threatened by inaction on climate. They have the most to lose, yet it is older generations who have more power and who have done too little. As I stated in my book [Kiehl, 2016a, p. 71], "Movement to wholeness requires a radical transformation in how we see the world..." The children's movement is just such a radical transformation in how we need to view the world.



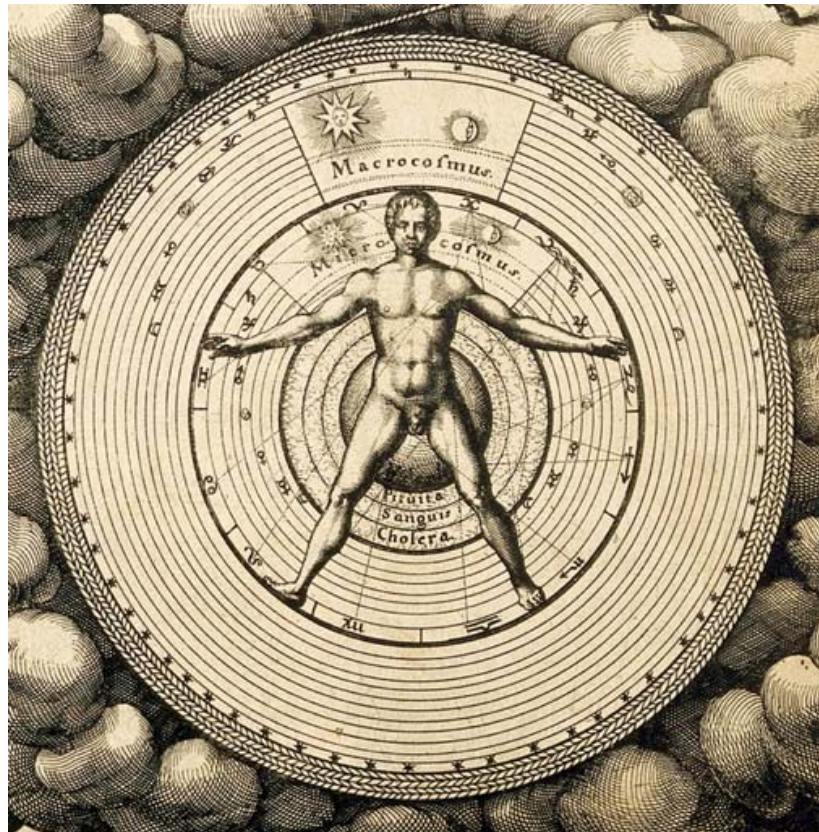
**Figure 21** Our future

## **Union of Spirit of the Times and Spirit of the Depths**

I have argued that collective dissociation is occurring on multiple space and time scales. Our separations from archetypal numinosity and instinctual nature form an inter-psyche split, which is coupled with a separation from others and the environment, an intra-psyche split. Separation propagates up through individuals, families, communities and nations. At the root of our *dis-ease* is the wounded separation between psyche and matter and at the most basic level, a separation between psyche and cosmos. We have lost our sense of deep inter-connectedness with the cosmos, which was present



for thousands of years in human history. Our primary mythologies were based on the connection and inter-dependence between the human and non-human world. Nature, Earth, Cosmos were animate and infused with soul. These mythologies evolved into cosmologies that placed humans in direct connection with the cosmos. Modern and post-modern civilizations have lost all such connectedness. Jung recognized the importance of such deep connections. He [MDR, p. 335] states that “Our psyche is set up in accord with the structure of the universe, and what happens in the macrocosm likewise happens in the infinitesimal and most subjective reaches of psyche.” Perhaps the Medieval and Renaissance periods were the last times in Western history when we recognized this deep sense of connection, as depicted here:



**Figure 22** Drawing for Robert Fludd, 1617-1618

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Yet, this view of universal connectedness is not just a relic of ancient cosmologies. The Nobel physicist, Werner Heisenberg, a founder of quantum theory, states that, “The same organizing forces that have shaped nature in all her forms are also responsible for the structure of our minds.” Science tells us that our planet and all life on it, including human life, arose from elements generated within exploding stars and colliding galaxies. The oft quoted statement that ‘we are star dust’ is quite accurate. We know also that quantum processes entangle matter at the most microscopic level. Our new cosmology of modern science, thus, reaffirms our fundamental inter-relatedness with the cosmos. But, the realm of soul lies outside of the sciences and it is here where we need to renew our connectedness. We need to experience our inherent participation in the cosmos to feel the soulfulness of nature. Jung [CW 10, § 635] states, “... wholeness ... has always been characterized by certain cosmic affinities: the individual soul was thought to be of ‘heavenly’ origin, a particle of the world soul, and hence a microcosm, a reflection of the macrocosm.” I find Jung’s term ‘cosmic affinities’ quite interesting for it captures exactly what I have been circumambulating in this article. How can we discover our cosmic affinities? Do they even exist?

To answer the later question, I end with a tale of the seemingly insignificant dung beetle. This beetle has a preferred straight-line direction to roll its dung ball along. Scientists [Dacke et al, 2013] hypothesized the beetle was using some aspect of nature to orient itself to roll the dung ball so straight. In particular, the beetle rolls the ball in a straight line during the night. To test these various hypotheses, scientists constructed a home for the dung beetle on a platform within a planetarium. They then projected different sky configurations on the dome of the planetarium, while at the same time observing which way the beetle rolled its dung ball. After many different projected

images, they eventually projected the light of the Milky Way galaxy onto the screen and discovered it was this light the beetle uses to spatially orient itself.



**Figure 23** The dung beetle and the Milky Way

If ever there was an example of cosmic affinities it is the story of the dung beetle. Let us also not forget the importance the scarab beetle played in Jung's discovery of synchronicity [CW 8, § 843]. This beetle plays a remarkable role in reminding us of the beauty of the cosmos and how life on Earth is integrally coupled to the cosmos. If a small dung beetle can manifest a cosmic affinity, is it too much to ask that we do the same? Can we look to the cosmos, inner and outer, and once again experience a deep soulful connection to these realms and ultimately realize that there is truly only one world, the *Unus Mundus*? If we were to open our hearts and minds to this reality, we

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would find the universal mandala of One World. Creating such a worldview would transform our relationship to the world around us. We would look at the world from a whole new perspective.

## **Endings & Beginnings**

According to Jung [MDR, p. 335],

“the mandala, ... is probably the simplest model of a concept of wholeness, and one which spontaneously arises in the mind as a representation of the struggle and reconciliation of opposites. The clash, which is at first of a purely personal nature, is soon followed by the insight that the subjective conflict is only a single instance of the universal conflict of opposites. Our psyche is set up in accord with the structure of the universe, and what happens in the macrocosm likewise happens in the infinitesimal and most subjective reaches of the psyche.”

As such, mandalas allow order to emerge from chaos, and, at the same time, open us to a direct experience of the sacredness of the everyday world. We find mandalas in the outer world wherever we look. They appear to us in nature and in art and architecture. They appear in our homes in the way we set our table, arrange flowers in a vase, or decorate our living spaces. The mandala also arises when people gather to share with one another. In today’s world the gallery screen view in our Zoom meetings creates mandalas of communality.

To the extent we make the mandala an integral part of our lives, we become more centered and can heal the myriad splits, inner and outer, that keep us in the dis-ease of dissociation. It may seem unlikely that being in a mandala could help us overcome our

present state of ecocide, along with the many other symptoms of collective dissociation, but the archetypal nature of the mandala transcends any such doubt. Cultures around the world for centuries have lived in the mandala. We too could choose this path to healing ourselves.



**Figure 24** Kalachakra Mandala

I conclude this circumambulation of mandala by offering the following video (click on image), which uses the beauty of modern science through the images of the Hubble telescope along with images of mandalas through the ages. It is accompanied by

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the Adagio from JS Bach's Concerto for 2 Pianos in C Minor, BWV 1060. Please meditate on the images and music, which too is a mandala, to experience our affinity with the cosmos.



**Figure 25** Cosmic affinities. Please click on the image to view the video.

## **Acknowledgments**

This paper arose from a presentation I gave at the 2019 Art & Psyche Conference. I wish to thank Linda Carter for organizing the conference and encouraging me to write a paper for ARAS Connections. I thank Tom Singer for also encouraging me to submit this work to ARAS Connections. I dedicate this work to the memory of my dear mandala friend Alec Stouras.

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## SECTION TWO: FOCUS ON THE UNITED STATES

### PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

## Introduction to the Presidency Day of the Conference

Thomas Singer, MD

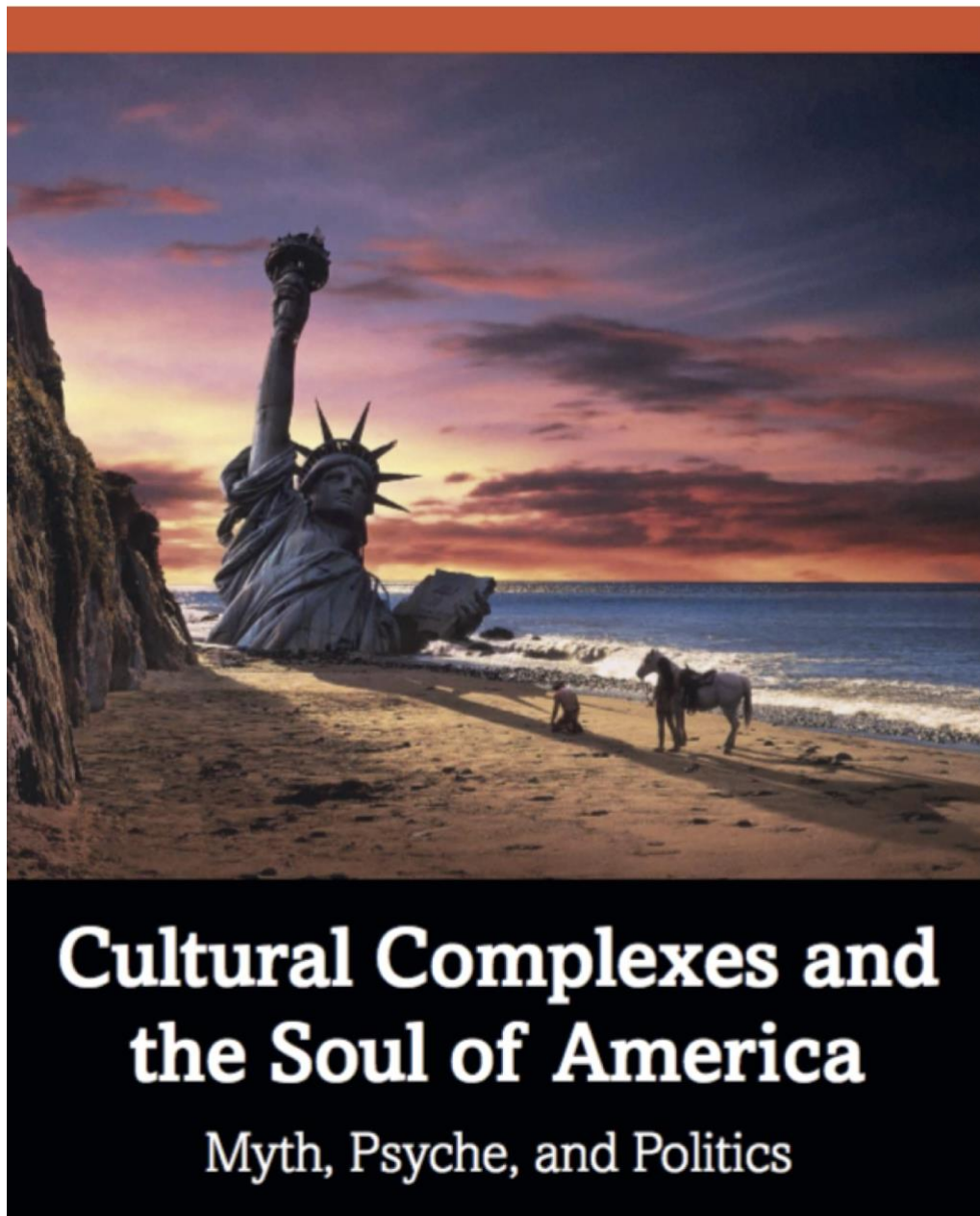
United States

This second day of our conference will focus on The United States Presidency and some of the issues we are facing as a nation and as a world on the eve of our election which is only two weeks from now. The political energy in our country is about to explode and judging from the first day of our meeting yesterday, there is huge political energy in our virtual conference as well—perhaps also ready to explode on occasion....To mix yesterday’s references to Yeats and Blake, maybe some part of all of us “slouches towards Bethlehem” as in the image of **Nebuchadnezzar** that Joerg Rasche showed us on the first day.



*Image 1 Nebuchadnezzar, 1795. William Blake*

Life in the United States these past four years has become increasingly dire. Too many of our bodies have been ravished by COVID-19 and we have suffered a collapsing economy as well as unprecedented fires and storms that many experience as being of Biblical and apocalyptic proportions. Making it all much worse, a psychic pollution has taken hold of the land. A foul and divisive spirit infiltrates everything from immigration, to healthcare, to race, to the environment, to the economic divide, to issues of sex, gender identity and sexual orientation, to the US relationship to the rest of the world, and to the psyches of all the citizens of the world. It should not surprise us if some of that divisive spirit makes itself felt in our conference. “Fetid”, “Venal”, “Corrupt” and “Unhinged” are the words that keep coming to mind as I contemplate the spirit in our Presidency of the past four years.



*Image 2 Cover of Cultural Complexes and the Soul of America*

Eight of the contributors to this conference have chapters in the recently published book *Cultural Complexes and the Soul of America*—a far ranging volume

about the United States and the current state of our national soul. I will be quoting a couple of those authors to introduce the day.

In her brilliant preface to the book, Jules Cashford opens with a quote from Alexis de Tocqueville in whose tradition she follows:

*America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.*

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859), *Democracy in America*<sup>1</sup>

Jules writes:

“The Statue of Liberty, looking out over the sea as a beacon of freedom, has offered the generosity of welcome to the world for over 150 years. It carries perhaps the most inspiring words ever to adorn a statue. They come from a poem by Emma Lazarus, written in 1883, and inscribed on a bronze tablet in 1903 and laid in the pedestal of the statue, seventeen years after the statue had been unveiled:

Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe  
free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless,  
tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

However, the picture on the cover of this book, is of a very altered Statue of Liberty and is taken from the final scene of the film *The Planet of the Apes*—directed in 1968 by Franklin James Shaffner, set in the future of 3978, and starring Charlton Heston as the hero George Taylor.



[Ironically later in his career, Heston became the champion of the NRA—the National Rifle Association—which has led the charge to the unprecedented arming of America where there are now more guns than people—350 million guns for a population of around 330 million. – Tom Singer]

It is the vision of this ruined Statue of Liberty, now half buried in the sand, which allows our hero astronaut to recognize that he is on Earth and has been all the time. He had landed in the distant future, not on another planet as he supposed. Here in this final scene, he realizes that this grotesquely broken and abandoned statue can only have been brought about by humans at war with each other, leaving the planet to be ruled by apes with the “intelligence” of humans. The apes experiment on the humans in the same way that the humans had experimented on the apes.

Kneeling in the long shadow of Liberty’s arm reaching upward, the torch long dead—beckoning to no one, pointing to nowhere, the tiny figure bent over in awe and despair—all this tells us that this icon cannot be simply a *sign*, not for him nor for any of us. It is a *symbol*—which means, literally from the Greek, a “throwing together” of two worlds, whose union reminds us of the depths from which it came: those depths that—however we choose to describe them—are in themselves sacred and cannot fail to move us.”

Many attending this conference may feel that the symbolic image of the half-buried Statue of Liberty portrayed in as occurring in the year 3978 has come 1958 years earlier than the movie anticipated and that the current descent of America into greedy self-absorption, fragmentation and the devouring of itself and the rest of the world has already been under way for some time. Surely, in this election we Americans face the possibility of the ongoing dismemberment of our government and our people as we have known it with the swallowing of the Department of Justice, the Center for Disease

Control and Prevention, the Department of State, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Supreme Court by a rogue and corrupt Presidency. This rapidly increasing institutional dismemberment along with what Jung often warned about in individuals as “an abaissement de niveau mental” is occurring in our collective psyche and threatens to destroy our Statue of Liberty and all that it symbolizes. The only thing more frightening than Trump himself is the fact that some 40% of our fellow citizens adore him and believe that our inalienable rights to carry a gun and not wear a mask during a pandemic are the current American symbols of freedom and are supported by our Constitution and the Statue of Liberty. One can only conclude that the American understanding of freedom and liberty has gone haywire and that the current state of our inner and outer Statue of Liberty is in great peril, much like the final scene from *The Planet of the Apes*. We are in a profound state of fragmentation and the very yearning for the healing of the soul of America feels as though it, too, is on life support. Democracy in America is being swamped by the lust for power and the power of illusion. Christopher Hedges nailed it in the title of his 2008 book: *The Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*.

To more specifically introduce our first panel of the day, (Panel 4), “Leaders and Led, Populism, the Media; National and International Perspectives”, I also turn to our book and another modern de Tocqueville observer of the United States, Stefano Carta from Italy, who offers a uniquely Jungian perspective on our current American state of affairs as we approach election day.

Stefano writes:

“Trump looks very much like an archetypal trickster figure who, similar to the medieval king of Carnival, appears around the winter solstice when darkness triumphs and the sun is at its lowest point. This time marks the liminal time of death and, God willing, rebirth. It is a universal midnight, a nadir when everything may turn into shadow, a ghost. It is a time opposite from noon, the zenith when time is suspended and there are no shadows anymore in the world.

The passage from the lowering to the raising is marked by feasts and rituals, like the Roman Saturnalia, the medieval Carnival, or, in America, Halloween, in which the underworld, the dead, the shadow, the antivalues, infiltrate the upper world and create a seemingly chaotic situation. This is what the alchemists called a *massa confusa*. The goal was to appease these darker forces and eventually allow them to be contained in their own world.

During Carnival the fool is made king, and the donkey celebrates mass... The thief is set free, and the just imprisoned, until the end, when the reestablishment of proper order marks the rejuvenation of cultural time. Elementary drives take over the more developed, spiritualized cultural symbols, and, in a somehow phallogocentric emergence of this archetype, Hermes's nature as the archetypal phallus acquires a central position.

In my opinion, Trump is the perfect king of such a Carnival, as he symbolically embodies all possible features of such a mad, mixed-up, upside-down world of antivalues, expressed through a unilateral phallic/machoistic way, starting from the frequent references to his penis to the use of women as pure debased prey. It is interesting to note that the deep, violent discrimination against women and their use as social partial objects exploded into increased consciousness at the same time (as Trump's ascension to the presidency), as if the “quality of the moment” (what the Chinese refer as the Tao), is presenting both mixed, oppositional sides of this issue.

As it happens with the upside-down king of medieval Carnival, who was chosen for his social, that is, sacred inferiorities and wounds (which in normal times would outcast him), this president projects an omnipotent image of himself, while being seemingly “mentally wounded.” In the sexually Puritan America, the king is a “pussy-grabber.” In the land of the self-made man, he inherited his patrimony from the Father, although he went to great pains to conceal that. In the land of opportunity created by immigrants, Trump confirms the archetypal idea that every other country may be a “shithole,” and that every non-American is dangerous. Yet he is married to an immigrant. In an American world, in which the Puritan/Pioneer was in a constant state of war against the (demonized) enemy, the King has befriended the United States’ traditionally most dangerous and obvious enemy—the Russians. In a culture in which a politician once could not be caught lying without serious consequences, the King is a dark, hermetic figure who spins the truth in almost every sentence he utters. This last point is particularly important, as it is connected with a systematic use of information to manipulate, distort, and confuse reality in order to create a regressed *massa confusa*, in which everything becomes unconscious—or nondiscriminated.

Yet, the king of antivalues delusionally still seems to defend the old archetypal organizing values: paranoid, he wants to build a huge wall to contain the (lost) infinite space of impurity. For this king, America is “first”—a grandiose, titanic, manic pretense, constantly paraded in order to deny reality. By creating a delusional claim of a menace from the space Without, Trump tries to re-create the old feeling of inflated identity in which everyone else is inferior and guilty or, at best, irrelevant. In fact, within this exalted Manichaeian differentiation, one of Trump’s mottos against Hillary Clinton was “Lock her up.” This implied a definition of the Other as ontologically negative, impure, inferior, *female*, and guilty—therefore someone to expel into space (in this case, the outside in the inside: the prison). We are the pure ones, destined to paradise; the Other is destined to nothingness.

In such a situation the denial of catastrophic global climate change, confirmed by every scientist on the planet, is quite understandable, as admitting it would imply the recognition that the United States is part of the “outside.”

Seen from the old archetypal vantage point, who would have ever imagined that someone like Trump could sit where Jefferson did? Yet this King is a “necessary” product of an archetypal development, in which the “Old World” is undoing itself into a chaotic carnival of antivalues mixed with the old ones. We should not underestimate the danger, as it is not certain that after a *putrefactio* there will be a real rebirth of a conscious ego. H. L. Mencken also anticipated the current American situation 100 years ago when he wrote with biting satire: ‘As democracy is perfected, the office represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. We move toward a lofty ideal. On some great and glorious day the plain folks of the land will reach their heart’s desire at last, and the White House will be adorned by a downright moron.’”

We begin today’s meetings with the fervent prayer that the siege of our psyches and our government will come to an end. We hope that an outpouring of votes from the hearts and minds of Americans gives voice to a cry from the soul of America that will bring about a profound reversal of Trump’s Carnival. We urgently seek for the renunciation of his anti-values that will be replaced by a spirit of renewal in everything the Statue of Liberty symbolizes, including our wish to contribute positively to the healing of a world teetering on the abyss of catastrophe.

**Thomas Singer** (U.S.) is a psychiatrist and Jungian psychoanalyst practicing in San Francisco, California. He has been organizing the Presidency conferences at the C.G.

Jung Institute of San Francisco every four years since 2000. He is the editor of a series of books exploring cultural complexes in Latin America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America. His interests include studying the relationship between myth, politics, and psyche in *The Vision Thing* and the *Ancient Greece, Modern Psyche* series. He is the current president of National ARAS, an archive of symbolic imagery that has created *The Book of Symbols*.

## Social Dreaming Matrix 2020

Barbara Holifield and Margaret Skinner

United States

**The Social Dreaming Matrix** reflects an archetypal process of being with dreams in community, historically used in indigenous communities, emerging in the psychoanalytic tradition during the rise of the Third Reich. Diverging from the common approach of understanding dreams as only pertaining to the inner life of the dreamer, the intention of a Social Dreaming Matrix is to bring attention to bear on the enormous effect of cultural and political forces on the individual and the collective. In the midst of the intense immediacy of these forces and the pressures they exert on the psyche, the Social Dreaming Matrix allows us to gain access to the creative, collective and cultural unconscious to that which is otherwise difficult to bring to language, to feel or to even think clearly about regarding the social context in which we live.

Typically, in a Social Dreaming Matrix what is emerging in the collective unconscious of the group as expressed in dreams forms the focus of attention. In our approach, we attend to the intention to *connect* to ourselves and each other with the purpose of cultivating a conscious collective and from there explore our dreams so as to glean the mutual influence we have upon each other from this intentional state. At the Analyst and Activism Conference, 2020, because of COVID-19, we were not able to meet in-person. It was instead, held on-line. In the face of its absence, we were especially aware of the profundity of human connection that typically unfolds in such a conference. Through the on-line medium we were able to connect, unbound by space and time, which synchronistically, is also intrinsic in our dreaming life. In this historically unprecedented time, with the web as our portal, in addition to the ongoing sharing and dialogue that unfolded in the conference, we fostered a palpable sense of connection by intentionally breathing together and taking time in silence to acknowledge each other visually.



In this vivified intersubjective field of contemplative silence, dreams were shared without interpretation. Dreamers titled their dreams, and these titles were strung together forming a group poem. The dreams carried the emotion, images and associations of the dreamer. As a group our listening perspective tuned to hear how these gave voice to what was unfolding, reflecting our individual diversity, the group-as-a whole, the conference content and process, and our global political experience as well. The dream poems became a tangible reflection of the mutual influence we have upon each other. Through their poetics, one can glean the effects the outer political reality exerts on us individually and collectively. Perspective, insight and a felt-sense of the feeling of connection arose for those who participated in the Social Dreaming Matrix.

**What follows are the Social Dreaming Matrix Poems from the conference:**

**Holding the Opposites: Toward healing**

**Saturday October 17, 2020**

Fight with Robert DeNiro

I offer you small hope...

At the Criterion Theatre no one wearing masks.

Three Biblical Fathers standing on a western sky.

Healing water.

I accidentally kill an ancient African horse.

The whale and the dog

Dumb patches

Upside down, feet warmed in the sun.

My brothers are listening...

Let's fix dad an impossible burger.

Little boy in the park,

Dread and hope.

The weight of the world!

Sad memory...

The changing blue Earth.

Unexpected reciprocity from the boy spirit child. He provides  
nourishment just when we think we have to leave nature, the wild.

No time for tomatoes

We need to be there for each other!

### **Sunday October 18, 2020**

The glass house of flowers

Pool surprises

Barack, Michelle and the baby chick

The importance of my grandparents.

Assaulted.

Before completion, hearing the call to so many tasks, we are the strong spear;  
is now a good time?

We may have to go to hell.

Must we all stay awake? We must all stay awake.

The conversation in the clearing  
mind and body evaluation.

I feel a lot of feelings, tradition and the new life; need to integrate empathy and  
sensitivity, overcome fear and etiquette.

Catastrophe

The caterpillar is coming

Infant time

The stolen water of Palestine

The Tree of light

She wants it and they laugh.

**Barbara Holifield** (U.S.) is an analyst member of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco where she teaches in the Analytic Training Program and an adjunct professor at The California Institute of Integral Studies. Immersion into wilderness deeply influences her analytic practice and thinking. Her interest and writings explore the relationship of trauma, body, earth, self and our participation with the dream of the earth and have been published in the *Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche*, *Psychological Perspectives*, and *The Body in Psychotherapy*.

**Margaret Skinner** (U.S.) is an analyst member of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. She works with adults and couples as well as offering consultation to therapists in her psychotherapy practice in Berkeley, California. She has taught at the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, CA and The Psychotherapy Institute in Berkeley, CA. Margaret specializes in the treatment of many types of trauma and couples psychotherapy. Political activism has always been an important aspect of her work as well.

Panel 4 - LEADERS AND LED, POPULISM, THE MEDIA;  
NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

## **Cultural Stories and Media Storytelling**

**Betty Sue Flowers**

**United States**

## ***Cultural stories***

On a fundamental level, the facts and science that allow us to “reason together” in a democracy and the stories that serve to bind us together as people are inherently at odds with each other.

By cultural “myth,” I don’t mean something untrue but, rather, a story of meaning or value or reality that a group of people live in without question. Each organizing myth has an ideal, characteristic behaviors, archetypal actors, and usual modes of communication. In medieval times in Europe, for example, society lived within a Christian religious myth in which even kings had to recognize the authority of the Pope. Beginning with the Renaissance, a new cultural myth began to emerge in the west, culminating in the Enlightenment, in which the source of authority was grounded in science and philosophy. In politics, the divine right of kings began to give way to philosophic arguments such as “all men are created equal.”

Unlike the religious myth, in which different groups followed different sub-myths and sometimes fought each other, science was the first truly universal myth. The Enlightenment made it possible to win arguments with facts rather than brute force. While the Enlightenment myth was theoretically universal, it was not really global because only an educated elite, trained to understand proofs and conduct reasoned, fact-based arguments, could participate in it.

We are now in an economic myth, the first truly global myth, because it rests on images and numbers (counting, not math), to which everyone has access, no matter the language or education level. It is inherently egalitarian because every dollar is equal to every other dollar, no matter who owns it. But, without influence from other sources of value, it is also inevitably destabilizing, undercutting social cohesion as some people

gain more dollars than others with no overarching framework or hierarchy of values to make sense of individual sacrifice for the general good.

While new myths emerge, the old myths don't go away, no matter what myth serves as an organizing center of society. Most people live in more than one myth, even though most societies now are organized around a global economic myth, where the ideal is growth rather than goodness (religious myth) or the pursuit of truth (Enlightenment myth). And the oldest myth of all – the hero myth – is still the basis of our sports and entertainment and models of leadership.

Journalists have to operate under three different myth systems: the economic myth because they have to make money; the Enlightenment myth because the profession values facts; and the hero myth, because to attract a large number of viewers or readers, journalists have to tell compelling stories.<sup>1</sup>

## The Myths That Have Made Us

-- Betty Sue Flowers

	Hero	Religious	Democratic / Scientific	Economic	Ecological (emerging)
Ideal	Excellence	Goodness	Truth	Growth	Health (Wholeness)
Behavior	Competition	Obedience	Reason	Maximizing advantage	Communication
Actors	Heroes	Saints Prophets	Philosophers Scientists	Consumers Business	Creators
Communication	Stories	Scripture Prayer	Mathematics Logical arguments	Images Numbers Data	Self-expression

Image 1

## ***Media storytelling***

The Renaissance and the printing press rose together. By the time the Enlightenment myth became an organizing principle around which democracies formed, newspapers and other sources of information were already splitting into two broad streams: entertainment and fact-based information.

Even for fact-based publications, however, the need for stories remains. Newspapers have to sell, so news “stories” have to be compelling even if rigorously fact-checked. Since the natural mode of storytelling involves a hero in action, even science news tends to focus on individual discoverers rather than the collaborative and iterative process that leads to a scientific conclusion; and political news is usually more about the horse-race of elections than the details of policy. As Aristotle noticed centuries ago, drama involves conflict. The story of violent conflict is as old as drama itself. “If it bleeds, it leads,” as the journalistic saying goes.

In the Enlightenment/scientific myth, the search for truth is carried out through procedures and proofs; in the economic myth, the “most” wins – polls tell us what is so. In the hero myth, truth is mostly irrelevant because a story is a spectacle. The Enlightenment leader is one who attempts to provide better policies – but reporting on policies (Are they true? Are they good?) is more like literary criticism than storytelling. It may be intelligent and important, but it will appeal narrowly to elites. It is not surprising that in the US Presidential election campaign of 2016, even left-leaning newspapers gave Donald Trump and his explosive rallies far more column inches of coverage than Hillary Clinton and her policy plans.



### ***The gravitational pull of the hero myth for storytelling***

The founders of the United States knew what had happened to the Athenian and Roman democracies, which is one reason they built in safeguards such as the electoral college and a republican rather than a democratic structure of government. The intentional disfunction of the checks and balances built into the US Constitution was intended to block the takeover of the government by a demagogue backed by a mob. Freedom of the press was considered to be an important guarantor of democracy because the press could expose corruption without fear – it could “enlighten” the population with the truth.

But the hero myth, based on conflict and providing compelling spectacle, is the ground of compelling stories. A football game attracts far more viewers than policy analysis. Even with no intention to do so, storytellers will linger on the man yelling to a crowd, especially where there is potential violence because there is *action waiting for a storyteller*. A candidate talking about policy leaves room only for a chronicler – a recorder of facts – and not a storyteller.

Throughout his 2016 campaign, Trump presented himself as a savior of the common people, not a condescending elitist, like his opponent, who called his followers “deplorables.” His lies were inconsequential to his followers because they could see he was standing for them, mocking and threatening the elitists and their “fake” media. At his rallies, he confined reporters in a kind of cage and hinted often that violence towards them would be justifiable, even patriotic.

How Elitists  
(Enlightenment Myth)

talk to

Populists  
(Religious and Hero  
Myths)

Stop asking candidates if  
they “believe in” climate  
change and start asking  
if they understand it.

It’s science,  
not Santa Claus.

@TheValorieClark

*Image 2*

Throughout his presidency Trump exploited the inherent tensions between the Enlightenment myth and the hero myth. He presented himself as a powerful leader, even retweeting heroic images of himself and presenting himself as triumphant over Covid by posing on a balcony, Mussolini-style, as soon as he returned from the hospital.



Image 3

He presented his policies as a kind of religious war against globalism and global human values versus freedom and American values. And the followers who sold hats

and t-shirts and banners outside his rallies depicted him as a Spartacus of the common man, armed and ready to fight.



*Image 4*

In the 2020 presidential campaign, Trump presented himself as the virile hero versus the weak senex, Biden, sleepy and hiding in a basement. He was healthy not because he exercised and watched his weight, like Biden, but because he was naturally strong – he was born that way. The media could point out the fake tan, dyed hair, make-up, corset, heel lifts, extra weight – but none of that mattered because his followers recognized the archetype of the hero, no matter how it was created. When Trump retweeted an image of himself photoshopped onto the body of the movie hero “Rocky,” he knew his followers

wouldn't laugh. They would understand that he was *performing* the role of the hero. Reporters then found themselves critics of a reality tv show, fatally captured by the hero myth even as they deplored it.



Image 5

### ***The role of the religious myth in the 2020 US election***

The religious myth is based not on reason but on correct belief that can't be challenged. From that point of view, it's not the content that matters so much as how that content is held. Shunning an unpopular point of view is an action from within the religious myth. A belief held in common is a powerful unifying force, serving to hold a tribe together. And the more unbelievable the belief, in logical terms, the more it serves to distinguish the tribe.

The conspiracy theories that proliferated on social media, especially those connected with QAnon, served to define a tribe prepared to enact violence on behalf of Donald Trump. The motto of QAnon is "Where We Go One, We Go All."



A QAnon supporter participated in a pro-police rally in Brooklyn, N.Y., in early August.

PHOTO: STEPHANIE KEITH/REUTERS

*Image 6*

The algorithms that fed mildly curious internet explorers more and more bizarre stories utilized the same compelling features that stories do – one thing leads to another until a willing suspension of disbelief leads you to an exhilarating new experience. What makes a better story – that Hillary Clinton is a hard-working, feminist, Methodist policy wonk? Or, as QAnon followers believe, that she is the ringleader of a secret cabal of Satan-worshipping, cannibalistic pedophiles running a global child sex-trafficking ring and plotting against President Trump? The second story defines a tribe and acts as a call to action.

The combination of followers acting within the religious myth (adherence to belief without question) to support a demagogue willing to perform the role of messianic hero and storytellers captured within the hero myth as a way to boost readers and ratings within the economic myth we live in is a “clear and present danger” to democracy. Recognizing the powerful interactions of these cultural myths is a first step away from being entrapped by them.

To go further, we would need to nurture the evolving ecological myth of health for all and for the planet, with its celebration of individual creativity and an ethic of caring. Perhaps then we could also evolve towards a politics of civility and problem-solving and reserve our tribal passions for sports events, where conflict is expressed in rule-bound ways and for a limited time and where the heroes don't lead us to kill our fellow citizens in the name of democracy.

**Betty Sue Flowers** (U.S.) is Professor Emerita-UT Austin and former director of the Johnson Presidential Library. She has consulted for the Aspen Institute, NASA, CIA, and the U.S. Navy, and written futures scenarios for Shell, OAS, OECD, WEC, the Five

Eyes, WBCSD, Malaysia, Oman, and Slovenia, among others. Her publications include two collections of poetry; *Browning and the Modern Tradition*, *Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future*, and, as editor, *Christina Rossetti: The Complete Poems*, *Synchronicity: the Inner Path of Leadership*, *Realistic Hope: Facing Global Challenges*, and *Joseph Campbell and the Power of Myth*.

