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Jung and the spirit: a review of Jung's discussions of the phenomenon of spirit

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Abstract: The phenomenon of spirit is a topic discussed frequently by Jung throughout his writings although spirit is not always considered to be central to the practice of analytical psychology. This article points to the importance of spirit in analytical psychology by presenting a survey of Jung's discussions of spirit. In Jung's discussions, spirit is not treated as an abstract concept but as an empirical phenomenon: to Jung, spirit is a psychological reality that can be described and whose effects can be experienced. Spirit is both described as an archetype and as a component of all archetypes. Spirit is related to the principle of life itself and is a prerequisite of both personal and cultural development and transformation. The article documents how Jung's understanding of spirit developed over time and in relation to different topics: Freud's psychoanalysis, the *Red Book*, fairy-tales, Christianity, Nietzsche's book on Zarathustra, Germany in the 1930's, alchemy, and creative work. The paper concludes with a discussion of the relevance of spirit to clinical practice.

Keywords: Jung and Freud, *Mercurius*, spirit, The Holy Ghost, the *Red Book*, Wotan

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In his seminal work on the history of dynamic psychiatry, *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, Henri Ellenberger (1970) states that after the archetype of the soul, the archetype of the spirit is the most important in Jung's map of the human psyche.[1] However, while it is clear from Jung's writings that he felt that spirit is an essential component of the psyche, and therefore is an important aspect of therapy, it is not easy to define precisely what Jung meant by spirit and what role he envisioned for it in the practice of psychotherapy. Given the importance of the topic of spirit in Jung's theory, it is worth producing an overview of his discussions of this phenomenon.

The following review is arranged more or less chronologically in order give a feel for how Jung's thoughts on spirit developed over time and in relation to the different topics he was interested in. In an attempt to show how spirit may appear in clinical work, the article concludes with a discussion of the role of spirit in relation to clinical practice.

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What is spirit?

It is probably helpful to begin with a few words about what is meant by the term spirit. Jung often mentions that the Greek word for spirit is *pneuma*, meaning wind or breath. The likeness to air and wind points to spirit being something insubstantial and intangible, but at the same time, it is an essential component of what it means to be alive. In Genesis God shapes the first man out of dust and then brings him alive by breathing into his nostrils. In Jung's words: 'The living being is filled with the *pneuma*; there is no life without it' (Jung 1989, p. 365). Spirit is closely connected with life, but it is also connected with inspiration and being inspired. The word spirit is related to the Latin word *inspirare*, which literally translates into, 'to breathe into'. So, to be inspired means to have spirit breathed into you.

It is characteristic of Jung as a scientist that he treats spirit as a *phenomenon* rather than a *concept*. Jung does not spend a lot of time defining spirit as if it was a philosophical concept but rather he describes its appearance in mythological material such as religion and fairy tales and its effects in the world (i.e. artistic, philosophical, and religious inspiration). For Jung spirit is not an abstraction or a product of logic but it is a real thing whose influence may be experienced directly and described empirically.

In the German version of *Collected Works* Jung uses the term *'Geist'*, which is sometimes translated into English as spirit and sometimes as mind. In the English version of *Collected Works Geist* is translated as spirit but the connotations of the two words are not quite the same. In English, the word *spirit* suggests something religious whereas the German word *Geist* may just as well refer to the cultural and aesthetic sphere and the sphere of the intellect, which includes philosophy, literature, poetry, art, and even scientific thinking. In German, the word *Geistwissenschaften* refers to the sciences concerned with the study of human culture, the humanities. In the English version of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* the German word *Geistigkeit* is translated as *spirituality*, but a parenthesis is added, which explains that what is meant is 'in the intellectual, not the supernatural sense' (Jung 1961/1983, p. 172). Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that when Jung discusses the phenomenon of spirit he is not only referring to a religious phenomenon but to an essential aspect of what it means to be alive, to be creative, and to participate in the continued creation and renewal of culture and consciousness.

