

Fairy Tale and Myth

An IAJS Online Discussion Forum
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Friday, 1st February 2013, at 03:44 AM

From: Stephani Stephens <sstephensiajs@gmail.com>

It is our pleasure to introduce our first presenter for the seminar on Myths and Fairy Tales and their resonance today. **Mathew Mather** is a recent PhD graduate from the University of Essex, having written his thesis on *The alchemical Mercurius: esoteric symbol of Jung's life and works*. Mathew was born in Mtoko, Zimbabwe but grew up in South Africa. Some years back he relocated with his family to the Nire Valley in Ireland. He lectures in Creative Multimedia and is course leader for the 'Certificate in Jungian Psychology with Art Therapy'.

We are very excited to post Mathew's paper and to invite the membership to begin the discussion about the fairy tale the 'Spirit in the Bottle', Jung's assessment of its symbolism, and its resonance today.

Spirit in the Bottle

Once upon a time there was a poor woodcutter. He had an only son, whom he wished to send to high school. However, since he could give him only a little money to take with him, it was used up long before the time for the examinations. So the son went home and helped his father with the work in the forest. Once, during the midday rest, he roamed the woods and came to an immense old oak. There he heard a voice calling from the ground, 'Let me out, let me out!' He dug down among the roots of the tree and found a well-sealed glass bottle from which, clearly, the voice had come. He opened it and instantly a spirit rushed out and soon became half as high as a tree. The spirit cried in an awful voice: 'I have had my punishment and I will be revenged! I am the great and mighty spirit Mercurius, and now you shall have your reward. Whoso releases me, him I must strangle'. This made the boy uneasy and, quickly thinking up a trick, he said, 'First, I must be sure that you are the same spirit that was shut up in that little bottle'. To prove this, the spirit crept back into the bottle. Then the boy made haste to seal it and the spirit was caught again. But now the spirit promised to reward him richly if the boy would let him out. So he let him out and received as a reward a small piece of rag. Quoth the spirit: 'If you spread one end of this over a wound it will heal, and if you rub steel or iron with the other end it will turn into silver'. Thereupon the boy rubbed his damaged axe with the rag, and the axe turned to silver and he was able to sell it for four hundred thaler. Thus

father and son were freed from all worries. The young man could return to his studies, and later, thanks to the rag, he became a famous doctor (paraphrase of Grimm's 'Spirit in the Bottle'; Jung 1943/1948: 193-4).

'The Spirit Mercurius' was initially delivered by Jung as two lectures at Eranos in 1942 (1943/1948: 191). The first lecture is an interpretation of Grimm's fairytale 'Spirit in the Bottle'. The second lecture is a more general thematic compilation on the figure of Mercurius.

Concerning the first lecture, Jung admonishes the reader that his treatment is a 'general survey' and that it makes 'no claim to completeness' (footnote, 193). What follows is a fairly detailed analysis of the fairy tale. Toward the beginning he enticingly states that this German fairytale "contains the quintessence and deepest meaning of the Hermetic mystery" (195). He then proceeds to interpret it as a transformation mystery whereby the boy, lost to the world, enters the darkness of his unconscious and is led by a strange calling. He goes to the very ground and root of his being and there discovers a calling of a numinous being bottled up within the physiology of his body. Releasing this chthonic spirit resulted in him almost losing his life. Fortunately though, by virtue of his wits, there is a favourable resolution for both himself and the spirit.

Jung effectively portrays the fairy tale as a timeless archetypal mystery applicable to a multitude of historical and cultural contexts, as a paradigm of psychospiritual transformation and renewal. On another level, he also locates the story within the Western Christian tradition by interpreting it as a cultural evolution at a particular stage of individuation. From this point of view, he identifies the magician or alchemist with the Christian God and the spirit in the bottle with the quintessential pagan God as the 'serpent of paradise' in the garden of Eden. In this sense God 'banished' the pagan spirit which gets bottled up and hidden in the depths of matter.

Such a theme is central to Jung's broader critique of modern Christianity as it portrays a 'split archetype' into instinctual and spiritual polarities. The instinctual, bottled and buried, gets contaminated with the feminine, pagan and malefic; whereas the spiritual conflates to the masculine, Christian and benevolent. Thus, in his opinion, such a split has resulted in a specifically Christian wound as reflected in such narratives as the grail legend, and as portrayed in the dreams and psychopathology of his patients. In this context, the spirit Mercurius is portrayed by Jung as a dynamic and compensatory figure to the collective consciousness of Christianity (245).

He further clarifies that it would be incorrect to equate the alchemical Mercurius with the Devil. Although essentially a dark and chthonic god, he opposes dogmatic definition and opposition at all costs: a real trickster who "drove the alchemists to despair" (203). He then relates that releasing the spirit Mercurius is alchemically incorrect. The more usual procedure would be to keep such a spirit bottled up and to transform him by means of various alchemical procedures (203). In this context we also witness an earlier work 'Wotan' inflected as the spirit Mercurius – the 'awakening of the blonde beast' in the German soul. He explicitly identifies the spirit Mercurius with Wotan, national pagan god

of Germany, but offers no expansion of the topic (198).

In summary two themes emerge, as well as intimations of a third. The first interprets the fairy tale as a personal encounter with the daimonic within the conceptual framework of analytical psychology. The second touches on the notion of a cultural individuation of the Christian religion. A third more tacit theme concerns political context; of particular interest considering the lecture was delivered in the midst of World War II.

Moving to the second lecture (a good example of Jung's problematic writing style) we get a monologue on Mercurius arranged thematically around a number of categories. He utilizes a fairly vast array of text citations to "draw a picture of this versatile and shimmering god" (204).

In the midst of this lecture, in seeming exasperation, he notes that "the concept swells dangerously and we begin to perceive that the end is nowhere in sight" (211). Its confounding properties, seemingly de-coupled from the substance itself, lead him to the conclusion that it is a projection of the unconscious. Finally, toward the end of this lecture, he attempts to 'pin the concept down' by means of a 6 point summary:

- (1) Mercurius consists of all conceivable opposites. He is thus quite obviously a duality, but is named a unity in spite of the fact that his innumerable inner contradictions can dramatically fly apart into an equal number of disparate and apparently independent figures.
- (2) He is both material and spiritual.
- (3) He is the process by which the lower and material is transformed into the higher and spiritual, and vice versa.
- (4) He is the devil, a redeeming psychopomp, an evasive trickster, and God's reflection in physical nature.
- (5) He is also the reflection of a mystical experience of the artifex that coincides with the *opus alchymicum*.
- (6) As such, he represents on the one hand the self and on the other the individuation process and, because of the limitless number of his names, also the collective unconscious (237).

He then ends by further elaborating the relevance of the spirit Mercurius in relation to Christianity and contemporary times. For example, he highlights this figure as having "the very qualities we so urgently need to heal the split in ourselves" (246).

Such a notion takes us into the very heart of what we might consider Jung's 'alchemical myth'. Von Franz, in a dramatic moment in the film *Matter of Heart*, clarifies key features of such a myth.

civilization needs a myth to live by ... And I think that the Christian myth, on

which we have lived, has degenerated and become one-sided and insufficient. I think alchemy is the complete myth. If our Western civilization has a possibility of survival, it would be by accepting the alchemical myth, which is a richer completion and continuation of the Christian myth ... The Christian myth ... does not include the dark feminine ... treats matter as dead and does not face the problem of the opposites – of evil. Alchemy faces the problem of the opposites, faces the problem of matter, and faces the problem of the feminine (von Franz, quoted by Marlan in Papadopoulos Ed. 2006).

* * *

The forum discussion may, perhaps, develop along two directions. The first of these might gravitate around the clinical and conceptual. The second might gravitate around a discussion of Jung's *alchemical myth* and of its contemporary relevance.

Concerning clinical aspects and the fairytale 'Spirit in the Bottle' Hillman writes: "Psychotherapy has made this tale a root parable" (Hillman 2010: 294). Arnold Mindell, for instance, uses this fairytale to clarify his dream-body concept (see chapter 5 in Mindell 1985/2002). 'Spirit in the Bottle' has also been the subject of many a Jungian lecture/workshop (curiously, the explicit title *Mercurius* has eluded article publication).

Regarding the second direction we might query the relevance of Jung's alchemical myth for our contemporary times. To do justice to such a theme we should also consider Jung's belief in a transition of astrological Ages, and his interest in the grail legend.

My recently completed PhD thesis involved a weave of Jung's views on alchemy, precessional astrology and the grail legend in a life myth construction. Intrinsic to such a perspective is Jung's belief that religious history (and its undercurrents) constitute a 'transformation of the God-image' synchronistic with a meta-narrative scripted by the precession of the equinoxes through the astrological Great Year.

I am also aware of the 'problem' many post-Jungians have with the more esoteric side of Jung (such as astrology). My claim is that such 'secret knowledge' is key if we are to better understand works such as *The Red Book*, *Aion* and *Mysterium Coniunctionis*.

Overall, in addressing this topic, a hoped for impact would be a revitalised interest in 'original Jung'. A drifting away from the 'big thing' of his oeuvre has been voiced: "If one looks around in today's Jungian world, one gets the strong impression that Jung's heritage has been forfeited ... the psychologist has got out of the *magnum opus* (or has never had access to it)" (Giegerich 1999: 81).

As further stimulus for discussion I include a few excerpts relating to Mercurius.

For the time being I am still immersed in Mercury who, as he will always try to, has dissolved me almost and just failed to separate me limb from limb" (footnote 5, in Jung

1973-75: 319).

Christ appears as the archetype of consciousness and Mercurius as the archetype of the unconscious (Jung 1951: 267).

It might be said that the secret of Merlin was carried on by alchemy, primarily in the figure of Mercurius. Then Merlin was taken up again in my psychology of the unconscious and – remains uncomprehended to this day!” (Jung 1963/1995: 255).

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Friday, 1st. February 2013 at 18:04 PM

From: Susan Rowland <susanr183@gmail.com>

Dear Stephani and Mathew,

It is a delight to read Mathew's paper and it makes me want to read the whole doctoral

thesis! I think the question of alchemy and today is an exciting one and I might offer a few thoughts about von Franz's proposal that we replace the christian myth with the alchemical one.

Jung's paper on the fairy tale as explored by Mathew hold two important aspects of Jungian studies in creative balance: the human archetypal and the cultural/historical. Might it be possible to envision a vast multidisciplinary international scholarly project on alchemy that might bring together scholars of the 3 great monotheisms plus, the modern ecological turn in the academy, plus paganism and polytheism, plus indigenous animated cultures of the sacred earth?

Alchemy now is know to have both a christian location and an Islamic history: that surely is a meeting point over the world's terrifying fractures not to be missed! Jung, of course, provides a psychological discourse that might be a way to bring disciplines and cultures together.

Another point is that not only is alchemy saturated in the heritage of western literature, but is increasingly evident in recent poets and novelists today. There is a real parallel in the imaginative developments of clinical colleagues - of which a forthcoming book edited by Dale Mathers is one example - and a lot of contemporary art.

This is something that has energy both from imaginative possibilities and a history that touches cross-culturally archetypal powers.

Lets discuss it!

Susan

Friday, 1st February 2013 at 17:46 PM

From: Matt Koeske <matt@uselesscience.com>

Dear Mathew,

Many thanks for your seminar presentation. I also find Jung's "alchemical myth" fascinating . . . and both compelling and problematic. Equally, although I have numerous (often passionate) disagreements with Giegerich, I tend to agree (or have at least regretfully observed) that "Jung's heritage has been forfeited" in contemporary Jungianism.

I've also observed that not a few other Jungians feel this way, and yet there seems to be very little consensus on just what this vital heritage is that has been lost. That hidden thing is perhaps every bit as elusive as the crux of the alchemical Mercurius.

For me, the lost heritage of Jung is NOT a matter of any abandoned Christification of

Jung or true believing acolytism (which is what many post-Jungians fear and recoil from . . . seeing this perhaps as the classical shadow of Jungianism, and not unreasonably).

What has been lost is what I would call Jung's (and would like to also think of as the *Jungian*) "project". That is, it is an organized work and a way of pursuing that work. A magnum opus that (with Jung) was always evolving . . . and in my opinion, no longer is (but *should be*).

We have often made Jung into a font of wisdom and revelation, a sort of prophet. I feel that is an error, and not only because that kind of deification is "inflated" and "delusional", but because Jung's project really wasn't grounded in a prophetic mode.

Rather (and this is what I feel is essential but so often missed), Jung's mode was experimental, exploratory, and often very "naturalistic".

He was not out to "reveal the truth" so much as to observe and catalog the abundance of the autonomous psyche. His annoying tendency to contradict himself and digress extravagantly is better explained by this experimentalist orientation. He was fascinated by the data, and although he sought to understand them, he seemed more interested in illuminating them, drawing one's gaze to them (not providing definitive interpretation of them). Explanatory theory was a secondary concern (and an infamous dividing point with Freud's approach, something developmental post-Jungians are still grappling with today).

Nowhere are Jung's experimentalism and naturalism more apparent than in his alchemical project. That project was less an academic attempt to understand the historical (or even the psychological) phenomena of alchemy than it was a modernized, translated effort to continue the project of the medieval and Renaissance alchemists.

It was not only the symbolism of alchemy, I think, but the proto-scientific, investigative experimentalism of the alchemists that resonated so much for Jung. (Philosophical) alchemy was not only (and should probably not be seen as primarily) a tool to obtain esoteric knowledge/wisdom. It was a way of approaching the autonomous psyche's AND Nature's dynamic, transformative complexity that was fundamentally scientific, based in observation and experimental manipulation of natural processes.

Alchemy tested the boundaries between the conscious, "rational" mind and the inherited/"instinctual", physiological, cognitive system. I don't think it meant to romantically blur the two. Rather it sought (within the limitations of its language and traditions) to observe the materiality and mechanisms of the autonomous psyche.

Physical matter is organized by complex, often dynamic natural laws . . . *systemic* laws.

And the autonomous psyche seems to have parallel organizational laws. That is, both matter and psyche are complex, dynamic, natural systems with similar basic principles of organization and systemic behavior.

Alchemy (in symbolic language) broke into and sought to experimentally and proto-scientifically observe the realm in which thought behaves "like matter". I have to agree with Jung that alchemy was an essential precursor to depth psychology.

One caveat I would add is that although I respect many aspects of Jung's alchemical project, I think it was limited (and at times even poisoned) by what could be considered a "too Faustian" attitude. To Jung's credit, he seemed aware of this danger (although it's unclear to me how much he realized this was his own personal complex and not some kind of universal condition). He wrote a lot about the "dangers" of inflation . . . and alchemical Mercury poisoning . . . but I feel he was in the grip of the complex while observing it. He was like a drug addict who can observe and describe his addictive behavior with a certain amount of distance, but can't ultimately break free from the compulsion of that behavior. Such was his lifelong struggle with Faust (and Philemon).

More specifically (and as you note in your presentation), Jung's sense of the alchemical goal was "to keep such a spirit bottled up and to transform him by means of various alchemical procedures". Jung never breaks free from the complex of the Faustian superman who can contain and master the "unconscious", cultivating and directing it in a way that serve consciousness. He recognized the futility of this and the dangers of too demonically seeking such mastery, but I see no signs that he ever worked through this complex.

My contention is that Jung's Faustian approach is both "alchemically" incorrect and psychologically flawed. It is based in a (false) assumption that the "unconscious" is volatile, dangerous, and "dark" unless harnessed and tempered by consciousness. The unconscious as wild, hungry animal only very grudgingly willing to negotiate with "taming" rational consciousness. That is a romantic and dated notion that is no longer really tenable in light of more modern studies of the mind and brain (e.g., those of evolutionary psychology that suggest the autonomous psyche is complex, functional, and adaptive within a particular niche of human evolution, efficiently and deeply organized rather than chaotic and volatile).

I am saying that Jung imposed darkness and sometimes demonism or even "evil" onto the "unconscious", where it would be more functional today to see the psyche as natural and complex. Taking a Christianized (and somewhat prudish) lens, Jung makes the "unconscious" a dark, yet fascinating and often very seductively compelling Other. I have found this to be a tainted narrative, though. The darkness Jung placed onto the unconscious and its "desires" strikes me as a projection of Jung's that may have ultimately derived from his own rigid, moralistic prejudices (and frequent inability to uphold and abide by those arbitrary, socialized mores, thus necessitating a powerful inner "devil" or shadow). Jung, a romantic, extremely curious, and perhaps somewhat "inconstant" and fractured man at heart, was prone to many "slips" . . . and he attributed these to the "temptations of the unconscious" instead of to his own quasi-dissociated egoic edifice.

In contrast, I would attribute his "slips" and characteristic, mercurial circuitousness to his artificial and overly rigid and fragile sense of righteousness and decency, which was not robust or sturdy enough to cope gracefully with the otherness of both his social and

psychological environments. Somewhat "heroically", he treated this fragile superego with a tonic of "balancing the light with the dark" and "acknowledging the shadow". In the Red Book, we see him desperate to figure out how to inject some compensatory "darkness" into his prissy, Swiss Protestant, socially constructed ego (and he goes about this somewhat heavy-handedly and histrionically). Jung resorts (throughout his life) to a more or less theological dualism, an effort to include a bit of "darkness" for every bit of "light" (as the seeming cure for one who has "too much light" would be a supplement of "darkness"). But caught up in this narrative of "Opposites", Jung failed to fully grasp that the objective psyche he was dealing with was, in fact, actually complex . . . and NOT "both good and evil", both one thing and its opposite.

This false dichotomy was never resolved, and it holds Jungian thought hostage even today.

Best,
Matt

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Saturday, 2nd February 2013 at 11:27 AM
From: Mathew.Mather <Mathew.Mather@lit.ie>

Dear Matt

Yes, I agree we should reframe Jung and speak more of the *Jungian Project* in the grand sense this invokes, as an evolving magnum opus (there is, perhaps, a more appropriate wording for this such as the *Aurea Catena* or Golden Chain). A good starting point toward a re-orientation might be found in Hermeticism, with its unitary worldview, praxis of theurgy etc. Faivre, for instance, identifies Jung as one of three major figures that have transposed Hermeticism into the twentieth century (Faivre 1995: 63).

Moving on to your reference to Faust is also most interesting. In my thesis chapter, titled *Merlin*, I explore the difference between the magus Faust and the wizard Merlin.

Faust's magic is wholly egocentric, for his worldly purposes alone. Therefore, the motif of magic links the archetypal figures of Merlin and Faust, yet the function of this magic is highly distinctive, the former's magic would shape a kingdom, a society, the latter's magic would shape an individual, in contrast to that society. (Lewis Singer, in Spivack Ed., 1992: 96-97)

One might say the linear trajectory of the Faustian spirit has spawned the automated techno-world of industrial nations: 'The American Dream'. This is very different to the Merlinesque spirit whose: "cooperation with time (to say nothing of nature) may likewise bar him from a post-Enlightenment progressive world. Merlinic time is natural: circular,

anagogic, relative” (Goode in Spivack Ed., 1992: 30).

The relevance of such a tension of spirits in our contemporary world is captured by the intuitive question posed by Spivack: “Which of the two provocative mages seems to be winning out in our culture, the subtle medieval wizard or the striving Renaissance magician? The beguiling circle of wholeness or the beckoning straight line of aspiration?”

Hopefully I’ll find the time and energy to respond to the many further most interesting issues you raise over the duration of the seminar.

Best,
Mathew

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Saturday, 2nd February 2013 at 00:04 AM
From: Mathew.Mather <Mathew.Mather@lit.ie>

Dear Susan

Thanks for your encouraging comments. Your *Jung as a Writer* and articles on *Aion* were of great use and inspiration for me.

In response to your interest in a new syncretism of the great religions, I draw attention to Hermeticism and Hermes Trismegistus. In the Renaissance, based on a ‘rediscovery’ of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, there was a resurgent interest in Hermeticism and its founding father Hermes Trismegistus (an ‘amalgam’ of the Greek Hermes and the Egyptian Thoth). Intrinsic to this doctrine is the notion of an age-old divinely inspired revelation, the *prisca theologia*. In the words of Jan Assman “greater age meant higher truth. The best knowledge was the oldest knowledge. As a result, Hermetic knowledge came to be viewed as rescued primeval knowledge, the wisdom of Adam, that had in some way survived the Flood” (Assman, foreword, in Ebeling 2007: ix). Thus, by the sixteenth century, evangelists such as Giordano Bruno were espousing the dawning of a New Age in which the ‘Egyptian’ religion of Hermes Trismegistus was “poised to become the unifying religion in which Jews, all denominations of Christians, Platonic humanists, and

even Muslims could meet and resolve their differences” (Freke & Gandy 1999: xxiv). Paganism, we might add, is also included in such a grand vision.