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<sup>1</sup> The ideas captured in this table were first explored in Betty Sue Flowers, *The Economic Myth*, a monograph published by the Center for International Business Education and Research, Graduate School of Business, University of Texas, 1995. They were later expanded in *The American Dream and the Economic Myth* (in the series *Essays on Deepening the American Dream*, sponsored by the Fetzer Institute, 2007) and republished in *Huff Post* (2013) [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/betty-sue-flowers/the-american-dream-and-th\\_b\\_3575951.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/betty-sue-flowers/the-american-dream-and-th_b_3575951.html).



## Hope and dread in the two Koreas:

Understanding North Korea as a shadow of free capitalistic societies

Nami Lee, M.D. Ph.D.

South Korea

Kim Il-sung and his off-spring, like many other dictators, have been eccentric villains that threaten the free world. Their use of aggressive language in diplomacy, overt/covert nuclear experiments, abduction of foreigners, infamous prison camps, and other dictatorial behaviors have often been mocked as a form of insanity. North Korea has functioned as a shadow archetypal figure vis-à-vis the capitalistic and westernized world. From their point of view, the warrior archetype, heroically fighting against wars, poverty, and famine in North Korea, has been activated. Capitalistic societies may have perceived North Korea as only dangerous, unpredictable, and mysterious, which is not helpful for peace in the Korean peninsula. Understanding socio-historical backgrounds and people's sufferings could facilitate communication between two Koreas.

The roots of the North Korean dictatorship may have been sown from the Korean Chosun dynasty and Japanese annexation. In 1909, the Chosun dynasty (1392-1909) surrendered to Japanese Imperialism mainly due to the shortage of weapons, poor government finances, and socio-economic affliction. The Chosun dynasty, one of the longest-lived dynasties in the world, had been too stable to open up toward the rest of the world.<sup>1</sup> A policy of isolation deterred the Chosun dynasty from adapting to the modern world. The Chosun dynasty had been threatened and invaded by multiple foreign entities. The contemporary North Korean isolation policy appears to be a continuation of the Chosun aversion to foreign powers.

The beginning of the encounter between North Korea and America was not peaceful, either. In 1862, the ship called the General Sherman from America entered the Taedong River and tried to invade Pyongyang. Soldiers of the Chosun dynasty

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<sup>1</sup> Nahm, A.C. (1993) Introduction to Korean History and Culture. Seoul. Hollym. pp141-163

repelled them ferociously despite their outdated, traditional weapons.<sup>2</sup>



*Image 1* A picture of American soldiers staring at dead Korean soldiers. In Cumings, B. Tr. by Kim. D. (2001) *Korea's place in the Sun*. Seoul. Changjak kwa Bipyong ISBN 89-364-8219-X, p137 in Korean

After an enforced treaty was signed between Chosun and Japan in 1876,<sup>3</sup> America became a friendly neighbor to Japan. Several Korean diplomats visited Switzerland and America for help, but their efforts to undo the Japanese annexation of Korea never came to fruition.

The Japanese annexation of Korea for 36 years (1909-1945) was cruel and traumatic for the Korean people. Korean sex and slave laborers were forced to go to the WWII battle fields including Japan islands and China by the Japanese. There are numerous records of tortures and executions to oppress the Korean liberation

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<sup>2</sup> Paullin, C. O. (1910). "The Opening of Korea by Commodore Shufeldt". *Political Science Quarterly*.25 (3): 470-499.doi:10.2307/2141171.JSTOR 2141171

<sup>3</sup> <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/>

movement during the annexation.<sup>4</sup>

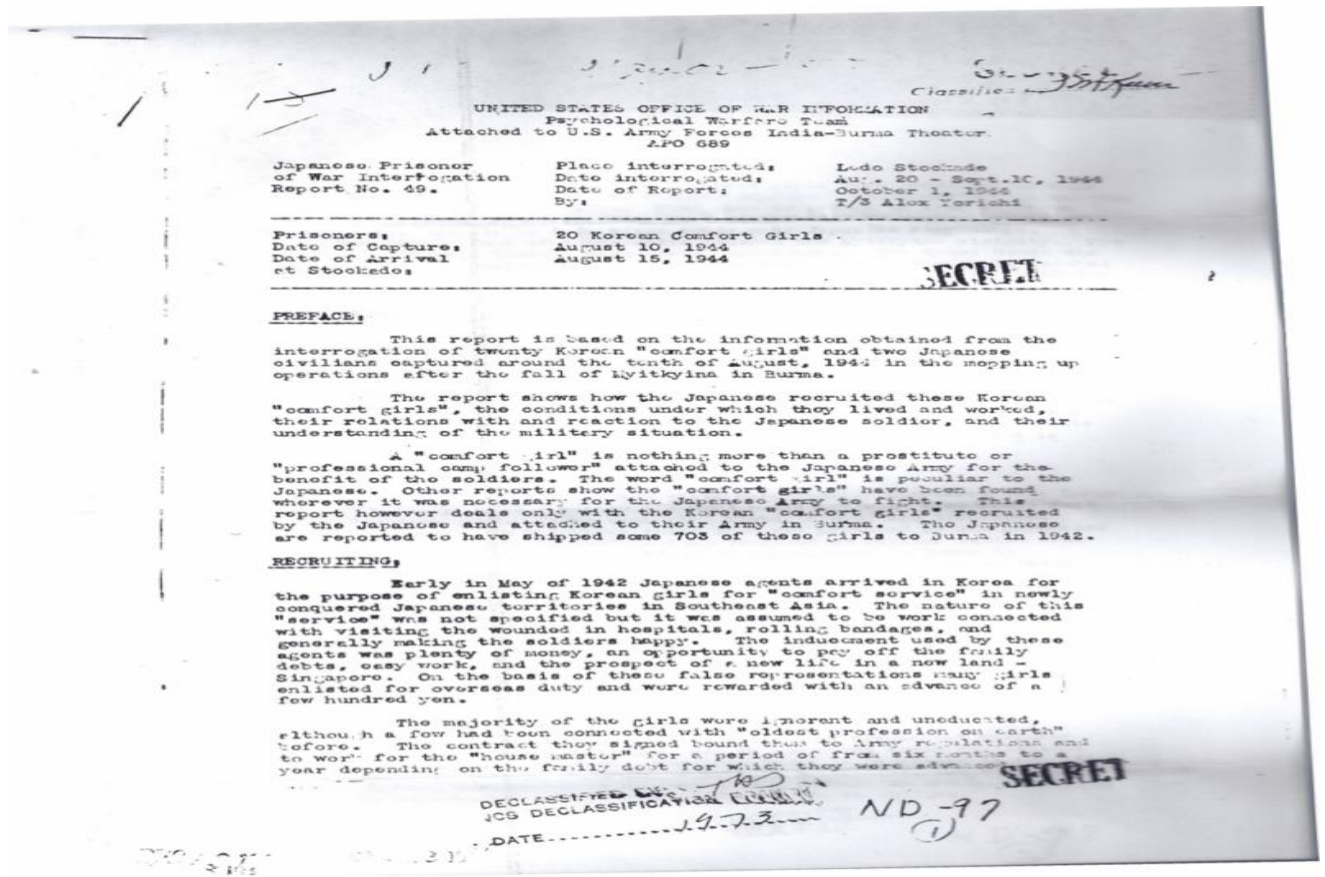


Image 2 U.S. report on Korean women being used as "comfort girls".

<sup>4</sup> Kratoshkal, P.H.(2005) Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire: Unknown Histories. New York. Routledge, pp. 81-100. ISBN-13: 978-0765612632



*Image 3 Pictures of comfort women. Photo by Charles H. Hatfield, US 164th Signal Photo Company. Note: The original photo is available in the National Archives Catalog.*



*Image 4 Pictures of forced Korean laborers in Japanese mine.*

In 1945, liberated Korea was divided in half by the victors of WWII. The Soviet Union occupied the North and UN and US forces occupied the South. The division of the Korean peninsula by the superpowers confused and rendered the Koreans powerless. Even before the Korean War broke out, the United States occupation of the South was seen as an invasion by the North Koreans and the Soviet Union occupation of the North was seen as an invasion by the South Koreans.



*Image 5 Picture of American soldiers and Korean civilians. euinz.tistory.com*

After the partition of Korea into North and South at the end of World War II, Kim Il-sung, who portrayed himself as a legendary guerilla fighter against the Japanese soldiers, was chosen as the leader of North Korea by the Soviets. In South Korea, Dr. Sungman Rhee who attended Princeton and Harvard Universities was

elected president. The North followed the Soviet Russian style regime and South Korea followed the example of Western democracy. In 1950, North Korea crossed the border between North and South Korea and the cruel civil war began. It lasted for 3 years. The two Koreas became surrogate pawns of a larger battle between Soviet Russia, China, America, and other western countries. Almost 3 million people, mainly civilians, were wounded or killed with 12-15 % of the North Korean population having died from the war.<sup>5</sup>

The North Korean economy, however, had actually been better than the South Korean economy until the 1980's, mainly because of substantial loans from Russia and China during the Cold War. North Korea also had a more advanced modernization program with its factories, power plants, and food production. The North Koreans were better fed than the South Koreans before the 1970's.<sup>6</sup> Communist leaders boasted of the prosperity of North Korea as the symbol of the superiority of their ideology. The abrupt collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990's, along with floods and famine in North Korea changed everything in the 1990's. In 1994, in the middle of the national crisis, Kim Il-sung died of a heart attack and his son Kim Jong-il took control. Subsequently, Kim Jong-un, Kim Jong-il's son, took his place in 2011.

Despite previous skepticism in North Korea about young Kim Jong-un, he has survived as a dictator with cunning strategies, mainly focused on building a nuclear bomb. Even the short honeymoon between Trump and Kim did not alter the course

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<sup>5</sup> Armstrong, C.K. (20 December 2010). The Destruction and Reconstruction of North Korea, 1950–1960" (PDF). *The Asia-Pacific Journal*. 8 (51): 1. Retrieved 13 September 2019

<sup>6</sup> Cha, V. (2018) *The Impossible State: North Korea, past and future*. New York. HarperCollins. pp 24-25

of Kim's strategies, and the world has returned to another stand-off with North Korea.

Considering the military might of the USA as the largest global exporter of weapons, and South Korea as the 9<sup>th</sup> largest global importer of arms, North Korea may have a legitimate rationale for nuclear weapons: survival. With South Korea and America regularly operating military exercises and economic sanctions against North Korea by America, the claim of North Korea on the importance of self-reliance may be both a practical necessity as well as an ideological position

Kim's clan has oppressed the human rights of North Korean people for 75 years. Their anachronistic regression to a harsh dictatorship has been sustained by brainwashing policies. Kim's ideology, so-called *Juche*, is a hybrid combination of Stalinism, Maoism, shamanism, Confucianism, Nationalism, and monotheism which rationalizes and imposes cruel policies. Its intense nationalism thrives on fear, anger, anxiety, and the religious belief that America is evil and that South Korea is America's puppet. Filial piety towards Kim Il-sung, has been idealized, even beatified, as virtuous and mature by the North Korean media. Political opponents have been imprisoned as being disloyal to Kim's regime. Collectivism that imitates a regressed form of Confucianism forces the North Korean people to be "harmonious" while denying individual differences of life values and practices. At the same time, the North Korean regime has reinforced massive secret surveillance, similar to that of the Stasi secret police of communist East Germany<sup>7</sup> prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Instead of improving the quality of life in North Korea, the Kim regime has focused on South Korea and America as oppressors against a powerless North Korea.

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<sup>7</sup> Cha, V. (2018) *Ibid.* pp. 208-210





Image 6 A picture of North Korean family in the worshiping ceremony for Kim family.  
[http://weekly1.chosun.com/site/data/img\\_dir/2007/06/01/](http://weekly1.chosun.com/site/data/img_dir/2007/06/01/)

Meanwhile, extreme conservatives in South Korea and America mock North Korea for its insanity or become infuriated by its abuse of human rights. It is part of human nature to want to help the oppressed, but we may become hypocrites by projecting our own insanities onto North Korea without reflection on our own flaws and limitations. Hasty intervention often does not guarantee real improvements, and instead creates unnecessary tension among societies. For example, South Korean prisons do not provide beds for inmates and hot water is only given once a week for 20 minutes, regardless of the weather. Developed countries are still struggling with social injustices such as racism and unfair legal proceedings against minorities and poor people. Between 2007 and 2012, an estimated 630,000 people per year have experienced homelessness in America.<sup>8</sup> More than 11,340 homeless people were reported in Korea as of 2016.<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, South Koreans tend to consider

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.usnews.com/news/cities/articles/2019-09-23>

<sup>9</sup> Bak, S. Sept 27, 2017 *Korea Herald news*.

homelessness as a structural problem, not just a product of personal deficits.<sup>10</sup> This may be a result of the emphasis in Korean culture on collective responsibility and solidarity with the poor and minorities. Likewise, prioritizing the community over the individual may be one of the foundations for North Korean collectivism.

Obedience and humbleness toward authoritarian figures, including political leaders and their family members, are still highly praised in both Koreas. As a corollary, the North Korean regime blames individualism as an ideology of the exploitative class for many of the social ills that plague Western societies.

This Korean collectivism may have originated not only from Marxism but also from the centralized regimes of the Chosun dynasty that ruled the Korean peninsula for over 1,000 years. Traditional conservative norms limited outside influences and reinforced the tendency toward seclusion.<sup>11</sup> The transformation of Confucian patriarchy into loyalty to the Kim family appears to have helped sustain the tyrannical communism of North Korea. Autocratic rule may be either good or bad, mainly depending on the leaders and followers. For example, Singapore became one of the wealthiest countries under the authoritative leader, Lee Kwan-Yew and North Korea the poorest under the Kim family.

Surprisingly, despite a collectivism that demands self-sacrifice, North Korean people show a conflicting mentality: overt conformity to the government and covert egocentrism and insensitivity to violence and injustice.<sup>12</sup> Psychological as well as

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<sup>10</sup> Yoon, I. (2006) Homelessness and community attitudes in South Korea compared with Japan. *Development and Society* 35(2), December, pp 217~239

<sup>11</sup> Armstrong CK.(2021) Central themes for a unit on Korea. <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/>

<sup>12</sup> Jeon, W. (2012) Understanding the society and people of North Korea based on North Korea defectors' testimonies. *World Cultural Psychiatry Research Review*. 7(1) 29-31.

political and economic restructuring may be required to repair North Korea. <sup>13</sup>.

Eastern Germany has experienced hardship both spiritually and materially. Freedom did not solve the problems of poverty and alienation. Some West Germans were not

happy about reunification, since they had to pay more than 1.6 trillion euros.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, many Koreans, especially those who are young or conservative, fear the economic consequences of the reunification of the Korean peninsula. The younger generation does not have any memory of a unified Korea and conservatives are concerned more about the economy than egalitarianism.

Jung suggested that relativizing good and evil may convert both into halves of a paradoxical whole.<sup>15</sup> He clarified that “collective contents, such as religious, philosophical, political and social conflicts, select projection-carriers of a corresponding kind---Freemasons, Jesuits, Jews, Capitalists, Bolsheviks, Imperialists, etc....Our earthly world is split into two halves, and nobody knows where a helpful solution is to come from.” <sup>16</sup> He was against communism which he saw as robbing human freedom in social, moral, and spiritual aspects.<sup>17</sup> But he did not comment on the dangers of capitalism compared to communism. Democratic and free societies also need to look into their own flaws which sacrifice spirituality for material prosperity, the poor for the rich, the minor for the major, etc. So Tae-san (1891-1943), the founding master of Won-Buddhism in Korea, developed a positive

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<sup>13</sup> Kim, M. (2015) A Psychological Consideration for Psychological Unification of North and South Korea. *Journal of Digital Convergence*. 13(1) 555-562 (in Korean)

<sup>14</sup> Kirschbaum, E. The dark side of German reunification. September 29, 2010 Reuter: Global News Journal. <http://blogs.reuters.com/global/2010/09/29>

<sup>15</sup> Jung, C.G., ed. by Jaffe.A., tr. by Winston, R., and Winson, C. (1989). *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*. New York. Vintage Books. p 300

<sup>16</sup> Jung, C.G., Tr. by Hull, R.F.C. (1970) *Civilization in Transition*. C.W. 10. Bollingen Series. XX. New York. Princeton University Press. para 610

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. para 559.

vision. He taught that as “material civilization develops, spiritual civilization cultivates accordingly.”<sup>18</sup>

Jungians also use the concepts of the irrational third, which overcome dualism among all the conflicts. Levinas, a modern French philosopher, also emphasized the dialogue with others through hospitality, empathy, and compassion. Levinas valued being with the ‘other’ as a transcendental opportunity.<sup>19</sup> Without understanding others with compassion, we cannot communicate with traumatized people who have been isolated for long periods of time as victims of persecution.

Can South Koreans embrace North Koreans as “us” who share the same language and history, beyond simply encountering them as an ‘other’? It is not clear yet, since the collective psyche of the two Koreas have grown apart in many ways. The unification process in the Korean peninsula should not aim to regain a group-oriented totality and isolating nationalism, but rather a harmonious oneness which integrates differences and heals wounds. It should be different from isolating or megalomaniac nationalism.

Jung wrote, “Western civilization is scarcely a thousand years old and must first of all free itself from its barbarous one-sidedness.”<sup>20</sup> Jung was a rare individual who could be at least partially free from Eurocentrism. He praised the values of other cultures including the cultures such as Eastern, African and Native American. But the Far East is not fundamentally different from West in that the Far East also developed

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.sotaesancenter.org/sotaesan.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Plant, B. (2006) Apologies: Levinas and Dialogue. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 14(1). pp79-94.

<sup>20</sup> Jung C.G. Tr. by Hull, R.F.C. (1977) *Psychology and Religion: West and East Bollingen Series. XX.* New York. Princeton University Press. *para* 976

traditions that emphasize rationality within a Confucian tradition while also devaluing other cultures. Sino-centrism or Kim's nationalism may be another example of one-sidedness. In the Far East, traditional patriarchy emphasizing filial piety and loyalty to kings and nation, sometimes played the role of oppressing one's unique voice for the sake of group solidarity. Opponents have been criticized, devalued, ignored, and even attacked as being immature, dangerous, and inhumane. It would make a great difference if a conscious application of the psychology of the shadow archetype could serve to encourage reflection by individuals and groups on their own limitations and flaws rather than blindly blaming other individuals and groups. Von Franz described contemporary political divisions as a kind of neurotic dissociation which activates the shadow archetype by projecting the unacceptable onto an opponent.<sup>21</sup> Such neuroticism does not belong exclusively to the Korean peninsula.

The Kim family claims that the nation they are forging is different from all other nations. They force their citizens to believe that Kim Il-sung is the most sacred leader in the history of the whole world. North Korea has officially prohibited all religious gatherings, not just because Marx wrote that religion was the opium of the people but because they claim that Kim Il-sung is a religious being.

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<sup>21</sup> Von Franz M-L. (1975) *His Myth in Our Time*. Toronto: Inner City Books, p. 264

# The Russian science keeping North Korea's dead leaders looking fresh

By Reuters

March 6, 2019 | 12:18pm



The body of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il lies in state at the Kumsusan Memorial Palace in Pyongyang.

*Image 7 Mummified Kim Kong's body. todayus.com. 2012. Jan. 12*

Traditional Eastern beliefs can be helpful in overcoming the dualism of good and bad or the pseudo-religiosity in the two Koreas.

The Tao doesn't take sides;

it gives birth to both good and evil

The Master doesn't take sides

she welcomes both saints and sinners...

Hold on to the center...

If you over-estimate great men, people become powerless.

If you overvalue possessions, people begin to steal. <sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Lao Tzu Chapter 5, 3

Wonhyo (617-686), a Korean medieval monk, developed the concept of interpenetration (Hon-yung 혼용 混融 or Tong-dal 통달 通達). Wonhyo's teachings emphasize mutual containing, reflection, compromise, and interpenetration of each other,<sup>23</sup> as a way to bring the best out in human nature and to provide a practical way for dealing with conflicts. Harmonizing the two extreme positions will be achieved only after we accept all the extreme positions of ourselves and others. <sup>24</sup>

One-sidedness, socially and individually, pushes people to be stuck with their own perspectives and to live within a shell in which only a homogenous voice prevails. Being awakened from ego-centered thinking and lust for self-satisfaction requires the sometimes painful recognition that we can be wrong and sometimes others matter more than ourselves. Wonhyo teaches that One Mind is different from exclusiveness and selfishness and that we need to behold that all things are interconnected and inter-related with each other as One Mind. (Il-shim 일심 一心)<sup>25</sup> Wonhyo's teaching can be rephrased: Go through the core of shadow within and without, and then achieve the integration between us and the other, and furthermore, ego and the Self.

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<sup>23</sup> Muller A. C. (2006) Key Operative Concepts in Korean Buddhist Syncretic Philosophy: Interpenetration (通達) and Essence-Function (體用) in Wŏnhyo, Chinul and Kihwa (1995) *Bulletin of Toyo-Gauen University*. 19 (757) No3 March pp33-48

<sup>24</sup> The Estimation on the Contents of Wonhyo's "Reconciliation of Dispute in the Aspect of Seeds" in Reconciliation of Disputes in Ten Aspects *Critical Review for Buddhist Studies* 2019, vol. no.26, pp159-183 DOI :10.29213/crbs.26.201910.159

<sup>25</sup> Park T. WonHyo(元曉)'s Philosophy of 'Mind Interrelating as if Oneness'(一心) *Chol-hak-Nonchong (Debates within Philosophy)* 2019, vol.98, no.4, pp. 27-54 (in Korean)



*Image 8 In a folk art, Wonhyo is portrayed as a monk who is drinking polluted water contained in skeleton. At night in a dark cave, he drank water for thirsty and was satisfied with good taste in decent bowl. In next morning, he found that it was in skeleton and became enlightened that everything was up to one's mind and illusion. Since then, he wrote many scriptures, gave great sermons, but stayed within common people's community. He danced, ate, slept and played with anybody with open-minded attitude. Picture in Koya-culture.com.*

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How the Narcissistic and Demonic Power of the Media can be  
countered by Jungian Arts-based Research

Susan Rowland, PhD

United States/United Kingdom

### Social media versus art...

This paper explores the relationship between the long history of art and the short eruption of social media. In particular I suggest that social media, like art, is shaped by and in turn conditions, those innate psychic energies that C. G. Jung called archetypes. However, whereas art involves tradition and craft designed to individuate those energies, social media so far lacks sufficient mitigating and creative factors. Here individuation signifies Jung's notion of a lifelong process of personal artistry, working with the independent energies of patterning archetypes to enliven being. Given the lack of ways to socially-individuate the psychic seas of social media, it is vulnerable to manipulation for political, commercial or criminal ends. Social media can become a vehicle for psychic contamination through conspiracy theories that breed incitements to hate and violence.

I go further to suggest that art can reveal what is harder to excavate in social media technology, just how the distortion of facts or 'fake news' can amount to psychic possession. For example, Shakespeare's Scottish play *Macbeth* follows the psychic manipulation of a successful warrior into becoming a murderer without any psychic resources whatsoever. Life ends for Macbeth in what he literally is, "a poor player that struts his hour upon the stage... signifying nothing (Act V, sc. V, l. 26-32). Here Macbeth models the follower of social media who becomes more and more polluted by the distortion of truth, what Shakespeare calls here: "the equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth." (Act V, sc. V, l. 44-5).

To begin, it is worth turning to Jung's suggestive evocation of art as socially potent.

Therein lies the social significance of art: it is constantly at work educating the spirit of the age, conjuring up the forms in which the age is most lacking. (Jung, CW 15, para. 130, p. 82)

The word ‘conjuring’ indicates a psychic power beyond rational argument; one that might even be concealed from reasoning strategies. It indicates a profound challenge to that dangerous habit of Western modernity, the splitting between reason and the irrational. Such splitting happens at levels that undo one version of the split, that between self and world. For the inner split takes the form of consciousness fashioned by suppressing what is less conscious, making it unconscious. It then becomes the split between persons, between culture and nature, between cultures, religions etc. Such a radical severing is fragile. It is vulnerable to eruptions from the unknown because the unconscious or ‘other’ is repressed into unknowability. Regarding the unconscious as harboring the foreign makes the foreign fearful. It also makes it magical in a bad way.

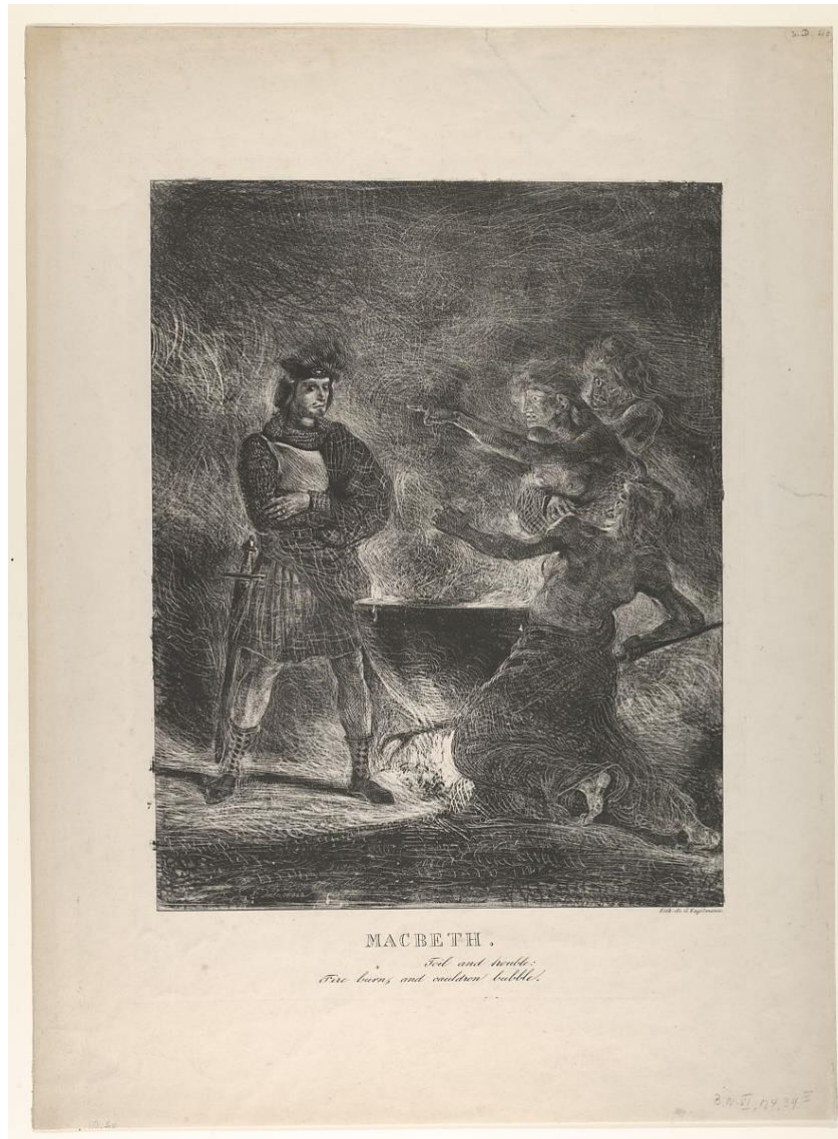
The subject/object split that begins in the psyche makes the other into an ‘object,’ one that can be manipulated and abused. Arguably, one of the more perilous and ingrained manifestations of the subject/object split is that between human and technology. As Lee Bailey points out in his seminal *The Enchantments of Technology* (2005), before the advent of social media, the absorption of technology into the scientific paradigm of the subject/object split itself has a enchanting effect on the psyche. Here enchantment is not the individuating numinous but rather a de-individuating paralysis. The illusion that we are securely separate from technology such as guns, rockets, and the internet makes us wholly vulnerable to the seductive fantasies and myths they materialize.

Art, as Jung says, may conjure from its long archetypal practice of working with psyches of artist and audience. Art even now does not propagate the illusion that it does not affect us or move us with e-motion. By contrast the patterns in the complexity of algorithms in social media are unleashed without the accompanying social rituals, and structures of understanding. Put another way, art and the practices surrounding it have their own modes of individuation. For example, watching a play in a theater is a social event with ingrained expectations. These do not include actors actually getting murdered on stage, nor actors suddenly breaking the ritual boundary and drawing in the audience to the drama as *real*. Yet there is no such expectations surround social media.

Technology originates from the Greek *techne*, art or craft, so technology is a discourse, logos or practice of art or craft. Severing technology from the arts as modernity does, numbs to unconsciousness the fantasies that propagate it. In turn, as Lee Bailey shows, the use of technology under the illusion of the subject/object split, that guns or social media are just neutral *objects*, renders persons more unconscious and more subject to psychic pollution from the fantasies materialized in technology. Social media is thus very dangerously not theater, where the fantasies and myths are presented as fantasy. Rather social media is an unindividuated domain of limitless images in words and other forms.

To return to *Macbeth*, is to see the play offering a form of exploration of such psychic pollution. Watching the play is not equivalent to being immersed in social media. However, seeing Macbeth in the toils of the witches is comparable. In particular, I suggest that Macbeth being seduced by the witches as psychic shadow is similar to the 2016 Presidential Campaign in the United States in that both Donald Trump and much of his voters are mesmerized and enchanted. In both cases, Fake News is psychically

contaminating and destructive. So just how do the witches seduce Macbeth from being the great hero of his society to its utter destruction? Jungian psychology offers a way of plotting the psychic dis-integration of Macbeth and of some of the electorate. Ultimately the play can be understood as a pioneering work of Jungian arts-based research.



*Image 1 Macbeth Consulting the Witches by Eugène Delacroix. France, 1825. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/336603>*

The problem is narcissism as Macbeth's very first encounter with the witches shows. The witches are Macbeth's dynamic and dramatic psychic mirror, his feminine other in demonic form.

Witches: Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Hover through the fog and filthy air. *Macbeth*, Act 1, sc.1 l. 11-12.

Macbeth: So foul and fair a day I have not seen. Act 1, sc.3 l. 38.

Narcissism indicates disturbances in the fundamental coherence of a person. Often discussed as mirroring, the narcissist sees only his reflection in the world just as here Macbeth 'mirrors' the witches in words. Whereas Freud theorized that primary narcissism was a stage in infantile development prior to the capacity to relate to others, secondary narcissism is a pathological "stuckness" in fantasies that ought to have been re-framed if the Oedipus complex had been negotiated successfully (Samuels et al p. 98). The Oedipus complex requires the boy child to break the primal bond with the mother under fear of castration by the father. It is therefore necessary to securing boundaries in a way that offers inner coherence and the ability to relate.

Jung's position on narcissism subtly differed from that of Freud. While agreeing on secondary narcissism as a problem, he also suggested a positive form of mirroring might become a goal of individuation, a mirroring in the greater being of the Self, an archetype that organizes the psyche and is an image of harmonious connection with the cosmos. In Shakespeare's play, Macbeth remains afflicted by secondary narcissism as the *affect* or flood of feeling from the witches and from his wife is to break down his ability to separate himself from his desire, becoming king. After all, Lady Macbeth urges him to kill to get the throne by a grotesque inversion of Oedipal love.

Lady Macbeth: When you durst do it, then you were a man...  
Does unmake you. I have given suck and know  
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:  
I would while it was smiling in my face,  
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,  
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn  
As you have done to this. Act 1, sc.7, l. 49, 54-8.

Such destruction of maternal love effectively cuts away the 'normal' Oedipal path. In these lines we sense a rejection of a potential mirroring of love. Macbeth cannot see himself being mothered safely and lovingly in the person of a baby son. He has to be king and yet he can never be secure as king because he is stuck in a narcissist's world seeing only his incompleteness.

Symptomatically, after committing the murder, primary narcissism overtakes him again. He loses a sense of his own body as whole and bounded.

Macbeth: What hands are here? Ha! The pluck out mine eyes.  
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood  
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red. Act 2, sc. 2, l. 58-62

Hands wanting to destroy eyes show a horrifying sense of bodily dis-integration. Bloody hands that can dye whole seas indicate the psyche trapped in a world without end, without limits to his crime. Transfixed by pre-Oedipal enchantment in the witches reincarnating his primary narcissism, the bond with the mother, Macbeth has struck down his king, his father figure who was the obstacle to his deepest and forbidden

desires. Such a perversion of the Oedipal situation propels him into a secondary narcissism in which his crime traps him in an endless mirroring of his murder.

Hence Macbeth comes to realize that he is in a world in which nature itself is chaos. There is nothing outside his chaotic psyche for him.

Macbeth: I conjure you by that which you profess...  
... though the treasure  
Of nature's germens tumble all together,  
Even till destruction sicken, answer me  
To what I ask you. Act 4, sc. 1 l. 50, 58-61.

Here is a psyche trapped in a medium (social media) where everything is possible for there is no force, no reality, no nature outside it. Perhaps the Trump administration destruction of environmental protection could be seen in this context. The only reality is fragments of psyche energized as appetite for money and power that are synonymous to the narcissist.

Arts-based research is a modern framing of art-making as the generation of new knowledge (Leavy 2005; 2018). The artist-researcher begins in the ontology of the autonomy of art as communicative, transformative and not limited to the being of the artists. Hence arts-based research is a new paradigm. Jungian arts-based research adds to existing ABR the ontology and epistemology of the psychic image while expanding Jung's notion of the autonomy of the archetypal image to see it realized in art-works. These pieces of art, be they music, painting poetry, novels or film etc. are then the final forms of the researching process. They exist separate from the artist and are open to multiple interpretations of their transformative powers, without limit. In this sense,



Jungian arts-based research is doing psychotherapy with the collective. Such research can embark on very diverse topics from those involving social fractures to aesthetic matters to actual arts-activism.

For this paper, I suggest that seeing Shakespeare's play through a Jungian arts-based research frame enables the play to show the horror of psychic pollution through un-collectively individuated media. In my book, *Jungian Arts-Based Research and the Nuclear Enchantment of New Mexico* with Joel Weishaus, it also heralds another new paradigm, that of Transdisciplinarity as theorized by Basarab Nicolescu. Here the various academic disciplines of Western modernity and the indigenous and artistic knowledges they exclude come together on the basis of quantum connectivity.

I type this conclusion to the paper on the day after the American Capitol was attacked by rioting Trump supporters. What was to have been a vital and vitalizing act of theater, the formal counting of State Votes, was disrupted by a boundary violation from those, like Macbeth, bewitched by seductive words. The witches tell him that he is safe until Birnam Wood approaches his castle. Since it is impossible, he feels safe. Then his watchman sees a moving wood because the army has seized branches to disguise their numbers. Nature herself turns against Macbeth, the child (narcissist) killer who is also a child killer. Macbeth misreads the witches because he has not the psychic coherence to read symbols. Jungian arts-based research and Transdisciplinarity can help us to do so.

**Susan Rowland** (U.S./UK) is author of many books on Jung, feminism and the arts, including *The Ecocritical Psyche* (2012) *Remembering Dionysus* (2017) and *Jungian Literary Criticism* (2019) Her latest is with poet Joel Weishaus, *Jungian Arts-Based Research and the Nuclear Enchantment of New Mexico* (Routledge 2020).

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## Panel 5 - SOME 2020 ELECTION ISSUES

## The 7<sup>th</sup> Circle: Racism, Illusion and Violence

Fanny Brewster, Ph.D.

United States

I'm in Philadelphia--the birthplace of American freedom, justice and liberty for all. As a 21<sup>st</sup> century African American woman whose ancestor arrived early during the 1700's, survived the slave auction blocks in South Carolina and later the low country rice plantations. I wish to elaborate on the incredible irony of these words--freedom, justice and liberty for all.