Jung and the 'spirit' of Freud

In Jung's early works, there is little discussion of the phenomenon of spirit. His doctoral dissertation deals with *spirits* as they occur in mediumistic séances, but he makes no direct link between the occurrence of *spirits* and the phenomenon of *spirit* (Jung 1902). After his graduation as a medical doctor from the

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University of Zürich and his appointment at the Burghölzli mental hospital, Jung published on quantifiable phenomena such as the results from the word association tests which earned him an international reputation (Jung 1973a). After his encounter with Freud, Jung continued to publish without reference to spirit, and in his publications from his years of collaboration with Freud (ca. 1903-1913), there is no mention of spirit as a phenomenon (Jung 1960, 1961). From what Jung later told about the period of collaboration with Freud, spirit was a subject on which the two men could not agree. In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung writes:

> Freud's attitude towards the spirit seemed to me highly questionable. Wherever, in a person or in a work of art, an expression of spirituality (in the intellectual, not the supernatural sense) came to light, he suspected it, and insinuated that it was repressed sexuality. … I protested that this hypothesis, carried to its logical conclusion, would lead to an annihilating judgement upon culture. Culture would then appear as a mere farce, the morbid consequence of repressed sexuality.
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> (Jung 1961/1983, pp. 172-73)

Jung could not abide Freud's understanding of all 'products of the spirit' as a question of repressed sexuality. Although he did not yet write about it explicitly, Jung felt strongly that the realm of spirit is an autonomous reality that cannot be reduced to biological drives and instincts.

Jung's last work during his affiliation with Freud was *Symbols of Transformation* from 1912, and the book would come to mark the point where the two men went their separate ways. In a 1924 foreword to the book, Jung states that the book originated in a pressure of ideas that could not find expression in the constricting atmosphere of Freudian psychology (Jung 1956/1967, p. xxiii). However, at the time of writing this book, Jung would not disavow Freud's perspective entirely by acknowledging spirit as an autonomous entity. In a discussion of the role of instinct and spirit in symbol-formation, Jung argues that a scientific attitude should interpret symbol formation as a result of instinctual processes alone (ibid., para. 338). He then goes on to mention that it would in fact be possible to explain symbol formation as a spiritual process, but he then concedes that this point of view would demand that one accepts spirit as an autonomous reality and not only a by-product of sexuality or instinct. Jung acknowledges that it may in fact be the case that the realm of spirit has its own independent existence, but he nevertheless states that as an empirical scientist, he prefers to explain symbol-formation as a result of instinctual processes alone.

In a later text, 'On psychic energy' (its first draft written in 1912 but only published in 1928, long after the break with Freud), Jung states that spirit is a phenomenon in its own right that cannot be derived from any other instinct. Here, Jung describes spirit as closely associated with the formation of symbols in religion and culture, and he describes it as 'a spiritual counter pole to

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[man's] primitive instinctual nature, a cultural attitude as opposed to sheer instinctuality' (Jung 1948a, para. 111).

At Freud's death in 1939, Jung wrote an obituary about him, and here he returns to the question of spirit vs. instinct. In the obituary, Jung includes a brief discussion of how Freud's psychology with its foundations on 'nineteenth century scientific materialism' (Jung 1939, para. 70) and his belief 'in the power of the intellect' (ibid., para. 71) had no place for the reality of spirit: 'Spirit, for him, was just a "nothing but"' (ibid., para. 72). In the finishing sentence, Jung makes it clear that he does not agree with Freud's viewpoint and asserts that spirit is in fact a central agent in the practice of psychotherapy: 'In reality only the spirit can cast out the "spirits" – not the intellect, which at best is a mere assistant' (ibid., para. 73).

Jung's confrontation with spirit

After the break with Freud, Jung famously undergoes a confrontation with the unconscious, which he chronicles in his diaries (the black books) and later enters into the *Red Book* (2009). As described in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung's inner journey was at times dramatic, and he learned from the process that spirit is indeed a reality and that it can be as powerful as a force of nature itself. In a letter to Father Victor White from 1948, Jung probably alludes to this period with the following words: 'I wanted the proof of a living Spirit and I got it. Don't ask me at what price' (Jung 1973b, p. 492).

