

**A Jungian Bridge  
to  
Native Philosophy**

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presented to the  
Department of Philosophy  
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario**

**In partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts**

**by  
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## **Abstract**

The gap between Western and Native world views is much more profound than the West has imagined. I support this claim from a variety of angles and offer insight into it from the work of Swiss psychologist C. G. Jung (1875-1961). Too narrowly logocentric, the mainstream Western view provides no way to recognize, let alone appreciate, the more well-rounded outlook of others. A means to counteract this blinding cultural impoverishment is illustrated from both Jungian and Native material. It involves a radically different way of being, which has roots in Native and (to a lesser extent) Western traditions. Since there are a number of fundamental values common to both Native and Jungian perspectives, I propose in this thesis that the West could appreciably bridge the gap between views by taking Jung's ideas seriously and expanding its conception of personal excellence to include much more than the conscious facility to be "reasonable".

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and  
**J. Douglas Rabb**

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-----  
To my own Western ancestors  
and to my parents

**- Alice Mildred Taylor and Grant Addison Taylor -**

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# A JUNGIAN BRIDGE to NATIVE PHILOSOPHY

## I THE CHASM: Alienation

### Introduction

Love consists in this,  
that two solitudes protect,  
and touch, and greet each other.  
(Rainer Maria Rilke)

From this quotation, Hugh MacLennan took the title for his 1945 novel, *Two Solitudes*, which explores the French/English conflict in Canada, giving strong personal voice to both cultures, perhaps for the first time in English-Canadian literature. Certainly, during my high school years, this book was presented as the first great "Canadian" novel.

MacLennan was writing *Two Solitudes* when I was born, and my childhood was spent deep in the English half of his divided Canada, safely isolated from the tensions he described. For me and many other English-speaking Canadians, his story served as a challenge to "touch" the unknown French. It raised our consciousness about the realities of the "other side," and therefore about our larger existence. For those of us whom it moved, it seemed to make possible a significant step in the long transformation from insular to cosmopolitan Canada — a transformation still far from complete, as current politics reveal.

Since high school, however, my perspective on Canadian culture has expanded

considerably. From this broader viewpoint, it is evident that the English/French clash is but an age-old feud between self-absorbed siblings caught in a love/hate embrace, who tumbled out of their own house and into someone else's, bringing with them a significantly *mutual* understanding of things. That largely unconscious understanding — what I will call, with many others, the *Western world view* — possessed hardly any means by which to recognize the richness and comprehensive order in the new house. In fact, it scarcely recognized a house at all. This different location appeared “wild” — virtually empty of civilizing structure — and so the Western world view, even while arguing with itself, set to work building all that it knew. In essence, it imposed its own order where a civil, vibrant and complex *Native world view*<sup>1</sup> already flourished, treating its carriers like so much raw material to be forged into useful components or shoved aside.

Almost surely, the surprised Native peoples had just as little equipment for accurately assessing the Europeans, but due to the devastating power of Western imports (disease and alcohol, material technology, and imperial intent) they were forced mightily to *try*. They could not ignore these uninvited guests as the whites could increasingly ignore them. Those who did not die or convert *were* shoved aside. And so, by the time I and my French-speaking counterparts were born, it was possible for us to know nothing of a Native presence, while a few miles away, Native people, isolated on reserves and living in starkly poorer economic conditions, desperately struggled both to maintain their own view and to understand the one oppressing them. Obviously, Canada had something more fundamental than cosmopolitanism to deal with; its own original inhabitants were as absent from our Euro-awareness as they were from the great

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<sup>1</sup> Stressing a fundamental difference on a global scale, “Western” and “Native” are capitalized to denote incommensurable world views and the people who live them. Various points of contrast will come out in the text to follow. Enormous cultural diversity exists within each of the two perspectives.



"Canadian" novel.

These truths astonish me now. They prove that a much more fundamental pair of solitudes exists in Canada than the MacLennian one. MacLennan wrote about different conceptions of essentially the same perceived reality. I entertain in this thesis the idea that our real "two solitudes" involves something very like different *perceptions* of the world altogether — perceptions so distinct that the chasm between them seems unbridgeable. How else to explain the virtual absence of a whole people from the awareness of another when the two share the same land? Power dynamics, greed, abuser denial, and conceptual differences certainly play significant roles. We see them in operation almost universally, when the West encounters other cultures. But I think we would be wise to consider perception itself, as it is affected by world view, to be an additional or consequent factor in explaining the enormous scale of this rift.

Before presenting my reasons for this, I must clarify three things. First, the terms "Western" and "Native" designating world views, and my brief sketch of the interaction of the two, like all generalizations, are caricatures, cartoons, stereotypes, which mercilessly gloss over myriad important distinctions and exceptions. I use these short, familiar labels because they point to a persistent and troublesome gulf of understanding which is generally recognized, if not adequately understood, in many areas of the world.<sup>2</sup> It is not my intent either to define the two views exhaustively or to claim them as the only ones operational on a global scale.<sup>3</sup> In this chapter, I wish merely to focus on the chasm itself, in order to explore what is, to my mind, its unappreciated enormity. In doing so, I do not wish to minimize important bridging attempts, or the

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<sup>2</sup> Giving rise to such organizations as "World Council of Indigenous Peoples" (In Canada:100 Argyle Ave., 2nd Floor, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P AB6).

<sup>3</sup> There is an Eastern world view, or views, for example. "Eastern" and "Western" are, of course, Eurocentric terms, as, indeed, is "Native", here meaning aboriginal or indigenous.

abundance of gradations and differences within each of the two views - differences which are vital to the self-definition of whole cultures and communities. The chasm goes deeper than most obvious cultural variations.

Secondly, although the Native/Western difference is a global issue, my research on Native cultures has focused on the Algonquian-speaking Cree and Ojibwa from the woodlands and plains of Canada and the northern United States. It is therefore from the literature *of* these people, historical literature *on* them, and my experiences *with* them, that most (but not all) of my examples are drawn. While I value accounts from times when Native lifeways were less influenced by the West, the quest for this sort of "cultural purity" seems to me rather like chasing a mirage. It is not a priority, since I view culture itself as both adaptive and conservative. Culture never stands still, and yet it has *continuity*. The walls of the chasm are made up of that which *continues* unbroken through countless adaptive expressions.<sup>4</sup> The Cree and Ojibwa cultures, having spread over vastly different terrains, are striking examples of essential continuity through enormous changes in form.

The *place* of my focus, then, is the broad area around my home (northwestern Ontario), while the *time* stretches out over what most endures. Miraculously, despite tremendous sustained pressure on it to disappear, the Native world view is as alive now as it was long ago.<sup>5</sup>

Thirdly, I must acknowledge my position with respect to the two world views to

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4 Alfred Young Man (1994) traces this idea through William K. Powers to Claude Lévi-Strauss, and claims, of "North American Indian artists", that they have "literally reinvented their cultures many times with no loss of continuity with earlier Native cultures" (383, 390).

5 Insights into the reason for this are offered as the text progresses.

be discussed — my “voice”<sup>6</sup> and intended audience. I have already mentioned my childhood isolation from not only the Native world, but also that of French-Canadians. My position arises from the very center of the dominant Western view — an almost purely white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant place of unquestioned authority in the land, despite its agricultural roots and working class status. Generally speaking, this means that I was never in want, and wherever I went, I was automatically seen, respected and listened to, although this was somewhat dampened because of my gender. From these crippling myopic yet privileged beginnings, fate has led me repeatedly, as if in compensation, toward the Native perspective in one form or another. Necessarily blind to what lay before me at first, I eventually came to realize that not *everyone* in “the land” was automatically seen, respected and listened to, least of all its first peoples, who seemed to embody a way of being so completely different from my own that I had no means with which to *see* it properly, let alone understand it. I *tried* to see, nevertheless, only to discover my own impairment; embarrassing contradictions and inadequacies in my assumptions came to light and led to intense self-questioning.<sup>7</sup> Of great help through the struggle and confusion were the works of two Western men who had also floundered in the depths of the chasm — Carlos Castaneda and Carl Gustav Jung, who, along with the women’s movement and first nations people themselves, have been the greatest forces of change in my adult life.

This thesis is simply another step in the ongoing process. It is a personal meditation on the way to somewhere unknown, and a cultural conversation with my own Western view, which desperately needs such probings. It claims no new inventions and expects to settle nothing. In short, it is not an exposition or explanation of “Native philosophy” for anyone, but a further attempt to allow something of the reality of that

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6 From what perspective, or on behalf of whom, one speaks.

7 This is a partial example of the hermeneutic circle as discussed in my next chapter.

subject into my being. Unavoidably, my personality lies exposed on its pages.<sup>8</sup>

Why should we care to conduct such conversations? It is a matter of completeness. A chasm separating people is not a small disagreement. It indicates profound mis- or non-understanding, which denies us the opportunity to explore our fuller humanity, for each side is completely "out of touch" with, irrevocably cut off from, the other. When we have come to the edge of such an abyss (and many have not) — when we begin to realize how much we have misunderstood and not understood — we become estranged from ourselves as well. Where we assumed there were solid connections, we find an airy impasse. The loss leaves us feeling torn and incomplete. We cannot rest until somehow a greeting, a touch, and, I would add, some mysterious exchange becomes possible, even while we remain in the inevitable solitudes of our individual existences.

Native people have suffered from this chasm since Columbus. In contrast, the West has paternalistically and aggressively profited from it — materially, at least. Although all are welcome, those to whom this thesis will most appeal may be among the slowly increasing numbers of Westerners whose own self-questioning has led them also to the edge of the abyss, where it becomes evident that such a deep wound in the psyche of humanity can profit no one.

Before we can even think about bridging the gap, we need to see it. I am convinced that the West has not seen it well enough. Earlier, I suggested that the Western and

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<sup>8</sup> I agree with C. G. Jung (1961a) that all writing is speaking about oneself — a fact of great importance in the pursuit of human knowledge, and one which Western philosophy is far from acknowledging (par. 774).

Native views are “very like” different perceptions (not just conceptions) of the world,<sup>9</sup> and I did so for four interrelated exploratory reasons.

### Reason 1: Psychological

First, I wish to shock our Western minds into seriously considering the possibility of two distinct types of reality being perceived in the “same” world. I want to shake us by the shoulders and say, “Stop reasoning! We don’t yet *see* properly, so we can’t just *think* our way across!” Rationalists may object to such an obvious psychological ploy, but I must insist. Precisely because we rely on a specific brand of “logical reasoning” which claims to be necessary and universal, we have consistently, and sometimes with the best of intentions, automatically assumed that we understand, or *can* understand easily enough, Native peoples and what they are about. With this assumption, we have caused more grief than will ever be told.<sup>10</sup>

It is rather like the outlook of a toddler who wanders through a world which seems to revolve around her and speak her language, but who still has everything to learn.<sup>11</sup> I have caught myself and other Westerners being this toddler enough times, to my shame, that I now sometimes glimpse in the infinite patience and courtesy with which most Native people treat us, the demeanour of a responsible parent, and I wonder in how many Native minds we appear as children. If there is any truth to this

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9 This is not a new idea. Alfred Young Man (1994) attributes it to Vine Deloria's *Metaphysics of Modern Existence*, for example. (389). I use “perception” loosely, to mean the very fundamental capacity to detect. More precise definitions are possible, but may miss the point.

10 Witness missionary attempts, the residential school disaster, the so-called planning of reserves and reserve relocations, and either patronizing or patronized Royal Commissions, enquiries, etc..

11 Prototype of the trickster, or vice versa.

characterization, then we are in deep trouble, for we are not ordinary toddlers, but ones with a powerful technology who present ourselves as adults, convinced of our maturity, and convincing others of it. In Jungian terms, we identify with the archetype of wisdom — we believe that we possess the best and most powerful knowledge — and we project our much-needed innocence and naivete onto people whom we call "primitive," meaning "at an earlier stage of development."

Projecting this way in the seventeenth century, Thomas Hobbes cast a dark interpretation on our life in the innocent "state of nature," calling it "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short,"<sup>12</sup> while in the next century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau romanticized it as that loving family state in which "all, being born free and equal, alienate their liberty only for their own advantage" (Hobbes 1958, 253; Rousseau 1993, 801).<sup>13</sup> We have been variously evaluating this so-called "stage in development" ever since. On the other side of the chasm, and again both positively and negatively, Native people have sometimes projected their own maturity onto the West, further cementing our unrealistic relationship.<sup>14</sup> Moral appraisals are not useful in this regard. The fact is that no one can escape the unconscious process of *pro-jection* - a "throwing forth" of material which properly belongs to ourselves. Projection has positive purposes, but in this instance, where it is prolonged and the material is

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12 For future reference, we should note that in 1781 Immanuel Kant agreed (1929, 601).

13 Barzun (1967) states, citing the theatrical literature of the time, that the "noble savage" predated Rousseau as a popular notion in Europe by 100 years, making it contemporaneous with Hobbes, although Rousseau introduced it to philosophy.

14 In 1642-3, the Jesuits recorded that Algonkians, in response to charges that their notions were "foolish", said "Now our dreams and our prophecies are no longer true, — prayer has spoiled everything for us . . . you, you are the cause of it ". (Petroni 1991, 8). An elder and *laibon* , or medicine man, of the mountain Elongis in Uganda told Jung in 1925: "In the old days the *laibons* had dreams, and knew whether there is war or sickness or whether rain comes and where the herds should be driven.' . . . But since the whites were in Africa, he said, no one dreams any more. Dreams are no longer needed because now the English knew everything!" (Jung 1965, 265).

substantial, it only widens the chasm.<sup>15</sup>

What if, then, we are not nearly as sophisticated as we think? What if the Western world view is the youngest child of humanity, and not, as we have assumed, the pinnacle of its wisdom — a technologically precocious yet socially backward fledgling convinced of its own superiority and intoxicated with power? Getting something that goes against all preconceptions through to such a being is not at all like teaching the normal toddler who stands wide-eyed and open to everything new. There is an almost palpable barrier preventing perception of anything not on the path of obsession.<sup>16</sup> One might just as well keep quiet. This is one way in which there can be two views which are “very like” different perceptions of the same world. It is a matter of psychological maturity and/or balance.<sup>17</sup>

## Reason 2: Cultural

Here is another way, and the second of my reasons for focusing on perception. It addresses directly the “coexisting stages in development” fallacy.<sup>18</sup> Palaeontology is able to sketch the evolution of life on earth. It presents us with temporal charts of the

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15 We can minimize this by becoming conscious of what we are projecting and reclaiming it. There are signs of this happening as the Native voice grows stronger in our society. This discussion employs Jung’s view of projection, and touches on his theory of opposites, which is expanded in the next chapter.

16 This attitude is also characteristic of old people who have fossilized into cranks, but their output and influence are not so prolific.

17 We pick up the topic of balance in the next chapter, under Jung’s psychology.

18 The fallacy or theory is a deeply ingrained Western reflex explanation or interpretation of aboriginal culture, and is not some well-discussed theory of a single individual. Hopefully, it is outmoded in places by now, but that is not the case where I live. Where I live, it would seldom occur to people that Native cultures have “done” or “achieved” as much as, or more than, Western cultures.

stages, showing when the first oxygen-breathing animals appeared, when the fish appeared, the amphibians, reptiles and insects, birds, mammals, monkeys, *Australopithecus*, *Homo erectus*, and so on. Archaeologists then carry on the line, adding humanity's cultural "developments" — control of fire, ritual burials, the rise of cities and agriculture, use of the wheel and a writing system, etc. (Korn 1973, 148-9). The chart is a good symbol of our Western concept of history, depicting a fairly straight-line progression from "primitive" to "civilized," and also reminding us of how very recent we are in the grand scheme of things. It is from such accounts that we get our idea of co-existing cultural "stages of development," so that we feel justified, when looking around, to say that cultures without writing or the wheel, for example, are at earlier stages than ourselves.

But the leap from biological to cultural history is very deceptive. *Homo sapiens* is by definition cultural, and culture, as mentioned before, not only conserves, but also changes by means of curiosity, imagination, invention, exploration, appropriation — activities which go off in every direction and, for the most part, defy straight lines. Our biological history, as embryology attests, is encapsulated in each individual zygote, which in a sense relives most of the paleontological part of the chart as it develops into the modern human foetus. The resulting infant then emerges into a culture. One might describe this birth as the accumulated biological wisdom of a single species meeting the accumulated cultural wisdom of a specific group.

This is the story of every being. Where is there room in it for "co-existing stages of development"? The archaeological story has no right to carry the chart on in a straight line. Once culture appears on the scene and begins to spread out, the chart should spread in ever-branching three-dimensional arms or tributaries, so that in any



given "present," many cultures co-exist, each being as old as culture itself, in the sense that each is in theory traceable through its own unique path back to the source<sup>19</sup>.

Certainly there are newer branches on this cultural tree, and my earlier exploration would suggest that the West is such a branch, while the Native world view is more of a main trunk. There will be every imaginable sort of development — branching, grafting, disease, stunted growth, spurts of growth, dying off, rejuvenation. But we cannot say of any given "present" — for example of the branch tips from this year's growth — that some members are at different "stages" than others. In our case at least, even the trunk is traceable up to a green twig, for Native culture is by no means dead.

The reason the West can imagine itself at a more advanced stage than others (besides the brilliance of its material science) may be that it has forgotten its roots and beginnings, having projected them elsewhere, as suggested above. This particular newer branch has amnesia or numbness downward from a point not far from its tip, in sharp contrast to the Native tip, which cultivates not only daily awareness of, but interaction with, many forms of "grandparents," right down to the great earth mother.

What do we think other cultures have been doing while we, the West, have been careening along our technological path? The "co-existing stages in development" theory seems to reply "not much." But as the tree analogy suggests, cultures are *always* doing

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<sup>19</sup> The reader may object to the assumption here that there is only one source. Please keep in mind that I am using its own cultural terms in talking to the West. Every culture has its stories of origin, which account for a time before humans, etc. (see Benton-Banai, 1988, for an Ojibwa summary). The Western scientific evolutionary account is no exception. I hope that the tree analogy helps to maintain the cyclical possibilities in all such stories. The "start" here is the acorn, as it were (although it can be any point in the cycle), and from that come "developments" which may seem linear in the short view, but which are cyclical in the long view. This argument grants the West its evolutionary "one source" premise in order to show how it is inconsistently and self-servingly used.

or being something — a fact to which we seem pitifully blind. What if our faith in science and technology — in *matter* — is so exclusive that it never occurs to us that all along, other cultures have been facing in different directions, busy concentrating on other issues — issues, for example, such as the nature of time (Mayans) or human responsibility in the cosmos (Navaho and many others)?<sup>20</sup>

The archaeological part of the chart not only fails to show all cultures as contemporaneous; it also bases itself entirely on what few scraps of humanly-altered matter have survived the ravages of time. It is, therefore, in typical Western scientific/materialist fashion, woefully ignorant about all human expressions not captured in durable matter — expressions which comprise, to some, almost all of culture.<sup>21</sup> Very rarely do human relationships, purposes, attitudes, beliefs, feelings survive in translatable form in our material artifacts, and the farther away in time or space we are from the originators, the less likely we are to see them when they do.<sup>22</sup> The chart, therefore, is doubly deceiving, equating cultural with technological “advancement.”

This second way in which two views might be “very like” different perceptions of the same world, then, is based on culture. There is an ethnocentric blindness on the

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20 Orientations which put another twist to Native claims that the West is “parochial” and “provincial” — terms applied to its writing of history by Vine Deloria in 1977, with a nod to Arnold Toynbee (*Young Man* 1994, 388, 400).

21 Northern Minnesota Ojibwa Wub-e-ke-niew (1995) gives a good example. He describes the requested meeting of two Western religious ministers with Lakota spiritual leader Ernie Peters in the late 1970s as follows: “Peters was sitting on a log where he had set up an altar as the Plains people do. He was stripped down to the waist, with paintings on his body, and his long braids hung below his belt. . . . ‘you are in my church now. Here it is.’ He motioned with his hands in all directions . . . ‘the sky is the dome of my cathedral. . . . I do not have fancy churches like you do, with all the gold in them. This is the way I live, humbly.” (1995, xlviii).

22 Especially with respect to populations isolated from Europe, such as Australia and the Americas, where cultures evolved for millennia with little or no extra-continental contact.

part of the West, which sees itself as not quite in the human family<sup>23</sup> — not quite connected to it. Preoccupied with progress and the future, believing that it has overcome the past and reached an “advanced” stage due solely to its own intellectual brilliance, it is unable to perceive, let alone appreciate, other human endeavours.<sup>24</sup> It “has no eyes for” for them. That would explain how it can confidently publish the chart of human history with the Western world view at the leading edge.

Columbia University's Jacques Barzun (1967), in his introductory booklet to the Time-Life series “The Great Ages of Man” entitled *What Man has Built*,<sup>25</sup> includes a typical variant of the chart divided into three columns - “West,” “Central” and “East.” At the top of each we see the first “great ages” - Greece, Mesopotamia, and Mohenjo Daro/Harappa respectively. They are represented as differently-coloured lines which start at some particular year and move down the page to end in later years. To either side of each, other coloured lines representing nearby and subsequent parallel cultures appear and disappear down the years, as if out of and into nothing. The lines do not touch one another, and none runs entirely from top to bottom. Only three blue lines cross the last time marker at the bottom of the page — the marker for 1900 A. D.. The blue represents Western imperialism, which is entering the First World War in the west and beginning to “withdraw” in the central and eastern columns. Indigenous cultures, not

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23 To emphasize the extent to which the West's tendency to universalize is offensive to others, there are contemporary Native people such as Ojibwa Dennis McPherson (at Lakehead University), who question that there is such a thing as the “human family” at all, regarding the label as another Western projection.

24 Wub-e-ke-niew sees this clearly: “In Western European linear time, the past vanishes into obscurity, perceived as dimensionless and infinitely small at the vanishing point of linear perspective. Their history becomes what they describe as the dead past, hypothetical and in a sense perennially unknowable, inaccessible in the abstract. The Western Europeans become detached from their continuity in time and thus seemingly insulated from their history, encapsulated in a present reality which has been severed at its roots” (1995, 86).

25 The very language suggests to us now huge omissions from this “view of the world” — omissions we are still struggling to correct thirty years later. If we can leave out so much, what *else* might we be omitting?

much represented, have long since disappeared from the page. This notion of "greatness" presents a sadly monochrome future. We cannot *perceive* what greatness might be left when the west "withdraws," and so except for ourselves, the bottom of the page of history is blank.

### Reason 3: Philosophical

My third reason for stressing perception is philosophical. Consider Kant's island. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) the great Prussian philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) felt that he had "surveyed" the entire "domain" of possible human knowledge. For him, anything that humans can know (as opposed to believe) is strictly confined to our experience of objects as synthesized *in us* by two "forms of intuition" (space and time [1929, 65]), and twelve "categories of the understanding," (including unity, reality, substance and causality [Ibid., 113]). These forms and categories — unconscious ordering principles — are innate to every human being, he argued. By means of them, we structure and synthesize the unknowable other or "noumenon" into "phenomena," or the world as we know it. They are our very means of experiencing anything whatsoever. Until recently, modern science appears to have stayed within their bounds as it fruitfully pursued its understanding of matter. There is indeed much to be "known" within the confines of space, time and the categories. Beyond these confines, however, nothing is graspable, said Kant, although we must naturally wonder and reason about what lies there. Kant summarized his view of all possible human knowledge as follows:

This domain is an island, enclosed by nature itself within unalterable limits. It is the land of truth — enchanting name! — surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, the native home of illusion, where many a fog bank and

many a swift melting iceberg give the deceptive appearance of farther shores, deluding the adventurous seafarer ever anew with empty hopes, and engaging him in enterprises which he can never abandon and yet is unable to carry to completion. (ibid., 257)

In short, Kant sees humanity as stranded on the island of its own universal and “unalterable” limitations — our one haven in the vast ocean of being.<sup>26</sup>

In one sense, Kant is feeding the Western hunger for absolute certainty, so avidly pursued by René Descartes in the previous century; on the island, he says, we can be certain. At the time, this was reassuring, in light of David Hume’s skepticism about our knowing anything at all but an ongoing flux of impressions and ideas for which we give merely habitual — and therefore fictional — explanations. In an opposite sense, however, Kant is featuring the “other,” the “thing-in-itself,” the absolutely “unknowable,” clearly *as* itself for the first time.<sup>27</sup> This mutually exclusive pair — the knowable and unknowable — seems to dwarf Descartes’ mind-body problem. As the island image suggests, it makes (possibly<sup>28</sup>) most of what *is*, inaccessible to us — a concept both humbling and alienating. This new dualism, with its deep implications for both metaphysics and moral theory, changed Western thought irrevocably.<sup>29</sup>

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26 See note 28 below.

27 A century earlier, John Locke mentions an “I know not what” necessary for sensation, but Kant appears to be the first to call it unknowable and to give it full standing as the other player in creating human experience, and as a necessity for ethical theory. (Lewis W. Beck, “phenomena and noumena”, in Honderich 1995, 658).

28 “Possibly” because “existence” is one of Kant’s twelve categories of the understanding, and therefore a distinction *we* contribute to our experience — as is “possibility”!

29 Graham Bird writes that the *Critique* “had an impact that was both immediate and enduring, and few Western philosophers have been able to escape its influence.” He traces this influence to the present, not only through the German post-Kantians (Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Husserl, Heidegger), but also through English and American philosophy (Peirce, Wittgenstein, Strawson, Putnam and Davidson) (“Kantianism” in Honderich 1995, 439-40). Blackburn, too, is confident that Kant is “the greatest philosopher of the last three hundred years” (1994, 206).

What is Kant's island of truth, more precisely, and who is really standing on it? The island, it is claimed, represents all possible human experience — our entire sensible universe, the object of Western science, the phenomenal world — as synthesized by us in an orderly manner by means of the innate *perceptual*<sup>30</sup> and *conceptual* principles aforementioned. Since we *are* these principles in a sense, we can never get off the island; everything we experience will be spacial, temporal, causal, etc.. The “we” in this picture, however, is really what we might call “Kantian man,”<sup>31</sup> or more broadly, “Western man,” despite Kant's universal claim — a claim which Robert C. Solomon has called the “transcendental pretense” because it assumes that “in all essential matters, everyone, everywhere, is the same”; that the self creates the world in an important sense; and that “the reflecting self . . . in knowing itself knows all other selves, and the structure of any and every possible self” (1988, 6). Kant did not delve deeply into other cultures or species, but he believed in the universality of his logic, which, as we shall see, just does not apply to the experience of some human beings. As with most grand Western philosophies, Kant's metaphysics is at once anthropocentric, ethnocentric and “logocentric” in the postmodern sense of placing excessive faith in reason (Blackburn 1994, 224).<sup>32</sup>

Kantian man, still predominant in the Western perspective, is the man of “pure,” or theoretical reason, whose speculations are “true” only when, as in the hard

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30 The “intuitions” of space and time are preconditions for sensation. (Kant 1929, 65 )

31 I use the male form because women played little part in the formation of Western theories beyond their enormous supportive role as bearers of life, child raisers, feeders, washers, and general sustainers for men, including, of course, male theorists - a direct expression of Western imbalance.

32 See also note 39 below. As Marilyn Holly has pointed out (direct communication), “the contemporary ecofeminist school of thought in philosophy has for some time engaged in powerful criticism of the overly logocentric orientation of Western theory and practise.” She recommends the examples found in Zimmerman (1993).

sciences, they pass the test of, or are grounded in, "experience" (Kant 1929, 23).<sup>33</sup> This is Kant's conclusion in the *Critique*: pure reason must not go off on its own without reference to experience; it must stay on the island. "I have therefore found it necessary," he writes in the Preface to the second edition, "to deny *knowledge*, in order to make room for faith" (Kant 1929, 29). And so Kantian man stands on the shore of his island of truth, gazing out at the swirling world of the inexperienceable, yearning to *know* what is out there, but utterly unable to do so; only faith is possible. What is out there includes "God, freedom and immortality" (Ibid.) — subjects which he will never understand or know to be true, although practical reason may work them into useful regulative ideas for deciding right action.

