



# *Inward Light*

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Essays from  
the *Inward Light*

- **Quakerism and Analytical Psychology**
- **Quakers and C.G.Jung**
- **Theology and Mystical Psychology**

In the Spring 1942 issue of "Inward Light" the Editor, Erminie Lantero (then Huntress) wrote that several members of "the Analytical Psychology Club of New York City met... to study what relationship might be found to exist between Quakerism and analytical psychology. Three of these were Friends, several . . . had contacts with Friends, all had been analyzed... (by) Dr. Jung or (one of) his students. They had in common a belief in 'analytical introversion' which they had learned was in itself a religious technique."

And she continued: "It is religious, because it is not a mere burrowing into one's own ego as casual observers are tempted to suppose. It is a process of discovery that the self is continuous with the whole of human life, dynamically in touch with the manifold religious images and motivations which have conditioned the race. The worldwide conflicts of light and darkness in which we participate are found to be creative: we become aware of a new center of life emerging from them which Jung calls 'the Self' and which gives us our individuality, but which is at the same time far beyond the ego and tentatively identified with 'the inward Christ.' The individual's obligation and deepest happiness consists in living out from this center, in his personal history, his own microcosmic version of universal truth and love "

***Inward Light***, the Journal of the Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology, sought to be an organ of expression and intercommunication among those concerned with cultivating the inner life and realting it to the problems of our time.

## Quakerism and Analytical Psychology

### I THE MEETING FOR WORSHIP

In our group study the first question we went into was the silent worship of Friends as a means of reaching the inmost Reality of life. We compared it with introversion as practiced in analysis<sup>2</sup> and with meditation and prayer as usually understood. We tried to get a picture of what a Friends' Meeting is, by descriptions of experience drawn from different Friends of Quaker history, and from writings of Quaker leaders today. One such example must suffice, and if it seems a long one it was chosen because it covers so many points brought out in our discussions. It is the description of her first introduction to Friends' worship by an Englishwoman of fifty years ago, Caroline Stephen. We read that, in the midst of her perplexities due to the influence of the naturalistic movement of which her brother Leslie Stephen was one of the leaders, she attended a Friends' meeting. She writes: "On one never-to-be-for-gotten Sunday morning I found myself one of a small company of silent worshippers who were content to sit down together without words, that each one might feel after and draw near to the Divine Presence, unhindered at least, if not helped, by any human utterance. Utterance I knew was free, should the words be given; and before the meeting was over, a sentence or two were uttered in great simplicity by an old and apparently untaught man, rising in his place amongst the rest of us." She felt "the unutterable peace of the undisturbed opportunity for communion with God, with the sense that at last I had found a place where I might, without the faintest suggestion of insincerity, join with others in

simply seeking His presence.” She found thereafter that the Friends’ form of worship helped her to increasingly deep, “soul-subduing” and strengthening communion.

She felt that one could not forget current theological controversies while listening to the language of the Book of Common Prayer; only silence could heal the spirit tormented by these. Silence attracted her at first simply because it enabled her to seek help in her own way; later she found that the cumulative effect of these silent meetings was “strongly subduing and softening.... There used, after a while, to come upon me a deep sense of awe as we sat together and waited-for what? In my heart of hearts I knew in Whose Name we were met together, and Who was truly in the midst of us.”<sup>3</sup>

These quotations illustrate admirably the points of resemblance and difference which we tentatively established between Friends’ worship and analytic introversion. I can do no more than summarize them briefly.

(1) Both, as to technique, require an attitude of alert passivity, an opening of the whole being in stillness and waiting, without pre-deciding of what is to emerge. Elias Hicks wrote: “I felt nothing when I came into this meeting, nor had I a desire after anything, but to centre down into abasement and nothingness, and in this situation I remained for a while, till I found something was stirring and rising in my spirit.”

(2) Secondly, both experiences, at their full development, involve awareness of an autonomous Reality, which becomes active within consciousness, and yet is distinct from the ego, giving it strength, and direction towards ends which the ego only dimly and gradually apprehends. Jung calls this autonomous Reality the Self. Friends have called it the Inner Light, the Seed, the Christ within. Isaac Pennington in the early rise of Quakerism wrote: “When I came (into the meetings) I felt the presence and power of

the Most High among them, and words of truth from the spirit of truth... opening my state... I felt the dead quickened, the seed raised... and in this sense... was I given up to the Lord... in waiting for the further revealing of His seed in me, and to serve Him in the life and power of His seed.”

(3) Thirdly, both are agreed that the “something stirring and rising” within leads to new understanding, new sensitiveness, to integration and transformation of personality.

The main points of difference we found were the following:

(1) In a meeting for worship the attention is more on the central, autonomous Principle, whose presence Friends intuit and whose action they expect; while in analytic introversion the attention is more upon the streams of consciousness, their variation and their growth – the appearance of a centering Principle being one of the evolutions that take place. It is as if of two sunbathers, one should be absorbed in watching the sun, and only later observe that it has turned him brown while the other was occupied chiefly in watching his skin change color, and only at the end discovered that it was the sun that had done the work.