As Jung opened up to experiencing his unconscious directly through images and voices, he first experiences the voice of what he calls (or what calls itself) The Spirit of the Depths. This voice speaks directly to him, and it is possible to interpret *The Red Book* as the message from this subterranean spirit to Jung and his time. What Jung learns through this internal discourse is that in himself, as well as in his time and culture, spirit has been split in half: one half, The Spirit of this Time, is the *zeitgeist*, i.e. the dominant cultural ideas and world view which most people take as a representation of reality itself. The other side of spirit, The Spirit of the Depths, is the heritage that has been repressed and forgotten and that has not been given a place in the ideas and worldview of the modern age of the Western World. The Spirit of this Time is largely representative of a culture that worships science and technology and which values reason and logic over other forms of apperception of the world and which is highly suspicious of everything that cannot be measured and quantified. The Spirit of this Time dreams of being able to govern the world and ourselves through our technological inventions. This spirit of our modern times is entirely utilitarian, as it values only money as well as everything that has a practical function. This spirit believes in rational explanations and of ordering things in systems, organizations and institutions. Jung tells us that in

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the time when he was collaborating with Freud and when he was at the heights of his psychiatric career, he had come to believe in The Spirit of this Time. It seems that Jung felt that he had come to a point in his life where he had come to embody the dominant worldview of his time. As the figure of Elijah tells him: 'You serve the spirit of this time' (Jung 2009, p. 253).

That other spirit, which he encounters in his active imagination, is The Spirit of the Depths. This is a spirit which is entirely alien to the modern and rational mind. It is the spirit that science and the Age of Reason had tried to overcome. The Spirit of the Depths shows him the realm of soul and brings him back in touch with his own soul, and it shows him the reality of the world of soul as such: 'The spirit of the depths opened my eyes and I caught a glimpse of the inner things, the world of my soul, the many-formed and changing' (ibid., p. 237).

This is not the place for a further discussion of what Jung learns from his journey into his own depths. What is relevant to note is that Jung here directly experiences the power of spirit as a force which can address a person directly through a kind of revelation or vision. The Spirit of the Depths wells up from beneath as a surge of inspiration and vision. It is spirit in its role as inspirer, teacher and guide. For Jung, this spirit, which wells up from below, is also a spirit that brings healing because it points towards a larger wholeness and a more balanced worldview: 'Depth and surface should mix so that new life can develop. Yet the new life does not develop outside of us, but within us' (ibid., p. 239).

Spirit and life

During the years of his direct experience of spirit, Jung (1953/1966) discusses the nature of spirit in his *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* originally written in 1916 and 1917. In these two essays, Jung clearly states that he regards spirit as a reality and he writes: '"Spirit" is a psychic fact' (ibid., para. 293). At this time, Jung had not yet invented the concept of the archetype, which he would later use to describe the nature of spirit. At this time, he describes spirit as a 'relatively autonomous complex' (ibid., para. 313), which indicates an understanding of spirit as related to the personal complexes that he had detected in the word association experiments.

In the essay 'Spirit and life' from 1926, Jung makes the observation that spirit is essentially what brings our minds alive: '"spirit" is the quintessence of the life of the mind' (Jung 1926, para. 621). To Jung, mind and spirit are closely related, but he makes it clear that by 'life of the mind' he does not refer to purely logical and rational thinking. Rather, spirit is the ideas that catch us because they emanate from underlying autonomous complexes and their affective charges. To Jung, any idea which has the ability to influence and inspire individuals and groups can do so because it is fuelled

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by the underlying affective currents of personal and collective complexes. This is why the influence of spirit is not a calm and 'cold' sequence of logical reasoning, rather it means being seized and stirred by the emotional charge of an idea and its resonance in our own personal and collective unconscious complexes.

To 'have complexes' may often be understood as something negative and pathological and thus to be gripped by spirit through its influence on our complexes may sound undesirable. However, while Jung has made clear the dangers of being carried away by the emotional charge of some idea or ideology, he nevertheless argues that we need the influence of spirit:

> It is certainly necessary for life, since a mere ego-life, as we well know, is a most inadequate and unsatisfactory thing. Only a life lived in a certain spirit is worth living. It is a remarkable fact that a life lived entirely from the ego is dull not only for the person himself but for all concerned. The fullness of life requires more than just an ego; it needs spirit.
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> (Jung 1926, para. 645)

We may live a life as purely physical creatures but such a life, Jung feels, is hardly worth living since it is dull to ourselves and everybody around us. The influence of exciting new ideas makes us feel alive and as such makes life worth living, but Jung also warns that such ideas need to be tested against the practical realities of daily life in order to have any real value: 'Life is the touchstone for the truth of the spirit. Spirit that drags a man away from life, seeking fulfilment only in itself, is a false spirit' (ibid., para. 647). The dangers of removing the influence of spirit from life in the material world is a topic I will discuss later in relation to the example of Nietzsche and the figure of Zarathustra.