The rigid shores of this island, set *a priori* by the very nature of the inhabitants, form an absolutely impenetrable boundary between truth and illusion, certainty and mystery, knowledge and faith. They seem more like a solid wall than real shores, which *do* change shape. Things roll down to and wash up on real shores, and whole societies of creatures thrive in their shifting environs. They are notoriously prolific, being margins of exchange and transformation between solid and liquid, dry and wet, heights and depths, fur and fin. In Kant's metaphor, there is no possibility for such contact. Identified completely with pure reason, Kantian islanders can never get beyond themselves. Here is another of the West's portraits of itself as isolated and alone, like the blue lines on the chart of life, this time frustrated by repeated "empty hopes" and delusions. There is no direct way to relate to — to touch, experience and know the truth

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33 Kant is also *practically* reasonable, but in a very theoretical way.

of — the mystery.<sup>34</sup>

Compare Kant's human isolation with what James Hallowell calls the "cosmic society" of the Cree and Ojibwa in north-central North America (1992, 74).<sup>35</sup> Here, everything is personal; the human being is one of a seemingly infinite variety of "persons," including the spirits of what the West would call inanimate objects, other animals, and powerful beings from other worlds. Each individual is aware of and relates to these "other-than-human persons" (Ibid., 63-5) as the need arises, some connections being fleeting, others enduring. Kant's time, space, causation, etc. are not inescapable laws. *Being on good terms* is more important than an ordered knowledge of matter.

"Truth" for the Cree and Ojibwa, therefore, can in no way be an island sealed off by human parameters. Although the world which human people commonly share with many other species is described as an island, this island is in the midst of an vast cosmos teeming with life and meaning.<sup>36</sup> "Truth" is the great whole, aspects of which may come to call unexpectedly or by invitation, changing shape and changing you, all quite naturally. As a knowledgeable member of this cosmic society, you, too, may alter form

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34 This is not to deny Kant his own mystical experiences. In the conclusion to his *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) the great thinker writes; "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: *the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me*" (Guyer 1992, 1). It is this typically Western appreciation for universal, rational, abstract — and therefore distant — law, which contrasts so sharply with the interactive social reality of the Native view. "Reflecting upon" is not directly "experiencing". Blackburn exposes Kant's deep Western roots by tracing the identical starry heavens/moral law formula back to St. John Crystostom (d. 407 A. D.), who based it on the nineteenth Psalm (1994, 206).

35 Hallowell writes of the Ojibwa on the Berens River in Manitoba/Ontario, but the term seems clearly to apply more broadly. See Nelson 1988, for example.

36 This is the island created by the trickster with the help of other animals, out of a bit of mud after the great Flood. It sits on the back of a turtle. Many versions of the story exist. One Ojibwa version from the western end of Lake Superior, published for schools, is Benton-Banai 1988, 29-34.



and travel afar (*ibid.*, 66).<sup>37</sup> Occasionally, you may be carried away against your will (*ibid.*, 85). In such a rich social milieu, there is little room for isolation. Wherever one goes there will be *persons*.

The Ojibwa, Cree and other Native peoples seem to have developed a science of relating to the cosmos as co-dwellers with many other forms of life — not, perhaps, an *exact* science, since exact predictability applies to automatons and not to the creative complexity of persons, but a *comprehensive* science, which takes into account vital realities scarcely recognized by the West. Their lives are permeated with *rituals of relationship*: purification, invitation, greeting, honouring, remembering, thanksgiving, celebration, supplication, co-operation, sharing, etc., performed with the aid of thought, word and desire, various plants and animals, rocks, smoke, heat, steam and other gifts of the four elements, fasting, feasting, story, dream and vision, art, music and dance, all combined in ceremonial forms both traditional and original.<sup>38</sup> The cultural context this creates was summarized by West coast Canadian artist Doreen Jensen, who remembered growing up in her Native village “surrounded by poetry, music and choreography” (Todd 1994).

The necessity of rituals of relationship in the Native cosmos is lost on us. We call such expression “art” or “religion” — expendable items on the balance sheet. I call it “science” here, because its long-held necessity implies a broad foundation of

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37 The capacity for metamorphosis is a characteristic of all persons, Hallowell learned among the Berens River Ojibwa. References abound. Saskatchewan Cree Minnie Fraser (b. 1896) tells of a relation who checked on his distant daughter’s family in the form of an owl (Ahenakew 1992, 115, 372). Ilyatjari, spirit doctor among the Pitjantjatjara of central Australia becomes an eagle while guiding his patients toward help (Bosnak 1996, 6).

38 Note the immaterial nature of these cultural tools, which have not needed nor will need digital or any other type of external storage, and, short of complete genocide, cannot be stolen or destroyed by others. It is this form of culture which survives catastrophe. The West has its versions of a few of these, but they are peripheral to its central materialistic orientation.

knowledge which works. The very survival of this science in the Americas, where it was so aggressively attacked, is testament to its profound pragmatic value.

I imagine the shores of Kant's island forming as human persons began insisting more and more on their special position in the community of being — on their uniquely *rational* nature (Aristotle), by means of which they were able to “know” things and the laws governing things with clarity and distinctness (Descartes), and thus to manipulate them to their own advantage, at the expense of what were formerly considered other persons. With great concentration, what seemed to be a universe of “irrational” chaotic, confused, complex and diverse particulars was slowly reduced to one of relatively “rational” predictable, controllable, clear and simple universals. While we, the West, believed that we were expanding ever outward by this process, our self-definition, and consequently the shores of our experience, were actually shrinking and becoming impermeable, until, to exaggerate a bit, the only thing we identified with was cerebration,<sup>39</sup> and the only persons left in our “knowable” world were human — human, that is, as defined *by us* to be *like us*, thereby sometimes excluding Native peoples.<sup>40</sup>

This interpretation uses Kant's own brilliant insight about self-definition (we are bound within our own perceptual/conceptual limitations) and it accepts his

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39 The Pueblo leader Ochwiay Biano, near Taos, New Mexico, told C. G. Jung in 1925 that his people thought all the whites were mad because they said they thought with their heads. The Pueblo think with their hearts, he said (Jung 1961, 248). The very idea is incomprehensible to the West, which champions such materialist philosophers of mind as Daniel Dennett, who sees us as computer-like, and whose “heterophenomenology” claims to be completely scientific and at the same time able to explain “the most private and ineffable subjective experiences” (1991, 72); and Donald Davidson, whose “anomalous monism” holds that all mental events are physical events, and that “without reason there is no thought” (Evnine 1991, 179).

40 For example, the official religious debate in Spain, not settled until 1535, as to whether aboriginal Americans were human (de Victoria 1917). If actions speak louder than words, the debate is not everywhere settled to his day ( McPherson and Rabb 1993, 26-7).

conclusion that we must stay grounded in experience. It merely disagrees that our boundaries are "unalterably" fixed by "nature itself." If our perceptual/conceptual boundaries can be permeable and elastic, then they will affect our "experience" variously; not all people will have the same "experience" in which to stay grounded. If, as in the West and in true Kantian fashion, we define ourselves as purely rational,<sup>41</sup> we throw away any of our capacities which may be judged irrational, and what these might bring us will then become "inexperienceable."

Kant himself provides a fine illustration of this rejection process. I refer, not to his notoriously punctual sedentary lifestyle, but to a decision or oversight he made in 1766, fifteen years before the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in a paper expressing his frustration with both the claims of "spirit-seers," as he called them, and of metaphysicians. In the case of the former, he concluded that "a coherent deception of the senses" was at work, against which "logic can do nothing," and that philosophical insight into related phenomena was not only "unattainable" but also "unnecessary" (1963, 82-4). Here we see the West defining itself.

It was the famous Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) who sparked Kant's interest in the paranormal. In the presence of numerous credible witnesses, Swedenborg performed some amazing feats of clairvoyance, which Kant took pains to investigate through a friend in Copenhagen. There is evidence that he was convinced of their truth (Rabel 1963, 72)<sup>42</sup> until he read Swedenborg's lengthy and obscure *Arcana Celestia*, replete with biblical exegesis based on personal visions. He then seemed put off altogether and embarrassed at his former interest. Against earlier statements to

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41 For Kant, to be rational was to seek unity by obeying lawlike principles (O'Neill 1992, 282-300) which would be, at least in principle, universal.

42 Letter to Fräulein von Knobloch, 1763.

others, and without giving any reason for suddenly dismissing eyewitness accounts, he concluded: "Nowhere do we find confirmation by living witnesses, and so we retreat, somewhat humiliated, from a foolish attempt". So far as Kant was concerned, from then on, both spirit-seers and most metaphysicians were spinning "fairy-tales" (Kant 1963, 81-2).

This is typically Western sleight-of-mind. In my reading of the events, Kant allowed certain publically-confirmed and once-accepted details about the clairvoyance to become buried, as it were, among Swedenborg's unverifiable claims about spirit beings. He then threw out the entire package. Among the three striking examples of clairvoyance which Kant used as examples, there are transgressions of temporal, spacial and causal sequence. The examples are as follows: information known only to one secretive person was presented to her; the location of an object, known only to the dead, was found; and an event occurring in one place was simultaneously described fifty miles away, with great accuracy (Kant 1963, 80; Rabel 1963, 73; Jung 1955, par. 707-9).

The loss of these details was very convenient in light of Kant's later philosophy, which was then in its formative stages. Had they been retained, the assertion, for example, that time and space are presupposed by the senses as "continuous" quanta would not have been possible, with great consequences for Western thought (Kant 1988, 59-63; Kant 1929, 204). As is to be expected in cases of extreme identification, reason, here, seems to become proprietorial and to work against itself; it insists on the universal, editing out whatever does not appear to be so. This is what I mean by something "very like" perception being at work. Kant would never knowingly contradict himself. Yet even when he had in hand information incompatible with his preferred course, it managed to slip through his fingers. In this respect, Kant is very

Western indeed, simply maintaining the process by which we keep the barrier of our "shores" solid.<sup>43</sup>

In the Native world, what Europe almost hysterically saw as miraculous about Swedenborg is not at all unusual. Rather, it is a natural and valuable personal capacity, encouraged, disciplined and developed *within a cultural tradition*, in each individual according to his/her talents and wishes. In 1804, trader George Nelson asked an Ojibwa elder for the whereabouts and condition of two of his men who were missing, and this was accurately provided (Brown 1988, 8). Another of Nelson's stories tells of a northern Saskatchewan Métis "conjurer" who retrieved his own tobacco pouch with the invited help of a spirit. The pouch had been lost in the snow during a hunting trek, and several searches on foot for it had proven useless (Nelson 1988, 33). Anthropologist Irving Hallowell, at a Cree shaking tent ceremony north of Lake Winnipeg in 1930, was correctly told events that would occur on his trip home (Hallowell 1967, 4). In the mid-1960's, southeastern Saskatchewan Ojibwa Felix Panipekeesick tells of finding a missing team of horses in someone's distant barn, again with with the help of a spirit (Tarasoff 1980, 80).

Examples abound in the literature, but the West cannot let them in. They are anomalous, violating what we "know" to be the predictive laws of the universe. Philosophical insight into them, as Kant decided in 1766, remains "unattainable" and "unnecessary." And so they drop from our awareness, or become cause for some

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43 Western philosophy does this also by ignoring the "irrational" source of many of its ideas, as in the cases of Descartes' dreams, St. Thomas Aquinas' late revelation, and especially Socrates' trances, dreams, prophetic abilities and personal connection to the gods, which he honoured all his life, and which are recorded in many places, but which are, in my experience, consistently overlooked in philosophical presentation. (See Xenophon's *Memorabilia* and *Reflections of Socrates* . . . , and Plato's *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Apology*, or *Crito* .)

ephemeral and/or cultish fascination on the societal fringe.<sup>44</sup> Clairvoyance and various other so-called “paranormal” phenomena are not necessarily central to the Native view either, but they have a natural place there — they “fit in” with the cultural view as a whole. Until the West can account for them in its own cosmology, as opposed to simply dismissing them, it should not lose sight of them. Indeed, the very fact that we have difficulty with them may be pointing to something very important about us.

I think the difficulty points to the solid barrier-shores of our Kantian island, through which, if these stories are true, something is leaking, suggesting fundamental flaws in our interpretation of things. Thus seen, Kant’s island expresses the West at its worst. With pretensions to objectivity, it is an artificial island defined by exclusion; its so-called shores are really a glass wall through which we see all that we have rejected. At our worst, we have rejected most of the mystery in our own being and in the universe, finding nothing of value in fog and swift-melting icebergs — harbingers of natural change if ever there were ones, and symbols of the very irrational, chaotic, confused, complex and diverse particulars banished by us in our quest for exact truth.

Were the wall to dissolve, our understanding would certainly lose some of its clarity. The banished fog of uncertainty<sup>45</sup> would thin out across our land, allowing us to detect territory beyond the edge of pure reason, and enticing us to travel past the swift melting ice pooling around us to a natural shore — one, as described earlier, where change and exchange are endemic. To reach this shore would be to rediscover the place

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44 Swedenborgian societies survive to this day. I found one on Newbury Street in Boston.

45 I am aware that since Einstein’s relativity theory, Heisenberg’s “uncertainty principle”, the discovery in quantum mechanics that “just by looking, we can change what we see”, superstring theory, chaos/antichaos theory, etc., science is moving in an apparently similar direction, although I wonder how much pure reason is actually relaxing its exclusive grip in these developments (Malone 1994, Barlow 1991, Lewis 1992). The same reservation applies for most of the “More than a Century of Psychical Research” in the West. (Kurtz 1985, xi - xxiv ).

from which we came and to reconnect with the human family — a topic pursued in further chapters.

The wall around Kant's island is what northern Minnesota Ojibwa Wub-e-ke-niew calls "the 'glass wall' of Western European culture" (1995, 78) against which Native people eternally bump, as they try to live in this land with us. It is another expression of the chasm, and it suggests on which side it originated.

#### Reason 4: Testimonial

My last and most important reason for emphasizing the chasm is the voice of the Native people themselves, who for hundreds of years have been saying that we do not see. I do not mean the sort of statements we get from Wounded Knee or Oka, the desperation of which cannot easily be ignored and should shock us into serious self-examination. Nor do I mean the necessarily urgent rhetoric of organized political groups. I mean the quiet, ongoing statements that Native people have made since we arrived, which mere common decency would incline us to hear, were we really listening. Such statements are all the more remarkable for being, when in English, courageous attempts to convey deep understandings and feelings in a radically foreign language. As Dennis McPherson and Douglas Rabb have pointed out, Native people "have had to learn our language-games because, with rare exceptions, in our [the West's] ethnocentric arrogance we have not bothered to understand them in their own terms" (McPherson and Rabb 1993, 15).<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The last of my examples, Wub-e-ke-niew, illustrates perfectly the increasing Native mastery of Western "language-games". As he sadly implies, however, no matter what language is used, it still a matter of eyes to *see*.

Below are five examples taken from the literature by and on Native people, presented simply to assist in my argument that there really is a chasm.<sup>47</sup> Two come to us through Western translation, and illustrate, to my mind, how the message — the truth — may slip into the most foreign of views and languages as plain as day, needing only eyes to see .

From pre-1823 western Cree and Ojibwa

This is a response to George Nelson's literal-minded questioning of any possible efficacy in what we call "sympathetic magic" (using a leather effigy upon which root powder was placed at the spot where harm was intended), the "universal" answer, "with little variations," from Native people was as follows (Nelson's translation):

. . . it is not the root alone, but with the assistance of that one of his Dreamed that is most powerful, and most fond of him: he! you white people you know not; you are consummately ignorant of the Power of our Great medicine men. Many things might I tell you much more surprising — but you do not believe these trifles, how much less, then, those you do not know? [Nelson's frustrated reaction was, "What then is to be done! how do with, what say, to a people so blind, so infatuated!"] (Nelson 1988, 66)

From Saskatchewan Cree and Anglican canon Edward Ahenakew (1885-1961)

This is from a manuscript written in the 1920s, but not published until well after Edward's death, despite repeated attempts during his lifetime:

White people have not understood and they have condemned the [Sun] dance. I see only blessing from it; and when it ends, when all that can be

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<sup>47</sup> Petrone (1991) contains many examples from across the centuries.



done is finished, there is everywhere a spirit of deep reverence and contentment that lasts for days. . . . I have listened to the talk of the white men's clergy, and it is the same in principle as the talk of our Old Men, whose wisdom is not from books but from life and from God's earth. Why has the white man no respect for the religion that was given to us, when we respect the faith of other nations? (Ahenakew 1995, 46-7)

From Pueblo Ochwiay Biano (Mountain Lake) near Taos, New Mexico, in 1925

This was spoken to Carl Jung (Jung's rendition):

. . . how cruel the whites look. Their lips are thin, their noses sharp, their faces furrowed and distorted by folds. Their eyes have a staring expression; they are always seeking something; they are always uneasy and restless. We do not know what they want. We do not understand them. We think that they are mad. (Jung 1961b, 247-8)

From southeastern Saskatchewan Ojibwa Peter George (b. 1874) in the 1960s

This comes from the very end of a long interview taped, in which he has generously tried to answer many typical anthropological questions on "ceremonialism":

I can tell you lots of things — maybe one month. When I finish, you still wouldn't understand. You don't understand what this for. That's why I just tell you few things. I don't wanna say too much, now, but I got okay for it, you see. (Tarasoff 1980, 188)

From northern Minnesota Ojibwa Wub-e-ke-niew in 1995

The *Midé* is not a secret — but enculturation into Western European civilization usually prevents people from seeing or understanding it. I have been present when *Midé* elders told interested and open-minded White people things about the *Midé*, in English, and the person to whom

the elder was talking did not realize they were being told anything.

...

If anthropologists came into our community with courtesy and respect, trying to find common ground rather than defining us in their terms, they would see us differently than they have.

...

Nearly every possible loophole through which a person might catch a glimpse of what the *Anishinahbæó'jibway* and other nonheirarchical peoples understand as reality has been blocked by the diversionary tactics, re-interpretation, automatic mind-blocking processes of denial, and emotionally-laden stereotypes. Because of this culturally-imposed blocking of information which is threatening to the hierarchy, I would be greatly surprised if even one percent of the people who read this understand what I am writing. I am not questioning that the people who are reading this are intelligent people. I am simply observing that the boxes of compartmentalized thinking into which the heirs of Western Civilization are forced by their culture, are extremely difficult to escape. . . . Standing outside the system, this structure is obvious. (Wub-e-keniew 1995, 8-9, 78, 199)<sup>48</sup>

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48 Thanks to D. Rabb for providing me with a copy of this very articulate man's book.

## I I THE ISLAND: Another Way of Seeing

In presenting the case that the chasm between Native and Western world views runs so deep as to border on the perceptual, I may seem to have vilified the West somewhat and idealized the Native view. For this I make little excuse, even while recognizing that any "view" or interpretation of the world must have both positive and negative potential. The facts certainly support my apparent bias; blatant moral wrongs have been committed by the West with respect to Native peoples and should be enough to silence any self-aggrandisement. Moral considerations, however, are not my justification. Rather, since I am standing on the Western side of the rift desiring that it be narrowed, I must be eager to *listen*, and open to *self-examination*. These are two fundamental aspects of the method employed in this thesis, with no great pretense to objectivity. The aim is not to enter the moral arena in order to pit view against view, but, assuming that there must be movement on my part, to place my own view under scrutiny in the light of what can be gleaned from the "other."

As already suggested, this thesis is an exercise or process, and I have found it useful, in discussing its method philosophically, to borrow some concepts from one of the "many recent process philosophies" (Crusius 1991, 95), *philosophical hermeneutics*. The previous chapter exemplifies my method, which is related to, and considerably expands, the notion of the "hermeneutic circle."

### The Hermeneutic Circle

Here is Simon Blackburn's definition of the hermeneutic circle, from *The Oxford*

*Dictionary of Philosophy:*

The problems in the process of interpretation that arise when one element, for instance in a text, can only be understood in terms of the meanings of the others or of the whole text, yet understanding these other elements, or the whole text, in turn presupposes understanding of the original element. Each can only be understood in the light of the others. Similarly, we may hold that the past can only be understood in the light of the present, and the present only understood in the light of the past. The phenomenon has preoccupied German thinkers from Schleiermacher and Dilthey through to Heidegger and Gadamer. In Anglo-American philosophy a similar problem arises from the holism of meaning, but is not generally felt to pose a fundamental difficulty: as Wittgenstein said, light dawns gradually over the whole. (1994, 172)

The circle, then, starts off as a *problem* about “the holism of meaning,” in which a *process* — a seemingly endless looping back and forth between and among the whole and the parts in search of understanding — is implied. It is a statement about the internal interconnectedness and complexity of “texts” or history, and the difficulties in interpreting them, referring to what Christopher Norris calls “the inherent circularity of all understanding (Honderich 1995, 353).

In making sense of life as it unfolds — whether it is seen as “text” or not — consciousness or “ego” does not work from an objective vacuum. It already stands on, or is grounded in, a largely unconscious *pre-interpretation* historically determined on the basis of culture. Hans-Georg Gadamer, in *Truth and Method* (1960), describes this as our prejudice, preunderstanding, or bias — an indispensable “*horizon*” of what Crusius aptly summarizes as “practices, meanings, values and preferences” within which each

of us continually lives and thinks.<sup>49</sup> Norris calls it a a “horizon of intelligibility,” a “tacit foreknowledge that alerts us to salient features of the text which would otherwise escape our notice,” and outside of which, conscious interpretation would be altogether impossible (Honderich 1995, 353).

This “horizon,” enabling us to see and yet circumscribing our view, encloses us within our unexamined pre-interpretation, or story about all that is. Only vaguely aware of it at best, we presume that this story is internally consistent and objectively “true,” while all along it is sending out “spontaneous, unscrutinized projections,” so that, as Crusius states, the world of people, things and events comes to presence as prejudged — as “the always already understood” (Crusius 1991, 38). Things fit into (and stay out of) our view suspiciously nicely. This is a good description of the way in which Western prejudice prevents us from seeing the chasm discussed earlier.

We can think of ourselves, then, as a prejudice — an unconscious “background of foregone interpretative assumptions” (Norris in Honderich 1995, 353) which largely reshapes the world to fit itself. Philosophical hermeneutics recommends that we alter this process. It suggests that, instead of simply allowing the world to “fit” our projections, we allow *ourselves* to “fit” the world as well, through genuine dialogue with the world *as other*, putting at risk “the very prejudices that make our world and constitute our truths” (Crusius 1991, 38).<sup>50</sup> Such a dialogue is seen as two-directional, moving both backward in time toward our *pre*-understandings, and forward toward some new understanding of the other. It is what I consider to be the hermeneutic

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49 On “horizon” (Husserl’s term), Kögler recommends Gadamer (1989) 242-54, 302-7 (Honderich 1995, 374). Gadamer is expanding on Martin Heidegger’s concept of “preunderstanding” in *Being and Time* (1927). See also Crusius (1991) 33, 96.

50 Of course the “fitting” is never complete. As Crusius (1991) explains, “we leave the conversation also in difference, but with an increased mutual understanding and common ground” (95).

circle *as process* — a dialogue, not only between future and past, but also between outer and inner worlds. As Norris puts it, despite the constriction of our horizon, “every text (and every reading of it) in some way manages to pass beyond our ‘horizon of intelligibility,’” so that *expansion* is possible (Honderich 1995, 353). In Norris’ view, Gadamer in particular portrays the hermeneutic circle as “an *ongoing cultural conversation*” (ibid.).

In the hermeneutic circle, we alternately approach and withdraw from *the world*, “*the other*,” or what Heidegger calls *the object* with which we subjects dwell in the “house of Being” (Heidegger 1977, 193).<sup>51</sup> As we face *outward* and forward, automatically projecting our biases, we also try to open to the other as possibly “not me,” questioning and listening expectantly. This way, we are less likely to gloss over, reshape or ignore what might seem strange. Encountering something which does not “fit,” we then turn *inward* and backward with it, stepping, not into a God’s-eye view, but into the very prejudices we project, and there we attempt to give this strangeness genuine standing by permitting *it* to question *us*. Again we listen. This self-examination may expose habitual blindnesses, inconsistencies, errors, unfairnesses, even cruelties, causing embarrassment, pain and change: “The learned is suffered,” says Crusius (1991, 39). After learning occurs and we face outward again, it is with new eyes; our slightly altered horizon now projects somewhat different biases. We present our revised understanding, again trying to remain open to the other, and so the cycle of dialogue — the hermeneutic circle — continues.

The process is one of intentional learning in which we allow ourselves to be complex changing parts in a complex changing whole. By entering this circle, we stop standing above the great story and consent to be included in it; we enter Heidegger’s

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51 As reported in Crusius (1991) 21. See the next paragraph for more.

"house of Being." *Being*, in philosophical hermeneutics, is tradition, or "what is handed down to us," and *truth* is the "event" of its "disclosure" or "unhiddenness" through the language of a particular time and place (*Ibid.*, 95). To realize that we are in the house of Being is to thaw out that Western numbness toward our origins mentioned earlier. It is to remember our massive "immersion in the authority of traditions" (*Ibid.*, 34), and to seek out and appreciate those fleeting moments of truth, when we are able to make conscious, and make choices about, fragments of our unconscious heritage. Such moments are especially accessible at the borders between cultures .

Inner expansions precipitated by the hermeneutic circle may be accompanied by an outer "fusion of horizons" with "the other" as well — a new mutual understanding, which, like expansion itself, is never finalized (Gadamer 1989, 273-74)<sup>52</sup>. Crusius writes about the resulting "truth":

It happens in "the between," among us, as we attempt to enlarge our horizons by incorporating the insights of the other, even as the other is challenged by what we ask and assert. Truth is whatever emerges from the dialogue, wherever we come to rest this time. (1991,39)

It is "truth as never-ending inquiry," forever "inseparable from bias" (*Ibid.* 38-9).

To pick up a metaphor from chapter I, the "horizon" might be visualized as a sort of island comprised of "what is handed down to us" - our island of understandings and preconceptions. In the West, at the broadest level, this would be Kant's rigid pseudo-island of empirical science or "truth," structured according to the inviolable laws of space, time, causation, etc., to which pure reason is strictly confined. Each constituent Western culture would cover most of this territory, with odd sections missing here or there, while the horizon of each individual person would approximate

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<sup>52</sup> As reported in Crusius (1991) 21.

that of his or her culture more or less ("more" as well as "less" because some individuals and groups will straddle conventional horizons). All of these overlapping individual and cultural horizons would fall within and define the Western view. In this land, we the inhabitants see (are conscious of) only the surface, and we largely *agree* on what we see. Generally, like Kant, we would be shocked to learn that our view stands on and originates from our deep cultural past, and not some eternal truth.

Philosophical hermeneutics agrees with Kant that most of such an island — its underground supportive substance, and the *reason* we can agree — is "hidden" (unconscious and unquestioned) and that an uncovering of at least some of this is possible.<sup>53</sup> But unlike Kant, it recognizes the island's subjective, cultural aspects, so that the uncovering or making conscious of buried material is seen as expanding the boundary, rather than merely exposing something within. Uncovering a preconception somehow changes or adds to the whole island, and has effects beyond its borders. This hermeneutics relocates "truth" from its Kantian position on the island itself to "the between" which spans the gap separating different horizons, and transforms it from an unalterable fact to a transforming "event." It seems to offer a sort of bridging mechanism, by which we might span a chasm such as the one discussed in chapter I.

I have presented this thumbnail sketch of the hermeneutic circle as I see it, because it seems to describe, more nearly than anything else in what I know of Western philosophy, my own experience and the method employed in this thesis. As will soon be argued, however, the circle is missing a crucial dynamic which might reduce its

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<sup>53</sup> Kant believed that metaphysics should be "the science of the boundaries which circumscribe Reason", or the study of what makes the island an island, which involved uncovering the categories or logical laws underpinning it (1963, 83), and he asserted that in the *Critique of Pure Reason* he had uncovered ("solved") or provided the key to *every* metaphysical problem (1929, 10)! Also "hidden" on Kant's island would be all that science, including psychology, has yet to discover empirically.



ultimately arbitrary meandering — a point which will be picked up later, along with my criticism that philosophical hermeneutics, too, is logocentric. It also has an air of universality about it, suggesting not only that this is a *the* way to understanding, but that all persons or cultures have the same endless amount of “expanding” to do, or that in dialogue, *both* sides expand into “the between.” As well, I have trouble with its stated specific ambition in the world, which is to move “‘forward’ toward achieving a common understanding, toward agreement, or at least toward recognition of exactly what we disagree about and why” (Crusius 1991, 38-9).