Thus, while the introversion experience is common to both and produces dynamic changes, Friends are less able to give an account of what goes on than are analyzants who are trained to observe and report on the inner process. There have been periods when it was otherwise. In the Quietest period, Professor Rufus Jones writes, “The focus of attention was turned upon inner states, and the mind in its long periods of withdrawal from objective happenings was likely to be occupied with an eager examination of all the inner ‘states’ passing before the footlights of consciousness, to discover which ones bore the mark and

brand of ownself and which ones appeared to be from beyond the regions of self, and so divinely given.” Friends today are not “introspective experts”<sup>4</sup> as Rufus Jones calls their ancestors. They introvert, and they bring up the results in true insights and deepened living, but they are shy of examining or discussing the process itself.

(2) A second difference is that while those who undergo analysis are by and large those who have been forced out of traditional moulds of experience, Quakerism sprang right out and was the spearhead of a progressive and dynamic movement of the Christianity of the Spirit. Hence introversion for most Jungians is a discovery of dynamic elements which are essential to Reality, but have been undervalued or denied by traditional Western Christianity. It, therefore, dons oftentimes non-Christian garb. The introversion of Friends brings back its jewels built into more Christian settings as a rule, though the variations are great from one region to another and one age to another. There are, for example, some Friends today who interpret Quakerism as a religion that can and should include adherents of any of the higher religions who have experiences analogous to that of the Inner Light. And the Quietist period of Quakerism habitually used language that has the greatest affinity with mystical thinking of many races and times. Abstract phrases such as “to comply with the motions of Life” come more easily to their lips than more personal terms for experience of the Divine.

(3) The third point of difference between Friends’ meditation and worship and analytic introversion was that while analysis was almost entirely a solitary act, or at most an activity to which one is helped by the analyst, Friends engage in both a solitary and a group activity, each form of it completing and enhancing the other.

## II A WAY OF LIFE

At our second seminar meeting we took up the question of what Friends do about the dark side of personality. This was confessedly the point in our discussions on which we obtained least clarity, but I believe we can present a few findings.

(1) The first arises out of the discussion of the two types of sunbathers. The one whose attention is on the sun, which tans him almost without his noticing it, loses the pale sickliness of an unhealthy body without ever being as vividly aware of its defects as his companion is. In Friends the dark side is often transmuted by an unconscious life-process, the natural result of a steady, lifelong direction of attention upon that central Reality which in turn works upon him. Those of us who are Friends and have also undergone analysis believe, of course, that to make this process more conscious would be of benefit to many and is absolutely necessary for some. But we see the force of the fears so many Friends entertain, that concentrating attention on inner processes easily leads to ego-centricity and morbid self-preoccupation.

(2) A second point was that the sensitiveness and gentle consideration that are on the whole a hallmark of Quakerism tend of themselves to depotentiate evil. Where the valves are kept open, pent-up steam is not there to be blown off! The power devil, which is one of the chief incarnations of the dark side in our western world, has less chance of growing to his full dimensions when he is met with understanding and disarming courtesy and if he continues to offend, is "tenderly admonished... in a spirit of restoring love," as the Book of Discipline recommends. "Tender" is a word that recurs all through the Discipline, and is like balm in Gilead to those who have suffered under the Sinai thunders of a Puritan conscience!

(3) Thirdly, this highly developed capacity for relatedness makes Friends acutely sensitive to those things that interfere with it, both in their own lives and in society. In their own lives first they are remarkably free from the reformer's zeal which projects on to society the undealt-with conflicts of the reformer's own soul. Their historic testimonies, work and sufferings on behalf of religious freedom, peace, abolition of slavery, simplicity of life, prison reform, and humane treatment of the insane were first of all a purging of themselves and their meetings of all share in these evils, and then only an effort to convince society at large. The Inner Light, according to George Fox, was "that which shows a man evil and leads into unity." Mostly the light that shows us evil throws us into jangling disunity with ourselves or our fellows or both. If on the other hand we stress unity it is too apt to get us all "mushy," thinking that everyone and everything is as good as everyone and everything else. To ponder the Light as that which both "shows a man evil and leads into unity" is to see what a centrifugal pair of opposites is here held together.

(4) The last point we established was that the long line of intuitives who for generations constituted so much of the leadership of the Society of Friends were familiar with those experiences of the dark side which arise from the collective unconscious and from unconscious evil in individuals and groups. George Fox wrote of the visions that came to him: "I was still under great temptations sometimes and my inward sufferings - were heavy... the Lord showed me that the natures of those things which were hurtful without, were within, in the hearts and minds of wicked men. I cried to the Lord, saying, 'Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit those evils?' and the Lord answered that it was needful I should have a sense of all conditions, how else should I speak to all conditions, and in this I saw the infinite love of God... I saw

also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love which flowed over the ocean of darkness. In that also I saw the infinite love of God; and I had great openings.”<sup>5</sup>