By way of example, in Jung’s *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, we come across the notion of a Sun-Moon coniunctio. If we amplify this by referring to his *Dream Analysis seminars* (Jung 1984: 321-435) it becomes clear he is alluding to the idea of a rapprochement between a Sun religion (Christian) and a Moon religion (Moslem), amongst other things.

I further suspect that one of his intentions with this work was to effect in the reader, through an invocation of symbols, an alchemical-like process of transformation – an ‘immersion in the mercury’ as the ‘highest mystery of the Whole work’ in which the figure of Mercurius functions as an agency that stitches together a plethora of oppositions and confounds one’s rationalism – thereby opening one toward a revelatory gnosis (I’m sure Robert Segal could enlighten us here).

And with this I wish you a good weekend and a luminous *Imbolc* 1st February (a time when divination is traditionally practiced).

Best,

Mathew

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Saturday, 2nd February 2013 at 13:48 PM
From: Mark Saban [jungpsych@marksaban.co.uk]

Dear Matthew

Many thanks for your paper. There are numerous possible threads to take up here. I am interested in the way in which Jung works with image at the moment, so this is where I will focus. It seems to me that you have offered us two separate images here. The first is the image of the tale, "The Spirit in the bottle". And the second is that image set within another image: that of Jung's 1942 interpretation of this tale.

To start with the second, one might note how Jung interprets folk tales as though they were unmediated products of the unconscious or as he puts it "spontaneous statements of the unconscious about itself". This naïve approach, as taken up by von Franz, became the standard Jungian approach. It depends upon a romantic idea of the folk-tale (the tale of the volk or race) as an authentic autochthonous product of the racial unconscious. This enables one to take it as a truly anonymous and collective phenomenon.

There are all sorts of reasons to treat such an approach with some suspicion. Not least because it seriously underplays the cultural/historical aspects of the tales in question. Grimm's *The Spirit in the Bottle* is a good example of this. It is a version of Stith Thompson's tale type 331. This is what Thompson says about this tale-type in his "Folk Tales": "Though its treatment in the *Arabian Nights* is undoubtedly most familiar to the literary world, it has been frequently told in every century since ... Oral versions are only occasionally encountered and these are likely to be closely related to some literary retelling." In other words, this is a story that has been fashioned in literary contexts, and only secondarily retold in oral contexts. As such it becomes difficult to approach this story as a pure product of the unconscious.

In her *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, von Franz suggests that one should take a look at alternative versions of a fairy tale before attempting to interpret it. This seems good advice. We can see from Grimm's version what an early 19th century German telling of the story looks like. Other versions, though recognisably of the same type, have a quite different feel about them, and the story can take quite different twists and turns. For example, there are plenty of versions in which someone lets the spirit (imp, jinni, etc) out of the bottle (jar, hole etc) and as a result dies. In *The Arabian Nights'* version (*The Fisherman and the Jinni* - the second 'top level' story told by Scheherazade) the poor fisherman pulls out of the sea a jar sealed with the seal of Solomon. The jinni was originally trapped inside the jar as a punishment for rebelling against King Solomon. For all the jinni's impressive power, the fisherman (the tale emphasises) knows that humans are cleverer than jinnis (who make a lot of noise but are on the whole rather unintelligent), and (like the hero of the Grimm tale) easily fools the jinni back into the jar.

[Incidentally, this seems a weakness in Jung's interpretation, as Daniel points out. Does it not seem unlikely that the Mercurius of the alchemists would be stupid enough to fall for such a trick by the ego-hero?] The jinni begs for mercy and in response the fisherman lectures him about the consequences of good behaviour in the face of an evildoer by telling him a story within the story (The Story of King Yûnân and the Sage Dûbân) The Jinni promises to reward the fisherman if he is released, and so the tale continues, in a very different way from the Grimm story, and which involves further tales within tales, and all kinds of magical transformations. This Persian (the name Arabian nights is a misnomer) version has then all kinds of tones and facets which make it very Persian, and very medieval. By further contrast, I have appended a wonderfully nihilistic Jewish version of the tale, There is no Truth in the World, to the end of this post.

My point is that, rather than naively taking the Grimm version as the unadorned archetypal in action, we need to acknowledge its cultural/historical setting, which itself makes up part of the image. This is the context of the original image - the German folk-tale of the Spirit in the Bottle, collected in the early decades of the 19th century by the Brothers Grimm: The Grimms, who also wrote scholarly works on Teutonic mythology, and on the German language, were consciously carving out a specifically German national identity at a time when there was no Germany only a patchwork of tiny independent kingdoms, dukedoms, bishoprics etc. Their ideology was romantic: the spirit of the volk was to be found in its autochthonous roots, its märchen, myths and words. So we can see this tale as also the tale of the Grimms, venturing into the forest (always a symbol of echt-Germany: it was the forest where Armonius defeated the legions, and where the pagan Germans lived, as described by Tacitus who also first made the Mercury-Wotan link) to collect and publish those tales that spoke directly from the soul of the German people, thus letting a mighty spirit out of the bottle – that of militant German nationalism. (For more on the symbolic importance of the forest for the Germans see Simon Schama's wonderful Landscape and Memory)

But then we remember that we are looking at this tale, this image, through the lens of another image: that of Jung lecturing at Eranos in August 1942. As Matthew points out, this offers its own theme, and a different, though no less specific historical/political context: 1942 was perhaps the year in which it seemed most likely that Hitler would win the war, but it was also the turning point. Jung spoke at Eranos just after the first battle of El Alamein, and just before Stalingrad. It was also in 1942 that news of the Nazi death camps became widely known. I agree with Matthew that we should make a link between the immensely powerful, and long buried, spirit in the bottle (Mercurius) and the Wotan of Jung's 1936 essay. In a 1938 interview Jung emphasises Wotan as god of wind

[spirit]. For Jung Hitler is the one who has found the bottle deep in the ancestral forest and let the spirit of Mercurius/Wotan out.

But in 1942, as *Götterdämmerung* looms, Jung makes not a mention of contemporary events. He stays resolutely in the alchemical retort, even though, as he acknowledges, the tale flouts alchemical protocol and is all about what happens if the retort gets broken. He thus manages to keep his psychology unsullied by the dangerous political/cultural forces he has played with in the 30s, but at the cost of imprisoning his psychology within a timeless uroboric bubble (as we have explored in recent posts) outside of history and outside of the real world. Unlike Walter Benjamin's dialectical image, which occurs in a flash of lightning as past and present spark off each other, Jung's image is inoculated against the reality of both past and present.

A last interpretation of the tale: Jung, son of a poor (in spirit) father (Paul Jung or Sigmund Freud – take your pick), who makes his living cutting down trees (extending the alienated forces of 'civilisation') bravely goes deep into the forest (unconscious) and hears the voice of the objective psyche. After some to-ing and fro-ing whereby he becomes aware of how powerful the unconscious psyche really is – he comes to a kind of understanding with it (conscious-unconscious, ego-self balance) which enables him ultimately to become a great healer, and, most importantly, redeem his father (Paul Jung's Christianity).

Finally, a very different, Jewish (almost Kafkaesque) version of tale-type 311:

There is no Truth in the world

A man was traveling a long way. It was a very warm day, and he grew tired. He came to a pile of rocks and sat down to rest. Suddenly, he heard a voice from underneath the stones' "Help me get out of here! The rocks are crushing me."

The man's heart was filled with mercy. He stood up and lifted a stone. A snake emerged and slithered away. The man thought no more about it and continued his journey. A short time later, when he lay down to rest, he felt something on his neck. He looked down and saw the snake wrapped around it. "What do you want?" he asked.

"I want to strangle you," replied the snake.

"I saved you and you want to repay me evil for good?"

"There is no truth in the world," replied the snake.

"It is forbidden to sit in judgment alone," said the man. "Come, let us travel together and find someone to judge between us. If he says you should strangle me, you may do so; otherwise, you'll let me go." The two traveled together until they met a horse, standing there browsing on the grass. The man went up to the horse, told him the story, and

asked, "Please, judge between us."

"Strangle him !" said the horse to the snake. "There is no truth among human beings! When I was a colt, they took care of me and children played with me; but when I grew up, they made me work and I brought profit to my master. But now, when I can plow no more, they don't feed me and I have to chew bitter grass."

"Perhaps you have a bad master," said the man. "But there are also good men in the world who don't behave like that. Come, let us continue our journey. Perhaps we will find another animal that has a different opinion of human beings." The three the man, the snake, and the horse continued on their way. They met a large dog that was digging with its paws, searching for food. The three went up to him and the man told him what had happened. The dog's answer was the same as the horse's. Turning to the snake, he said, "Strangle him! When I was a puppy, they took care of me and loved me. When I grew up, they put a chain on me and I guarded the sheep and barked when anything approached. But now, when I am old and can no longer bark and run, they have thrown me out. This is why I have to look in the fields for dead rats to eat. Is there any truth, justice, or righteousness in the world? Strangle the man!"

"Perhaps the dog had the same master as the horse," objected the man, "and he didn't treat them fairly. Come, let us go to the forest and look for animals that have never served human beings. Perhaps their verdict will be different."

The snake rejected the proposal. "Don't be too hasty to kill me," interjected the man. "You can always do so later."

They went on and met a fox. The man with the snake wrapped around his neck said to him, "Two judges have already rendered a verdict between me and the snake, and now I want you too to judge."

"How can I judge when I didn't see how it happened?" replied the fox. "Let us go back to where it happened, and after I see how it happened I will issue my verdict."

So they all went back. When they came to the place, the fox told the man, "Pick up the stone and show me how it happened." Then he told the snake, "I want you to go back to the place where you were lying, so I can see exactly what the situation was."

The snake did as the fox instructed. "Leave him there under the stone!" the fox told the man. The man did as the fox suggested and the snake was left to suffocate under the stone.

The man went happily on his way, with the fox accompanying him. As they walked along together, on the way the fox said, "I saved your life. You should pay me for saving you."

"How can I pay you?" asked the man.

"I don't need much," the fox replied. "One chicken a day is enough for me." The man agreed. "Gladly," he said. "A tiny payment like this will not bear heavily on me."

The fox went back to the forest and the man kept on until he arrived back home. He recounted his adventure to his wife and sons. They were all happy. "Yes," the woman said, "I have sixty chickens. We can satisfy the fox every day."

That night they heard the fox yapping in the yard. "Do you hear?" she asked her husband. "The fox is demanding the chickens we promised him."

They sent one of the children to tie up a chicken and bring it to the fox. They did this every day, until finally the woman said to her husband, "We had sixty chickens, but now the fox has eaten all of them. We only have one left. What can we do? Take the ax and kill the fox! Then we'll have a fine pelt we can sell, and we'll also save the last hen."

That night the man hid in the henhouse. When the fox came as usual to get his chicken, the man brought the ax down on its head and killed it.
From this we see that there is indeed no truth in the world.

The Folktale, Stith Thompson, University of California press, 1946
The Interpretation of Fairy Tales, Von Franz, Shambhala, 1996
The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia, Ulrich Marzolph and Richard van Leeuwen, ABC-Clio, 2004
Wotan, C.G. Jung, CW10, 1936
C. G. Jung Speaking, ed. McGuire & Hull, Princeton University Press, 1977
Landscape and Memory, Schama, Harper Collins, 1995
Folktales of the Jews, ed. Ben Amos, The Jewish Publication Society, 2007

Best

Mark

Saturday, 2nd. February 2013 at 00:14 AM
From: Daniel Anderson
<danielmelanderson@gmail.com>

Dear Matthew and All,

Matthew, thank you for this fine paper and interesting fairy tale. Obviously, Jung places a great deal of emphasis on it, although I disagree with his interpretation. To interpret the tale I start with Jung's injunction--reiterated by Lopez-Pedraza, Hillman and Giegerich--to stick with the image. I also found it useful to read the Grimm tale itself, <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm099.html>. The actual fairytale conveys important nuances that a skeletal outline, such as provided by Jung, fails to capture.

The tale is about a poor woodcutter and his son. Let's stop right there. It seems that the Brothers Grimm wrote down this tale around 1815, but I think it fair to assume that it goes back to the Middle Ages, but probably not much beyond that because an important feature is that the son goes to a university. I'm dating this to the Middle Ages. My Internet research on medieval woodcutters, admittedly not extensive, indicates that a woodcutter was at the bottom of the social pecking order. They were generally poor and usually didn't participate in village life or in its hierarchy. They scraped out a living cutting down trees in the forest and bringing them to town for fuel.

At this juncture, it is worth contrasting this fairy tale with the myth of Actaion and Artemis--analyzed both by Thomas Moore and Wolfgang Giegerich in *Soul's Logical Life*. In the myth, we have analogous motifs: a hunter (Actaion) entering the forest in his professional capacity as it were (to hunt). We have in the forest an encounter with a spiritual being, a goddess, Artemis. The forest in the Actaion-Artemis myth is the

location of epiphany and transformation. How different is our fairy tale! At the outset, the forest is ontologically minimized. It is no longer the place where epiphany occurs--the fairy tale's spiritual being is little more than a gullible spook. The forest, rather than being depicted as a holy place, a sanctuary of gods and goddesses, is in the fairy tale objectified as a source of raw materials, and not very valuable materials at that. One could make a living cutting down trees and hauling them out of the woods, but not a very good one. The woodcutter is "poor" and this reflects the impoverished symbolic status of the wilderness itself.

The woodcutter knows that there is no future in the woods for his son. So he saves and he sacrifices to put together enough money for his son to learn a better profession, something at the university. Medieval universities must be associated with scholastic learning which, as Giegerich notes, served to train the mind using rather sterile logical exercises. Now, the woodcutter's son doesn't get too far in his studies. He got just a little bit of book learning. But even this little bit made him more than a match for the rather impotent Mercurius. This suggests to me that this fairytale reflects something like emerging enlightenment consciousness. This interpretation is supported by numerous aspects of the story, including the fact that "Mercurius" has already been reduced in size and confined to a bottle. Jung suggests that an "alchemist" or "magician" buried the bottle. I think it more plausible that the burial of Mercurius (representing pre-rational consciousness) was a counterpart to a more sophisticated, complex consciousness fostered by the scholastic training of the universities which would later spread to the wider culture and eventually become the Enlightenment.

But this burying of Mercurius--from the Enlightenment perspective, the personification of superstition--suggests a sort of fear, repression. Of course, when something is repressed it is not disposed of; it is just removed to another place, here, the roots of a great oak tree which Jung probably correctly notes reflects another archaic practice, worshipping great oaks. What the story suggests is not a releasing of a potent spirit but rather an unmasking of this spirit as impotent. Reading about the young man opening the bottle and releasing a fuming, threatening Mercurius reminds me of the scene from the *Wizard of Oz* where the four fearful travelers encounter the "Great and Powerful Oz" for the first time. Yet unlike Dorothy and her friends, who were terrified of Oz, the young man in our story calmly, almost dismissively, tricks the spirit into climbing back into the bottle. He was ready to walk away and leave the spirit where he found it had the spirit not begged to be released, promised to be good, and promised to give the young man a gift.

And, indeed, something did come out of the spirit after all. He gave the boy a rag that could turn anything into silver, and heal any wound. The outcome of the story is significant. There is no dramatic transformation of either the father or the son; they simply get a lot of money, and the young man becomes a famous doctor. The Grimm version of the tale ends with a very specific accounting of how much money the boy earned by selling the silver ax and how much the old iron ax was worth. Astoundingly, these mundane details of cost warrant far more attention at the end of this tale than the released "Mercurius." The fairy tale as a whole treats Mercurius as really not much of anything at all. Who knows if it was really "Mercurius" who came out of that bottle or

simply a blustering Oz-like spirit intent on making a show? But it doesn't matter. Whatever the thing in the bottle, it is so incredibly gullible and easily undone by the simple intellectual tricks of a university dropout that one is left thinking, "who cares?" *This* is something to fear? Jung was upset at the danger posed by releasing "Mercurius." But the fairytale obviously doesn't care. Once the spirit hands over the magic rag it's exit stage right for Mercurius. Far more interesting is how much a silver ax commands in thalers in the marketplace compared to an iron ax.

But what do we make of that magic rag? After all, Mercurius was good for that significant boon. Considering that this tale should be read according to text, context and theme I return to the possibility that the buried Spirit Mercurius represents a sort of repression, a fear of the old ways which clung even as a new consciousness emerged in Europe. As we know from personal psychology, it takes energy to repress. Once the repression is lifted the energy which previously was devoted to keeping a content out of consciousness is now freed for the use of consciousness. There is a liberation. I would suggest that lies behind the theme of the release of "Mercurius." The fairy tale's point is simple: nothing to fear here, folks, you can move along. Why are we chasing and burning witches? Why issue papal bulls against alchemy? To the extent that emerging rational consciousness was weighed down with expunging superstition, witchcraft, and occult practices, such as alchemy, it is not freed to realize itself. You don't need to avoid the black cat at all. It's just a cat. Once freed from the weight of fear and superstition the mind is freed to approach the world "rationally" seeing matters in terms of economics and scientific learning--which could result in developments such as medicine (the boy becoming a famous doctor).

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The London conference of 2011 centered on the theme, Enchantment/Dis-enchantment. It strikes me that this tale, considered in its details, points to the theme of dis-enchantment.

Best wishes,
Dan Anderson

Saturday, 2nd February 2013 at 10:39 AM
From: John Hill johnrayhill@me.com

Dear All,

I recently directed a fairy tale drama on *The Spirit in the Bottle*. Psychodrama allows for a wide variety of fairy tale interpretations. The following description might be helpful in illustrating how the archetypal presence of a *Mercurius* can facilitate a change of attitude. The group consisted of twelve members, some of who impersonated the tale's various figures. The protagonist, a young man in his thirties, took on the role of the woodcutter's son. He became immersed in an

endless conflict with his father. The father, a successful man of the world and by no means at the bottom of the pecking order, was irritated that his son was not practical and could not cut wood properly. The son tried to persuade his father of the importance of philosophy in order to set limits to the rabid materialism that is destroying the world. The father was convinced that he had foolishly wasted his savings on his son's education. There seemed to be no way out of this conflict, despite several attempts at role-reversal and doubling from other participants. It suddenly occurred to me that the spirit in the bottle, identified as the god Mercurius in the original tale, might be a source of inspiration. I instructed the protagonist to step out of his role as son and choose a member of the group to impersonate that spirit. He provided sufficient cues to a woman participant so that she could embody a *Mercurius* who could see beyond the moment and bring healing to the damaged father/son relationship. The antagonist, now embodied as the spirit, tuned right into the archetypal dimension of Mercurius. In the dialogue with the son, she spoke directly to his soul, momentarily distracting him away from the struggle with his father and awakening him to the deeper intentions of the psyche and his destiny to become a philosopher. In connecting with the tale's Mercurial energy, the son could calmly and convincingly speak to his father about the importance of his future profession, without being caught in the snares of fruitless argument. The impact of this archetypal figure inspired the protagonist to gain a firm standpoint that prevented him from identifying with the splitting forces of a puer/senex feud.

This vignette will appear in 2013 in a new book on Jung and Moreno, edited by Craig Stephenson.

John Hill

Sunday, 3rd February 2013 at 13:18 PM
From: MathewMather <Mathew.Mather@lit.ie>

Dear John

Pity we don't have a YouTube clip of your play! This is a good example of how the minimalist fairytale has a 'timeless relevance'. I am particularly interested in the role playing of Mercurius. This action touches on a magical invocation, so it is well to have it contained in the broader psychodramatic container, allowing for healing transformations. This leads to the 'tricky' problem of how we might deal with a constellated archetype. Stephen Walker expresses the problem:

It is true that for Jung the integration of an archetype usually requires some degree of identification with it first. But, having identified oneself with it at first, one must go on to disidentify with it. The resulting state of deflation allows for the integration of some of the archetypal contents – the depth of vision of the sage, for instance. But for this to happen, the ego must remain aware of its all-too-human limitations and must stay humble in relation to the potentially overwhelming numinosity of the archetypal content. Only in this way can true sanity be maintained ... In other words, the ego should neither blithely ignore the archetypal content nor identify with it rashly. Once an archetype has been constellated, it is as dangerous to attempt to repress it completely as it is to identify with it totally. (Walker 2002: 102-3)

Also interesting is how psychodrama (and art therapy) can constellate a field in which our life issues can be mirrored, sometimes synchronistically, in others. It would be interesting to hear more on this theme!