I thought I would be in Berkeley for my talk today--spending more time on Dante's 7<sup>th</sup> mythological circle of hell for murderers. The allegory about those who are thrown into pits of boiling blood for committing violent murderous acts. When they try to escape, they are pushed back into the blood by centurions. When I first planned to speak today Ahmaud Arbery, had not yet been murdered. Breanna Taylor had not yet been murdered. George Floyd had not yet been murdered. All by police officers or those who had previously been police officers. These murdered African Americans, all of them younger than 50 years of age, could have anticipated an early death due to their skin color. However, would Breanna Taylor have thought it would happen at two o'clock in the morning as she laid in bed with her boyfriend? George Floyd as an African American male surely knew of the risks of being such a man--even in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, would he have thought his death would come, witnessed by others--eventually millions, around the world? Knee on his neck, choking the life from his body. Taking his breath away.

Ahmaud Arbery could feel the wind around him, as he ran on a country road as familiar to him as any other, near the place of his birth in Brunswick, Georgia. However, could he have imagined that on this day two white men would kill him with a shot gun? For running down a quiet country road. These are only three of the tragic stories of the

circle of hell experienced by African Americans who lost their lives due to acts of violence and racism.

The imaginal story that I anticipated weaving regarding political violence drawn from Dante's story of hell disappeared from my own imagination. The harsh reality of *real* murders taking place, live, on television suddenly took precedent over the imaginal. The centurions had taken shape in the form of "peace" officers who were stealing the lives of the innocent.

Now in Philadelphia, not Berkeley, I want to really be here in considering freedom, justice and liberty for all. I'm also thinking about American political and societal violence, racism and illusion. This always includes physical violence when applied to Africanist people. Political violence was the creation of an American Constitution that made Africanist people 3/5 of a citizen, no--of a human being. Political violence is the continued creation of judicial laws for centuries that validated the taking and enslavement of Africans and then African Americans to build an American economic system of which they were never intended to be compensated. This includes today when the fight for African American reparations is considered by some to be unjustified. Ask me or others of an African ancestral lineage if *we* believe our enslaved ancestors did not deserve better treatment as human beings. Certainly, once slavery ended via the Emancipation Proclamation, to be compensated for all the centuries of lost lives. The labor of the slave work is worth mentioning but how does it compare to the millions of the African Holocaust? This last being the ultimate horrific act of condoned physical, political and racial violence.

The struggle for political freedom existed in the lives and groups of the African Diaspora for all of the centuries of slavery. American history, as myself and most others

were taught, would have us believe that slaves were docile and willing participants as captured human beings. How could this have been possible? It defies logic. Even more so it defies the nature of our spirit. The spirit that wants more freedom--never less.



*Image 1 Octavius V. Catto Sculpture*

The image that appears here is of Octavius V. Catto. This sculpture of him was designed by Branly Cadet and established at Philadelphia City Hall in 2017 as a

The images and text in this paper are strictly for educational use and are protected by United States copyright laws. Unauthorized use will result in criminal and civil penalties.

memorial entitled, "A Quest for Parity". Octavius V. Catto was an African American who fought for de-segregation of Philadelphia public transportation, to improve education for black children, and to create constitutional amendments for giving African Americans the right to vote. On the day of his murder by white vigilantes, he was engaged in the political action of registering black men to vote. This was in 1871. He was 32 years of age. Political violence that engages physical violence are customarily intertwined when African Americans are targeted. The political violence of denying political rights--most often defined as the right to vote, has haunted American politics for centuries. Many individuals and groups who support the American political system are not in favor of voting rights for African Americans. Our history of the fight for this right dates back for centuries. Today, we still fight for this right because the power to vote means the power to choose politicians who are in support of your civil, economic and educational rights. The right to vote means you can decide who speaks for you in Washington, D.C. and in state legislatures across America. It is as if some Americans will do anything to keep black Americans from their voting rights. We continued to witness this as members of the Donald Trump political party began an anger-driven campaign to stop black and brown people from voting across America. The states targeted with attempts at voter suppression included Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and North Carolina. Trump and his allies tried every way possible to keep black and brown people from voting, and finally as a last resort claimed that all the votes by individuals in these states were fraudulent.

The specific areas of contention always seem to center on black urban areas such as Philadelphia and Detroit. The Trump battle to prevent black votes from being counted eventually led to the siege at the United States Capital building on January 6, in



order to disrupt the final tally of election electoral votes by each state. Police officers died attempting to protect Congress women and men, and the vice-president of the United States. Rioting individuals engaged in attacking the Capital and police officers died. Political violence and political action caused the death of 8 individuals that day as the Confederate flag was waved and carried through the building by insurgents. This is the America that we continue to live in and must acknowledge as a continuing aspect of our political psyche. This reality accepts that racism was established at the beginning of America's freedom and nurtured by her Founding Fathers. America's first freedom was not for men and women of color--it was for white males. This is a key element--both conscious and unconscious, that we continue to engage in as we try to achieve political, economic and educational freedom for black Americans.

African Americans are not in denial of the necessity for political action. We understand that our most basic human rights--not even considering political rights, will need to be fought for, with the possible loss of lives. Most often this is on the streets as well as in the voting booth.

Dr. Martin Luther King understood this and was a political activist until the day he was murdered by a white man at a political rally supporting city sanitation workers.



*Image 2 Dr. King mural*

This is an image of Dr. King’s bust on the corner of 40<sup>th</sup> Street and Lancaster in Philadelphia. Four days before his assassination in 1968, Dr. King gave his last sermon at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC. The title of his speech was “Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution”. He said the following:

It may well be that we will have to repent in this generation. Not merely for the words and the violent actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people who sit around and say, “Wait on time.”

Somewhere we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on the

wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals who are willing to be co-workers with God. And without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the primitive forces of social stagnation. So we must help time and realize that the time is always ripe to do right.

We have reached a profound marker in the fight against COVID-19. More than half a million Americans have died from Covid virus related deaths. Blacks have the highest death rate from all of the ethnic groups, LatinX individuals follow blacks in this regard. The failure of the Trump administration has negatively impacted the high number of deaths from the virus--this has been felt even more so in the black and brown communities. The way in which individuals in these communities have been treated in terms of first being included in statistics regarding those dying from the virus, to testing people of color, to providing the vaccine to them in their communities has been shameful. However, we have seen that the political leaders who controlled the White House and the Senate had barely any shame as their energy and focus was on winning another term in government. This effort failed, which will hopefully be the salvation of our American way of life--troubled though it may be. We live to fight another day.

The American politics of the last four years has been one of gas-lighting and illusion. This continued through the beginning deaths of Americans being told that the virus was like a flu and would be “gone in a few weeks”. As black and brown people went out into the world as essential workers, being of service to others, they began to die at higher and more extremely painful death in hospitals. We did not have the right medicine for their bodies and we could not get the right information from political leaders to protect ourselves from sickness and death. And so, we died at alarming rates.

The harmful legacy of American medical apartheid against Africanist people has been documented in many ways. The political actions of 2019 and during the rage of the virus, could have been anticipated. The fight, and it is a fight for survival, continues as we in Philadelphia attempt to find locations, vaccine and the political voice to scream out our frustrations at not getting the medical care to which we are entitled during this pandemic. We are still recovering from a national election where Philadelphia was targeted and accused of “stealing” votes to ensure President Biden’s victory. This is part of what has become known as the “Big Lie”. One perpetrated by the former president and his political allies, in essence steal votes from Americans--particularly black Americans. Did they think we wouldn’t see or just not care? They are mistaken because black lives *do* matter.



*Image 3 Cherry Blossom Trees*

A tree blooms pink and beautiful in Fairmount Park. It reminds me of how some of us must suffer and still bloom, suffer and still bloom. To give breathe, life, to those of us who are left. George gave us this through his death.

The last words of George Floyd:

*It's my face man*

*I didn't do nothing serious man*

*Please*

*Please I can't breathe*

*Please man*

*Please somebody*

*Please man*

*I can't breathe*

*I can't breathe*

*Please*

*Man can't breathe, my face*

*Just get up*

*I can't breathe*

*Please, a knee on my neck*

*I can't breathe*

*Shit*

*I will*

*I can't move*

*Mama*

*Mama*

*I can't*

*My knee*

*My neck*

*I'm through*

*I'm through*

*I'm claustrophobic*

*My stomach hurt*  
*My neck hurts*  
*Everything hurts*  
*Some water or something*  
*Please*  
*Please*  
*I can't breathe officer*  
*Don't kill me*  
*They're gonna kill me, man*  
*Come on man*  
*I cannot breathe*  
*I cannot breathe*  
*They're gonna kill me*  
*They're gonna kill me*  
*I can't breathe*  
*I can't breathe*  
*Please sir*  
*Please*  
*Please*  
*Please I can't breathe*



*Image 4 The Johnson Abolitionist House*



*Image 5 The Johnson Abolitionist House*

I am at the last standing house in Philadelphia of the Underground Railroad that was used to help shelter men, women and children escaping from slavery. It was built in 1768 and owned by Quaker Abolitionists. Today it is the Center for Social Advocacy. In post-Civil War, Reconstruction times, Frederick Douglass said the following:

Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob, and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe. It is not light that we need, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.



## Is this a good time?

On February 23, 2020, Ahmaud Arbery, a 25 years old African American was out for a run in the town of Brunswick, Georgia, a neighboring community next to his childhood hometown. As his parents sat at home, living, their son lay on a dirt road dying--because he was a black man. He was killed by three white men who accused him of stealing from a house that was in the process of being built. Nothing was in the house--it had only a wooden frame.

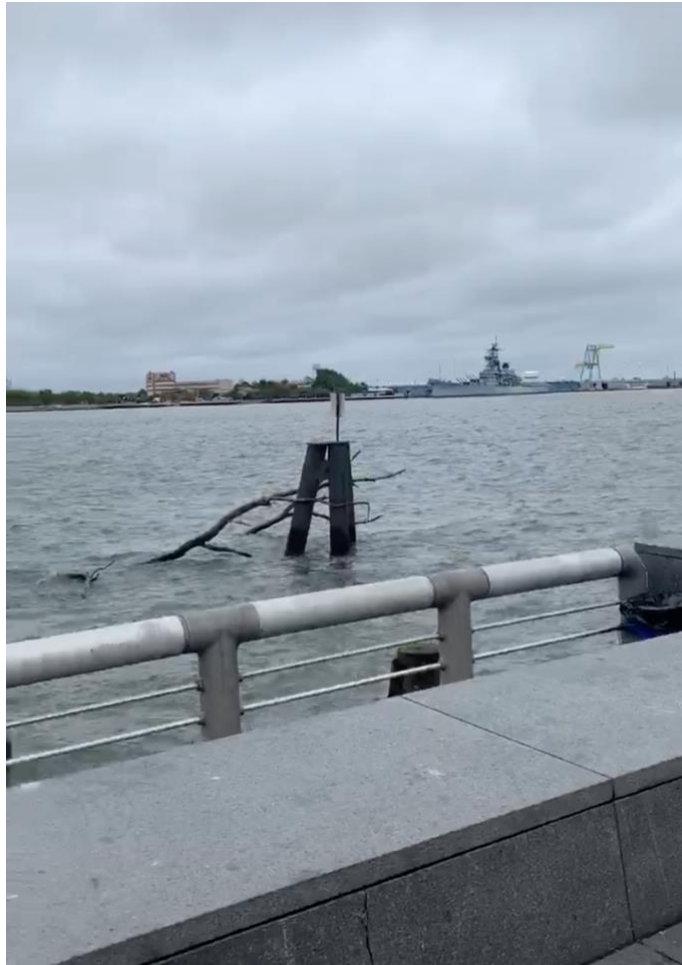


*Image 6 President's House, Downtown Philadelphia*

This is the outline, the wooden frame of a house that sheltered George Washington and four other early American presidents. George Washington owned 8 slaves when he lived here in what was once his Philadelphia home.

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, black women worked alongside white women to get voting rights.

When white women got this right to vote in 1920 by way of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, black women were still denied voting rights due to racial discrimination in the form of political and physical violence. It took until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 for black women to get their *protected* right to vote. The black and brown vote is being suppressed all over America by the political violence of racism that wishes to prevent us from this expression of political freedom.



*Image 7 The Delaware River, Independence Seaport Museum*

This is where slaves disembarked from ships in Philadelphia as early as 1639. At least two million African ancestors, died coming across the Atlantic Ocean. Millions of the survivors worked as slaves for hundreds of years on cotton and rice plantations.

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Building the American economy. The mostly white men who have held power in the United States Congress have fought against reparations for African Americans for decades. The voices of those who today demand reparation are not only speaking for themselves. They are speaking for all of the millions of our lives lost while America became the wealthiest country in the world.

Black men and women were lynched as sport in American towns and cities up until the 1940's. It is documented that more than four thousand African Americans died while white people watched, many laughing at the sight of our swinging, lifeless bodies. Legislation against lynching proposed as a federal hate crime was introduced into the United States Senate by Kamala Harris, Cory Booker and Tim Scott in December, 2018 and passed. The bill, known as the Emmett Till Antilynching Act at first failed to pass in the House of Representatives. The legislation finally became law in February, 2020.



*Image 8 Lynching of Laura Nelson and her son. 1911, Oklahoma.*

## POEM

### The Bridge

It's the water that first catches your eyes

You barely glance at the simple bridge arching itself across the North Canadian River.

Sunlight shimmers on water, holding an intense glow that says it must be late morning.

Trees on both side of the banks are in full bloom.

Men, women and children stand on the bridge, some bending over the railing to watch what swings below, as river water flows soft as tears.

If you look closer, you can see what photographer G.H. Farnum caught, reflected, on the river's water. The two photographic down river views of this scene are historic and known as Farnum's number 2899 and number 2898.

But he was late.

Hundreds had already seen the image he made famous that day.  
What hangs off the bridge deck, catching the photographer's eyes on May 25,  
1911, was not such an uncommon sight and yet the standing bridge viewers  
probably thought themselves lucky, to be captured in the frame of the camera's  
eye.

The photographer caught the trees, the shiny river, the blossoming river bank  
shrubs, and all 35 men, 6 women and 17 children who came to the lynched Laura  
Nelson, and her fourteen year old son LD.

That bridge from that day, in that place, Okemah, Oklahoma, is no longer there.  
It has been replaced by another, but this is the one we see:

Raped mother hangs across from her son.  
They face one another, rope tight around their necks,  
Caught forever in the shadow of the bridge.

Mother and son move with the breeze.

The sun shines.

Their shadows ripple across flowing river water.

That bridge, from that day, in that place is no longer there,  
Yet this is the only one I can still see.

(By author)



*Image 9 Paul Robeson's House*

Paul Robeson was an African American actor, singer and political activist. He was persecuted by Joe McCarthy and the Congressional House on Unamerican Activities in the 1950's. Like many others--performers and activists, Paul Robeson was seeking civil liberties and protection for himself and others, against political violence.

### **Is this a good time?**

I conclude with the words of authors William Grier and Price Cobbs from their book *Black Rage*:

The culture of slavery was never undone for either master or slave. The civilization that tolerated slavery dropped its slaveholding cloak but the inner feelings remained.

The "peculiar institution" continues to exert its evil influence over the nation. The practice of slavery stopped over a hundred years ago, but the minds of our citizens have never been freed.

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## Western democracy and the necessity of the ‘illegal traveller’

Michael O’Loughlin

United States



A migrant toddler's body washes up on the beach at Bodrun, Turkey. A father and daughter drown together in the Rio Grande. The trump administration in the United States separates families and locks children in cages. In Manus Island and on Christmas Island, persons seeking asylum in Australia stitch their lips shut in silent protest at their inhumane and indefinite incarceration.<sup>1</sup> What are we as human beings if we allow our governments to create what Agamben calls *states of exception* in which some people take on the status of *homo sacer* – unwanted ones, rejects, “vermin people”? Mbembe speaks of *necropolitics*, Khanna talks of *human disposability*, Bauman speaks of some lives as *human waste*, and Scheper-Hughes speaks of people who are rubbished.<sup>2</sup> Refugees and asylum-seekers, trapped in legal limbo and subjected to enforced anomie and destitution are perhaps the world's most disposable people. Refugee children, lacking legal status in any country live lives of unimaginable precarity. As Bhabha notes:

Refugee children and their female caregivers are much *less* likely than adult men to reach a wealthy destination state where they can make an application for permanent refugee protection. Though, as I have just noted, children constitute almost half of the world's refugees, they amount to less than a third of asylum seekers in developed states. Among the majority of children who do not make it to a developed state to claim asylum, some 1-4 million live in impoverished and overcrowded refugee camps and settlements...Tragically, more than two thirds of today's refugees have spent five or more years “warehoused” in such camps where the average length of stay is close to twenty years. These refugees include millions of children trapped in a limbo of *temporary permanence*, dependence and

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<sup>1</sup> For Bodrun see: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/02/shocking-image-of-drowned-syrian-boy-shows-tragic-plight-of-refugees>. For Rio Grande, see: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/25/us/father-daughter-border-drowning-picture-mexico.html>. For migrant children in cages, see <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/07/11/written-testimony-kids-cages-inhumane-treatment-border>. For Manus Island see <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2014/dec/04/four-asylum-seekers-manus-sew-lips-together-mass-hunger-strike> and for Christmas Island see <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2010-11-19/asylum-seekers-sew-lips-together/2343854>.

<sup>2</sup> For related discussion, see Bauman (2003) on lives as human waste; Khanna (2009a) on disposable people; Mbembe (2003) on necropolitics; and Scheper-Hughes (1997) on people who get rubbished.

despair, where only periodic aid handouts from international organizations or intracamp fights interrupt the endless flow of boredom and depression induced by the lack of prospects. (2014, p. 209).

In *'Illegal' Traveller*, Khosravi speaks of the dehumanization of undocumented border crossers. Borders are “where the third world grates against the first world and bleeds” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 12, cited in Khosravi, 2010, p. 28). Asylum seekers “are discursively constituted as ‘non-agents’, that strategically appropriate a refugee discourse in their own self-preservation through performing ‘victimcy” (p. 72). Khosravi elaborates:

...pain and suffering have become the hallmarks of refugeeness. The term ‘refugee’ generally signifies deprived and underprivileged people. A ‘real’ refugee is thus supposed to be a ‘profound,’ ‘poor,’ ‘traumatized,’ ‘serious,’ and of course ‘sad’ person...a happy, well-dressed, good-looking refugee is a contradiction. Refugees have to perform ‘refugeeness.’ (p.73)

Fleeing Iran as a teenager, Khosravi learned to perform this abjection of refugeeness:

To have a chance of getting refugee status, one must have the ability to translate one’s life story into Eurocentric juridical language and to perform the role expected of a refuge...I was advised to wear dirty clothes when going to the UNHCR and to look ‘sad’ and ‘profound’. (p. 33)

Khosravi continues:

The victim role followed me for a long time beyond the walls of the refugee camp...I had left no space for enjoyment, agency, self-representation or individual background. In that interview...my self-represented victim role appeared, stripped of the specificity of culture, place and history. (pp. 71-72)

Malkki (2006) notes that through depoliticization, refugees “stop being specific persons and become pure victims in general: universal man, universal woman, universal child” (p. 378). This process creates Others who are conceptualized as mute and ahistorical, and without agency. Refugees do not need to be consulted, their voices do not need to be heard, because the international script for refugeeness is predetermined, and enabling refugees “to establish narrative authority over [their] own circumstances” (p. 393) could only lead to trouble. The price all of us pay, however, is significant, Malkki notes: “For if humanism can only constitute itself on the bodies of dehistoricized, archetypal refugees and other similarly styled victims—if clinical and philanthropic modes of humanitarianism are the only options—then citizenship in this human community itself remains curiously, indecently, outside of history” (p. 398).

*The refugee*, therefore, is a bureaucratic formulation designed to exclude, and to permit actions on the body of the refugee that would never be permitted on person with full human rights. Notions of justice necessarily occur within frames of representation and it is useless to seek to reconceptualize the treatment of *the refugee* without probing the discursive contexts within which the political world has chosen to delimit the human status of *the refugee*.

### ***Violence and social death***

Mechanisms have been developed by sovereigns to ensure what Patterson (1985) referred to as *social death*. These have sprung, in part, from a tightening of national borders. As Allon (2002) and Bigo (2006) note, paranoid fears of global insecurity are stoked so that nation states are invested with draconian powers to regulate the flow of marginal peoples across the world. In Europe, billions of euros are paid to Turkey to

stanch the migrant flow across the Mediterranean, with no apparent concern for the welfare of the incarcerated migrants, the conditions of their incarceration, or the process by which asylum or repatriation is determined. The U.S. president has made a similar deal with Mexico and Central American countries to keep migrants from reaching the U.S. Chimni (2009) speaks of “muscular humanitarianism”—policies that, while masquerading as humanitarian, are unmistakably self-interested, authoritarian, and often draconian. One further qualification should be added. Simon (1998) ties the authoritarian response to refugee people to the growth of incarceration across the western world. The development of a globalized and often privatized prison-industrial complex that has gained increasing influence in the world of refugee policy.

### ***The sovereign and the constitution of the abject***

Agamben’s notion of *bare life* and *state of exception* offer a political explanation for the way in which ostensibly progressive and democratic countries create conditions of abjection for refugees.<sup>3</sup> Agamben ties the existential condition of the *disposable* refugee to the workings of sovereign power thereby questioning individual liberty as a foundational assumption of western democracy—a system that permits citizens to benefit from its freedoms only because it can invoke autocratic powers of extra-judicial regulation to control and manage its Others.

Sovereign power has the capacity to take away the participatory powers of a person as citizen thus reducing that person to *homo sacer* or *bare life*. In *Remnants of Auschwitz* Agamben (2002) offers a detailed inquiry into Primo Levi’s account of the

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<sup>3</sup> For details see Agamben, 1998, 2002, 2005.

development of what came to be known as *Muselmann*, zombie-like persons who, while not having died, experienced living death. “The Jew is a human being who has been deprived of all *Würde*, all dignity: he is merely human—and for this reason non-human”. *Bare life*, therefore, is a form of life that begins where normal life ends. In *bare life* people do not live, yet they are alive.” (p. 68). Their eventual death, for the Nazis, became merely “the fabrication of corpses,” (p. 68), exclusion from natural life and political life for the *Muselmann* having already taken place.

We can only enjoy the freedoms that we in the West, enjoy because we invest our sovereigns with the power to create *bare life*. Declarations of rights, Agamben notes, apply only to persons within the normal juridico-political order. The state is not constructed on a natural order based on being human. One becomes a sovereign subject by virtue of birth. Refugees, “by breaking the continuity between *nativity* and *nationality*... put the originary fiction of modern sovereignty in crisis” (p. 130). NGOs are complicit too because of their uncritical adherence to the political status quo: “humanitarian organizations...can only grasp human life in the figure of bare or sacred life, and therefore, despite themselves, maintain a secret solidarity with the power they ought to fight” (p. 133).

Mbembe (2003) points out that mechanisms of social death have deeper origins. Such necropolitical intent was also central to the Othering and states of exclusion at the core colonialism. It is no coincidence that the colonial powers of yesteryear are handling the flow of world refugees using a state of exception. Such an approach to inferiorized others is naturalized in a colonial mentality. The current flow of refugees from the Middle East, for example, is eliciting the invocation of draconian states by Western powers that reflexively invoke a necropolitical authority to manage the chickens that

have come home to roost as formerly colonized subjects knock on their door. This kind of humanitarian crisis, it appears, requires a *muscular* response from the sovereign.

Papastergiadis (2006) refers to refugee camps as a form of limbo, and he points out that moral outrage or horror is unlikely to have any influence on the presence of such camps precisely because the construction of the camps, as discussed above, “is consistent with modern democratic definitions of executive power” (p. 437) and furthermore that “the normalization of the state of exception is also embedded in a deeper process of depoliticization” which is evident in the “ubiquitous colonization of the sphere of private life by the state and the market forces of globalization” (p. 437).

### ***The ethics of psychoanalysis and the limit case of ‘the refugee’.***

Understanding subjectivization—and the desubjectivization and depoliticization involved in the imposition of *bare life* and the *state of exception*—is inherently a political process. As Butler (1997) stated, subjectivity necessarily implies *subjection* to prevailing discursive practices. Questions can be raised about whether psychoanalysis is so ideologically bound to conventional power structures as to make it unusable for deciphering a limit situation such as the production of refugee subjectivity. Khanna states unabashedly that “Psychoanalysis is a colonial discipline... that formalized and perpetuated an idea of uncivilized, primitive, concealed, and timeless colonized peoples. As a discipline, it formalized strategies to normalize a form of civilized being constituted through colonial political dynamics” (p. 6)

In 1981, Jacques Derrida presented an address in which he took the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) to task for a waffling and obscurantist statement which failed to condemn torture by the military junta in Argentina. Derrida castigated

the IPA for seeking refuge in an abstract resolution that enabled the organization to distance itself from the realities of torture and political oppression in Argentina. Rather than becoming a tool with the potential to “constitute an irreplaceable means for deciphering [forms of violence] and hence a prerequisite for their denunciation”, Derrida said psychoanalysis risked, instead, serving “as a conduit for these forms of violence” (p. 74). Bar-Haim noted that “Derrida insisted that the IPA should not be silent. To many in the audience, his speech seemed to call for a radical revision of the psychoanalytic “Magna Carta” by encouraging psychoanalytic institutions to be much more engaged, standing at the centre of real political events” (np).

Derrida charged the IPA with being *apolitical*, and even *aps psychoanalytic*. In the interest of advancing a view of the subject that neutralized ethical concerns, the official body of psychoanalysis dissociated “the psychoanalytic sphere from the sphere of the citizen” (p. 77). Derrida, Algerian by birth, noted “that there is practically no psychoanalysis in Africa, white or black, just as there is practically no psychoanalysis in Asia or in the South Seas. These are among those parts of ‘the rest of the world’ where psychoanalysis has never set foot, or in any case where it has never taken off its European shoes” (1995, p. 69).

Anderson, Jenson and Keller (2011) argue that psychoanalysis and colonialism “together forged the conflicted cosmopolitan figure of the universalized, psychoanalyzable subject” and thereby produced a psychoanalytic subject which is “constitutively a colonial creature” (p. 1). Greedharry (2008) takes psychoanalysis to task for its lack of interest in the material, political, and cultural factors that produce human subjectivity” (p. 3). Can a psychoanalysis constituted around universalist,

ahistorical, and colonial notions of being, prove useful in any way in understanding terror, genocide, violence, or the kind of displacement constituted in the body of *the refugee*? Does psychoanalysis have a capacity to understand subjectivity as constructed through political violence and through constructions such as nationhood? Without such understandings how can we possibly comprehend the function of nether zones of *bare life* and *states of exception* as an integral part of Western democracy? Is it possible that displaced persons and asylum seekers are the kind of limit persons who represent “the kind of subject that psychoanalysis is not able to imagine or provide for”?

***There but for the grace of God...***

Khosravi concludes his book with a story of how noted intellectual Walter Benjamin attempted to flee the Nazis by crossing the mountains from France to Spain. Having been denied an entry visa, Benjamin committed suicide and then suffered the following fate:

Not even death could save him from violence of the border regime. Not even a dead Jewish body could be tolerated. He was buried as a Catholic, under the name ‘Benjamin Walter’ in a Catholic graveyard—despite his being a secularist who believed in materialist philosophy. His displacement endures even in death. The money left with him was only enough for five years’ rent on the grave. In 1945, his remains were moved to a collective grave... his final burial place is unknown. (p. 131)

There but of the grace of God...

It seems to me that Jungians and non-Jungians could benefit from dialog where we unite around a deconstruction of colonialism, and a capacity to theorize and critique



social movements and political developments in our societies in the service of articulating a more socially inclusive, critical, activist psychoanalysis.

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Hermeneutic Ideals, Traumatic Realities – How Can We Cross the  
Divide to Meet One Another?

Khenu Singh, MD

United States

In 2017, I published a paper in our San Francisco Jung Journal, entitled “Can We Have a Conversation? Against Totalization and Towards a Dialogical Hermeneutics.” Partly indebted to psychoanalyst Donna Orange’s book, “The Suffering Stranger: Hermeneutics for Everyday Clinical Practice,” I drew inspiration from hermeneutic philosophers, from Schleiermacher to Gadamer, as well as Jewish-Lithuanian philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas, seeking counsel on how to better connect across deepening divisions in America. I wondered what pains were seeking contact and what eruptions might ensue should we miss their call, as we unfortunately have? I also reflected on what Jungian and contemporary psychoanalysis might offer this endeavor, in terms of understanding and also praxis.

It’s three years later; clearly, our capacity to engage productively across the aisle, across our various tribes, has been limited. Rather than conversing, there has often been mocking or shouting. When we have tried to engage with the political other, perhaps a handful of times, it has often gone nowhere. We’re left demoralized and feeling such conversations to be futile. I hope that by the end of this presentation, we will have some more empirically-grounded hope in the possibilities emergent from hermeneutic engagement. We will examine the most unlikely of connections and transformations, with some better idea of what it takes to get there, as well as obstacles we face in even trying to doing so.

Looking back... Though far from symmetric, people on both sides have stoked fires of division in Trump’s America, with Trump both a symptom and catalyst of division. Our country and democracy are falling apart worse than I imagined three years ago. Only time will tell if this destruction paves way for something less structurally rotten – will this all be an alchemical *mortificatio* that precedes something

transformative, or not? As psychoanalysts, we strive to shine the light of consciousness into the ever-present dark, so let us reflect on our failures, in order to better address what in *our* shadow might contribute to this ever-widening gulf. In doing so, I hope we will discover and embody more constructive ways of approaching one another across the aisle, including the hateful other...

**Conversations...** the hermeneuts remind us that in engagement with one another we always start with misunderstanding, that arriving at mutual understanding is hard work, and that for authentic meeting to occur, we have to approach the other genuinely with the idea that they have something to say – all this with an openness on our part to being surprised and even changed. As North Indian Shaivite Tantrics have observed, the Divine can be found in shock and surprise. As clinicians, we know that when approached with sincere openness, the other registers this, which in turn slowly allows the development of trust and relatedness, along with the possibility of change.



*Image 1 Daryl Davis (pictured), who has helped over 200 people leave the KKK and other white power groups.*



*Image 2 Daryl Davis (right) and Scott Shepard (left), former Ku Klux Klan Grand Dragon.*



*Image 3 Daryl Davis with one of the 50 or so KKK robes that have been turned over to him by members who have resigned the organization.*



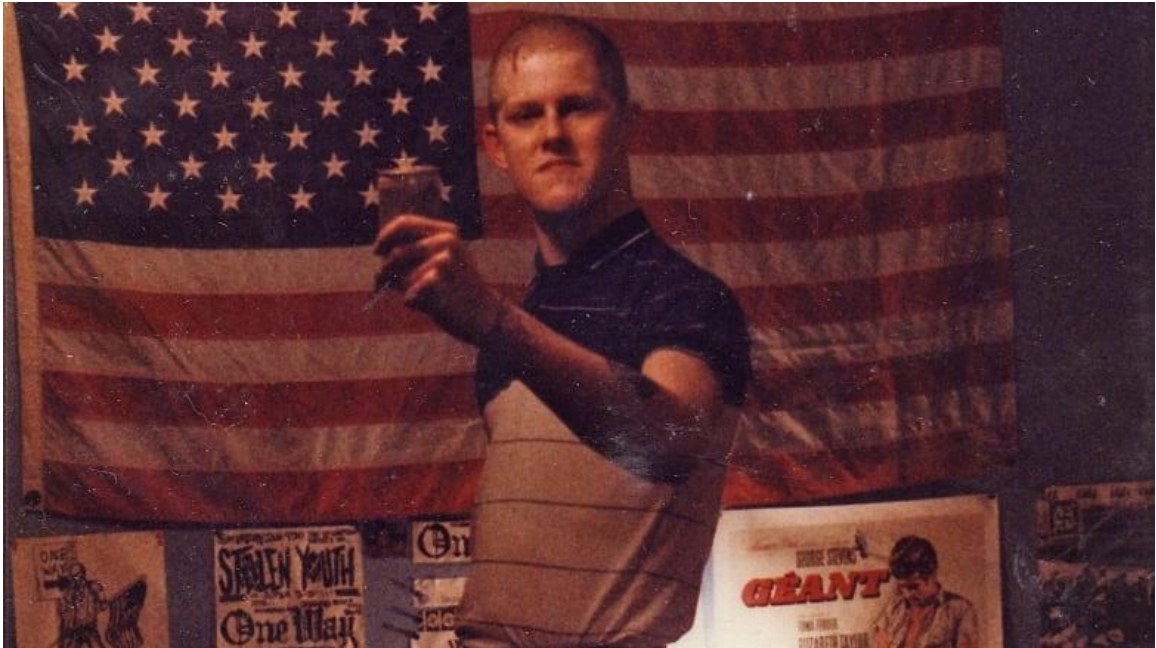
We live in a world of technologies that can give us an illusion of connection yet leave us more asunder, overwhelming us with dense social networks running at hyperkinetic rhythms, without the co-regulation & connection that face-to-face contact can facilitate, especially with regular meetings across longer arcs of time. The comments sections on Facebook and in response to online news can constellate groupthink on overdrive, with personal and collective complexes exploding and consuming left and right, spreading like wildfire, burning relational bridges, potential or actual. While technology can connect – look at us here today – clearly, technology and media also play a role in creating and sustaining division.

As much as I think about conversations, I sometimes find myself strained to have them outside clinical work and with those closest to me, as I'm often saturated with all that presses on me and now more than ever, we're all further estranged from one another due to COVID. Of course, realities of modern life are part of what Jungian analysis meets, offering a different rhythm and tempo in response, a space for contemplation and inner life to be met and cultivated.

Whether we reflect on the slow process of psychoanalysis, or as we shall soon visit, the example of those such as Daryl Davis, a black man who has helped 200 people leave the KKK and other white power movements, we are reminded of the magnitude of the effort; the patience and restraint required, the challenge in finding one's bearing in midst of affective storms, within and without, in order to slow down and listen and also challenge reflectively in effective, truly transformative ways...

Moving forward, Emmanuel Lévinas enriches what the hermeneutic philosophers offer us, warning us of what he termed **Totalization**, a process in which we reduce the complex, nuanced mystery of the other to some known (e.g., “the radical left,” Karen(s),

“white people,” and so on). When totalized, people feel misunderstood, defensiveness and polarization typically escalate; meanwhile, hope for conversation fades... There is a violence that emerges when we are unable to aspire towards the ineffable fullness of the sufferer in front of us, who, ultimately, presses for our compassionate concern.



*Image 4 Arno Michaelis as a white supremacist, founding member of Northern Hammerskins (later Hammerskin Nation), the most violent and well-organized neo-Nazi group in the United States. Subsequently, a founder of Serve 2 Unite and Life After Hate.*

As Arno Michaelis, founder and former white supremacist member of America’s largest racist skinhead organization shares, “The way to address implicit bias is to practice seeing the divine in every individual human, to see them as individuals rather than political abstractions... Far too many human beings of all backgrounds and political beliefs see kindness as weakness, as if it’s capitulation... when really it is a weapon. And one of the most powerful weapons against hate that we have.”