They wrestled with these principalities and powers not only in solitude but in the meetings, when in a later day they felt that the people were becoming traditional Quakers merely, and the silence a “dead silence.” They felt, as Rufus Jones describes it, “called to it in silence with a meeting until they had worked their way down, ‘centred down’ where they could feel out and discover ‘the state and condition’ of the meeting or of individuals in it, and then they believed that in silence they could ‘travail in birth pains’ for the ‘suffering seed’ and through divine assistance raise it into life and power and victory... As Sarah Tuke Grubb wrote: ‘In Penrith we had two Suffering Meetings: in both of which I had a greater unwillingness to submit to a necessary wading of spirit than I can describe; for really the spring of life requires much digging for, in places where the substance of religion is departed from and only the image retained. In this exercise I frequently felt ready to faint, and always engage in it with great dread.’”<sup>6</sup>

With this example we reach the problem taken up in our third seminar, that of the group life and its compatibility with individuation. Where so keen a group consciousness exists, is it a sign that the members have sunk into a collective identity, where the lines of unique individuality are lost? I believe that the contrary is the truth, and that in the measure that the group attains its true end, in that same measure its members are helped to individual growth. And vice versa. There can be no vital group experience unless the members have a vital experience of their own, cultivated by each in solitude. Preparation for Meeting has always been stressed among Friends. Sarah Grubb would not have had such agonies of travail with the suffering seed

had she not been almost the only one in the Meeting who was living an intense inner life of her own, while the rest were living apathetically or casually in hopes of getting something from each other without contributing anything. They were living an unconscious collective life, and she was obliged to take up the burden of consciousness for them and herself. Such a burden can become more than can be borne by one or two only, and then the Meeting deteriorates or dies.

But in a healthy Meeting the majority at least of the members take seriously the priesthood of all believers, which is a cardinal belief of Friends (for they claimed to have abolished not the priesthood but the laity). The resulting experience of worship, and of sharing the messages that come to one or another with that glow of significance and conviction which Friends call being "moved by the Spirit," does actually bring about increase of understanding, increase of sensitiveness, increase of relatedness, not as a mere temporary feeling, but as a regularly renewed process which deepens and expands through life. It is actually a heightening of the individual's consciousness, an individuation process, carried further in and through the group than any of its members could achieve outside of or without the group.

Proof of this is to be found in the sphere of action, and the Friends meeting for business is the place to look for it. Business is carried on in the same spirit as worship, and all decisions are sought with the same religious dedication. It is assumed that a group which acts with this disinterested desire to carry out the Divine will can also discover that will, given forbearance and time for enlargement of vision through understanding of opposing viewpoints. Hence no votes are taken, but the clerk who has to register the decision does so when he feels he has "the sense of the meeting." If unity cannot be reached, there is no coercion of a minority by a majority, but the issue is

postponed in order that through further education and sharing of views a solution satisfactory to both sides may be reached. Nor is this solution thought of as a shallow compromise, satisfying neither, but as a more comprehensive and deeper thing than either side would have thought of without the corrective of the other. This is an active dialectic of the opposites which can be witnessed in any good meeting for business.

It works so well because it is at the same time a real balance of democracy and aristocracy. Every member is free to take part. Even committees are not hermetically closed against any member of the Society who wishes to be present; for opinions tell not by the number of those who hold them or the fervor with which they are advanced, but by the spiritual weight of the opinions themselves and of those who advance them. The mature and seasoned spirit carries more influence by unanimous consent than the immature, and decisions are reached in accordance with "the weight of the meeting."

Naturally this system can work only as long as the spiritual life is actively maintained, and when it breaks down it is time to examine the life of the meeting for worship, and the life of the individuals who compose it.

We closed this last session with expressions of opinion as to what the most vital contributions were which Quakerism seemed to offer to those trained in analytical psychology. Among them were:

(1) The emphasis on the Autonomous Reality to be found within, a Reality which is supra-personal.

(2) The capacity for holding together the pairs of opposites in a fluid synthesis, without identifying with either.

(3) The hopeful method of adjustment between the individual and the group, avoiding authoritarianism and coercion, without falling into individualism and anarchy.

(4) The trained practice of silence, in order to get behind the barrenness of concepts and theories to the welling source of life. This seemed to meet our longing not for information but for transformation.

## NOTES

1. Reprinted from *InwardLight*, Nos. 15 and 16, November 1942 and Spring 1943.
2. Introversion, or "turning inwards," is used to denote that attitude which is aware of the world primarily as it *appears to the subject*, while extraversion or "turning outwards," is concerned primarily with the object in itself, even to forgetting that objects can never be apprehended except through the modifying medium of a subject. Deliberate introversion, as practised in analysis, is a focusing of attention on the inner processes, in order thereby to deepen and widen the scope of the subject's apprehension of the world, which has become so narrow and shallow as to dry up the sense of expansion, growth and sublimity.
- 3 Jones, Rufus M., *Later Periods of Quakerism*, London, Macmillan, 1921, Vol. I, pp. 967 ff.
4. "Introspective" is of course used in its general scientific sense of observa-tion of one's mental contents, not in the restricted sense of morbid self-examination. Introspection must be clearly distinguished from introver-sion. The religious duty of self-examination falls under the former head, which is not of itself life-giving or energy-creating. Meditation, contemplation, worship fall rather into the category of introversion as a process of exposing oneself to and linking oneself with the dynamic realities of the inner life.