Walker S (2002) *Jung and the Jungians on Myth: An Introduction*, Routledge, New York and London

Best

Mathew

Sunday, 3rd. February 2013 at 23:52 PM

From: Stephenson Craig <craig.stephenson@orange.fr>

Dear colleagues,

John Hill has contributed a response to the wonderful ongoing seminar led by Mathew Maher and in response to Mathew's paper about "The Spirit in the Bottle". In his response, John mentions his much longer essay about his ongoing work with Fairy Tale Enactment. You will find John's essay in JUNG AND MORENO: ESSAYS ON THE THEATRE OF HUMAN NATURE, to be published by Routledge in July 2013. Here's the link so you can visit the Routledge webpage for our book:

<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415696456>

Thanks for taking a look.

Craig Stephenson

**Sunday, February 3rd, 2013, at 7:04 AM,
From: Mathew.Mather Mathew.Mather@lit.ie> wrote:**

Dear Mark

Thanks for highlighting such a cautionary note when interpreting fairytales. Steve Myers article in the IJJS is also of relevance here, in which he contrasts the making of *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*.

I'd like to respond here to a compelling theme you consider: an interpretation through the lens of Jung's times, as the 1942 Eranos lectures. As you say, "1942 was perhaps the year in which it was most likely that Hitler would win the war, but it was also the turning point". I constructed a perspective on this sensitive issue in a chapter *A Fish-Snake Synchronicity*, in my recently completed thesis.

Here I explored Jung's conflation of Wotan to Mercurius. This association offers a reinterpretation in the sense of the wild and resurgent Germanic spirit being 'alchemically transformed', with Jung's analytical psychology being both the 'container' and praxis to help effect such a transformation. I further located this within Jung's esoteric belief that humanity was in the midst of a transition of the Ages, from the Age of the Fishes to the Age of Aquarius.

I included a consideration of the square-like constellation Pegasus, which appears above and between these two constellations. In the early 1930's, in the *Visions Seminars* Jung writes of Pegasus: "And people are now tremendously busy with squares as they were busy with the trinity before; all the old gods of India and Egypt and Greece were trinities" (Jung 1998: 731). Clarifying the meaning of Pegasus, "the ruling principle at this time," he further remarks that "the horse was a libido symbol, representing the animal part of man, and by pulling himself up upon it, by riding it, it thus becomes winged and divine; it is not only an ordinary animal, it is a divine animal. So it would mean a time in which man discovers that the real guiding principle is the living libido, and that would be represented by a square" (731).

These are just a couple of allusions, which I assemble and develop more fully in the fish-snake chapter. The point, in my opinion, is that Jung's astrological (as well as alchemical) worldviews are vital if we are to better understand him, his legacy and of its possible usefulness in shaping our contemporary myth/s.

Thus, to return to our fairytale, we might also consider our present 'ruptured times' as a contemporary resonance. For example, a few years back, Obama and Hilary Clinton appeared on the political landscape; two 'symbols' that, historically, embody the abject in American society. Could this phenomenon be interpreted as the emergence of the repressed American spirit (historically controlled by a 'white male supremacy')? Is this 'spirit' being alchemically transformed?

Jung's more sophisticated portrayal of Mercurius (that begins to give shape to the notion of repressed feminine, evil and matter) affords, perhaps, an insight into such contemporary dynamics. In *Aion*, Jung describes Mercurius as problematic fourth. He writes: "Mercurius duplex ... [corresponds] ... in the 'Christian Quaternity' – if such an expression be permitted – to Mary or the Devil. These two incompatible figures are united in the Mercurius duplex of alchemy" (Jung 1951: 252).

These further allusions, admittedly rather dense and in need of further explanation, take us in the direction of the possible relevance of Jung's alchemical myth for our contemporary times. I hope we can take this theme further, which Susan also opened up. I'd also be interested in looking at Jung's *astro-alchemical myth*, and of its possible relevance and usefulness for our times.

Jung C. G. (1951) *Collected Works*, vol. 9ii, *Aion*, 2nd ed. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Jung C. G. (1998) *Visions: notes of the seminar given in 1930-34*, in 2 volumes,
(C. Douglas Ed.) London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Best

Mathew

PS: this coming week I'll be at work during the daytime, but will contribute a couple of hours every evening if possible. The following week, our mid-term break, I hope to be more present.

Monday, 4 February 2013 at 21:35 PM

From: Mathew Mather <Mathew.Mather@lit.ie>

Dear John, All

For an analysis of the atomic bomb in 1945, in terms of the 'Spirit in the Bottle' fairytale, see Geigerich (1998) 'The Invention of Explosive Power and the Blueprint of the Bomb', *Spring*. <http://www.mindfully.org/Nucs/Bomb-Nuclear-Blueprint1988.htm> Geigerich, however, does not refer to Jung's astrological worldview (How many post-Jungian scholars do?).

To quote from my thesis, "Jung believed the dawning of the New Age would begin in the 1940's with the precession of the equinoxes approaching 'the first star of Aquarius'. This was also the decade during which he worked on his magnum opus *Mysterium Coniunctionis*: a work I would characterise as a creative struggle with divine shadow in an effort to contain and unite the opposites sundered in the aeon of Pisces".

Further on: "For Jung, the harnessing of star energy for human purposes was one of the terrifying 'promethean' consequences of the incarnation of divinity in the human psyche (Jung 2007: 237; see also Geigerich 1988). For him the splitting of the atom, creating nuclear fission, was thus a concretisation of a myth commensurate with the problem of a split God-image 'coming to a head' of the second fish".

If we are to better understand Jung's magnum opus (this constitutes more than *Mysterium Coniunctionis*) then surely we should include his astrological perspective! In hopes that David Tacey, and others, will engage with this question. The notion of the *alchemical coniunctio* would also be an interesting line of enquiry perhaps Susan, and others, might be inclined to discuss.

Geigerich, W (1988) 'The Invention of Explosive Power and the Blueprint of the Bomb', *Spring*.

Jung C. G. (2007) *The Jung-White Letters*, (C. Lammers & A. Cunningham Eds. M. Stein Consulting Ed.) Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London & New York.

Best

Mathew

Monday, 4th February 2013 at 07:53 AM
From: John Hill, johnrayhill@me.com

An: "The IAJS Online Discussion Forum" <iajsdiscussion@iajsdiscussionlist.org>
Betreff: Re: [Iajsdiscussion] Fairy Tale and Myth Seminar
Dear Mathew, All,

Many thanks for your comment and question about how to deal with a constellated archetype. I appreciate the rich contributions that contextualise this tale within the frame work of historical events and the development of consciousness. The dropping of the atomic bomb in 1945 is another example where many feared that the Jinn has now been let out of the bottle and humans may not be able to control it.

Fairy tale narrative has always been a way of containing archetypal forces. In fairy tale drama a tale is enacted by a group, then there follows an individual psychodrama. The psychodrama might be concerned with more personal issues, as for example a father/son conflict. The protagonist, however, not only confronts the personal mother or father, but also faces the embodiment of an archetypal figure that has structured those personal relationships. At decisive moments in the drama the need arises to connect with such a figure. This only works if the chosen person (antagonist) can interiorise the energy of a particular archetype and communicate it to the protagonist, as, for example the woman participant in my previous posting who could embody the archetypal qualities of a Mercurius. Psychodrama has excellent techniques to help a participant embody and disembody such forces. This process is relational, in that the protagonist who needs to connect with that force gives the cues and thus contextualises the archetype within the narrative that is being enacted. The process maintains boundaries for it is the protagonist who decides when this figure is activated or not. At the end of a psychodrama, those who enacted the roles go through an elaborate process of de-rolling.

Can such identifications lead to some kind of inflation? Hardly. Archetypal figures are powerful but not so complicated as the human ego that remains present through the entire psychodrama. Their pattern of behaviour is relatively simple. In psychodrama as in fairy tales they are background figures who appear at decisive moments embodying the virtues and vices that one is like to encounter in a lifetime, such as power, love, wisdom, anger, hate or greed. It is their constellation at a decisive moment that challenges the

protagonist's ego and may lead to transformation. "...when an archetype becomes conscious it is a process of incarnation" (M.L. vonFranz, Apuleus' Golden Ass, chap VI, p.1.)

With best wishes,

John Hill

Tuesday, 5th February 2013 at 16:29 PM

From: Mark Saban <jungpsych@marksaban.co.uk>

Dear Matthew

Though it seems perhaps a little off the subject of what has been advertised as a fairytale and myth seminar (maybe I am being pedantic?), I am happy to address the questions you bring up. But first, I must confess to being a little confused about what you refer to as "Jung's astrological worldview".

When you say "Jung believed the dawning of the New Age would begin in the 1940's with the precession of the equinoxes approaching 'the first star of Aquarius,'" is this meant as a literal statement? Are you saying a) that Jung thought that the movement of the heavenly bodies was affecting human evolution in the way you describe, or b) Jung thought there was an occult correspondence (outside of cause and effect) between the positions of the stars and the changes in consciousness you describe, or c) that Jung saw certain astrological imagery as suggestive of movements of collective psyche, or d) Jung thought that popular awareness of certain astrological events would trigger movements in the collective psyche? Or perhaps some other option?

It seems to me that in the passages from Jung you quote (e.g. with reference to the horse/pegasus symbol, "So it would mean a time in which man discovers that the real guiding principle is the living libido, and that would be represented by a square") Jung is very careful to keep within psychological bounds. That is, he is making a statement about the kind of meaning that man has found in various images (horse, square, constellation of Pegasus) but not making an objective claim about the actual influence of planetary bodies upon human life.

Similarly, as I understand it, in the synchronicity essay, he begins by setting up an experiment to see if conventional astrological wisdom with regard to marriage is statistically correct. At first, the data seems to support it, but then he makes the important realisation that the data is reflecting, not the objective statistical recurrence of astrological patterns, but the nature and quality of the interest shown by the experimenter. This is a highly interesting psychological fact, but tells us nothing about the validity of astrology as a science of prediction or about Jung's personal beliefs.

Are you suggesting that there are places in the collected works where Jung steps beyond these strictly psychological statements and expresses 'belief' in astrology, outside of

human meaning-making? For example, I find it hard to tell from your comment, "For Jung, the harnessing of star energy for human purposes was one of the terrifying 'promethean' consequences of the incarnation of divinity in the human psyche" what you really mean with regard to Jung's beliefs. Does the phrase, "the harnessing of star energy for human purposes" assume that such a thing as "star energy" exists outside of human harnessing? Or are you talking about a symbolic harnessing of an energy that humans have invested the stars with?

I hope you appreciate my questions stem from a genuine desire to understand what you are claiming about the nature of Jung's "astro-chemical myth".

Best wishes

Mark

Tuesday, 5th February 2013 at 23:51 PM
From: Mathew Mather <Mathew.Mather@lit.ie>

Dear Mark

If we are exploring Jung's astro-chemical myth, then our discussion has not drifted too far from the myth and fairytale theme. I shall try to answer most of your questions.

Staying with the Pegasus theme we read in the *Visions Seminars* of Jung's analysis of winged horse imagery of his young woman patient Christiana Morgan. He comments "Of course, there is no doubt about her knowing that the horse is Pegasus, but I am convinced she never thought of it as an astrological constellation, nor that Pegasus would be the leading principle at about this time" (Jung 1998: 732). This reveals Jung as a believer in the 'astrological' nature of the unconscious (fitting your 'other option' category, and related to his concept of the archetype – another story, perhaps too far off the myth theme).

As further corroboration of Jung's belief in astrology (not as projection, but as ontic reality), we read in *Aion*: "The course of our religious history as well as an essential part of our psychic development could have been predicted more or less accurately, both as regards time and content, from the precession of the equinoxes through the constellation of Pisces" (Jung 1951: 95). Susan Rowland identifies the issue: "Jung refuses to accept that Christian enthusiasm for fish symbolism is *derived* from study of the zodiac ... Rather the psyche spontaneously produces fish symbolism" (Rowland 2005: 149).

In light of this, it would appear that Jung *literally* as *objective claim* believed in the

dawning of the New Age in the 1940's (though, later, he revised his dating).

Concerning his astrological experiment – he would only have gone to the trouble of setting up such an experiment if he thought he could empirically prove a tenet of astrology. Perhaps this was spurred by an ‘intuitive conviction’. However, after an initial astonishing success, subsequent experiments did not corroborate his hypothesis. According to von Franz it was whilst pondering such a difficulty at Bollingen that: “suddenly he saw, through the interplay of light and shadow, a mischievous face laughing out at him from the masonry of the wall (Later he brought this face out of the stone with chisel and hammer and perpetuated it as the trickster Mercurius). The thought struck him: Had Mercurius, the spirit of nature, played a trick on him? In a soberer and more sceptical frame of mind he repeated the experiment with a second batch of horoscopes and this time the result was substantially less improbable. In all probability, then, the first result had itself been a meaningful coincidence, in other words a synchronistic phenomenon!” (von Franz 1998: 238).

Here, we might ask: what synchronistic phenomenon characterised the first result? The argument I build in my *Synchronicity* chapter (thesis) is that his decision to experiment with married couples (microcosm) coincided with the coniunctio theme related to the arrival of the Aquarian Age (macrocosm). For him, the separation of opposites in the Age of the Fishes would now unite in the Age of Aquarius (remember also the subtitle of *Mysterium Coniunctionis – an enquiry into the separation and synthesis of psychic opposites in alchemy*).

Finally, in responding to your question about star energy, we should remember that it is actually fusion that generates ‘star energy’ (a coniunctio image), whereas the Atom Bomb and Nuclear power is generated from fission (a separatio image).

I would like to have answered your questions in much more detail, but perhaps this would have taken us a bit too far afield from our seminar theme!

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Best

Mathew

Wednesday, 6th February 2013 at 20:36 PM

From: Mark Saban <jungpsych@marksaban.co.uk>

Dear Matthew

Thank you so much for your clarifications. I am sure you agree that whenever possible it is important to attempt clarity particularly in these areas (i.e. those areas wherein Jungian psychology is prone to mystification and/or mysticism.) The fact that we are dealing with fields that have been considered marginal to (or even outside of) the mainstream discourse of Western academia should not obviate the possibility of a rigorous approach.

In fact in recent years figures such as Wouter Hanegraaff have applied first class scholarship to what we might broadly call occult subjects, including the modern 'New Age', and with some very interesting results.

In the case of Jung what interests me, at least, is the question of what is the value and importance of Jung's evident interest in subjects like astrology and alchemy within the context of his psychological work. For myself, I am not sure that lumping astrology and alchemy together necessarily furthers that project. Alchemy is a special case for Jung, and was evidently central to the later psychological writings, while, despite your claims, I can't see astrology as anything but marginal. For the moment let us return to the astrological side of things.

You make a claim for Jung's 'belief' in astrology "not as projection, but as ontic reality".

I am left wondering what it might mean to say that Jung believed in astrology "as ontic reality". Elsewhere you suggest that Jung, "*literally as objective claim* believed in the dawning of the New Age in the 1940's" and also believed in the "'astrological' nature of the unconscious". I note that you put the word 'astrological' in quotes here. Why is that?

Anyway I am unsure if these three claims about what Jung believed add up to the same claim for you, or whether they are different.

I think I understand what it would mean to say that a fifteenth century Italian believed in astrology. The dominant worldview at that time accepted as fact that there were correspondences between every aspect of the sublunar world and the heavens, so that the macrocosmic movements of the planets inevitably had certain effects in the microcosmic human world. Alchemy too depends upon this kind of belief: the metals correspond to the planets, for example. One might object that our fifteenth century Italian does not consciously 'believe' in astrology or alchemy but rather simply assumes that, as an integral part of her worldview, it is valid. However, in the case of Jung things are evidently different. The dominant (scientific) worldview when Jung was alive was completely incompatible with a belief in astrology. This is why we are right to use the word 'belief' in his case. In the 20th century, in order to express an allegiance to astrology one needs to make a point of saying, "I believe in astrology". In the same way

one needs to make a point of saying, "I believe in alien abductions" or "I believe in angels", precisely because these are not integral parts of the accepted *Weltanschauung*.

This particular claim would, I assume, amount to a belief that the movement of planets and constellations have a direct causal effect upon human life on earth. As far as I am aware Jung never actually made the statement, "I believe in astrology". However, as I understand you, your position is that his writings on astrology point to the fact that he did hold such a belief.

Now, as you mention, one of the main contexts, within Jung's work, of his comments on astrology is that of synchronicity. Jung's aim in putting forward the theory of synchronicity was to attempt to account for certain aspects of the life-world that were not hitherto accounted for within the scientific paradigms of his time, and particularly that of meaningful coincidence. His aim was not to overthrow the claims and assumptions of modern science, but to suggest an adjustment to science, in the form of an additional non-causal connecting principle that could work alongside the more conventional scientific ideas such as causality.

In this context he writes in a letter to Andre Barbault on the 26th of May 1954, that, "There are many instances of striking analogies between astrological constellations and psychological events or between the horoscope and the characterological disposition... Astrology, like the collective unconscious with which psychology is concerned, consists of symbolic configurations: the "planets" are the gods, symbols of the powers of the unconscious". He goes on, "It seems to me that it is primarily a question of that parallelism or "sympathy" which I call synchronicity, an acausal connection expressing relationships that cannot be formulated in terms of causality... Synchronicity does not admit causality in the analogy between terrestrial events and astrological constellations... What astrology can establish are the analogous events, but not that either series is the cause or the effect of the other."

What Jung seems to be clearly denying here is that the positions or movements of the planets or constellations can have a causal effect upon human life. To that extent, Jung would seem to be a long way from 'believing' in astrology, unless by 'astrology' we mean something different from astrology as understood, by, for example, our 15th century Italian. So, just as Jung writes at great length about the subject of alchemy and its importance for psychology, but without showing any sign of believing that one can literally create a lapis philosophorum in the laboratory, he is quite capable of taking astrology seriously as a highly complex and nuanced archetypal system, without literally believing in it "as ontic reality".

With regard to your statement that Jung, "*literally as objective claim* believed in the dawning of the New Age in the 1940's", this, even if true, surely doesn't necessarily commit Jung to believing in astrology. He could quite easily hold that human consciousness changes (evolves?) over time and that these changes can be identified as occurring at certain historical moments. Presumably the "dawning of the New Age" is one of these transformations of consciousness which would not necessarily need to be attached to astrological beliefs (though I appreciate that it was popularly tied to the

transition from Pisces to Aquarius).

Before coming up with the theory of Synchronicity, Jung held to the idea of 'qualitative time' whereby "whatever happens in a given moment of time inevitably has the quality peculiar to that moment". The success of astrology, he points out in a 1934 letter, relates to the nature of qualitative time: "The fact that astrology nevertheless yields valid results proves that it is not the apparent positions of the stars which work, but rather the times which are measured or determined by arbitrarily named stellar positions. Time thus proves to be a stream of energy filled with qualities and not, as our philosophy would have it, an abstract concept or precondition of knowledge." This again surely does not count as a profession of 'belief in astrology'. However, when he developed synchronicity he simultaneously rejected his previous theory of 'qualitative time', as he explains in the 1954 letter to Barbault: "... since qualitative time is nothing but the flux of things, and is moreover just as much "nothing" as space, this hypothesis does not establish anything except the tautology: the flux of things and events is the cause of the flux of things, etc."

Best wishes

Mark

Wednesday, 6th February 2013 at 23:55 PM
From: David Tacey <D.Tacey@latrobe.edu.au>

Dear Mark and all,

Not quite sure what you mean by the "first class scholarship" of Wouter Hanegraaff and other figures like him. Are you for Jung or against him?