This bears more of a Western rationalist agenda than I prefer. Rilke’s less aggressive “greeting” and “touch” seem more respectful of difference to me, and thus more apt to keep our eyes and ears open. Eventually, agreements may or may not occur; they certainly *need* not occur. Simply accepting and appreciating the other for what it is, without interfering — which is what I think Rilke means by “protecting” — is a liberating “activity” of which the West still has much to learn.

While the hermeneutic circle might well seem elemental to Native thinkers, I regard it as an important and necessary development on the part of the West, making it more possible for us to to perceive the unseen chasm. Basically, it recognizes the enormous role of the unconscious in our lives — a healthily humbling realization. It acknowledges that we are rooted in our history, and that it is only through relating to that history that we can expand or change the horizon it creates. Thus it counteracts our tendency toward amnesia, encouraging us to reconnect with the tree of human culture and thereby grow onward more consciously and maturely. It teaches us to appreciate context, and to listen both inwardly and outwardly — skills at which we are still very inexperienced, in sharp contrast to Native people.

To illustrate, years ago, while I was racing along the north shore of Lake Superior in my Volkswagen Beetle, a headlight went out just as it was getting dark. I pulled into the nearest gas station anxious and fearful, for I had planned to drive all night and did not relish the thought of covering the long, lonely distance one-eyed. Even worse, it was Sunday, a day when many services were customarily unavailable. There was only one person in charge of the place — a middle-aged Native man, probably from the local Ojibwa community. After I had blurted out my story, he maintained what seemed to me evasively long silences between non-committal answers to my pointed questions. Despite my efforts to direct his attention, he did not even pretend to look at the headlamp. It seemed obvious that he was resisting any engagement whatsoever in my predicament. My impatience grew until, exasperated, I inquired, "So, you don't want to fix it?" More silence. I was about to move on when he spoke. "I am not very knowledgeable about this kind of car," he said. "There's a place in Wawa where they would know better what to do." Embarrassed, I took his direction, thanked him, and went on to receive the needed service precisely as anticipated.

I suspect that this type of meeting between our two solitudes is an old story, and I leave it to the reader to appreciate what it possibly demonstrates about differences in prejudgement, listening, breadth of view, sense of place, respect, generosity, etc.. On the basis of experience, I am convinced now that this man was anything but unconcerned or disengaged from start to finish.

As philosophical hermeneutics suggests, we on the Western edge of the chasm have to start from where we are, using our own language. We cannot leap over the gap and suddenly adopt concepts and practices which may seem more attractive than our own. That would be to live inauthentically, falling back into amnesia. With our own resources, as they are informed through some such process as the hermeneutic circle, we must do

what we can from the place where we presently stand, until our uncoverings are sufficient to expose some sort of bridge or "common ground," as Wub-e-ke-niew has already called it .

### **Some Basics of Jungian Psychology**

The Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung (1875 -1961) was one Western innovator who spent his life working outward from his side of the chasm. Although always interested in other cultures, he did not intend specifically to reach out to the Native view; he was simply refusing to ignore or take seriously various facts denied or minimized by the West — facts such as meaning in dreams and myths, the correlation between mental and physical states, and "coincidence." He made a point of studying these, not only to keep his own view complete and to serve his patients well, but also so that he might present them convincingly to the West in its own language. He did an admirable job in voluminous publications both scientific and popular, providing clear multiple descriptions of where he went and how he got there.<sup>54</sup> As might be expected, however, he did not have an easy time convincingly describing places traditionally blotted out of the Western horizon.

The human-being-in-the-world, described from a Jungian perspective, still sounds strange to the Western ear. Oddly, it is as though Jung stands across the same chasm that separates us from the Native view, for both he and Native people present the same or similar "strange," "incomprehensible," or "useless" information to us. But since Jung was always the first to insist that we connect with our own past and carry it

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<sup>54</sup> It does not always *seem* clear at first, due to the aforementioned systemic blindness and the genuine complexity of the subject when expressed in contemporary Western thought.

forward, rather than adopting the ways of others, he never ceased being thoroughly European. It must be, then, that he actually expanded his "horizon" so that it overlapped areas known to Native people. For this reason, he should be of help in our own efforts to touch the Native "other."

When one begins to understand what Jung was talking about, his way of seeing, which is a comprehensive view in itself, becomes a sort of "method." It has increasingly become my "method" since I first started reading him years ago. It might be called "How to Find your Own Method," were there specific steps to write down. But there are none. His way of seeing turns out to be a way to live which is different for every person. It is not really Jungian, either, if I am correct in linking it with the Native view. Rather, it is a sort of map or cosmology which addresses what it is to be human in very broad and yet practical terms, which Jung, through the struggle of his own life, managed to rediscover and make accessible to modern Western individuals. I believe that he would have failed, had he not undertaken the prodigious task of delving deeply into the European past, in the spirit of philosophical hermeneutics.

I now take up the daunting task of trying to present this way of seeing in a few pages. The ideas expressed below, which Jung insists must not be engraved in stone, are the result of massive clinical and theoretical work performed over the very long period of his lifetime. Jung focuses primarily on the *personality* or *person* — also a focus in the Native view, as previously suggested — and that is what is discussed below.

We start with a basic *unity*. The person is "an unknowable living being, concerning the ultimate nature of which nothing can be said except that it vaguely expresses the quintessence of life" (Jung 1960, par. 619). As if in answer to René Descartes and in seeming sympathy with Baruch Spinoza, Jung continues, in the same

passage from 1926:

This living being appears outwardly as the material body, but inwardly as a series of images of the vital activities taking place within it. They are two sides of the same coin, and we cannot rid ourselves of the doubt that perhaps this whole separation of mind and body may finally prove to be merely a device of reason for the purpose of conscious discrimination - an intellectually necessary separation of one and the same fact into two aspects, to which we then illegitimately attribute independent existence. (Ibid.)

This is a good description of Jung's theory of opposites. The intellect, whose job it is to discriminate, must distinguish body from mind, or *matter* from *psyche*, and so we have this ostensible pair of opposites, inseparable because they are really aspects of the same thing. The *inseparability of the opposites* is a key Jungian concept, and one which has an extremely insightful balancing effect when adopted as a way of seeing. He is saying much the same thing thirty-one years later, in 1957, perhaps giving matter a bit more weight:

. . . the psyche, if you understand it as a phenomenon occurring in living bodies, is a quality of matter. . . . this matter [of our bodies] has another aspect, namely a psychic aspect. It is simply the world seen from within. It is just as though you were seeing into another aspect of matter. . . . Old Democritus talked of the *spiritus insertus atomis* . . . the psyche is a quality which appears in matter. It doesn't matter whether we understand it or not, but that is the conclusion we come to . . . . (1977, 202)

Note that Jung is not restricting the psyche to human beings alone, but attributes it to "living bodies," a category which may stretch past what is obvious to the West (as the term "*atomis*" might imply). This is consistent with the Native idea that "person" may include other than human beings.<sup>55</sup> Jung's work, however, concentrated on the

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55 See especially Hallowell (1992) 61-5 on "other than human persons".

*human* person.

Although the opposites are part of a unity, Jung is more interested in the dynamics of opposition itself, so in that sense only, he might be regarded as a dualist.<sup>56</sup> With respect to *the necessity of opposition* for consciousness, he agrees with Jakob Boehme (1575-1624), whom he quoted in a paper from 1898, when he was twenty-three years old:

Without opposition no thing can become apparent to itself; for if there is nothing in it to resist it, it goes forever outward and does not enter again into itself: But if it does not enter again into itself, as into that whence it originally went out, it knows nothing of its first condition. (1983, par. 202)

This is a psychological application of the general rule of nature professed by Empedocles (c. 493-433 BC), that multiplicity arises from “enantiology” — from the opposition of “strife” and “love,” or the tendencies to action and rest within anything — a notion which the youthful Jung claimed we have enshrined as a biological principle in the modern “*struggle for existence*” concept (Ibid., par. 203, 206-7).<sup>57</sup> According to Jung, then, a *tension of the opposites* is central to the dynamism of the person.

Of the first pair of opposites (*matter and psyche*), Jung is naturally and professionally more interested in the psyche — the mind, or what he calls the subjective factor (1977, 302). If he had a mission in life, it was to convince the West of the

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<sup>56</sup> Which I think is a secondary position for him. In my view, Jung is a monist first and foremost.

<sup>57</sup> I do not know whether Jung realized that Empedocles held some form of doctrine of the evolution of the species, as does our science (Blackburn 1994, 118).

psyche's reality and significance.<sup>58</sup> He insisted that it was a world as vast and potent as the external world, in which, as in the external world, consciousness plays a small but important role.

As indicated above, Jung described the psyche as "a series of images" of inner activities (a characterization to which we will refer later), and as the world perceived "from within," which defines his meaning of the term "subjective."<sup>59</sup> Conversely, we could say that the outer world is "objective" in that it is perceived "from the outside." Within these definitions it is permissible to talk of a "subject," an "object" and their "contents." Thus there are two different worlds, although they are somehow intimately connected — an inner subjective world full of thoughts, judgments, memories, sensations, emotions, images, etc., and an outer objective world full of trees, events, photographs, violins, weather and cities. Both contain other persons.

Consciousness, ego, or the person we believe ourselves to be, is poised between, partakes of, and participates in, both worlds at once. Which one takes precedence at any given time depends on our view, or the direction we face. This is what Jung calls "attitude" (Jung 1971, par. 687). With our awareness turned inward toward the subjective psyche, we are *introverted*; turned outward into the objective world, we are *extraverted*. This is an expression of the psyche/matter or inner world/outer world opposition with reference to the individual's vista, as it were. When you stop catching the meaning of the words on this page and start musing on some memory or idea of your own, you have switched from extraversion to introversion, and the opposition of the two

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58 In a letter to Dr. Edward Edinger just before he died, Jung wrote: "I have failed in my foremost task to open people's eyes to the fact that man has a soul, that there is a buried treasure in the field, and that our religion and philosophy are in a lamentable state." As a Jungian, Edinger knew that the treasure was the soul - the unconscious side of the psyche (Segaller 1989, Part I).

59 Otherwise, as we shall see, there is much that is quite "objective" about it.

becomes apparent when you try to do both at once. Each of us, Jung observed, has an inborn tendency to favour one attitude over the other, and that bias is a primary characteristic of our individual psyche.

The conscious person, then, is at least a point of view — a point of awareness and attention with a direction of focus and slight attitudinal preference. It has its own “contents,” which would include whatever we know we can do and believe we are, as well as whatever we are currently remembering, wanting, understanding, feeling etc.. This ego is one pole in the next pair of opposites — the *conscious/unconscious* polarity — which expresses Jung’s primary subdivision of the subjective factor or psyche. As persons, we are not just consciousness. We are attached to the other side of consciousness — the *un* conscious — which consists of:

everything of which I know but of which I’m not at the moment thinking;  
everything of which I was once conscious but have now forgotten;  
everything perceived by my senses but not noted by my conscious mind;  
everything which, involuntarily, and without paying attention to it, I feel, think, remember, want, and do; all future things that are taking shape in me and will sometime come to consciousness. . . . (Segaller 1989, Part I)

In terms of “content,” one can see that this is a very large world compared to ego. As it happens, this “other side,” being everything in the personality which consciousness is *not*, takes on a personality of its own, “complementing” consciousness. Now we have two distinct personalities, one conscious and the other not, which are inseparable opposites in the sense that each supplies what the other is missing in order to make a viable and complete psychic organism. The large unconscious part is what



Jung called "soul" (1971, par. 797).<sup>60</sup> Complementarity or compensation are Jung's more precise terms (replacing "opposition") for the dynamic relationship of the two. It turns out that this pair of personalities in the psyche, while often in serious conflict, need not always be so; they stand in compensatory (not strictly oppositional) relationship to one another, and may thus come to some approximation of balance.

Jung's general (not necessarily exclusive) rule of compensation follows directly from the image of a pair of opposites in tension. Since the two form a whole and are inseparable, if one side gains ground or strength, it will do so at the expense of the other. The fact that Jung often included the the eastern concepts of *yin* and *yang* in his amplification of the opposites<sup>61</sup> has led me to explore the circular *yin -yang* symbol, and I have found it strikingly helpful in illustrating the concept of compensation, as well as other ideas to be touched upon later. I am using the symbol here simply as a diagram, without examining its eastern connotations, many of which are compatible or identical nevertheless.<sup>62</sup>

One can visualize the compensation rule in action by imagining that the light half of the *yin -yang* symbol, to the right, represents consciousness or ego, and the dark half, to the left, represents the unconscious. As a matter of fact, Jung found that the

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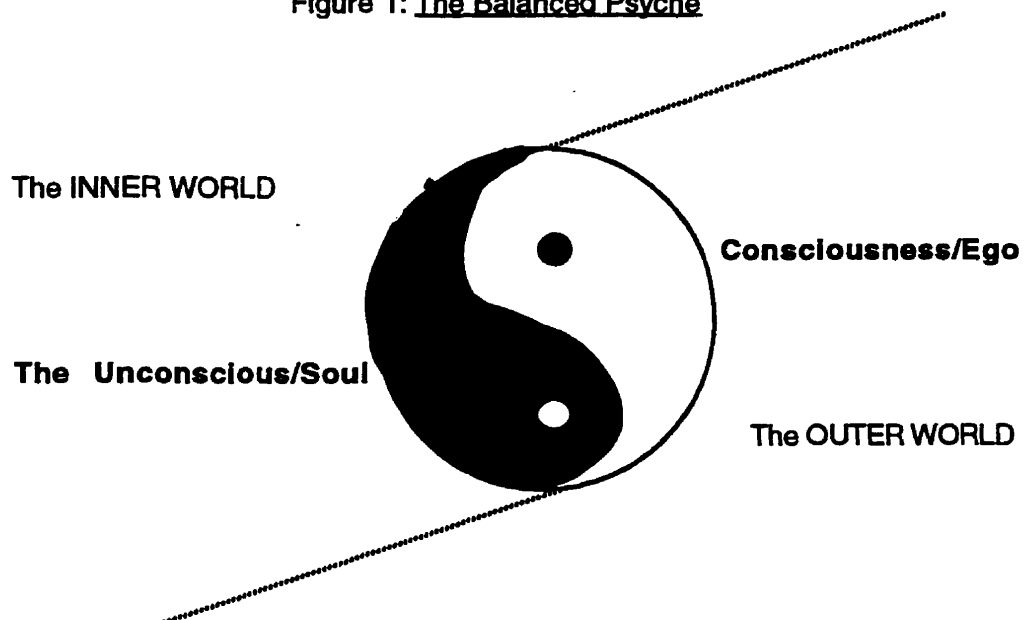
<sup>60</sup> Jung distinguished various layers or components of the unconscious, to which he gave other names, but as a personality complementary to consciousness and representing the entire other side of the individual psyche, "soul" is the most appropriate Jungian appellation.

<sup>61</sup> There are many references. See, for example, Jung (1960) par. 865, where the pair are seen as (among other things) expressing the union of "the psychic inner world and the physical outer world".

<sup>62</sup> To objections that I am fortuitously introducing extraneous material here or desecrating others' symbols, I can only say that this type of association is part of the "method," and that fundamental symbols such as this amazing one from the east are powerful enough to unite many meanings with no loss of integrity. Good associations are meaningful and often, in the end, quite logical. In each symbol, the individual will find his/her own set of most meaningful associations, whether culturally derived or not.

opposites light/dark and right/left are ancient and widespread symbols for, among other things, the conscious/unconscious distinction, as is the top/bottom polarity with reference to mandalas,<sup>63</sup> of which this is an example.<sup>64</sup> The diagram shows *tension* (polarization, and mutual exclusivity), but also *harmony* or *balance* (order), each side nestled into the other, each assuming mirror-identical shapes and sizes. In the sketch below, the two greater worlds are indicated, to show how ego may “face” outward or inward.

Figure 1: The Balanced Psyche



We must think of the two sides as balanced or equal, not in amount of “contents,” for we have already observed that the unconscious seems to contain much more than consciousness, but in *strength*, *value* or *participation* in the ongoing life of the whole psyche or circle. We might think of them as energies which have come, not to stasis, but to an ideal working relationship. The dividing line pulses back and forth minutely.

<sup>63</sup> Literally “circle”. See discussion below about “island”.

<sup>64</sup> For light/dark, Jung (1959a) par. 284; for right/left, *ibid.*, par. 570; for top/bottom; *ibid.* par. 538. These are just samples of many possible references.

“Contents” — thoughts, memories, feelings, etc. — pass through it in both directions as need be, much like nutrients and waste<sup>65</sup> in the osmosis of a healthy cell.<sup>66</sup> This is a picture of compensation as pure complementation — the perfectly-balanced psyche — impossible in reality, but a goal toward which to strive, perhaps.<sup>67</sup>

Now imagine consciousness becoming inflated with self-importance and attempting to claim the whole area of the circle for itself. The curved dividing line hardens, resisting further exchange, and pressure builds in the unconscious, for there is nowhere for it to go as ego pushes out. Stress within the psyche mounts: if the circle is not to break, something has to give. We see that each half of the psyche contains at its core the small seed of its opposite, and when tension becomes too great, the unconscious flows into this seed, enlarging its influence and becoming, as it were, the enemy within. Compensation has now become open opposition, and one’s unconscious personality steps into broad daylight, undermining conscious intention. This state of affairs begins when we start forgetting our keys, misspelling words, and saying or doing other small things contrary to our will.<sup>68</sup> At the extreme, it ends in chronic obsession, compulsion, delusion, etc. which may eventually stop conscious functioning altogether. As the

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65 “Waste” is a poor term here. In the psyche, nothing is “waste” in the sense of “meaningless”, but for many reasons, content constantly falls out of and becomes “unavailable” to consciousness.

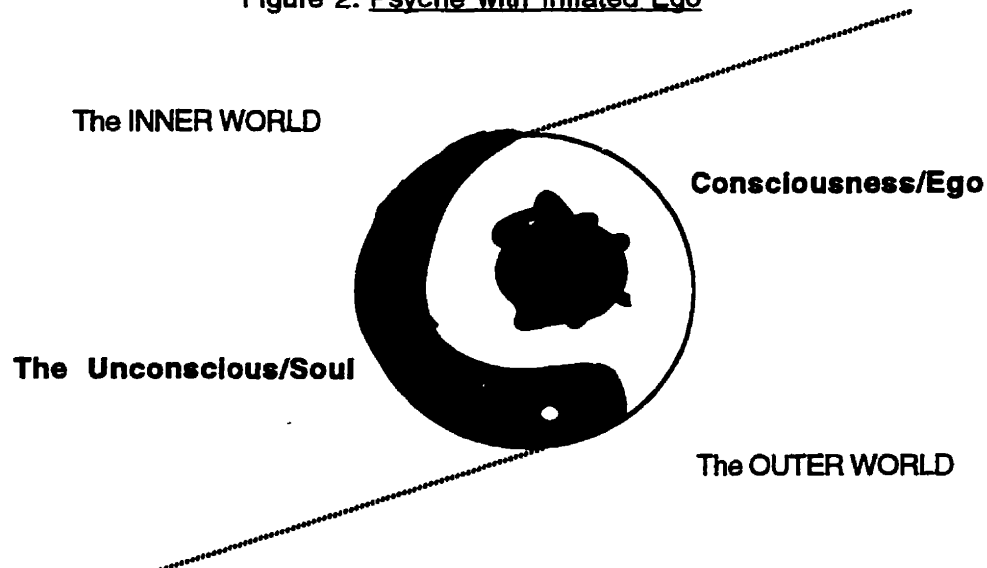
66 I am ignoring the rotation of the symbol (suggested by its two tadpole-like shapes) as too complex an element for my purposes, but the reader may be interested to muse on it. The leftward motion shown suggests a process of introversion, which is more typical of the Eastern world view. To make the symbol rotate to the right, look at it in a mirror. This, however, puts consciousness on the left, which doesn’t “fit”. It is easy for the intellect to get lost trying to “fit” things precisely. This two-dimensional symbol catches many but not all meanings in our discussion.

67 “Perhaps” because some may find a degree of imbalance and increased tension more energizing and/or productive. Jung writes, “I have nothing against one-sidedness as such. . . . Without one-sidedness the spirit of man could not unfold in all its diversity” (Jung 1958, par. 786). I think of balance as a state to which one must at least try to *return* periodically, if well-being is to be maintained.

68 These are common examples of unconscious behaviour which occur in any situation where the balance is upset, including fatigue, stress and illness.

unconscious begins taking over from inside, it does so with a severity that is proportional to ego's degree of inflation. In the diagram below, which shows an extreme case, I have imagined the inner unconscious invasion as asymmetrical to suggest its disordered effects.

Figure 2: Psyche with Inflated Ego



Of course the reverse movement may occur when ego is deflated, but it is sufficient to stop here for present purposes. I wish merely to convey a rough sense of the most basic elements and dynamisms in Jung's psychology, so that we may interpret by means of them, and apply them in our discussion of the chasm. My examples are tailored to Jung's analysis of the predominant Western view, which he saw as highly resistant to the unconscious or soul.

Jung's four functions represent his next differentiation within the psyche. They fall into two pairs of opposites, one "perceptive," and the other "judging." Again, each person has an innate preference or talent for one of the four functions, assisted by one or

both from the other pair. He summarized these four basic psychological functions as follows:

The perceptive/irrational functions:

Sensing — which tells us *that* something is.

Intuition — which tells us *whence it comes* and *where it is going* .

The judging/rational functions:

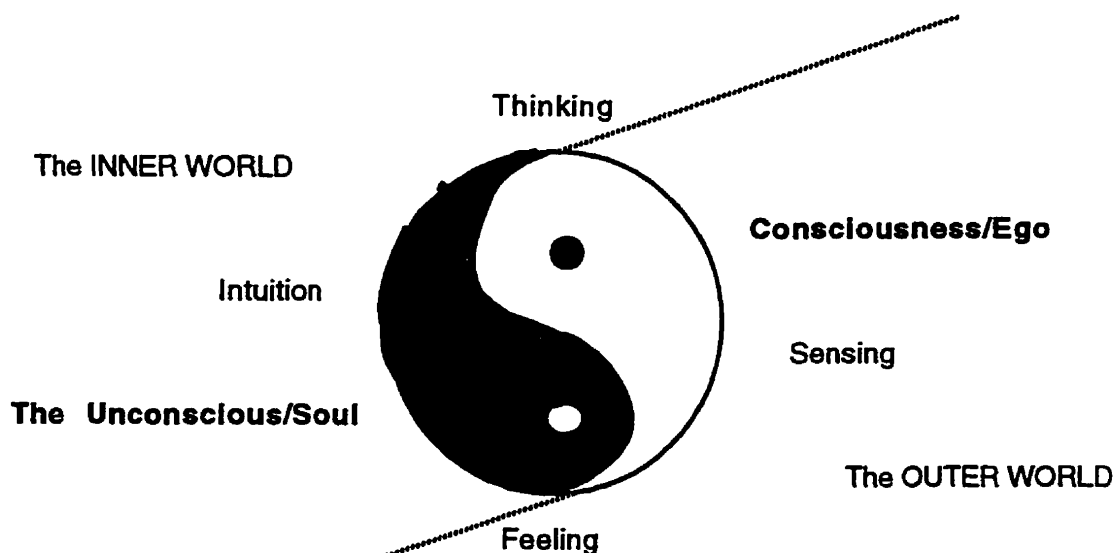
Thinking — which tells us *what* it is.

Feeling — which tells us whether or not it is *agreeable* .

(1964, 61; 1971, par. 787)

Among many psychological functions, these four appear to be fundamental. Together they represent but one way of looking at the human personality as a whole. It is a way, however, which Jung and many others including myself have found extremely helpful. I will place the functions on our diagram of the balanced psyche in the arrangement which Jung believed the West values most highly.<sup>69</sup>

Figure 3: The Western Ideal Personality (Extraverted Ego)



<sup>69</sup> I am not sure that intuition and sensing should not be reversed in this diagram, but their position is not germane to the central ideas here. In thinking of a culture as having personality, we are, of course, actually characterizing the dominant collective orientations and values.

This diagram shows thinking as the primary function of consciousness, with sensing and some intuition as auxiliaries. In Jung's terms, extraverted thinking is the most "differentiated"<sup>70</sup> of the four functions, while introverted feeling is least accessible to ego. The West, then, consciously values, makes its way by, and "sees" as, an extraverted "sensible thinker," which is consistent with a moralistic person or culture believing implicitly in material science. Jung describes such a person as tending to live strictly by an intellectual formula which, in the name of justice and truth, is regarded as universal. The resultant impersonal altruism in the conscious personality is compensated by touchiness and secret self-interest — expressions of relatively undeveloped feeling — in the unconscious. "Artistic sense, cultivation of friends . . . religious experiences, passions," etc., remain largely repressed, and therefore unrecognized and unexpressed (Jung 1971, par. 587)<sup>71</sup>. Within the usual range of such persons we find everything from effective social reformers and scientific researchers to quibblers and prigs, says Jung.

Figure 3 shows a relatively balanced extraverted thinker aided by a well-developed sensing function and also informed by whatever of feeling and intuition may cross the line by "osmosis." But when such persons or cultures rely *exclusively* on thinking (i. e., when they deny the validity of other functions), they *identify* with it; they identify, in effect, with their intellectual formula as *the* truth, and embody it *religiously*. Passion and the religious experience, that is, have unconsciously

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70 Differentiated from the emotional/physiological matrix of the unconscious, and therefore available for conscious use.

71 Read paragraphs 584 to 594 for Jung's full characterization of the extraverted thinking type.

“possessed” them or taken them over from the inside.<sup>72</sup> In the midst of their uprightness and logic, they fall into shady deals, inappropriate love (or hate) affairs and other contradictions, while their usual emotional sensitivity flairs into open aggression at the slightest provocation, real or imagined. Such undeveloped forms of feeling may help to explain the West’s warlike history — a history which continues in many ways, including widespread family violence and the seemingly gratuitous “fantasy” violence in movies, games, etc.. We are finally beginning to acknowledge, perhaps, the enormously aggressive side of the Western character. <sup>73</sup>

I cannot go further into this very rich area of Jungian thought, and regret that so much has to be omitted. Suffice it to say that the preferred personality configuration in the West is only one of many, that each type makes its own invaluable contribution, and that the more a culture pushes one type over others, the more all individuals within that culture who are not of the favoured orientation, suffer. In Jung’s psychology it is possible to “differentiate” unconscious contents and functions to some extent, thereby integrating them into the conscious personality — a process he called “individuation.”

### **The Island : The Individual Psyche**

The eastern *yin-yang* symbol has helped us to picture Jung’s view of the human

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72 See the diagram above of psyche with inflated ego.

73 Anti-violence campaigns and the existence of shelters for battered women are first steps in this direction. Thomas Moore sees our violent nature partly as compensation for the “flatness and predictability of modern life” (1992) 129-30.

psyche in its broadest, most general terms.<sup>74</sup> Through it, we have gained a sort of sketch map of the major territories and relational rules identified by Jung in the inner landscape of the person, as it were. In a spirit of experiment and play more than anything else, I would like to tie this image in with the other land images so far discussed.

To start, I will expand slightly three common elements of the island motif, using some results of Jungian research into human symbols world-wide.<sup>75</sup> *Earth as land* commonly symbolizes, among other things, the "*terra firma* of consciousness" (Jung 1953a, par. 57)<sup>76</sup>. Generally speaking, this is collective consciousness (von Franz 1964, 224), as philosophical hermeneutics appreciates. "Land" includes present collective consciousness (the surface) and everything that the ancestors realized and passed up<sup>77</sup> to the present, most of which is now unconscious (buried). The past, which underlies, upholds and substantiates present awareness, descends in historic layers down to the deepest beginnings of culture.<sup>78</sup>

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74 No diagram will be adequate to illustrate the complexities of the psyche. Jung himself depicted the same idea by dividing a circle into four equal sections with a cross, the functions being placed as in Figure 3, and the lower half graduating in darkness from light grey to black, but to illustrate compensation, I prefer the eastern symbol (Jung 1964, 60).

75 The Jungian view of the symbol *per se* will be discussed further on. I ask the reader to bear with me here.

76 I preface interpretations often with phrases like "among other things" in deference to the nature of symbols themselves, which, as Jung says, represent the otherwise ineffable. As well, different known aspects of a symbol will take precedence, depending on the context.