*Image 5 Kindness and compassion as a “weapon against hate”*



*Image 6 Pardeep Singh Kaleka, whose father Satwant Singh Kaleka was killed by a white supremacist from Hammerskin Nation*



*Image 7 Arno Michaelis, with his daughter. A single father, who feared going to prison like most of his peers had. Now he is uncle Arno to Pardeep's children. Pardeep uncle to his daughter. What can we learn from this?*

From what Michaelis has shared, he experienced a series of compassionate events that chiseled away at his own hate. A black man offered him a sandwich when he was hungry... a black cashier at McDonalds greeted him with a warm smile, even after registering the swastika tattooed onto his hand, said "You're a better person than that, I know that's not who you are." He felt powerless against the compassion. Now he's left

the organization and has become an anti-hate activist. There *is* good on both sides,<sup>1</sup> though sometimes it's buried in something vile and even dangerous. We have to be able to see it. It is in the progressive shadow that we often don't allow this space. *Why not?*



*Image 8 Arno Michaelis and Pardeep Singh Kaleka. Now they work together to combat hatred, under their organization, “Serve to Unite”*

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<sup>1</sup> I think of the critique that Trump received after Charlottesville, when he spoke of “Very fine people on both sides.” There wasn’t a necessary, clear condemnation first. As well, he had exploited hate, exacerbated polarization and galvanized white supremacist movements, hate crimes and organizations. Without genuine acknowledgement of the destructive shadow first, he deserves the condemnation he received for this statement. Yet, perhaps there was also some truth buried in these words. The former members of hate groups discussed in this paper demonstrate this; they certainly weren’t “fine” at moments, but they did have good in them. If we aren’t mindful of our own language and attitudes, how we hold things, we can lose potential space for possible redemption in the hateful other, as well as healing in the larger social fabric. What hope do we have then of healing our divisions and reaching the 74 million people who voted for Trump, who are still out there?



*Image 9 Arno Michaelis and Pardeep Singh Kaleka, involved with Serve 2 Unite.*



*Figure 10 Arno Michaelis and Pardeep Singh Kaleka. They eventually received a \$750K grant from the Department of Homeland Security. This was the first non-profit in North America dedicated to supporting individuals in leaving the violent far-right.*

We are invited to approach the suffering stranger with a spiritual, loving openness that is a difficult, ethical responsibility for us – yet one we often decline...

Sometimes, this is due to our own traumatic experiences, with resultant fear, distrust and other self-protective responses. We also fear legitimizing the hateful other, concerned that by giving space to their voice, further hurt and destruction will ensue. This brings to mind the patient who doesn't want to talk of their trauma, fearing that by giving it voice, there will be unleashed more negative feeling than can be borne, that by giving space, destruction will again ensue. Yet we know, in both types of cases, what happens when there is no safe space for expression and transformative engagement –

destructive forces erupt unconsciously leaving various forms of wreckage. Giving space to trauma is often agonizing, but when mediated well enough – with a dynamic rhythm between expression and regulating containment – the ultimate effect is the opposite of what was feared, there is *healing*... It can be similar with talking across the aisle, including with the hateful other, but we struggle to envision, much less create such safe spaces for expression.

As well, sometimes we become wedded to ideas, positions and movements that can give us cohesion, but when held rigidly, can sidestep bearing the confusion and difficulties inherent to the slower and more difficult work of genuinely meeting one another. We become entrenched in our particular tribalisms and attribute the source of trouble onto some other group, such that degrees of truth become inflated into monolithic and reified positions. This can leave us foreclosing our analyses, as well as totalizing one another, leaving us impoverished and crippling progress towards transformations we strive for. I think of Bion's work around Truth and Lies here. As local Jungian Analyst Barbara Sullivan writes, [Bion] "is trying to explore a fundamental paradox of the human condition: we need to face into the truth in order to be related and therefore in order to grow but we have to lie to ourselves both to titrate emotional pain... and to maintain our stability as ongoing, familiar selves in a reliable world."<sup>2</sup>

As analysts, what might we offer the collective, in addition to our direct clinical work? In our sessions, we're often reserved, patient, reflecting on what is invoked in us by the other, pausing and taking inner counsel before responding. Our patients can become intensely hateful at times, for instance, in midst of negative transferences, such

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, the lie that the violent white supremacist is pure bad/evil. It is easier to bear this than a more complex reality in which they may have committed heinous acts, yet *also* be survivors of heinous acts who are capable of redemption



that it becomes difficult to access necessary therapeutic love and concern. We know there is always a backstory that makes the anger, often displaced and projected, more understandable. We persevere, working hard to reach our patients, surviving the storm for their sakes. Hopefully, our personal analysis<sup>3</sup> allows us to better discern between various layers of our own emotional response, including personal and cultural complexes born of trauma.

We clinicians have deep experience as hermeneuts. Yet, outside the frame and *temenos* that holds the clinical work, it becomes harder to access these modes of relating as we are also vulnerable, struggling humans trying to contain ourselves in the midst of a variety of anxieties, susceptible to all the same polarizing and dissociative forces as the rest of our brothers and sisters across the world.

Perhaps we also carry unique liabilities... exquisite empathy that might cause us to feel more for the sufferer in front of us – in terms of particular oppressed groups closer to home – versus the sufferer across the line who threatens us and the groups we care for with his actions. We potentially identify with groups we find in need of protection and can find it harder to hold back totalization of groups threatening those we serve and ally with. Even if we have more nuanced or even dissenting views, we're often silent, as we have a desire to belong and we fear being shamed; who wants to be perceived as on the wrong side of things, or to experience the wrath of call-out culture, that can ruin relationships and livelihoods...

So-called “white” people, police and correctional settings are often totalized by progressives. This can unnecessarily alienate. While I'm heartbroken by sometimes

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<sup>3</sup> The original audience of this paper were analysts and other individuals who have been in psychoanalytic processes themselves, often multiple sessions a week over several years. In fact, this personal work is a prerequisite to becoming a psychoanalyst.

murderous police brutality, having worked with family members of victims, as well as other clearly broken and racist aspects of the criminal justice system, the vantage point from within reveals more nuance.

Of course, I hear stories that coincide with events that lead to justified anger and which rightfully energize our desire for reform. Yet, some patients also tell me jail saved their lives and that their incarceration feels a Divine intervention. We talk of the need for treatment versus incarceration, yet community mental health providers are aware of many who refuse treatment even when offered. In the correctional setting, at its best, new windows of intervention open for the captive and ambivalent potential patient. Perhaps at first, all they want is something to sleep or to reduce nightmares from bloodshed they've witnessed on the streets. Over time, I've been able to engage many such patients in meaningful, psychotherapeutic treatment – often their first such engagement. Likewise, some patients won't engage substance abuse treatment voluntarily, even when offered treatment versus custody. When therapists can support patients, during this period of forced institutional sobriety, in understanding their natural psychological rebellion towards something that feels forced, more conscious choice can occur. As a captive audience, there are novel possibilities for intervention that are difficult to understand for outsiders to these systems.

Being able to speak from experience of the light and shadow in such systems is more real and allows engagement with those across the aisle who work in these systems, or whose lives overlap with such systems. It requires some of us to work from inside, to understand what it is and incorporate this into our activism. In general, if we better hold nuance in our discourse, we can prevent alienation of those who could be more aligned with just causes and political choices, and perhaps could even become allies. This has

certainly been my experience working as a psychiatrist-analyst in the county jail, seeing slow transformations across time in aspects of the system and in the individuals who are not only constituted by, but also constitute such systems.

Some – though not all – of my patients have done terrible things. Sex trafficking, murder, domestic violence, pedophilic acts, brutal gang initiations, mass killings as child soldiers in some part of the world they’ve since fled... Many of them are haunted, hungry for a relational home to come to terms with what they’ve done, to thaw out their numbness and live more fruitfully. They are often totalized by many, including myself. I’m often struck by the contrast between the image I initially construct reading charges in some prominent case that makes the news, and the suffering stranger in front of me as a patient.

When I try to share from these experiences, working as an analyst psychiatrist in the county jail, with my progressive, activist friends, there often isn’t much receptivity – at these times, it seems to push against narratives that give cohesion, containment vessels for outrage in wake of the terrible events that saturate us in our daily, online news and social media consumption.

It is hard to reconcile truth and so much easier to totalize (lies), obviating responsibility for the more difficult task of *working* (Bion). Limit setting and consequence is necessary for the various transgressions named, but we also are invited to temper and minister this with loving concern. That is our challenge. It also serves our own goals if we succeed in turning the other from hate, the way someone like Daryl Davis has.

In terms of “white,” in my 2017 paper, I reflect on the danger of using this unfounded construct, arguing that it is part of a racist system which sustains a divisive

way of thinking and acting. That in addition to a fulcrum that galvanizes action, this can also become part of a system of divide and conquer that sustains the racist structure. One can speak of racism against blacks, without having to speak reductively of “whites,” “Karens” and so on. Let us remember what the great James Baldwin said, speaking of the mixing together of very different people - Irish, English, German, Italian, French, Swiss, Polish, Jewish and Indians:

“The crisis... in the white community is remarkable—and terrifying—because there is, in fact, no white community. This may seem an enormous statement—and it is...

It bears terrifying witness to what happened to everyone who got here, and paid the price of the ticket. The price was to become “white.” No one was white before he/she came to America.”

The erasure of rich, complex cultural and mythological roots continues to have a “terrible price,” it has consequence... I wonder about this when I reflect on what might be seeking contact in those that join “white power” movements. Might we gain more by letting go, or at least softening in our use of “white,” and opening into the shades, as we fight against the devastating violence of racism.



*Image 11 Christian Picciolini, former white supremacist and co-founder of Life After Hate.*

In researching who is drawn to white supremacy, I found an interview with former white supremacist, Christian Picciolini. He now runs an anti-hate organization that uses outreach and intervention strategies to help young men leave racist groups. He's shared that he was searching for a sense of family, as well as identity and purpose. One turning point came at a time he had opened a record store aimed at selling racist music... As they innocently wandered into his record store, he unexpectedly experienced *conversations* with those towards whom he espoused hate but was now truly meeting – Jewish, gay, black people. One was a black teenager, who also had a mother diagnosed with breast cancer, a mutual suffering which bonded them, opening a *relationship* that shattered his totalizations.

In terms of this type of contact, Picciolini had this to say:

*“I would certainly never put the burden on people of color to make that happen, nor would I encourage people who are traditionally victims of racist violence to make that leap. But I can tell you that receiving compassion from the people that we least deserve it from — at times maybe when we least deserve it — is often the most powerful thing. In fact, it might be the only thing I’ve ever seen truly break hate...”*

For the Jungians among us, isn’t part of what differentiates our approach that we look at the purpose or meaning in the pathology or symptom? This overlaps with the hermeneutic principle that the other has something they are trying to express. When the expression comes out in a violent, hurtful and especially murderous way, this typically becomes noise that drowns out our willingness to see or hear anything meaningful buried within. Certainly, our own wounding at the hands of racism, homophobia, misogyny and so on, both empowers us, serving as vital energy in our own activism, and also turns up the gain on the noise. Or we could say, in traumatized, paranoid-schizoid states of consciousness, we struggle to trust and be open to the other and are more inclined to see things in binaries, in black and white, such that we totalize the other and close space for the relatedness we need to heal.

It’s understandable to struggle to feel concern towards those that espouse so much hatred to principles and people we hold dear. Yet, in Totalizing we contribute to an emotional field that breeds division and undermines the very projects we strive to enact through our activism. We miss this in the cohesion we experience when caught in the grip of a fight-flight basic assumption, where we evacuate much of the bad onto the other and feel good about organizing within our own tribalism.



*Image 12 Derek Black and his father Don Black. Former KKK Grand Wizard and founder of Stormfront.*



*Image 13 Derek Black, son of Don Black who started Stormfront and godson to David Duke.*



*Image 14 Derek Black, Matthew Stevenson (an orthodox Jew) and some of the Jewish students who befriended him, having Shabbat dinner.*

In ways that are resonant with our own hermeneutic, clinical work, we have something to learn from individuals such as Daryl Davis, Pardeep Singh Kaleka and Arno Michaelis and others such as Matthew Stevenson, an orthodox Jew who alongside other Jewish students, befriended Derek Black, son of the former KKK Grand Wizard. The latter were ostracized from their own befuddled friends, yet through interrogating their own totalizations and accessing enough openness to invite Derek to Shabbat dinners, relationships formed and Derek was able to be challenged – and changed – by people who meant something to him. This led to yet another redemption, launching Derek Black (and his Jewish friends) into the world in a manner that is effective anti-racism.



I hope some of this invites us into self-inquiry and inspires us, as many of us are fatigued in trying to converse with the political other, now more than ever. More often than not, it hasn't gone well. The country is burning and we are worried, scared, fatigued, and angry. Perhaps we are closed at a time that we need to be open the most. Even for those of us trained and experienced in these matters, it's hard to stay in touch with the type of long-haul process required in order to make contact across seemingly insurmountable divides.

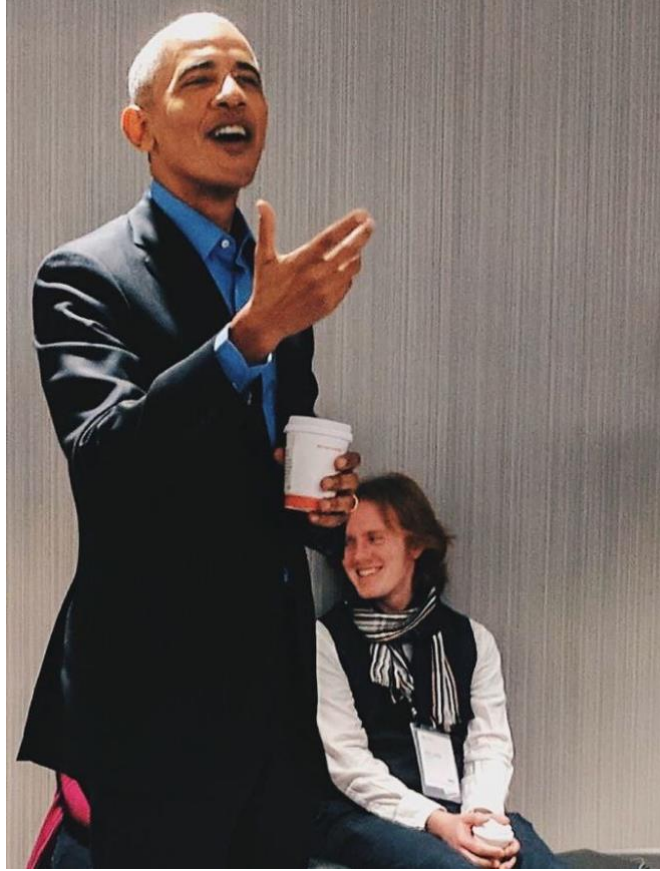
We will conclude with the example of Daryl Davis, another brave soul who held his positions, but also related across seemingly un-crossable chasms, with dramatic outcomes. Let's watch the video together to bring these words to new life:



As Conor Friedersdorf notes in his 2015 piece in the Atlantic – “The Audacity of Talking about Race with the Ku Klux Klan. Can Conversation help end bigotry?”:

“What Davis did makes a lot of people uneasy even when they fully grasp his intentions. I’m a relatively radical proponent of public discourse who respects his motives... and his results ... and it still makes me uneasy. But one needn’t agree with the decision to engage literal Klansmen (or minimize the good work done by the NAACP) to conclude that if conversation has changed the minds of multiple leaders of what is arguably the most hateful group in American history, it could probably do... good in... less-extreme cases... I have some disagreements with Davis. This isn’t the place for them. He should have us convinced, beyond... doubt, that conversation has a place in the anti-racism tool kit. [He’s certainly] struck more blows against racism than I ever have.”

So, am I arguing for each of us to outreach the local KKK, neo-Nazis, or Trump supporters? Of course not. I do think it’s a less ridiculous idea than it sounds and people such as Daryl Davis, Arno Michaelis, Pardeep Singh Kaleka, Christian Picciolini, Derek Black, Matthew Stevenson prove what can come of this. Less ambitiously, we can all be mindful of how we hold the political, even hateful other. How we hold and converse about the other matters, even in their absence. When we totalize, this radiates outward and contributes to a polarizing field, leaving us with chasms too large to bridge, in order for substantial healing and transformation to occur. In contrast, as hermeneutically-minded individuals, we see through the dark, toxic veneer that the other has something they seek to express. We realize that by making contact with this, by thoughtfully challenging anything less than this, we contribute to the healing we are so desperate for and which in turn is in our reach.



*Image 15 Derek Black and President Obama.*

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## **Additional Resources**

### **Organizations:**

<https://www.giftofourwounds.com/serve2unite>

<https://www.lifeafterhate.org/about-us-page>

### **Articles:**

<https://www.deseret.com/indepth/2020/7/13/21292134/racism-prejudice-white-supremacist-daryl-davis-conversion-change-conversation> (good video)

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/thenational/white-supremacist-sikh-friendship-fighting-hate-1.5107715> (good video)

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/03/the-audacity-of-talking-about-race-with-the-klu-klux-klan/388733/>

<https://www.npr.org/2018/09/24/651052970/how-a-rising-star-of-white-nationalism-broke-free-from-the-movement>

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/3ked5w/i-saved-my-schools-notorious-racist-from-white-nationalism>

### **Film:**

“Accidental Courtesy – Daryl Davis, Race and America:”

<https://accidentalcourtesy.com>

“Healing From Hate – Battle for the Soul of a Nation:”

<https://www.healingfromhatefilm.com>

Panel 6 - PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION IN THE U.S.

COLLECTIVE

The March from Selma to Montgomery  
and the Nonviolent Movement in Analysis

Renee M. Cunningham, MFT

United States

Violence and nonviolence are the birthmarks of the soul; moments of violent upheaval creating psychic fissures and splits that form the landscape from which the personality will flourish. The variants in the landscape are titrated by active nonviolent moments; experiences folded into a determination to live, guided by life's rhythms, both inner and outer. Violence and nonviolence form the syzygy of nature herself; their inextricable, serpentine flow informing the intra-psychic struggle; the dynamism from which the mythopoeic narrative of life emerges. Nonviolent *activism* is an external and *internal* spiritual warfare. It is the sword baring feminine function of the psyche that cuts into unmediated aggression and violence, revealing the nonviolent potential for peace therein. The depth of this dynamic process is defined within the psyches of participants whose levels of self-related consciousness provide the vital nutrient for change.

As a practiced ethos, nonviolence sits on a spectrum with tactical and strategic principles on one end and philosophical, transpersonal on the other. And while many practitioners can strategically participate, few can hold both ends of the spectrum. The Selma marches provide a unique look into the emergence of archetypal nonviolence through the self's synthetic movement in a community and nation in the throes of an adaptive identity crisis.

The Selma campaign sits at the apex of the nonviolent civil rights movement, the achievement of a ten-year pilgrimage driven by Martin Luther King, Jr. and his colleagues. From January to March 1965, King and other members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee worked the town of Selma, Alabama, like a

finely tuned instrument. Harnessing their grief and a passivity that enabled marginalized African Americans to survive the historical abuse of whites, protestors learned to nonviolently, *actively* engage this passivity by confronting the racist factions upholding a corrupt voting rights system, and through enactments of racism, make the unobservable shadow, observable. Voting registration days became protests shaped of nonviolent trickery designed to get the town's sheriff, James Clark, to do what King called "tip his hand," or act out his racist ways so that the media's camera could witness and broadcast the events live to the nation.

Mark Kurlansky, in his book *Nonviolence: The History of a Dangerous Idea* (2006), states that "while every major language has a word for violence, there is no word to express the idea of nonviolence" (p. 5). Gandhi (1962) states that the closest terminology to nonviolence comes from the Sanskrit word *ahimsa*. "*Ahimsa* is a derivative of the word *himsa*, which means to harm. *Ahimsa* is the complete absence of violence in word and even thought as well as action" (p. xxv). *Ahimsa* is a philosophical, spiritual stance that is evolutionary in nature and can never truly be achieved (Kurlansky, 2006; Gandhi, 1962). "Nonviolence is a perfect stage. It is a goal towards which all humanity moves naturally, though unconsciously" (Gandhi, 1962, p. xxv).

In the Chinese language, the word closest to nonviolence is *teh*. "In Taoism, there is a concept embodied in the *teh*. Not exactly nonviolence, which is an active force, *teh* is the virtue of not fighting—nonviolence is the path to *teh*." (Kurlansky, 2006, p. 11). The term that comes closest to nonviolence is the



Islamic term *jihad*, which means "nonviolent activism;" to strive with great intensity for a relationship with Allah. Unfortunately, the internal struggle is misunderstood as an outer goal of converting the other to Islam, in the name of God. In its essence, however, the word *jihad* supports the journey of nonviolent activism or the process of individuation (Kurlansky, 2006).

Gandhi's term *satyagraha* means actively seeking and holding onto the truth, or consciousness (Gandhi, 1962, p. xxiv). *Satyagraha* is an active stance, a holding of the tension of opposing psychic forces of conscious to unconscious states, where *ahimsa* is a stance against violence in thought, word, and deed. Essentially, nonviolence is a feminine practice that has the potential to transform time and space, bridging what Jung referred to as the "spirit of the times" with the "spirit of the deep" transmuting through aggression, splits both current and transgenerational.

By the time the patient arrives in the consulting room, they have likely endured years of suffering inflicted by an oppressive inner other whom they are convinced lives outside of themselves. It is a suffering so engrained that the patient has yet to define him- or herself as a person of free will, able to individuate from and in relationship to their personal shadow. As a devoted satyagrahi, the analyst is trained to contain the patient's suffering without inflicting violence on the patient's sacred self. It is an *active* activism, a body-mind, conscious to unconscious tension bearing experience designed to consistently mediate the inner other who oppresses the patient's ego, occluding the inner potential embedded deep within the shadow complex. Each

consultation lays bare the patient's desire for an inner democracy of truth and self-love.

Although this process causes violent eruptions within the ego, it does not damage the patient's soul but instead stimulates the ego/self-relationship. Holding the tension of opposites, the analyst's hermetic capacity fortifies the creative stance of activism, enabling the analyst to challenge projections, explore fantasies and nourish the imagination emergent in the third, the *tao* of healing. The analyst's capacity to work through countertransference feelings (violent and nonviolent) offered up by the patient serves to develop the analyst's humanity as well. Gandhi's tenets of *satyagraha* and *ahimsa* are the central tenets that sit alongside King's six philosophical tenets and form the fingerprint of archetypal nonviolence delivered to America via the Civil Right movement. In sum, King's six tents state that:

*“Nonviolence is not a passive nonresistance against evil, but an active, nonviolent resistance to evil”* (King, 1958, p. 90). *“Nonviolence does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his friendship and understanding”* (p. 91); *“Nonviolence is directed at the forces of evil, but not those who happen to be doing the evil”* (p. 90); *The nonviolent resister is willing to accept violence if necessary, but never to inflict it* (p. 92), and *“nonviolence avoids not only external but internal violence”* (p. 92). Finally, *“nonviolence is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice”* (p. 92), a notion which is similar to Jung's transcendent function. These tenets practiced consistently for

years before Selma provided integrity to the alchemical vessel that Selma would become.

### The Eightfold Path of Nonviolence

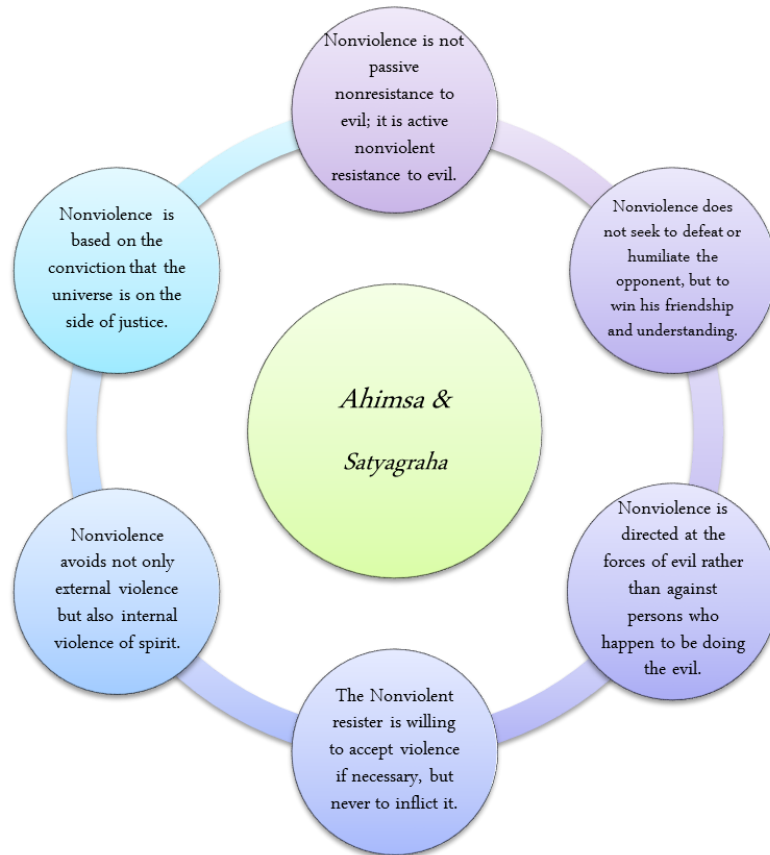


Image 1

Campaigns for truth and a nonviolent, conscious life are defined and driven by the failures and successes of any inner battle; indeed, the inner battle becomes the outer battle when unawareness, hubris, and suffering become too unbearable. Psychic defenses and the ego's need to maintain control over the

wounded, vulnerable inner other can trap the ego in obstinance, driven to maintain a position of power at all costs. In the outer world, this can become exceedingly painful as the battle for the survival of the "old way" is usurped by the self's imperative demanding change from the inside. Those who could deliver the seeds of consciousness into the collective became the carriers of the dream and the transgenerational agents of change; many willing to sacrifice themselves for the cause. As America witnessed her shadow side, demand for reconciliation sparked embers of rebellion in cities across the nation.

Three nodal points in the Selma campaign defined the shifting of the national landscape leading to the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, all taking place on the Edmund Pettus bridge: Bloody Sunday, Turn Around Tuesday, and the final crossing into Montgomery. In each crossing attempt, the two sides of the split met; both sides carriers of the racist complex, both cultural and personal, each side containing the oppressed other whose identities were shaped by their individual and transgenerational wounds of slavery.

Blacks defined one half of the split, the oppressed slave whose very souls depended on an immediate reconciliation. Whites shaped the other half of the divide defined by historical power and abuse. Both sides were defensively armed with economic, psychological, and emotional reasons for their positions, transgenerationally defined by chattel slavery, the Civil War, and reconstruction. More importantly, both sides carried the solution to racism should it become accessible through the alchemical procedure of nonviolent shadow integration.

Whereas the archetypal master-slave relationship is ruled by oppression, violence, and dependency, its compensatory shadow is the dream delivered, in this case, through the vote, the image of freedom, the architect of new psychic life. However, On Bloody Sunday, the troopers blocked the marchers' first attempt at Montgomery, the abusive master's hubris unwilling still to reflect and supplicate to the nonviolent truth Bloody Sunday held. The images of brutalized marchers being gassed and beaten by state troopers were broadcast nationally. Consequently, Bloody Sunday shaped the image of the change needed.



*Image 2 Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965*



*Image 3 Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965*



*Image 4 Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965*

The rage from this event catalyzed the national call for another march by King. Ostensibly, two days later, a second attempt to bridge crossing became known as Turn Around Tuesday, March 9, 1965.



*Image 5 Turnaround Tuesday*

Violence and nonviolence shapeshift in unexpected ways, which can create a whiplash effect, nonviolence peeling open the depths of the complex constellating murderous rage which cannot be contained. Such was the case in the loss of lives in Selma: Jimmie Lee Jackson, Reverend James Reeb, and Viola Liuzzo, these losses subsequently occurring at the beginning, middle, and end of the march.

On Turn Around Tuesday, King, risking further death and retaliation, negotiated a covert agreement with the government not to march to Montgomery. However, King would also openly defy the government and its injunction forbidding the march by telling his followers that he would march no matter what. Indeed, King was caught in a double bind. By marching, he betrayed the government and its federal order, while turning around on the bridge would betray the movement. Indeed, not crossing would be viewed by all as a supplication, once again, to the master. In the end, King's steely determination and trickster ways left an open ambivalence in which he stated to the government that he would attempt to turn around but could not guarantee that his people would follow (Kotz, 2005, pp. 289-291).

On Turn Around Tuesday, over two thousand marchers found their way to the center of the bridge guided by the song "We Shall Overcome." After addressing the state troopers, the marchers silently kneeled and openly prayed. Then, at King's prompting, the group turned around, following back across the bridge into Selma, as the troopers subsequently cleared the road to Montgomery, thus constellating in King the archetypal image of the hero turned martyr (Garrow, 1978, p. 405).

President Lyndon Johnson, a Southerner himself, carried the suffering of racism in his personal history. He wanted legislation passed, albeit on government time. However, Johnson, too, was in a double bind. In supporting the marches, he risked that any deaths would be blamed on him, the injunction's committed infraction, thus ruling him powerless. If he did not support the



movement, the marchers, disobeying a federal injunction, risked more violence and death, in which case he would also be blamed. Indeed, King and Johnson were shadows of each other, each reflecting their egoic positions of a need for power while also holding the tension of archetypal democracy that set the stage to change the nation. For the archetypal relationship of master/slave to shift, each had to trust one another, implicitly supplicating power to relatedness, aggression transmuted through trust.

In *The Book of Symbols* (Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism, 2010), the bridge is noted as a symbol of spiritual union: "Psyche appears to support the separation of conscious from the unconscious, but also a bridging that brings them into creative relationship" (p. 626). By walking across the bridge and holding a meditative, prayerful vigil, King was neither breaking the law by marching nor cooperating with evil by not marching. He simply held the tension of third, not knowing what to do, and by that action bridged what, until that moment in time, were two splits in culture. The African American won the government's support, and the law enforcement officials, choosing not to retaliate, won the support of the nation. The moment of silence on the bridge ushering in a new paradigm, a creative act engendered by the collective unconscious. Weeks later, the marchers would make their way to Montgomery with the protection of the national guard.



*Image 5 The Edmund Pettus Bridge*

Similarly, the process of bridging between the ego and the self occurs analytically for the patient who is on their own journey of activism (individuation). The defenses which blind and bind the patient to their behaviors effectively crumbles as the analyst holds the mirror up to their shadow complex. Thus, moving forward in a new way can mean a particular kind of paralysis or egoic destruction/reconstruction is being offered up by the unconscious, catalyzing through the double bind, a surrender to the self, a path of *teh*. The softness of an inner vulnerability overcomes a calcified position, opening the way to Montgomery.

It is today, sixty years later, that the alchemical opus has come full circle. Once named after the Grand dragon of the KKK, the Edmund Pettus bridge is due to become the John Lewis Bridge, the result of the thousands of marchers' desire to dream King's "beloved community" into being. While mired in violence, their nonviolence efforts bear a continued examination and scrutiny as an ethos vital to our existential existence.

In an analysis, the individual's activism journey is a series of bridge crossings, with the analyst holding the nonviolent philosophical tension of the opposites while implementing tactics that emerge uniquely in the third. Nonviolence provides the path within which the patient and analyst find the bridging, together, thus mediating the violent waters of the unconscious with nonviolence, building, once again, a hopeful, fuller experience of life as the patient walks home to Montgomery guided by their true north, the Self.

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## Photos

Image #1: The Eightfold Path of Nonviolence; the tenets of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Image #2: Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965; Spider Martin Archives, University of Texas Austin, Texas

Analysis and Activism 2020 + U.S. Presidency Conference

Image #3: Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965; Spider Martin Archives,  
University of Texas Austin, Texas

Image #4: Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965; Spider Martin Archives,  
University of Texas Austin, Texas

Image #5: The Edmund Pettus Bridge, Selma, Alabama;  
[www.thecrazytourist.com](http://www.thecrazytourist.com)

# Declining Divisions: Non-Binary Gender Identities and American Cultural Consciousness

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Those persons we refer to as transgender or gender non-confirming have existed cross-culturally and throughout history. These individuals took on social roles and behaviors that differed from those expected for their apparent sex designation at birth. Among many Native American tribes, for example, elders observed gender variance within children and performed initiation ceremonies to honor them in appropriate social roles for their nature (Williams, 1986). In many cases, gender variance was treated as a sacred gift, and its recipient was marked for additional gifts, such as dreams, visions, and healing.

Much of this changed, however, under the influence of European Christianity, as missionaries and explorers imposed their own gender essentialist views upon native peoples (Williams, 1986). Gender variant individuals were punished, persecuted, and ultimately murdered, falling victim to the unforgiving forces of religious colonization. As a result, much of Western culture inherited a strictly binary system of gender, thought to be inherent. Even today, many conservative Americans insist that humans come in only two types, male and female, identified by genitals and unchangeable.

The initial resurgence of non-binary gender identities in the United States is difficult to trace, simply because of this binary hegemony (McNabb, 2018). Americans have historically lacked language or societal constructs which would allow for the possibility of non-binary gender identities. At the beginning of the twentieth century, for example, sexual orientation and gender identity were readily confused, such that lesbians who did not conform to social expectations of femininity were sometimes referred to as a “third sex” (Leng, 2014, p. 227).

Transgender activist Kate Bornstein (1994) experienced this lack of understanding during her own journey of transition during the mid-1980s. Describing her thought process, she wrote:

I know I'm not a man—about that much I'm very clear, and I've come to the conclusion that I'm probably not a woman either, at least according to a lot of people's rules on this sort of thing. The trouble is, we're living in a world that insists we be one or the other—a world that doesn't bother to tell us exactly what one or the other is. (p. 8, emphasis in original)

As a result, Bornstein experienced deep shame for her own confusing feelings, ultimately transitioning to a female identity simply because doing so was less painful than continuing to falsely present as male. Later, her 1994 memoir was provocatively titled *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us*.

The term “genderqueer” is analogous to non-binary, referring to persons who identify as neither male nor female, or some combination of the two. The first known usage of genderqueer appeared in the Spring 1995 issue of the newsletter “In Your Face: Political Activism Against Gender Oppression.” In the same brief note, editrix Riki Anne Wilchins (1995) presciently referred to persons “transgressively gendered” and “those of us whose gender expressions are so complex they haven't even been named yet” (p. 4). Two years later, Wilchins (1997) went on to argue that strictly binary gender concepts were rejected by Americans specifically because they threatened the machinery of heterosexism. “The unstructured multiplicity,” she wrote, “the sheer creativity of queer genders strike at the very foundations of heterosexuality, and this is exactly why queers have historically been targets for straight prejudice, bashing, and outright hatred” (p. 68).



The concept of non-binary gender identities remained obscure in American culture for another two decades. The ubiquitous search engine, Google, allows users to trace the frequency of search terms over multiple years. Google searches for the term, “non-binary,” remained almost nonexistent until 2013, when they began to escalate significantly. Another indicator of this rapid change is its appearance within official documents. No form of government identification existed in the United States for non-binary persons until 2017. Now, in 2021, eighteen states and the District of Columbia offer driver’s licenses with an “X” gender designation. Thirteen states currently allow corrected birth certificates with the same marker.

This increased attention, however, has failed to translate into unanimous acceptance. When Oregon pioneered gender-neutral driver’s licenses, social media generated a plethora of angry comments, disparaging transgender persons as mentally ill and declaring that gender could not exist beyond the male/female binary (KOB1-TV NBC 5, 2017). More recently, when Joseph R. Biden Jr. became the first U.S. President to officially recognize the Transgender Day of Visibility, thousands of Americans vilified transgender persons and insisted that non-binary genders were a religious and natural impossibility (Biden, 2021). The vehement and irrational nature of these reactions marks the existence of what I have elsewhere called the “Pentheus complex.”

