

Obituary: Gerhard Adler

Sweden. 14. 89

The true Jungian apostle

WITH the death of Dr Gerhard Adler the world has lost a major figure in the field of analytical psychology, often now known as Jungian psychology. With characteristic energy and devotion he continued writing and seeing analysands and students till the day before he died.

Born in Berlin, he studied at Freiburg University where he took his PhD in 1927. He went to Zürich in 1932 to work at the Burgholzi Psychiatric Clinic and to study and train under C.G. Jung, with whom he maintained a close association till the latter's death in 1961. Jung asked him to co-edit the English translation of his collected works. Adler also later edited two volumes of Jung's letters.

On his arrival in England in 1936 largely as a consequence of the Nazi persecutions, he soon became established in private analytical practice in London and as a major proponent of Jungian psychology. He wrote and lectured extensively in this country and abroad both in

German and in English. His own published works include *Studies in Analytical Psychology* (1948), *The Living Symbol* (1961) and *Dynamics of the Self* (1979). These have for many been revelatory of the essential spirit of the Jungian approach in practice and in theory. He was, however, very conscious of the dangers of "amateurs" enthusiastically taking Jungian ideas and setting up as therapists. His concern for proper professional standards spurred him to become co-founder of the Society of Analytical Psychology in 1946.

Like Jung, Adler always recognised and acknowledged Freud's discoveries in the field of unconscious dynamics in human behaviour. But he became unhappy with the trend in analytical psychology in England towards an exclusive preoccupation with intensive reductive analysis, accompanied by a devaluation of the transcendental aspects of the psyche which to him were the cornerstone of Jung's contribu-

tion to depth psychology.

At the same time he was aware of an opposite drift among many Jungian groups, and indeed among the educated public, towards a fascination with the archetypal and transcendental features. His long struggle to reconcile the two positions eventually led to the formation in 1977 of the Association of Jungian Analysts. This organisation with its aim of an integrated approach remained his great concern to the end of his life, a concern shared with his wife Hella, also a Jungian analyst.

Adler was a gifted teacher who inspired many trainees and also developed a skill and found creative expression in painting. Those closer to him knew his warm and caring personality with its humour and from time to time rumbustious joy of living.

Alexander Duddington

Gerhard Adler, born Berlin 1904; died London, December 22.