Indeed, the Vatican's Pontifical Councils on Interreligious Dialogue and Culture have made extensive use of the reactionary sociology of Wouter Hanegraaff to discredit Jung and our entire tradition of Jungian studies. Hanegraaff is a number one enemy, much more so than the likes of Richard Noll, harmless by comparison.

Using Hanegraaff's work, "New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought", the Vatican recently decided that Jung's psychology is "New Age" and "inauthentic". In the Vatican's formal denunciation of Jung, in a 2003 document called "Jesus Christ, the Bearer of the Water of Life", Jung is lumped together with Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophists, as a group of frauds and charlatans. The basic problem, both of Hanegraaff and the Vatican, is that they think Jung's idea of the Self is merely the Ego writ large. They do not, by definition, subscribe to the idea of any healing, guiding, or divine force within the person - which, as you know, is basically an

Eastern idea, apart from where it is found in Western esotericism, outlawed by Western churches and indeed by most Western philosophy and theology.

So Hanegraff can write:

"Jung not only psychologised esotericism but he also sacralized psychology, by filling it with the contents of esoteric speculation. The result was a body of theories which enabled people to talk about God while really meaning their own psyche, and about their own psyche while really meaning the divine. If the psyche is 'mind', and God is 'mind' as well, then to discuss one must mean to discuss the other. " p. 513.

This in turn leads the Vatican to conclude that "Jung's mysticism refers not to meeting the transcendent God in the fullness of love, but to the experience engendered by turning in on oneself". It adds: "Jung's mysticism is 'turning inwards on oneself rather than communion with God who is "totally other"".

I often find it disappointing that this list discusses Jung and the New Age without mentioning my book of that title - an entire study devoted to this problem, published by Routledge in London. We ought to be more scholarly and read the stuff that has already been produced on these topics. Less internet chatter, and more time in libraries, please.

But would this book by Mitch Pacwa also be considered first class scholarship: Mitch Pacwa, "Catholics and the New Age: How Good People are being drawn into Jungian Psychology, the Enneagram and the New Age of Aquarius." The attack on Jung is as vicious and nasty as ever , but we all have to keep up with our reading to realise the extent of it.

I have to say that I find this seminar disappointing, and it has hived off into esotericism, which is certainly not the "main game" in Jungian psychology. At most it is a diversion along the way, and if we concentrate on it, we are all easily wiped from the horizon by the clever intellectuals. I have read the Spirit in the Bottle fairy tale several times: there is no indication there that the spirit is Mercurius - this is just a guess Jung makes, and by no means a wise one. This discussion has assumed the spirit is Mercurius, and hence wandered off into esotericism. We should start again, with the assumption that the spirit is not Mercurius, and then we might come back to psychology from the dark woods of the esoteric.

I would hope in future that discussions of Fairy Tales could keep within the realms of depth psychology. I did not join this list or community to be subject to weird and wonderful reflections on esotericism. I get that every day from my undergraduates, and don't need it on this list. Occultism, I believe, is a phase that one usually grows out of, but some prolong the phase beyond adolescent years. Let's get back to the real world, and don't confirm the prejudices of our detractors. What we are talking about now is exactly why the field has been rejected.

best wishes,

David Tacey

Thursday, 7th February 2013 at 02:46 AM
From: Susan Rowland <susanr183@gmail.com>

Dear Mathew and all in this fascinating seminar.
I have read the posts up to this one by Mathew and want to make a few comments to several of them. Let me start where my book *Jung As a Writer* is quoted on Aion in support of Jung having astrological views.

My position on Jung, the astrologer is somewhere between Mathew and Mark, but nowhere in any of my publications have I expressed my view on this. I am interested in Jung's writing and not him as author of them. To me this is a hugely important distinction because Jung's very psychology encourages a detachment between the ego functions of writing (the views of the author) and the imaginative functions of writing (his use of symbols as defined by Jung as portals to the unconscious).

Aion, the work, takes astrology seriously because it tries to get into astrological symbolism and look out from it from the inside. Jung was writing a history of the European imagination using *its symbols as forms of time travel - ways of going back to past forms of consciousness*. The being that wrote Aion may have "believed" in astrology because that was necessary in order to write Aion. The work comes before the writer as point of origin!

OK "The Spirit in the Bottle". From the point of view of my discipline literary studies AND of how I read Jung, I see no right or necessary interpretation of the tale. Art is not about messages, codes or one meaning.

But I would like to offer the alcoholics version for the 21st century! Alchemy arguably found the spirit in the bottle by discovering whisky. Lets stick to Jung's notion of the teleological psyche and see it as addressing the addictions of OUR age!

Finally what Matt Kroeske says about Jung's project is almost exactly what I have been saying about his writing and alchemy writing for years.

Jung is trying to do the great work in the modern age. He knows that therapy is one very potent way but not everyone in afflicted western modernity is going to see a Jungian analysts. The core of the work is the symbol: his alchemy writings attempt to liberate symbols from text to psyche to bodies to culture! As for astrology, he cared enough about saving the world to USE the astrological belief of millions. It is the egg and the chicken!

Mark, I do believe that Jung's writing is showing the value of astrology etc as powerful symbols without definitively implying a belief in an ontic reality. By 1942 he craved

more about saving the world than getting a reputation as a mainstream scientist.

Who wouldn't?

Susan

Thursday, 7th February 2013 at 17:54 PM

From: Mark Saban <jungpsych@marksaban.co.uk>

Dear David, Susan, and all

Great to see some heat being generated in this discussion. Whether it will generate much light remains to be seen. As far as I can see we are now discussing Jung and Astrology.

Though this subject has a only a tenuous relationship with myth or fairy tale, I don't see any point in getting picky about it. When god gives you lemons, make lemonade. David disagrees. He seems to think that this is not an acceptable subject for a discussion: "it has hived off into esotericism, which is certainly not the "main game" in Jungian psychology". Main gain or not, astrology was clearly important to Jung at various points in his development and therefore surely deserves the IAJS's attention. What has become already clear is that there are various different opinions about precisely what value astrology held for Jung. I should have thought that the task of unpacking these disagreements was exactly the kind of thing that a listserv devoted to Jungian studies should be engaged in.

David,

1. **Hanegraaff**: For those who don't know, Wouter Hanegraaff is professor of History of Hermetic Philosophy and related currents at the University of Amsterdam. He has published numerous books and articles and has edited (with Antoine Faivre and others) *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, Brill, Leiden 2005. In his doctoral dissertation (published in 1996 as *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought*, Brill, Leiden) he devoted a chapter to Jung and drew various unfavourable conclusions, one of which David quotes in his post. By the time of his 2001 article *Beyond the Yates Paradigm: The study of Western Esotericism between Counterculture and New Complexity*, (Aries, vol.1, no. 1 2001) his attitude seemed to have changed. He referred there to "the great Swiss psychiatrist" and distinguished Jung from the phenomenon of 'Jungism': ("By popular Jungism I do not primarily mean the academic and therapeutic reception of Jung's analytic psychology but, rather, the international grassroots movement that has formed around the symbolic image of Jung and takes the form, e.g. of innumerable workshops, television shows, best-selling books, and video cassettes") However, whatever Hanegraaff's opinions of Jung, he is the author of numerous scholarly papers on the subject of modern esotericism which I, for one, have found enormously helpful. I would particularly

recommend his *How magic survived the disenchantment of the world* (Religion 33 (2003) 357-380). My point in mentioning his work was to draw attention to the way in which those fields that have until recently fallen outside of conventional academic discourse (and which coincide with Jung's interests: astrology, alchemy, spiritualism, the occult) are now receiving scholarly attention within the academy. This shift has and will continue to make a difference to the way in which Jung's work gets received. I don't understand what you mean by characterising Hanegraaff's work as "reactionary sociology" as his background is in cultural history and the study of religion. Given that he is presumably not responsible for the way in which the catholic church's has chosen to make use of his work, how exactly is his work 'reactionary'?

2. **Are you for Jung or against him?** What is your point in challenging my personal allegiance to Jung here? If you really want an answer it would be: Both. In fact, I don't see how one can be 'for' Jung without being 'against' him. Behind the question there seems (to me) to be an unnecessarily defensive attitude toward Jung's work – and one rather reminiscent of the Zurich-bunker school of Jung: either Jung is right or he is wrong – you must choose! Of course Jung is wrong in all sorts of ways, but how fascinatingly! Before this seminar started you and I were discussing the contradictions at the heart of Jung's work. How can those contradictions not also become visible in our responses to Jung – how can Jung's ambivalences not be reflected in ours? Besides, are you suggesting that we should never read or pay attention to those who dislike Jung? So Hanegraaff is "number one enemy" as you put it. Who is number two – Walter Benjamin? He disliked Jung. Let's put him on the list. What about Zizek? – he's rude about Jung too. Strike him off. Can we not gain from reading these people without letting their attitude to Jung get in the way?
3. **Vatican (Papal bull in a china shop).** I have to confess that the fact that the Pope doesn't like Jung is not keeping me awake at night. Frankly I would be more worried if he did. Does anyone really care what the Vatican says about Jung? Certainly not the Carmelite monastery down the road who regularly send me novices for therapy, in the full knowledge that I am a Jungian. As Hillman emphasised in his talk about the Red Book, Jung was a heretic to the core. So now it's official.
4. **Mitch Pacwa.** Huh? According to Wikipedia he is a Jesuit priest who "has mostly earned fame by being host of many TV shows". So I guess the answer to your question about whether his books would be considered first class scholarship is, No, they wouldn't.
5. **Your book.** I am sorry no-one has mentioned your excellent book on Jung and the New Age. I think the reason is that we weren't actually discussing that subject, but rather the very specific issue of Jung's attitude to astrology, which is not addressed in your book.
6. **Weird and wonderful reflections on esotericism.** Like it or not, Jung spends an awful lot of time talking about psychology via his considerable and extensive interests in esoteric subjects. Given that, it matters how and why he does so. In this case, it is important to look at the question of whether he 'naïvely' believed in

astrology or was utilising it as a highly complex symbol system, analogous to his use of alchemical imagery and motifs, or whether there are other possibilities (see Susan's post). Surely if we are studying Jung then we are studying all of Jung – not just the bits we like. A couple of weeks ago you said about Jung's Aion, "the bulk of it is full of arcane materials derived from ancient philosophies, gnosticism, astrology, and other esoteric sources. It made me wonder who he was writing this for? His own pleasure?" Well, given that Jung spent years composing Aion, and it is a substantial product of his psychological maturity, it is presumably worth taking sufficiently seriously to warrant asking some questions about what he thought he was doing when he utilised these esoteric sources. If you really don't want to "confirm the prejudices of [Jung's] detractors" then surely having an answer to some of these questions would be a good place to start?

Susan,

My version of your highly fertile approach to the distinction between Jung (ego) writer and Jung (imagination) writer is to see his work as existing in a highly ambiguous tension between the two (which are analogues of his personalities 1 and 2), and the reader's reception of his work of course as further constellating these same tensions on another level. I also welcome your comments on Aion. I love the idea of Jung "writing a history of the European imagination using *its symbols as forms of time travel - ways of going back to past forms of consciousness*".

In the light of these comments my efforts to establish a clear difference between Jung as 'believing' in astrology and Jung as utilising astrological symbol systems for a specifically modern psychological purpose may seem overly prosaic. However, it is important (for me at least) to remember that the tensions and ambiguities which your (and my) work emphasise rely for their impact upon prior work in which clear distinctions of this sort are made. Otherwise, what can too easily occur is a slippage into a (highly suggestive) vagueness, whereby almost anything can mean anything: a morass of feel-good waffle. Unfortunately, this is a problem which particularly afflicts Jungian studies.

You use the phrase 'saving the world' with regard to Jung's project and his involvement in astrology. I don't understand. In what way was Jung prioritising 'saving the world' at Eranos in 1942? And how did that project conflict with 'getting a reputation as a mainstream scientist'? And was this project of world salvation coming from Jung (ego), or Jung (imagination)?

Best wishes

Mark

Thursday, 7th February 2013 at 22:03 PM
From: Susan Rowland <susanr183@gmail.com>

Dear Mark,

I am pretty much in agreement with everything you write in this letter both to David and myself. Let me answer your too final points to me.

Your point about needing to remain clear on the nature of Jung's use of astrology (as a belief or...), because it refers to prior research upon which such detailed work with symbols rests is a very good one - except that it does not apply to ALL disciplinary categories meaning all types of academically received research. I have recent been exploring a complex and largely unconscious relationship between the formation of my own home discipline - vernacular literary studies and that of Jungian and Freudian psychology from the late 19th century to now. When I say unconscious relationship I mean that this is not one that is researchable by a historian like Sonu Shandasani in his disciplinary work on Jung because it is not about historically documented connections. Rather is is a growth of twins, separated at birth who do not consciously know of the other's existence. The results of some of this research will be presented in Copenhagen.

OK, I digressed. But literary studies developed an epistemology that enabled it to discount the author in a way radical enough as to not need the research into Jung's actual views you mentioned. You might then say - but Jung does not present himself as a writer of literature. Fair enough and I totally respect that to most forms of academic research on Jung, your point is very valid - but Jungian theory is not, I contend, totally separate from the developments of the discipline of literary studies and this is partly why Jung uses so many literary tropes in his work.

Secondly, I am suggesting that "saving the world" was the reason Jung risked being labelled an esoteric nutter in respectable circles. He wanted his readers to have a real taste of past forms of consciousness in his work on symbols, fairy tales, alchemy etc.

Finally, I am serious about offering a teleological reading of the fairy tale as about addiction for the 21st century.

Any takers!
Susan

Thursday, February 7th, 2013 at 4:50 PM,

From: Jerome Bernstein

<bernsteinjerome@gmail.com> wrote:

Susan:

Hello.

You wrote:

Secondly, I am suggesting that "saving the world" was the reason Jung risked being labelled an esoteric nutter in respectable circles. He wanted his readers to have a real taste of past forms of consciousness in his work on symbols, fairy tales, alchemy etc. Do you consider this a valid pursuit on Jung's part and on the part of any branch of psychology/depth psychology as opposed to 'saving' individual souls through clinical work? Why?

Warm regards,

Jerome

Jerome S. Bernstein, MAPC, NCPsyA
Jungian Analyst
(505) 989-3200
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"We see and hear what we are open to noticing."

**Thursday, February 7th 2013 at 6:02 AM,
From: Susan Rowland**

Dear Jerome,

Great question! I know its complicated. Does someone like Jung *lose* influence by publishing esoteric-friendly material and so his "diversion" from clinical writing and practice is counter productive. I respect such a position.

However: the world needs saving, a lot!! From where I stand in the humanities research traditions and the arts, what I am suggesting Jung did in writing works like *Aion* is not only normal practice, it can be legitimated as scholarly knowledge with certain careful definitions of the imagination and its fruits.

So from where I stand academically: yes, definitely very valid.

From where I stand as a non-clinician worried about the world: still yes!

From my reading of Jung's symbolic writing, it re-frames consciousness in ways that can be understood through just the kind of complexity evolution that you write about in *Living in the Borderland*, so wonderfully. I have spoken and published several times that

I see Jung's trickster-symbol writing as a Complex Adaptive System generated by/through the interface of the Jungian psyche and non-human nature. This is not a metaphor. Such writing IS a complex adaptive system evolving consciousness collectively. I am suggesting that Jung's writing metonymically re-connects us to the living planet.

Your work was a big part of helping me see this.

Susan

Friday, 8th February 2013 at 00:56 AM
From: Mathew Mather <Mathew.Mather@lit.ie>

Dear Susan, David, Andrew, Mark, and all

If Jung's magnum opus (most notably, Aion and Mysterium Coniunctionis) can be shown to have a strong astrological basis then, surely, his astrological worldview should be engaged with and studied before we can offer fair comment.

To quote Giegerich: "... if we have not succeeded in (at least experimentally) giving ourselves over to the inspiring core of the work we are examining, we will not even be able to criticize it" (Giegerich 1998: 89).

Mark,

You quoted me out of context. I wrote "it would appear [emphasis] that Jung literally as objective claim believed in the dawning of the New Age in the 1940's (though, later, he revised his dating)". My position is a little more subtle than you imply.

David,

Yes, I did read your excellent book on Jung and the New Age. As Mark pointed out though, you did not engage with Jung's astrological worldview. Many of your insights here dovetail with what I consider Jung's alchemical myth. Also, I couldn't help but notice the cover of your other excellent book *The Spirituality Revolution*, with its hands in vital water, as being so Aquarian. Also, in the Grimm's fairytale (the version I have) it is the Spirit Mercurius. Maybe I am missing something here. If you could please clarify!

Best,

Mathew

Friday, February 08, 2013 at 2:05 AM
From: [Joel Weishaus](#)

Dear Susan and Jerome;

The problem I have is with the concept of "saving," (I'm sure used by Susan, with reference to Jung, tongue-in-cheek) which has been, and is, used by Christian and Muslim zealots sometimes with brutal force.

China uses it to justify its destruction of Tibetan Culture, "saving" the Tibetan People from their traditions.

When it comes to psychotherapy, what is one saving one's clients from?

With astrology, is this not at bottom just another strategy, like religion, to "save" us from the consequences of God rolling the dice? An impossible task indeed; which, if we were (re)connected to the living planet, we wouldn't need.

Best Regards,
Joel

February, 8th 2013, at 11:28 AM,
From: Mark Saban

Dear Susan and all

Thanks for these thoughts. I look forward to hearing more in Copenhagen about the reunion of your separated twins.

I do recognise the heuristic value of approaching Jung's work as self-sufficient literature – your work is evidence of the benefits of such an approach. However, for me it seems productive to maintain the tension between that re-imagined opus and Jung as person. I say this because I see 'Jung as person', not as a list of biographical/historical facts, but as a highly complex weave of image and memory – embedded in a history (cultural setting) which, in turn, is constituted by a similarly complex weave. Within that weave "Jung's actual views" are a thread, though no more than that.

I still have no idea what you mean by "saving the world" in this context. How was enabling "his readers to have a real taste of past forms of consciousness in his work on symbols, fairy tales, alchemy etc." related to 'saving the world'?

I, for one, would be very interested to hear more about Spirit in the Bottle and addiction.

In the meantime, a re-reading of the tale leads me to an interpretation which is more about modernity and the soul in the academy. It is consistent with Dan's interpretation of 1st Feb but differs in various ways.

THE SPIRIT UNDER GLASS

The initial problem in the tale is to do with the uneducated father's inability to pay for his son's education. The shift of consciousness from pre-modern to modern, from 'natural' consciousness to reflective intellectual consciousness, fails – because the resources of the old masculine are not on their own enough. The father/son axis alone is unable to achieve the goal. Something is missing. Von Franz would have drawn attention to the lack of the feminine in the initial setting. As father energy alone is insufficient (too poor – in spirit?) to propel the son onto a new level, the result is a half-baked intellectualism: the son is neither one thing nor the other.

What transforms the situation (by taking the son deeper into the forest and eventually finding the spirit in the bottle) is the son's somewhat abstract desire to "look for bird's nests". The nest is the place where the eggs are laid, hatched, and from where the fledgling birds eventually set off into the air. This is the birth of airy thoughts, ideas, imaginings that take one away from the prosaic earth-bound world of the father (work, eat, sleep). Bird imagery tends to be associated with the anima. The search for this airy anima stuff (the call of the imagination) is what takes this would-be intellectual off the beaten path and to the oak tree: huge, ancient and 'dangerous looking'. Whether this vast old oak is world-tree – the axis holding together god, man and underworld, standing firm in the centre of the forest or whether it is one of those oaks sacred to Diana – the wild, virgin feminine, the unintimidated scholar can only think to himself: "Must be a lot of birds nests in there!"

It is here that the voice of Mercurius is to be heard. But here, in the modern world, in the ear of the scholar, it is barely to be heard - "half-smothered". The spirit is in a bottle – shrunken – looking like a frog (duplex – amphibious – symbol of rebirth). Note Mercurius is behind glass – and seen thus he is small and manageable. This is the intellectual gaze – it places the living and powerful under glass – it reduces the living soul to a concept – easy to control. This is where the modernness of the tale comes through very strongly. This son is no Actaeon, a mighty hunter, he is an semi-intellectual birds nest collector (like the Grimm brothers questing for tales, or Jung questing for alchemical motifs).