77 In this context it is more appropriate for the generations to pass things "up" rather than "down," since we are standing on the inheritance of the past.

78 A dream of Jung's illustrates this partially - see Jung (1961b) 158. At the level of humanity, it is as though, from any point on the surficial present, one could trace deep down to the trunk and roots of the tree of culture.



As an encircled area or mandala,<sup>79</sup> the *island* is an expression of the human psyche as a unity. Inasmuch as culture (collective consciousness) lives only in individuals, this form of "land" can show a psyche's individual organization of the collective, or, as in our present case, the actual components with which the psyche achieves that organization. Philosophical hermeneutics incorporates this image when speaking of a culturally determined horizon "*within*" which we are "capable of making sense" of things (Kögler in Honderich (1995) 374). By its very circumscription, the island image expresses a "solitude" or *one* ness, which is our quality of experiencing things exclusively "from within." Its details describe a sort of "ground plan of the self"<sup>80</sup> — an ordered and relatively stable totality amid oceanic chaos.

The *sea* is the "matrix" or "mother of all things" - the "collecting-place where all psychic life originates, i. e. , the collective unconscious" — a concept which we will explore in the next chapter (Jung 1963b, par. 340; 1966b, par.15). If we imagine the simple *yin/yang* symbol (Figure 1) to be an island, then this ocean normally lies outside the entire circle.

We can clearly link the light "*yang*" half of this island, labelled "consciousness/ego," to "land" or collective consciousness, as just discussed. But what of the dark "*yin*" half called "the unconscious" or "soul"? Jungian Thomas Moore, perhaps the most eloquent contemporary exponent of the soul, writes (with my asides inserted):

Tradition teaches that the soul lies midway between understanding [ego] and unconsciousness [the surrounding sea], and that its instrument is

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<sup>79</sup> "Mandala" means "circle" in Sanskrit, particularly a magic circle protective of the center (Jung 1955), par. 409-10).

<sup>80</sup> Unity/totality: Jung (1959b) par. 59. Ground plan: Jung (1963b) par. 262. See Jung (1959a) par. 246 for the creation of an island in Islamic lore. The self is a special Jungian concept. For our purposes, it is enough to know that it is a form of the psyche as a whole.

neither the mind nor the body, but imagination (1992, xiii).

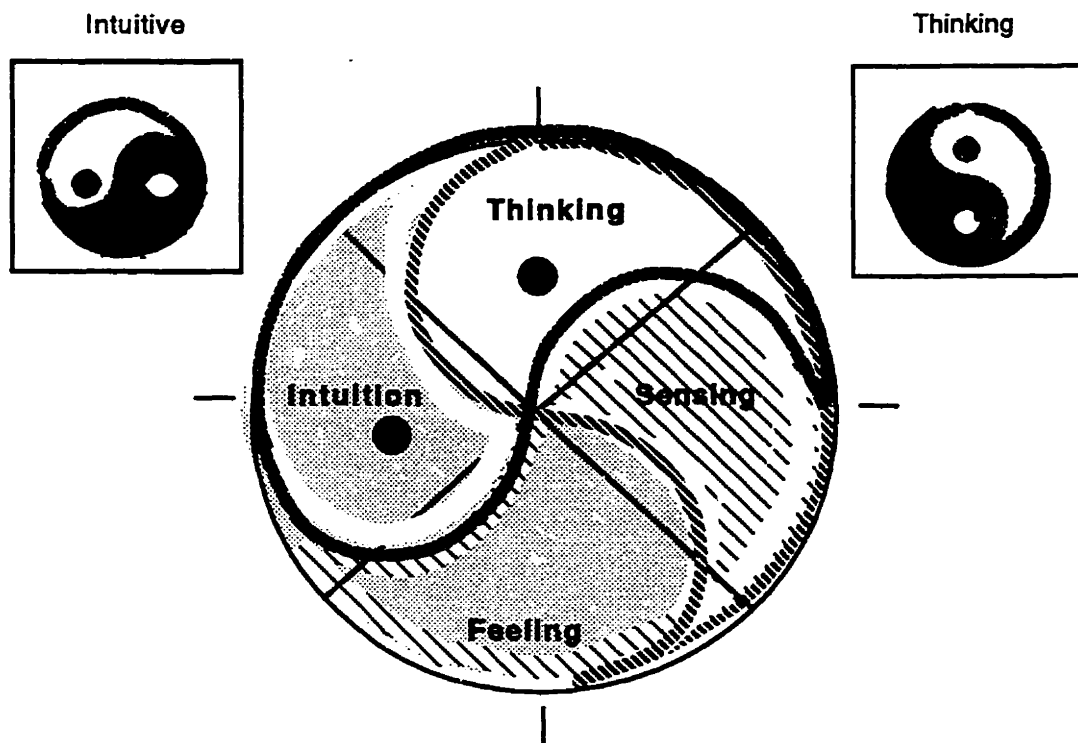
We have come to one of Jung's main differentiations within the unconscious. It turns out that the soul, which lies like a buffer between our waking selves and the deep unconscious, has its own lights and is not so much black as shades of grey. In one of his diagrams, Jung actually shows it growing blacker as it recedes from consciousness (1964, 60). To some extent, he discovered, it can be actively enlightened as well. In the West, however, the soul has been very dark indeed — ignored, repressed, denied and otherwise kept unconscious for centuries.

In terms of landscape, soul usually appears as wilderness — a place of untamed lifeforms and landforms, and therefore dark, mysterious, often frightening, certainly unpredictable. Whereas the land of consciousness bears the ordered marks of culture, the land of imagination, depending on the psychic time, may appear as desert, forest, mountains, rivers, lakes, swamp — any “wild” place, that is, where nature is in full voice. There is often land beneath it, but its nature is not as clear as that beneath consciousness. There is something much less reliable than “tradition” about it. In fact, by the rule of compensation, it would be tradition's other side, and therefore as wild as whatever it supported.

We can now envision the *yin/yang* symbol as the island of the human psyche, with its bright, cultured conscious side supported by a solid collective “horizon” of preunderstandings, and its more mysterious wild soul side, upheld, if at all, by something much less substantial. To start seeing this island as a *particular person*, it must first take on its own arrangement of the four functions. One way to imagine this is to become cartographers and turn the set of four into cardinal points, so that the two sets of polar opposites — thinking/feeling and sensing/intuition — cross, as on a compass or

map. In agreement with Figure 3 (and therefore *not* ethnocentrically, I hope), let us place thinking at the top. To individualize the *yin/yang* configuration, we simply set it over the center of our fixed map or compass and let it rotate freely until the light, conscious part of the psyche stops, like a needle, over its preferred leading function. The result for the West would appear as in Figure 3, but for an intuitive consciousness, for example, it would be quite different. I have tried to superimpose these two types in Figure 4 (the seed of the opposite is shown in consciousness only).<sup>81</sup>

Figure 4: Thinking and Intuitive Orientations Superimposed



<sup>81</sup> The number and type of functions and/or attitudes is not as important as the underlying idea here. Using this Jungian scheme, there are sixteen possible attitude/function configurations, but the poles must reverse, and the mirror image must be included to account for them all using this diagram.

One can see that each of the four functions, as regions on the psychic map, will be lightened by consciousness in some orientations and darkened by the unconscious in others. Each, therefore, may range from the very "cultured" to the very "wild." A conscious view of the island or of the world from intuition will contrast significantly with views originating from thinking or feeling, and another island or world altogether will seem to appear from the vantage point of the opposite, sensing. Most probably, no one person will ever see the whole world — inner or outer — from all four perspectives, in the clear light of consciousness. That is why we need others to show the way in our weak areas, and why, as Jung observed, we are most often attracted to someone from the opposite perspective in affairs of the heart (Jung 1977, 305). It is a matter of compensation and completeness. Successful alliances of different viewpoints can easily be seen as "fusions of horizons"; we are led by experts in another way of seeing into regions we could never have discovered on our own, and our learning there creates a fusion or intermingling of interpretations, so that genuine communication between persons occurs, and on the inside, some dark area is enlightened.

It could be that the chasm between Western and Native views is partially explained by its position between completely opposite sides of the island. This would imply (if the West thinks with its head) that Native people live in the land of feeling and "think with their hearts," which is precisely what the Pueblo Indian Ochwiay Biano told Jung in 1925 (Jung 1961b, 247-8).<sup>82</sup> But even if this were true, it does not explain the severity and depth of the impasse. As the Pueblo Native people were forced to conclude, there is probably some madness involved.

Let us take the West's position and say that, as conscious beings, we live

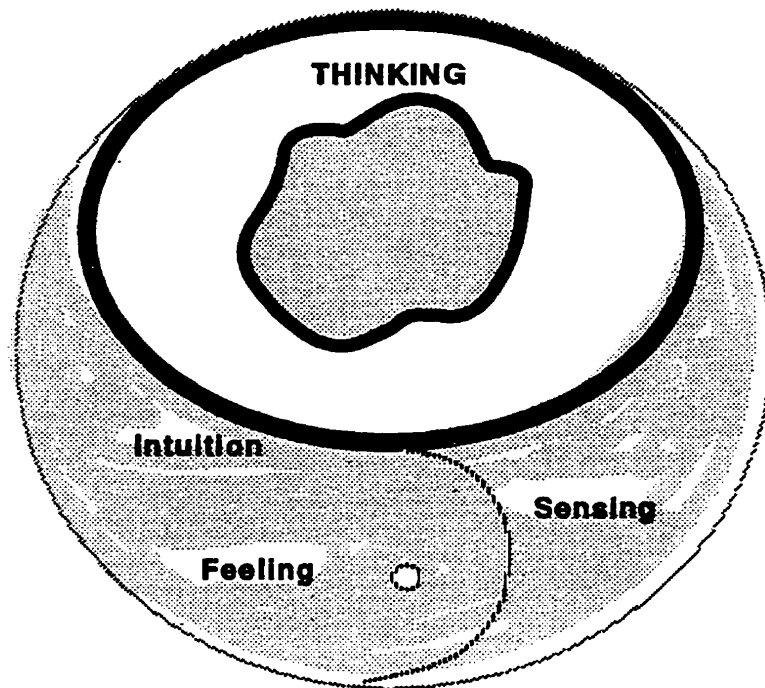
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<sup>82</sup> Jung later observed that the West really thinks more with its tongue. Jung (1977) 30.

primarily in the thinking quarter of the psyche, where we discriminate, analyze and abstract our way through life. In a relatively balanced psychic state, we would be able to exchange council with neighbouring territories — especially with sensing and intuition — and we would recognize many elements of their landscapes; our “horizon,” or extent of awareness and understanding, would include some of their territories and talents. But in the extreme position of identification with thinking — Kant’s position, as I have described it — having closed the borders of our knowledge to everything unclear and illogical, we would be hostile and blind to whatever our neighbours might offer.

I have suggested that Kant’s island, which he put forth as the sum of all possible human experience, is probably only the Western view, and that its “shores” seem more artificial than natural, being the bounds of “pure reason” (a version of the thinking function). Jung points to at least three other territories, equally important, which fall within the encircled whole of the human psyche, are available to consciousness, and contribute to knowledge. In search of logical certainty, Kantian man seems to have withdrawn completely from these territories, or more accurately, pushed them away in an attempt to banish them from the “land of truth.” It is as though our attempt to cover the entire island with one brand of certainty has caused massive darkening and flooding over all peripheral areas, and, completely unknown to us, within the home territory as well.

With this in mind, Figure 5 restates Figure 2 (“Psyche with Inflated Ego”). Think of all but the white area of “thinking,” including the entire background, as dark sea water. Everything is black and white. There is no room for a properly mediating soul.

Figure 5: The Kantian Island

The philosophical import of moral "truth" here should not be lost. Jung's pioneering work on association, which led to the polygraph or lie detector, was actually able to detect the unconscious personality, embedded as it is in an emotional<sup>83</sup> and physiological matrix. The polygraph works because, when ego is asked a question which she tries falsely to deny, answering "no," another "personality" — the soul — immediately says "oh yes!" by physiological response, proving that, as Edinger says, there is "a second center in the human psyche, and it's interested in truth." (Segaller 1989, Part I). This other voice is always present, like the seed of the opposite in the halves of the *yin-yang* symbol. In Kant's case, however, where the soul's truth is actively opposed, its inevitable, unintended and overt expression will be more extreme, warped, and obvious (to all but ego), taking such forms as dogmatism and hypochondria,

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<sup>83</sup> Emotion is not the same as feeling in Jungian terms, feeling being highly differentiated.

among others previously mentioned .<sup>84</sup>

The reasons for this rigid exclusion, as philosophical hermeneutics suggests, lie in our past, which we must look to for any insights we may need. Jung himself looked deeply into the European past, eventually concentrating on the Middle Ages, where he discovered our pre-Kantian view in alchemy and the myth of the philosopher's stone. In effect, he was performing hermeneutic archaeology, and in doing so he was able to identify a time when we still knew how to get down to the true shore.

### The Jungian Approach

By presenting this incomplete whirlwind tour through philosophical hermeneutics and the Jungian view of the person, I hope to convey the idea that the way we *see* is "method." Method as we in the West have known it, is embedded in bias — the bias not only of history and tradition, but also of the personal psychological type through which we synthesize that tradition. Thus it has a sort of agenda which actually closes us to "the other" in important ways. Philosophical hermeneutics tries to minimize this by abandoning methodology altogether (Crusius 1991, 34, 38). Jung would have agreed, I think. He did have a sort of "method," which I have somewhat explained, but it is not the sort that we in the West are used to. It has an element of intent — a questing spirit — but it is mostly attentiveness; an attempt to hear and dialogue with some very strange material. We call the bulk of that material "*fantasy*" — a dismissive term in the present culture, but one respected as representing hard fact by Jungians, with

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<sup>84</sup> It is probably true that Kant suffered from hypochondria — read Rabel (1963) — and his omnipresent universality sometimes speaks of dogmatism, but I hope it is clear that I am discussing the West as a whole, so that we must consider to what extent these are elements in our own psychology. The personal Kant cannot represent the West (it is possible that he himself was introverted) but his vision of human possibilities certainly might.

transforming results. As Jung says . . .

it is a fact that a man has such and such a fantasy — such a tangible fact that . . . another man may lose his life. Or a bridge may be built — these houses [around us] . . . were fantasy to begin with, and fantasy has a proper reality. (1977, 302)

In other words, every human action and artifact began as fantasy — as a mere idea, often of mysterious origin — and ideas which drive a man to murder or to build bridges have serious consequences in the lives of everyone. They could not, therefore, be “not real.”

Jung’s “soul” *is* this fantasy, or *produces* it. He has already told us that the person appears inwardly “as a series of images of the vital activities taking place within.” The image indicating “vital activity” is a product of the imagination, and is treated as a “symbol,” by which Jung means, not merely a descriptive “sign,” but . . .

a word or an image [which] implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. It has a wider unconscious aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained. Nor can one hope to define it. As the mind explores the symbol, it is led to ideas beyond the grasp of reason. (1964, 23)

Symbols — the stuff of dreams, myths, fairy tales and most spontaneous writing, dance, visual art, music, etc. — have meaning and purpose; it is just that they “have more than one meaning” and “point in different directions from those we apprehend with the conscious mind” (Ibid. 90). As products of the compensatory unconscious, symbols are attempts to synthesize, reconcile and reunite opposites (Ibid. 99). They provide consciousness with the missing part of its “truth.” And they are perfectly natural. Jung explains: “There is no difference in principle between organic and psychic growth. As a plant produces its flowers, so the psyche creates its symbols. Every dream is



evidence of this process" (Ibid. 94). Consequently, symbols also mean exactly what they say — they are no more covering up or disguising something than is a flower. To gain some appreciation of their meaning, however, we cannot apply our usual Western version of logic. Instead, we must *think symbolically* .

Symbolic thinking requires an appreciation of everything presented on Jungian theory in this chapter. It has great respect for the soul, and assumes that there is meaning in the fantasy image it produces — a meaning inherent in the symbol itself; Jung agrees with the Talmud: "The dream," it says, "is its own interpretation" (Ibid. 90). We must therefore remain open to the unique "otherness" of the symbol, even as we bring to it all that we have — our "*own living wholeness* " — rather than some intellectual theory (Ibid. 60). Jung could be describing philosophical hermeneutics when he writes of the dream analyst:

. . . you have to sacrifice your own predilections and suppress your prejudices. This is not easy or comfortable, because it means a moral effort that is not to everyone's taste. . . [the analyst must] make the effort to criticize his own standpoint and to admit its relativity . . . .  
(Ibid. 61)

But as usual, he finds the balance to this by valuing equally the other side. He observes:

It was a great mistake on Freud's part to turn his back on philosophy. Not once does he criticise his assumptions or even his personal psychic premises . . . I have never refused the bitter-sweet drink of philosophical criticism, but have taken it with caution, a little at a time. . . . All too easily does self-criticism poison one's naïveté, that priceless possession, or rather gift, which no creative person can do without. . . . philosophical criticism has helped me to see that every psychology — my own included - has the character of a subjective confession. (1961a, par. 774)

Symbolic thinking, then, requires simultaneously one's *self-questioned knowledge* and one's complete *naïveté* .

On the knowledge side, Jung developed some techniques to help draw out meaning. He studied comparative world mythology, discovering what appear to be universal motifs or archetypes. Associations from these to dreams and other fantasy material often proved fruitful, as did personal associations, of course. Ever on the lookout for dogmatism, however, he advised his students: "Learn as much as you can about symbolism: then forget it all when you are analyzing a dream" (1964, 56). Such a policy helps to prevent one's own associations from leaping in inappropriately or too soon. The context in which the fantasy material was produced, and the emotional and compensatory value of the symbols are also important and will help in interpretation, when known.

As Jung points out, facts "that exist yet cannot be described . . . can only be approached by "*circumambulation* " (1963b, par. 123, note 4). We therefore circle the symbol, looking at it from as many angles as possible, *amplifying* it with those associations which seem to apply, given the particular context and emotional meanings.

John Freeman describes it this way:

Jung's arguments (and those of his colleagues) spiral upward over his subject like a bird circling a tree. At first, near the ground, it sees only a confusion of leaves and branches. Gradually, as it circles higher and higher, the recurring aspects of the tree form a wholeness and relate to their surroundings. Some . . . may find this "spiralling" method of argument obscure or even confusing for a few pages - but . . . very soon the reader will find it carrying him on a pervasive and profoundly absorbing journey. (Freeman 1964, 14)

Eventually, a core of meaning — forever incomplete, but often quite convincing — is built up, which, as Jung says, “leads beyond the grasp of reason,” not to some dead end, but mysteriously, to some unpredictable and usually enhancing transformation in the form of a new insight or way of being which leads on. In the end, there is no plan, no rationally delineated method, just openness, care, a desire to understand, and a dialogue in which a person or persons enter the alchemical vessel with the symbol (the unconscious) and offer themselves up to the work.

Before applying this approach further, I would like to address two other possible criticisms. The first is that, having said that we cannot think our way across the chasm, I proceed to reason *ad infinitum* anyway. The accusation is partly justified. I am using rational concepts and arguments in true Western fashion. There must be some of this because it is the best way I know to speak to my distant logocentric culture-mates. But it is also true that, by using Jung's unorthodox approach, I have invited the other three functions and the vast unknown into my deliberations, so that thinking is but one contributor. Thinking *is* important. It serves an invaluable function in our lives, becoming dangerous, as explained above, only when used exclusively. Entering the hermeneutic circle and calling upon the evocative image, eros, and the irrational, are antidotes to the sort of ethnocentric armchair logic which has kept the chasm as it is for so long.

The second objection is that, after rejecting the Western tendency to universalize, I embrace a theory about the human psyche, which uses the universal concept of the archetype and talks about a collective unconscious, etc.. To this I can only repeat that Jung and Jungians shrink from the notion of this approach being set in stone. It is forever open-ended, being the result of empirical practise. When applied, it *works*

in an encouraging number of cases; it has borne an abundance of healing fruits. It does appear to have some universal relevance, pointing toward certain psychic factors which, like bodily organs, are common to humans the world over. But no one dwells on this. Rather, exceptions are actively sought, and this will continue. It is implicitly understood that much will never be known, so there is no attempt to achieve universal certainty. In the end, it is just a theory, and its only value lies the quality of its results.

With tools from this chapter in hand, let us again look at the chasm.

### III THE SHORE: Connection

#### Revisiting the Chasm

How might the chasm between Western and Native world views relate to the island of the human psyche? I think that the chasm, like Wub-e-ke-niew's glass wall, is another expression of that impermeable border around what remains of the West's flooded Island (Figure 5) — a border which denies intuitions, feelings, and many sensations entry into the land of space/time truth for being too subjective, imprecise and unclear.<sup>85</sup>

Kant experienced the border as a shore battered by stormy seas, but we have seen that it is an odd sort of rigid, lifeless shore, being a stark divide between the humanly knowable and unknowable. It has an artificial, clean-cut quality, well suited to pure thinking, which insists that things stay in their defined times and places. Inimical to anything "wild," this shore seems really more like an invisible wall through which Kant saw everything he had labelled "unknowable."

More balanced outsiders experience this wall as glass-like, too. Through it they see the West standing with open arms. They have no reason to anticipate problems in entering our land of truth, for they have a variety of resources upon which to draw in

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<sup>85</sup> Traditionally, these characteristics have been attributed to women in the West. Thus, until recently, women too have been denied citizenship on (if not entry into) the Kantian island - seat of Western economic, political and intellectual power for centuries. Kant might deny that sensations are disallowed on the island, but there are many "unverifiable" sensations which, like clairvoyant intuitions, would not fall under Kant's heading of possible knowledge. Physically-expressed memories in the sudden reliving of past traumatic events (abreaction) would be one example.

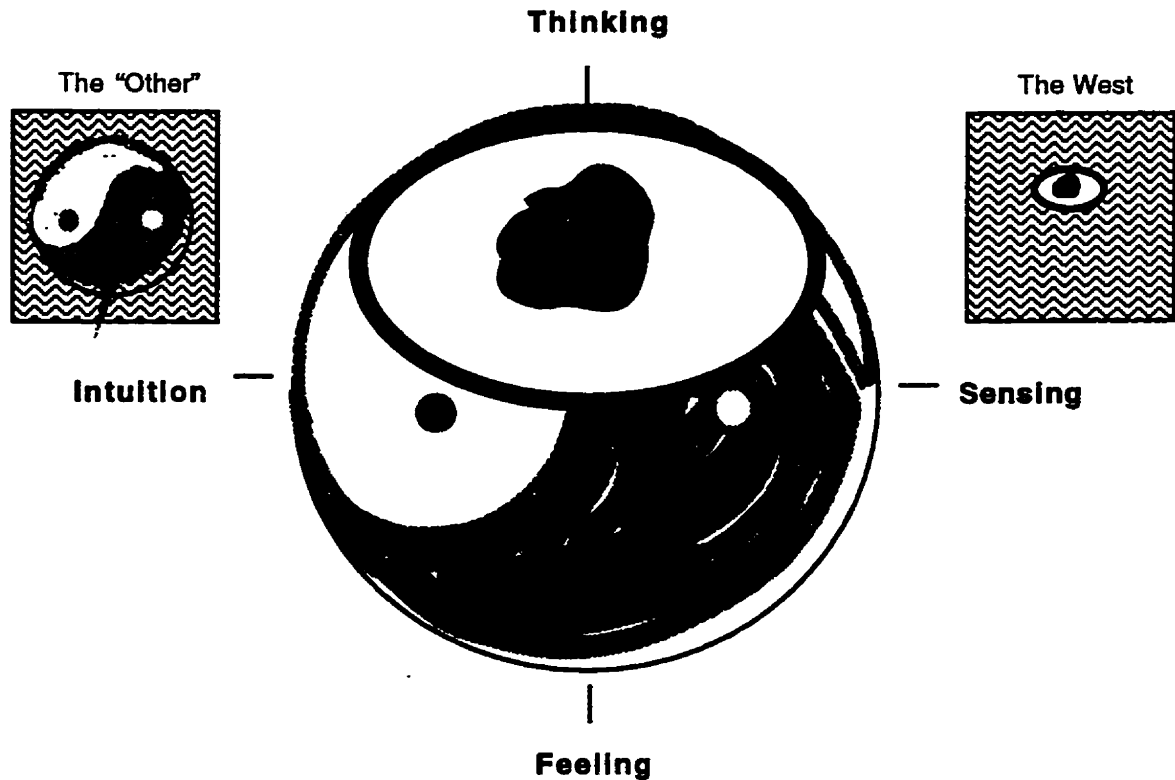
trying to relate to us; their well-rounded psyches allow each of the functions to play some part in their lives. When they attempt to approach, however, they are stopped short by the glass barricade, for they carry too much of what must be excluded. Like any good wall, this one prevents real connection and true relationship. As it turns out, the open-armed West was not welcoming the outsider; it was standing at the margins of its own flood, staring through the wall at Kant's stormy sea, perhaps hoping for something to arrive, but seeing only fog. This relates to my first reason for claiming that perception is involved in the Native/West impasse (chapter 1); psychological imbalance creates blindness.

Note how the island image has evolved to address the problem of personal interaction. The island has become a subjective point of view, so that one may see quite different things, depending on whether one is looking from the inside or outside. We might evaluate the potential for a "fusion of horizons" through dialogue with another — an event of truth in "the between," as Crusius has put it — by juxtaposing the images of two views. Figure 4 does this with two balanced psyches which have many parallel features such as size, proportion, number and type of functions, state of tension, etc..<sup>86</sup> If, however, we place an unbalanced Western thinking type over any well-balanced type — say the intuitive type of Figure 4 — we get something like Figure 6.

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<sup>86</sup> These qualities are not measurable, of course. My point is merely that, to communicate, psyches must have something commensurable with which to start.

Figure 6: An Intuitive "Other" (bottom) Meets the Inflated West (top)



In contrast to the pair in Figure 4, these two psyches appear to have very few similarities. The sea or collective unconscious surrounds both islands (one natural, the other artificial) but having lost conscious touch with three of its functions, the West has become merely a fragment of its possible self. There is therefore very little potential for "common ground." Even the overlapping thinking functions in consciousness — the main congruence — are in such different psychological states that genuine dialogue would seem improbable.

I am not going to suggest what personality type might be most highly valued by the Native view under this model (if any), so we must take the intuitive psyche in Figure 6 as an example of any balanced person. I do believe, however, that for "soul" reasons, which I hope are becoming obvious, the Native view is more capable of

fostering full, rounded psyches. In contrast, my portrait of the West, which restates Jung's own analysis, is specific and bleak. It shows a relatively "small" person whose outlook can only be narrow. It also reveals the madness mentioned by Ochwiay Bianco — an inability to relate, not only to the truths of others, but also to the truths of ourselves, absorbed as we are in seemingly endless projects of quantification, as though desperately looking for something. Certainly this is a "worst case" picture, but that is the very thing to which one must be sensitive in the hermeneutic circle, and I must say, the shoe fits often enough.

While outsiders who are trying to relate to us from the exterior tend to experience Kant's shore as an unscalable ascending glass wall, it is perhaps Westerners like myself, desiring to move beyond the Kantian island from the inside, who experience it as a descending chasm. Our faith in reason has been shaken, and the glass wall has consequently thinned, flexed, become porous, and retracted. Unlike Kant, we have discovered enough about our non-thinking functions to detect land in the distance, but like him, we are unable to move past the traditional edge,<sup>87</sup> for the retreating sea has exposed a gaping void ahead. It appears that no ground has been laid here, at the edge of reason. There is a great gap in our culture — in our very preunderstandings — which cuts deep into the centuries. As Jung realized, the only way to get across is to descend.