5. *The Journal of George Fox*: revised by Norman Penney, London, J.M. Dent, Everyman's Library, 1924, p. 11.
6. Jones, op. cit., pp. 86-88.

In the course of 1943 individuals and small groups in widely separated parts of the world coalesced into conferences or summer schools to rediscover the inward and personal ways, thru neglect of which the outward ways of men in the mass end in disaster.

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## Quakers And C. G. Jung

Copernicus in his day turned the solar system inside out and summoned his contemporaries to realize that the earth was not the center around which the sun and moon and planets moved; on the contrary, the earth herself was but one of those planets, revolving with them around the vastly greater sun. Jung, in our day, requires of us a similarly drastic recognition as regards the psyche. We take it so much for granted that our conscious ideas, attitudes, and intentions are the main and central fact of personality, that an enormous effort of imagination is required to realize that consciousness is but a fragment of the psyche, and not necessarily the most important or the most potent. Yet Paul's experience: "That which I would, I do not, and that which I would not, that I do" is common enough to prove to us that the authority of consciousness to guide our activities is severely limited. Sudden emotional outbreaks, even changes of personality, may occur and be beyond control; or we may find ourselves subject to states of mind, obstinately life-eroding, which resist all our conscious efforts to surmount them.

Jung has described the case of a woman at the head of a large institution, who came to him because of a haunting feeling of anxiety which she could not explain. Her rationalism was so extreme that she could not conceive of anything taking place in any part of her mind without her being aware of it. She was utterly amazed when one day something in the nature of a fantasy was lured into her circle of awareness: she saw in imagination a black snake. Another day she saw it again and it moved. Next, she saw it

glide on to a frozen lake and found that she could follow it. Finally, the snake slipped through a hole in the ice into the cold dark water below and again, in imagination, she went after it. She was enabled to see that the ice represented the frozen barrier which shut off the depths of the unconscious from her knowledge, while the snake represented, as so often, the instinctive forces of life which she was now at last prepared to follow. During subsequent days a whole series of episodes unfolded which, when interpreted and incorporated into her conscious outlook, transformed this woman's life.

In *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* Jung writes: "The Psyche stretches into dim realms far beyond the categories of our understanding. The soul contains as many riddles as the physical universe with its galactic systems, before whose majestic view only an unimaginative mind cannot admit to itself its inadequacy."

Varying that metaphor, Jung compares our egos to fishes swimming in the ocean of the psyche and adds that there may be fishes, too, that believe they contain the ocean within themselves!

It is almost impossible in one short article to put content into this idea of the psyche. One feels as we westerners do when a Chinese speaks of the history of China in terms of millennia in place of the centuries to which we are accustomed: we know theoretically what the figures mean, but the shorter span of our historical perspective can feel no body to them. The historical sense grows as more and more lives and events are fitted into the centuries, and realization of the psyche as Jung sees it dawns on us similarly as we are presented with one element after another emerging out of the unconscious.

For Jung, the psyche includes all the experiences of humanity and even of our pre-human ancestry, as well as the seeds of future development; it contains all the demons

that tempt and plague mankind, and all the good and guiding spirits that assist him. In a man it contains the complementary feminine side of his nature, which it is one of the tasks of life to bring gradually to consciousness, and in a woman the masculine side, which she must incorporate in order that personality may become rounded out. At the core it contains the supreme potential, the Self.

The Self is a concept with definitely religious implications; the term is familiar in the religious literature of India, though Jung gives it a more Western connotation. Friends recognized it as akin to "The Seed" or "The Inward Light" in Quaker usage. An international group from the Friends' Meeting of Geneva, Switzerland, once had the unusual privilege of discussing with Jung himself the relation between Quakerism and his psychology. The group had spent the season 1934-5 studying his ideas, and on a fine June day three carloads of us drove across Switzerland to Zurich and were received by Dr. and Mrs. Jung at their beautiful home by the lake. Over tea in the garden, with home-grown strawberries, we had several hours of remarkably free exchange of ideas. Dr. Jung agreed with us on the affinity we found between Quaker ideas and experiences and his own psychology, and he met our sincere desire for more than intellectual answers to our questions with equal sincerity and candor.

Jung sees images like the Light and the Seed as dynamic symbols of the Self, the central reality of the psyche, expressive of its illuminating quality and its power of growth respectively. Another of the hallowed Quaker phrases, "the Christ within," is also, in Jung's estimation, a Self-symbol; he expressly quotes, as a classic example of what he means by the Self, the declaration of St. Paul: "Not I live, but Christ liveth in me."

It is unfortunate that the word "self" has in English a more "selfish" connotation than the German word "Selbst."

This makes it difficult for English-speaking readers to accept such an equation as “the Christ within” with “the Self.” It is necessary, therefore, to explore more thoroughly what Jung means by the Self. As we have seen, the psyche is for him an articulated organic structure, an inner World comparable to the Outer World in scope and complexity. Of its many elements, some are in harmonious combination, others at loggerheads with one another. Some of them are conscious, others semiconscious or quite unconscious. Our ego identifies with some, resigns itself to others, rejects or represses yet others, and of many more it remains quite unaware.