The Pentheus complex seeks to guard an archetypal core that I believe is best represented by the encounter between the god Dionysus and Pentheus, King of Thebes. Euripides’ epic poem, *The Bacchae*, tells the story of Dionysus returning to the city of his birth to publicly lay claim to his divinity (Woodruff, 1999). Years earlier, his mother had been impregnated by Zeus, yet few in the village believed her story (Kerenyi, 1951/1980). Semele implored Zeus to prove the truthfulness of her tale by revealing

himself in glory, but when he did so, both she and her house were destroyed. Zeus rescued Dionysus from Semele's womb, and sewed the fetus into his own thigh until it could be fully formed. As a consequence, the young god was called twice-born, delivered first from a female, but second from a male. For his safety, Dionysus was entrusted to mortals who raised the child as a girl. This unusual origin would foreshadow Dionysus' own peculiar nature.



*Image 1 Second century Roman statue of Dionysus, Louvre Museum*

Typically depicted as male, yet notably effeminate in body and manner, Dionysus became the subject of scorn. The young god was given names in reference to the phallus, yet also called “the man without true virility,” “the womanish,” “the man-womanly,” and even “the hybrid” in an intersex (what used to be termed hermaphroditic) sense (Kerenyi, 1951/1980, p. 273). Dionysus appears in various artworks flaunting a rejection of gendered cultural expectations, wearing feminine clothing and hairstyles. Even the early Christian apologist, Justin Martyr, condemned Dionysus’ “feminine nature,” including the habit of “decorating himself with cymbals, and garlands, and female attire” (Martyr,

150/1868, p. 281).

In modern terms, Dionysus could be seen as non-binary in terms of gender identity. Early rituals represented this essence of the god by means of a vertical pole, upon which hung a bearded mask and a woman's robe, a combination of explicitly

masculine and feminine referents (Evans, 1988). Dionysian rites involved men dressing in women's clothing, and women wearing exaggerated faux phalluses made from red leather (Evans, 1988). Karl Kerényi (1976) noted that according to at least some sources, these rites appear to have involved the castration of some male-identified followers, again blurring simplistic, binary gender distinctions.

Upon his return to Thebes, villagers refused to recognize the mature Dionysus' divinity and took him before Pentheus, their king (Woodruff, 1999). Here, the story becomes especially interesting. Dionysus was taken before King Pentheus, who likewise scoffed at Dionysus' claims to divinity. It was not enough, however, for Pentheus to simply regard Dionysus as fully human. Rather, Pentheus began to inventory the god's androgynous features:

Well, well. Not bad. You're actually quite good-looking.  
I mean, to women. Of course, that's why you came to Thebes.  
This long hair of yours—you're no wrestler, are you—  
These curls along your cheek—oh, they'll swoon for you—  
And this fine complexion—you had to work on that,  
Staying out of the sun, in the shadows, hunting,  
With your pretty face for sex. Aphrodite's business. (Woodruff, 1999, p. 17)

Knowing that *The Bacchae* was written as a stage play, readers can imagine how this scene would be staged. Pentheus slowly walks around Dionysus, stroking the god's long hair, touching the god's smooth cheeks. The king describes the body of Dionysus in erotic terms. He acknowledges the beauty of Dionysus, but then rushes to reassert his own heterosexuality, claiming to only notice what the *women* of Thebes might appreciate. At the same time, Pentheus highlights Dionysus' feminine qualities to exclude the god from stereotypically male roles such as wrestling, hunting, and outdoor labor.



*Image 2 Alan Cumming as Dionysus, Tony Curran as Pentheus, from [alancumming.com](http://alancumming.com).*

Queer readers, in particular, can see both revulsion and arousal in Pentheus' peculiar attention to a body that transgresses social norms. The king's reaction to Dionysus illustrates a cluster of associations, experiences, and memories linked to gender, revealing his own anxiety at feeling forced to maintain the norms of cisgender, heterosexual men. Martha Nussbaum (1990) wrote of Pentheus:

He mocks the soft, sinuous, feminine form of Dionysus; his long curls, “full of desire,” his untanned skin, suggestive of the indoor world of women, his womanly form. For this aspect of the god threatens the hard boundaries between categories on which Pentheus insists. But he himself is drawn in complex ways to that womanly condition—both sexually attracted (“you’re not impossible to look at”) and drawn through identification and longing. He desires the condition of womanly passivity, even while he scorns it. He desires the dissolution of boundaries, even while he insists on them most firmly. (pp. xxxvii-xxxviii)



Image 3 Attic Red Figure,  
Harvard Art Museums

Pentheus' simultaneous revulsion and arousal mirrors the response of many modern Americans to the ambiguity that transgender and gender non-conforming persons present. As Patricia Berry (2008) explained, we as humans construct hard gender dichotomies (among others) in order to avoid feelings of inferiority, even while we remain privately enthralled by the violation of such markers.

I would like to reframe the scene between

Dionysus and Pentheus. Pentheus is the king of Thebes—a privileged person of wealth, education, and power. He holds the authority to declare whether society will recognize Dionysus' true nature. This power differential mirrors the relative position of Jungian analysts, therapists, or scholars with regard to transgender and non-binary persons. They, along with medical professionals, represent what members of the transgender and non-binary community refer to as *gatekeepers*—persons to whom society has given authority to either grant or deny access to the mechanisms of gender transition. Dionysus reflects the divine androgyne, a non-binary figure whose identity is subject to the king only due to society's default of rejection and disaffirmation.

Jungian analysts and scholars are not immune to preconceived prejudices in this arena. The first time I spoke on the subject of gender identity at a Jungian conference, one analyst confidently proclaimed that every transgender client he had worked with had an anima or animus that stood opposite to their gender assigned at birth. From his

gender-essentialist perspective, this invalidated the reality of his clients' stated gender identity. This analyst's declaration went unchallenged by the other analysts and scholars present.

Another analyst uses her Jungian credentials to support an active career in anti-transgender activism, arguing in professional journals, podcasts, and popular media that young transgender or non-binary persons should not be allowed to transition, because their gender identity is the illusory image of a "psychic epidemic" (Marchiano, 2017, p. 145). In one interview, she expressed that a minor's declaration of transgender or non-binary identity should be treated no differently than their longing for the newest model of iPhone (Murphy, 2017). With perhaps her most callous tone, she dismisses the fact that over forty percent of non-affirmed transgender teens report suicide attempts (Haas, 2014), arguing that the existence of transitioning adults proves that transgender teens can (and should) survive their dysphoria without gender-affirming treatment (Marchiano, 2017). This analyst's extreme views make her a popular voice within *Fourth Wave Now*, an organization of parents who adamantly refuse to accept their transgender or non-binary children's gender identity, let alone provide proper medical and therapeutic treatment.

The fact that such outmoded views exist in contrast to the vast majority of medical and psychological professionals should not be surprising in a world that seems increasingly polarized and torn apart. Most recently, even one of the world's most popular children's authors has inexplicably chosen to raise her voice against transgender persons, particularly transgender women. The damage created by these views is incalculable when it comes to disaffirmation, rejection, exclusion, denial of treatment, and in too many cases, murder.

I would argue that views such as these are not ultimately Jungian, regardless of the gender-essentialist framework which many have attributed to C. G. Jung. For Jung, the androgyne or hermaphrodite (a word that has fallen out of favor since, replaced by intersex) was an important symbol of psychic development. From his words, I believe we can see non-binary persons as a harbinger of cultural change—not just in what is increasingly accepted, but what is taking place psychically on a collective level, despite the resistance we see nightly on news broadcasts.

As we can see from the medieval writings the primordial idea has become a symbol of the creative union of opposites, a ‘uniting symbol’ in the literal sense. In its functional significance the symbol no longer points back, but forward to a goal not yet reached. Notwithstanding its monstrosity, the hermaphrodite has gradually turned into a subduer of conflicts and a bringer of healing, and it acquired this meaning in relatively early phases of civilization. This vital meaning explains why the image of the hermaphrodite did not fade out in primeval times but, on the contrary, was able to assert itself with increasing profundity of symbolic content for thousands of years. . . . As civilization develops, the bisexual [i.e., bi-gendered, or non-binary] primordial being turns into a symbol of the self, where the war of opposites finds peace. In this way the primordial being becomes the distant goal of man’s self-development, having been from the very beginning a projection of his unconscious wholeness. Wholeness consists in the union of the conscious and the unconscious personality” (Jung, 1951/1969, pp. 174-175).

Writing elsewhere about the alchemical production of the famed Philosopher’s Stone, Jung (1959/1969) noted that “everything separated must be united again” (p. 170) making the long-suffering distillation of the stone a symbol of individuation.

While I would not presume for a moment to misconstrue Jung by arguing that non-binary persons are somehow further along this project of self-development as

individuals, I wish to suggest that the rapid rise of non-binary visibility since 2013 speaks to something happening in the broader American culture—that even as we are fighting what seems like ideological civil wars, something is taking place on a deeper level.

A recent Pew Research Center (Dimock & Wike, 2020) report discussed the unique degree to which Americans are divided along political lines. “America’s relatively rigid, two-party electoral system stands apart by collapsing a wide range of legitimate social and political debates into a singular battle line that can make our differences appear even larger than they may actually be” (para. 7). Certainly, both news and social media highlight what seems like an insurmountable polarization within American culture.

Regardless of how vociferous American political divisions may seem, however, the majority of Americans desire compromise and unity. In a survey just prior to the 2020 presidential election, Pew Research Center found that 86% of Trump supporters, and 89% of Biden supporters believed that if their preferred candidate was elected, he should “focus on addressing the concerns of all Americans, even if it means disappointing some of [their] supporters” (Dimock & Wike, 2020, para 10). Jennifer Wolak (2020), an associate professor of political science at the University of Colorado at Boulder, found that 78% of Americans prefer members of Congress who show willingness to compromise with their fellow legislators. While political views may represent a limited view of division and unity, these studies suggest that Americans yearn for wholeness and healing.

Jung (1933/1970) wrote that “all art intuitively apprehends coming changes in the collective consciousness” (p. 83). In recent years, non-binary persons such as Sam Smith (singer), Jonathan Van Ness (stylist), Ruby Rose (actor), and Indya Moore (actor)



have become increasingly prominent in the arts and media. In 2019, Merriam-Webster declared singular “they,” a pronoun used by many non-binary persons, as their Word of the Year. The American Civil Liberties Union (2021) has recently launched an effort through petitions and other means, advocating for federal identification such as passports to be issued with accurate gender markers for non-binary persons. The growing prominence of these signals, whether in the arts of performance, writing, or self-representation, herald a change in the collective consciousness toward what Jung (1951/1969) acknowledged as a symbol of future healing, conflict resolution, and wholeness.

Might I suggest, then, that as we analysts and scholars fill the role of privileged Pentheus, we welcome the divine Dionysus who enters our spaces? However, they might present as individuals—be it androgynous, femme, masculine-of-center, or whatever they might choose—let us see them as not only beautiful individuals, but also as messengers of the *anima mundi*, calling us to a collective unity that will advance psyche. As we do so, we may all find greater freedom to become ourselves.

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**The Archetype of the Trickster in U.S. Electoral Politics:  
The Voting Rights Act (1965) and Voter Suppression  
Yesterday and Today.**

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**United States**

Analytical psychology and the phenomenology of the Trickster archetype are engaged to interrogate the adverse impacts of changes to the U.S. Voting Rights Act of 1965, and to explain old and newer 21<sup>st</sup> century forms of voter suppression in U.S. electoral partisan politics and the racism embedded therein. I propose that Jung's framework for transformative change can be adopted to imagine reforms to cure the national psychopathology of racism and corruption in U.S. electoral politics.

### **Historical Perspective on the Trickster and Tricksterism**

The archetype of the Trickster is defined by Jung (1954) in his essay, 'On the psychology of the trickster figure' and offers the ground in analytical psychology upon which to construct our understanding and meaning of the resurgence of voter suppression as an assault on the lives of African Americans, People of Color and an American Multicultural democracy. Jung states:

The trickster is a collective shadow figure, a summation of all the inferior traits of character in individuals. And since the individual shadow is never absent as a component of personality, the collective figure can construct itself out of it continually. Not always, of course, as a mythological figure but in consequence of the increasing repression and neglect of the original mythologems, as a corresponding projection on other social groups and nations. . . The most rudimentary insight into the shadow sometimes causes the greatest difficulties for the modern European. (CW 9i, p 270 paras 484, 486)

In the post-Jungian scholarship, Samuels (1993) locates the archetypal energies of the trickster in the theatre of politics and the realities of the political economy. Samuels and Hopcke (1989), both speak of the trickster archetype as a trans-cultural

phenomena found in mythology, as well as in the individual and collective psyche. Samuels states: 'For the Greeks, the arch-trickster was Hermes, with his tendency to play jokes, to lie, to cheat, to steal, to deny reality, and to engage in grandiose fantasy' (1993, p.81). Genuine tricksters, from Coyote in North America to Ananse or Eshu in West Africa, follow this pattern, undermining the prevailing organization of power and even the perceived structure of reality itself. Tricksters can certainly be seen as personifications of primary process activity, challenging and disregarding the laws of time, space and place. Samuels speculates about why trickster mounts this challenge and concludes '*precisely to test the limits of those laws*' (1993, p. 81).

I would add that the Trickster archetype manifests in a bipolarity that can be whimsical, fun, instructive and helpful. As an advisor and guide it can offer insights at the crossroads where decisions are made and direction is needed. Among the Yoruba of Nigeria and in derivative religious beliefs and practices that include Santeria, Curandismo and Candomble, in the southern hemisphere, Eshu or Elegba is the guide at the crossroads of decisions and an intermediary to the Orisa or African Gods and Goddesses. He can open the pathway to the depths of the self. He will carry your prayers and advocate for you. So, the positive aspects of the trickster archetype can well serve individuation. However, the negative aspect of the trickster, presents in the psychopathology of racism or as racialized cultural complexes (Brewster, 2020), that have infected the landscape of American psyche, its system of electoral politics, the U.S. Congress, the judiciary, national law enforcement and the military in the assault to the Voting Rights Acts of 1965. We see this in the resurgence of modernized traditions of voter suppression at all levels of state government in both formally 'covered jurisdictions' and new jurisdictions; and through the inaction of the legislative and

judicial branches of the U.S. Government and the militarized armed law enforcement targeting the Black Lives Matter movement in the exercise of the First Amendment rights to free speech and peaceful protest.

The psychology of the trickster is particularly relevant to the interrogation of the impact(s) on the Voting Rights Act (VRA) (1965) from the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013).

Signed into national law by President Lyndon B. Johnson August 6, 1965, the (VRA) is a centerpiece and marker of transformative change derived from the U.S. Civil Rights movement that began early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It ensured the right to vote proffered in the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment of the U.S. Constitution (1857). The VRA focused on the enfranchisement of African Americans excluded from voting in the U.S. electoral process by voter suppression in paradigmatic practices among the states that formed the Union. As well, the VRA intuited a Multicultural American Democracy and sought to enfranchise other populations of color, Native Americans, Latinx and Asian Americans that had been summarily excluded from full participation in electoral politics contravening the Federal laws and the U.S. Constitution.

The VRA grew out its predecessor, the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1957 and the U.S. Civil Rights movement for social justice, equality and inclusion in the U.S. political economy from 1950, (Franklin and Moss, 2000; Hampton, 1986-1990) and today in the Black Lives Matter movement (Vaughan, 2021). The VRA included important provisions in Sections 2 and 5. Section 2 continues to offer nationwide coverage and targets policies and practices that impede the ability of communities of color to elect the candidates of their choice. Section 5, also known as “pre-clearance”, required states and counties with a proven historical record of discriminatory voting practices to obtain

certification or pre-clearance before making any changes to election laws and procedures within their jurisdictions. This was to ensure that the proposed changes were not discriminatory in intent and impact. The pre-clearance set up a simple administrative regime in which jurisdictions could get that certification from the U.S. Attorney General in the Department of Justice or the U.S. District court for the District of Columbia. For nearly 50 years, this helped protect voters of color in jurisdictions with a history of racial discrimination, principally southern states during the period of post-Civil War Reconstruction (1863-1877). They continue today to resist full citizenship rights and liberties for populations of color. Across the arc of history, this active resistance has taken the forms of Jim Crow laws, economic and political violence, terror campaigns, murder, and mass incarceration of African Americans. Voter suppression continues in the organized domestic terror campaigns of the current generation of white supremacist organizations.

### **Shelby County v. Holder (2013)**

The intent and successful impacts of the Voting Rights Act were both acknowledged and undermined by the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case of *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S.529, (2013). The court removed Section 5, the pre-clearance provision of the VRA, which required all formally covered jurisdictions to apply for federal approval to make any changes to the state election laws. Section 2 of the VRA is currently being challenged in the U. S. Supreme Court by the state of Arizona in the case of *Bronvich v. Democratic National Committee* (2021)). The majority opinion in *Shelby* was written by Chief Justice Roberts who opined, in part, that the basis for the court's decision is " because the disparate treatment of the states is based on 40-year-old facts



having no logical relationship to the present day and thus is not responsive to current needs". (Shelby, 2013)

Roberts determined that the VRA had been immensely successful in redressing racial discrimination and racial integration in the voting process, thanks to the VRA (Shelby, 2013). But he added that if "Congress had started from scratch in 2006, it plainly could not have enacted the present coverage formula."

The coverage formula is Section 4(a) of the Act. It established a formula to identify those areas where race-based discrimination was more prevalent in the country and to provide for more stringent remedies where appropriate. The coverage formula was the measure of disparities between eligible votes cast by African Americans and European Americans, based on local and state population demographics.

(<https://www.justice.gov/crt/section-4-voting-rights-act>).

According to the Court, "Regardless of how you look at the record no one can fairly say that it shows anything approaching the 'pervasive,' 'flagrant,' 'widespread,' and 'rampant' discrimination that faced Congress in 1965, that clearly distinguished the covered jurisdictions from the rest of the nation." (Shelby, 2013). In effect the coverage is no longer necessary today because the discrimination is less prevalent. So, there is not a need for the act" (Shelby, 2013). It should be noted that Justice Roberts was against the VRA as a young lawyer in the state of Arizona and subsequently as a law clerk to U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Rehnquist (1924-2005).

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote a dissenting opinion in the case. The dissent would have held that Congress had sufficient evidence before it to determine that the coverage formula remained responsive to current needs. She went on to say that discrimination in voting has decreased in the covered jurisdictions since enactment of

the Voting Rights Act in 1965, but attributed much of that decrease to the Act itself, noting that "[t]hrowing out pre-clearance when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet." (Shelby, 2013) .

The truth of the dissenting opinion was born out of the shadow of American psyche through the agency of the Trickster archetype in current U.S. electoral politics, yesterday and today.

### **Post-election: phenomenology of the trickster archetype unhinged**

The contemporaneous example of the phenomenology of the Trickster archetype is evident in U.S. post-election partisan politics and in the collective of citizens through the agency of racialized cultural complexes. The incumbent President lost the election by some ten million popular votes. In my opinion, he is now completely possessed by the negative energies of the trickster; engaged in denial, corruption, deception, destruction, manipulation and vengeful primary process behaviors and narcissism that assault the ideals of American Multicultural democracy. The trickster was evident in inflaming an insurrection and attack on the U.S. Capitol, January 6, 2021, through lies and propaganda. The motivation was a desperate effort to stop the certification of the Electoral College vote and to support the partisan platform of an alleged fraudulent election as the basis for biased reforms to election laws in old and new paradigms of voter suppression.

Pelton describes the archetypal energies of the trickster in ways that are relevant today:

Loutish, lustful, puffed up with boasts and lies, ravenous for foolery and food, yet managing always to draw order from ordure, the trickster appears in the myths and folktales of nearly every traditional society, sometimes as a god, more often as an animal. Seeming trivial and altogether lawless, he arouses affection and even esteem wherever his stories are told, as he defies mythic seriousness and social logic. Just as skillfully, he has slipped out of our contemporary interpretive nets to thumb his nose at both scholarly and popular understanding of so-called primitive peoples. Yet these peoples too know their tricksters as the very embodiment of elusiveness.

(Pelton 1980, p. 1)

To clarify and to provide a decolonizing multicultural lens sensitive to perspectivism and historical context, I would add here that the so called ‘primitive peoples’ should be construed and understood as a reference to the earliest transcultural layers of the human psyche from which the archetypal energies of the trickster are mediated and expressed in complexes and patterns of behavior rather than a negative reference to a particular ethnic group.

Edwards and Mason (1985) describe aspects of the trickster, expressed as agency through the deity of Elegba or Esu among the Orisa or pantheon of Yoruba-African gods and goddesses. “He resides at the crossroads in decisions; he is the owner of vital power, the Orisa that offers choices” (p. 11).

Elegba brings out the fool in man. His weapons are trickery and deceit. He is said to be a good Orisa to use for exacting revenge. He does this by his ability to mislead or trick people onto the wrong paths. He is called the God of Mischief because he offers options which lead to the disruptive collision of men’s paths. However, Elegba’s idea of mischief is not just the irresponsible playfulness of a child, it goes much deeper. The type of mischief we are referring to finds its

origins in the evil, which is below the surface of chicanery. Implicit in the mischief is the possibility of disaster.

(Edwards and Mason 1985, p. 14)

### **Voter Suppression Campaign: Chicanery, Corruption, Evil**

In the aftermath of the Shelby decision the resurgence of racial discrimination and voter suppression against African Americans and other people of color were immediate, regressive and transparent. Since the ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013), states have removed online voting registration, early voting, "Souls to the Polls" or Sunday voting, same-day registration, and pre-registration for teens about to turn 18. More states have implemented laws requiring government issued identifications and become more aggressive in expunging allegedly ineligible voters from registration rolls, e.g., Georgia, Iowa, Texas. Three years after the ruling (2016), 868 polling places had been closed down. In 2018, five years after the decision in Shelby, nearly 1000 polling places had been closed in the country, in predominantly African-American counties; and jurisdictions where African Americans had the highest voter turn out in the 2008 election of President Barack Obama. (Brenan Center for Justice, 2020)

In 2018, a report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (a bipartisan, independent commission of the United States federal government) found that there had been a growth in discriminatory laws making it harder for people of color to vote. The commission found that at least 23 states enacted restrictive voter laws, such as closures of polling places, cuts to early voting, purges of voter rolls and imposition of strict voter ID laws. This level of ongoing discrimination confirms what was true before 1965, when the Voting Rights Act became law, and has remained true since 1965. Americans need

strong and effective federal protections to guarantee that ours is a real democracy. This contravenes the views of the majority opinion in the Roberts' court.

In 2020, the U.S. presidency and majority rule of the U.S. Senate was lost to the Republican Party. Coupled with the earlier loss of the majority in the U.S. House of Representatives (2018), it generated a more aggressive wave of Southern and libertarian strategies of tricksterism. According to the Brannan Center (2021), 43 Republican state legislatures have recently enacted 211 bills designed to restrict voting in traditional and new paradigmatic practices. The intent of these freely enacted election laws is to restrict voting by African Americans and other people of color and to preserve white supremacy within the state and country by any and all means. They include: a propaganda campaign of voter fraud; incitement and insurrection; manipulation of opaque domestic and foreign capital contributions to elections; purposeful cultivation of chaos and confusion in the collective American psyche; an attack on fact-based truth; duplicity in intent, impacts and outcomes seen in the Shelby decision.

The positive effect of these blatant actions is that they illuminated shadow aspects of the phenomena of the Trickster archetype. The Trickster, affecting members of the Republican Party, has created and continues to perpetuate the false narrative that the presidential election was not legitimate, was stolen and lacked integrity, which they must restore, though no federal or state court in the nation ruled this to be true.

Republicans are unified in the message that voting restrictions are needed to prevent fraud, a negative projection of the fraud to which they ascribe and are in fact guilty. In the shadow, the goal has been to create a fiction and platform to: suppress the vote; limit access to the polls in violation of the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment of the U.S. Constitution; stack the federal judiciary and U.S. Supreme Court with conservative partisan jurists,

some with limited legal experience; gerrymander and capture a once in a decade opportunity to draw new voting districts; pursue minoritarian rule and supplant the principle of majority rule, which is the ideal underlying a representative democracy. In 2045, the populations of color will outnumber populations with claims to white identities. This is a real existential fear of annihilation and the end of white supremacy (Welsing 1980). If they are left unchallenged, these extraordinarily dangerous efforts to subvert the rule of law move toward an authoritarian government and open the gates to the underworld of chaos and the destruction of democracy.

Georgia, now a purple State has enacted the Election Integrity Act (2021), known as Senate Bill 2020. The Election Integrity Act is corrupt in name, intent, spirit and the matter of the law and seeks to undermine the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the ideal of a Multicultural American democracy (Brennan Center 2021). Rather than a national agenda to improve the lives of all American citizens, the only agenda of the Republican Party, as tricksters, is the coordinated effort to win the 2022 mid term elections and the office of the U.S. presidency in 2024 by suppressing voter turn out.

### **Emergent Constructive Aspects of the Trickster Archetype.**

The cadre of African American corporate executives who recently called on corporations to condemn the wave of voter suppression laws is an example of the positive outcome of bringing the Trickster out of the shadow. Another example is the work of Stacey Abrams, the former member of the Georgia House of Representatives and founder of Fair Fight Action, an organization established in 2018 to fight voter suppression. She has been joined by the newly elected African American Senator,

Raphael Warnock in the efforts to secure election equality in the state of Georgia and to fight this newest Jim Crow legislation. Both honor the ancestral efforts of the honorable John Lewis, the recently deceased Georgian and former member of the U.S House of Representatives. He is a heroic figure in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. As part of his legacy, Lewis created new legislation, The For the People Act (2021), H.R.1, to counter the negative forces of racism enacted in voter suppression laws in 43 Republican state legislatures.

### **The For the People Act (2021)**

Corrective and broad in scope, the new legislation seeks to restore essential provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and to safeguard national elections and American democracy in the following proposed reforms.

- Modernizing Voter Registration, Restoring Voting Rights, Protecting the Ballot;
- Restoring the Voting Rights Act, D.C. and Territorial Voting Rights;
- Ending Gerrymandering;
- Election Security;
- Campaign Transparency, Countering Foreign Interference;
- Empowering Small Donors and Related Reforms;
- Enforcing Campaign Finance Laws, Strengthening Campaign Contribution Limits;
- Supreme Court Ethics Reform, Expanding Lobbyist Disclosure, FARA Reform, Recusal of Presidential Appointees;
- Executive Branch Ethics Reforms;

- Congressional Ethics Reforms;
- Disclosure of Presidential Tax Returns

## **Conclusion and Imagined Reforms**

In conclusion, Jung offers a psychological framework and helpful therapeutics for the treatment of the psychopathology of racism of which voter suppression is but one form. Through the agency of active imagination, it can be applied to the current state of U.S. Electoral Politics outlined herein. I discuss this approach briefly here and more in my chapter of the book, “Cultural Complexes in the Soul of America, Myth, Politics and Psyche,” edited by Tom Singer (2020). The chapter speaks to social justice and equity required for a Multicultural Democracy, “Every voice and every vote counts”.

I posit that Jung’s potentially curative and transformative framework offers the opportunity to heal fragmentation in the psyche, soul and body politic of American society and to help realize the ideals of a Multicultural Democracy.

**Confession (s):** The original sins of America and practices of inhumanity: Genocide of Native Americans and appropriation of land; Slavery and inhumane system of conscription with the goals to produce capital formation, excess capital and free labor; Chinese Exclusion Act(s); Internment of Japanese Americans in Koromatu v. United States: 323 U.S. 214 (1944): Truth of Matters, own them, repair them, heal the soul of the nation plagued by corruption, greed, and the psychopathology of racism embedded in capitalism.



**Elucidation:** What, why and how is this happening in all sectors of American society and its cultural institutions, then and today? We desperately need clarification of the Truths of Matters in national and international narratives and relations.

**Education:** Which psychological and educational strategies must be implemented to cure racism within and across American psyche and its cultural institutions and to educate the citizenry and immigrants about a Multicultural narrative and perspectivism in U.S. history and public education?

**Transformation:** Truth and Reconciliation in the example of Nelson Mandela and South Africa: Psychological and economic reparations; creation of new language to counter and eradicate the fiction of race; new and reformed cultural institutions exorcised of racism.

I offer here specific recommendations for safeguarding democratic institutions and for establishing a Multicultural Democracy. This is best achieved by a direct voting system rather than a representative voting system subject to the phenomenology of the archetype of the Trickster.

1. The For the People Act (2021), H.R.1: The U.S. Congress should immediately reinstate essential provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, (sections 4 coverage formula, section 5 preclearance provision and section 2; halting the immediate resurgence of multiple updated historical forms of voter suppression paradigms through the agencies of tricksterism and racialized

cultural complexes. I believe this would require a Democratic Party majority in the U.S. Congress and the office of the presidency.

2. The Electoral College should be abandoned: A direct voting system would void the need for the Electoral College and eliminate legislated forms of corruption in the electoral process. It would open the possibility to the Transcendent and active imagining of “a more perfect union”; a Multicultural Democracy transplanted in the eco-centric ground of social justice and equality and planetary consciousness with derivative reforms; and new national and global institutions to save planet earth and to ensure the well-being of all inhabitants.

3. The Federal Election Commission should bring all states into conformity on standards and fair voting practices and procedures. The Commission should be the federal administrator for National elections and authorize a national election federal holiday.

4. The election process should be shielded from the corruption of foreign influence and unlimited campaign contributions unleashed in the Citizen’s United case (2010), decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. Denise Ramos, Polly Young- Eisendrath and others have been talking about corruption. This is a problem for the U.S, Electoral System and I believe an emerging problem in the DNA of the nation’s Governance structure. It is an architecture with fissures currently under great duress and subject to fragmentation.

5. Psychological and Economic Reparations: HR. 40.

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**U.S. Constitution: Amendments to the Constitution: 13<sup>th</sup>: 14<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup>. National Archives America's Founding Documents. <https://www.archives.gov>.**

These amendments to the U.S. Constitution after much blood, terror and suffrage were early collective efforts to treat the psychopathology of racism.

(1865) The 13<sup>th</sup> amendment of the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery in principle and created an agency for enforcement in the U.S. Congress and Congressional legislation. In reaction, the state legislatures enacted Black Codes or Jim Crow laws that sought to criminalize the behavior of African Americans unjustly; and to create comparable source of free labor through the agency of the Federal and State and prison systems that we now see in Mass incarceration.

(1868) The 14<sup>th</sup> amendment granted and guaranteed equal rights and protections under the Constitution for all born or naturalized citizens. These protections included privileges and immunities from unjust laws and public policies among the states; the

implied warrant was the entitlement of each person to life, liberty, or property; or deprivation thereof without due process of law.

(1870) The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment guaranteed rights of citizens of the United States the right to vote. It states: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Section created an agency in Congress to enforce the article by appropriate legislation.

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SECTION THREE: ANALYSIS AND ACTIVISM AROUND THE  
WORLD: PART TWO

Panel 7 - INEQUALITIES: PAST AND PRESENT,  
COLLECTIVE AND PERSONAL



Yes: There are Slave Owners in My Family.

Katherine Murphy

United Kingdom

This is a personal reflexive exploration, and owning, of my family history in the context of a disavowed chapter of British history and a facing of what I call their blood in our sugar, a riff on Andrea Stuart's *Sugar in the Blood*, her families' story of Slavery and Empire. This exploration is a move towards what Robert Frie calls the ethical responsibility to remember.

It is 5pm UK time and I am in West London. A few minutes away flows the river Thames - the magnificent phenomenon of the twice daily tidal rhythm still very visible here. I think of all the turns of British history that have happened on and with the help of this vast tidal way and the other tidal ways in the UK. I think of the hundreds of slaving ships that came into the port of London on the incoming tide bringing sugar or white gold as it came to be described by white investors, tobacco and cotton; on the outgoing tides these ships sailed across the North Atlantic to the West coast of Africa where they would load with what their owners, and investors, called another kind of gold, the black gold of chattel slaves who were then transported, or trafficked, to the Caribbean Islands and the southern coast of the USA and sold to the plantation owners. Even in these febrile times after George Floyd's shocking death, and the Black Lives Matter activism, I am reminded that the 250 years of the Transatlantic Slave trade is a mostly disavowed part of white British history. The idea of ongoing post slavery trauma for the descendants of the millions of enslaved black Africans, incarcerated in sugar or cotton plantations is still a difficult idea in white western consciousness; The British bask in the moral righteousness of the abolition of slavery in 1837 without owning their pre-eminence in the previous 250 years of slave trading and slave owning. We were not taught that the abolition legislation could only come to pass if every (white) individual who lost earnings through the abolition of slavery would be adequately compensated for their loss. A pay out financed by a borrowing of such proportions that the debt was only

paid off in 2015. We British in this audience have been contributing to this compensation. Of the many ways we have been complicit we have been implicated in bankrolling the industry of slavery. Who knew? Who chose to know?

In this brief paper I begin to explore what it means to discover your family is caught in this web of history and is actively part of a traumatic past over which we had no control. Am I/we or how am I/any of us, responsible for what we only half know and never personally lived. I do this in the belief that despite the distance of time, emotional scars and traumatic memories endure illustrating the extent to which we live our lives in the larger dimension of history. As William Faulkner said: The past is not past; It is not even over.

Levi Gahman and Elise Hjalmason write: “The creation of race and subsequent production of racial subjects offers the imperialist imagination a convenient justification and serviceable pretext to dispossess and enslave, to plunder and exterminate, acts taught to be in some distant past and thought to reside only in history, yet that continue to shatter communities and alienate individuals to this day.”

Born into the miasma of this imperialist imagination I try and face my own history and the history of white Britain.



*Image 1*

My great grandmother was born Ethel Braithwaite, daughter of James Butcher Braithwaite. Braithwaite according to Creole links is one of the 20 most common surnames in Barbados today. Like the other 19 most common surnames it is British or Scottish in origin. Braithwaite is a well-known surname in the North of England. James Butcher Braithwaite was born in 1821 in the parish of St Phillips, Barbados. What binds these pieces of information inextricably together is the sugar plantation of Three Houses, St Phillips, Barbados. A plantation owned by my ancestors the Braithwaite family from 1685 until the abolition of Slavery in 1837. Like all sugar plantations, it was a plantation worked by chattel slaves. There are 150 years of chattel slave owners in my family.



Image 2

How I wish it were different: that there were abolitionists among my ancestors—that my people were on the better side of this bloody history; but like many white people in the UK, I am explicitly descended from the perpetrators of this crime against humanity.

In a white New Zealand settler family, my kin have trawled through a lot of our family history. For whatever reason, this thread was unknowingly absent.

Perhaps because no-one knew my great grandmother, who died before my father and

his siblings were born. Maybe her father had arrived in New Zealand, leaving Barbados and a brief sojourn in England behind, to start afresh, and reinvented himself - there was no one for him to reminisce with about his early life and perhaps, therefore, these stories could remain untold; Post the abolition of slavery did these become stories the plantation owners and slavers, the investors in the transatlantic slavery never told?

This history was an uninterrogated gap until recently when a curious cousin wondered about my grandmother's family. And there we find the Braithwaites. The plantation slave owners. We know very little about why the first John Brathwaite sailed to Barbados in 1679 - the call of adventure, of wealth, a different life, an escape from Britain's bloody history at that time, a journey, perhaps, that was full of promise for him, and becomes a crime against humanity for millions of others.