Before following this up, we must again note a change in the image. We started out imagining a chasm between two world views — a state of affairs for which there are plenty of supporting arguments. Now we find this same chasm on the island of the individual psyche. Such developments illustrate what Jung means by sticking to the

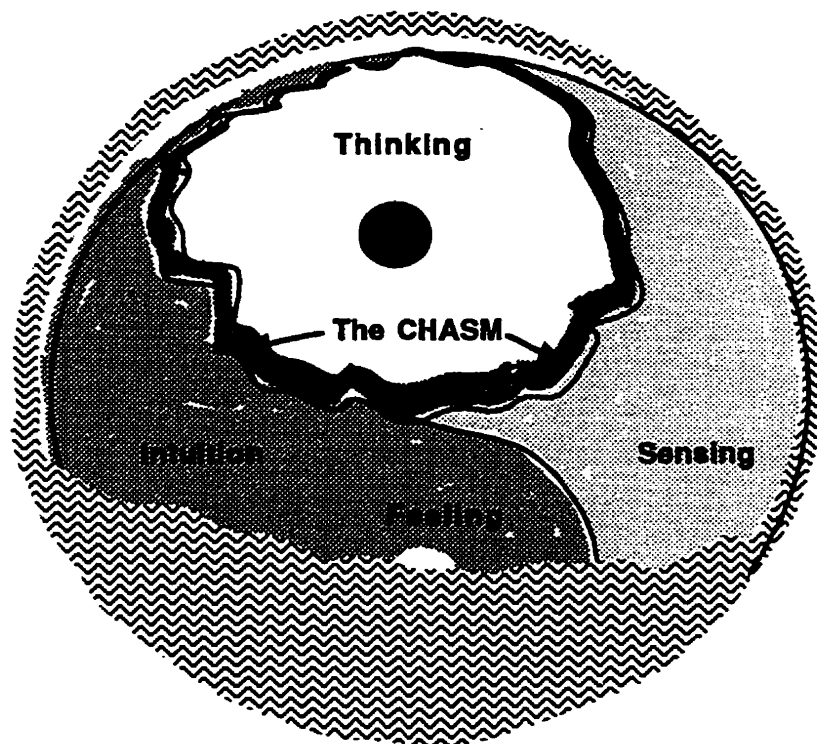
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<sup>87</sup> This suggests that Kant's island existed before Kant, and in many ways it did, as we shall see.



symbol.<sup>88</sup> Doing so complicates and confuses (for nothing is as simple as it seems<sup>89</sup>), but it also takes us to surprising places — to “ideas beyond the grasp of reason” (a way of describing insight before it is reasoned out).<sup>90</sup> Our Western island has now become something like this:

Figure 7: The Chasm



The true edge of the personality is beginning to emerge as the leading function,

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88 “Sticking to the symbol” is the essence of Jung’s “active imagination”, which is a way of fostering and maintaining psychic balance by respecting and cooperating with the unconscious.

89 Most things are probably both simple and complex, but logocentric people need to appreciate more of the complexities.

90 The great physicist Niels Bohr understood this. He said: “When it comes to atoms, language can only be used as poetry. The poet, too, is not nearly so concerned with describing facts as with *creating images*” (emphasis mine) [Malone and Milton 1994].

which is approaching its proper proportions, stops insisting on total control and begins to recognize the other functions. The latter, however, are still total strangers to thinking, as it were; thinking does not yet know how to relate to them. Sensing is most familiar, and the chasm is likely shallowest on that side. As the rift heals here, and the conscious personality broadens, thinking will become more "sensible" — more truly appropriate in the sensible world.<sup>91</sup>

We have already considered that "uncovering" or descending into the earth can mean (among other things) going back in history. Illustrating that the unconscious actually makes such associations, I myself recently dreamed that many families, including my own, were descending an enormous ravine in stages, each family having reduced its possessions to whatever essentials it could carry. As I went deeper, I began to talk of my family history, and later I noticed that my cargo was something from the middle ages. The chasm is like a deep "V" in our inner Western landscape — a wound that can only heal when we find the place where the two sides join. That place is the time before we left the land of the soul, where we are still connected to it.<sup>92</sup> To reach it we must give up many of our cultured acquisitions and reduce ourselves to —"get down" to — bare essentials.

The exact time when the distinctively logocentric West branched off on its own track is not as important as the fact that it was very long ago. It seems to be apparent in Plato, who saw reason as the charioteer of the tripartite person, keeping tight reins on its two motivating "horses"; the good, white, spirited steed and the evil, black

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91 It should be noted that the legitimate leading function of many Westerners is not thinking at all, although we are all raised largely to be thinkers. It will be these people who can best lead us beyond the chasm.

92 The interchange of "place" and "time" highlights the fact that the past is very much present (or located) in us, as both Jung and philosophical hermeneutics claim.

appetitive one, described as “hard to control with whip and goad” (1961, 500).<sup>93</sup> Here, thinking is using its opposite as a means of transport only, and one can see the shore of Kant’s isolating island beginning to take shape as reason insists on control. Through his logic, Kant simply clarified the “shoreline” for Western philosophy, fixing it within space, time and certain logical categories. To heal the chasm, the West must “get to the bottom” of all of this, where reason is in a more equitable relationship with the other functions.

This does not mean that we delve meticulously into the sequential particulars of our history - an exercise largely designed by reason to satisfy itself. Historical understanding is important, but true descent involves *realizing* in a fundamental way what the events of history, and history itself, mean *now*, to *us*; it means almost palpably *sensing* that the ancestors and their doings shape the very way we perceive, think and feel; it means *experiencing* how all who have gone before still live in us; and it means suffering, bearing, and enduring this new understanding, for it is quite a shock to the Western ego, raised as it is to believe in its own self-sufficiency and independence. We do not acknowledge the enormous mountain of individual lives and collective experience upon which we stand as tiny mites, and to which we owe our very existence.

Typically, Jung discovered a multifaceted constellation of meanings around the humbling motif of *descent*. For our purposes, he observed that descent refers largely to a psychological process of introversion in which the individual seeks “that condition where consciousness [including the Western illusion of independence] and the unconscious [including the detached fact of history and the ancestors] are so completely

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<sup>93</sup> This is *Phaedrus* 253c and following. I use “person” instead of “soul” for Plato’s tripartite image to prevent confusion with Jung’s “soul”, which corresponds to the horses only.

united that he is neither conscious nor unconscious" (parentheses mine). He writes: "Whenever the two are too much separated, consciousness seeks to unite them again by going down into the depths where they once were one." Descent is "the way to total being, to the treasure which suffering mankind is forever seeking, which is hidden in the place guarded by terrible danger." The "treasure" is completeness or "wholeness," a term which comes from the meaning "to make holy or heal."<sup>94</sup> Paradoxically, the diminishment of ego in its connection with the collective is the very thing needed to uncover one's own unique individuality, for that is what "wholeness" means.<sup>95</sup>

The "suffering mankind" who is "forever seeking" wholeness evokes Ochiway Bianco's observation that the whites seem to be "always seeking something; they are always uneasy and restless." We have separated our conscious selves "too much" from the unconscious — from the soul — and we suffer from the separation, as do those who try to adopt our way. To heal the chasmic wound, we need to allow the darkness of the unconscious to dim our glaring clarity; we need to descend toward our shadowy beginnings and experience their vital presence in us. For ones so long disconnected from the very idea of "soul," we in the West have a long climb down, and many ideas and attitudes to shed on the way.

### The Shore: The Soul

In a sense, Jung's whole work was about the soul, so I cannot convey its full significance here. He certainly saw the soul as prior to and greater than consciousness.

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94 References for the whole paragraph are Jung 1955, par. 80, 260 and especially 263 and 270. More specifically, the "treasure" is the soul, as stated in note 58, chapter II above.

95 This theme arises again in the section on "The Sea," below.

It is, he wrote:

. . . the living thing in man, that which lives of itself and causes life. . . . always the *a priori* element in [our] moods, reactions, impulses, and whatever else is spontaneous in psychic life. It is something that lives of itself, that makes us live; it is the life behind consciousness that cannot be completely integrated with it, but from which, on the contrary, consciousness arises. For, in the last analysis, psychic life is for the greater part an unconscious life that surrounds consciousness on all sides - a notion that is sufficiently obvious when one considers how much unconscious preparation is needed, for instance, to register a sense-impression [emphasis mine]. (Jung 1959a, par. 56-7)<sup>96</sup>

We have seen that the soul is the *dark* or *unconscious* half of the individual psyche,<sup>97</sup> which can sustain some degree of consciousness or light, being various shades of grey rather than the deep black of the collective ocean, as it were. We have also seen that, in relation to consciousness, the soul is a *complementary unconscious personality*, possessing, as Jung says, "everything that should normally be in the outer attitude, but is conspicuously absent" (1971, par. 806). For those who identify with one function alone, this means that most of their unique individualities lie hidden in the soul. To reach this, they must first deal with what Jung calls the personal "shadow," which very much contaminates and darkens the soul. The shadow is everything that we have more or less consciously disowned by overlooking, disregarding or repressing it at some point (Jung 1964, 51-2), so that now we believe we are *anything but that*.<sup>98</sup> Usually,

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96 This quotation illustrates why we cannot quite call the soul or dark part of our *yin/yang* diagram the "personal" unconscious, to contrast it with the sea of "collective" unconsciousness. I would say that the soul becomes more "personal" as it approaches consciousness, and that is why I like the concept of soul as shore — a place of transition where the collective can become increasingly suited and available to the particular individual.

97 The quote above makes it clear that "soul" is much more than "half" of the psyche, but as before explained, our diagram is meant to show the *balance* of components, not their amount or relative "size".

98 "Protesting too much" often points to the shadow.

disowned shadow characteristics — also called personal *complexes* — are rather unpleasant, but negative or positive, they must be claimed and made conscious before the soul is free to do its proper job.<sup>99</sup>

One might think of shadow integration as “enlightening” the edge of the island’s dividing line just inside the dark, soul half, making the content there, including the inferior functions<sup>100</sup>, more visible to consciousness and thus more available to it. Jungian shadow work<sup>101</sup> is done with the help of dreams and other fantasy material, and as it progresses, the content of this fantasy takes on a different character; the soul begins to show its true nature.

On our diagram, the soul lies between consciousness and the deeply unconscious. Not surprisingly, then, Jung sees it as a receiver and transmitter of deeply unconscious events (1971, par. 409-25). He describes it variously as a “bridge,” “connecting link,” “mediator” and “filter”<sup>102</sup> between the deep unconscious and consciousness. As such, therefore, *the soul is the shore itself*. No matter what “land” may appear there, it is, as observed earlier, not as solid as the ground of consciousness. It is especially susceptible to floods and tidal ebbs and flows. When cleared of too black a shadow, it has its own characteristics, certainly, but it also remains the place where things wash up from the sea and become perceptible to the vigilant and respectful ego.

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99 I am speaking relatively here. One is never free of personal shadow, but in Jung’s psychology one must realize the nature of personal shadow and establish a working relation with it before the soul *per se* becomes apparent. Shadow work itself is difficult and transforming.

100 “Inferior” means in Jung’s terminology “less consciously developed”, not “less valuable”.

101 The transforming process of attending to the content or voice of the shadow, thereby bringing it into the light of consciousness where it may be helpful (rather than hurtful) in the everyday world.

102 In order, Jung (1959a) par. 223 and (1959b) par. 706, 33 & 40.

The land of soul, to which we will return in the next chapter, is intimately familiar to the Native world view, which speaks its symbolic language with understanding and reverence. It knows the vital necessity of "soul work" <sup>103</sup> and has developed myriad ways in which to renew the connection to soul by going down to the shore.

### **The Sea: the Collective Unconscious**

We have come to perhaps the most difficult of Jung's discoveries to understand, and a key concept in bridging outward toward the Native view — the collective unconscious. My presentation of it here, which I hope does not do it too much injustice, is gathered from Jung's writings, and is but a snapshot of an understanding which is very much in motion. The concept came to him as he noticed similarities in thousands of personal dreams presented to him in his work, on the one hand, and in myths, fairytales and other such collective material from around the world, on the other. These similarities were profound and persistent, crossing vast spacial and temporal expanses. Certain forms, movements and meanings seemed to cluster together, no matter in what personal or cultural guise they appeared. They finally gave rise in him to the idea of the "primordial image," later also called the archetype, which is not so much an image as an "engram" or trace. He writes:

The unconscious, considered as the historical background of the human psyche, contains in concentrated form the entire succession of engrams (imprints) which from time immemorial have determined the psychic structure as it now exists. These engrams are nothing other than

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<sup>103</sup> Work with the soul is simply an extension of shadow work in the process of individuation (see note 101 above). Its meaning will become apparent as we proceed.

function-traces that typify, on average, the most frequently and intensively used functions of the human psyche. They present themselves in the form of mythological motifs and images, appearing often in identical form and always with striking similarities among all races. (1971, par. 281)

Just as the physical body is a museum of its own phylogenetic history, says Jung, so the psyche has its "phylogenetic stratum," aptly imagined as a *primordial* sea of "*instinctive trends*" (1961, 69). This sea or *collective unconscious*, aggregate of all archetypes, is also described as the "prehistoric psyche" or "*original mind*" (Ibid., 99) — a more or less permanent archive of ancient patterns of experience, untouched and unmodified by consciousness. Jung therefore regards it as "the very *soul of humanity*" (1966, par. 65), a species or world soul (*animus mundi*) reaching back to the beginnings of organic life (Jung 1971, par. 659). From it, each individual psyche arises.

Because the contents of the collective unconscious have never been conscious,<sup>104</sup> they are not sorted and set, like the more solidified traditions of collective consciousness. Consequently, the sea is their appropriate symbol. Here, the opposites swim together in a sort of amoral soup. At times they are agitated, like a "boiling cauldron" (Jung 1959a, par. 190) of contradictory impulses, inhibitions, and emotions. At other times, they form a calm "mirror" reflecting our conscious views "*sub species aeternitatis*, somewhat as a million-year-old consciousness might see them," spreading over them "a patina of age-old subjective experience and the shimmer of events still unborn" (Jung 1971, par. 649).

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104 They are a form of instinct, in other words.



When we penetrate deeply into the soul's territory - when we approach and step into this sea of archetypes — we increasingly enter a state of:

. . . unprecedented uncertainty, with apparently no inside and no outside, no above and no below, no here and no there, no mine and no thine, no good and no bad. It is the world of water, where all life floats in suspension; where the life of the sympathetic system, the soul of everything living, begins; where I am indivisibly this and that . . . it is sheer objectivity, as wide as the world and open to all the world. There I am the object of every subject, in complete reversal of my ordinary consciousness, where I am always the subject that has an object. There I am utterly at one with the world, so much a part of it that I forget all too easily who I really am [Emphasis mine]. (Ibid., 45)<sup>105</sup>

This state, where we are no longer “lost in the isolation of consciousness and its errors and sufferings,” but are caught up in a “common rhythm” with all humanity (Jung 1966a, par. 161), is identical to the state reached in *descent*, as discussed above. Descent into the chasm, we noted then, is descent into what Jung called “that condition where consciousness and the unconscious are so completely united that [one] is neither conscious nor unconscious” (Jung 1955, par. 263). In the West, we must take “going down ” to the sea almost literally, for, as observed previously, in place of a gently sloping shore or soul, we have a steep rift of dissociation from everything shady, uncertain, fluctuating and “half wet.” We have no shore, that is, until we undertake the more dangerous and fearful descent to a point of connection with soul, which then can expand (us), as shore, more gently to the sea.

As part of the watery sea, the archetypes lack specific content, being merely “preformed patterns” and “functional possibilities” (1971, par. 513). Jung called them inborn modes of psychic *apprehension* (Ibid., par. 624), as distinct from modes of

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105 The topic of “objectivity” is resumed further on in this section.

*acting* (instinct proper).<sup>106</sup> A legacy from our evolutionary ancestors, they comprise “a preformed and ever-ready instinctive system” which underlies and motivates “thought forms, universally understood gestures, and many attitudes,” making it probable that we will behave very much as human beings have always behaved (Jung 1966b, par. 61). In one of his many formulations, Jung calls the archetypes:

... ideas *ante rem* , determinants of form, a kind of preexisting ground-plan that gives the stuff of experience a specific configuration, so that we may think of them, as Plato did, as *images*, as schemata, or as inherited functional possibilities which, nevertheless, exclude other possibilities, or at any rate limit them to a very great extent. (1971, par. 512)

In the same paragraph, he refers to Kant, without whom, I venture to say, the concept of the collective unconscious might not have been expressible at all. Jung studied Kant with great care during his university years (Jung 1983), and it was probably from him that he got the idea of subjective *a priori* conditions of experience. He writes:

We know . . . that the mind cannot be a *tabula rasa* , for epistemological criticism shows us that certain categories of thinking are given *a priori*; they are antecedent to all experience and appear with the first act of thought, of which they are its preformed determinants. What Kant demonstrated in respect of logical thinking is true of the whole range of the psyche. The psyche is no more a *tabula rasa* to begin with than is the mind proper (the thinking area). Naturally the concrete contents are lacking, but the potential contents are given *a priori* by the inherited and preformed functional disposition. This is simply the product of the brain's functioning throughout the whole ancestral line, a deposit of phylogenetic experiences and attempts at adaptation [parentheses his]. (1971, par. 512)

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<sup>106</sup> *Archetypes* facilitate apprehension, Jung thought. Without them, for example. the apprehension of new situations would be impossible (1971, par. 754). He regarded the archetype as the “formal aspect” or unconscious “image” of instinct in humanity (1959a, 714; 1959b, par. 278).

This passage shows Jung to be one of the many great thinkers who have profited from Kant's work, and it agrees with what I have been saying up to now. The "thinking area" or reason, is not the whole psyche; its categories are not the sole preconditions of experience, as Kant seems to argue.<sup>107</sup> Jung is here broadening the island to include the whole circle of the psyche as we have been discussing it.

In contrast to personally acquired "complexes," then, the *collective* archetypes are *innate and inherited*. Their origin is *unconscious*, since they appear as mythological motifs in the dreams of individuals who have never heard of them (Jung 1959a, par. 88).<sup>108</sup> Their wide distribution suggests that some are *universal* to the species.<sup>109</sup> Although they may remain relatively dormant in the sea for long periods in our lives, doing nothing more than generally sustaining the individual psyche, they are not passive. Each one is potentially *autonomous* and *dynamic*, being a unique "organization of psychic energy," which behaves like "a self-activating organism" (Jung 1971, par. 754). Archetypes seem to "come and go very much as they please," Jung observed (1964, 79), but in actual fact, they are very often "released" by the *effect* of external factors (Ibid., 624-5).

Being remnants or residues of the repeated joys and sorrows in typical human predicaments (Jung 1966a, par. 127), archetypes become activated in situations which

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107 Through his "forms" of space and time, Kant included "intuition" in the psyche as well — a function which has no direct correlate in Jung's lexicon, but would be closest to "sensing" perhaps — and he would not deny that we have feelings, etc. The point is that, through his logical categories, he set up thinking as the precondition of all experience, so that the other functions, as Jung has defined them, seem to have no authority in the experience-defining process. This is a natural bias for the thinking type.

108 A study of the fantasies of children reveals this clearly.

109 By "collective," Jung means "at least common to whole peoples or epochs", if not always "universal," which many archetypes seem to be, on the basis of evidence (Jung 1971, par. 747).

*correspond* to them (Jung 1959a, par. 99). When one is at a complete loss and about to fall apart, for example, powerful images of the Self as a containing circle may appear.<sup>110</sup> This happens *spontaneously* when consciousness becomes too one-sided and strays from the "middle way" (Jung 1966a, par. 160).<sup>111</sup> Like all fantasy material, therefore, archetypes *compensate* the conscious view. Their distinction lies in their collective depth, which lends them special powers (soon to be enumerated).

Once the archetype has crawled up on shore as it were, usually drawn by our inadequate view of the present situation, which it typifies, it assumes a more perceptible form.<sup>112</sup> Unrecognized by consciousness, it will live itself out from our soul-side, in the form of *attitudes*<sup>113</sup> and *behaviour*. Archetypes often "land" during major life-changes. In the West at least, insecure young men may identify with a Rambo-like hero, for example, and young lovers become besotted by non-familial (unfamiliar) inner content which they project onto each other but actually require for their own completeness.<sup>114</sup> In either case, the people involved have little or no control over what is felt and done. They believe that their position is absolutely unique, when in truth, Jung argues convincingly, they are "possessed" by the unseen archetype and are "no longer individuals, but the race" (1966b, par. 128).

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110 The archetype of the Self is discussed below. The term is capitalized to distinguish it from the usual meaning of the term (ego) and to indicate its importance.

111 This is a very Aristotelian notion - naturally so in the context of opposites. Whereas Aristotle finds the middle way by practising the example of the wise (outer authority), Jung finds it in listening to the soul (inner authority) as well.

112 Jung held that, like instincts, archetypes can only be proven when they manifest themselves. Thus they can be named and have invariable nuclei of meaning *in principle only*.

113 Pronounced preferences and definite ways of looking at things (Jung 1971, par. 625).

114 In opposite-sex couples, this archetype is called the "soul" and its function is the same as the soul-as-shore. In its infinite forms, the soul serves as a bridge between the entirely personal ego and the entirely collective unconscious. Projected, as in this example, it leads the young person into relation with the broader world, and provides opportunity for its own eventual assimilation.

The two examples above illustrate the only processes through which the archetypes can become accessible to consciousness, since direct access to them is impossible.<sup>115</sup> *Identifying* with an archetype, as in extreme cases of hero-possession, can have devastating results. Hitler and his followers "becoming" the super race would be an example. *Projecting* the archetype out onto the world, as lovers do, and as imagination does in its every expression (from dreams and myths to the greatest works of art) also has serious consequences in extreme cases. An example might be the projection of all goodness upon a remote God, coupled with the belief in original sin, so that there is no real feeling of self-worth — a state which can drive people to renunciation of the world and fanatic self-purification rituals.

As the examples suggest, identification and projection are a pair of compensating opposites: the more I identify with one thing, the more I will project its opposite. My point is, however, that the archetypes "happen" to us, and in doing so, they "carry us away;" they take us "beyond ourselves". We usually have no say in the fact of their arrival, or in the face of their power. We *can*, however, influence the way we accommodate them. It is a matter of attitude, understanding, balance; it is a matter of how well-rounded we are.<sup>116</sup>

"I am inclined to the view," Jung writes, "that things were generally done first and that it was only a long time afterward that somebody asked why they were done" (1964, 76). This is an expression of the archetypes living through us unobserved. To

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115 This makes the two processes necessary (but not sufficient) to the individuation process, soon to be discussed.

116 This is an argument for the "well-rounded" education, which embraces both arts and sciences in their broadest senses, recognizing the complexity of the psyche and its crucial need for balance.

my mind, it explains vast amounts of human behaviour. Consciousness is the latest development in our long history, and all too often it is the last to discover its own motivations.<sup>117</sup> The West has long been asking “why” of the outer world through its material science. In finally turning to the inner world, it has generally treated it as outer too, employing the same scientific techniques and coming to similar “objective” conclusions.<sup>118</sup> In contrast, the Native view, like Jung’s, seems to hold as vitally important each individual’s internal “why.”<sup>119</sup> Personal meaning is everything. Asking this “why” *subjectively* initiates us into the individuation process (discussed below).

Archetypes manifest themselves not only in attitudes and behaviour, but also in the *symbolic images* of all fantasy material. As they land on the shore of the psyche, they:

. . . seek something to fill them out. They draw the stuff of experience into their empty forms, representing themselves *in* facts, rather than representing facts. They clothe themselves in facts, as it were. (1971, par. 513)

The “facts” will be in and about us — they will be in our individual, culturally-

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117 This emphasizes our need to be consciously aware of the influence the past exerts in our lives. If I continue to ignore my soul’s need for creative play and slave night and day for the mortgage, without seeing this as a compulsive habit (perhaps inherited), I have no freedom as I toil away toward some such thing as a heart attack. If collectively, we continue destroying more forest than regenerates, without seeing it as a custom with long-term effects, we have no choice as we proceed toward ecological crisis.

118 Witness the continued dominance of behaviourism in the psychology programs of many universities. In his association experiments, Jung was able to go far beyond the conclusions of behaviourism by using them as means rather than ends. He followed their lead into the *individual* psyche.

119 Jung also seeks out patterns among these “whys,” looking for a more comprehensive understanding (typically, he respects both sides of the subjective/objective opposition in himself), but the personal “why” is clearly all that matters to him with respect to a person’s psychological health.

based consciousness — and so the manifesting archetype will take on whatever is appropriate there. By this very process, it unites consciousness with the unconscious. Archetypes can assume a seemingly infinite variety of forms. Depending on the situation, what once appeared as the fiery dragon, for example, may now show up as a roaring freight train. The soul, we have seen, can appear as a shore, a chasm, or a person. It is misleading in the extreme, therefore, to take archetypal images literally. In order to grasp something of their real meaning, one must adopt what Jung called the “symbolic attitude.”

The symbolic attitude sees things as symbols; it looks for meaning in events “beyond the bare facts.” Knowing that there is such meaning, but not yet knowing what it is, consciousness attends to the image and is led into imaginative participation with it — an activity which in itself has life-giving and life-enhancing effects (Jung 1971, par. 819).<sup>120</sup> Called “*active imagination*,” this Jungian technique is a sort of proactive behaviour in which consciousness invites unconscious input rather than denying or ignoring it. Symbolic and/or ritual acts of all sorts, performed in words, paint, dance, sculpture, music, play and many other imaginative activities have been found helpful in bringing the denizens of the shore into interaction with ego.<sup>121</sup> Anyone who has attended a Native American ceremonial gathering will have seen most, if not all, of these processes at work.

What arrives on the shore contains the opposite of something overvalued or

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120 The “symbol”, “symbolic thinking”, and the way Jungians “interpret” or “attend to” or “engage with” it, are sketched out in the “The Jungian Approach” subsection of Chapter II above.

121 Referring to our diagram of the psyche, one can see how this is, in itself, a union of opposites. Jungian analysis is another activity on the list. Like the rest, it is an attempt to understand the underlying message of the unconscious — to integrate or “assimilate” unconscious material into consciousness in the name of psychic balance and health.

undervalued in consciousness. It therefore creates a *tension* which points to the imbalance — a tension which we feel in our daily lives, and which sometimes grinds us to a halt. As one “participates” with the symbol of the opposite in active imagination, it evolves into a “*third thing*” which “*unites the opposites*.” Jung calls this the “transcendent function.” “As opposites never unite at their own level,” he writes, “a supraordinate ‘third’ is always required, in which the two parts can come together. And since the symbol derives as much from the conscious as from the unconscious, it is able to unite them both, reconciling their conceptual polarity through its form and their emotional polarity through its numinosity” (1959a, par. 280). Such a symbol “lives” for us, when it unites “thesis and antithesis” in a *personally meaningful* way (Jung 1971, par. 828). Experiencing the union can relieve, inspire, energize and renew. Through it, ego gains the freedom to transcend the debilitating imbalance and move on. This is the symbol’s *creative* power, in contradistinction to its simultaneous *conservative* nature, embodying, as it does, age-old patterns (1966a, par. 61).

As an ongoing “way of seeing,” active imagination has been called “the symbolic life” (Jung 1955, par. 608-96). By means of it, what arrives on the shore of our souls, no matter how gruesome, is welcomed and invited up the slope to develop its own place in the land of consciousness. As it does so, both it and ego change. The conscious personality broadens and deepens. The result is a true individual with some awareness of the archetypes as they relate to her, and consequently with some measure of autonomy from them. Jung himself talked to his complexes, painted and sculpted his dream images, played with beach stones and watercourses, created the house of his personality, surrounded himself with meaningful symbols from his (and other) culture(s), and generally took care to be in touch with his “other side” throughout his life.

The symbolic life enhances or accelerates the natural process of individuation.



which everyone can observe in himself. Our conscious personalities generally expand as we mature through the stages of life. We gather increasing resources with which to face life's never-ending challenges. To the degree that they are typically human, these challenges are experienced as archetypes clothed in "facts," and to the degree that we successfully adapt to them, we have "individuated" or grown in complexity and freedom. We have become more consciously what we always were potentially.

Jung distinguished "individualism" from "individuation." The West tends to place ego at the center of the personality so that everything revolves around it. Consequently, people take things very 'personally.' The result is the extreme individualism for which North American Western society is renowned. As our diagrams show, however, Jung does not place ego at the center of the well-rounded personality; ego has to take more than itself into account within the psyche. The individuated person has differentiated from the collective as she has consciously developed her innate "specific nature"<sup>122</sup> — a nature which has come to her in raw form, as it were, across the shore of her soul. To individuate, she must take account of her soul's desire in everything she does. Far from leading to the isolation of individualism, this process almost inevitably leads to "more intense and broader collective relationships," for all that has crossed the shore is rooted in the collective and carries a collective imperative (1971, par. 758-61). To the degree that we do not value individuation, Jung believed, we encourage the "artificial stunting" of persons who, far from contributing to society, become stuck in the lonely morass of neurosis (ibid.).