This ego is the center of consciousness, but the center of the total psyche, which embraces both conscious and unconscious, is the Self. The ego, as we have seen, is limited in range and in power when compared to the forces of the unconscious; for we must remember that the unconscious is no placid or inert collection of mental phenomena, but a throng of trends and impulses struggling for awareness and expression. Here are love against hate and fear, loyalty fighting self-interest, justice opposing mercy, beauty striving not only against destructive squalor and ugliness but against rival ideals of beauty – all the comedy and tragedy of human life.

The supreme question then arises, how are these multiple centers of energy, ousting or jostling one another, to be brought into harmony? This is where Jung has made his greatest contribution – a truly religious contribution. He found what he believed to be a purposeful movement within the psyche toward synthesis, order, balanced polarity of opposites, and growth of a living, transcendent center around which partial psychic systems can group themselves. This movement towards an inner cosmos is expressed and promoted by images of Wholeness and Centrality, the totality of the Self. This is now seen to be not just my self, your self, his and her self, but a Supreme

Self which transcends them all, and at the same time is your and my truest and deepest self. Herein we all “live and move and have our being,” we in It and It in us.

Such a movement towards unity around a Center and such images of resulting Wholeness have a practical outcome in self-awareness and activity. In enlightened moments one ceases to feel the ego as the prime directing center of one’s total self. One may experience, beyond the light of reason, that Inward Light which “shows a man evil and brings into unity,” as George Fox defined it. Or one may sense something growing within, whose nature is unknown, but which impels one to pray, “Grow me, O Lord!” One feels led oftentimes in ways one would not have expected and one learns to trust and rely on the guidance. The mundane ego accepts the role of intelligent and willing subordinate to a central coordinating Something or Someone whose nature remains mysterious but nonetheless imperative and holy.

Jung came to a realisation of this unifying and centering activity, not only through his dreams but through painting and what he termed “active imagination.” Active imagination is a form of fantasy or play in which the conscious ego interacts with spontaneously arising images and happenings; an example has been given at the beginning of this article. The method has since been adopted and adapted in various directions as “intuitive painting,” waking dream (*rêve éveillé*), “twilight imaging,” or “guided imagery.” This last is used by some as a group activity, but active imagination is very much a private process of self-discovery and self-direction akin to meditation, and is carried out in the same spirit of devotion and concentration. Afterwards it may be discussed with an analyst or adviser, just as the religious student of meditation discusses his experience with a spiritual director.

Jung's pioneer efforts involved him in what seemed like childish play and he had to overcome his own repugnance and shame at its puerility, as well as his anxiety at the lurid or eerie quality of some of the images he encountered. An L.S.D. generation cannot conceive of the courage it took to forsake the safely trodden ways of rational consciousness.

One of the most important types of image that emerged in his own work and in his patients' was the now familiar *mandala*. For years he had no clue to its significance, until finally he discovered the ancient mandala pictures of the Orient, the sacred circles which serve as objects of religious meditation. They symbolize the Universe, and at the same time the harmonious totality of the Psyche: as Jung observes, World and Psyche are entities of equivalent dimensions. The absorbed production and contemplation of a mandala has a unifying effect upon mind and feeling. Children sense it and their drawings may reveal it. One child in a bad humor was invited to suggest a picture his mother might draw for him. "Make a sun" he said somewhat sulkily - "in de middle," he ordered, and added. "very in de middle." When the picture was done, equilibrium and good humor also had returned. The universality of human intuitions and modes of expression revealed by these parallels, which link East and West, child and sage, the past with the present day, opens out a vista as moving as it is fascinating.

The key feature of the mandala is the symmetrical grouping of its elements around a central point. Simple examples are a sun with its rays, an eye with its dark pupil, the petals of a flower around its golden heart. The circle is often combined with a square, or a cross painting in the four directions, symbolizing infinity surrounding bounded space, as in the Celtic cross. Sometimes the circle of infinity is set *within* the square that symbolizes finitude; Mrs.

Miniver saw it thus when she enjoyed waking to the sight of blue sky between her rose-colored curtains; “Infinity enclosed in domesticity – how else could one see Infinity?” More complex mandalas, such as those of Tibetan Buddhism, have alternating circles and squares filled with a wealth of religious symbols. Similarly, in some of our Western rose windows, the four evangelists form a square within the outermost circle, and in turn surround an inner circle whose center is the Christ image.

The symbolic gathering around a Center need not be painted or carved – it can, for instance, be danced, or it can be experienced, as described elsewhere in this number, by a group gathered for meditation around a table with a lighted candle.

“Centering down” is the traditional phrase Friends use for the initial settling into the reverent and expectant silence of a Meeting for Worship. The phrase rests on the same metaphor of the Center as does the visual symbolism of the mandala.