Did they think about this?

There are very few personal records for any of the plantation owners. One of the few, and most notorious, is that of Mr. Thistlewood who kept a forensically detailed diary of the daily beatings, the rapes that he meted out. As I read this, I kept thinking: is this what my ancestors did? Is this what I am descended from?

There is nowhere for me to hide from knowing now that my ancestors are part of what British writer Ben Okri describes as this failure of humanity, in the context of what British historian David Olusoga calls the collective historical amnesia of the British involvement in this same past.

I so want to separate from this legacy; I don't want this to be in my family. But given the 250 years of Britain power housing the transportation of over 10 million West African men women and children, whose family do I want this history to belong to?

I can feel the pull to dissociate and disavow my own history and to “other” those other egregious white families of slavers and slave owners. To puff up with outrage about them as their statues are rightly toppled. Oh, the sanctity of othering. And the shame of owning, accounting, facing. This is me; this is us.

As I immersed myself in historic records and data, I could hear Toni Morrison’s question, threading through her book *The Origin of Others*. How much data, she asks, do you need to collect before you feel the inhumanity of this. When does the fact finding, the research, become a defence against taking ownership of this history, taking responsibility for the fundamental wrongness of it and sitting within the group perpetrating such a failure of humanity? This IS me, This IS us.

I believe that in knowing, facing and accounting for all facets of history there is the possibility of some kind of repair in the present. As James Baldwin said: Nothing can be changed that has not been faced; and not everything that is faced can be changed.

I am moved by Roger Frie’s idea of the ethical/moral responsibility to remember and his question does the commitment to remember have the power/potential to redeem(redress) crimes perpetrated by a previous generation.

In 1997 Avery Gordon, a sociologist, wrote that the impossible memories and unwritten histories continue living and often come to us as ghosts. “The ghost is not simply a dead or missing person but a social figure... an animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known...”; my personal history, our collective history is rife with ghosts that call out the savagery haunting our illusory fantasy of being civilized and our disavowed history of colonialism, slavery and genocide. The not me that we project on to others. We are being called, I believe, to feel shame of harm done and for having benefitted from that harm. Every

spoonful of sugar casually consumed here meant the desecration and obliteration of people, there.

For me, looking at this history has brought a sickening sense of shame of ancestral/collective harm done and benefitting from that harm; and I sense what Lynne Layton describes as a horrific sense of dis-illusionment and the pain of undoing of disavowal.

Lynne Layton talks of white deserved shame that arises from experiencing a conflict between ideals of decency, equality and social justice and awareness of benefitting from racial and class inequalities, from white privilege. It is important, she argues, not to bypass deserved shame, but to move closer to it; and that moving into shame might lead to ethical action.

In 2019 she wrote:

“It seems to me that it is only through the painful process of undoing the disavowals that underlie psychosocial illusions that we might be able to conceptualize and address the ghost’s demand for justice, for a something to be done.”

I am not an extroverted activist, and I have struggled with feeling that that is the only legitimate kind of action but in facing my family story, in talking about it with my family and with my friends, in facing it here with you I believe this too becomes a way into ethical action and gives support for others to be/do the same.

I end with an activist’s prayer that was first tweeted by community organizer Terrance Hawkins in June and was included in the Washington Post’s piece on Race and Reckoning on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020:



Thicken my love  
Widen my heart  
Sharpen my analysis  
Enliven my praxis  
Embolden my voice  
Deepen my rest  
Lighten my heaviness  
Toughen my skin  
Soften my heart  
Strengthen my friendship  
Lengthen my endurance  
Weaken my ego  
Awaken my soul

Writings I found particularly supportive in writing this piece:

Ball. Edward (1998) Slaves in the family

Frie. Roger (2017) Not in My family

Layton. Lynne (2019) *Transgenerational Hauntings: Toward a Social  
Psychoanalysis and an Ethic of Dis-Illusionment*. Psychoanalytic  
Dialogues, vol. 29

Morrison. Toni(2017) The Origin of Others

Stuart. Andrea(2012) Sugar in The Blood

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The Reality of Fragmentation and the Yearning for Healing:  
Jungian Perspectives on Democracy,  
Power and Illusion in Contemporary Politics  
**The Divided Sky: War and Wisdom**

Ursula Wirtz

Switzerland

Acute polarizations with divisions between countries, communities and individuals, and a heightened level of disembodiment and fragmentation has infested our society. Camus intuitively saw in 1946: “An apocalyptic historical vista stretches before us.”<sup>1</sup> Today we are still haunted by the specters of fascism, plagued by inequalities, social injustice, political, economic and gendered oppression. Collective traumata reveal the battle of our divided brain, a mind at war.<sup>2</sup> Our culture is dissociated from the grounded, imaginative world of the right hemisphere, and trapped in the toxic hyper-rationality of the left hemisphere, devoid of empathy and compassion for Otherness.

Consequently, we are driven by archetypal imperatives to self-annihilation and destruction, becoming a society “gone mad on war” (Martin Luther King), drunk with power. Yet the archetype of War lures us with its numinous, sacramental core; violence is worshiped like a god leading to a crisis of humanity. I think of the religiously charged myths and Canonization of war, the blessing of weapons and Napoleon's cynical remark that God is on the side of the stronger battalions. Our obsession with War and violence reveals an alienation and dualistic splitting of everything into either good or evil, superior and inferior, us and them. We are alienated from the matrix of life, its sustaining unifying source, causing violence and undermining freedom and democracy. The stronger our alienation, the greater our anxiety.

With Simone Weil and Hanna Arendt, I believe in *The Need for Roots*<sup>3</sup> as our

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Camus, *Towards Dialogue*, 1946 This text is part of a series of articles published in November 1946 under the title *Neither Victims nor Executioners* in the paper of the French Resistance *Combat*.

<sup>2</sup> McGuilchrist, Iain (2009). *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*. USA: Yale University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Simone Weil, 1949 [2002], *The Need for Roots: Prelude to a Declaration of Duties toward Mankind*, Arthur Wills (trans.), New York: Routledge; *L'enracinement. Prélude à une déclaration des devoirs envers l'être humain*, Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1949.

modern uprootedness threatens the human soul. Weil criticizes the deep rift between science and humanism, the lack of relatedness and wisdom in a world governed by violence and inequality. Millions of refugees and asylum seekers suffer from the experience of being uprooted, having lost a life of meaning. Midwifing a global change calls for wiser ways of seeing, being and acting. If we want to evoke ‘the better angels of our nature’ we need to awaken from our collective unconsciousness, and nurture our spiritual needs to transcend war, ecocide and our own extinction.

First, I want to amplify the name of my panel: *Inequalities: Past & Present, Collective & Personal* with the metaphor of the divided sky. *Der geteilte Himmel: Divided Heaven or They divided the sky* is a novel by the prominent East German writer Christa Wolf<sup>4</sup>, set in the years preceding the construction of the Berlin Wall on August 13, 1961. It is a doomed love story about inequalities, power and illusion, about love that does not transcend ideological barriers. The sky of the lovers was split into two irreconcilable halves with different ‘truths’: Rita deciding to not follow her lover to the West, but rather follow her idealistic hope for a more just, non-capitalist socialist East Germany and Walter who opts to stay in capitalist West Berlin not believing in socialism. I took my title from this poignant dialogue at their final parting:

*In the past lovers who had to separate would look for a star where their gaze might meet in the evenings. What can we look for?*

*“At least they cannot divide the sky, Manfred said in a mocking tone.*

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<sup>4</sup> Christa Wolf: *They divided the sky*. Translated by Luise von Flotow. University of Ottawa Press, 2013 Original title: *Der geteilte Himmel*. Berlin: Suhrkamp 1963

*“The sky? This enormous vault of hope and yearning, love and sorrow? “Yes, they can”, she said. “The sky is what divides first of all.”*

The divided sky became a metaphor for the divided Germany, the powerful ideological forces and oppressive politics that created a deep rift between the political systems of East and West. The sky that vaulted over the German Democratic Republic and West Germany was neither before the fall of the wall in 1989 nor after the fall the same sky or ‘shared heaven’.



*Image 1 The Berlin Wall*

The iron curtain had divided their sky, split their identities and, after the collapse of the German Democratic Republic, the ‘culture wars’ and the ‘wall in the head’ perpetuated. No real *coniunctio oppositorum* was possible not even after 30 years of German Reunification (October 3rd). The East still suffers severely from their wounded *group spirit*, issues of self-worth and the cultural colonialism of the West (rise of nostalgia, *Ostalgie*). The activated polarizing cultural complexes between, *Ossis* and *Wessis* and the structural gap of inequality in the areas of economy, technology, and ecology

prevails.<sup>5</sup>

A divided sky is also experienced in Cyprus, Palestine and Korea, and at the brink of the American elections, culture wars and deeply polarized politics divide the people and their hopes for a peaceful future.

Second, I want to address The war on Women's Bodies: The appropriation of the female body as object.<sup>6</sup> I see a fundamental link between a rape culture of violence and exploitation and society's attitude towards women. Women and LGBT citizens as the Oppressed are living in a chronic "state of emergency" (Walter Benjamin).<sup>7</sup>

They are victims of 'Othering', a systematic process of subjugation, gendered violence, gendered nationalism, and gendered militarism.<sup>8</sup> The power inequalities reveal the invisible symbolic violence in our disconnected cultural master narratives. In our global culture of discrimination, gender binaries have been a curse, whereas social justice is fostered by intersectionality in the analysis of sexualized, racial and national inequalities. Sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), the denial and degradation of the feminine and its subordination to the power of the masculine gaze is ubiquitous.

In war, men exercise their power over life and death, their right to seize whatever is wanted, like the body of a woman. In all parts of the world women's bodies

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<sup>5</sup> See psychoanalyst Bernd Huppertz in his book: *Psychotherapy in the wake of war: discovering multiple psychoanalytic traditions. E-book, 2013, by Jason Aronson*. As a medical doctor from West Germany, living and working analytically in East Germany, he mused on the impact of the wall on the personality types of his East German patients.

<sup>6</sup> Lamb, Christina (2020) *Our Bodies, Their Battlefield. What War does to Women*. London: William Collins

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin, Walter 1969 «Theses on the Philosophy of History. In: *Illuminations*. Hannah Arendt, tr. Harry Zohn, p 253-64, New York: Schocken

<sup>8</sup> Sjoberg, Laura, S. Via et al (2010) *Gender, War, and Militarism: Feminist Perspectives*. Praeger: Oxford, ABC-CLIO

have turned into battlefields.<sup>9</sup>



*Image 2 No war on my body*

In India the violence of the Partition metamorphosed from the idea of appropriating a territory as a nation to appropriating the body of women as territory. 100,000 women were stripped naked and forcibly abducted and raped. Nationalist slogans were inscribed on their bodies- like *Victory to India, Long live Pakistan* to forever bear witness that they had been claimed and possessed by other men. The bodies of females were considered like blank pages on which a revolution could be inscribed.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The impact of War on Women also led to the insight that women's wisdom might be needed in peacebuilding and security work. (WPS) The Gender, Peace and Security Unit of the UN acknowledged how central women are to global ceasefire efforts. And we have recently seen which role female leadership played in handling the Pandemic

<sup>10</sup> Veena Das: *Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain*. In: *Violence in War and Peace*. P. 327-334



*Image 3 France, World War II*

In France, as the second world war approached its end, women who were believed to have had sex with a German soldier were stripped naked, their hair shaved, and swastikas painted on their heads, making their bodies a mark of humiliation and shaming.<sup>11</sup>



*Image 4 Burgundy, 1944*

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<sup>11</sup> Between 1943 and 1946, about twenty thousand women were victims of these humiliating acts.



The rape of women as war trophy and legitimate booty has a long history. I think of the 100,000 women raped in Berlin, the mass rapes in Bosnia and Kongo, the rape of Nankinging , the Yazidi and Rohingya women, and the Armenian genocide.



*Image 5 Armenia where women were first raped and then crucified.*

A reconstruction of this toxic masculinity is needed to end this gender sadism and war against women.<sup>12</sup> Maybe femicide compensates for a deeply embedded fear and hate of the feminine. From a third perspective I want to address the issue of war and wisdom by asking if terror can be transformed and what seismic shifts would be needed to deal with cultural, political, systemic and structural violence.

I consulted Hannah Arendt's dissertation<sup>13</sup> on love, love of the world, *amor*

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<sup>12</sup> The impact of War on Women also led to the insight that women's wisdom might be needed in peacebuilding and security work. (WPS) The Gender, Peace and Security Unit of the UN acknowledged how central women are to global ceasefire efforts. And we have recently seen which role female leadership played in handling the Pandemic

<sup>13</sup> Arendt, Hannah (1929). *Der Liebesbegriff bei Augustin: Versuch einer philosophischen Interpretation* [On the concept of love in the thought of Saint Augustine: Attempt at a philosophical interpretation. (Doctoral thesis, Department of Philosophy, University of Heidelberg (in German). Berlin: Springer, reprinted as (2006). *Der Liebesbegriff bei Augustin: Versuch einer philosophischen Interpretation* (in German). Introduction by Frauke Annegret Kurbacher. Georg Olms Verlag.

*mundi*, as a building block for a harmonious society and an antidote for war and dehumanization. Simultaneously I read the correspondence of Mahatma Mohandas K. Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy, discussing non-violence and the nature of man.

For Tolstoy the relentlessly inclusive discipline of love entails the aspiration for communion and solidarity. For him only the ‘law of love’ is capable of substituting the outlived law of violence. When Gandhi in 1908 read Tolstoy’s *A Letter to a Hindu*, he contacted Tolstoy and it changed his life.<sup>14</sup> They became friends and Tolstoy’s ideas had a lasting influence on his political philosophy and the concept of *Satyagraha*, which translates into ‘clinging to the truth’. For Gandhi, truth, like love, is a soul force that can never be destroyed and will ultimately bring about peace by reawakening in the Other their dormant humanity.

Tolstoy and Gandhi firmly believed that, through the doctrine of love, the social and economic inequalities within a society could be abolished and that only the development of humanity could transcend political and cultural boundaries.

Concerning the question of delivering mankind from the menace of war, I read the correspondence of Einstein and Freud. Einstein, an intellectual activist for peace, was engaged to safeguard peace without resorting to arms and violence. He asked Freud: “*Is it possible to control man’s mental evolution so as to make him proof against the psychosis of hate and destructiveness?*”<sup>15</sup>

Freud believed violence cannot be avoided and that law is founded on brute

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<sup>14</sup> Gandhi had come to South Africa 1890 to work there as a young lawyer and make a living as he could not economically survive practicing law in Bombay. He was shocked to experience in South Africa racial discrimination against Indians that prompted him to fight injustice and racial prejudice.

<sup>15</sup> In 1931 the Institute for Intellectual Cooperation invited Einstein to a cross disciplinary exchange of ideas about politics and peace. Einstein chose Freud whom he had only briefly met 1927 and wrote him a letter, dated 30 July 1932. The correspondence was published in 1933 with the title: *Why War?*

force and maintained with violence. This echoes the controversy between Albert Camus and Jean Paul Sartre about the legitimacy of revolutionary violence. Camus opted for nonviolence in the face of terrorism while Sartre, drawing on Fanon, believed in the need for bloody catharsis: the marks of violence cannot be erased by gentleness, “only violence itself can destroy them”.<sup>16</sup> Freud holds that man is governed by the primal instincts of *Eros and destructiveness*.

His formula for eliminating war is the emphasis on Eros as war’s antidote. In the letter he even mentioned ‘love’: as a “pious injunction, easy to enounce, but hard to carry out!” As a pacifist, like Einstein, Freud believed in a psychic attitude, shaped by cultural development working against war. For him the progress of civilization and the weakening of the death instinct would ultimately overcome the primal state of the struggle of all against all, as postulated by Thomas Hobbes. The psychocultural evolution that Freud hoped for is, in my understanding, a paradigm change to a transformed consciousness, and a radical change in perception, as we cannot solve our problems from within the same level of consciousness that created them. We need to ‘think out of the box’ if humanity is to survive. The future of humanity, threatened by ever escalating apocalyptic wars, belongs to wisdom, to intellectual humility, acceptance of uncertainty and paradox.

I see the antidote to war in a reconnection with the whole, an awareness of ‘Interbeing (Thitch Nhat Hanh) and ‘Interresponsibility’. If we do not acknowledge the “Hitler in our Selves” (Max Picard)<sup>17</sup> we lack the wisdom needed to repair a ‘culture of uncare’<sup>18</sup> (Sally Weintrobe), and politics devoid of ethics but full of narcissistic hubris.

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<sup>16</sup> Sartre, preface to Frantz Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth*. Quoted in: *Violence in War and Peace*. p233

<sup>17</sup> Max Picard, (2010) *Hitler in Our Selves*. transl. by Heinrich Hauser, Kessinger Publishing

<sup>18</sup> Weintrobe, Sally, *The Culture of Uncare*. Bob Gosling Memorial lecture, 29. Nov.2014

Rebel wisdom and spiritual activism is needed, a new myth of equal and shared power. Nurturing a culture of equanimity and compassion fosters an emancipation process that counteracts an ideology of fatal growth and acceleration.

To bring about change in a society, we need a different mindset that does not rely on heroism and wars. I think of Brecht's comment: *Unhappy is the land in need of heroes*. What is needed is a transformation of consciousness, a paradigm change. The archetype of the hero needs to be replaced by an archetypal system of relating and bonding, that honors the Feminine. Patriarchal images of the dragon slayer and superman must be deconstructed, giving way to images in which the dragon gets tamed and not slayed.

### **Wisdom as an antidote to violence**

I want to evoke Scheherazade, an archetypal image of feminine wisdom, the powerful and highly cultured trickster heroine of *The Thousand and One Nights* who not only saved her own life through storytelling, but became a psychopompos for a wounded one-sided masculine consciousness in need of redemption. She represents an inspiring image for a coniunctio of eros and logos, fulfilling the role of a civilizing and humanizing agent, when reconnecting the king with his abandoned spiritual roots. Her relatedness, creativity and resilience, speaking with the soul's poetic voice, enabled her to heal the king's broken wings of eros. With her compassionate attitude, she redeems and restores the dignity of the feminine and humanizes the king from his disconnectedness with life, fostering his movement from alienation of soul to an ensouled presence and reverence for life.

## Wisdom and Peacebuilding

Wisdom and self-reflective consciousness are needed for midwifing a global change. Required is an unending faith into an inviolable integrity of the human soul, like Henry David Thoreau's great faith in a seed. "Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders." With *Chela Sandoval*,<sup>19</sup> I believe that our postmodern world needs a hermeneutics of love. Not only Tolstoy, Gandhi, Einstein and Freud regarded love as an important source of empowerment when struggling for social change in the realms of gender, race, and class. I hope for Love and wisdom, creativity and art to replace the outdated mechanisms of knowledge and power.

Embodied in the Zen Peace-maker movement, founded by the Zen master and social activist Bernie Glassman, I see the emerging vision of an ethics of non-violence and an emancipatory evolution of consciousness that overcomes our present alienation and uprootedness. He encourages a spiritual practice to bring about change by an attitude that embodies not-knowing, but bearing-Witness, and taking action.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Chela Sandoval, (2000) *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

<sup>20</sup> In Auschwitz-Birkenau they meditate, sing and chant at their bearing witness retreats with the prayer for peace: OSEH SHALOM. "May the Maker of peace in high places make peace descend upon us and upon all Israel and let us say: Amen.



*Image 6 Auschwitz*

A vital part in reconciliation and peace-making entails witnessing our collective wounds with loving awareness and mindful presence, while engaging in nonviolent social action and protest as a path of awakening and service. Collective witnessing with its specific mode of consciousness provides an antidote to our Western entrapment in binary oppositions.

Envisioning a peaceful hoped-for future, we strengthen our belief that it is possible. As we can see the future only in imagination, we must continue to believe in the big dream of freedom, peace, justice and a meaningful life for everyone.

When I feel overwhelmed with the obstacles in my engagement for justice, equality and peace, endangered even to lose hope and trust in the big dream, I console myself with Pablo Neruda's wisdom: "*you can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming*".

Let us hope we are at the cusp of spring coming.

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*Image 1 “The world of a wild child who chases his dream” Top prize 2015 National Geographic Photo Contest (Youth group) By Kelvin Yuen, Hong Kong*

## Exploration of Masks

During a time when political and health challenges have taken hold of Hong Kong

Emma Ting Wong, PhD

Hong Kong



In 2020, wearing a mask is not unusual for most people in the world. In particular, surgical masks have become a daily necessity when having face-to-face contact with other people.

This article invites you join me in a journey of reflection and exploration of the symbolic meanings of masks as experienced by a Hong Konger living under the powerful impact of current political and health challenges. I hope this brings to mind your own experiences by eliciting memories, associations, ideas and images about “Mask” as a symbol in personal, collective and socio-cultural contexts. There are many underlying archetypal meanings about the mask which are quite varied depending on which group of people you consider. I would like to start this reflective journey with a brief description of Hong Kong. Hong Kong originated as a Chinese fishing village. Eventually, it came under the colonial rule of Great Britain from 1841 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 1997. China resumed exercising sovereignty over Hong Kong beginning 1<sup>st</sup> July 1997. Since then, Hong Kong has become a special administrative region of The Republic of China. Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated metropolitan areas in the world. It is well-known as a city “in-between”, characterised by its multiple languages and cultures. Hong Kong is in-between the “Eastern” and the “Western” world in many different ways. Most of the people are Chinese in race and speak Cantonese, although both English and Cantonese are the official languages and a large proportion of people in Hong Kong are bilingual. We have created our own highly specific and unique Hong Kong English expressions. One of the most popular is 加油(Add Oil) which means encouragement or support to a person, originating with a literal Cantonese two word phrase that refers to injecting fuel into a tank. We tend to call people by their English rather than their Chinese name. We often use chopsticks, forks and spoons interchangeably. We celebrate both Eastern and Western festivals. We enjoy public holidays from both cultures and that

includes Christmas, Easter, Chinese New Year and Mid-Autumn festivals. We have adopted traditional Chinese family values such as filial piety, hierarchy by age and face-saving practises. But we also value the most “westernized” values such as freedom, democracy and respect for individual autonomy.

But, the key focus of this paper is on the role that the surgical mask has played in Hong Kong’s recent history. It is no surprise that the surgical mask had played a major concrete and symbolic role in the COVID-19 pandemic. But, more surprisingly, the surgical mask has also played a key symbolic role in recent major political events in Hong Kong that have involved questions of national security. There is a complex history to the meaning of the mask in Hong Kong

In 2003, there was a SARS outbreak (Severe Adverse Respiratory Syndrome, a severe coronavirus), which resulted in the deaths of 299 people among 1755 cases. The outbreak lasted 3 months in Hong Kong which had the second highest number of cases apart from Mainland China. This experience of viral contagion was a collective trauma for the people of Hong Kong. The earliest SARS cases were found in the Guangdong province of Mainland China and then spread to other parts of the world. There were serious concerns about the lack of openness about the epidemic which in turn raised questions about the effectiveness of controlling the epidemic. Public health strategies seemed to reflect not only health-related measures but also government policies. The discrepancy between how information is managed in Hong Kong vs. Mainland China seriously affects how people view and trust the highest political and government authorities in the community.



*Image 2 SARS outbreak. Hunghom railway station, Hong Kong, April 2003.*

*Source: REUTERS/Kin Cheung*



*Image 3 SARS outbreak. Students wearing surgical masks in class, Hong Kong, Apr 2003*

*Source: REUTERS/Bobby Yip*



*Image 4 A Mourner. During the funeral of Dr. Tse Yuen—a medical doctor who died of SARS in HK, May 2003. Source: REUTERS/Bobby Yip*

Since the SARS outbreak of 2003, the mask-wearing practice has become a deeply ingrained ritual in the people of Hong Kong who face both infectious disease and political threats to their well-being and survival. It has become normal for people in Hong Kong to wear a surgical mask even when they are only suffering from a mild common cold.

Apart from health protection, people also wear surgical masks in their political protests.

Does wearing a surgical mask have any other symbolic meaning in Hong Kong?

In 2003, the Hong Kong government tabled its previous National Security Bill (Legislative Provisions) to implement Hong Kong Basic Law Article 23. Basic Law is the constitution of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region which went into effect when Hong Kong was returned to Chinese sovereignty on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1997 under

the principle of “One Country, Two Systems”. Article 23 states that “The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall enact laws on its own to prohibit treason, secession, sedition, and subversion against the Central Peoples government, or theft of state secrets, to prohibit foreign political organizations or bodies from conducting political activities in the Region, and to prohibit political organizations or bodies of the Region from establishing ties with foreign political organizations or bodies” (1). The proposed legislation gave more power to the police and led to widespread protests. After controversies and a massive demonstration on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2003, the Hong Kong Government shelved the bill indefinitely in Sept 2003. But, the seeds of later tension were planted between the citizens of Hong Kong and the ruling government authorities who were most responsive to China. This tension was reflected in protests, the most notable of which was the 2014 Umbrella movement or Occupy Movement.



*Image 5 A massive demonstration against the attempt to implement Hong Kong Basic Law Article 23 on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2003. Source: Agent Rouge / CC BY-SA (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>)*



*Image 6 Protest on 12th Nov. 2019. Source: Hong Kong Free Press, Studio Incendo  
<https://hongkongfp.com/2019/12/08/november-12-clashes-chinese-university-hong-kong-eyewitness-view/>*

In 2019 there was another series of protests triggered by the introduction of the Fugitive Offenders amendment bill (2) by the Hong Kong government. It was also known as the extradition bill. The bill was to establish a mechanism for transfers of fugitives from Taiwan, Mainland China and Macau, which was excluded in the existing laws. Strong opposition to the bill in Hong Kong erupted in the fear of the further erosion of Hong Kong's legal system and its built-in safeguards. The bill strengthened Mainland China's ability to arrest voices of political dissent in Hong Kong. Again, the bill triggered the concerns about national security. In a series of large-scale protests, the protestors wore all black with masks covering their faces. The masks were easily obtained and provided anonymity to the protestors. As a result, the Hong Kong authorities passed an Anti-mask Law on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The law was created in response to the ongoing protests and banned protestors from covering their faces. Even after the enactment of this law, protestors continued to wear masks.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, mask-wearing became a necessary health

precaution, preventing people from getting or spreading virus. The Hong Kong Government implemented a Wearing Mask Regulation effective 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020. Mask-wearing in all public places became mandatory in view of the public health concern. However, even before the enforcement of a mandatory mask-wearing law, Hong Kong had an exceptionally high rate of mask-wearing during the COVID-19 pandemic with almost 99% of the population participating.



*Image 7 People queue up to buy masks in Hong Kong, Feb 2020. Photo: Felix Wong*



*Image 8 Newly married couple in Hong Kong, Feb. 2020. Photo: Reuters*

Ways of thinking about the various functions and meanings of wearing a mask:

### **Expression of Personality**

Persona is the word we use to refer to the Social Face people present to the outer world, the face we want to show others in the world. It is a psychological expression.

What are we unconsciously showing or not showing the world by putting on a surgical mask?

### **Filtration**

A mask is the physical partition between the individual and the outer world. It serves as an extra partition for the purpose of separation. A mask is a semi-permeable membrane, allowing limited dynamic flow in and out but blocking out particles above a certain size.

What is being separated by this partition, symbolically?

What can be passed through the partition?

What can be blocked through the partition?

Masks serve both the functions of expression of personality and separation from the outer world, from which one needs protection.

Wearing a surgical mask serves the obvious function of protecting the individual from the threat of contracting virus. It is designed to protect the body from the threat of being invaded by external harmful “substances” to the body such as harmful gases and particles as well as viruses. Masks of different design afford



varying levels of protection depending on filtration efficiency. It is common for people in Hong Kong to purchase the highest level of protection for masks, choosing higher than 99% VFE (viral filtration efficiency, which can filter particles from 0.1 to 5 microns upwards), PFE (particulate filtration efficiency which can filter particles from 0.1 microns upwards and BFE (bacterial filtration efficiency which can filter particles from 3 microns upwards).

What do we want to prevent from entering the body with a surgical mask?

What are the emotions associated with wearing a surgical mask? Unease? Security? Protection?

### **Personal and collective dynamics**

When the whole community is mandated to wear surgical masks, following the mask-wearing rule is a way of complying with the social norm by participating in the joint effort of protecting public health. Those who comply have a sense of increased security by participating in the community effort of mass protection. However, some feel it sacrifices the expression of personal identity. Those individuals who do not conform to mandatory mask wearing may regard their personal choice as more important than the collective well-being and its rules. Such defiance can easily become the target of attack because it compromises the collective benefit. On the other hand, refusing to wear a mask can become a proud non banner of the freedom of the individual or a symbol of not believing in the reality or severity of the viral threat. There is a tension between the rights of the individual and the well-being of the collective in which public health issues can get easily mixed up with political power struggles. In Hong Kong, wearing a mask in 2019 was a symbol of protest against the government whereas in 2020, wearing a mask became a symbol of

fighting the virus and protecting the common good.

What is being expressed by wearing a surgical mask when it became a collective action?

What needs to be filtered and prevented from entering in a collective sense?

What are the possible conflicts between the individual well-being vs public health?

What are the possible conflicts between individual freedom vs national security?

Masks cover major personal facial recognition signs and display a collective identity. With the individual face covered, the fact that every individual is a member of the collective group becomes evident in a dramatic way as individual features and identities become much less identifiable.

Wearing masks covers some identifying features of the face, i.e., the nose and mouth are still covered but the eyes and ears remain exposed. In the context of the mask serving the goal of health precaution, covering the nose and mouth prevent the passing of droplets. Wearing surgical masks largely filters the exchange of tiny particulates carried by water but still permits a limited level of air passing in and out. This partially blocks the major functions of the nose and mouth, i.e., breathing, smelling, eating and speaking. Although these functions are essential for life, partial blocking is done in the name of protecting collective public health as well as individual benefits. Mask-wearing in the public health context places the collective well-being as the highest priority and individual life functioning is partially compromised.

Despite the loss of some individual functioning, most feel a higher sense of security with this kind of protection.

Leaving the eyes and ears uncovered by a mask, one can still see fully and be seen partially; can hear fully and can be heard partially. The individual's receptive functioning can be kept intact while the expression of individuality may be compromised.

What are the meanings of mask-wearing in mediating the dynamics between the personal and collective?



*Image 9 Photo: Erin Scott / Reuters. Oct 5 2020*

### **Protection from threat in the context of political power dynamics?**

We have explored the symbolic meanings of mask-wearing as a public health precaution in the context of coronavirus pandemic. What about the symbolic meanings of surgical mask-wearing in a political context? Symbolically, what are the individuals and the group wanting to filter and protect in such a context? Virus-like political energy can be contagious, spreading through human-to-human in-person contact. If there's no in-person contact, there is less fear of getting caught by the

political infection, although the transmission of political infections is also rampant through the media. One can certainly lose a sense of political well-being and even political integrity through the spread of contagious political energy.

Survival threat? Existential threat in the context of “political infection”?

When the Hong Kong community finds itself wearing “political masks” in the form of surgical masks, what is happening within the group’s collective psyche? In fact, apart from surgical masks, there was a variation of masks being used during the protests in Hong Kong 2019, including the Guy Fawkes Mask from the movie “V for Vendetta” and even respirator mask with higher level protection. It is worthwhile to explore the symbolic meaning of mask wearing in political events.

### **Cultural complex**

Individual needs and values overlap collective needs and values, but also need to be separated from them. These include issues of autonomy vs conformity, freedom vs restriction, equality vs hierarchy, stability vs flexibility and conformity vs deviance.

Individual and collective values in Hong Kong are influenced by cultural tensions and differences between the East and the West. In Asia, it is a default position to identify with the safer, more collective side of how to present oneself in society, to be considerate and to show solidarity with the community values and not to interrupt others. Collective values are given a higher priority than individual needs. At the same time, western values have taken hold in Hong Kong under the influence of the previous British sovereignty.

### **Power dynamics in this space and time**

The power dynamics among countries and cultures have become more

complex in the era of the 2020 pandemic. For the sake of our individual and collective health, we want to avoid getting caught by the COVID-19 virus. And, we also hope to avoid getting caught by the collective and personal unconscious as we fight off the virus of the corrupting influence of power politics.



*Image 10 "A Night in a dream" Kelvin Yuen, Hong Kong, 2015*

With the unique multicultural backgrounds of Hong Kong, there seems to be no hiding from or being free of any “virus” transmission, whether it is biological or socio-political. Hong Kong is a place and space where different materials, energies, cultures and people are flowing with a constant movement both from outside to inside Hong Kong and from inside to outside the area. In that regard, it should come as no surprise that Hong Kong is an arena that displays the power struggles among different and opposing forces. At times when existence and preservation of a group is more important than individuals, it is easy for people to lose their own individual stance and fall into the collective unconsciously. It is also important not to get too

caught in the collective but to notice and distinguish individual from collective issues as well. We need to cultivate awareness, with compassion...

Let me end this reflection process with my dream:

*“I had a session with my client who had issues with boundary setting. She did not wear a mask. I showed my concern about the risk of contracting the virus but she had no intention to put on a mask. There was a surgical mask on the desk between us.”*

**Emma Ting Wong** (Hong Kong) is currently in the IAAP router training program to become a Jungian analyst. Emma is a clinical psychologist and she is also a mindfulness teacher. Her interests include transference/countertransference; *anima* & *animus*; cultural and political issues in psychological work. Publications: Wong, E. T. (2016). “My Journey Connecting to Jungian Analytical Psychology in Parallel with My City’s Search for Identity”. In M. Tibaldi, T. Chan, M. Chiu, M. Lee, B. Tam & E. T. Wong, *Stories of Transcultural Identities: Jungians in Hong Kong*. Roma: Artemide Edizioni.

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Panel 8 - HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF POLITICS: CLINIC,  
PSYCHE. POLIS, ACTIVISM



Expressive Sandwork with children in areas of conflict:

*“Oh... in silence... when there’s silence outside, we can hear the  
voices that speak inside”*

Ana Deligiannis (Argentina)

Eva Pattis Zoja (Italy)

Mónica Pinilla (Colombia)

We feel privileged that Expressive Sandwork - the topic of this presentation - has always been present in the conferences of Analysis and Activism: in 2013 in London, in 2015 in Rome, in 2017 in Prague and at the online conference in 2020.

Expressive Sandwork can be seen as a form of political activism: it is a social application of Jungian theory. And, in the words of our colleague Renos Papadopoulos: *“No one would doubt that Jung himself would have been considerably excited by this type of development...”*

Expressive Sandwork is a transcultural, non-verbal method of therapeutic care for situations in which individual psychotherapy is not available. It is an adaptation of Margaret Lowenfeld's World Technique and Dora Kalff's Sandplay Therapy and it is especially designed for emergency situations, disaster settings and long-term interventions in vulnerable communities. Its goal is to help children and adults activate a process of psychological self-regulation, using their own creative potential.



*Image 1 Founders: María Claudia Munévar, Mónica Pinilla, María Camila Mora (Colombia), Eva Pattis (Italy)*

Expressive Sandwork began in 2002 in China and in South Africa, was brought to Latin America (first to Colombia and later to Argentina), was expanded to Romania and Ukraine, to Palestine and to Malaysia. In Europe, Sandwork has been used with refugee populations in Germany and in Italy. The latest project had just taken place in January 2020 in Jaipur, India.