When he lets the spirit out of the bottle ("thinking no evil") and the spirit inflates, becoming "like a frightful giant" the tale is insistent that he remains "without fear".

However loudly the spirit roars, the scholar exhibits no awe, experiences no numinosity.

This poor spirit is a Rip Van Winkle of spirits – he wakes up in the modern world and everything is different. (note that in the Arabian nights version this is exactly what has occurred – confined to the jar in the heroic age of Solomon he comes out in a lesser more human age) Yet unaware of the huge changes that have taken place, Mercurius tells the scholar he is going to break his neck. The scholar offers a classic academic retort: "More persons than one must be consulted about that." Not surprisingly this throws the spirit off balance. Thoroughly bemused, he can even be tricked back into the bottle by the puny intellectual guile of the smart-aleck scholar. Welcome to the modern world, Mercurius!

So, in the light of modern academia even the great Mercurius ("the point at which all the contradictions which rend existence are resolved. He is the beginning, middle, and end of the Great Work – prime matter, secret fire and Stone... Mercurius... is one's own soul and also the Soul of the World; as personal as a lover, as impersonal as a god. Like the Tao, he is everything and nothing, everywhere and nowhere.") trapped under the gaze of the intellectual can easily be controlled and tricked into serving the scholar. And what is the scholar's reward for bullying the great Mercurius? A sticking-plaster duplex – one side heals, and one turns to silver. And that is the last we hear of the great spirit. There is no remainder. Mercurius has, in this modern all-too-human world, been wholly translated (*utriusque capax*) into the capacity to heal and the capacity to transform the ordinary and pragmatic (iron) into an anima-psychology: a highly aesthetic silvering into the albedo, lunar consciousness and its reflections – and of course both fame and money for the man who now controls it. A very modern parable?

Best wishes

Mark

Saturday, 9th February 2013 at 01:12 AM

From: Daniel Anderson

<danielmelanderson@gmail.com>

Dear Mark,

Thank you for these insightful reflections. I liked your attention to the story, particularly your remarks on the young scholar's search for bird's nests. That is an important detail. I didn't know exactly what to make of it. Was anima-imagination the motive force behind our hero's midday walk? The story doesn't give us much to work with here other than that he was interested in bird's nests. In one very important sense, though it doesn't matter, because we know that he had something in mind when he went off into the forest. He had an intention. Then he comes to the "dangerous-looking tree," a huge oak. Now, in a tale

reflecting an earlier state of consciousness one might expect an epiphany at this juncture. Concerning the difference between modern and pre-modern consciousness, Giegerich writes in "The Alchemy of History" that one characteristic of pre-modern being-in-the-world was the way in which the world *stared into us*. This being seen into *from and by* world gave rise to epiphanic encounters: the lightning strike that was a visitation of Zeus; the climax of maenadic frenzy in which the maenads both became the god and saw him embodied in their prey; the host of taboos; the real danger to one's life posed by the "evil eye." These phenomena show how the world piercingly gazed into us. The modern stance, by contrast, is characterized by *our* looking out into the world. The world is object of our view. We are not the object of its view.

Were this tale reflective of an earlier consciousness the encounter with the towering oak would have pierced our young hero. But what happens instead? After being startled briefly by the oak's impressive size and appearance, the young scholar immediately returns to *his* agenda: "Ah, what a large oak! There must be many birds nests in it." The modernism of this tale is reflected in the hero's unperturbed outward gaze. Psychoanalysts might note his strong ego. Jung might note his directed thinking. Both reflect the modern stance of consciousness which animates this tale to the extent that the once mighty Mercurius, like the mighty oak, both fall to the logic of ego pragmatism. How many birds nests might such a large tree hold? How many thalers does a silver ax fetch?

Best wishes,
Dan

Sunday, February 10, 2013 at 10:44 AM

From: [Jerome Bernstein](#)

Joel:

Of course, I agree with your point here. "Saving" is an inflated, messianic and more often than not destructive concept, most particularly when co-opted by religion. I rather imagine Susan agrees as well.

I took her use of the word as a metaphor for a consciousness and a "noticing" of civilization's and our species' destruction of the world (and ourselves). But you are right, the word is the word and it is not the best one in this context.

With regard to clients, that is a greater challenge. Sometimes "saving" is the appropriate word as in stopping a suicide in process, child abuse, etc. THE more challenging question in my experience is whether "saving" the individual – assuming that the intervention preserves life – is the correct action relative to the psychic and moral imperative of the individual. This has always remained a conundrum for me even when I have acted decisively and believed that I was correct in doing so.

Jerome S. Bernstein, MAPC, NCPsyA

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"We see and hear what we are open to noticing

**Monday, February 11th 2013 at 12:58 PM,
From: Mathew Mather <Mathew.Mather@lit.ie>
wrote:**

Dear Susan, Joel, et al

At risk of putting my foot in it here in this erudite dialogue on the word 'save', I offer a few thoughts.

In *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (sorry, I seem to have a fixation here for some reason!) Jung recounts his much loved rain maker story; of how the wise man, by means of ritual meditation, whilst on the outskirts of the village, re-establishes Tao within himself and thereby also 'saves' the village from drought and social discord. He brings 'heaven and earth' into 'right relationship' to each other. Does this not align to his more mature understanding of psyche/matter that includes world (Dorn's unitary concept of the *Unus Mundus*!). In a very real sense, especially in the latter half of the 1940's and whilst he was working on *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, the world certainly required 'saving'. Nuclear holocaust was the nightmarish scenario facing humankind. In engaging with such a reality, atavistically and inflatedly, from one perspective, and whilst at Bollingen (on the edge of the village!) was he not absorbed with the issue of 'saving the world'? *Mysterium Coniunctionis* articulates an alchemical myth. I interpret this as the emergence of the transcendent function toward resolution of a seemingly insoluble situation: a great moment of potentiality toward cultural individuation.

The following excerpt from *Jung as a Writer*, at least in my understanding, is relevant. "He regarded religion as the best type of discourse capable of taming the materialization of our unconscious destructiveness in weapons of mass destruction. All his works after the Second World War are devoted to finding a form of psychic healing that would avert the acting out of apocalyptic myth. So he experimented with the kinds of writing in which the word has the power to heal through appeal to more than rational understanding. For it was the privilege of rational cognition over any other kind of psychic endeavour, he believed, that has caused irrationality and unconsciousness to be repressed so far that it

has become dark matter” (Rowland 2005: x).

Spirit in the Bottle!

Best,

Mathew

Monday, 11th February 2013 at 11:15 AM
From: Päivi Alho [palho@aland.net]

Dear Jerome and All,

'Saving an individual' sometimes includes stopping part of the dissociated personality destroying another part of it. I think Jung's theory of archetypes explains this well. When 'killing' happens in dreams, which it often does, it is **symbolic** and just means that one archetypal power wins over another - is projected or introjected. So I think you should continue to save people from themselves and from their 'moral imperatives', real morality is always more complicated than that, it takes others into account.

Greetings from Paivi in Mariehamn/ Finland

----- Original Message -----

Tuesday, 12th February 2013 at 03:31 AM
From: Susan Rowland <susanr183@gmail.com>

Dear Mathew and Jerome and all,

Mathew: many thanks for the quote from Jung as a Writer - yes, I do stand by those words, which (fortunately) do not include the word "save" but do argue for an ambition on Jung's part to change the consciousness of an epoch.

Jerome: I agree entirely with the real problems with the word "save" and the messianic connotations. Part of my use in this seminar is continuous when I have said the same thing at conferences, that Jung at times and we, at times, are trying to save the world. It is more than tongue in cheek - it is an attempt to simultaneously acknowledge and to counteract despair. Jung faced nuclear weapons in their raw form post first use in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We face catastrophic climate change. In such situations it is easily to feel crushed. The hubristic and in some senses wholly ludicrous suggestion that a counter cultural and archaic use of symbolism might stop the bomb or global warming

is meant as defiance and a kind of refusal to entirely despair laughter.

I have thought for years that the humour in Jung's writing is "seriously" undervalued. I blame Jung - I got this not innocent use of "save" if not from his use then from his crazy stories of stars and psyche!

Susan

Tuesday, 12th February, 2013 at 04:33 AM
From: Evangeline Rand <evangelinerand@shaw.ca>

Dear Susan,

Laughing...and tongues in cheeks...

One my favourite of all stories is of Jung's noticing of the 'cook and the hyena escapade' on his Africa journey, the ongoing re-enactments, the rolling around laughing, of other African members of the Safari party. The story reminds me of some of the current 'research' in 'flooding' for War experience PTSD (and other trauma situations), but much more interesting since it arose spontaneously from the frightened, and it was created into a drama. (A natural style for re-balancing) I tell my grand children this story quite often...of Jung going out into a world that was new to him and the hyena 'mobbing'!...quite spontaneously they got down on the floor and started the drama all over again...and then I joined in. we couldn't help laughing and rolling around.. A wonderful story of Jung in the academy!! Of course Jung knew how to fire his rifle to frighted off the menacing 'beasts'

Love and good wishes for engagements with Merurius..and long live 'Mercuria'....

Evangeline Rand (India, temporarily)

Wednesday, 13th February 2013 at 23:36 PM
From: Mather Mathew <mmathe@essex.ac.uk>

Dear all,

Thanks to all the contributors, as well as to any 'invisible eyes', who took time out for this online seminar. I am indebted to Stephani Stephens for proposing me, a first time! Thanks also to the organisers (Elizabeth Brodersen and Leslie Gardner), and to Daniel Andersen for his role as moderator (and incisive and illuminating insight). Thanks also to my wife Lyn for her shared enthusiasm, insight and inspiration. There was great dynamism, much insight generated and also some 'heat' and controversy and some lively discussion also about 'the S word'. We have surely progressed our understanding of the 'Spirit in the Bottle' fairytale, and have, in my opinion, also come a little closer to a better understanding of Merlin/Mercurius who, according to Jung, "... remains

uncomprehended, to this day!”

The seminar also drifted into the theme of ‘Jung and astrology’. This let a spirit out of the bottle of sorts; at least for some (more rationally minded!) of the Jungian community whom, perhaps, took flight into the libraries. I’d like to remind the readership here of the star-gazing prophet Merlin, in his observatory in the forest. Should we not also be listening to this side of Jung? Are not his Bollingen engravings all about star constellations (not to mention images in his Red Book; and text in his seminars, letters and his later works)? Should we be discrediting all of this as ‘crazy star stories’, or should we put our ear to the unconscious (in Jung’s mature understanding of this concept) and listen to *Le Cri de Merlin*?

We began the seminar on the Celtic festival of Imbolc, a time when divination is traditionally practiced. In this (controversial!) spirit, I would like to sign off with a few reflections on the anomalous event of asteroid 2012 DA14 that, fortunately, will whizz past our earth tomorrow. It will apparently be visible, with the help of a telescope, in the East (Eastern part of the sky) on the 15th January. Its ‘visible’ path begins in the southern hemisphere in the constellation Crux. It will move through the monster Hydra, through Virgo and then disappears in the constellation of the Great Bear (Ursa Major). This ‘jewel’ is said to contain in the region of €200 billion dollars of metals and water.

Our disenchanted worldview, as will be broadcast over countless media channels, will describe this in hollow and spiritually vacuous terms, or as an opportunity to push commercial and other materialistic-oriented agendas.

Suppose, on the other hand, we were tasked to mythologize this event, or to interpret it, in a classical Jungian sense, as if it were a big dream! Might we see this as a trajectory from a Christian symbol (cross) that shoots through an evil sea-monster (Hydra), gains further momentum via the blessed Virgin, and then on to give a final death-blow to that pagan and feminine symbol of the Great Bear? A *separatio* image. Alternatively, might we view it as a silver chain (an *Argentum Catena*), as a numinous divine sign capable of apocalyptic destruction, that threads through deeply Christian symbols (cross and Virgin) and deeply Pagan symbols (sea-monster and Great Bear)?

My preferred interpretation would be the latter. It occurs, after all, on the day after Valentine’s day (a *coniunctio* image). And with this, I’ll hand the baton over to Catriona Miller. Please keep contributing or, at least, be an ‘invisible eye’.

Best,

Mathew

Catriona Miller PhD, based at Glasgow Caledonian University, and editor on film for our journal, The International Journal of Jungian Studies, brings a background in history and media studies as well as a track record in working on Jungian themes; her work has been included in anthologies edited by Luke Hockley and Christopher Hauke on Jung and film, and her second, upcoming book *Cult TV Heroines: Aliens, Angels and Amazons* is due out this autumn.

In the seminar paper for our forum, she proposes broadly to explore the nature of symbol, and von Franz's work on fairy tale. She takes a look at Jung's approach to the intractable problem of the zombie – intractable in apocalyptic stories because they always 'win'. In effect, also, we can tackle issues of the difficulties of collective psychology – it is rare, we are told, that zombies operate in isolation. Fairly new in the panoply of monsters, Jung would not have had a chance to think how to approach this imponderable, but we can try to imagine how he did. Zombies have taken on film, television and print media in last years; their fascination seems compelling to the general populace. Catriona explores questions we might consider.

Zombie Apocalypse Now?

In 'Spirit in a Bottle' Jung interprets a fairy tale, pointing out that "we can treat fairytales as fantasy products, like dreams, conceiving them to be spontaneous statements of the unconscious about itself."¹ And Marie Louise von Franz later suggested that the fairy tale was a good candidate for examining in this way for it "is so elementary and so reduced to its basic structural elements that it appeals to everybody."² This paper would like to take this fairy tale interpretation approach to a contemporary cultural phenomenon – the zombie.

The first issue is to put films (and other audiovisual texts such as television and gaming) into some kind of context. On one level, film is certainly a product of conscious deliberate effort and film theory has tended on the whole, to follow the 'auteur' approach, looking to the director as the source of artistic inspiration. And, for certain kinds of independent cinema, the role of the director can certainly be central. However, at the more profit driven end of the sector, the commercial pressure to create a box office hit, argues for an ability to respond to a popular mood. The green-lighting of a film project requires many elements to come together fortuitously - script, director, acting talent and, of course, financial backing. It is a collective decision where a large

¹ Jung CW13, para 240 (p.194)

² von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.12

group of diverse interests need to converge on a film project and decide, at the same time, that it is a good idea to take forward. This idea can be further expanded to take in the rise and fall of particular genres and narrative subjects, where several such groups decide, independently, that the time is right to make the same type of movie, creating a trend, often, in retrospect, closely related to the cultural zeitgeist in which they arise. And, of course, it is also tempting to suggest that the average Hollywood blockbuster “is so elementary and so reduced to its basic structural elements that it appeals to everybody.”³ While maintaining a cautious attitude, it may be possible to approach films *et al* as modern fairy tales.

As I discussed in my chapter of *Jung and Film II: the Return* (Routledge, 2011), what we should be paying attention to, in this context are those clusters of films revolving around a similar subject. To go further, even, and look for the rise to prominence of an idea or trope across a whole variety of cultural endeavours, beyond the screen, which reveal an investment of affect in the audiences engaging with it. A discourse analysis approach would dub it the emergence of a discourse strand, whilst a Jungian approach would perhaps suggest the constellation of an archetypal image.

Zombies are just such a cluster.⁴ For example, there is a globally popular television series *The Walking Dead* (AMC, 2010- ongoing) based on an equally popular graphic novel series. America’s TV Guide noted that “The zombie apocalypse has upended the entire TV business. AMC's *The Walking Dead* is now the No. 1 entertainment series on TV among adults 18-49 — a landmark accomplishment for a cable show.”⁵ In terms of film, there is the blockbuster movie *World War Z* (Marc Forster, 2013), based on the bestselling novels by Max Brooks; but there are also smaller community projects such as *Dawn of the Fegs* (Richard Weeks, Claire O'Hara, 2012)⁶ and the stranger mash up phenomenon that is *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (Jane Austen and Seth Grahame-Smith, 2009) which is reputed to be in line for a big screen adaptation.

Of course the popularity of these audio-visual texts is interesting in itself, but the phenomenon extends beyond simple consumption to forms

³ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.12

⁴ For more details, see the ‘zombie-ography’ at the end of the paper.

⁵ <http://www.tvguide.com/News/Cable-Vs-Broadcast-Walking-Dead-1055456.aspx> November 2nd, 2012 accessed 18.1.13

⁶ A community project written and filmed by young people in the deprived Ferguslie Park area of Paisley, near Glasgow, Scotland. ‘Feg’ is local slang for someone from Ferguslie Park.

which encourage (enthusiastic) participation. There are any number of games (one of the major launch titles of the new Wii U console in North America was *ZombiU*⁷); augmented reality games; phone apps, that show what you would look like as a zombie,⁸ and participative zombie walks across the globe, including, Singapore, Stockholm, Toronto, Sydney and many more. There was also a 5k zombie run in London in November 2012, where participants were ‘encouraged’ along by zombie attacks.⁹ Zombies are a transmediatised phenomenon that has a participative global audience.

The zombie is not a completely new figure in popular culture, but I would argue that its current configuration and popularity belongs very much to the contemporary era. Zombies do not arise from the folklore of medieval Europe, or example, or from its Romantic and Victorian literature, such as the vampire or Frankenstein’s monster, but rather, if one is looking for origins, to Haitian folklore. According to one writer, the “zombie myth enters western consciousness primarily as a result of the US occupation of Haiti from 1915-1934”¹⁰ through the publication of a stories such as William Seabrook’s *Magic Island* published in 1929, which began “to draw the American public’s attention away from the Old World and toward the New, specifically the island of Haiti.”¹¹ However, the zombie that inhabits popular culture in 2013 does not owe very much to the this Haitian background. In fact, it does not exist at all before George Romero’s ground breaking film *Night of the Living Dead* released in 1968, which “defined the modern horror movie.”¹²

Prior to *Night of the Living Dead* zombies in film were different and more like their Haitian antecedents. Writing in 1986, Halliwell described the zombies of films such as *White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932) or *I Walked with a Zombie* (Jacques Tourneur, 1943) as “dead people who are revived, more or less intact, to serve the purposes of the living.”¹³ They are raised by black magic to become the mindless slave of the magician who creates them, and the ‘monster’ of these films is not really the

⁷ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/nov/30/zombiu-review-wiiu> accessed 29.1.13

⁸ <http://www.deadyourself.com/walkers> accessed 30.1.13

⁹ <http://www.zombieevacuation.com/> accessed 29.1.13

¹⁰ Kevin Boon ‘Ontological Anxiety Made Flesh’ in Scott, Niall ed. (2007) *Monsters And The Monstrous: Myths and Metaphors of Enduring Evil* Rodopi, Netherlands p.35

¹¹ Bishop, Kyle (2008) ‘The Sub-Subaltern Monster: Imperialist Hegemony and the Cinematic Voodoo Zombie’ in *The Journal of American Culture*, Volume 31, Issue 2 pp141-152.

¹² Harper, S (2005) *Night of the Living Dead: Reappraising an Undead Classic* in *Bright Lights Film Journal* Volume 50

¹³ Halliwell, L (1986) *The Dead That Walk* Grafton Books: London p.242

zombie but its master. As Halliwell said, “The trouble with zombies had always been that they had little character of their own and shambled around at the will of other people.” He went on to note “George A. Romero changed all that.”¹⁴ In *Night of the Living Dead* the rules change. It is a mass outbreak where the dead rise up to consume the living, any explanation or cause given is fragmentary and inconclusive.

Post-Romero zombie films can be considered a new genre in their own right. To generalise a little, for the sake of discussion, in terms of narrative, they tend to centre around a small band of humans trying to survive a zombie onslaught in a variety of locations, but, in vain. These are mass outbreaks not a few individuals and its effects are highly contagious. To be bitten is to turn into a zombie eventually, inevitably. All escape is temporary, for the genre is also marked by the nihilism of its endings - everyone dies. It is apocalyptic.

In these narratives, the zombie outbreak is occasionally given a cause, such as a (manmade) virus which reanimates the brain stem of the dead, but sometimes it is radiation, environmental contamination, or some force from outer space and so on, but importantly it is no longer the result of occult black magic practices, making the genre arguably more science fiction than horror. The zombies still have little character of their own, being intent only upon devouring the living, but their main characteristic is their relentlessness. They are often not swift moving, but they do not stop, having no need to sleep or rest. Their appearance is markedly more horrific, in many cases being in an advanced state of decay and decomposition. They are also familiar to the survivors, being family, friends, and next door neighbours all become monstrous. Some narratives such as *Night of the Living Dead* and *The Walking Dead* also contain zombie children.