In *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, by Jung and Wilhelm, among the photographs of mandalas at the end of the book is a beautiful one which was painted by Jung. It is plate no. 3, described as “A luminous flower in the center, with stars rotating about it. Around the flower, walls with eight gates. The whole conceived as a transparent window.” Jung told us once in a seminar that when he painted it he supposed, with his “usual modesty,” as he put it, that the central pane stood for his own psyche, while the small stars in the surrounding panes stood for other people! The night after painting it he had a dream.<sup>1</sup> Briefly, he dreamed that he was in Liverpool, a sooty, rainy city, on a winter’s night. He and his companions walked through dark streets up to a plateau and found a broad square, around which the various quarters of the city were arranged. “In the center was a round pool, and in the middle of it a small island. While

everything round about was obscured by rain, fog, smoke, and dimly lit darkness, the little island blazed with sunlight. On it stood a single tree, a magnolia, in a shower of reddish blossoms. It was as though the tree stood in the sunlight and were at the same time the source of light.”

The companions “commented on the abominable weather and obviously did not see the tree.” They spoke of another Swiss who was living off a small square, lit by a single street-lamp, and wondered why he should have settled in this dreary town. But, ends the dreamer, “I was carried away by the beauty of the flowering tree and the sunlit island, and thought, ‘I know very well why he has settled here!’ Then I awoke.”

Comparing this dream with the preceding picture, Jung recognized it as a commentary on the picture and on his interpretation of it. The magnolia was the luminous flower, the street lamps of the small squares were the surrounding stars of the picture, and the Swiss on the dim side street was himself! Thus gently, yet unanswerably, was the dreamer’s initial usurpation of the Center for his conscious self corrected. The Center was shown to be a supra-personal entity (trees and flowers frequently represent its inexpressible nature) to which his ego was willingly subordinate. Yet at the same time, the carnate self was the seat of the mystery; Liverpool was picked, with the habitual genius of the unconscious for puns and plays on words, because of its anatomical reference and the traditional belief that the liver is the seat of life. There, in the body-psyche, the more-than-personal Self dwells and grows. Carl Jung in his finite concreteness, citizen of such and such a city and country, is not the central reality in his own psyche; he is a man content to live in a dim side-street in order to be near the luminous tree that grows on the island in the round pool in the broad square in the city of Liverpool – or, as Bunyan might say, of Mansoul.

The picture, the dream, the interpretation, all build up to a climax so meaningful that it might seem worse than superfluous to analyze further. Yet there are two features on which Jung has not commented, but which seem pregnant with further significance. The magnolia blossoms of the dream are not of the white but of the “reddish” variety; this would link them with flesh and blood rather than with an incorporeal, spirituality. The ‘language of flowers’ instinctively discerns this contrast, as anyone may realize who reflects on the relative significance of red roses and white to honor different occasions in human life. This magnolia reminds us that the Self glows ruddily among the dwellers in Liverpool, even though they may be as unaware of its presence as the companions of the dreamer.

A still more arresting statement is made in this dream: “It was as though the tree stood in the sunlight and were at the same time the source of light.” What more vivid parable of the high worth of human nature could there be than that its center should be a “source of light”? At the same time “it stood in the sunlight” where its own radiance would be transcended by the cosmic glory of the sun. Apparently the two shine together in harmony, the sunlight enhancing the beauty of the tree without extinguishing its identity as an autonomous source of light. Is it fanciful to see here a penetrating image of Light within and Light without, of Immanence and at the same time Transcendence? At all events, the notable significance of the dream is raised to a still higher dimension by such an interpretation.

Jung himself might fight shy of so much emphasis on the Light, whether of heavenly or earthly provenance, and insist upon the soot and murk of the city of “Liverpool” as equally essential to the complete picture, and even a precondition for the revelation of the luminous tree. And we must grant that in the world of temporality he may be right. Hinduism expresses a similar idea in the myth of

Krishna as a small boy getting his mouth full of mud; when someone tries to clean it out, the divine child opens his mouth wide and within it the shocked adult perceives the whole of the universe.

To those Friends who have felt in our latter-day Quakerism a too complacent assumption of the supremacy of the Inward Light and too little readiness to recognize the shadow side of our nature, this insistence of Jung's on the Darkness has been a bracing challenge to overcome our blind spots as individuals and as a religious Society. It has become newly important, therefore, to understand how early Friends envisioned the forces of Darkness and Light. In the oft-quoted vision of George Fox they have found one of the most powerful statements of this inner duality. Fox reported it as follows:

I was under great temptations sometimes, and my inward sufferings were heavy; but I could find none to open my condition to but the Lord alone, unto whom I cried night and day. And I went back into Nottinghamshire and there the Lord showed me that the natures of those things which were hurtful without were within, in the hearts and minds of wicked men. The natures of dogs, swine, vipers, of Sodom, of Egypt, Pharoah, Cain, Ishmael, Esau, etc. The natures of these I saw within, though people had been looking without. And I cried to the Lord, saying, 'Why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit those evils?' And the Lord answered that it was needful I should have a sense of all conditions; how else should I speak to all conditions; and in this I saw the infinite love of God. I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness. And in that also I saw the infinite love of God; and I had great openings.