Since March 2020, Expressive Sandwork activity in eleven countries has come to a complete stop because of the pandemic. Children could not complete their therapeutic processes. Schools and childcare facilities were closed.

But there is hope: since our Colombian colleagues had applied Sandwork in a children's cancer clinic in Medellin, Colombia, they became familiar with using sophisticated hygiene protocols, including disinfecting the sand and the toys after each session. Therefore, we can go on: the first project "After Covid Project" started in October, in Northern Italy for children with psychosomatic symptoms after the lock-down period.

### **What is specific to Sandwork?**

The method is based on the work of locally trained volunteers, who are not necessarily psychologists. It has a very specific setting which is a combination of a group experience and an individual encounter. The sessions are held in a group, with each child being paired with his or her own individual witness throughout the 12 sessions. This arrangement means that each child has access to a personal, intimate reference figure.

Since we don't take pictures during the sessions, here is a representation of the setting in the sandtray itself by a child.



*Image 2*

The group is seen as an alchemical vessel that needs to be hermetically sealed for the process of psychic transformation to occur. As soon as symbolic processes begin to express themselves in the children's play, the emotional temperature begins to rise, everyone's involvement is intensified, every gesture becomes significant and every observation important. The subtlest emotions are noted, and every individual is connected in unconscious energetic interaction with every other individual present. This web of interconnectivity increases from session to session.

Seen as a systemic entity, a number of groups are in constant interaction with each other in Expressive Sandwork: the groups of volunteer-facilitators, the children, their parents, the group project leaders, the teams of the different institutions involved, and, last but not least, the branching group of the international wider network.

## What are the Conceptual Bases?

They are: the bond, the play, the spontaneous creation of Images (imaginative experience), the self-regulation of the psyche and the symbolic process.

**The Bond:** According to Bowlby's Attachment Theory, the child needs a relationship with a sensitive and receptive caregiver for their social and emotional development. The importance of the bond, one to one (facilitator-child) re-edits the mother-child relationship.

Expressive Sandwork proposes an attentive and empathic attitude of the facilitator allowing the child to express what her/his psyche needs. It is done in 'a free and protected space' (in Dora Kalff's words), without judgment and without an interventionist or pedagogical attitude.

In this context, the child is watched and thought by someone: *Maybe someone is interested in me.*

The free **Play** allows and favors:

- Setting situations of conflict
- Connecting with emotions
- Experiencing oneself in a multiplicity of situations and roles
- Experiencing their own creative potential
- Learning to solve problematic situations
- Influencing brain maturation (according to Panksepp)

**The imaginative experience:** Imagination as a bridge between conscious and unconscious, between the inner and outer world. Jung speaks about the "imaginative essence of the soul" (Jung, 1926 OC8, par. 618), and according to Henry

Corbin, he recognized a 'productive' function in imagination, a true organ of knowledge, capable of 'creating' being, and not only the strictly 'reproductive' function, to which Western philosophy, from Plato onwards, had confined it.

**The self-regulation of the psyche, the symbolic process and the transcendent function** that creates a new symbolic position which contains both perspectives at the same time, the emergence of the third term.

### **And What about Silence? Another important issue in Expressive Sandwork**

It is surprising and touching to see the children play in their sandtrays with concentration and silence. This silence is not one that hushes, omits, or fragments the psychic structure which, as products of violent situations and abuse, is usual in many children's lives. This silence, on the other hand, is a fertile ground for the child to express what his or her psyche needs. This silence and the facilitators' availability and an empathic understanding, enables the emergence of both, the conflicts and the child's potential and creative transformation.

There are moments... certain situations in which we feel different emotions, sadness, joy, anger, and also tenderness, frustration, smiles, but above all, the silence prevails.

### **How do we unveil what the presence of silence in Expressive Sandwork shows us?**

While children are out, getting ready for our meeting, they are usually loaded with excitement. Their world is full of sound and movement. However, once they

enter to the space of ES, they also encounter silence: the adult is silent, the environment is silent. They are also prepared to be part of this silence since they find a welcoming and safe space there. Children recognize that this place is special and different from their usual surroundings.

Silence turns up the volume of their inner world. And those inner voices guide them in an encounter between their inner world and the outer reality. Their playing and what they build have the particularity that what happens there, happens in the presence and company of an adult who is attentive to their play. This play is part of a continuum between the inside of their voices and the outside of what they do in their sandtray. This psychic experience that occurred between the inside and the outside while they are playing determines what Winnicott called the *transitional space* from which culture, and perhaps spirituality, comes. This silence in Expressive Sandwork allows a special play experience and lets the children enter that *transitional space* we consider almost as a sanctuary (*temenos*) where everything is potentially possible.

The equation that characterizes what surrounds the group atmosphere of Expressive Sandwork can be stated as: attention + silence. And since this is a shared silence, it generates communion, in the sense that it allows us to perceive our deepest common-union. The most important thing is to share silence in silence.

Now, silence in Expressive Sandwork is not silence without sounds since there are sounds that arise from silence. We hear the sound of the miniatures while children play with them, we also hear babbling and sounds of children as they play, or we occasionally hear words or short stories from a game or a child's question.

This special playing emerging from silence offers the children the possibility to explore, create, and transform, at their times, even the horror that may be paralyzed inside. Thus, we witness their play and learn to trust in their process and in what is the most genuine expression of their need: to build or to destroy, to bury



or to uncover, to confront or to harmonize. And while this happens, we know that children are in the presence of the most intimate part of themselves and we carefully protect that experience which had previously been violated by abuse, neglect, violence.

Some of that silence, full of potential, nourishes us all. As adults, we are witnesses of the children's play and of the child within ourselves who reminds us of the possibilities of silence, of our silence.

**There are some testimonials of the facilitators:**

- *"It has been an opportunity to discover the other in silence, not trying to guide but allowing to be"*
- *"I received more than I gave. It's a life-changing experience"*
- *"You have to be prepared to learn how to let go, to trust in your child's and the group's process, and fundamentally to learn to just be there in silence. There is an enormous development of sensitivities; we are all transformed by this experience. I could understand my small effort to accompany these children in their process and I could witness their capacity and strength to transform their inner world. I am really glad of being able to be there"*
- *"Expressive Sandwork in vulnerable populations touched something very sacred in me: the symbolic rescue of deprivation and the value of an adult's gaze for a child who feels unseen by their parents"*

## Some examples

Many changes are observed after Expressive Sandwork processes: decreased levels of aggression or anxiety, better relationship with themselves, better relationship with others and progress in cognitive processes.

Furthermore, we also observe that many times children can talk about traumatic situations they have never shared until that moment.

That is the case of Jorge, a 10-year-old boy who, almost at the end of the process, told his teacher -through drawings and texts- what was happening to him: his father hit him with a belt every time he didn't get good grades.

But the significant thing was that at the end of the process, in the meeting with the parents, the facilitator (who was not aware of what had happened), explained to Jorge's father the qualities and skills of his son. At that moment, the father gets excited and told the facilitator that he is very hard on his son because he does not want him to be like him...

We can notice that during the process of Expressive Sandwork, the child can reveal, make visible or express something that was previously hidden or silenced.

Another example is the case of a girl who told her teacher that she had been abused by a relative, or another girl who asked her mother not to hurt her and to speak to her in good manners.

This is how the children begin to put their needs in words.

Then... silence as a fertile ground allows silenced words to emerge...

*Oh... in silence... when there's silence outside, we can hear the voices that speak inside...*



*Image 3*

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Amazonia, Burning Self:  
A Jungian Approach to our Ecological Crisis

To the memory of Chico Mendes

Hannah Hennebert

Brazil

## Abstract

The 2019 events concerning the Rain Forest burnings in the Brazilian *Amazonia* shook up the international community and provoked diplomatic tension between Brazil and European countries. The current and other environmental crimes of similar latitude seem to lay on economic options supported by perverse policies based on indigenous populations' dehumanization, colonialism, and will to power. This paper aims to explore the *Weltanschauung* at work in the ignition of the ecological crisis and the potential individuation paths in the face of an even harsher and disintegrated environment waiting for us in the next few years. *Amazonia* is the *Pacha*, a holistic place where ecological consciousness manifests the need for nurturance and development. In contrast, we have the liberal-technocrat mind acting to impose a worldview sponsored by unethical gains at the expense of the Great *Pacha*. How to walk through the individuation path immersed in this chain of environmental destruction? What routes are open to us? These are fundamental questions I will strive to elucidate.

I grew up in Manaus, a metropolis built in the heart of the Amazon Rain Forest. My grandmother spent a good part of her day telling me archetypal stories (mainly indigenous myths) while preparing the meals. These stories were so scary that I grew up afraid of the forest and all the "monsters" that inhabited it in my imagination. If there was any ecological awareness in me, it was the ecology of fear. I was familiar with those almost mythological snakes, scary crocodiles, giant insects. They were part of my surroundings. Nature in the Amazon is not romantic. It is cruel, aggressive, temperamental. Its people are, therefore, quite tenacious and resilient.



*Image 1 The female of the anaconda species, also called Sucuri which lives in the Brazilian Amazonia. Photo Rafael de Fraga.*

Nature to me was a goddess, and I was very much afraid of the gods. I never thought that one day I would be speaking about nature with so much love and

appreciation. I never thought that all these animals, plants, flowers, insects, stones, rivers were all part of my soul. This realization came much later when I left the Amazon region to live in the United States. It was from an outside perspective that I came closer to my roots, to my Self. This brief reflection aims to bring awareness that being born and raised in the Amazon does not make you an instant advocate for it. Ecological awareness comes most of the time from a spiritual awakening.

Individuals relate to nature in different ways: Either feeling a strong connection with species of living and non-living beings or responding with gratitude for the kinship with animals and plants. I believe that the Earth has rights (Rights of Mother Earth, 2010), and I see it as *La Pachamama*, a living superorganism (a term coined by James Hutton in the 1790s). In Jung's words: "The Earth has a spirit of her own, a beauty of her own" (Jung, 1930, as cited in Sabini, 2016, p. 1).



Image 2 *Los Derechos de la Pachamama (The Rights of Mother Earth)*, Dec 8, 2010



Those feelings and beliefs are political choices that we make daily. They reflect how we live and conduct ourselves with our surroundings. No matter what the connection with nature is, as individuals, we depend on it for daily sustenance and ultimately for survival on this planet. Unfortunately, the natural world has been deeply affected by human economic activities. We are "cleaning" nature while getting increasingly "dirty" as Jung (1984) said: "Matter in the wrong place is dirt. People have got dirty through too much civilization" (p. 142).

The next generations will inherit a world quite different from the environment we were born into ourselves (Attfield, 2018). Throughout many centuries we have been losing entire libraries of living organisms ([https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/evolution/library/03/2/1\\_032\\_04.html](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/evolution/library/03/2/1_032_04.html)). Each lost book, each broken organic system requires adaptation from other species, and some of them are unable to do so. For this reason, I am claiming ecological justice while declaring that the existence of living and non-living beings matters. We must reject the human-interest-only stance, this anthropocentric view where the prevailing thought is that nature exists to serve human beings' interests only.

Chico Mendes, who became an icon during the conflict involving rubber tappers and farmers in the state of Acre in the 1980s, presented a model for extractive development that was a combination of the social and environmental solution.



*Image 3 Chico Mendes. ©Divulgação from the page <https://www.wwf.org.br/?37442/Chico-Mendes-nominated-Patron-of-the-Brazilian-Environment>*

Chico Mendes was aware of the ecological violence against the environment and social violence against indigenous people and rubber tappers (*Seringueiros*). Both types of violence follow the logic of accumulation through people's domination and natural resources exploitation. (Boff, 2009)

### **Environmental and Social Justice**

The word ecology comes from the Greek *Oikos*, meaning home. It is the study of all living and non-living systems' interrelationships with their environment and each other. Several aspects of ecological thinking interrelate with other sciences and knowledge, and psychology is one of them. The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, who

coined the term "deep ecology," contrasted two ecology movements: The shallow and the deep. (James, 2015).

These movements reveal our way of thinking of what it means to be on this planet. The shallow kind is anthropocentric, elitist, and focused on the people of developed countries. By contrast, the deep kind considers all species' interdependence and all people living on this planet where all have the "equal right to live and blossom." Naess called it a "biospheric egalitarianism," meaning that we are all nature and entitled to live our way of life. According to deep ecology, the causes of the Earth's deficit lie in the type of society we currently have and the type of psychological attitude that prevails, which is based not only on modern thinking but also on ancestral times (Attfield, 2018; Boff, 2009; James, 2015).

### **Environmental Ecology**

There are other currents of ecological thinking; one is the "environmental ecology" – a biology branch that studies the interactions among organisms and their environment. The environmental ecology's main preoccupation is preserving the environment and its several organic and inorganic systems, aiming at the ecological balance. This ecological thought appears in the activism pro-clean, green, and renewable energy. Nevertheless, this ecological thinking separates human beings, and all that human thought produces from nature and has political and economic implications (Kahn & Hasbach, 2012). Environmental ecology has a solid scientific basis and is mainly corrective. It requires an innovative political attitude that demands an economy based on less polluting technologies to contain the current industrial project's voracious advance, based on pathological consumption.

## **Social Ecology**

Social ecology, on the other hand, considers human beings and integral society parts of nature. According to this ecological thinking, social injustice is environmental injustice (Boff, 2009). We are currently facing several crises as humankind. The COVID-19 pandemic came to exacerbate the already established global economic problem we have been handling for more than ten years. We still face a crisis in the energy sector, one of the consequences of the normalization of pathological consumption. There is also a social, educational, moral, spiritual, and ecological crisis going on concurrently. In all these crises listed here, we can find archetypal coloniality. Aníbal Quijano coined the term coloniality to convey the idea of an ongoing pattern of the colonial thinking of the XVI century based on four domains of human experience: "(1) **economic**: the appropriation of land, exploitation of labor, and control of finance; (2) the **political**: control of authority; (3) the **civic**: control of gender and sexuality; (4) the **epistemic** and the **subjective/personal**: control of knowledge and subjectivity" (Mignolo, 2005, p. 11).

Coloniality is a force behind the current environmental crisis. Still, I would instead place the economic domain of coloniality in second place, bringing the political realm to the pole position since the financial system is regulated politically in developed governmental powers.

## **Integral Ecology**

An integral ecology is another critical ecological thinking that sees a strong bond between humans and other living and non-living systems: We are the Earth, along with other living and non-living beings (Esbjörn-Hargens & Zimmerman, 2009). Jung expressed some of his thoughts on nature that are in tune with the integral view of ecology. These are Jung's words: "My Self is not confined to my body. It extends into all the things I have made and all the things around me. Without these things, I would not be myself; I would not be a human being. Everything surrounding me is part of me". (Jung, 1977, p. 202).

We are now living the loss of the type of connectivity described in Jung's words, which has done substantial harm to our inner ecology. This lack of connection is only imaginary. Under integral ecology perspective, the Earth and human beings are considered a single entity. The human being is *La Pachamama*. Integral ecology calls attention to the importance of a worldview that aims to awaken in human beings the awareness of their actions and the respective consequences in the solution of environmental problems or the promotion of even more severe crises.

## **Amazonia, Burning Self**

The Amazon rainforest is burning at an unprecedented speed (Goodman & Giles, 2020), and along with it, our chances of individuation. We are also burning inwardly in a frantic search for something more in the closet, a little more pleasure in the mouth, the last model of the year, that is, our eyes increasingly turned outward. The individuation process requires the recognition that we are nature and that when we destroy it, we also destroy a part of ourselves. The environmental emergency we face is also the result of an

ethical crisis. This crisis is also cultural, psychological, and spiritual. The belief that "eternal" life and the kingdom of God "is not of this world" built a mentality that exploits the riches of this world since everything has become somewhat banal, fleeting, as this planet is not our final destination. And if there is no belief in a spiritual world, there is the certainty that we only have one life and we must make the most of it, hence Frank Sinatra's mantra: "You only live once."

Now, allow me to introduce a type of ecological thinking that comes from an indigenous nation in the Brazilian and Peruvian Amazon. They self-name *Huni Kuĩ* but are also known as *Kaxinawá*. For them, life is a continuous transformation that takes place right here. Despite the belief that beings originated from the voice and the will of a transcendent being, once here, we are the planet Earth itself in its most diverse manifestations. Therefore, for the *Kaxinawá* there is no promise of eternal life outside this world, but the assurance that life on this planet will go through different shapes, be they human, animal or vegetable forms. For the *Kaxinawá* we are still going through a process of continuous creation, birth, and transformation.



Image 4 *Huni Ku (Kaxinawá) Children* – Photo David Tesinsky, 2019.

## **Psychological Questions to Elucidate**

How to walk through the individuation path immersed in this chain of environmental destruction? What routes are open to us?

Individuation is a process to which relatedness is a must. "The Self is relatedness," said Jung in 1935. Our inner ecology can only work with emotional integration, and for that, we need to relate not only to one another but also to all that surrounds us. In this moment of an environmental emergency, we face four challenges: climate, nature, food production, and individuation. The individuation process happens from the bottom up: No one can individuate with an empty belly. No one can individuate without a decent shelter. No one can individuate without clean water. No one can individuate without a stable climate. No one can individuate without feeling love for oneself and others.

We are indeed facing a biodiversity crisis: Up to 1 million species are at risk of annihilation, many within decades. We are also facing a diversity crisis everywhere. I am not only speaking about race but also about ideas. We forgot how to relate to others whose thinking is not a mirror of our mind. Finally, the attitude that leads to dominating classes, oppressing people, and discriminating against people is the same that leads to exploiting nature. Thus, it is not enough to go to the streets and fight to preserve the Amazon Rain Forest and continue a paternalistic political approach that only causes dependency and misery on other countries.

The Amazon region is the largest cattle ranching territory in the world. The beef industry is responsible for at least 80% of the Amazon Rainforest destruction. Since the 1960s, the Brazilian Amazonia has been suffering from fires, which had a boom in the 70s. Since then, Amazonia has been an international "concern" and the stage for several

foreign businesses playing leading roles in this tragic drama that we are living (Tollefson, 2013).

Brazil must respond to all these environmental crimes happening in our geographical territory. But this country should not be the only one to blame. Canada, the U.N., and the U.S. companies help promote the beef industry in Brazil, leading to the violation of most indigenous populations' human rights, something that those countries so strongly condemn (Recinos, 2019). This globally integrated neoliberalism is deeply anti-ecological. This system promotes the exploitation of the planet. From this system, the deterioration of the quality of life in all its aspects originates, including the psychological element.

We are sick within as much as our environment is unhealthy. Just as there is an external ecology, there is also an internal ecology. Violence and aggression against nature have done substantial harm to our mental health. By lovingly embracing *La Pachamama*, we may counter the perverse logic of capitalism. Here are some examples of how to do it.

### ***Águas do Cerrado – Cerrado Waters***

The project "*Águas do Cerrado*" [Cerrado Waters] began in 2014 in a region near the Federal District of Brasilia and lasted two years. There were two basins at risk due to the accelerated urbanization process, and this Permaculture project aimed to recover these areas and promote the sustainable use of water. Petrobras sponsored the work. It included the revegetation of degraded areas associated with watercourses and the promotion of water resources' rational use in public schools and rural communities, implementing, replicating, and spreading permaculture social technologies.



## **Permaculture**

Permaculture emerged in the 1970s in Australia as an alternative to the accelerated degradation of natural resources. Permaculture began with some aboriginal practices concerning the environment. They related to nature-inspired resources, including methods that were systematized and adapted to modern technologies. One of Permaculture's principles is integration rather than segregation. Its ethics have three pillars: care for the planet, care for people, and distribution of surpluses (which means not accumulating and generating waste).

## **Agroforestry**

Another vital alternative to the food production problem is the implementation of agroforestry systems. These systems combine food production with environmental conservation. Agroforestry mimics the rhythm and logic of nature, but of course, they are not in line with the accelerated and anti-ecological output of the current model of agribusiness.

## **Alternative Psychotherapy Practices**

Human beings' reintegration into the inner and outer nature also depends on a change in our psychotherapists' practice. The clinic needs to get out of the four walls. If this is not possible, an ecological approach needs to enter the clinic through practices that promote environmental awareness and reconnection with Mother Earth and with the shamanic force that inhabits each one of us. May this ecological crisis call for returning to our roots because we are trees as we are the Earth.



*Image 5 An aerial view of a natural lake fed by a spring in the Amazon River basin near Manaus, September 30, 2010. Ivan Canabrava / Reuters*

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# Democracy and authoritarianism in the age of cyber-power

## Archetypal political states of mind and their tricksters

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This paper discusses the potential heuristic value of Jungian psychology to the emerging relationships between humans, non-humans and technology. This reflection aims to answer the question of whether or not analytical psychology can contribute to developing the philosophical paradigm of ‘post-humanism’ (Förster, Ferrando, 2019). Posthuman studies (Braidotti, 2018) created and adopted a new specific methodology and praxis to overcome an anthropocentric *Weltanschauung* so as to embrace a thorough inquiry into non-human life: from animals, to artificial intelligence and its concerns with non-human experience as a site of knowledge. The Covid-19 pandemic experience has demonstrated the limits of a vision excluding non-human life from the equation. The encounter of Jungian and depth psychology with intersectional approaches linking themselves to a deconstructionist tradition of contemporary European philosophy (from Deleuze to Braidotti) has generated interesting ideas and perspectives (Main, McMillan, Henderson, 2020). The original Jungian model of the psyche, and in particular revising the idea of a *psychoid archetype* could offer new epistemological tools to embrace a Jungian post-human view of the relationships between humans with other living beings such as things, animals, plants, the ecosystem and, more important to the aim of this discussion, artificial intelligence and digital technologies. The paper briefly explores the manifold transformations of human potential following the enhancement of technological science and its applications in human interactions with Artificial Intelligence (AI) that have started to rewire the human brain and nature, triggering generational mutations already visible among Gen Z (born after 2000) and native digitals (children born after 2010). The paper discusses the revolutionary changes that cyberspace has introduced into political life at both individual and collective levels, and illustrates three cases illuminating the trickster dynamics that rule democracy and authoritarianism in the contemporary world.

### ***Psychoid unconscious, unus mundus and post-human existence***

Jung postulated a psychoid function of the unconscious, a psychic modality of processing information out of consciousness and that can be experienced only indirectly. This idea is connected with the *unus mundus* or ‘one world’ (1946) in which everything is intangibly interconnected. This is the visionary attempt revealing a decisive stance to move beyond the Cartesian splitting of the body and mind domain, which can echo with contemporary non-dualistic (neo) Spinozian views (Adams & Braidotti, 2017). In light of the massive technological revolution following the creation of the *world wide web* by Sir Timothy Berners-Lee (1989), the idea that the human psyche is constantly and intangibly connected with the outer realm clearly indicates that Jung’s ideas cannot be disregarded as mere ‘metaphysical speculations’ (1944, cit. in Williams 2019). The idea of a psychoid archetype might be epistemically applied to understanding the virtual dimension or cyberspace and the transformations that information technology has introduced in human lives at both individual and collective level. Biotechnologies and neurosciences can allow an overcoming of the material limitations of the human condition by creating parallel psycho-sensorial realms, virtual realities, prolonging bodies’ functionality by implanting microchips, and empowering mental and physical abilities.

On a different note, the Jungian model of psyche could be re-adjourned in its relations between conscious and unconscious by considering to what extent the daily use of technology has modified the normal patterns of functioning of brain areas so that we can re-think the psychosomatic complex of Ego in light of its virtual ‘E-ness’. Jung’s definition of the psychoid archetype can allow us to heuristically understand the intersection of the individual and the collective dimensions in cyberspace as well

as multiple changes with regards to the intra-psychic, relational, social and political realms.

### ***The digitization of human life***

In the last decade, starting in 2010 wearable technology has unpredictably developed to produce a fast revolution in digital health. Wearable technology refers to sophisticated electronic technologies or computers that are incorporated into items of clothing and accessories, which can comfortably be worn on the body, such as, for instance, smart glasses and watches. Wearable devices easily provide sensory and scanning features, biofeedback and tracking of physiological functions in the present moment and their accuracy of measurement depends on the hardware of the algorithms used. They are becoming pivotal for a healthy lifestyle. Digital technology can enhance the efficiency of health services making it unnecessary to physically visit a doctor, especially for simple procedures such as checking blood sugar and blood pressure. In the field of psychiatry, the potential of wearable technology use is enormous and can allow monitoring at a distance the effects of medications on psychobiological activities, mood, sleeping patterns, and helping patients to keep engaged and compliant with their cure while encouraging proactivity. Smartphones can provide accurate digital phenotypes, detecting through phone sensors, keyboard interactions and voice and speech analysis at least three main clusters of information. Phone sensors are able to detect the level of activity, location and sociality; the interaction with keyboard can measure reaction time, attention and memory, while prosody, sentiment and coherence are assessed through the analysis of voice and speech. Undeniably, digital phenotypes capture in real time behavioral patterns, cognition and mood changes, making it possible to diagnose, monitor for



remission and relapse and predict the risk of suicide and other conduct based on the data extracted via smartphone (Akeret et al. 2018; Borger et al. 2019).

The social impact of wearable technology can be impressive<sup>1</sup>. Wearable systems are also used to augment the intact portion of sense in individuals with different degrees of sensory impairments (Shull & Damien, 2015). In this case, haptic wearable devices have been created and are defined as untethered, ungrounded body-worn devices that interact directly with the skin in natural environments and/or in laboratory settings. At the moment wearable haptic devices have been shown to improve function for a variety of clinical applications including: rehabilitation, prosthetics, vestibular loss, osteoarthritis, vision loss and hearing loss and, in the future, new devices might support amputees as well as blind or deaf individuals.

Scientists have found evidence of the effects of neurotechnology on brain neuroplasticity, demonstrating how the daily use of smartphones can produce the extension of neural networks between visual and sensory neocortical areas (Gosh, 2015) compared to individuals who do not use smartphones. These neural transformations can be dramatic and irreversible when microchips and body-mind prosthesis are applied. The downsides of using plasticity and brain-computer interfaces to enhance human life have yet to be accurately investigated.

In view of the irreversible technological transformations that have challenged human limitations over the last decade, the symbolic stance of the Ego bridging the

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the mobile app Khushi Baby ([www.kushibaby.org](http://www.kushibaby.org)) helps community health workers to motivate and monitor the health care of mothers and children in remote areas of the world. The app was born out of a classroom project at Yale University and works by interfacing with a digital necklace worn by patients via Near Field Communication (NFC). All the data is stored on a tiny NFC chip worn in a form of a pendant that is synced to the cloud and displayed on an analytics dashboard where insight can be acted upon by health officials.

real and the unreal archetypal states of mind entails new tasks and functions. Jung's definition of the archetype allows us to heuristically understand the intersection of the individual and the collective in cyberspace in relation to the orientation of political attitudes and choices. The use of the Internet and social media through algorithmic manipulation has shown its pivotal grip potential in both democratic, populist, authoritarian and revolutionary movements.

### ***Cyberspace and the collective unconscious***

A unique study conducted in 2014 by Adam Kramer and colleagues<sup>2</sup> brought experimental evidence of a massive scale of emotional contagion through social networks on a sample of 689,003 Facebook users. This study sets in stone the Jungian notion of *participation mystique* as an 'unconscious identity in which individual psychic spheres interpenetrate to such a degree that is impossible to say what belongs to whom' (Jung, 1958: 851-52). It provides a clear description for many collective phenomena of emotional contagion through the use of social media. In a previous study (Fowler & Christakis, 2008), researchers had proved that emotional states could be transferred to others via emotional contagion, leading people to experience the same emotions without their awareness. Emotional contagion is well established in laboratory experiments, with people transferring positive and negative emotions to others. In their work, the authors collected over a 20 year period data from a large real-world social network and showed that that longer-lasting moods

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<sup>2</sup> Kramer et al. (2014) have set an experimental design with people who use Facebook to test whether emotional contagion occurs outside of in-person interaction between individuals by reducing the amount of emotional content in the News Feed. When positive expressions were reduced, people produced fewer positive posts and more negative posts; when negative expressions were reduced, the opposite pattern occurred. These results indicate that emotions expressed by others on Facebook influence our own emotions, constituting experimental evidence for massive-scale contagion via social networks.

(e.g., depression, happiness) can be transferred through networks although the results were controversial. The study by Kramer and colleagues also suggests that, in contrast to prevailing assumptions, in-person interaction and non-verbal cues are not strictly necessary for emotional contagion, and that the observation of others' positive experiences constitutes a positive experience for people. Of note, this study was conducted without the informed consent of the participants while using data extracted by Facebook, raising serious questions about its ethical standard.

### ***Citizens of the cloud: archetypal political states of mind and their tricksters***

Technological transformations have reshaped the relationship of individuals and groups with power (Qvortrup 2007; Development, 2004). Cyberspace and social media have become key tools to influence, direct and mediate social representations, political attitudes and crucial determinants of elective choices. Three situational cases demonstrate the deep archetypal dynamics that influence political behaviors taking place in the virtual realm of the Internet at the intersection between individual and collective states of mind. The first is the constitution of the Five Star Movement (Movimento Cinque Stelle) in Italy as a form of direct democracy through the Internet. The second focuses on the use of personal data by Cambridge Analytica to orient the Republican elections in the US; lastly there is the use of social media in revolutionary movements and potentially violent political upheavals. These three examples are intended to clarify the importance and value of Jungian concepts in the contemporary world and call for a creative re-elaboration of Jungian psychology for its application at the intersection with other fields of knowledge and disciplines.

The Five Star Movement (M5S) was born as a joke between two 60 plus year old billionaires, both following the dream of absolute participatory democracy –“1 vote= 1 person”. They sought to demolish what they considered to be a corrupted and unequal elite leading the political system and to replace that corrupt elite with new political blood coming from the whole society. Their experiment seems to have failed after the Five Star Movement became an institutionalized political party not only losing its original revolutionary power but showing paradoxically authoritarian behaviors to control its members. It appears that all the activities of elected parliament members are controlled, regulated and sanctioned through a digital platform ‘Rousseau’, which is owned by a private company Casaleggio S.P.A.. The fact that a private entity controls so closely the choices of elected PMs is clearly a violation of constitutional rules and rights of elected representatives (Iacoboni, 2018).

The Arab spring represented an outstanding turning point for “liberation technology” (Diamond & Plattner, 2019) by helping to mobilize citizens’ protest and oust autocracies. The power of simple communication apps, such as WhatsApp, to assemble in a few minutes thousands of netizens to advocate for their freedoms appeared to overcome the control of the government. On the other hand, authoritarian governments can also use technology to stifle protest and to target dissenters in order to stay in power. The tricksterish nature of e-democracy reveals its perturbing influence on human relations in cyberspace as they take place in an ethereal, immaterial and unbounded environment where imagination and projections can be manipulated by algorithms which can direct and orient identities and group movements, based on simple selective principles of human cognition that opt for convergent information rather than considering divergent data (Hommel, B.

2012). The documentary “The social dilemma”<sup>3</sup> provides an approximative discussion of this issue. If authoritarian governments can legislate censorship, install firewalls, remove or manipulate contents, use high-tech surveillance to detect, arrest, and persecute critics and ban certain information, as reported by Freedom of House in 2018<sup>4</sup>, democratic and liberal countries can exploit the illusion of digital democracy in more subtle ways. Cambridge Analytica used illegal data mining to manipulate public opinion and shape the outcome of the US elections in 2016<sup>5</sup> and the Brexit referendum in UK (2018). This scandal was exposed and explained to a wide audience by “The Great Hack”<sup>6</sup>.

### ***Conclusion: Jungian reflections in a post-human present***

The epistemic potential of analytical psychology and psychoanalysis (Johansen et al., 2016) to explore in depth the current relationships between human and non-human realms appears to be quite underestimated. In light of the fast-paced technological changes, it seems essential to widen the original Jungian model of psyche in order to analyze and integrate the impact of new technologies on the overall psychic functioning and in particular on the development of the Ego complex. With the term E-ness (‘E’ as Ego and Electronic), we could describe the virtual dimension of agency. The relatedness of humans with artificial intelligence and

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<sup>3</sup> *The social dilemma*, Netflix Official Series, 2020 by Jeff Orlowski.

<sup>4</sup> Freedom House (2018). The raise of digital authoritarianism. Available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2018/rise-digital-authoritarianism>. reported about China’s model of internet control that in 2018 implemented the Cybersecurity Law centralizing and upgrading surveillance to extreme human rights violations.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/mar/17/cambridge-analytica-facebook-influence-us-election>

<sup>6</sup> *The Great Hack*, Netflix Official Series, 2020, by Karim Amer and Jehane Noujam.

technological devices should be considered an important mission pursued by Jungian scholars and clinicians. The effects of the virtual realm on individual psyche, cultural consciousness and collective unconscious have been proven by the political archetypal states of mind and their tricksterish dynamics. Several venues of research can be identified for those who want to apply Jung's ideas in the post-humanities and to contemporary scenarios where human and artificial intelligence will interact and develop mutually. In particular, Jungian psychology might serve the purpose of rethinking the ethical challenges of these relationships to include a new accountability and responsibility for devices invented to replace human activity (self-driving cars and drones for example). These new frontiers of post human communication require the supervision of regulations and policies so as to ensure ethical conduct, transparency, and consent for the huge population now using social media.

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Panel 9 - MOTIVATION AND INSPIRATION, HOPE AND  
DREAD

**The Danger in the Split—  
The Importance of Integration**

**Moshe Alon**

**Israel**

This lecture is dedicated to my father who passed away exactly 10 years ago on 10.18.2010.

My lecture today describes what I view as my most significant achievement in my forty years of work as an Educational psychologist and as director of the educational psychological service in the city of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa. Over these years, I built a working model that, eventually, came to be called multiculturalism. The model is designed for systems serving diverse and conflicting populations and strives to replace splits that hinder functioning with an integration leading to achievements. I developed this model for the purpose of working with a particular school in Jaffa serving a mixed population of Jewish and Arab children contending with many conflicts. The model would later be implemented in other schools and urban settings. Following its success, schools were awarded prizes for their academic achievements and the model itself was awarded a city prize which was named in Hebrew— “Etgar” ["Challenge"]. The attempt to translate analytical theory into socio-political action exerting influence beyond the clinic on the education of children and youths and on urban social processes is a huge challenge that requires activist input.

Jaffa, the place where I began my working life and of which I speak today, is also the place where I was born and the one my parents came to from Morocco, a Muslim Arab country.

Municipally, Jaffa is part of Tel-Aviv, which is known as an open and pluralistic city that embraces diversity and splits. The most significant split in Jaffa is that resulting from the coexistence of two national groups—Jews and Arabs—and three religions—Muslims, Christians and Jews.

Before the State of Israel was established, 120,000 Arab residents lived in Jaffa and most of them were forced to flee during the war of independence. 70,000 people live in Jaffa today—30,000 Arabs and 40,000 Jews—a coexistence not often discussed though, naturally, it does, at times, lead to conflicts. As an educational psychologist and a Jungian analyst, I recognized that the remnants of that war in unconscious currents still exert influence in several contexts, including education. I understood that, if I could help to preserve a balance in the hardest and most loaded place in the city, if I could successfully lead to containment, acceptance, and conflict resolution, I would be helping in the development of the city beyond education, thereby realizing my activism.