Archetypal symbols — as distinct from the archetypes themselves — may display the familiar detail of ordinary personal/cultural life, but they betray their essential nature in concomitant collective, unconsciously derived characteristics such as: their

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122 This is the Self — an archetype soon to be discussed.

*paradoxical* nature (they contain the opposites), their *mythological* underpinnings (they have manifold meanings and a limitless wealth of reference [Jung 1959a, par. 80], expressing “motifs” rather than particularities), their *allegorical* leanings (they express themselves chiefly in metaphor [Jung 1959a, par. 128, 267]), their *superhuman* quality (there is always something not quite human about their personalizations, such as androgyny or perfection [ibid., par. 138]), and their *numinosity* or strong emotional charge. This last characteristic is the key connection between the archetype and ego. By its numinous hook, the image reels us close and *makes* us engage with it personally.<sup>123</sup>

Because of these characteristics, archetypes defy the rules of space, time and causation. As attitudes and behaviour, they are the unexpected ancient patterns come to life. As images, they may burst into one’s fantasy “without cause” in the form of something both Native and Western, old and young, prehistoric and of the space age. *Events*, too, can be archetypal. Examples would include precognitive knowledge, meaningful “chance” occurrences and other so-called “extrasensory” or “extramundane” experiences which defy all rational explanation. These exemplify what Jung called “synchronicity” or “meaningful coincidence” - apparently “acausal” symbolic acts and situations.

In a discussion of mandalas and J. B. Rhine's researches into extrasensory perception, Jung wrote:

If mandala symbolism is the psychological equivalent of the *unus mundus* [one world], then synchronicity is its parapsychological equivalent. Though synchronistic phenomena occur in time and space they manifest a

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<sup>123</sup> This reversal of the main land/sea image makes us fish and the archetypes fishers, which is the way it seems when we are “completely caught up” in something. Active imagination somewhat restores us to the position of fishers. Its attentiveness to the unconscious is very like *fishing* - an archetypal image in itself.

remarkable independence of both these indispensable determinants of physical existence and hence do not conform to the law of causality. The causalism that underlies our scientific view of the world breaks everything down into individual processes which it punctiliously tries to isolate from all other parallel processes. This tendency is absolutely necessary if we are to gain reliable knowledge of the world, but philosophically it has the disadvantage of breaking up, or obscuring, the universal interrelationship of events so that a recognition of the greater relationship, i. e., of the unity of the world, becomes more and more difficult. Everything that happens, however, happens in the same "one world" and is a part of it. For this reason events must possess an *a priori* aspect of unity, though it is difficult to establish this unity by the statistical method. (1963b, par. 662)

It is this unity to which Jung referred in the earlier quotation above, when he described experiencing the sea of archetypes as "sheer objectivity." Immersed in the sea, one loses one's subjectivity and forgets who one is. This is the ultimate archetypal experience, akin to returning to the womb. But even in the most mundane moments of consciousness, strange phenomena may intrude, like waves of the sea lapping up onto our dry space/time land, and suddenly we are no longer a sovereign subject. We have had no say in what has happened and possess no means with which to explain it, as though we were the object of some other subject; as though this inner event had happened to us as breezes or earthquakes do. Jung likened synchronicity to the medieval "principle of correspondence," and considered it the irrational fourth in the modern scientific trilogy of space, time and causality (1959a, par. 409).<sup>124</sup>

For this and other reasons, Jung saw the collective unconscious and the external world as *objective* aspects of a single reality. As our *yin/yang* diagram suggests (Figure 1), we partake of both worlds and experience the objects of them "from the

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124 Volume 8 of the *Collected Works* (1960) also has papers on this subject.

outside," having to adapt to them as "other," even though one world seems to be far less publicly accessible than the other, and is therefore called "subjective." We seem to be subjects in both worlds.

The objective reality of the collective unconscious is the "crucial dynamic" which I think is missing in the concept of the hermeneutic circle as described in Chapter II above. Crusius tries to address the criticism that the circle leads to an "anything goes situation".<sup>125</sup> He points out that only well-defined traditional truths are "uncovered" within, and that our biases ensure minimal exposure of them (so that not *enough* "goes," really). A further restriction, he argues, is the fact that the dialogue only "permits to stand what can withstand the encounter" (1991, 39).

In addition to our conscious intent, then, Crusius sees our *interiorized tradition* (as it is unearthed), and "*the other*" with whom we are in dialogue, as guiding or constraining the hermeneutic process by their very specifics. On the *yin/yang* diagram, these would correspond to the light, right half of the psyche (*ego* supported by the historical *collective consciousness*) and the "outer world" beyond it, to the right.<sup>126</sup> The "inner world" of the collective unconscious, and the soul-bridge from it to ego (i. e., the entire left side of the diagram) remain unrecognized. They comprise a fourth, crucial determinant, for, as the rule of compensation suggests, balancing direction and purpose come from them. To provide each individual and therefore the

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<sup>125</sup> Rather along the lines of American pragmatist Richard Rorty, who has abandoned the search for "objective truth" in philosophy, and wishes simply "to keep the conversation going" (1979, 377). This can mean talking for talk's sake, following "idle curiosity" all over the place. It can also mean having a Babel of generally unheard individual conversations, or alternatively, following the "most persuasive" voices, which, in situations of power imbalance and incommensurable views can mean following the loudest/largest view, just to survive. The last scenario seems to be Rorty's preference, since he openly advocates ethnocentrism (1991, 23).

<sup>126</sup> *Present* collective consciousness is extant in the outer world, of course. It turns into "earth" as it becomes part of our internalized history, as it were.

hermeneutic dialogue itself with a stabilizing rudder and development which is deeply meaningful to each individual, the true unconscious — that which has never been conscious — must be invited into the circle.<sup>127</sup>

There is an archetype of meaning or purpose *per se* . Jung has called it the "Self."

### The Whole: The Self

The Self is a sort of overriding archetype, reminiscent of Plato's form of the Good, to which all of the other archetypes ultimately lead, and in which they all participate. It is also like Aristotle's final cause — the oak within the acorn. Like everything in Jung's psychology, however, the Self has its own shadow, immanent nature, and unique meaning for each individual. For each person, the Self is both the *nucleus* and *ordering principle* of the collective unconscious (Jung 1963b, par. 372), and the *psychic totality* or *whole personality*, which includes everything on the psyche-island, not just ego. The Self, not ego, is the center (nucleus) and circumference of this personality, and as such, it is "a *process that seeks its own goal* independently of external factors" (Jung 1953a, par. 4). In so doing, the Self helps those who help it (ibid., par. 155).

Let us start at the beginning of the individuation process. "Natural man is not a 'self,'" Jung writes, "he is the mass and a particle in the mass, collective to such a degree that he is not even sure of his own ego" (ibid., par. 104). In this picture, we are

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<sup>127</sup> This is fundamental to Jungian dialogue in the consulting room (analysis), and to the individual life of everyone who lives symbolically. One can enter into a sort of hermeneutic circle with the unconscious itself, "fusing horizons" with inner realities. What emerges is one's own truth. This means that there is one truth for each individual, but, as we have seen, it has collective significance.

each, as it were, a tiny speck of "matter" or "land" — a bit of ego-island protruding from the collective sea of unconsciousness, susceptible to flooding at the slightest upset. And yet from the very beginning, the Self exists here, albeit, like everything else, in latent (unconscious) form. The Self is the "archetype of the *spirit*" symbolizing "the *pre-existent meaning* hidden in the chaos of life" (Jung 1959a, par. 74). It is that illusive *greater personality* maturing within us, which one "always was" and now "also is," "into whom Nature herself would like to change us," never completely succeeding (Jung 1959a, par. 217, 235). Of this figure Jung testifies: "Whether he is our friend or foe depends upon ourselves"(Jung 1959a, par. 235). As the Self becomes conscious, we become a self — an individual, distinct and somewhat free from the collective mass, yet still "of" and dependent on it (1953a, par. 104).

As Jungian Joseph Henderson puts it, the Self is the original condition of *wholeness* from which ego (portrayed, among other things, as the mythical hero) must periodically break away in order to develop autonomy, and to which it must continually return in order to remain healthy. Individuation is a series of repetitions of the original separation — the clash between claims of Self (where we are at one with all) and claims of ego (where we are distinct from all) [1964, 128-32]. In this cyclical back and forth motion — a sort of hermeneutic circle — new aspects of the Self appear as archetypes on the shore, each seeking its place in consciousness and expression in the outer world, each presenting a challenge to ego, who must somehow assimilate its content. "Emergence of the Self" is a comprehensive way of describing the whole process of individuation — the progression of potential from sea to land, or the maturing of acorn into oak.

Archetypes and their images are what used to be called *the gods*. For the West, the gods have fallen, and their manifold figures — the whole mythological pantheon — are

now seen as expressions of typical human experiences projected upon the world (Jung 1966a, par. 127). "Only an unparalleled impoverishment of symbolism could enable us to rediscover the gods as psychic factors," Jung writes (1959a, par. 50). But for him, seeing gods as archetypes by no means minimizes their awesome reality and power. With or without our knowledge, the fallen gods emerge from the sea and irreversibly alter our lives, much as the gods of Athens, Rome and Constantinople did, largely from on high. This truth does not alter with a change of terms. He who claims to possess no religion, Jung says, is possessed by some "god" or other — some "supraordinate idea" or "ism," whether it be "materialism, atheism, communism, socialism, liberalism, intellectualism, existentialism, or what not" (Jung 1959a par. 125).

It is wise, therefore, to know the gods — at least to know those at work in our own lives. Jungian analytical psychologists study the "comparative anatomy of the psyche," as it were, archetype by archetype, and therefore take "mythology in the widest sense" (including religion) as their primary textbook (1964, 67). Jung was never able to separate psychology from religion. He once defined the latter as "careful observation of the data" (1955, par. 368-9, 673). Through mythology, religion and many dreams, the collective unconscious presents itself so that it may live with and influence us in our daily lives. For Jung, the entire phenomenon of personal psychology was but "a ripple upon the ocean" of the collective (1955, par. 371).

In describing his work with the majority of his Western patients, Jung gave the following account. In it one can see how the collective emerges as analysis progresses, and what it means to him:

. . . you have to guide people quite slowly and wait for a long time until the unconscious produces the symbols that bring them back into the original symbolic life. Then you have to know a great deal about the language of the

unconscious, the language of dreams. Then you see how the dreams begin to produce extraordinary figures. . . . They are unknown quantities, but you find these figures in a literature which is itself completely obsolete. If you happen to know these symbols, you can explain to your patients what the unconscious is after. . . . Our symbol . . . is ourselves. . . . I am only concerned with the fulfilment of that will which is in every individual. . . . That is the whole problem of the true Pueblo: that I do today everything that is necessary so that my Father can rise over the horizon. That is my standpoint. (1955, par. 638-9)

Jung is referring to what he learned from Ochwiay Bianco; that it is necessary for the people to help the Sun to rise each morning, or it will not rise. That "will" in us, the Sun of the Pueblo, Christ of the West — all are expressions of what he means by Self, as that unique "nucleus and ordering principle" within each of us, which "seeks its own goal."

The Self *requires* the symbolic life, which Jung observed had "an extraordinarily civilizing influence" (Jung 1955, par. 653). "Only the symbolic life can express the . . . daily need of the soul," he said (Jung 1955, par. 627). The Pueblo people arise each morning, not as "nothing but" drudges, but as children of the Sun "with a feeling of their great responsibility" to the world. In fulfilling that responsibility they are actors in a divine drama, their lives have great meaning, and thus they maintain a natural peace and dignity which is all but lost to the "civilized" West (Jung 1955, 630).<sup>128</sup>

In a conversation with the head father confessor at Jena — a Jesuit trained in the psychotherapy of many schools — Jung presented his stand with respect to the West. It

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128 One is reminded of Edward Ahenakew noting the lasting "deep reverence and peace" which follows the Sun Dance. (See end of Chapter I above).



was the only stand he knew for those who have lost their gods and cannot go back. In the following quotation, he is relating the conversation to a group of Protestant theologians, and has come to the place where he asked the priest about his position on dreams. The priest replied that instead of dreams, Roman Catholics referred to Church as the means of grace:

“Right you are,” I said, “you don’t need dreams. I can give no absolution, I have no means of grace; therefore I must listen to dreams. I am a primitive; you are a civilized man.” In a way that man [the priest] is much more wonderful than I am. He can be a saint . . . I can only be . . . very primitive, *going by the next thing* - quite superstitious [Emphasis mine]. (Jung 1955, par. 682)

This more-than-ironic exposition of “primitive” and “civilized” might equally be addressed to all whose religion is science. “Going by the next thing” is not the straight-line Western way. Jung was indeed “primitive” in the way he describes, but as we have seen, he actually regarded this way as “civilizing.” The two terms have really lost their meaning, having united for him into a “third thing” — the symbolic life — a way of being which is familiar to Native people the world over. From this comes my thesis that Jung may have blazed a trail for the West; that he may have built a bridge jutting out over the chasm of our misunderstanding. Near the end of his life, Jung wrote:

There are no longer any gods whom we can invoke to help us. The great religions of the world suffer from increasing anemia, because the helpful numina have fled from the woods, rivers and mountains, and from animals, and the god-men have disappeared underground into the unconscious. There we fool ourselves that they lead an ignominious existence among the relics of our past. Our present lives are dominated by the goddess Reason, who is our greatest and most tragic illusion. By the aid of reason, so we assure ourselves, we have “conquered” nature. But this is a mere slogan, for the so-called conquest of nature overwhelms us with the natural fact of overpopulation and adds to our

troubles by our psychological incapacity to make the necessary political arrangements. It remains quite natural for men to quarrel and to struggle over one another. How then have we "conquered nature?" (1964, 101)

There are people alive today for whom the numina have not fled. In contrast to the Western view just described, they hold the Native view that we are part of nature and are therefore in no position to "conquer" it. Consequently, they are more consciously sensitive and vulnerable to whatever nature presents. At a recent Native elders' conference,<sup>129</sup> a Cree teacher, talking about the future as she saw it, was suddenly visited by such a numen. She stopped speaking and waited. Overcome by and absorbed in the event, she eventually had to sit down. A fellow teacher from her home knew that an offering was appropriate, and a sweet grass smudge was improvised on the spot. Not just the speaker, but everyone in the room was afforded the chance to offer silent prayer and receive purification in the fragrant smoke, so that we might carry on in good relation with the awesome visitor.

We in the West tend to see this as an incapacitating 'invasion' of the unconscious. Ignoring such 'invasions' has got us to this 'advanced' technological point. It has also made us deeply irreverent, narrow-visioned and, with reference to the chasm, disconnected from the gods, who nevertheless live on in the deep unconscious, influencing our lives by interior floods.<sup>130</sup>

Over the door of his home in Kūsnacht, Jung had engraved in stone: "Vocatus atque

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129 Appropriately called "Bridging the Gap," Lakehead University, March, 1996.

130 Interior floods (Figure 2) are not recognized by consciousness. They arise like wars, which we believe have external causes. The Cree teacher practised the art (or science, as I have also called it) of recognition, and the smudge was part of an extensive art (or science) of balancing.

I would like to reiterate here that the apparent wide applicability of Jung's typology and theory of individuation in no way obviates a study of the great differences between cultures.

non vocatus, deus aderit (Summoned or not, the god will be there)." "I have put the inscription there," he explained, "to remind my patients and myself: *timor dei initium sapientiae* (Psalms 101:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom')" (Jaffé 1979, 136-9).

## IV THE SYMBOLIC LIFE

### Going Down to the Shore

As may be evident by now, Jung's way of seeing is far removed from the current mainstream Western perspective. And yet, while informed by other world views, it arises almost entirely from the Western tradition. Within it, Jung brings new meaning to Western theories both ancient and modern, uniting divergent philosophies and disciplines in creative and useful ways.<sup>131</sup> At the same time, his perspective is able to include non-Western views, accepting them as authorities in their own right while recognizing in them an inner logic which in no way violates their inherent integrity.<sup>132</sup> Most importantly, Jung is able to criticise his own view with reference to others; he is well and truly in the hermeneutic circle, proposing no final interpretations.

The inner logic which Jung finds in all things psychic<sup>133</sup> is a *human* logic based on his empirical analysis of the human person. I have been trying to suggest that those Westerners who adopt a Jungian perspective not only bridge a gap in their own psyches, but also acquire a means of seeing other cultures more realistically (less distortedly). There is little I want to add to this message except further illustration.

I think of this way of seeing as rooted in the meditational lives of those pioneers

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131 One might say that Jung makes Plato (the forms/archetypes) and Aristotle (the opposites/mean) and Kant (the expanded subjective *a priori*) relevant to post-modern philosophical hermeneutics. As well, it is often impossible to separate philosophy, psychology and religion in his work. He also draws heavily on literature and anthropology.

132 This point is picked up later on.

133 And all things psychic, as already stated, include all humans and their artifacts.

of the middle ages who practised alchemy with undying dedication, eventually giving birth to chemistry. The roots go much deeper than that, of course. The medieval flavour comes from Jung himself, who had a fondness for that period and studied the alchemists with a dedication matched only by their own. From their neglected manuscripts, he refined much "gold." Both he and the alchemists have been judged by the West as having lived in a "dark" place where nothing of note ever happened.<sup>134</sup> At best, they have been labelled mystics.

And yet Jung was strictly empirical, "carefully observing the data" — a fact upon which he repeatedly insisted. Securely connected to the past, his ideas have nevertheless influenced some of the most forward-looking Western minds of the twentieth century. Wolfgang Pauli (1900-1958), Nobel Prize-winning Swiss physicist, for example, "set out to see what the unconscious said to him" and with Jung's help "gradually accepted the symbolic data," so that he ended up analyzing his dreams and taking guidance from them (Jung 1955, par. 673).<sup>135</sup> It is merely a matter of being attentive to *everything*. I think of the Native world view in the same way; it fosters careful observers who live the symbolic life. These are two very important and telling similarities between the Native and Jungian views.

Any reader even slightly familiar with Native ways and values will have been reminded of other resemblances in the last chapters without any help from me. Names and superficial details may differ, but there are many agreements between the Jungian and Native perspectives, on a basic philosophical level. I would count the following as

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134 With reference to Jung, this is ever-so-slowly changing, but for most of the twentieth century, he has been eclipsed almost entirely by Freud, within and outside of his own field.

135 Who Jung's clients were is a matter of confidentiality, although there are rumours and some confirmed cases which comprise an impressive list of creative people. Pauli was the one person whom I have ever seen Jung name, and that would have been with the physicist's permission.

among the most important:

Table 1: Basic Assumptions Shared by Native and Jungian Views

1 - recognition of the authority of personhood (the psyche or subjective factor), and its direction from within. This may be reflected in the recognition of individual *autonomy* from a very early age, and in the child-rearing and general relations-with-persons policy of *non-interference* — two values proposed as central to the Native world view. It is also the basis of the cosmic society. 136

2 - acceptance of the reality and importance of the inner (spirit) world, which is regarded as at least equal in importance to the outer world. This is most obvious in the continued ceremonial expression of Native people, especially in their frequent gatherings, where the spirit is always recognized as present; but it is an ongoing factor in everyday life. 137

3 - acceptance of the unconscious (spirit) as guide and therefore sensitivity to and respect for any kind of unconscious manifestation - dreams, myths, feelings, illnesses, synchronistic events, etc. (i. e., paying attention to *all* of the data). This comes out especially in the widespread importance of dreams and teaching stories, as well as in ceremonies like the vision quest and shaking tent, where advice or allies are sought and often received. 138

4 - awareness of coexistence with, dependence on, and personal relation to the past (tradition, the ancestors, deep collective consciousness). This is evident in a constant appreciation of the “grandfathers” and “grandmothers” of the culture — repositories of *wisdom* — including all elders, both living and dead. They appear in stories and are addressed in prayers, ceremonies, etc.. 139

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136 Hallowell (1992) provides profound and comprehensive insight into the Ojibwa concept of the person. See McPherson and Rabb (1993) 95-100 for a consideration of the autonomy principle, and the work of Native psychologist Clare Brant (1990 and Brant and Sealy, 1988) for the non-interference policy, which is more controversial. McPherson suggests that “interventive non-interference” might be a more appropriate label (personal communication).

137 Both Native and Jungian views recognise a “public” significance in the “inner” world, which is actually made “outer” in such ceremonies as the shaking tent (discussed later).

138 Many texts document this. For the Cree and Ojibwa, five of many comprehensive sources, each of which includes a survey of the factors mentioned are Hallowell (1992), Preston (1975), Howard (1977) Morriseau (1965) and Nelson (1988).

139 Benton-Banai’s *The Mishomis Book: the Voice of the Ojibway* (1988) is an intentional embodiment of the “grandparents” concept.

5 - the theory of opposites and the need for balance (compensation is implicit here). This underlies point 3 above, and among Algonquians is often mythically symbolized as a struggle between Thunderbirds and big underwater snakes. (Howard 1977, 112-14)<sup>140</sup>

6 - an overriding concept of and need for wholeness or completeness, which is lived out in cycles and is illustrated in the basic arrangement of the *circle* as we have used it (symbol of human experience and personality), with its various aspects in multiples of two and *four*.<sup>141</sup>

7 - the necessity of the symbolic life as a relational and synthetic mechanism<sup>142</sup> helping to complete and balance the psyche or self. This entails various creative modes of symbolic expression and embraces all six points above.

The key concept of the unconscious as guide — number three above — is deeply embedded in the Native tradition, whose practitioners are adept at going down to the shore or soul to interact with what has arisen from the sea (the archetypes/gods/numina) or what has been banished from the land (personal shadow). They are skilled, that is, in the art of maintaining psychic balance between inner and outer worlds, uniting their personal experience of the two into a single, awesome universe.

The awesomeness of the universe is important. We in the West tend to believe that we have a handle on things; awe is not a prominent experience among us, although

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140 Howard 1977, 112-14; Benton-Banai(1988. 47; Wub-e-ke-niew 1995, 8-9,194-9, 202-5,352; and Ahenakew 1995, are four of many writers who speak of balance/harmony between opposites.

141 Meanings of the four (or two, eight, etc.) points on the circle (used as a personal symbol, teaching tool, communicative device, and ordering principle for almost every ritual and ceremony) is illustrated in Storm's 1972 exposition of Siouan mandalas (versions of the healing circle or medicine wheel). Again, although cross-cultural correlations can sometimes be made, for present purposes it is not as important *what* the four are as it is *that* there are four. Descriptions of what they are depend on psychological type, psychological state, and experience — each of which has many variables.

142 As previously explained, the symbol *relates* /unites opposites and, through the transcendent function, *synthesizes* them into a "third thing," mysterious and transcending.

we try to recreate it collectively in such places as cathedrals, auditoria and theatres. Nor are we altogether at home with awe's constituents — wonder, respect, humility, and perhaps the largest component, fear. Awe and its various aspects seem to permeate the Native world view.

This realization hit home for me after a recent conversation with a brilliant and articulate Native American from the Amazon. In telling me about his life — an apparent pattern in introducing oneself to strangers <sup>143</sup> — certain topics were chosen over others, presumably on the basis of importance. He did not talk about exactly where he came from or how he made a living or what he owned or wanted to acquire. Time, space and materiality were altogether minor aspects of the subject matter. He told me a story, each section of which was a compact jewel, flashing with strong emotion, poignant meaning and above all, awe. Some of the jewels were tragically sad, others terrifying, still others enlightening and inspiring.

He seemed to be showing me the meaning of his life — his place, not in the objective Western world, but in the cosmos; that great whole of which the inner and outer worlds , are aspects. This man's view of his own singular journey was truly archetypal; his very life was a symbol uniting particular and universal, personal and collective, inner and outer *in consciousness* . The story was nearly unbelievable in its uniqueness, and yet it followed the age-old pattern of joy in love and worldly success, followed by loss of love, disappointment, disillusionment, despair, renunciation of all worldly goods, careless wandering, searching and lostness, the sudden intervention of the spirit , a gift of power (with the aid of lightning), revival, renewal and initiation into

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<sup>143</sup> This practise reminds me a bit of carving a totem pole or painting identifying symbols on one's tipi.



the next round in the cycle of life.<sup>144</sup>

After hearing this amazing story, I had trouble filing it away as the isolated history of an exceptional person, although there must have been something of that in it. Then I remembered an almost identical incident experienced years ago. I was at a fly-in reserve in northern Ontario making archaeological inquiries related to a proposed airstrip. After the first day's work, the elected chief visited me in the typical government-supplied modern bungalow situated on the "white" side of the reserve.<sup>145</sup> For no apparent reason (this is partly why I remember) he began telling me the story, not of himself, but of his father.<sup>146</sup> This story was entirely of the same type as the one from the Amazon. In it, a disadvantaged man is given a gift of power from the spirit, which renews him and initiates a new round in the cycle. Again, lightning was the agent of the spirit.<sup>147</sup>

Then I remembered watching a thunder storm with another Ojibwa, during which she commented on her grandmother's beliefs about the Thunderbird. And then I was able to remember, from other brief meetings with Native people, all sorts of indications that *place in the cosmos* — in the great whole — is of paramount importance, not as a matter of pride or status, but as a matter of *meaning*. They see their lives in a very different

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144 I do not feel comfortable disclosing the details, although I'm sure the man would not mind. I will say this much: he acquired a business and a family, then lost the family, sold the business in despair, wandered in the jungle wishing to die, lost his speech and senses for months as the result of a lightning strike, was nursed to health by jungle people speaking a language unknown to him, and ended up as a political activist with nine lives!

145 In contrast to the one-room log cabins with no electricity on the Native side.

146 That the story was of the father and not himself suggests that perhaps the teller saw no such cosmic significance in his own life, except by way of his father - a great loss to him and to his culture. It is what Jung would call "loss of soul" - the Western malady.

147 In this case, the man was physically disabled and barely able to support his family, but after a nearby lightning strike, he gained the power to know certain things, to persuade storms to move away, etc., and his value in the community rose.

way from people in the West, whose aspirations and perceived possibilities often seem quite parochial in comparison. I am simply confirming Jung's observations about the Pueblo people, whose :

. . . belief endows their life with a perspective (and a goal) that goes far beyond their limited existence. It gives them ample space for the unfolding of personality and permits them a full life as complete persons. Their plight is infinitely more satisfactory than that of a man in our civilization who knows that he is (and will remain) nothing more than an underdog with no inner meaning to his life. (1964, 89)

This is the price we have paid to know that the earth circles a ball of exploding gases. Such knowledge is of some service in the outer world, yes, but of what use is it to the psyche (and we are *all* psyches)? For each individual to have a *personal relationship* to the sun (and to all that the sun symbolizes) is another matter entirely. In this light, it is possible to see how Western preoccupations might seem trivial, and why the Native view has survived in spite of all efforts to eliminate it. Keepers of the Native view have never let go of that invisible world of "inner meaning" which the West dropped as it grabbed material science with both hands.

What we dropped was our souls — our personal connection to the archetypes/gods/spirits of all things — earth and universe included. European tales about selling one's soul to a devil are not at all trivial. The legendary Faust was based on a real medieval character who lived from about 1480 to 1538 — a span of years during which Nicholaus Copernicus (1473-1543) also lived (Murphy 1948, 343,227).<sup>148</sup> It seems more than fitting that Jung, who tried to restore the soul to us, went back to

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148 Let it be noted that Faust's soul is rescued at the end of Goethe's story because he constantly strove to justify his existence (i. e. to find personal meaning in the cosmos).

study this period.<sup>149</sup> His work on alchemy amounts to a guide on how to pick up the soul again. Doing so, however, will cost us our absolute certainty — our secure two-handed reliance on material science. But it will restore our balance.

What is “soul” in everyday life? Thomas Moore, in *Soul Mates*, distinguishes Jung’s “soul” from that “spirit” of which the West is so enamoured. The latter term is not what, in the Native view, is usually called “spirit.”<sup>150</sup> To avoid getting lost in labels it is best to “unpack” them, and so I have summarized Moore’s distinctions in the following table. The terms are meant to be neutral; each has value in the Jungian view, and can be over or underdeveloped. In several respects, “Spirit” here resembles the Chinese concept of *yang*,<sup>151</sup> and “soul” resembles *yin*.