So, after Romero, the narratives move from occult explanations to science (fiction); from one or two individuals to a contagious horde; from a passive victim to a ravening cannibal and from the containable mania of an individual to global apocalypse.

What is the (psychological) function of the zombie? - for discussion

¹⁴ Halliwell, L (1986) *The Dead That Walk* Grafton Books: London p.248

Jung made clear that a “view with interprets the symbolic expression as the best possible formulation of a relatively unknown thing, which that reason cannot be more clearly or characteristically represented, is symbolic.”¹⁵ By way of contrast a known thing that stands for another known thing is simply a sign.

So the first question to consider might be whether the zombie constitutes a symbol or a sign. Perhaps they are a manifestation of the ‘return of the repressed’ in the Freudian sense¹⁶; a political comment on consumerism in a capitalist culture¹⁷; a response to 9/11¹⁸. All of these may be true, and more, though it does start to appear as if the sheer number of possible meanings start to argue against assigning the zombie simple ‘sign status’.

So does a Jungian lens offer anything by way of fresh insight? If we accept that the zombie in popular culture is an up-welling from the unconscious, an archetypal image, a symbol we should perhaps add another question. In *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales* (1974/1995) von Franz says “compensatory tendencies are to be found in fairy tales everywhere, so before I finish an analysis or interpretation I always say to myself: to whom has such a story to be told? Who needs that?”¹⁹ So the question then might be: what is the psychological function of the zombie image and what is its message of compensation?

In *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, von Franz explores a number of types of evil in fairy tales and asks questions about the responses to it. She notes that it is not a straightforward thing and that fairy tales do not give uniform answers to this issue. In fact, the advice on how to deal with ‘evil’ or the shadow is often contradictory - run away/ never run away; trick it/ on no account employ trickery; lie your way out of it/ honesty is the only answer and so on. In some depth, she discusses the situations in which all of the above responses may in fact be correct. She lays out a number of types of evil encountered in fairy tales - ‘Primitive Evil’, ‘Possession’, ‘Hot Evil’, and ‘Cold Evil’. The zombie figure is interesting because it seems to encompass a number of von Franz’s

¹⁵ Jung 1971: para 814

¹⁶ Wood, Robin (2003) *Hollywood From Vietnam to Reagan* Columbia University Press, USA

¹⁷ Williams, Tony (2003) *The Cinema of George A Romero: Knight of the Living Dead* Wallflower Press, UK

¹⁸ Bishop, Kyle (2010) *American Zombie Gothic: The Rise and Fall (And Rise) of the Walking Dead in Popular Culture* McFarland, USA

¹⁹ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.147

categories, each of which offers an insight into the nature of the monster. Let me pull out a few possibilities in the hopes of facilitating discussion.

In terms of 'Primitive Evil', von Franz describes such manifestations as "unnatural, superhuman, gruesome and overwhelming"²⁰. She also notes that it isn't an ethical issue as such, it is simply a question of fighting it if one can, and running away if you can't. The zombie is a monster that rises up without much explanation and overwhelms the survivors, over and over again. It is a very simple narrative from that point of view.

She speaks of 'Possession' as trope which results in the alteration of a human, who often turn hostile after death. "The dead person is jealous of the living and has not had time to detach naturally from the living and therefore now has a destructive and dangerous effect in the world of the living."²¹ The hostility (and deadness) of the zombie is not in question.

However, her categories of 'Hot Evil' and 'Cold Evil' are perhaps more interesting. With reference to 'Hot Evil' von Franz suggests that "hot evil is carried, no matter whether by demons or by human beings, by an unquenched emotional affect underneath, like a suffocated fire burning and smouldering all the time, and this kind of repressed affect is highly infectious."²² Zombies are highly infectious. As noted above, to be bitten by a zombie is to become one, sometimes after death, sometimes it is just a matter of time. In the TV series *The Walking Dead* the survivors realise that they are all infected already and that they will inevitably all become zombies when they die whether they are bitten or not. Contagion and infection are strong tropes in zombie narratives.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, with regard to 'Cold Evil' she discusses the imagery of the wolf which "represents that strange indiscriminate desire to eat up everybody and everything, to have everything, which visible in many neuroses where the main problem is that the person remains infantile because of an unhappy childhood. Such persons develop a hungry wolf within themselves... Jung says it is a drivenness which cannot be identified clearly with power or sex. It is even more primitive; it is the desire to have and get everything."²³ It creates in people "a constant resentful dissatisfaction. It stands as a symbol of bitter, cold, constant resentment, because of what it never had. It wants

²⁰ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.152

²¹ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.159

²² von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.218

²³ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.256

really to eat the whole world.”²⁴ Zombies are hungry. They wish to consume the living. In fact, they do not desire anything else.

One final note from *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*. In numerous places, von Franz discusses the role of the hero in the fairytales, so important to understanding the different responses to the question of evil and the shadow. So, we must also consider the role of the survivors of the zombie apocalypse. In the case of *The Walking Dead* TV series, they fight and fight but every time the group think they have found a secure location, they are over run once more. The survivors might be said to embody what von Franz dubs “a too-active extraverted masculine outlook in consciousness... The heroic chivalrous ideal that man has to fight evil, be involved in fighting it actively - doing something about it!”²⁵ A very western attitude, she notes. But in the context of the zombie narratives, this approach is not working - the zombies never give up and never go away and there are always more of them waiting for their opportunity to eat, but the survivors fight on and on. So again, one might ask “to whom has such a story to be told? Who needs that?”²⁶

The zombie is horrifyingly gruesome, overwhelming, hostile, infectious, and hungry, and all attempts to resist are futile. It may be that the zombie ‘simply’ stands for death itself, the biggest taboo remaining in the west, which may, of course, render it back into a sign after all.

The problem of the zombie, by and large, has been intractable in these films. They have been un-solvable, a relentless force, who can be killed but there are always more. Up until now, that is.

More recently narratives have begun to offer other possibilities: a desire to see the person that was once there; a desire to rehabilitate even, a desire to see a cure. In Romero’s own 2005 offering, *Land of the Dead*, the zombies begin to demonstrate some will of their own, and in contrast to the selfishness of the humans (now walled up in a city), the zombies seem to deserve pity rather than violence. In 2009 he comes back to the issue in *Survival of the Dead*. Taking an even more extreme position is *Warm Bodies* (Jonathan Levine, 2013), in which a zombie falls

²⁴ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.256

²⁵ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.277

²⁶ von Franz (1974) *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, Shambhala, London & Boston p.147

in love with a human - a zom rom com, if you will - and starts to get better, the effects spreading to other zombies.

If we accept that the zombie stands for death, then these versions of the story may be the fantasy that death can be eventually defeated. However, if we take the zombie for a less well defined shadow archetypal image of some kind, encompassing western alienation, anger, consumerism, fear of 'outsiders among us', aging and more, then perhaps the conscious attitude is seeking to adapt in response to the images of compensation? I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Zombie-ography - places to look if you'd like a flavour of the zombie phenomenon.

Non Movie Items

Zombiepedia - a zombie related Wiki -

http://zombie.wikia.com/wiki/Zombie_Wiki

Zombie Walk - people dress up as zombies and walk the streets.

Wikipedia entry - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zombie_walk These happen across the globe - Stockholm, Toronto, Singapore, Sydney, Istanbul, etc. This video from Russia gives you a flavour -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9I7NZIwmhSg>

Zombie Run - a fitness app, which encourages you in your endeavours by placing you in a zombie related story. Or, you can take part in a more immersive event of a 5k run through woodland with zombies chasing you, organised in London, November 2012. Details of the event here:

<http://www.zombieevacuation.com/> and a newspaper story from one of the participants here:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2012/oct/31/zombie-games-run-for-your-life>

Zombie Survival Guide Scanner iPhone App - the ideal zombie detector tool. Use your camera-enabled iPhone to scan friends and neighbors and determine their level of infection.

<http://www.maxbrooks zombie world.com/> or on You Tube

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Do3mtgtqvLM>

Zombies Everywhere - augmented reality game. Looking through a smartphone or a tablet, you see zombies in the scene in front of you. Some gameplay can be seen here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59An70D3xg8>

ZombiU - game that launched new console WiiU. Trailer here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95aIAQNkzEw>

There are a great many more zombie related video games.

Television

The Walking Dead (AMC, 2010-ongoing) Official Website here:

<http://www.amctv.com/shows/the-walking-dead> It also includes a ‘Social Game’ on Facebook, and a “see what you would look like as a zombie” App called ‘Dead Yourself’ Why not have a go?

<http://www.deadyourself.com/walkers> And, as an advertising stunt, here’s what happened when zombies took to the streets of New York:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHPMocTmC08>

Dead Set (E4, 2008) - participants in Big Brother don’t realise that the rest of the world has fallen prey to the zombie apocalypse. Trailer -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQjq639WPiU>

Pre-Romero Movies

White Zombie (Victor Halperin, 1932) - A young man turns to a witch doctor to lure the woman he loves away from her fiance, but instead turns her into a zombie slave. Trailer

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQV7wOg3hYQ>

I Walked with a Zombie (Jacques Tourneur, 1943) - A nurse comes to the West Indies to care for the wife of a plantation manager who seems to be suffering from a kind of mental paralysis as a result of fever. The nurse determines to cure her patient even if she needs to a voodoo ceremony to do it. Trailer

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6SWz27OXac>

George Romero’s Movies

Night of the Living Dead (George Romero, 1968) - A group of people hide from bloodthirsty zombies in a farmhouse. Entire film available to view (officially) on You Tube - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXuE-CyYsdQ&wide=1>

Dawn of the Dead (1978) (remade in 2004) - Following the ever-growing epidemic of zombies, two Philadelphia SWAT team members, a traffic reporter, and his television-executive girlfriend seek refuge in a secluded shopping mall. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt-EipwIWQ0>

Day of the Dead (George Romero, 1985) - A small group of military officers and scientists dwell in an underground bunker as the world above is overrun by zombies. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g9XorBCikM>

Land of the Dead (George Romero, 2005) - The living dead have taken over the world, and the last humans live in a walled city to protect themselves as they come to grips with the situation. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atXJB9luiko>

Diary of the Dead (George Romero, 2007) - A group of young film students run into real-life zombies while filming a horror movie of their own. Trailer - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JS_JQsljVII

Survival of the Dead (George Romero, 2009) - On an island off the coast of North America, local residents simultaneously fight a zombie epidemic while hoping for a cure to return their un-dead relatives back to their human state. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sGx0gTVkqM>

Other Zombie Movies (a far from exhaustive list, but you've probably had enough by now!)

Braindead (Peter Jackson, 1992) - A young man's mother is bitten by a Sumatran rat-monkey. She gets sick and dies, at which time she comes back to life, killing and eating dogs, nurses, friends, and neighbours. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnCfUpw-i7A>

Shaun of the Dead (Edgar Wright, 2004) - A man decides to turn his moribund his moribund life around by winning back his ex-girlfriend, reconciling his

relationship with his mother, and dealing with an entire community that has returned from the dead to eat the living. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LlfcaZ4pC-4>

Zombieland (Reuben Fleischer, 2009) - A shy student trying to reach his family in Ohio, and a gun-toting tough guy trying to find the Last Twinkie and a pair of sisters trying to get to an amusement park join forces to travel across a zombie-filled America. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=071KqJu7WVo>

Warm Bodies (Jonathan Levine, 2013) After R (a highly unusual zombie) saves Julie from an attack, the two form a relationship that sets in motion a sequence of events that might transform the entire lifeless world. Trailer - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQ3ZwtyKs_o

World War Z (Marc Forster, 2013) Due out later in 2013 - A U.N. employee is racing against time and fate, as he travels the world trying to stop the outbreak of a deadly Zombie pandemic. Trailer - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2dNX2ILmm4>

18. February 2013 at 07:40 Uhr
Sent: "Elizabeth Brodersen" <liz.brodersen@web.de>

Dear Catriona and all,

Thank you for your very interesting paper on the Zombie. I like the way you tie in the emotions contained in the Zombie image to Marie von Franz's 'hot' and 'cold' evil in *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*. I know you also have an interest in vampires as you wrote your PhD thesis on the vampire from a Jungian perspective. So I am wondering whether we could compare these two images of 'living death.' Would you would say that vampires could be interpreted as von Franz's 'hot' images of 'evil' and Zombies as 'cold' ones?

For me, vampires seem 'hot,' even irresistibly attractive (!) as passionate, animalistic images with her/his canine fangs so hungry for human contact, ie. warm blood. I would say that vampires are symbolic because they embrace a wide range of conflicting emotions that can be creatively contained within their image and be transformed. Zombies, on the other hand, although they bite like vampires and seem equally contagious in the way they spread their mood, seem to be composed of totally dead (cold/depressed) tissue without any form of individual attractiveness or feelings that could ignite sufficient heat/passion to transform them...

Would you say that the vampire is more differentiated, warmer and thus nearer to

consciousness than the Zombie who, by comparison, seems disassociated, far away and really dead to the ego? It could be that the vampire is a 'taboo' image of the older European collective unconscious and, therefore, closer to ego consciousness and more familiar, whereas the Zombie belongs to African and Haitian voodoo cultures that seem very distant to us (resurrected so to speak from a more distant consciousness) but getting closer through globalisation and global warming...You mention this connection, Catriona, too. I find Zombies an older and less differentiated form of the 'monstrous' than the vampire, which is now becoming more visible.

But that said, I am wondering generally what aspect of 'shadow' is so unable to be assimilated by the ego and left ousted as the Zombie as an image of such horrible, undifferentiated affect. It could be fear of death or death itself as you suggest or it could be an autonomous, collective 'curse' which has made aspects of the individual/collective psyche so unredeemed and monstrous? Have you any ideas what that 'curse' might be? I think when Zombies appear, they need careful, differentiated handling by the ego otherwise their infectious, depressive 'outbreak' can swamp all glimmer of hope and any chance of an effective dialogue.

I am bringing in the theme of the 'curse' as it nearly always features in fairy tales. Marie von Franz looks at this phenomena in *The Psychological Meaning of Redemption Motifs in Fairy Tales*, pp. 78- 80, where she describes how an unconscious affect can take an unremitting hold and negatively overwhelm the ego when the ego (as hero) has not sufficiently separated from the unconscious to hold his/her own position. She suggests (p. 80) that there has to be 'a rebuilding of the feeling value' through working with the unconscious.

The Zombie seems a particularly difficult image for the hero to embrace! Do you have any suggestions?

With warm wishes, Liz

19. February 2013 at 16:10 Uhr
Sent: "Miller, Catriona" <C.Miller@gcu.ac.uk>

Dear All

Thank you all for your insightful responses. And to Joel for posting the link to the Canadian Parliament's 'discussion' re: preparedness for the zombie apocalypse. I'm still chuckling. But tongue in cheek or not, it does highlight the widespread prevalence of the zombie trope. There have been similar instances in Britain - see this story from 'The Telegraph' about the Ministry of Defence's response to a Freedom of Information request last year regarding zombies
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/howaboutthat/9721072/Britain-is-well-prepared-to-fight-apocalyptic-zombie-invasion.html> As I say, tongue in cheek, but I also wonder, why ask the question, and why do public institutions (not generally noted for

their sense of humour) spend time answering them? Would they have ‘joined in the fun’ if it were a plague of vampires, or invasion of werewolves being inquired about?

Mark, if I could turn to you first, as you address the wider issues for a Jungian approach here. As you elegantly put it, Mark, “The challenge for Jungian psychology is how to find archetypal (i.e. transhistorical) meaning in a cultural phenomenon which is almost defined by its peculiar modernity”. I’m keen to see if we can crowd-source something from our collective intelligence on this subject. My hunch is that we ought to be able to do this, if Jung’s approach is as useful as we think, but we must also be wary (as you also point out) of jumping too quickly to conclusions. As von Franz says “I would like to warn you against taking Jungian concepts and pinning them onto mythological figures, saying this is the ego, this is the shadow, and this the anima, because you will see that this only works for a time and then there come contradictions - and finally distortions as people try to force the figures in the story into a definite form.” (von Franz, 1974: 21)

Helena, I was struck, re-reading your own seminar paper on the Shadow at some of correspondences with what I was suggesting about the zombie: You said, “Postmodern culture has been preoccupied with concealing the pain of realisation that the shadow is always inside, lurking and waiting for the right moment to attack the ego... to break through ‘the thin layer of civilization’ is only the first step: the real aim is to infect the carrier with the dark contents; to fill their soul with envy, anger, aggression, inflated pride, murderous intentions.” The zombies and the survivors do seem to be enacting these problems in startlingly direct imagery. I think we can agree that the zombie is a form of collective shadow archetypal image? Matt’s suggestion of a harking back to a more tribalistic society, with a narrative of ethical considerations for the survivors which may be trying to tackle the issue of how essential that ‘thin layer of civilisation’ really is. (And you’re right about ‘The Walking Dead’ being at the more sophisticated end of the genre, from that perspective.) In this aspect, zombie films have much in common with apocalypse fantasies generally, though they are not offering a telos ending (one that implies an ultimate purpose, usually of renewal) but simply a terminus (a stop).

Elizabeth, I very much like the direction of your thoughts and questions. And I do agree absolutely that vampires are much more consciously elaborated than the zombie, who has almost nothing by way of back story. In terms of vampires, I feel that whilst vampires have existed as a spectrum (from the shadow-y, animalistic vampire of folklore to the super-sparkly Edward Cullen), since the days of the Romantic poet Lord Byron the vampire has been a shadow inflected animus archetypal image, and for my money, that ‘shadow inflection’ exists because of the continued existence of patriarchy. Women’s experience of the masculine is affected by power relations, and is often not a positive one. However the figure of the male vampire has become more heroic and less monstrous as the decades roll on, so one might be tempted to suggest that this is, in some way, resolving itself. Perhaps - gender seems less to the forefront in the zombie films, though I was struck by the very traditional gender roles in 'The Walking Dead'. In one episode, the survivors are living in a camp, and the women are doing the laundry and ironing, of all things. Even after the zombie apocalypse, women still have to do the ironing!

The zombie is less differentiated than the vampire, and not showing much sign of resolving anything. I saw 'Warm Bodies' (the zom rom com) last week, and it was interesting. To imagine a happy ending, it had to create two types of zombie! There was 'R', the hero, a zombie, and, yes, he did eat the brains of the living, but he wasn't happy about it! He meets a living girl, falls in love with her, re-igniting hope in his heart and thus starts to 'get better', infecting other zombies with his hope. But there is a second type of zombie, called 'bonies' in the film, who are 'too far gone' and who begin to attack the living and the semi-dead, who then join forces to defeat these unrepentant undead. So the narrative manages to embrace some zombies, but not all - the hungry, contagious dead were still there, although defeated in the end by the combined forces of the living and the semi-dead.

If we look at the narratives, and the piecemeal explanations given for the zombie outbreak - they are often caused by the modern world, science - a virus (made by humans, or contracted by humans being where they shouldn't), radiation, chemical spill and so on. 'Warm Bodies' dispenses with the why and how in something less than a sentence. However, a common theme is that they're not 'natural' they are made by humanity or at least by humanity's growing dominance in the world. Is that their curse? Is it a fear that this is what humanity is? Just a ravening horde rampaging across the planet, devouring everything in its path? It is an apocalyptic vision, indeed. A collective shadow that does need to be admitted and embraced.

But to finish with another point. Some people I've asked about this, say that they in fact identify with the zombies, rather than the survivors - they feel like they're stumbling around without much of an idea of what's going on, unconnected to the world yet filled with a sense of hunger for something real.

Looking forward to further thoughts.

Catriona

19. February 2013 at 22:38 Uhr

Sent: "Matt Koeske" <matt@uselessscience.com>

Dear Mark and All,

Mark, I share many of your concerns about an overreaching in Jungian textual interpretation. The issues you raise are definitely ones the Jungian community needs to grapple with. I'm not yet decided on whether the outcome of such self-examination would be as bleak as you (at least seem to) imply. For me, it is not as much a wonder that Jungians can still persist in treating films like fairytales as it is that not a few films still exhibit fairytale-like motifs and qualities . . . and that modern audiences still love them.