When I began my work in Jaffa, I was a young psychologist just released from my army service as a lieutenant in a combat unit. By the age of 31, I had fought in three wars, the hardest and bloodiest of them in October 1973. In this conflict, I was in immediate danger of losing my life, an experience that led me to develop an unambiguous perception of Arabs as the enemy. Therefore, when I was first asked to work in an Arab school, I refused, as I still felt war-scarred. But two years later, I was asked again, and I accepted the offer to embark on the fascinating journey I will tell you about here.

The work with an Arab population that includes students, teachers, and parents has been one of the most crucial events for me as a person and as a psychologist. Meeting with the other/the enemy and recognizing the vast difference between them and myself and still working to help, advise, and strengthen the teachers and the community was for me no less than a numinous experience.

The Arab population, beyond the enemy, was for me the “other,” different in language, culture, religion, mentality, and narratives. And yet, over the years, I have been able to touch core educational principles in the Arab schools where I worked, pose deep and essential questions, seek answers and solutions together, and also implement them. My long years of work unequivocally clarified to me that I had chosen the right profession. I felt that I had been able to integrate the enemy and the other inside myself, while realizing this was also my work outside in the real world.

When I was appointed director of the city’s educational psychological service, the principal of the Jaffa high school requested my intervention. Most of the students at this high school are Jews, with a minority of Arabs, and the principal offered a symbolic description of their circumstances.

## The Two Benches

Arab students bench



Jewish students bench



*Image 1*

As you see, during breaks students are sitting on two benches in the schoolyard—on one are the Jewish students speaking Hebrew and on the other the Arab students speaking Arabic. Symbolically, there is no connection between

the two benches, and the teachers refrain from educational interventions. I recognized the fear preventing the teachers, as the responsible adults, from approaching the two benches symbolizing the split and initiating a conversation between the two groups of students that could lead them to a dialogue about the conflict. I was shocked by the fact that these students are neighbors and study in the same class for six years or more.

The multiculturalism model emerged, when I realized there was a call to replace the split thinking pattern that sees either Arabs or Jews with one that integrates them together. During my four-years journey with the principal and the school staff, the school as a system shifted from the “or” splitting stance symbolized by the picture of the two benches toward the “and” integrating stance we aspired to.

The journey, which was a therapeutic-educational process, comprised simultaneous work at three levels. At the level of the principal, I worked individually; at the level of the school leadership, I conducted group work together with other psychologists, and at the level of the teachers’ room, group work was conducted by a team recruited for this purpose that included both Arab and Jewish psychologists. Meetings were conducted regularly over the year, focusing on the participants’ attitudes toward the shadow and toward the other. After two years of work at all three levels through a method enabling them mutual feedback, I identified a decrease in anxiety levels and an increased ability to grapple with confrontational and conflictual contents. Some of the contents trickle down from the principal to the school leadership and then to the teaching staff, and some move in the opposite direction, from the teachers’ room, through the school leadership, and up to the principal. Although the model dealt at first

mainly with conflict-related contents, we later learned that we could work similarly with any subject that needed to be expanded and worked through within a system, not necessarily a school.

Team members had to realize and acknowledge their educational duty to contain the other and, above all, the other/the enemy inside, the threatening shadow within themselves. They also learned that attaining this new consciousness was not enough and they had to remain on guard since the unconscious would continue attacking and dividing. These attitude changes in the staff quickly led to a significant decrease in displays of violence among the students as well as to the enhancement of personal identity and belongingness.

An example of the way a teacher's perception changed involved the initiative of a teacher around observance of the Memorial Day for the Fallen Soldiers of the Wars of Israel and Victims of Actions of Terrorism. This Remembrance Day marks one of the most significant and vulnerable days for the Jewish population but is also one of the most alienating moments for Arabs in Israel who, on this day, grieve over the Nakba—the catastrophe of their expulsion with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. The teacher's unifying suggestion was to go with her students on that day to visit a memorial garden named after two casualties of a terrorist attack in the city in the 1990s—an Arab man and a Jewish woman. The students conducted a memorial service for the two victims and for all those who had died in the conflict on both sides. This is the commemoration monument in the garden.



## The Commemoration Monument



*Image 2*

In another case, I worked with a primary school in Jaffa with Jewish and Arab pupils that reached outstanding achievements after going through a similar process. The school's young principal had claimed at the start that there were no problems in her school between Arabs and Jews but agreed to implement the program. As her journey and that of the teaching staff proceeded, the events below the surface, which they had denied, were exposed to them. One significant episode was a football game that evoked tensions between Jewish and Arab students, culminating in physical violence. The principal separated the rivals and intended to suspend them. Luckily, and shamefully for her, both the Jewish and Arab students suggested replacing the suspension punishment with a homework assignment on football and violence. She and the teachers became aware that, when the staff looks away, splitting incidents occur, not necessarily below the surface but openly. This turned into a constitutive event in the process and paved the way for many insights and initiatives. One such result emerged when the Arts

and Crafts teacher assigned the students to paint on the subject of bridging differences in the school society, while presenting their conflicts symbolically. Each received a white umbrella and was asked to paint on it. The dozens of umbrellas that were hung throughout the school reflected familiar symbols of reconciling opposites.

## The Painted Umbrellas



Image 3

The principal then took a further step when she decided to make a special calendar for the school, which was to include and integrate all the holy days and festivals of the three religions and the students' birthdays.

# The Calendar



Image 4

Two years later, the school was awarded the National Education Prize for high achievements in school climate and for exceptional learning

accomplishments. A school for Jews and Arabs in an area with a relatively weak and poor population excelled, by national standards, in its academic attainments. The shift from a perspective of split to one of integration released powerful energies that had been focused on anxiety and replaced them with creativity, openness, learning, and achievements among both teachers and students. The students' sense of belongingness to the school and to the community, together with their identity according to their own religious and national origin, became much stronger. At Christmas time, fir trees stood in the classrooms; on the month of Ramadan, a Qur`an was placed in each class, and on Memorial Day all participated, with all the teachers and students aware of the difficulties this day entails for the Arab students.

At the municipal level, these experiences were viewed as a product of therapeutic educational work against schisms and splits and as reflecting the need for constant investment in the integration and preservation of the various—and at times opposite—sectors in the community and in the society while emphasizing the unifying human elements. These principles were implemented in other schools and communities in Tel-Aviv affected by similar problems, including in schools that integrate special education students.

On the Surface, splitting is a convenient solution, since it implies a high separation wall between the parties and no tension outwardly. Under the surface, however, anxiety and hostility lie in hiding, and many energies and resources are invested in defenses. On the other hand, the unconscious areas of the shadow await creativity, initiatives, and seminal ideas. To preserve unity and belongingness, efforts must be invested in preserving alertness and in the

attempt to perceive and interpret events at the symbolic level, which differentiates between split and integration.

Allow me to conclude with words written many years ago by a great Israeli, Jungian theoretician, whom you all surely know, Erich Neumann. In his deep and insightful vision of *A New Ethic*, as if predicting what is yet to come, he wrote:

“whatever leads to wholeness is “good”; whatever leads to splitting is “evil”.

Integration is good, disintegration is evil” (p. 126).

## Jaffa is Home for Everyone



Image 5

If you can spare another minute, I would like to conclude with an anecdote that brings together Jung, Jaffa, activism, and myself. I assume you all know of

Amos Oz, who is one of Israel's most famous writers whose work has been translated into many languages with great success. His writing bears a distinctly Jungian tone, and Abraham Balaban, a literary scholar and journalist well known in Israel, has suggested a Jungian analysis of his stories. As chairman of the New Israeli Jungian Association, I invited him to lecture to our members. Given that Balaban publishes a weekly journalistic column where he tells the story of a specific street in Tel-Aviv, and given that I am a Jaffa native and love the city, I suggested to him at the end of his lecture that we take a sightseeing tour of south Tel-Aviv, of Jaffa, where Jews and Arabs live together. We toured Jaffa for several hours and I told him my personal story in this city from childhood to the present. Balaban then published a column about this tour and about me, which he titled "Carl Gustav Jung in Jaffa," and I am happy and proud to show it to you.

### C. G. Jung In Jaffa



Image 6

The images and text in this paper are strictly for educational use and are protected by United States copyright laws. Unauthorized use will result in criminal and civil penalties.

**Moshe Alon** (Israel) is the President of The New Israeli Jungian Association and former General Manager of the Educational Psychological Services of Tel Aviv-Jaffa. Serving in this position during times of terror war, he became one of the leading experts in Israel, intervening in trauma and emergency situations, both with individuals and communities. Moshe is also trained as a family therapist and works with families, adults, and children. Moshe is highly interested in social conflicts and mainly the Israeli-Arab conflict. He is published in Hebrew, and his articles appear in some edited books as well as Israeli journals.

**Activism of the heart: Jungian practice when violence,  
racism and ancestral wounds prevail**

André Castro, Cristina Maranzana, Guilherme dos Anjos  
Lemos, Giany Bortolozzo, Letícia Schreiner, Luciano  
Alencastro, Marluce Renz, Patrícia Flores de Medeiros

Brazil



According to the United Nations' latest reports, Brazil is the seventh most unequal country in the world: millions of people live in poverty, women earn less than men and although 56% of Brazilians are considered black, they are the ones with the lowest income and the highest rates of police deaths and femicides. Because of its continental dimensions, there are many "Brazils" nested within Brazil. Thus, we are going to talk about our state, Rio Grande do Sul – where the climate is temperate, not tropical. Rio Grande do Sul imagines itself a place of European immigrants and it has slowly erased enslaved Africans and their descendants from its make-up. Here, only 22% of the population is black.

As psychotherapists, we often wonder how implicated we are in the unequal world we live in. In this sense, this is not intended as a finished work with conclusive reflections, but rather a sharing of apprehensions and discomforts regarding this process of training in psychology, which takes us beyond the walls of our institution to the lower-income outskirts. Moving beyond these walls means cutting ties with a cultural complex which prevents us from hearing the racism and colonialism that perpetuate ancestral wounds. We insert ourselves in the outskirts not simply from a place of research, but from a need to act and become accountable in the world we inhabit. We act, think and reflect based on a place - the place under our feet and where our heart beats.

The Brazilian Jungian Association has been offering internships in Jungian psychology in a neighborhood on the outskirts of the city of Porto Alegre. The internship is located in a microcosm of Brazil. People live in extreme poverty, on welfare and in precarious housing. Drug dealers rule the territory and the citizens live in great fear. We too feel afraid. But we go anyway, not due to charity or benevolence, but propelled by activism. We call this "activism of the heart" because

the concept of Anima Mundi is central to this political and imaginal connection with the world.

Integration of the psyche is not exclusively a matter of the individual, but occurs in the context of the individual engaging with the soul of the neighborhood, of the city, of politics. We are looking for a psychology that is also capable of grappling with political, social, historic and urban contexts (Hillman, 2006). The neighborhood we work in has a frail public health system and deficient social services, with very little material and human resources. Hence, the psychological services we provide have become an important part of the local public network. One of the members of this network of services is the Non Governmental Organization Francisco de Assis which provides the internship's headquarters. The population is mostly black or mixed race (non-white).



*Image 1 Work team - supervisors, interns and volunteers at Non Governmental Organization Francisco de Assis*

It is our understanding that the place in which we work also works its way into us, so we'd like to invite you to share in the geography of the location. As mentioned, it's a region on the city outskirts and one of the distinguishing features is a deactivated quarry. A portion of the houses in the region has sanitation, but the part located on the quarry does not; in this part, water is supplied via water trucks. To hear about the every-day life, the suffering and the reality of the people who live there is to be touched by horrific stories and images. It is a blend of fear, hope and dread. That is the image of being on the quarry.

In the internship, we feel on our own skins the sting of failure; an ineptitude and powerlessness in the face of social issues. We can recognize this in the following account, as stated by an intern in a meeting:

*Once, when I was there, I saw photos of decapitated bodies forwarded on WhatsApp. There was a curfew; we couldn't go out on the streets. So much negligence and abandonment. It's all very concrete. This concrete thing, a block, a quarry. You try to move it, but it won't budge. Then you meet with your supervisor and ask 'what can we do?'*

This echoes in us: what is our role in all of this? What are our limits? What is possible and what is impossible when it comes to making a difference? Here we cross a border. We feel the need to acknowledge and embrace the other. Getting out of the ivory tower and making these encounters in the outskirts exposes us to different images. In one of these encounters, we came across an offering placed on a crossroads.



*Image 2 Offerings are foods and beverages left for spirits and, in the Afro-Brazilian religions, crossroads are special spaces of connection with divine entities.*

Here is a photograph of an offering made in honor of Obaluaê-Omolu, an *Orixá*, or deity, worshipped in the Afro-Brazilian pantheon. *Orixá* in Yoruba language means bringer of *Axé*, or energy, life force. Omolu was born with sores all over his body, so his mother abandoned him in the sea. Yemanjá, the goddess of salt water, found him, adopted him and raised him as her own child. At around the age of twelve, he decided to leave home and earn a living, but at every village he stopped to look for work, no one wanted him to approach because of the marks on his skin. So he ended up in the forest. Mosquitos bit him, turning his sores into pustules.

Omolu fell asleep in pain. In his dreams, he heard a voice whispering in his ear. At the end of the night, the voices said that he was cured and ready to move on, because he had learned how to heal with plants. He returns through the same places

he had come, except that this time, as he passes through each village, he wards off diseases. Omolu goes from being scorned to being welcomed and summoned in the communities due to his knowledge.



*Image 3 Omolu, the Lord of Passages, representing life and death, health and disease*

Omolu wears clothes made of straw to cover and protect his wounds. Obaluaê and Omolu are two names for the same *orixá*, representing opposites: life and death. Obaluaê is young; Omolu is old. He has the power of life and has the ability to get rid of diseases. At the same time, he is feared for his deathly power, resulting in disease and epidemics. He is Lord of passages, crossings and cemeteries. This image of Omolu at a crossing makes us look at the imagery that is alive on our streets, on our street corners, and come face to face with our myths: a wounded healer of African descent. Omolu crosses our path as future analysts by presenting us with another perspective on health and disease.

Historically, the myth of Omolu is linked to smallpox, a disease eradicated in 1970. Yet this archetypal image of a virus that killed millions of people is very timely!

By the path of Omolu, we arrive at skin marked by the wounds of contagion. The image of Omolu covered in straw takes us to the wounds that have been covered up in our own skin, in our neighborhood, in our city, in our country. He shows up as a healer, but interacting with him means interacting with horror, darkness, pustules, stench, death.

There's a short story about a party among the *Orixás* in which Omolu stays outside, because he feels rejected, but Iansã – the *orixá* of winds and storms – summons him inside and dances with him (Prandi, 2001). While they are swirling, the winds lift up the straws and his wounds are exposed, which is precisely the moment in which his sores turn into popcorn, bouncing off of his body as he dances. Here we have an image that shows us that getting on the dance floor, being who one is, uncovering and accepting one's wounds, leads to the possibility of transformation.



*Image 4 Ritual dance in honor of Omolu*

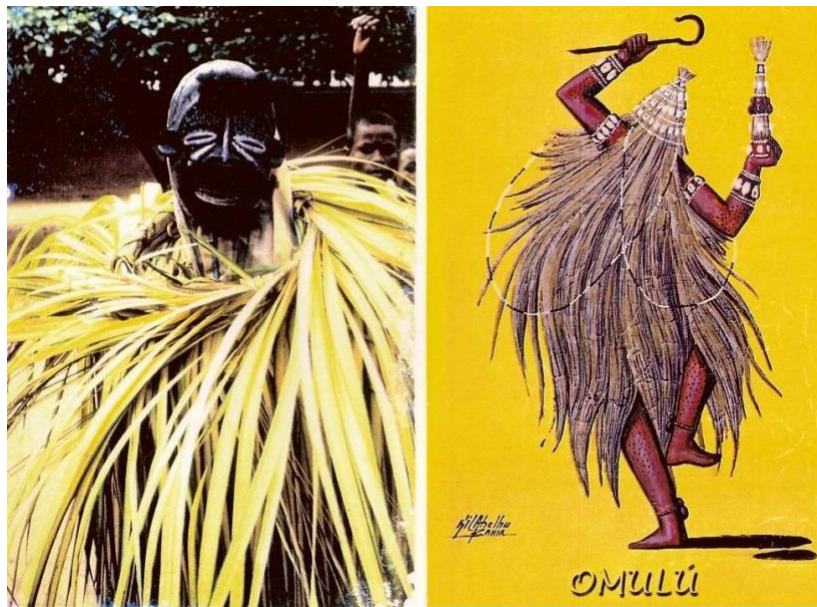
When we think of the archetype of the wounded healer, we recognize our need to look at our own wounds, of working on ourselves in order to attend to the other. Omolu has multiple sores on his skin; his disease is one of contagion. It's not a wound from an arrow, or even a single wound, but skin that's inflicted with many lesions, acquired by contamination, through interpersonal and social relationships, and the environment at large. The open wounds on the skin's surface, hidden beneath the straws which cover up the wounds allowed vulnerability and shame not to prevent contact with the Other. For us, to look through the eyes of this image is to look through the perspective of someone who has been shunned.

If we go along with these markings on the skin, markings covered up by straw, we are presented with the unique and structural racism that exists in Brazil with our myth of a racial democracy. As we have never had official segregation laws, which proclaim racially-based principles of blood purity and racial inferiority, racist values in Brazil were covered up, resulting in a narrative, shared by many Brazilians, that "we are not racists." But the numbers tell a different story.

However, as white psychologists, we must realize that light skin also creates marks, and that not being aware of this contributes to sustaining racism's deadly consequences. **Dis-covering** (un-covering) our wound, from Omolu's perspective, also brings about the paradox inherent in our situation in the outskirts: we need to affect and to be affected by others, to experience a contact wound, a wound made in an encounter. We hope to be able to care for others because we are aware of our own wounds. In this perspective of shared contagion, the healers need be aware of the fact that we affect the other, and cause sickness in the other, unless we become aware of the markings inherent in our own skin. Indiscriminate contagion, due to lack of awareness of one's complexes, may be fatal.

We would like to focus on the complex of white supremacy that is covered up by white people's silence. The historical persistence of the idea of whitening in both the social imagination and in social practices ensures white privilege (Adams, 1996). Being white on the chessboard of racial relations is to be unmarked, unlabeled; it is to be the standard of what is considered universal. This universality does not encompass many, but a powerful minority towards whom all rights are directed, even the right to life.

With the corridors of power being occupied from this perspective, the racial issue is not discussed from the viewpoint of white accountability. Hence, white people act with unconscious force towards maintaining the symbolic and material advantages of whites to the detriment of non-whites. Recognizing that being white creates its own problems as part of clinical practice allows us to look at modes of contagion that are ruled by the complex of white supremacy. How goes our ability to listen at this racial crossroads? The denial of racism and the impossibility of confronting it, kept it in the shadows and perpetuates an indiscriminate contagion of pain and suffering.



*Image 5 Omolu presented in two different aspects*



On the other hand, our entering into this reality of social vulnerability and abandonment also leaves its marks and wounds in us. We began to look at these wounds and came to the realization of how this complex covers our whiteness and creates a rift. Omolu reveals himself to us as an awareness that contains the ambiguity of affecting and being affected by the other. The issues of contagion, self-care and care for others are mirrored in our relationships to the *polis*. Could this care, therefore, be considered a political act? We hope these reflections open dialogues towards a Jungian clinical practice committed to the world we live in.

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The Reality of Fragmentation and the Yearning for Healing:  
Jungian Perspectives on Democracy, Power and Illusion in  
Contemporary Politics

Movement Workshop:  
Moving the Political Body toward Consciousness

Tina Stromsted (US)

Heba Zaphiriou-Zarifi (UK, Palestine)



*“Gaia’s Daughter” by Mara Friedman*

*“A body whose wisdom has never been honored does not easily trust.*

*An animal with a crazy trainer learns crazy habits, runs wild.”*

~ Marion Woodman (Woodman, 2001, pg. 41)

Today, the body of humanity is challenged with health issues affecting vital organs such as the lungs, heart, liver, guts, and brain. The body of earth is ailing with pollution – poisoning flora and fauna, air and water. Populations are threatened with extinction. Personal and global voices cry: “I can’t breathe!”

Jung clarifies: *“The idea of the self could not exist for one single moment if there were not a body to create and maintain that distinctness”* (Jung, 1988, p. 65). Our body holds polarities, dilemmas, deep feelings, wounds, memories, longing, and a creative potential for new life. Through the body we engage psyche-soma by participating in Jung’s urging to hold the tension between the opposites for the transcendent function to emerge, providing more than the sum of its parts.

Our daily 30-minute movement sessions offered a safe and sacred temenos for our community to come together to embody the emerging spirit of the depths. By carefully attending to even micro-movements, a connection between the individual soma and the collective body is made, affecting both simultaneously.

Our body is key to experiencing a spirituality that holds dark and light, good and evil, in conscious awareness. As we breathe into our organs, we breathe life into the imaginal to sustain healing, regeneration, and greater awakening to the present moment. We feel, reflect, and come to a sense of political responsibility connected to a strong moral compass. For every breath lost, a new breath awakens.

Our movement interludes supported listening and learning from one another while tending to self-care. Integrating breathing, sensing, and grounding, we practiced returning to our center, connecting to ourselves, and receiving one another with respect and kindness.

We were delighted that so many of you joined us as we invited in the discovery of body-psyche wisdom, explored peace in chaos, ground in uncertainty, connectivity in isolation, and supported each other in learning how to ‘dance with the times.’ No movement experience was necessary, only curiosity and a bit of courage to open up to the unknown.

### **Moving Activism – Tina Stromsted**

*“As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of being.” (Jung, 1961,p. 326).*

Our movement sessions sought to offer a place where body, breath, and spirit could come together to offer nourishment for the soul in our beleaguered community. The world was suffering from many long months of tragic losses associated with COVID-19, and each day surged with the building tension that preceded a US presidential election filled with division, vitriol, conspiracy theories, and a growing tide of hope for change.

As ‘sheltering in place’ necessitated shifting the conference to an online environment, we designed experiences to support participants in grounding in their bodies with a sense of safety, receptivity, and openness to help sustain them through days of screen time. Inviting ease and spaciousness, these brief movement explorations engaged inner resources, flexibility, tenderness, play, strength and resilience as we gathered in community.

In these days of global pandemics ~ cellular and social ~ we’d become that much more aware of our fragility. We knew that listening to different experiences and points of view at political conferences such as this could also be triggering, stirring deep responses that are patterned in the body/mind ~ some ancestral, others more recent, or both, seeking recognition and reconciliation. Jung’s urgent message was to practice ‘holding the tension between the opposites,’ to discover a transcendent function that engages psyche and soma; each profoundly influencing the other.

Sometimes moving to music, and at other times in quiet moments for embracing and engaging what we sensed in our bodies, we took time to ground and move – exploring in the present moment what could otherwise remain mental constructs. The body links us to the depths - our somatic unconscious - a threshold that bridges light and shadow, matter and spirit, the personal and the collective, and our interrelationships with all life forms on the planet.

As we know, when we don't do our inner work, our political actions are often inevitably driven by the power of unexamined complexes that can further divide us. Neuroscience is now telling us what we've intuited all along: that the guts contain our second brain – the enteric nervous system - and that we are triggered by what we hear or perceive liminally. Integrating the body's experience is not only necessary to make our experience conscious, but it also helps us transform and metabolize information into meaning.

As Modern dancer, Martha Graham said: *“Movement never lies. It is a barometer telling the state of the soul's weather to all who can read it”* (Graham, 1952/1998, pg. 96).

A very beautiful moment during the movement workshop was when Heba and I saw over a hundred of you dancing in your living rooms via zoom, and then shared significant gestures with the group! How wonderful it was to see our community in motion, some with your partners, kids, and/or pets - responding to one another through natural movement from different parts of the world! From the reactions and enjoyment, we perceived how fundamental it is to bring the body in as a profoundly integrative element in our awareness as analysts, and in activist work.

As the *Native American Hopi people* say: *“To watch us dance is to hear our hearts speak.”* Thank you all; it was heartwarming to share this experience with you!

### **The Dance of Democracy - Heba Zaphiriou-Zarifi**

For Kierkegaard, an individual is in despair if he does not align himself with God or God's plan for the self. Individual despair is a misalignment of the dance of life with oneself. Dance involves a synthesis, a reconciling of a tension made conscious of itself. There is no wisdom without an inhalation and exhalation, nor



vitality without a dialectical homeostasis between the possible and the necessary. Conscious knowledge of polarities, held together in relation, runs through the body as the line between good and evil crosses each individual psyche. To dance is to hold the centre between good and evil as the still point between creation and destruction, death and rebirth.

The body is the portal to immanence and transcendence, the gateway to experiencing a spirituality of darkness and light, of good and evil, of chaos and order in conscious awareness. Dance is a balancing act, a wandering paced on a tightrope stretched between opposites – left and right, above and below, front and back. The dancer moves out from and in toward the still point, the calm abode of peace within.

When the animal body is denied its instinctual daemon, the opposing spiritual pole is concretised into addictions. Perfectionism and consumerism are addictions concretising spirit in matter whilst “riding the mount of the body” (Rumi). Racism is another lethal drive that snuffs spirit out of existence. The body becomes the tomb of the rejected spirit.

There is a nonconformist energy in the body that will not give in to collective norms, dogmas or fascism, and, if given a chance to dance, willingly creates out of its own central axis, between earth and heaven, a morality based on knowledge of good and evil, and the joyfulness to *be*. Dance, as a political act, incarnates a decision-making centre out of which emanates lawful relation to others. It takes courage to become the centre of the spinning wheel, the axis mundi of the rotating world, the point toward which we indefinitely travel.

The body is foundational to democracy: it opens dialogue and freedom of movement, engages the old in renewal, generating ethical norms to give equal rights to all our parts, integrating the neglected or abused. Dance is democratic not merely because it engages all parts of body-psyche equally without discrimination; it creates

solidarity between them. Furthermore, decency is integral to democracy. However, ‘politely’ we may impute undesirable qualities to others, it is *undemocratic* and truly indecent. The question of embodying true democracy and equality remains open. More than solidarity between the parts, it requires “the mind [to] learn compassionate love for the body” (Ostrowski, p. 25). By ‘body’ we imply the earth, the shadow, sexuality and the feminine.

We each have the freedom to call for equality and for change by reclaiming the spirit-of-a-nation to return home. The scapegoating of others because of lack of inner honesty needs to be defeated. Fragmentation occurs when others’ integrity is not respected. Colonisation of the indigenous points at a famished disincarnated spirit. When chained to our certitudes about others whom we judge, we become slaves who have forfeited their freedom. Here is a poem to the defeated who continue to dance despite the suffering inflicted upon them:

Dance, when you’re broken open.  
Dance, if you’ve torn the bandage off.  
Dance in the middle of the fighting.  
Dance in your blood.  
Dance, when you're perfectly free. (Rumi)

**Tina Stromsted** (U.S.) Jungian analyst, Board Certified Dance/Movement therapist, Somatics educator, & author is past co-founder and faculty of the Authentic Movement Institute. She teaches internationally, and at the C.G. Jung Institute in San Francisco, the Depth/Somatics Doctoral program at Pacifica Graduate Institute, and the Marion Woodman Foundation. Her private practice is in San Francisco, California.

**Heba Zaphiriou-Zarifi** (UK/Palestine) is a senior Jungian analytical psychologist, a training analyst and supervisor. She has a private practice in London, UK and consults on mental health projects in the Middle East. Heba founded The Central London Authentic Movement Practice and is a Leader in BodySoul Rhythms© at the Marion Woodman Foundation. She has founded and co-leads The Silence Retreats. Heba is a speaker at international conferences and is a published writer in academic journals. She integrates philosophy, embodied spirituality, active imagination, and the creative arts in her work. Heba has campaigned extensively for justice leading to peace and reconciliation.

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## CLOSING REMARKS

## Reflection Groups and Conference Recap

Michael Bala

United States

Since the Spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit us all with a powerful body slam. As we staggered to adjust to contagion anxiety, threats to health, possible illness or death, travel fears and bans, it became clear that the Analysis and Activism + Presidency Conference would need to adapt or be cancelled.

The conference planning committee reached a decision to shift from the intended live and in-person gathering in Berkeley, California to an online, live-streamed, and recorded program broadcast from the seminar room of C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco.

Many logistical adjustments and program reconsiderations were required. Part of the multitude of considerations was an awareness that meeting on-line rather than in-person would feel quite different. Discussion ensued about how to shape the conference so that as much relatedness, interaction, and in-the-moment and of-the-moment discussions might occur.

At a live in-person conference, so much happens when people mingle during breaks and over meals. Individually and together, thoughts and feelings are gathered, experiences are explored and shared, questions and responses formed. This is often when important social interactions and exchanges contribute to relatedness; to being together in something stimulating and meaningful.

The planners came to recognize that the remote format would not present the opportunities for this key set of meaningful connective experiences. That felt like a significant potential loss.

With discussion, the idea of having some form of group gathering at the end of the conference days began to form. Having group gatherings came to be a way for us, the conference participants, to connect with each other. We could meet for a time in a safe and secure space where reflecting and discussion might occur. The discussion might include or be separate from the presentation content and saying what one was experiencing would be welcome.

What are Reflection Groups and how did they become part of the conference?

These thoughts led to the creation of Reflection Groups. The intention was that the groups would serve as forums where thoughts and feelings about the conference and presentations could emerge between participants. The San Francisco Institute has integrated *process groups* into candidate training. And, a significant number of analysts meet multiple times a year to engage in our own group process experience. A core tenet of group process is that individuals in groups and groups-as-a-whole strive to bring unconscious material more into consciousness.

The thinking about Reflection Groups grew from these group process experiences. Yet Reflections Groups are not the same in purpose or in operation to group process. Experience with group process gave birth to the idea of conference Reflection Groups.

Part of the intention for the Reflection Groups was for conference participants to not feel like passive recipients of the talks but rather to be actively engaged in discussion. A goal for the groups was to provide settings for relating closely with others

with an eye and ear towards integrating both conference content and personal experience.

The conference planners asked me as to serve as coordinator for the groups. In conversation with my San Francisco colleagues, Lynn Franco and Tom Singer, the purpose, and construction of the groups was clarified. We initially envisioned four groups with two facilitators per group at the end of each day. Once the conference registrations shot past the anticipated 150 individuals to almost 300, we revisited the number and structure of the groups. Not having any sense of how many people would stay after the conference presentations ended - would it be 50 or 300? - we decided to have seven groups with one facilitator per group.

The facilitators were selected from analysts we knew who we thought could well contain the group, invite discussion, and be able to establish and maintain a safe space for sharing. The facilitators were Chie Lee from Los Angeles, Harry Fogarty from New York, and from San Francisco, Robin Greenberg, Christine Hejinian, Patricia Katsky, Gordon Murray, and Mario Starc.

On a personal note, I must say how honored I was and am that, when asked, each facilitator quickly said “Yes, I would like to be a facilitator”. I am grateful to each of them for serving and honored to have worked with them as they so ably facilitated the groups.



What was shared in the Reflection Groups?

At the end of the conference day on both Friday and Saturday, the groups met. In welcoming the participants assigned to each group, the facilitators invited them to speak of what came up, what they were feeling and thinking, how they had been impacted by attending the conference.

Each facilitator, in their own unique way, invited thoughts or feelings about the experience of being in an on-line conference, a conference about intersections of analysis and activism, about *what has come up within you* as the conference has unfolded.

Group participants responded to the invitation with thoughtful reflections, considered engagement with each other, and a sense of having experienced something quite unanticipated.

It would be virtually impossible and likely inadequate to tell you what the group participants shared with each other. So much happens in groups that language barely captures. So, I relay some of the facilitator observations about what the groups offered:

- I was moved by the openness and directness between the group members, particularly at the end of Saturday.
- Themes on Friday night struck me as "re-constituting" - turning to archetypal motifs and comments on the particularly deep themes evoked by the mixture of profoundly distressing materials.

- Themes at the end of Saturday moved toward more personal sharing, particularly with regard to activated dread and fears of election and post-election destabilization.
- I was moved by the openness and directness between the group members.
- There was a lot of emotion both days. On the first day, the group fell into a state of deep, silent grief – an “existential despair”.
- On the first night, we began with dreams. On the second night, the themes arising involved strong emotion – a feeling of being “shattered” and profoundly moved.
- The group was trying to hold opposites. There is energy for repair and potential for new growth but also dangerous energies pulling for further regression into chaos.
- Overall, the groups carried a generous willingness, vulnerability, and unguarded energy in the process of sharing feelings, images and associations. There were many compelling moments of sharing.
- The presentations intensified anxieties, especially with talk of probable post-election violence.
- The presentations strengthened the need to face fears, to bear sufferings, listen to our deep nature and to act on it.
- The feeling tone vacillated between hope and despair (or fear of despair) with the group in a self-care position by encouraging each other with positive ideas and/or compassion.
- There was an obvious shifting back and forth between the political and the emotional, mirroring the conference itself.

- The discussions were a combination of problem solving that moved more into reflections on how a person was impacted. The experience was of the group becoming more alive in the here and now.
- Grief and confusion emerged as the primary emotions/feelings. Associations to the content presented during the days became more prominent over explications for how we might respond to the problems.

### Recap to the Conference

I was asked to recap what had happened over the conference's three days through the lens of what I, in my capacities of working behind the scenes with slides and images and as the Reflection Groups Coordinator, had observed.

As it was important to me that as many voices and experiences were heard, I invited the dream matrix leaders and the body movement leaders to send me their observations which I would fold into my recap.

I reported how successful the conference was. How nearly 300 individuals from around the world had attended and participated even if being in different time zones meant that the broadcasts from San Francisco were quite late at night or in the very early morning hours.

I shared my own impression as well as the impressions of others I heard from that the conference was incredibly moving. Moving even though there were some initial technical glitches, and when tensions around inclusion and fairness emerged, and as conference fatigue set in.

A few key turns of phrase that caught the attention of many were:

“Non-violent spiritual warfare.”

“Is now the time?”

I spoke of the quality of the presentations, of their thoughtfulness and deep feeling, of the depth and breadth of the material, and of the intersection of psychological thought with both historic and contemporary experience. I noted the videos on taking the knee, of a chorus of voices coming together, of very personal experiences related to archetypal dynamics, to current and historical socio-political events - all being metabolized through a psychological lens; through both analytic and symbolic attitudes.

### A Closing Observation

Future international conferences, especially those conducted online, would benefit from having some form of reflective gathering for participants. Gatherings such as Reflection Groups so participants can see each other, can share their experiences, can ask questions, can integrate within themselves and through conversation that came up, and can identify what they take forward within themselves, into their clinical practices or professional lives, and into their communities.

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## Psychotherapy and Politics: A Charter for the Future

Andrew Samuels

UK

As my contribution to this book, published by ARAS to whom we owe a lot, I am providing a link to the video of the 20-minute talk I gave at the conference. It includes a 'charter' for the future of the project of Analysis and Activism - to bring depth psychology and psychotherapy into closer contact with the world of politics.

In the talk, I address some issues that are particularly relevant to Jungian psychology, including the question of racial prejudice and whether Jung was really just 'a man of his times.'

However, as my talk is rather downbeat, dystopic and sceptical, I'd like to ask my readers to warm up by listening to Leonard Cohen's song THE FUTURE which I have been playing at several lectures and conferences during the pandemic. This version has amazing images embedded into it, as well as the lyrics on-screen:



*Now, we get to the main course, which is my talk from the conference:*



Finally, still with the pandemic in mind, - a topic not much mentioned during the conference because the papers were chosen before COVID-19 hit us - here are some of its fruits: [A series of YouTubes and other videos that I made.](#)

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