Here we have a classic vision of the collective unconscious that Jung describes; those dark varieties of

human and pre-human nature that were most alien to Fox's conscious self are realised as present, in some inscrutable way, in his psyche. For though he speaks of them as "in the hearts and minds of wicked men," it is plain that he feels their potential power in himself, since he cries to the Lord, "Why should I be thus?" The reply comes that he needs to "have a sense of all conditions" and this he can only have by feeling and knowing himself as the possible active agent in the oppressions of Pharaoh, the sexual excesses of Sodom, the fratricidal violence of Cain.

All these evils are gathered into one superordinate image at the close of the vision, when he sees the "ocean of darkness and death." The last word in Fox's vision, however, belongs to the "ocean of light which flowed over the ocean of darkness" and this time it is an "infinite ocean," whereas the ocean of darkness, by implication, is not. This accords with the observations of students of mysticism, that the creative visions of the mystics as a rule affirm the essential worth and goodness of Being, beyond or indwelling the undeniable evils of our temporal existence. Even Zoroastrians, whose creed is usually thought of as the most extreme polarisation of the Powers of Light and Darkness, have held that though the Darkness was present in the Creation from the beginning, it was not eternal; at the end of Time the Power of Wisdom and Truth would win a cosmic victory over the Power of the Lie.

It would take us too far afield to try to account for the fact that some great souls stress the darkness in psyche and world, and identify with it so much more than others. But we cannot leave our brief study of Jung and Quakerism without touching upon it. For the Quaker emphasis on the Inward Light is not easy to reconcile with Jung's on the universal polarity of Darkness and Light, which he sees as including the dynamic God archetype, as it assumes form in man's psyche. Jung always refused to assert anything

concerning the nature of Ultimate Reality as it is “in itself,” since we can, in his view, have no direct knowledge of anything outside the psyche. But one is left with the strong impression that his personal hypothesis does not differ essentially from his psychological theory. “God may he loved, but he must be feared,” he declared.

One explanation for such differences of view may lie in temperamental make-up. For a Paul or an Augustine, whose complex inner struggle is “not with flesh and blood” but with the daimonic “principalities and powers,” it is harder than for more harmoniously constituted souls to believe in an essential or an ultimate predominance of Light. And if, as a wit has remarked, “the amount of grace required to make a saint of John the disciple is just enough to keep Peter from knocking a man down,” how can their views of existence not be different? Jung belongs to this twice-born type and he can never overlook or minimize the power of evil; he makes it impossible for us too to forget its might, not only in the world but as personally experienced in our divided natures.

Historical circumstances, furthermore, play their part in determining a man’s view of himself and the universe. Two world wars and the horrors of totalitarianism reinforced Jung’s personal revolt against complacent beliefs in peace and progress, and too facile or sentimental ideas of a paternal Deity, a *Bondieu* or *Lieber Gott*. Fox, on the other hand, had to contend with the stern religious outlook of Puritanism, its emphasis on sin and doom; his message of Divine Light at the heart of every man was a much-needed compensation for puritan gloom. He felt himself as “walking cheerfully over the earth, answering that of God in every man,” and in the Meetings he sponsored men found “evil overcome and the good raised up.”

We have seen that Fox was granted his vision of the Light only after intense and prolonged experience of inward

Night, and that he speaks first of the ocean of darkness and death and *then* of the infinite ocean of light and love flowing over it. Those of us who feel deeply indebted to Jung are grateful that he has recalled us to the dread reality of the ocean of Darkness. We are still more grateful for the leads he has given us for finding light in our own darkness, and fullness of living amid chaos. Yet it is true that, when we look for assurance that the ocean of Light is infinite and shall ultimately – or does eternally – prevail, we find him unwilling to affirm it. His empiricism, so valuable in gaining a hearing from a scientifically oriented world, hinders him from openly making that “leap of faith” which friends and admirers of his in the religious world long urged upon him. He admitted that the charisma of faith had not been given him and that, as he often said, “Either I know and then I don’t need to believe, or I don’t know and then I can’t believe.” Or again: “One must always be aware of the fact that God is a Secret, and everything that we say on the subject is expressed by human beings.”

The Problem of Evil, as a mystery to the human mind, will not be solved in our epoch any more than in the past history of our race. Yet without a hypothesis that makes sense to him and gives hope concerning the nature of the universe, man’s spirit cannot long survive. And without leaders who are profoundly and powerfully convinced of the validity of both sense and hope, the average man cannot maintain his trust in them. It may be said that Jung’s very non-belief was more potent than most men’s belief, and what he *knew* carries a conviction that can serve as a launching pad, in an unbelieving age, for a new leap of faith – in the teeth of terrestrial and temporal existence – in the infinity of light and love. “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” cries Job, and many an anguished sufferer has echoed that cry of the heart. *Amor fati*, the love of one’s destiny, is an existential fact, and when our very heart is

torn out of our breast we may come to know that this is no inhuman sacrifice to an ignorant or diabolic deity but is, on the contrary, open-heart surgery by the Great Physician, for our ultimate health and salvation. Lowell's tender and understanding lines speak home to the stricken soul;

For the love of God is wider  
Than the limits of man's mind  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most infinitely kind.

### Notes

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1. This dream appeared thirty-five years later on page 198 of his *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*.