As a father of still young children (8 and 5), I am exposed to (and often enjoy) a great deal of contemporary children's films. "Archetypal" motifs are alive and well in this

genre . . . even when the setting of the film or TV show is not specifically based in classic European fairytales. Science fiction and fantasy films also continue to offer up many "fairytales-like" themes and structures.

Still, I agree there is a very antiquated trend in a lot of Jungian interpretations . . . not only interpretations of films and contemporary literature, but also of social trends and contemporary events. With apologies for the ensuing digression, I suspect that it is the most classical/fundamentalist construction of archetype that struggles to be relevant in the interpretation of modern literature and film. Where one is locked into a "primordial images" (practically a "blueprint") notion of archetype, modern phenomena are more readily (and probably erroneously) reduced to such images. Such a theory probably necessitates this reduction and focus.

But where archetypal patterns can be understood, for instance, as complex system dynamics that are limited and shaped by the inevitable components and conditions of those systems, the "detection" of archetypes in texts need not be endangered by its archaism. For example, in *The Walking Dead*, you have an apocalypse that destroys modernity, you have some kind of highly contagious and deadly super virus, you have a small band of survivors fighting desperately to survive (and at times to decide if survival as it is available is really worth it) . . . some related, some not. The premise of the series asks (of its own creators and writers as well as of the audience): what might a system with these preconditions look like? Probably people skilled in combat and survivalism will "compete" more successfully than those skilled in, well, academically analyzing zombie films (although, maybe not?) . . . but can a society (even one as small as a band or tribe) really function adequately with such a profound bias toward the survivalists (who, in the show, often have ethical shortcomings or are driven by pathological levels of rage and defensiveness).

What I mean is that what might be seen as "archetypal" developments in this system/scenario are greatly shaped by the preconditions of the system. Classical Jungianism tends to look at primordial images before it observes systemic preconditions. And this creates a dangerous bias, because unlike primordial images, systemic preconditions are always current and immediately relevant (even when they might have existed in some form as long or longer than human history has been recorded). It seems to me that a classical Jungian trend is to stuff potentiality into a specific image or type or idea instead of seeing potentiality as a matter of context (by which I mean a dynamic systems context as well as social and physical environment). Archetypes may belong to a set of preconditions, not necessarily to inheritance alone (although inheritance may be one of the preconditions).

Where a Jungian might seek to bridge the interpretive gap between classic European fairytales and contemporary films, s/he might want to compare and contrast the relevant preconditions of the narratives under analysis. Many of these preconditions remain the same today as they were in the heyday of the oral European fairytale tradition. We are still human, and although we may have developed larger, more complex societies and technologies, relationally and socially it would be hard to see our needs and desires as

significantly different. Perhaps most importantly (for present company), we seem to be much the same *psychologically*.

A parallel issue regarding archetype theory worth mentioning is the common Jungian tendency to make archetypes into singular entities that **contain** numerous traits. So, the implied assumption is that there is such an archetype as an "Athena archetype" that, although especially embodied in the myths surrounding Athena, is alive and present in all individuals . . . and it *contains* all of the mythological figure's traits. This is where Jungian archetype theory really starts to unravel for me. It is certainly true that archetypal personages do spontaneously present themselves in dreams, fantasies, and through art and literature. But I suspect we are being hoodwinked (as neutral observers) because of our powerful tendency to (even unconsciously) assign agency to complex dynamic systems and to see any signs of conditional processing (like "choice making") as "intelligence" more or less like our conscious intelligence.

My hunch is that when we observe even broader archetypes like the anima, what we are really observing is a particular feature of a complex dynamic system, something like an attractor point (Erik Goodwyn has argued similarly on this list and in his articles and book) that is easy for our minds to anthropomorphize and assign agency to. But a psychologist studying archetypes would do better to try to understand this anima feature as part of a complex, dynamic narrative that describes the movements of a much larger system. And in that narrative, there will be other signature characters and events . . . all of which are distinctly limited and shaped (although not entirely determined) by the preconditions of the complex dynamic system being described. (As an aside, I believe the anima/animus belongs to the master narrative of individuation and that it can only be effectively understood in relationship to other component features of that narrative like the hero, the Self, the personal shadow, and what I call the Demon, which is not generally differentiated from both Self and shadow in the Jungian archetypal pantheon).

In these narrative systems, there are often very high probabilities of outcomes that are not absolutely determined either by genetic inheritance or by social context and development, although both of these factor into the structuring of the system. There are other very basic systemic principles that play extremely important roles in the structuring of an archetypal representation or feature. For instance, the movement toward equilibrium or homeostasis, the nature of system robustness and naturally developing failsafes as well as "fault lines" that shape systemic collapse (saving a collapsed system from true "chaos", and allowing it to reform in another way). These complex systemic structures are like the physical structures and principles of interaction that govern the behavior of matter. These kinds of forces and principles can be granted agency in the narrativization of complex system dynamics because they seem to have will or to act upon the individual/ego. A homeostatic movement in a system, for instance, can be seen as a radical restructuring or an assault upon a particular formation within that system. The dynamic is always an assault on the static.

I apologize for digressing so much from zombies. What I mean to suggest is that, with some (logical and observation based!) revision to archetype theory, Jungian approaches

to modern texts might not flirt so closely with obsolescence. We do not have to determine what mythological figure the zombie is an archetypal representation of. We might instead look into the systemic dynamics that are generated in by the preconditions of Zombie films and try to observe how these preconditions and the emerging genre illuminate and present fundamental dynamics of our psychology. A Jungian in this model might still be able to observe social and relational roles and movements that could be seen as "archetypal". It would certainly be legitimate to compare the relationships among the quaternity of characters in *The Walking Dead* I mentioned before to some corresponding ancient Greek myth or legend . . . although this, would not in itself make the relationship "archetypal".

One suggestion (then I will end) might be examining the "archetypal pattern" of the zombie apocalypse. What does its preconditions give rise to? What kinds of characters and relationships tend to emerge? How does the developing system contribute to the transformation of specific systemic features (typically represented as characters)? Who survives (at least who survives longest?) and how must they change in order to survive? Do any of these features become "adaptive", emerging in a new relatively homeostatic and consistent form out of systemic collapse?

To the degree the show is dystopian, it might prefer to depict the dissolution and failure of all kinds of previously held social assumptions, roles, and personae. Maybe nothing will emerge. Maybe life will be utterly and finally ended. But from what we know of nature, it tends to adapt and persist . . . even as species die out, new ones evolve (even if not many species, certainly some genes have proven magnificently adaptive on this planet, pervading many surviving species). Ecosystems collapse and reform. The idea that life on Earth can end absolutely is, thus far, a product of human fantasy (perhaps a hyperbolic post-industrial interpretation of and reaction to all of the destruction our species has already wrought upon the environment).

One thing I very much like about fairytales is how life finds a way to survive through adaptation and transformation. That theme feels more compelling and mysterious to me than a parable about dystopian collapse brought on by our vices. Perhaps this is why I geekily asked before whether the zombie virus would find a way to survive and adapt even after consuming all of the "biomass" it was initially hunting.

Best,
Matt

Feb 19, 2013, at 8:47 AM, Mark Saban wrote:

Dear Lena, Catriona, Matt, James and all,

Lena, you suggest that "films are contemporary myths and fairytales andŠ they acutely reflect the state of the collective psyche today".

Catriona's position, if I read it right, is rather more measured than this: "While

maintaining a cautious attitude, it may be possible to approach films et al as modern fairy tales." Well, this is the important question here - to what extent is it possible, useful, interesting, to interpret films as if they were fairy tales? It is not difficult to see that it would be convenient for Jungian critics to decide that films should be treated as if they were fairy tales, but merely stating this to be the case is not really enough to convince. After all, as cultural phenomena they are profoundly different in numerous ways.

Fairy tales are primarily pre-modern, pre-industrial orally transmitted traditional (authorless) narratives which are recognisable and classifiable because they contain certain oft-repeated motifs and tale-types (see Propp, Aarne, Thompson etc). Films are highly sophisticated, industrially produced, mass-marketed products of an ultra-technological age, consciously created by teams of professionals, in order (on the whole) to make a buck. Of course, films are also the products of the imagination, and, no doubt, express unconscious aspects of the collective culture into which they are released. It is not absurd, therefore, to suggest that depth-psychology might have something to offer in the interpretation of film. On the contrary, psychoanalysis and film were born at the same time, born for each other in a sense. It has become a cliché to compare the experience of film to that of the dream - and many film makers have fed psychoanalytic ideas back into the form and content of their films. All this is highly interesting and critically fertile. But it is a long way from the uncritical suggestion that "films are contemporary myths and fairytales".

In the case of the zombie movie, as I have pointed out, even if we put to one side the vast cultural/technological gulf that exists between the folk-tale and the modern film, not to mention the highly significant differences in the way these two phenomena are received by their respective audiences, and approach it purely on the level of narrative content, any attempt to trace its themes or motifs back to archetypal patterns are highly problematic. In the chapter entitled "Searching for Tale-Types and Motifs in the Zombie Film" (in *Film Folklore and Urban Legends*, Koven, 2008) Mikel Koven approaches zombie movies specifically looking for folk-tale motifs as found in the (mainly Euro-American) standard collections. He struggles to identify any links which go beyond seeing the zombie as generic revenant, or ogre. This would seem to be particularly the case with regard to the zombie, as opposed to other film monsters which can more easily be tied in to recognisable folklore patterns. In other words, the zombie threat is interesting precisely because of the ways in which it differs from the ghost or vampire or werewolf threat. In what ways then can a specifically Jungian approach illuminate this interesting difference, if it can't trace the narratives back to an existing archetypal motif?

Matt makes the valid point that within zombie product like TV series *The Walking Dead* certain situations tend to lend themselves to the unfolding of collective and familial patterns. 'The small group under threat' is a standard setup, particularly for long-running TV. If you have a range of sufficiently well created characters you can play out the variations almost endlessly. Depending upon the tastes of the producers these can be sociological or political or oedipal or any combination of the above. The external threat adds jeopardy and excitement. But the truth is that the threat could be almost anything. In this series it happens to be zombies, but much the same setting was in place for long-

running series *Lost* for example. He makes an interesting point when he suggests that zombie threat perhaps represents "the modern fear that we will lose our instinctual selves and become mindless automatons, simply following an insatiable hunger in one direction sans consciousness, sans ethicality". But is it the loss of the 'instinctual' self that is feared? Or the loss of individuality? One of the powerful tropes of the zombie movie is the moment when a character (and we as viewers) recognise that a loved one has become a zombie. This involves the loss of almost everything that made that person who they were in life - and yet, uncannily, they continue to 'go through the motions' in the minimally animated way that the zombie does. Žižek links the zombie state to the habitual. "The shock of meeting a zombie is thus not the shock of encountering a foreign entity, but the shock of being confronted by the disavowed foundation of our own humanity." When life becomes habitual we lose our authentic, spontaneous individuality, and forget why we do the things we do. We just do them. In Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* the zombies congregate at the shopping mall where it becomes difficult to tell the automaton-like shoppers from the stumbling zombies.

Another possibly fruitful approach is that of Kristeva. The zombie (neither alive nor dead, neither human nor inhuman) seems a particularly good example of the 'object', (i.e. any admixed phenomenon that, by virtue of its admixture, recalls this sickening experience of entrapment at the border between identity and non-identity). Our fear of the zombie threat would then represent a primal terror at the constant threat of collapse of the boundaries of the individual self into the indifferent materiality of abjection. The small groups that tend to find themselves barricaded into houses might then be seen as aspects of the embattled psyche attempting to deal with this threat in their different ways. In *Night of the Living Dead*, for example, it is the black man and the woman who, partly by working together, deal most effectively with the threat, in contrast with the middle aged white man (ego?) whose attempts to reinforce rigid pre-zombie hierarchies are entirely counterproductive. However, in zombie movies any success is only ever provisional. It is integral to the genre that apocalypse can only ever be deferred. Ultimately the zombies will win. Perhaps a pessimistic Freudian approach is better suited to such a genre than the inexorably optimistic Jungian. Hence the plausibility of Žižek's (Lacanian) and Kristeva's (post-Freudian) interpretations. Again, the question is what does a Jungian approach offer that is different?

Thanks for the reference, James. I haven't read the article and I'm unsure from your summary if it is Grotstein who is discussing zombiedom in the context of possession, and specifically demonic possession, or whether this is your archetypal gloss. Whoever is suggesting it, I think he is off-beam. The pre-Romero zombies of *White Zombie* and *I Walked with a Zombie* might at a pinch be seen to be 'possessed' but the modern zombie is most certainly not. The diabolic (and indeed any aspect of the religious or ethical/moral) is completely foreign to the utterly unmotivated modern zombie. But if Grotstein is only linking the zombie with negation of self then this would seem to perhaps overlap with the Kristeva interpretation? Of course it is one thing to use the metaphor of a zombie when discussing case material, quite another to interpret the cultural phenomena of zombie movies using psychoanalytic tools.

Best wishes

Mark

20. February 2013 at 01:58 Uhr

Sent: "Segal, Professor Robert A." <r.segal@abdn.ac.uk>

Feb. 20

Dear Matt,

The assumption that recurrent motifs, symbols, themes, and categories--entities called "archetypal"--are the monopoly of Jungians is typical--dare I say archetypal. In actuality, recurrences have been found for centuries by folklorists, anthropologists, scholars of religious studies, literary scholars, and comparative historians.

Take one of your examples., the hero. Want to know how back this category goes?

Followers of Jung jump from identifying a category , motif, etc, to claiming authority in analyzing it. Not only have professionals in other disciplines identified these generalizations long before Jung arose, but they have analyzed them far more systematically and far more rigorously. For Jung, two cases do an archetype make, and the explanation is that it is innate. In fact, most archetypes are less than universal, and the explanation of them is to be found in culture, not in the unconscious.

And one does not have to reify similarities to account for them. Similarities can be mere names for one or more collections of similarities.

Someone who took seriously the study of myths or fairy tales--and they are often distinguished--would consider both the locations in which specific motifs, symbols, and so on in myths or fairy tales are to be found and the array of explanations given for them. A Jungian account would come in last, not first. The work of Jack Zipes, not of von Franz, would be a sensible starting point for anyone interested in fairy tales.

Best,

Robert

20. February 2013 at 16:34 Uhr

Sent: "Miller, Catriona" <C.Miller@gcu.ac.uk>>

Dear Mark, Matt and All

The question of whether one can read fairy tales and film in similar ways is an important and complex one, and as you suspected, Mark, I'm not sure I can give an unqualified 'yes' to it in all cases.

Film is an incredibly varied medium, and the production context of films can vary immensely. In his BAFTA acceptance speech, director Sam Mendes mentioned that 1,292 people had worked on the Bond film 'Skyfall'. In addition, given the long history of Bond, (Ian Fleming, the 25 or so films, the role of producer Cubby Broccoli and the production company Eon Films etc.) I find it very hard to accept that we view such a film solely as the work of the director. It is collectively created and evolves based on audience responses over many years. Perhaps forming the system that Matt suggested?

But even over and above that type of film, there are certain tropes that burst the bounds of single film texts, or series of texts. 'Avatar' has been mentioned on the list from time to time. It is a Hollywood production, with a very large cast and crew, it is collectively produced too, though perhaps James Cameron, the director, has a stronger hand on the tiller of this film than Mendes did on the latest Bond. But, and here's my point, whilst elements of 'Avatar' narrative might be constructively approached from a Jungian perspective, for my money, it hasn't elicited quite the emotional response in the audience, beyond viewing the film, in the same way as the figure of the zombie. Zombies exist in the imagination above and beyond any particular text or group of texts - they are transtextual and transmediatised. Their stories are 'generally known' even by people who have never seen a zombie movie and engagement with them often goes far beyond watching an audio-visual narrative. (Maybe there is work to be done in collecting zombie stories from the general populace.)

Because by way of contrast, I sometimes wonder at the apparently accepted neutrality of fairy tales, since the texts we use for analysis (as Jung and von Franz did themselves) tend to be those that were collected and written down by specific people at a specific cultural time and place - Grimm's collections for example. These aren't value free texts in themselves, often being rife with patriarchal attitudes for instance. I suspect this might be Robert's point. We ignore the social, political and cultural discourses that led to the creation of these collected fairy tales, and the considerable scholarship that has sought to unpick some of these issues in the time since Jung, at our peril.

We sometimes complain about Jung not being more widely utilised in the academy, but we often seem to want to side step the work that has been done elsewhere in the Academy on, for example, the history of fairy tales, on film theory, on culture in general, which ought to deepen our understanding of these (highly complex) human constructions. It doesn't seem the best way to join in the academic conversation. It can make a Jungian approach appear rather 'antiquated' as Matt nicely put it.

Regards
Catriona

21. February 2013 at 18:27 Uhr

Sent: "Mark Saban" <jungpsych@marksaban.co.uk>

Dear Catriona, Luke, Lena,

Catriona,

I find myself in agreement with all your points - elegantly made. Your summary is exemplary: "We sometimes complain about Jung not being more widely utilised in the academy, but we often seem to want to sidestep the work that has been done elsewhere in the Academy on, for example, the history of fairy tales, on film theory, on culture in general, which ought to deepen our understanding of these (highly complex) human constructions." Hear hear!

Luke,

Unfortunately I seem (yet again!) to have failed to get my points across clearly enough. I must try harder to achieve clarity.

First misunderstanding: No, I was not saying anything about proving the existence of archetypes. I was merely suggesting that archetype-spotting is a pretty puny form of cultural criticism, whether it be in film studies, literary studies or anywhere else. If you have never come across this particular genre of Jungiana, I really am astonished. However, despite your generous invitation, I am not going to slag off particular writers. I am more interested in exploring what if anything in Jungian theory might limit its ability to fully engage with modern cultural products (such as zombie movies). Please note that I was careful to point to the fact that there is plenty of quality Jungian film and literary criticism out there.

Second misunderstanding: When I use the phrase 'stick to the image' I am not being ocular-centric, (any more than I am being glue-centric when I use the word 'sticking'). Neither Lopez-Pedraza who coined the phrase, nor Hillman who took it up, nor Pat Berry who amplified it, nor Jung who originally stated "Image is Psyche," meant or mean the word 'image' in an ocular-centric way. In this context 'image' means any imaginative structure. These can, and often do, take perceptual, or sensual form, but the point of sticking to the image is to stay with it as it is in all its complexity, avoiding the temptation to either bracket off particular aspects of the image (e.g. narrative) or to see the image as referring to= something outside of itself. In the case of film that means that every aspect of the phenomenon is asking to be taken into account - narrative, medium, syntax, cultural context (of both creation and reception) - you name it. Which is why I am entirely in agreement with those theorists you mention for whom film is fluid - I have no intention of fixing the film in any sense. Sticking to the film image means allowing it be as fluid as it is. You "think a... fruitful approach is to see how meanings are negotiated, changed, subverted and generally remade by film viewers". Me too! (Though isn't your term 'film viewers' dangerously ocular-centric?) For Walter Benjamin, a theorist who I think has much to offer here, the dialectical image is what occurs in the dynamic meeting between image as received - in the now - and image as generated - in the then, or between waking and dream, as he puts it. All, I would have thought, highly relevant to "the psychology of cinematic experience". Which leads me to the

Third misunderstanding: "The torsion between the ancient and the modern" Perhaps here too I expressed myself badly. I meant that dynamic tension between the archetypal (which is, if I understand Jung, also the primordial, the archaic) and this particular cultural product here and now. I had assumed (perhaps wrongly?) that anyone working within a broadly Jungian orientation would inevitably be interested in both these poles and in the relations between them.

Can I return us to the original question: Can we, as Jungians, approach a film as if it were a fairy tale? If the answer to this is an unequivocal yes (which appeared to be Lena's position, though it is increasingly hard to tell), then presumably classical Jungian tools (in other words some form of archetypal reduction) will be sufficient for its interpretation.

If the answer is no, then what does this tell us about the limitations of a specifically Jungian criticism. Lena now tells us that she uses "a combination of approaches, including a variety of depth psychology theories, anthropology, semiotics, literary criticism..." Is this eclectic approach typical? If so then what, if anything, characterises a Jungian approach to film? A willingness to drop the term 'archetype' into a sentence, when it seems appropriate? Or something more robust?