Persons, cultures or views may favour one set of characteristics over another in *consciousness*, and that side will be called whatever people call themselves. The West is seen to consider itself “spiritual” here,<sup>152</sup> and we can see that it has a strong intellectual component, as in our former *yin/yang* diagrams. Jungian “Soul” is always the compensating *unconscious* part of the psyche, and in this list of its characteristics, feeling shines through as would be expected. Table 2, therefore, is a version of Figure 3

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149 Copernicus is one of the very early markers of the beginning of the scientific age and the West’s own severe “loss of soul.” [Prior to his time, the West fully recognized a “soul,” likely viewing it in the Platonic sense mentioned earlier (the tripartite person with thinking at the reins), although feeling experienced a resurgence in the Middle Ages.] Since Descartes (1596-1650), Western philosophy has had trouble relating to the soul.

150 The term “spirit,” when applied to things Native can be, among other things, archetypal material making itself known by surfacing on the soul/shore of the psyche, but it includes much more than this as well. See Holly (1993) 164-171, for a broad, sensitive treatment of this concept as a distinct sort of energy or power. Jung’s use of the term “spirit” is also distinct. It is often contrasted with instinct or body (Jung 1959 a, 572).

151 With its upward thrust, it also resembles Plato’s “spirited” third of the soul.

152 This likely reflects the Christian ideal, to which Moore, trained for the priesthood, would be especially sensitive.

in Chapter II, with the conscious personality taking its customary position to the right. It brings out our Western soul through the law of compensation, for we identify with most of what "spirit" here represents. Our soul, consequently, will be all that "spirit" is not. To regain it, we must start valuing and practising the soul-things listed below.

Table 2: Particulars of the Western Soul as it Compensates Consciousness<sup>153</sup>

(devalued/unconscious) <u>The SOUL finds value in</u>	(consciously valued) <u>The SPIRIT finds value in</u>
relatedness	intellectual understanding
complication	clarity
incompleteness/fragmentation <sup>154</sup>	perfection/wholeness
irrational reverie/rumination	rational analysis
advancement by "state" or cycle	straight-line progress
possibility/unfulfilled promise	achievement/success
tradition	ambition
living through our given existence	propulsion onward
vernacular life as it is	transcendence
ordinary particulars	ideals
foolishness	refinement
depth/involvement/connection	height/upward striving/superiority
wetness/earthy darkness-coolness	dryness/fiery light-heat

<sup>153</sup> This comes from all over Moore (1994), but most can be found in 4-54. Like most Jungians, I am reluctant to make lists, which are the product of reason and are so satisfying to it that they can easily detract from the underlying issue. The issue here is balance or completeness. I believe that we do not need to ponder over lists such as the insightful ones offered by Jerry Mander in *In the Absence of the Sacred* (1991) 215-219, so much as we need to observe what we *personally* love and hate. Realizing that these point to our very souls, we would then be wise to find voice for them in daily conscious living. That said, lists like Manders' and the one presented here make discriminations which can be useful in the personal search.

<sup>154</sup> For example, Preston has a good appreciation of the Crees' view of the phenomenal world as ambiguous, unpredictable, complex and obscure, which prompts them to seek precise and sensitive understandings of whole contexts (1975, 21-2).

feeling the impact of <i>all</i> events	breaking from our hurts and failures
weakness/suffering/death	power/strength/health
the past	the future
attachment/intimacy/dependence	detachment/solitude/independence

By giving each side its due value and weight, recognising *all* of these aspects as necessary to the complete life, Westerners can cross the chasm, for the *inner* chasm, of course, runs down the middle of Table 2. Denying this soul place in our daily lives makes us shallow, one-sided people. The West must “descend,” or “belittle” itself in its own eyes, or “stoop” to embrace its soul, thereby “wedding” the two halves. Such a marriage entails a “*shift to a different level of perception altogether*,” as Moore puts it (emphasis mine; 1994,147),<sup>155</sup> which brings us back to my initial claim in Chapter I, that the chasm makes a difference in “something like” perception.

Again, I am not going to speculate as to what “soul” might mean from the Native perspective. We cannot assume that it complements ours exactly — that it possesses the characteristics of “spirit” in Table 2. That would be true only if Native and Western views favoured completely opposing types of personality.<sup>156</sup> I suspect that no such comparison can ever be made, for the Native view seems to be less monolithic in its toleration of different personality types, as its emphasis on inner direction would suggest.<sup>157</sup>

We cannot say, then, that the West’s inner chasm corresponds exactly to the

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155 In this context, Moore says “soul” is what happens when we finally give up struggling to figure out and/or control. It is the “third” in good relationships.

156 Which, if it were at all true, would cast the arrival of Columbus in the “New World” in a different light. The soul *will* be dealt with, no matter how far banished.

157 I also suspect that at least some totemic clan systems describe the different personality types, making a valued place for each in the culture.

chasm between Native and Western views — that the two separate identical values. It is enough to say that the inner chasm indicates a perceptually debilitating incompleteness which excludes half of human experience, and that, to the extent that others embrace the unacknowledged half, they themselves will remain unacknowledged by the West, or worse, persecuted for embodying qualities despised and rejected. The Native view is not 'seen' properly, and therefore suffers from gross misunderstanding, because it does not reject those soul-values listed in Table 2.

This knowledge is enough to answer the following questions posed by searching persons from both world views: how is it possible that my Western ancestors so severely oppressed and then ignored Native Americans; and, from the other side, how is it possible that my Native ancestors so often put up with this systemic oppression (as in many Canadian cases). But this is exactly what happens, Jung says, when one person despises his own soul-values and so, entirely unconsciously, projects them out onto people who openly embrace those values. Seen inside or out, the despised element must be controlled, contained, eradicated if possible. "Projectees" who accept their full selves and so live on well-rounded psyche-islands, on the other hand, have a much broader, more generous view, and are not as inclined to see evil in the projector. They have little that is despised to project back, and can tolerate adversity with some patience, having many resources on which to rely and several angles from which to look.

To the extent that there is truth in this analysis, the long Native/Western "problem" is entirely the West's at root — which is what I have been trying to say in different ways. *It is our* — the West's — *problem*, and it is time we realized it and started working on ourselves. This is not to say that Native people are superhumanly immune to denial, projection of evil, etc.. It is only to say that they do these things more

normally, being much less off balance. Perhaps part of their secret is their view of the person, and the abundance of ways their cultures provide for getting down to the shore.

### Some Examples of Shore Life

No matter what the content of consciousness and its compensating soul may be, the vehicle of their "marriage" is the same: the symbolic *attitude*, which looks for meaning in events, and the symbolic *life* — the regular *practise* of going down to the shore. I have already mentioned various Native shore-activities, which probably take on countless forms, since a creative attitude inspires them. It is the *attitude* which is important, not the techniques.

Imagine the sort of attitude which inspires elders to wake up the children each morning to watch the sun rise and to receive its blessing — a ritual repeated again at each sunset before going to sleep. This was the custom among the Plains Ojibwa or Bungi (Howard 1977, 81). Imagine the attitude bequeathed to each child in so doing — the feeling of personal relation to the awesome powers of the universe, awareness of the grandparent introducing, overseeing, interceding. There is no finer example of the symbolic life.

It is the same attitude which takes the powers within seriously. Every human being goes down to the shore at night when she falls asleep, often returning with memories of experiences there. Most people also have daydreams, and some will even admit to waking visions. The Native tradition honours such "shore experiences" with care and attention. Some are judged to have collective importance, and will then

influence the direction of whole communities.<sup>158</sup>

Here is another example of the symbolic attitude, chosen because it illustrates well many points made previously. George Nelson's Métis interpreter told him of an old Cree chief near Lac la Ronge, Saskatchewan, who "heard" "a rumbling noise" while the two were out hunting in the winter of 1819-20 <sup>159</sup>. It stopped him in his tracks. The interpreter heard nothing when asked to listen, but the chief had no doubt, listened a long time, and seemed concerned. A few days later, his wife "heard" the same thing, while the women she was with detected nothing. These incidents made the chief suspect that some evil spirit (numen) intended him harm. They so increased his anxiety that he finally asked for a conjuring to discover the meaning — a measure taken only as a last resort.

The conjurer was another Métis known as a "true man" who "never lied" in his work,<sup>160</sup> and he agreed to fulfil the chief's request "out of respect," "but much against his will; 'for I am much afraid that some of these times *they will carry me off* '," he explained. He is referring to that state of submersion in the collective sea in which "I am the object of every subject," as Jung put it, for this man has to go into trance so that various archetypal figures might speak through him. It is they whom he wisely fears;

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158 For a typical example of this among the Iroquoian Huron, where community participation was raised to a sophisticated art, see the case of the woman Angoutenc, who was visited by the moon in 1639 (Lallement 1898, 144-215).

159 For the whole story, read Nelson (1988, 29-33). To those who object that this is a second-hand story given from memory and translated into a foreign language, I can only say, "keep reading the literature". To my mind, there is no reason to doubt the main facts given about this incident, although there are probably many important untold facts as well.

160 This implies that "lying" or wrong information can be "conjured" — a possibility in any profession, depending on many factors, not the least of which is the practitioner's skill. I have run into this "true man" label elsewhere, and infer that it was given only to the best conjurers. Preston (1975, 110) is one of many references to the good/evil conjuror subject.



perhaps they will not let him return to his earthly human life.<sup>161</sup> Here it is apparent that reentry into the primal womb is not always blissful. The conjuror seems to have a good healthy ego which does not want to be swamped, but he has an overriding duty to his leader and community.

Much has been recorded on the ancient *conjuring* or "*shaking tent*" ceremony, which is still practised today.<sup>162</sup> For our purposes, it is enough to know that it is usually a community affair requested by one or more people for the purpose of curing, finding lost items, predicting the future, defending against malevolent conjurors, or as here, discerning the meaning of strange events. A specialist in conjuring is placed inside a small but sturdily-built "tent" which has been ritually constructed by helpers. He is often naked and bound with ropes from which he mysteriously breaks free. Once he has prepared himself psychologically with the help of his spirit helpers, etc., the tent begins to shake as various entities enter from above. The distinctive voices of certain animals, mythical characters and other "persons" can then be heard from inside making up a sort of unruly inner congregation of several to many individuals. Outside the tent sit members of the community who may ask questions and/or receive information from these visitors, each of whom has a unique character. Turtle, for instance, is usually prominent, with his throaty, nasal voice and ribald wit. Bear adds a more sombre tone. Many familiar cultural characters may be involved. Even the souls of distant sleeping humans may be summoned and questioned about news in their area (Hallowell 1992, 85; Morriseau 1965, 76).

This is a graphic picture of the meeting of outer and inner worlds at the shore.

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<sup>161</sup> Leaving his mind confused or absent — a state the West calls "psychotic".

<sup>162</sup> See any of the references attached to point 3 in my list of common Jungian and Native assumptions near the beginning of this chapter. A colleague witnessed this ceremony in 1996 (details confidential).

The cosmic society is here united, interacting with itself, informing itself *of* itself. Energies within the acausal, timeless, spaceless collective ocean take the form of traditional characters and convey, through the skilled medium of the conjuror, information to society (consciousness) which is often 'unobtainable' by Western means. To work — and there is ample testimony that it can work well — the practise requires an extraordinary understanding of shore dynamics: an understanding which must have taken ages to perfect. As indicated earlier, the shaking tent is not often resorted to, for Native culture has provided many avenues for the symbolic life.

In the Lac la Ronge case, the spirit inside the tent whom the chief asked about his problem said no, there was no evil spirit about; "you trouble yourself with vain phantoms." The chief then asked about sudden flashes of light he had seen in the night. The spirit assured him that these were perfectly natural for the time of year, laughed at him, and added, "if you doubt me, for the future observe attentively and you will find it to be the case." This appears to be a good example of compensation: objective empiricism is recommended to counteract an over-influence of the soul or inner world; ego needs to rely on its own powers a bit more. After a few days of cheerfulness, the chief again became unshakably troubled and asked for another conjuring, posing the same question. "Again!" exclaimed the spirit. "Now thou art fond of, thou *wantest* to be haunted, well, thou shalt have thy desire" (emphasis mine).

To the horror of the community, it was then announced that the feared spirit had just left its home, was on its way, and would arrive at a certain time, just before which, they should conjure again. This done, the congregated spirits confirmed that the menace was very near. "What shall we do?" the chief exclaimed. Finally, the spirit known as "Bull" or "Buffalo" asked the chief if he remembered a *dream* of him (Buffalo), which he had had as a young man. The chief remembered it "perfectly."

This dream may well have occurred during the *vision quest* — once a widespread rite practised primarily by boys in their early teens. In it, the quester *fasts in isolation* from other humans until one or more visions or dreams appear to him which speak of his life and provide personal insight and advice.<sup>163</sup> A lifetime spirit helper — in this case, perhaps the Buffalo Bull — is sometimes acquired at this time. The quest is yet another culturally-fostered shore experience uniting the two halves of the psyche and placing the whole individual in cosmic context.<sup>164</sup>

In both shaking tent and vision quest, consciousness invites numena to emerge from the collective sea. The chief himself, however, has experienced an uninvited arrival on his shore, which he feels as menacing. In Jungian terms, it is likely that his conscious view is too exaggerated or restricted in some sense, and resists whatever compensation has just landed. The reassurances of the first conjuring have certainly not had a lasting effect. The unconscious may be quite correct, therefore, in observing from inside the tent the second time, that the chief is really *asking* for trouble (unconsciously).

In the dream from the chief's youth, he was told by Buffalo that he would be troubled one winter in his old age, and that he could get "relief" by offering a specific *sacrifice* and doing a *sweat*. The solution to the problem, therefore, has been available to consciousness all along. "But . . . I have no stones [to heat for the sweat lodge]," complained the chief, whereupon the spirit with whom he was conversing pointed out the

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163 Most good ethnographies cover this topic. For a first-hand account of an adult experience, see "Dancing with Chaos: An Interview with Douglas Cardinal", in the magazine *Intervox*, vol. 8, 1989/90, 27-31, 44-47, reprinted in McPherson and Rabb (1993, 67-81).

164 I cannot help contrasting this inexpressibly profound and life-enhancing gift once offered to children in Algonquian-speaking cultures with the pitiful offerings of the West, whose offspring are usually left with no idea of the richness available to them from within.

stones at the door of his very own tent. "Yes, but, . . . the dogs have *watered* them, and they are otherwise soiled." To which it is replied, again rather scientifically, "Fool, put them in the fire"; the fire will purify them. This appears to be what I would call the "Yes, but" syndrome, having caught myself enough times to know that usually when I say "yes, but . . .", something in me knows better; I'm stalling, resisting the next step.<sup>165</sup>

Now, at the shaking tent, however, while all of this good advice is being imparted, the menacing spirit has almost reached them, so four spirits within the shaking tent volunteer to go out and try to drive it back. We have seen how four is an expression of wholeness — the poles of two pairs of opposites balanced and contained within the circle of the psyche. It is a very good sign, then, that the disturbance will be met by wholeness. After a strange noise which disturbs even the dogs, however, it is revealed that the four have failed in their initial attempt because this evil spirit has been sent against the chief by "another indian who conjured him up from the Deep (i.e., the bottom of some flood)" [parentheses Nelson's]. This is the same land/sea imagery which we have employed in talking of the psyche-island. The "Deep" is one of the ways the collective unconscious depicts itself in dreams, myths, etc.. It is here claimed that someone else has used his special power to get an archetype to emerge from the sea, take form and pursue.

Similar reports of rivalry between powerful men, or of "black magic" performed on others are quite common,<sup>166</sup> and I am too ill-informed to discuss them here. It is true, however, that life is often a social struggle, not only in the outer world,

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<sup>165</sup> Which, alas, does not prevent me from falling back into the pattern. I can only hope to get quicker at recognising it, as "yes, but . . ." slips out once again.

<sup>166</sup> Again, most ethnographies discuss this. Nelson himself talks about it elsewhere (1988) 63-73) and elsewhere.

but also in the inner one. Evil intentions, real or imagined, can have devastating results. We have already noticed that this chief seems to have brought the incident on himself.<sup>167</sup> With or without the help of some external challenger or ill-wisher, however, the collective "Deep" has been disturbed; a menace has arisen from it which needs attention until it returns once more to its rest.

The spirit of this disturbance, once nonexistent, is now reported to be "of monstrous size, ferocious and withal enraged against you." The tent spirits say that the four will continue in their efforts, and will have succeeded in driving it back if, between first light and sunrise, "a very smart shower of snow attended with a terrible gust of wind" occurs — an expression of the angry spirit's "spite," and the last remnant of its power. "He'll then return to his home" in "the Deep," they say. Despite all signs to the contrary, this snow squall occurred suddenly, as foretold, and just as suddenly disappeared.

The sacrifice (which was to Buffalo) and the sweat were performed in exacting detail, and they restored the old man, but only for a time. Again he heard rumblings and had to have yet another conjuring, during which he posed the same questions. Again he was laughed at, given perfectly sound outer-world explanations, and reassured that he would be forewarned by the speaking spirit if any ill was to happen to him. The matter may then have been resolved, for this is where Nelson leaves the story.

This little tale very partially describes one of many Native ways of going down to the shore or getting in touch with the soul. In contrast to the vision quest, where the quester is isolated, the shaking tent is a public affair in which the archetypes are made

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<sup>167</sup> It may be that this is a case of guilt about some thought or deed — merely neglectful or openly malevolent — against the distant conjuror which could be years old. Hallowell talks about the sensitivity of the Ojibwa to matters of this kind (1967/92) 97.

available to the whole community. In a real sense, the tent contains the community soul; it contains whatever the group needs to answer its questions and make it whole.<sup>168</sup> What would the old chief have done without this ritual? He did have the solution from his dream all along, but perhaps he would not have tried it without the tent's prodding. Nothing seemed to work quickly for him. The point may be that, when in distress, he had recourse to something that gave relief time after time, calming his fears, giving constructive advice, and even recognizing, when things came to it, the communal and cosmic importance of his plight. The West, with all its scientific helps cannot offer more.

### About Myths

Myths, too, are shore activity. Just as the community soul is briefly housed in the shaking tent, so, on a more long-term basis, it is captured in the culture's legacy of myths. Myths are archetypes and groups of archetypes which have crept up on land in individual visions, dreams and imaginations and "clothed themselves" in the people's language, refitting their garments to suit the occasion in tellings and retellings, but generally maintaining their skeletal essence. Their chronicles have become kept stories because they are truly collective, presenting a society's experience from the perspective of its unconscious and therefore providing it with what it needs to be whole. So long as myths still point to that mysterious something which has not yet broken through into full consciousness, they remain fascinating, alive, and even sacred. In this sense, they are powerful cultural dreams, guiding, challenging, leading the people on.

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<sup>168</sup> Which is the West's approach to science. Our problem is that it is our *only* approach (excluding our segregated and "anaemic" religion and art). Again, I resist the temptation to speculate that Western and Native views are opposites in this regard. A view which keeps the people alive for millennium after millennium *has* to have a sophisticated understanding of the material world.

For good empirical reasons, Jung ended up with the following conclusions about the origin and history of myths:

Myths go back to the primitive storyteller and his dreams, to men moved by the stirring of their fantasies. These people were not very different from those whom later generations have called poets or philosophers. Primitive storytellers did not concern themselves with the origin of their fantasies; it was much later that people began to wonder where a story originated. Yet, centuries ago, in what we now call "ancient" Greece, men's minds were advanced enough to surmise that the tales of the gods were nothing but archaic and exaggerated traditions of long-buried kings or chieftans. Men already took the view that the myth was too improbable to mean what it said. They therefore tried to reduce it to a generally understandable form. (1964, 90)<sup>169</sup>

Jung, however, is not so "advanced." He advises us to "stick to the image." For him, every myth must be taken to be saying what it is saying; it must be taken seriously at face value. We must therefore be able to tolerate and entertain the mystery of it, trying to follow and understand without adding what is not already there or subtracting what does not make sense. Through a lifetime of work, Jung discovered useful ways to see more of what is already there in symbols and myths — which is not to say that their mystery is diminished thereby. His way of seeing merely exposes one more layer in the richness of myth — a layer especially useful to the West in reviving its long lost sense of inner meaning. In the consulting room, analysts are often able to relate mythical scenes and stories from very diverse cultures to contemporary Western predicaments, bringing insight to otherwise inscrutable images produced in individual psyches.

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<sup>169</sup> The sexist language is dated. It may also reflect the tendency of many sets of myths to reflect a more male than female psychology, although this is by no means universally true. The reduction of soul content to rational content in ancient Greece is another reference to the bottom of the chasm (or close to it).

There are many, many ways to see the same story. People brought up with one story will see something new and meaningful, or be reminded of something old and meaningful, with each new hearing. That is the magic of stories; they tease the imagination into its own reveries, and the intellect into new probings, so that they never really say the same thing twice to anyone. What is seen in any story depends on such factors as the hearer's inherited cultural pre-understandings, personality preferences, past personal experience, stage in life, state of well-being, specific problems, and particular location in space and time. Most of these variables apply to what the teller says as well.

A culture will have its own wisdom about its stories, too. Some stories will teach how it is to be in this culture, and what to do in this or that type of situation. In a jam, one might find oneself asking, "What would coyote do now?" thereby evoking a sort of familiar coyote-energy upon which to draw for imaginative help. Other stories tell how things came to be as they are, deeply etching symbolic meaning into one's view of everything in the world. But in the end, no matter what the content of a myth, the psyche has spoken, and we may always take this as an expression of soul, and therefore a mystery.

Myths, then, have layers and layers of meaning, of which Jung's archetypal view is only one. He partially unclothes the archetype, as it were, exposing aspects which often have relevance beyond the specific culture of origin. This can in no way detract from the sanctity of the culture's own many ways of seeing its myths. Far from reducing myths to neat psychological formulae, Jung almost insists on elevating their mystery  
170 — amplifying it, entering it deeply, allowing it to lead us to who knows where. Awe is the only appropriate attitude.

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170 This is in compensation for the West's tendency to take a literal view of everything.



As the list of Native/Jungian similarities might suggest, I am of the opinion that Native cultures have, and have had, people who understand many aspects of Jung's view, including the notion of myths as pictures of compensating inner motions initiated by typical human situations — "a sort of mental therapy for the sufferings and anxieties of mankind in general — hunger, war, disease, old age, death," as Jung put it (1964, 79). It may very well be true that it took Jung his whole life to understand some important basic facts which are quite obvious from the Native perspective.<sup>171</sup>

### The Origin of Horses

Take, for instance, the sacred story "The Origin of Horses," (Bloomfield 1993, 257-79) collected by the great linguist Leonard Bloomfield in 1925 from the Sweet Grass band on the North Saskatchewan River in central Saskatchewan, near the Alberta border. It is the only version of it I have encountered, which is a bit unusual, but it was clearly considered sacred by the Sweet Grass people.<sup>172</sup> I mention it because we already know from the title that the story is not ancient, horses being a European introduction to the Americas. And yet this myth was told to Bloomfield by blind elder Ka-kisikaw-pihtukāw (Coming Day) acknowledged by the band as knowing the most traditional stories (Bloomfield 1993, 1).

The hero of this myth is the youngest of three sons, who is unmarried. For living

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171 Given his heritage, this is Jung's great accomplishment, which is equalled by the recording of his discoveries in terms that others in the West might understand.

172 It is called in Cree one of their *atayohkāwin* — traditional sacred stories "concerning the time when the world was not yet in its present definitive state" (Bloomfield 1993, 6). This is a psychological stage for all individuals.

accommodation, he alternates among the three tents of his parents and two married brothers. All is well until the oldest brother's wife tries to seduce him and then accuses *him* of seduction when she is disappointed. His relatives then make it so uncomfortable for him that he decides to leave. So he sets out, despondent, with no destination: "I may as well go to my destruction, it matters not where."<sup>173</sup> This is a familiar human state in which Jungians see great potential. In it, we have let go of all that is dear and familiar; we have no schemes or plans — no intent. Nothing matters, which leaves room for the soul to enter, for caring too much in consciousness can shut out the soul's voice.

After many trials and almost starving to death he meets an old woman (a "grandmother," and a form of soul) whom he honours. As she does with all young men who come her way, she warns him not to carry on in the direction he has taken, but he says he has no reason to turn back. He stays four nights with her as she teaches him what to do to survive at his eventual destination. She then gives him some of her possessions — including her own breech-clout — as magic aids and sends him on his way.

His travels take him to a *flat plain* running down to an *endless body of water* (the land of the soul and sea of the collective unconscious), where he meets a tall man, dressed like a woman in a long skirt which hides his feet. This is a very powerful, numinous Self-figure, uniting many opposites, not the least of which are the sexes. He is also deadly dangerous, but, by meticulously following the old woman's advice, the youth manages to survive four nights with this figure, after which, he has won the right to a horse.

One of the key trials was to catch sight of the tall man's hidden feet and to prove it

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173 This is very like my Amazonian friend who set off into the jungle to die.

by describing them. The feet have the shape of horse's hooves. This version of the Self, then, also unites human and animal energies.<sup>174</sup> The figure stands on (is founded on), moves by, and partially *is* this instinctive, tamable power of motion, and he embodies it in a humanly accessible form. This is the secret of his power, and to discover it is to gain power over him. He is consequently obliged to hand over a horse. He tries to give the youth four different horses, but each is refused, for by now the young man knows that he wants only the tall man's own special horse. "Oh, no, grandfather! It is not this one I have come to fetch. . . . It is your own horse I have come to fetch," he repeats with each offer.

Finally the man gives in:

Then they went to the lake, and from there, "My horse, come to land!"

Suddenly he saw the water rise up high, just as if it were boiling, and at last he saw a horse come from the water, and come to shore, a bay horse.

It was a stallion. (Bloomfield 1993, 276)<sup>175</sup>

Once mounted by the youth, this stallion "made as if to go back into the water. 'Ho there, I am giving my horse to my grandson! Come to land; he means to take you home with him!'" the tall man orders. The myth goes on for several more pages, explaining how the youth ends up with forty additional horses which he takes home to his family, how he distributes them and gets them to eat grass, etc.. The story ends: "In this way, then, horses came to be, for the first time since the beginning of the world."

We are already prepared to recognize much in this from a Jungian perspective. I

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<sup>174</sup> Pan and some forms of the Western devil are related to this figure.

<sup>175</sup> I think of this as the form of "horseness," or of what "horse" symbolizes to human beings, and to the Sweet Grass Cree. Perhaps before the horse it was sometimes a buffalo or dog.

see this myth, for one thing, as the story of a young person coming into his sexual maturity in a very authentic way. Life (love) has perhaps hurt and confused him and he feels uncertain as he resists the seductive power of of his personal soul (sister-in-law). The condition is intolerable, so he turns from everything familiar and "sinks into himself ," making his way deep into the land of the soul with nothing but his pain. There live two archetypal figures who can help him, as they help all who wander there without hope. With the aid of a collective soul-figure ("grandmother") he meets that Self of which he is an part and into which he is growing, and, with the right balance of wariness, obedience and trickery, he manages to claim the one possession of the Self which he needs at this stage in his life. As if before our very eyes, we see it rise from the great sea of the collective unconscious and pass from the true Self to consciousness, which can tame it and put it to work in the outer world – *for the first time* . It is the archetype of instinctive strength, power, speed, passion and wide-ranging freedom.

Because of his exemplary behaviour, the youth's very Self comes to want this development. "To land!" is the command, even as the instinct turns back toward its watery home. As the youth gains familiarity this new energy, it quickly multiplies, becoming potentially available to all aspects of the conscious personality. Bringing this energy home — bringing it into the land of consciousness for the first time — means a significant expansion in the scope and powers of ego. He becomes more self-directed in this homeland — in his dealings with the outer world (he becomes chief in the story) — having gained his own mind (tent), which includes, for the first time, relationship to a soul mate (he is given the good sister-in-law for his wife). This young man has matured significantly. His horses will carry him far, having already brought him

authority, power and prestige.<sup>176</sup> A young person sick at heart over an inappropriate love, for example, might well take courage from such a story, no matter at what level he understood it.<sup>177</sup>

After this, there is little need to explain why, despite historical accounts of the horse in North America, some Cree people in Saskatchewan talk seriously of the horse originating in the sea. The two accounts are equally true. Interior horses are just as real as exterior ones, and symbolic horses have just as much power as physical ones. We are talking of two different, but equally significant worlds. In the inner world, horses, and everything else, come from the collective "Deep" and have to make their way, hopefully with our help, up onto dry land. I think that Ka-kisikaw-pihtukāw may have understood this. Which account has more personal significance for you?