## Theology and Mystical Psychology

Theology frequently accuses psychology, even religious psychology, of regarding the human mind as being all there is, or at least as being the most important reality about which to know. It denounces “psychologism” and the Luciferian pride that sets man above God. The religious psychologist is often bewildered by this accusation, for he may never have questioned in his own mind that the Godhead is there, independently of man’s experience, or that His significance is absolute and the significance of man’s experience only relative. But man’s experience of God being all that he can know of God, it seems to him a condition inherent in human existence that he should concern himself with that, while freely admitting that it has reference to an Object that stretches beyond experience.

The theologian on the other hand knows just as well as the psychologist that man’s apprehension of God is limited by his finite mind, and that he cannot step out of his mental skin to perceive God as He is in Himself. But this fact seems to him so trite that he does not even mention it. Filled with the great conviction that the rays he receives are poured upon him by the very Source of Light, he speaks of “God revealing Himself,” in a way that often strikes the psychologist as a naive or arrogant assumption of being in the inner counsels of God and exempt from the necessity of filtering the Light of revelation through the cloudy medium of the human mind.

Granted, however, that each has been drawn out to admit that what is explicitly maintained by the other is implicitly assumed by himself. They realize that man’s awareness, even of God, is conditioned by the perceiving

subject; they realize equally that they share the same faith in an Objective Reality which infinitely transcends man's subjective experience of it. Will their differences be thereby removed? Not at all! Watch, for instance, the theologian's reaction to the statement that "theology is really projected psychology!" Or again witness the baffled irritation of the psychologist when urged to differentiate between faith "as a human attitude" and faith in God, "which is a gift of the Holy Spirit." In the ensuing debates the first speaker will almost certainly be charged with reverting to "psychologism," and the second will be reproached for his incomprehensible insistence on lifting man's attitude to God out of the continuum of human experience.

What causes this ever renewed misunderstanding between men who verbally accept each other's positions? Is it allied to the fact that each sees the other's contention as true indeed, but so banal and obvious that he is astonished at the importance that the other attributes to it? He is puzzled whenever he discovers that the other is crusading for a truth he himself has never thought of denying, and he wonders why his own fervent affirmations arouse the other's opposition all over again on the ground that they imply a position he has repeatedly declared that he does not hold!

What is here described as a conflict between theologian and psychologist can be paralleled within the field of theology by debates between the champions of "faith" and of "experience" respectively. Evidently it is not the beliefs that are opposed but the value laid upon this belief or that belief. Stressing one side only of a total situation, the psychologist seems to his opponent concerned only with man, the subject, and his experience, while the theologian appears in turn to think only in terms of God, the Object, unconditioned by aught but Himself. The theologian rightly sees that the psychologist's subjective emphasis would end,

if pushed to its logical extreme, in solipsism, and uncorrected may easily get stuck in the halfway house of humanistic psychologism. The psychologist in turn may help the theologian to see that his objective emphasis pushed to the same logical absurdity would become “sol-Ilism” (if we may coin a word to balance solipsism), an assumption that only God is real and only God acts, that man’s life is consequently a mirage and free-will false. High Calvinism is at least as near to this danger as some psychologies are to the other.

Theology needs the perpetual reminder of psychology that her statements about Ultimate Reality, however high and absolute they may sound, are never unconditioned Truth, but only those categories of human understanding to whose moulds Truth stoops to conform for us. Psychology needs no less the insistence of theology that she shall not become so absorbed in her own Vision of Reality in the small “camera oscura” of human experience, that she forgets to hold by faith to the infinity of the *unexperienced* Godhead.

If each can open the eyes of the other to the perils of its one-sidedness, they will at last be in a position to see the major importance of that side of the coin which they have hitherto neglected. They will recognize that their argument has been no merely verbal one, but a desperate struggle for life between two complementary and absolutely essential views of reality. When the psychologist insists on our conditioned and finite experience of God, the theologian will no longer answer, “So what?” Nor will he condemn as pernicious and morbid the careful observation and elaborate analysis of the soul’s life in God which grips his friend. He will see that these things are neither subjectivism nor egocentric elevation of man to the throne of the universe, but that they spring from reverent curiosity and ardent homage before the miracle and dignity of the human psyche, as it opens up before him like a great continent of

unexplored riches – a continent which theology has viewed too often from ground level, in flat and trivial perspective.

With like generosity the psychologist will listen to theology's affirmation of the Wholly Other, and not murmur against "abstract speculation." Nor will he condemn as arbitrary and meaningless the great constructions of dogma and symbol. He will know that these are no insubstantial fancies of the mental stratosphere, but Herculean efforts to express in firm outline and inescapable form That Which has veritably impinged upon and gloriously taken captive man's heart and mind and soul. Toward That both will now turn together, with faith in the transcendent Whole and with joy in the modest, expanding experience of it vouchsafed to men. A reasoned faith in the Whole that bathes and surrounds experience, giving it depth and vastness, is theology's ancient stewardship; fuller knowledge of the experience which confirms faith by incarnating its Object, is the contribution which mystical psychology brings. Experience without faith grows trivial or may grow horrific; faith without experience becomes sterile and fails to sustain man's life.

### Notes

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