Lena,
LOL

Best wishes

Mark

21. February 2013 at 18:35 Uhr
Sent: "leslie gardner" <gardner.leslie@gmail.com>

The notion that struck me about the focus on the current zombie world view Catriona is raising to contrast to Jungian analytic psychology is its cheerful bleakness. This is a union of opposites par excellence.

The theme of apocalypse, i.e. there is no way out is endemic to this fictional field. We read fiction to escape from realities, and the corollary is, that to experience escape is to enjoy ourselves. The paradox is in the pleasure in the unpleasant we experience; and many zombie stories are comedies.

This is truly beyond the pleasure principle. What's wrong? why do these come up now so frequently in popular collective imagination (not the unconscious either – they are all too

conscious) – the negativity chills us with shivers of delight.

In Jung's essays about L'Atlante [sp?] and 'She Who must be obeyed' we are again engaged in an aesthetic experience of displeasure – She ruins men who are deeply enamoured of her, until she is destroyed. Jung would not, I think, have it that these personal psychic events are wish fulfilment – but to call it as it is, is to experience it as a symbol of directly relevant contrary realities – but in the excesses of the zombie 'life' which is 'death' we are engaged with personal dismemberment as a ritual – in experiencing that ritual, we engage with magical controls – a certain pleasure – the comedy of life. This is hardly scientific but fits the tenor of Jung's essay 'Wotan' about the Biblical rivers of blood which engage the country in those days.

Is this dismemberment part of a hopeful sequence toward (or heralding) transformation? And in that way works with analytical psychology's zeitgeist? Leslie

22. February 2013 at 17:23 Uhr

Sent: "Elizabeth Brodersen" <liz.brodersen@web.de>

Dear Leslie, Catriona and all,

I like your post, Leslie, as I understand it, because you seem to be linking the Zombie to a paradox: the pleasure of experiencing the unpleasant, as a sort of cheerful bleakness. But I'm still wondering whether we have gone deep enough into the Zombie when we leave it just as that.

For example, images of the 'unpleasant' as symptoms of 'hysteria' have always been the butt of amusement. Historically, Bedlam as a London hospital institution from 1815 to 1931 to house the 'insane,' brought the wealthy during the nineteenth century in droves to look with both amusement and mock horror at the grotesque, outward forms of anger and disempowerment in the human body. There was very little empathy attached to their gaze. Bedlam inmates were comical, light entertainment and easily dismissed as an afternoon's enjoyment. I think if we regard Zombies in this light we miss the chance to go deeper into the distress imbued in their images. Laughter can also be a form of 'hysteria.'

I have clients who dream of vampires and we have been able to work with the conflicting emotions contained in their image. I am wondering whether any clinicians on the list partaking in the seminar have clients as veterans or soldiers in active service who dream of Zombies as a way of imaging and managing PTSD- as the horror of marching mindlessly into battle zones in an excess of violence under a command that has no stopping mechanism... I'm thinking here, Catriona, of the sentence in your paper

concerning relentlessness (no need to sleep and rest) which contaminates the next generation..

I could also imagine soldiers applauded as heroes returning from globalised war zones but without their limbs after having witnessed unspeakable, fearful, mindless atrocities. How would the ego as 'hero' cope with such a mixture of contradictory messages? Would not a sort of cold, disassociated rage accumulate and manifest itself in the unconscious and project itself outward onto film as a collective expression of the hero's anger and betrayal which is not taken really seriously, just like the inmates of Bedlam?

Could the Zombie image encompass these 'inferior,' 'ludicrous,' emotions perhaps?

I am no expert on film theory but I do experience film as an excellent media for attempting to mirror as well as contain those indigestible, 'monstrous' chunks of the human psyche and bring them closer into scrutiny...

With warm wishes, Liz

22. February 2013 at 19:13 Uhr

Sent: "Miller, Catriona" <C.Miller@gcu.ac.uk>

Dear All - I'm very much enjoying the creative responses to the zombie phenomenon! And as the discussion has wandered round films and fairy tales more generally - not in any way a complaint, I'm finding that very stimulating :) - but I thought it might be useful to sum up some of the things people have said about zombies so far, as there's an interesting range.

Elizabeth brought in the issue of causes right at the start. "I am bringing in the theme of the 'curse' as it nearly always features in fairy tales. Marie von Franz looks at this phenomena in *The Psychological Meaning of Redemption Motifs in Fairy Tales*, pp. 78-80, where she describes how an unconscious affect can take an unremitting hold and negatively overwhelm the ego when the ego (as hero) has not sufficiently separated from the unconscious to hold his/her own position. She suggests (p. 80) that there has to be a rebuilding of the feeling value' through working with the unconscious. The Zombie seems a particularly difficult image for the hero to embrace." 'Warm Bodies' is the most obvious attempt at embracing the zombie (quite literally, and kissing too) but it did have to maintain the 'bad zombies' in the narrative too.

Helena said that "zombies are particularly important motifs because - as repressed elements of the sterile post-industrial lifestyle - they represent our fear of ourselves; of the uncontrollable, basic behavioural patterns." A suggestion echoed by Matt who suggested that "Where zombies are infectious, endlessly hungry automatons, they could

represent the modern fear that we will lose our instinctual selves and become mindless automatons, simply following an insatiable hunger in one direction sans consciousness, sans ethicality. That is one of the great fears about the modern condition . . . that we can too easily fail to inhabit the beings that we are . . . that we are not adequately rooted to our instinctual drives or to a functional principle of organization (i.e., "the Self"). We cannot exist sustainably in this world, but devour our ways through it indiscriminately, seemingly oblivious to the fact that our resources are finite. Seen from a "genetic" perspective, what happens when the virus-overcome zombies devour every living thing on earth? The zombie virus cannot propagate. It eats itself into extinction?"

I do find myself wondering, in terms of the narrative of these films, if they would eventually just 'burn out' having used up all the humans. However, none of the stories ever seem to get that far. But as Luke pointed out, the zombies don't actually do anything to the environment. He said "One fascinating aspect of Zombie films is the way that mostly Zombies wander around doing little harm - it is only in the presence of 'healthy' people that the Zombie becomes violent. It is almost as though the healthy body activates the Zombie sickness. It is latent, of course, but comes to the fore when in the presence of an uninfected human. I wonder if that is part of the fear and appeal of the movies generally and Zombies in particular - that we as film viewers we might have the capacity to activate the pathologies that are latent in other people, the characters on the screen and in do doing our own anxieties and fears, or own pathologies get activated." So on its own, the zombie doesn't do very much. Some films have zombies only interested in humans as food, others are more equivocal about any living animals. 'The Walking Dead' had a memorable scene in Season 1 where the hero Rick allows his horse to be consumed in order the facilitate his escape.

And Leslie then reminded us that the tone of many of the narratives contains a certain 'cheerful bleakness'. Not 'The Walking Dead' or indeed the Romero films, to be sure, but some of the films have an almost carnivalesque delight in the macabre and engage in black humour, as many horror films have done over the years. 'Warm Bodies' was not without its moments of irony and comedy, others like Peter Jackson's 'Braindead' much more so. And certainly the 'out of text' responses to the narratives with all the zombie walks, zombie runs, zombie-you apps and parliamentary questions, often seem to elicit a delighted horror, as well as a touch of hysteria certainly - the journalist writing about her experience of the 'zombie run' noted that she discovered very quickly that it's impossible to run and scream at the same time. As Leslie says "the negativity chills us with shivers of delight." Then asks "Is this dismemberment part of a hopeful sequence toward (or heralding) transformation?" I wonder. Do we fear being consumed? Do we fear we are the consumer? Or, in the paradox Leslie suggests, quite probably both!

Back to Luke who reminds us that the body can be involved in the cinematic experience, but I'm wondering if the extensive real world re-enactments of the zombie threat suggest that audiences aren't getting enough of a physical 'kick' out the films? Audiences feel the need to further 'embody and experience' the zombie phenomenon whether as zombies themselves, or being chased by them.

Looking forward to your further insights and thoughts.

Regards

Catriona

26. February 2013 at 16:12 Uhr
Sent: "Joel Weishaus" <weishaus@pdx.edu>

I see in the new Psychological Perspectives a piece titled "Zombie Typology," by Jim Kline:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/upyp20/55/4>

Best,
Joel

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Paper Archive:

<http://rmoa.unm.edu/docviewer.php?docId=nmu1mss456bc.xml>

Gesendet: Sonntag, 24. February 2013 at 11:20 Uhr
Sent: "Stephenson Craig" <craig.stephenson@orange.fr>

Dear all,

I'm not able to enter really into this conversation at this time, except to reiterate Mark Saban's useful question: what does a Jungian perspective bring that is unique and insightful to a discussion about zombies?

In order to answer this question, don't we need to know a little more about what non-Jungian commentators are saying about zombies, and then ask what we think is missing from these commentaries? With regard to the previous discussion about the Grimms' "The Spirit in the Bottle", Robert Segal recommended the essential Jack Zipes, and Erik Goodwyn provided a superb and varied reading list. Perhaps, then, in service of Mark's question and Catriona's argument, I can mention non-Jungian Mariana Warner's essay(s) on zombies, as well as her work in general (in connection with either Catriona Miller's paper or Mather's for this seminar):

Marina Warner (2006) "Our Zombies, Our Selves", in *Phantasmagoria: Spirit Visions, Metaphors and Media in the Twenty-First Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 357-368

Marina Warner, (2002) "Zombie: The Devil Inside", in *Signs and Wonders: Essays on Literature and Culture*, London, Chatto and Windus, 341-346

Marina Warner (1998) *No Go The Bogeyman: Scaring, Lulling and Making Mock*, London: Chatto and Windus.

Marina Warner (1994) *Managing Monsters: The 1994 Reith Lectures*, London: Vintage.

Marina Warner (1994) *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairytales and their Tellers*, London: Chatto and Windus.

Certainly 'zombies' as metaphor are everywhere at the moment. Frank Bruni's op-ed piece on Berlusconi (in today's New York Times 24/02/13) is just one example. Here's the link:

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/24/opinion/sunday/bruni-berlusconi-is-back.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20130224

Many thanks, then, to Catriona for leading such a timely discussion!

Craig Stephenson

Gesendet: Dienstag, 26. February 2013 at 17:38 Uhr
Sent: "Elizabeth Brodersen" <liz.brodersen@web.de>

Dear Craig, Catriona and all,

Thanks for the reminder, Craig, that we should be looking at Mark's useful question: what does a Jungian perspective bring that is useful and insightful to a discussion about zombies? You suggest a comparison to non-Jungian Marina Warner's work on the zombie.

I am familiar with Marina Warner's excellent, differentiated work on zombies from the sources you quote, particularly *Phantasmogoria*, 2006, pp. 357-268, chapter 27, *Our Zombies, Our Selves*. However, to my mind, her essays still fail to address the inter-subjectivity of the zombie phenomena. Prof. Warner looks for zombie references in political literature (the issue of slavery), children's fiction where the souls of children are brutally separated from their animal 'other' (Philip Pullman's *Dark Materials Trilogy*) women exchanged as computerised sexual objects (Levin's *Stepford Wives*) suggesting that zombies have a global presence attached to socio-political agendas which have robbed humanity of its soul. I would agree with that.

In her foreword to (1994) *Six Myths of Our Time*, Prof. Warner states that she is influenced in her interpretation of myths by the French school of classicists, anthropologists and historians such as Dumézil, Vernant, and Loraux, amongst others, rather than by Freudian or Jungian approaches which, she maintains, do not offer images that change in relation to the social structure in which they interact. I disagree with that, as clinical Jungian dream work does change images, bringing them into alignment with modern day dilemmas; these images not fixed in the past but open up new interpretative dimensions...

The strength of a clinical Jungian analytical interpretation of myths and fairy tales is that it works with undifferentiated, autonomous complexes *dynamically*. In order to address the difficult emotions behind mythical and fairy tale images, a Jungian clinical methodology, particularly dream work, is unique because it does offer an opportunity to change, for example, the zombie image, as an inter-subjective, inter-active, first-hand experience, belonging to ourselves, as individuals, not just to 'others' collectively (blacks, poor whites, children, animals), so we can't simply sit back and enjoy the zombie phenomena as an afternoon's entertainment. In this way, we take an ethical responsibility for it.

I would say that the zombie is a specific archetypal 'shadow' image which is particularly difficult to assimilate, hence its intense, 'negative,' magnetic charge which is projected outward into film. Jung describes the moral dilemma of working with autonomous complexes in *CW 8, The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, paras. 409-416 and provides an *active* working model for addressing such transference phenomenology. Archetypes are not static phenomena. They respond to engagement and are capable of changing their images over time. But perhaps that is another seminar topic!

An academic approach to myths and fairy tales, whether Jungian, Freudian or a psycho-social, that does not approach depth psychological, disassociated emotional aspects, first hand, as belonging to oneself, cannot differentiate or change the emotions that influence their image. They simply take on a new form which reveals their continued disconnectedness, speechlessness and lack of soul.

I find Jungian, clinical interpretations of unconscious complexes as they activate archetypally through myth and fairy tales, such as those provided by Donald Kalshed (1996) *The Inner World of Trauma*, Ann & Barry Ulanov, (1994) *Transforming*

Sexuality, The Archetypal World of Anima and Animus, and Neil Russack, (2002) *Animal Guides in Life Myth and Dreams*, amongst others, more useful than an academic theorising alone in addressing and changing the 'negative' connotations stored up in 'shadow' emotional complexes over time.

With best wishes, Liz

Gesendet: Mittwoch, 27. February 2013 at 22:45 Uhr
Sent: "Nuala Flynn" <flynn.nuala@googlemail.com>

dear all

I'm not sure if this has come up in the discussion but just happened upon this section in Ian McGilchrist's "The Master and his Emissary- the Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World"- a broad, deep, imaginative, scholarly and clinical work on the primacy of the right brain and the dominance of the left brain, and thought it might be of interest....

p235(a bit fragmented, but to convey briefly)

"the popular assumption, aided by the reflections of some respectable neuroscientists is that the right hemisphere might be something like a zombie or a sleepwalkerGiovanni Stanghellini has exploredthe way in which the zombie state is mimicked by schizophrenia - a largely right hemisphere deficit condition...".

Mc Gilchrist goes on to invert this, saying that during hypnosis, a state of extreme dissociation, the assumption of right brain dominance is confounded --- it's the left brain - the rational side of the brain that dominates, the right side, associated with individual agency and peripheral awareness,-contextualising awareness is switched off ...

"so if I am right that the story of the western world is one of increasing left brain domination we would not expect insight to be the key note. Instead we would expect to see a sort of insouciant optimism, the sleepwalker whistling a happy tune as he ambles towards the abyss"

best wishes

Nuala

On Wed, Feb 27, 2013 at 7:57 AM, Tony Woolfson
<woolfson.tony@bell.net> wrote:

Dear all,

I suddenly remembered that a brilliant English writer, Angela Carter, became famous twenty plus ago for her re-writes of tales like Little Red Riding Hood, and that Penguin published them. For sheer macabre and terror I think she is the one to beat; whether there is an overlap with zombified status I am not quite sure!

Best to all,

Tony.

Gesendet: Freitag, 01. März 2013 at 17:57 Uhr
Sent: "Miller, Catriona" <C.Miller@gcu.ac.uk>

Dear All

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your participation in the seminar. It's been extremely interesting. I find the seminars a valuable space in which to debate some of the issues around using Jung's ideas to explore our culture in a (perhaps) slightly less formal way to the more usual academic conference papers.

I raised a number of questions in my paper, some of which we've considered. It may have seemed a tangent at times, but actually they are a very important issues for using Jung within a cultural studies context. Specifically here, can films be examined as if they were fairy tales? It was my opening question and it did raise some debate. I'm not sure a firm conclusion was reached but there was certainly a concern expressed that film should be approached with attention to production context, as well as awareness of socio-historical milieu, and the multi-modal aspects of the audiovisual language. It can make film a rather daunting beast to tackle analytically (from a Jungian or any other theoretical perspective), but it is such a prevalent cultural form in our era, I think we need to keep trying. The question was asked more than once, what does Jung add to this discussion? I suspect Jungian film studies still has quite some exploration to do here, but I'm encouraged by the spirit of enquiry. And I'm looking forward to Luke Hockley and Helena Bassil-Morozow's forthcoming publicaton on Jungian film studies. No pressure! ;o)

A similar topic of discussion was the question of fairy tales themselves, and again the issue of context arose, and again the importance of not decontextualising fairy tales was emphasised, as Erik Goodwyn's helpful post yesterday made so clear with regard to 'Beowulf'. Maintaining an interest in insights, theory and evidence from other parts of the Academy remains essential.

But what of the zombie? In a sense my interest in this cultural trope is twofold. Before any analysis, I was interested in identifying a phenomenon as it is happening, rather than in retrospect. The zombie is enthusiastically engaged with from community projects, here and now participation and acting out, to big budget Hollywood narratives, and the 'serious' world of politics. Its penetration of culture is widespread. People know all about it even when they have never seen a zombie film, or read a comic or novel. The zombie exists above, beyond, any particular text. It also worth noting that its origins don't stretch back into the mists of time (or at least the folklore of 'Old Europe'). It is a phenomenon

that arose in the second half of the twentieth century.

Those drawn (or indeed repulsed) by the zombie engage with it in a variety ways: feeling pursued by a horde of relentless zombies; feeling the deadness of the zombie; fearing the infectiousness of the zombie's bite; the horror of transformation as the known becomes the unknown; a revelling in the black humour and schadenfreude of the horror; the ethics of how humanity treats the 'other'; the ethics of surviving at any cost. There are many elements to the story with the emphasis falling differently depending on who is doing the looking.

So after identification, the second issue is the analysis. I asked in my paper if we ought to think of the zombie as a sign or a symbol. If it stands for another thing that we can identify, then it is a sign. If it is the 'best possible formulation of a relatively unknown thing' (Jung 1971: para 814) then it is a symbol. This didn't raise much discussion. Possibly because we all agreed we were discussing a symbol... or possibly it was only that those who felt it was a sign, weren't much interested in discussing it at all. :o) I suspect that if we were able to solve it, and think 'yes, that's exactly the answer!' it would likely lose any symbolic glamour. However, given the variety of responses and thoughts put forward in our seminar, I would tend towards thinking of it as a symbol. A widespread and popular expression of something that can't, at present, be expressed better than a hostile, hungry, relentless, contagious monster.

I hope we continue to look at cultural phenomena of this kind, and ask "to whom has such a story to be told? Who needs that?" (von Franz, 1974: p.147) If a Jungian approach does bring something to the table, it maybe this willingness to keep asking where the symptoms (or at least, the concerns raised by clusters of cultural artefacts) are leading, rather than simply charting where they came from.

Many thanks to you all once again for your kind participation.
Kind Regards
Catriona

Gesendet: Freitag, 01. März 2013 at 21:20 Uhr
Sent: "Elizabeth Brodersen" <liz.brodersen@web.de>

Dear seminar participants,

We would like to thank Dr. Catriona Miller for her very stimulating and timely presentation on the Zombie phenomena and for so generously allocating her time to answer and further elaborate on questions presented to her. It has brought forth some very interesting, soul searching responses which have certainly enlightened many aspects of how difficult an undertaking the individuation process, as Jung perceived it, actually is. Myths and fairy tales give signposts to help direct us through the maze of twists and turns, blocked pathways and false trails. There is never one correct, straightforward route.

Differentiating the Zombie image and edging nearer to the emotional content contained in her/his personification has been the main thrust behind Catriona's paper. I think we have all emerged much wiser and better informed about Zombies in general and their 'shadow' placement in the collective consciousness, past and present, thanks to Catriona's contribution and from others who have so thoughtfully contributed their own perspectives bringing in non-Jungian material as well.

Although the formal structure of this seminar has now ended, we hope that list members will feel free to continue participating on the theme of myths and fairy tales by opening up other aspects as well, although, of course, we cannot guarantee that Mathew and Catriona will stay on line to participate further.

On behalf of the IAJS EC and list seminar participants, a warm and sincere thank you to you both, Mathew and Catriona, for the very generous contributions of your time and expertise. It has been much appreciated.

Liz (Brodersen), Leslie (Gardner) and Stephani (Stephens) subcommittee on behalf of the EC, IAJS.