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<sup>176</sup> The many fours associated with this story emphasize its relevance to the *whole* psyche. There is only the matter of the lying sister-in-law, who is killed ("repeatedly" stabbed) by her husband when he finally finds out the truth, which may be cause for complication down the road. After all, she was the one who set him on the journey in the first place — a proper function of the soul.

<sup>177</sup> I have barely scratched the surface of this rich and intriguing story, which may, as I have discussed, have cultural uses and interpretations far differing from this, as well.

## Appendix

I have presented merely some key elements in the complex and intriguing "The Origin of Horses" story, simply to demonstrate the language of myth as Jung discovered it. I add here a very rudimentary Jungian-oriented analysis of an entire myth in order to illustrate further all that has gone before. In doing so, I ask the reader to understand that I am not a Jungian analyst. Jungians write whole books on shorter tales than the one below. This fact, and time restraints ensure that I will miss a great deal indeed. Even so, by exercising our much-needed symbolic attitude, we will become better acquainted with more of the shore environment.

Before starting, I would again like to restate what has already been suggested on page 114 and elsewhere, that a Jungian interpretation, on its own, cannot be enough for a Western person to understand these myths. Rather, Jung provides one way of approaching mythology which may bear fruit when brought into dialogue with more culture-specific methods of interpretation. I take very seriously the attitude expressed by non-Native Ojibwa ethnographer Mary Black-Rogers in her foreword to *Clothed-in-Fur and Other Tales: An Introduction to an Ojibwa World View* (1982, xv-xvii). Experience has taught her that understanding of such myths comes from repeated exposure to many variations, told in the cultural context from which they arose and to which they apply. She as much as advises us to shut up and listen again and again, patiently allowing the story, the context, the manner of presentation, etc., to work at a "meta-level" (allowing unconscious input, as Jung advises).

Such rich contextual and cultural engagement is not available to us as we consider myth below. We will indeed be taking an approach from the Western perspective — an approach which may at first seem detached and abstract. By relating our Western analytical skills to the other human functions, however — by healing the wound of the chasm — Jung has enabled individuals of very diverse backgrounds to find personal meaning in the myths of the world. As Native elders do, he uses myth and other manifestations of the psyche to usher us, *through our own door*, into that primal tent or house of Being where we struggle and laugh and suffer together. No matter from what direction we arrive, we need to return again and again, for within that tent we remember our wholeness and understand again what it means to “protect, and touch, and greet each other.”

### First-Born Son

“The First-Born Son” is an authentic myth collected by American ethnographer Dr. William Jones from Ojibwa storyteller J. B. Penesi, at Fort William (now Thunder Bay), Ontario, between 1903 and 1905 (Jones 1919, 133-49). It appears to be a widespread and well-known story; I have found several versions or mentions of it in print,<sup>178</sup> suggesting a distribution from Saskatchewan to central Ontario at least.

To begin our consideration, let us take Jung's advice, throw out all our preconceived notions, and stick to the specific story, looking for associations to

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<sup>178</sup> A Cree version from Saskatchewan is called “The Ten Brothers” in Bloomfield 1993, 221-36. Another Ojibwa version from the Lake Nipigon area of Ontario is called “The Indian that Became a Thunderbird” in Morriseau 1965, 6-12. Hallowell also mentions it among the Berens River Ojibwa of Manitoba (1992, 66). These “variations” are not from the same community, and therefore not quite what Black-Rogers means by the term in the next paragraph.

particulars, and assuming, as does Black-Rogers, that there *is* sense and order to be found. As we walk through "The First-born Son," I will mention not only cultural details to enhance meaning, but also certain *motifs* — sets of symbols found by Jung to appear globally, bearing fairly universal meaning.

"The First-born Son" opens with "once on a time" — a clue that we are entering the mythic reality of the inner world and should start searching for associations, rather than taking things literally. As already argued, this is not to detract one iota from the truth or relevance of the tale. It is not "make-believe." As anthropologist Irving Hallowell notes, traditional Ojibwa are not only members of human society, but are "participants, with other than human persons in a larger cosmic society," which is "*far from being metaphorical* for them [emphasis mine]" (1992, 68). In fact, for them, mythical reality is as "ordinary" as waking reality. They, much like Jung, integrate their waking and sleeping experiences in a way quite unknown to most of us (*Ibid.*, 84-5).

"Now, once on a time, they say, there dwelt a first-born son." Here we get the title — the topic around which the tale revolves. This man, this important (first), experienced (adult) unity,<sup>179</sup> has developed (fathered) ten sons and ten daughters — another unity, this time the "higher octave of one."<sup>180</sup> Ten is often considered a "perfect number,"<sup>181</sup> and here reflects a differentiation of the initial unity into ten pairs of opposites. The sons, in Jung's approach, would likely represent *conscious* abilities (e.g. thinking, willing, sensing, etc.), male being most like the initial unity, while the

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<sup>179</sup> Jung 1959a, par. 624. I will at times place references in footnotes from this point to preserve what clarity survives in an already complex text.

<sup>180</sup> Mahoney 1966, 216.

<sup>181</sup> Jung 1966b, par. 525-6. Morriseau's is the only version varying from the number ten; his number of brothers is seven, which makes sense in terms of the ending.



daughters would represent their complementary, instinctive, *unconscious* aspects (Jung, 1959a, par. 674).

The story starts off, then, by showing us the differentiation of a simple personality or people into a complex but perfect unity in which nothing is out of place despite all the development. But life can never remain in idyllic harmony. Now the ten sons, taking over the tale, say it is "time" to move to "a different land." Off they go by themselves, setting up their own wigwam from which they daily depart to hunt. The complex unity has been split down the middle (dissociated), and the conscious (male) half is trying to get along without its unconscious counterpart. Because of this one-sidedness, trouble is bound to follow.

Traditional Ojibwa are reported to be patricentered and patrilocal, father and one or more married sons hunting/trapping together.<sup>182</sup> A boy, "by twelve or fifteen years . . . should leave the family lodge for his own hunting grounds,"<sup>183</sup> and I think this is one archetypal situation for which the story holds great relevance; a son, having perfected his own abilities, moves toward independence. The story reflects Native "non-interference" and "right time" policies as outlined by Native psychologist Clare Brant.<sup>184</sup> for it is the *sons*, not the parent, who announce what the time requires. And the storyteller, like Jung, seems to realize that this breaking up of unity and consequent pain are necessary to growth, for it treats the sons' move as perfectly natural.

What happens when we make a "move" into "a different land" as does this Ojibwa youth? We have left the old guiding principles (father) behind, and must rely on our

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182 Hallowell 1992, 44; Dunning 1959, 630.

183 Landes 1968, 8.

184 Brant 1990 and Brant and Sealy 1988.

own resources. It is the start of what Jung calls an "individuation process" toward increased consciousness (Jung 1955, par. 77).

The difference between the sons is symbolized by the trail they follow each day. From it, "the road of the eldest was the first to branch off towards where he was to hunt . . . and the road of the next eldest then branched off . . . and so on . . . in order of age." Each one's territory lies at a different distance from home (seat of consciousness); the oldest gets to walk least, and, as we shall see, comes home earliest. In Jung's interpretation, the oldest son would be the strongest, most fully conscious function in the personality, and each step down would represent some ability under less conscious control.<sup>185</sup> As already discussed, we have a tendency to identify with our first function, to the detriment of the others, if it will best secure our social success.<sup>186</sup> In insecure times, such as this move, the tendency would be especially strong.

As always happens in cases of imbalance, compensation arrives, this time in the form of a mysterious woman, who visits the wigwam while the men are out, and does "the work of a woman" - cooking, sewing, gathering firewood, housecleaning. In a society with such clear sexual divisions of labour <sup>187</sup>, this would be a great relief to the men.<sup>188</sup> In Jung's terms, a representative of the unconscious has come to contribute its necessary part toward the well-being of the whole, and indeed, this woman is a perfect symbol for the "wild" unknown, for she turns out to be a Thunderbird "manitou" — an eternal power or spirit-person, whose basic form is hawk-like, but who acts much as

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185 Jung 1971, par. 764.

186 Ibid., par. 763.

187 Dunning 1959, 130.

188 And it is a good metaphor to show how the soul enhances life when given a place.

humans do, including changing form.<sup>189</sup>

Balance is being restored, but which son will be able to claim this new power — which function will best be able to work with the unconscious and bring her more visibly into conscious life? Each son, starting with the oldest and working down the pecking order, stays home one day to see if she will appear. Since we already suspect that the youngest brother represents the function with least conscious control, we are not surprised that the new help-mate chooses him for her husband.

In traditional society, this would be bound to upset the balance again, for . . . "The only way for a man's status to . . . advance is for him to develop a family of his own," and "the status of the adult male who remains unmarried . . . remains low."<sup>190</sup> The story confirms this: "now it had been agreed among them that the one who was married would always come home first" from the hunt. Thus, the youngest brother has usurped the oldest's privilege.

When we identify with our primary ability (say thinking), it is very difficult to respect the others, especially the one farthest away from and least like the first (say feeling). It requires relinquishment of power, admission of inadequacy, etc., all of which we resist.<sup>191</sup> Accordingly, in a fit of jealousy, the oldest brother secretly returns early one day, shoots the woman, then resumes his hunt. That the first-born may actually represent thinking is supported by the fact that his instrument is the arrow — the sharp intellect projected to penetrate the object, in the hope that it can be reasoned away (Jung 1955, par. 197-8). The story emphasizes total denial: even

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<sup>189</sup> Landes 1968, 22, 66; Hallowell 1992, 61.

<sup>190</sup> Dunning 1959, 133-4.

<sup>191</sup> This is precisely the challenge for the West in embracing its soul. One can read this part of the myth as more than a metaphor of the-West-meets-Native-people story.

though everyone knows who did the crime, the perpetrator never confesses and is never confronted. He even pretends to be sad over the bad news.

What has happened is a self-inflicted injury to an organic whole by means of a war of opposites; consciousness (the familiar) is resisting the choices and new input of the strange and upsetting unconscious. Disorder and struggle replace the harmony with which we began.

Jung is clear that, if unconscious ideas or feelings are consistently repressed (become a secret) they may seem to disappear, but in reality they go underground to take "possession" of the personality. Consequently, one ends up doing rather unsavoury things without much conscious intention (Jung 1966b, par. 125-7). The potentially most conscious first-born, who has just undergone this process, now disappears from the story until the very end, eclipsed by the pressing events he himself has set in motion. He has not succeeded in thinking the unconscious away. His victim is near death, but not dead, and she has her husband — the tale's new hero — take her to a secluded place, where he must leave her alone for ten days. The "perfect" number returns.

After trauma, the "time" for healing must be right, and it is our unconscious who knows when that is. But alas, a third upset is about to occur, since even the humblest representative of consciousness, the tenth son, cannot trust the unconscious enough. He visits his wife on the eighth day, only to see her in her true Thunderbird form, flying off to her home in the west. A power that once served consciousness has been twice violated and is returning to its inaccessible home. As for the men, "Thereupon, once more were they waiting upon themselves."

All is not lost, however, for the husband's premature return is on the *eighth* day. As ten is an "octave" of one, so eight is a variation of four — the basic and most universal symbol of wholeness *in consciousness* (i. e. "discriminated wholeness," as opposed to an undifferentiated unit).<sup>192</sup> From antiquity, four, and multiples thereof, have expressed aspects of the *known* world — the four elements, colours, sides of a square, arms of a cross, directions, etc.. As previously hinted, four is "a powerful number" in Ojibwa culture, and "an irreducible ritual unit" in the *midéwiwin* tradition.<sup>193</sup> The four directions are the homes of the four winds<sup>194</sup>, the shortest length of days for a vision quest is four, the minimum number of stones for a curing sweat is four.<sup>195</sup> Eight expresses greater differentiation, and reaching the fourth or eighth appears to mean reaching a new degree of integration.<sup>196</sup>

The fact that the husband had enough patience to reach the eighth day, therefore, is a clue that, even though he has disobeyed the unconscious, there is still hope for union. He now starts off on a solitary quest — a classic motif for the process of individuation — following his manitou wife westward.

The process involves introversion — that "inward-turning of libido [interest]"<sup>197</sup> enhanced or not by such techniques as the vision quest or sweat lodge — in which one detaches oneself for a time from the authority of external life, giving priority to events in a world to which we have access primarily from inside, through our

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192 Jung 1963b, par. 5, 323.

193 Landes 1968, 32,115.

194 Hallowell 1992, 74.

195 Landes 1968, 8, 27.

196 Jung 1953a, par. 203-4.

197 Jung 1971, 769.

singular person. In other words, one goes down to the shore of one's soul. In doing this, one finds that one is not alone (McPherson and Rabb 1993, 73); the unconscious is full of helpful as well as dangerous powers. Therefore, although the husband's journey is solitary, he is not without company as he travels through an increasingly strange (unconscious/soul) land.

Throughout the first leg of the journey, other-than-human-persons in the form of trees tell the husband which way to go, manifesting our instinctive sense of psychic direction. In addition, on four successive evenings, he is fed and sheltered by a different old person or "grandparent," each possessing extraordinary manitou powers.<sup>198</sup> The first three warn that he will never be successful, the dangers being too great, but the husband persists.

The old people are like tests or temptations to give in on the arduous quest. But they also bode well, for they nurture and refresh the weary traveller. After his third warning, the youth reiterates "I am determined to go,"<sup>199</sup> whereupon the third grandfather promises that the next old man will be able to give him extra help. That these grandparents are two female and two male might express the collective "whole" of our ancestry, since each of us has that number and division of grandparents. That the males come last and have the most power shows that the traveller is getting closer to (figures like) "himself," yet on a plane greater than himself. Jung has identified that figure which encompasses both consciousness and the unconscious, and who appears to us in dreams as a powerful figure of our own sex, as the "Self" (the "Wise Old Man", for men). As already suggested, this figure is an expression of meaning within chaos that is

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198 Other than human persons are traditionally referred to as "our grandfathers" (Hallowell 1992, 65).

199 The deep resolve may hint that the story was used as an aid in vision quest.

much larger than the puny ego and serves to inform it (Jung 1959a, par. 74-9).

On the fourth evening, the husband reaches the fourth "grandparent", and in the morning he is told: "At noon you will come to a steep cliff; and there you will see the bones of all the people that have died there." This is a major turning point in the story. At noon (midway), there is a deadly obstacle, which no human can scale. But this fourth grandfather supplies a gift with other-than-human powers — four hook-shaped pieces of copper, which will stick to the rock and serve as steps. These could represent powerful concepts or resolves which "grasp" things. Ruth Landes reports a midéwiwin rite in which the patient is asked to dance on four strips of iron. The speaker instructs: "Iron is strong. You stand on the fourth strip and there must dance to the mystic talk . . . thus you will lose all that ails you, never more to suffer" (1968, 149).

The pieces of copper get the husband part way up, but then they become dull and won't stick any more. "Alas! . . . there on high was he hanging." Consciousness (ego) has contributed stamina and persistence, and the unconscious has provided refreshment and useful ideas, but all this is not enough. As in any severe dilemma, we reach a point where we've run out of resources and become "suspended" in frustrating inaction. This is where the Native respect for dreams steps in.

The husband now remembers dream instructions, and a dream from his youth of a butterfly, which he now wills to become.<sup>200</sup> Succeeding, he flutters a little higher up the cliff. To reach the top, he has to further transform himself into a duck. Using previously developed spiritual (winged) instincts, he has scaled the deadly barrier (fearful resistance) exercising that power of personhood known as "metamorphosis" — the product of co-operation between ego (the vision quester) and manitou (the

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200 This could be an unassisted dream, or one from a vision quest.

unconscious "animal").<sup>201</sup>

Reaching the top of the mountain surely represents entering the Thunderbird world. Jung found that climbing a mountain often represents spiritual ascent to a place of revelation.<sup>202</sup> The winged forms which got our hero to the top suggest that he, too, is becoming Thunderbird-like. In Ojibwa mythology, Thunderbirds do not live on earth, but in a world above<sup>203</sup> — sometimes expressed as "on a big mountain" to the west. They are associated with the weather — especially thunder and lightning — and share many social characteristics with the Ojibwa people.<sup>204</sup> In the "cosmic society," they are invoked by humans attempting a cure by vision.<sup>205</sup>

On the other side of the top, there is a rock in the shape of a knife blade, which he can descend only by becoming an agile squirrel. The peculiar rock evokes the hard, "sharp" intellect, as dangerous as the first-born son's "piercing" arrow, which threatens to slice the husband in two, thereby causing another dissociation. The husband, however, now knows the wisdom in becoming small and behaving instinctively.

At evening, he comes to a town with a flagpole at the centre. The marked centre is a sure sign of potential wholeness. It is that stable point to which everything relates. It lends order and energy to the whole, manifesting, as Jung put it, "the almost irresistible urge to become what one *is*" (as opposed to what convention might say one should

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201 Hallowell 1992, 66.

202 Jung 1959b, par. 317, 356. Here it becomes evident that the land of the soul does not always go "down" — a topic which I cannot pursue here. The curious may find it helpful to think of it in terms of compensation. This does not change our general psychic position as islands in the collective sea.

203 Hallowell 1992, 65; Landes 1968, 208; Overholt 1982, 134.

204 Hallowell 1992, 61, 66.

205 Landes 1968, 47.



be).<sup>206</sup> Our hero accepts shelter from an old woman on the periphery, who welcomes him, and informs him that he will be invited to join tomorrow's contest for the chief's daughter as wife.

The contest, it turns out, will be won by he whose hand sticks to the inside of a red mussel shell which is passed around to all contestants. The hero wishes that only his hand will stick. When he remembers it, a certain glue he once dreamed of appears on his hand, the shell sticks, and he wins the daughter. Shells play a prominent role in the origin myth and rites of the midéwiwin curing society. Landes tells of a similar "trick" performed by a Midé chief in which a downturned mirror with a shell stuck to it by some "secret herbal medicine" was danced, shell-side down around the lodge. If the shell remained until the dancing chief returned to his seat, the patient would live.<sup>207</sup>

Symbols of opposites uniting now abound. The shell, normally a denizen of the deep ocean (that collective and unconscious mother of us all), appears in the highest world as the key to success. What is more, it is red — the colour of blood, fire, feeling<sup>208</sup> — quite opposed to the cool, contained and airy intellect, which has been our main source of trouble. Will little ego be able to remember his lowly roots and relate (stick) to them in a lasting way, or will the ever-threatening dissociation occur as ego begins to identify with these high spirits? <sup>209</sup> Again, an appeal to his hard-won vision powers gets the husband past the difficulty.

Jungians hold that an adult's sense of completeness arises from the union of the

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206 Jung 1959a, par. 634.

207 Landes 1968, 187. See also Howard 1977, 140-41.

208 Jung 1959a, par.697; 1963b, par. 20.

209 This is what happens in the Morriseau version. The hero becomes a Thunderbird and never returns home.

conscious (here male) and unconscious (here female) aspects of himself, and that out of this union comes the aforementioned "transcendent function," by which greater individual potential can be realized. Jung calls one aspect of the transcendent function the very "symbolic attitude" we are attempting to adopt here. As stated before, it "assigns meaning to events which is greater than the value of the bare facts." We should, therefore, encounter synchronous signs of prosperity, as our hero's vision and power expand.

The Thunderbird bride has nine married sisters. In all, there are ten couples under the "chief" — a spiritual or manitou counterpart of our very first "first-born son". This chief of the place with the centre, this Self-figure, encourages his new son-in-law to walk about. Doing so, the hero encounters, on a great plain (the terrain has now become easy), two fountains — everflowing sources of energy. The basic opposition with which we have been concerned all along — consciousness and the unconscious — here appear together as life-giving springs. Their gift is a red foam, perhaps resembling the froth from a dying bear's mouth, which the husband rubs on his leggings. It gives him the special ability to hunt bear. One might say he now has a feeling for (red) and grounding in (legs), bear energy.

It is important for a human to attain gifts in the land of the Thunderbirds, but that is not where we belong. To remain there for long would be excessive. We have our own world and our own tasks. As soon as our hero remembers his nine brothers, the chief, always promoter of the right way, encourages him to return home with his wife and all his sisters-in-law. An alternate version of this myth has the chief add: "You can take them as wives for your brothers. . . . I'll be related to the people on earth now and I'll be merciful towards them" (Hallowell 1992, 66). A lasting connection to the great Self has been forged, the mediators being spiritual correspondents of the ten sisters

originally left behind.

The elements now bound for earth are exactly those needed by the nine brothers to become a viable, (re)productive unity. They set out, and when they reach the edge of the cliff, the women become Thunderbirds in form and fly down to the land of humans, our hero clinging to the back of his wife. Having landed near his home, the husband leaves the women and proceeds alone to his brothers' lodge, passing by "tracks of all kinds of game." Wherever he goes, there is plenty of nourishment (meaning).

The first sign of his older brothers is "sand coming forth from the doorway" of their wigwam. Since Landes several places refers to the use of clean sand on the floor for midéwiwin ceremonies, I am guessing that this sand-moving, which is being done with a spoon by the first-born-son, is a form of housecleaning. This oldest son has lost all of his false pride, for he seizes his long-lost brother and kisses him. Here we see, finally, a well-balanced *conscious* personality that can appreciate and employ the least of its abilities without conflict.

At first, however, the brothers seem to be in disarray, for, after the youngest brother has been welcomed, he tells them: "Bathe yourselves, and clothe yourselves neatly in fine raiment. Comb your hair." The outer person (Jung's "persona") has been severely neglected during the long inner journey. When this is cleansed and restored, the last-born-son leads the ten women into the lodge, saying, "Keep at my back, and in a regular order are you to take your seats beside [marry] my elder brothers." Accordingly, younger joins older, female joins male, the spiritual joins the mundane, the unconscious joins consciousness, to reestablish wholeness, unity, completeness — this time, on a more conscious level, since it has been dearly won. "And the very last to have one sit beside him," says the story, "was the first-born, oldest in

years."

In Jung's terms, this is a true myth. From start to finish it is about the relation of the opposites. Among other things it presents the story of a complete dissociation, how it occurred, and how it was healed. In the language of one Native society, it shows, in symbolic form, the process of maturation, announcing that health lies in respect for and co-operation with *all* of one's functions and abilities, as well as those of all "persons."

The story is a fine example of the function of myth to guide and instruct on matters almost impossible to put into words. People hearing it told and retold might remember, in times of psychic inflation, to look for the opposite — the small, weak, humble (youngest, butterfly, shell) — and in times of helplessness, to journey inside. They would value all life forms, "the grandfathers," dreams, and the vision quest, which served the hero so well. In a morally non-judgmental Native way, the legend accepts with equanimity that humans are going to make mistakes, and that these may lead to growth.

The story of, "The First-Born Son" ends with the following ambiguity:

And the very last to have one sit beside him was the first-born, oldest in years. And after the woman was seated, then he took up his war-club, whereupon out of doors he went (and) he was heard beating upon something. It happened to be a bear (Jones 1919, 149).

Perhaps it is just a slip in grammar or translation that leaves us suspecting that it is the first-born who is clubbing the bear, and not the young hero who so recently won the gift of hunting at such cost. More likely, however, by ending where we began, with the oldest brother, the teller is deliberately leading us to the very Jungian understanding that this whole story, at one level, is the tale of a single human being —

"Everyperson" — making his/her very human way from youth to maturity, having to deal with the many aspects of his/her complex personality, and managing to secure, with great effort, a new level of completeness, prosperity and well-being. In this sense, the myth is a map for the splittings and joinings that comprise that human journey on which every individual is first-born.

"And so the gizzard of the ruffed grouse now hangs aloft" (Jones 1919, 149).<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> In the tradition of his people J. B. Penesi formally ends "The First-Born Son" with this statement. The convention appropriately, brings us back to the particular reality of the people from whom the story arose.

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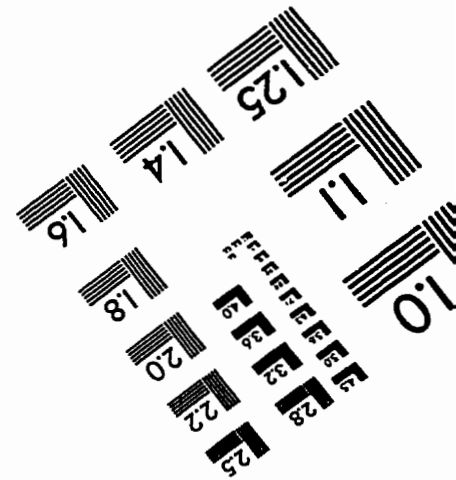
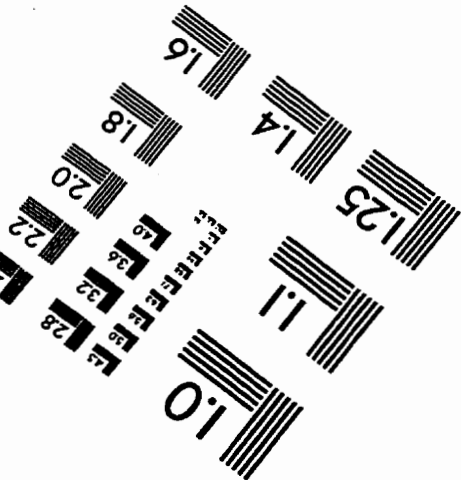
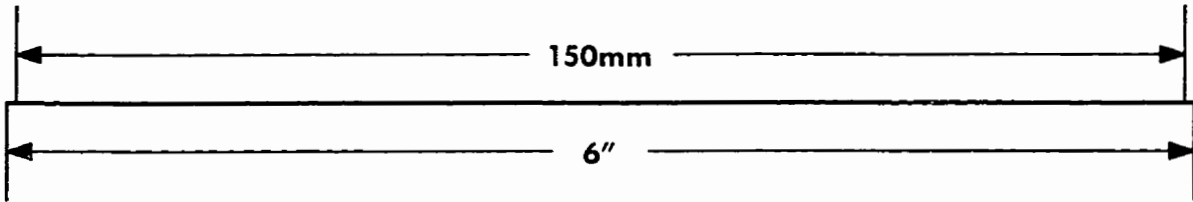
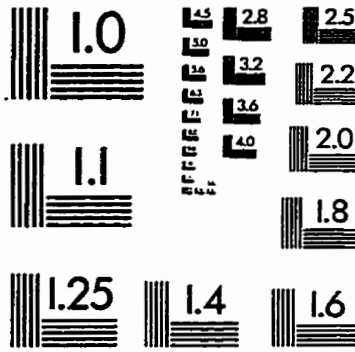
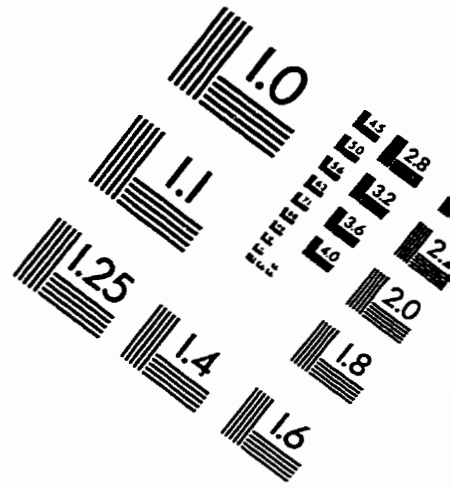
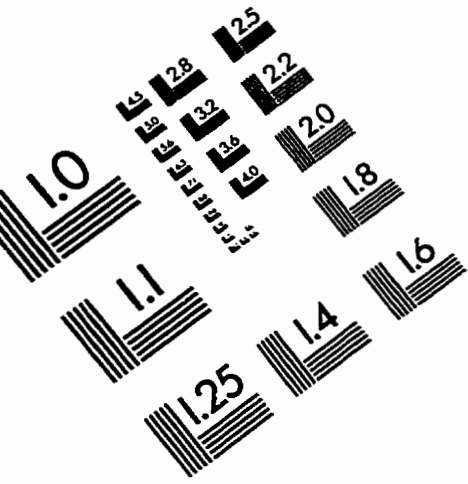


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