Spirit as an archetype

In his later works, after having developed his idea of the archetypes, Jung describes spirit as an archetype. It is in the essay 'The phenomenology of the spirit in fairytales' (originally from 1945) that Jung most comprehensively discusses the archetype of spirit (Jung 1948b). Here we learn that one of the most striking characteristics of spirit is that it is connected with mental movement and activity. Being the originator of inspiration and original ideas, spirit is rarely still but always in motion. Symbolically, spirit is first and foremost connected with air, and often it is represented as birds or other winged beings. Spirit is also connected with fire, since its influence is often 'fiery'. A new idea or a fresh inspiration may come as a gentle breeze, but it may also come as a fiery wind that stirs and awakes strong emotions: 'In keeping with its original wind-nature, spirit is always an active, winged,

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swift-moving being as well as that which vivifies, stimulates, incites, fires, and inspires' (ibid., para. 389).

In fairy tales as well as in dreams, spirit may appear as a wise old man who gives important advice to the protagonist: 'The wise old man appears in dreams in the guise of a magician, doctor, priest, teacher, professor, grandfather, or any other person possessing authority' (ibid., para. 398). Spirit may also appear in the form of a dwarf, little men of ice, iron or lead, as hobgoblins, brownies, and gremlins, or as the sun itself. Spirit may also appear in theriomorphic form (animal form), which is typically in the form of a bird, but it may also be a bear, a lion, a white horse. The way we can recognize spirit in these very different forms is by its function as guide and teacher. Spirit brings new insight when old ideas or attitudes no longer work. Spirit appears in a hopeless and desperate situation that the hero of the story cannot solve by means of his own resources. Spirit brings to the hero a much-needed piece of insight, understanding, good advice or the inspiration to adopt a new attitude which generally enables the protagonist to overcome obstacles that his existing resources and old attitude could not overcome. Jung remarks that spirit is the *spiritus rector* (ibid., para. 406), the aspect of our unconscious psyche which provides us with advice on what to do with our lives if we find ourselves in a metaphorical 'tight spot' or 'dead end'. However, Jung points out, we can never be quite sure if the advice or inspiration we get from spirit is for the better or the worse: 'It can never be established with one-hundred-percent-certainty whether the spirit-figures in dreams are morally good. Very often they show all the signs of duplicity, if not outright malice' (ibid., para. 397). In dreams or fairy tales, the wise old man may in fact be an evil dark sorcerer which is also an aspect of spirit. Again, a discerning and reflecting ego or healthy instincts are needed to decide whether one shall heed the advice or trust the inspiration that spirit offers.

Later, in the essay 'On the nature of the psyche' (originally from 1946), Jung discusses spirit as not just one isolated archetype but as an essential component of all archetypes. About the nature of the archetypes he writes: 'there is probably no alternative now but to describe their nature, in accordance with their chiefest effect, as "spirit"' (Jung 1954a, para. 420). Having located the archetypes in the realm of spirit, Jung nevertheless emphasizes that all psychic processes may fluctuate between the psyche's instinctual pole (our biological nature and drives) and the spiritual pole (our ideas and beliefs). As such, the relation between instinct and spirit is never clear-cut and in effect, these apparent opposites are often indistinguishable from each other. Furthermore, even though Jung designates the archetypes as spiritual, they also reach into the biological strata of the instincts and drives: 'the archetype is partly a spiritual factor, and partly like a hidden meaning immanent in the instincts' (ibid., para. 427). It is partly this affinity with instinctual drives that gives both archetypes and spiritual phenomena such as religious, philosophical, and political convictions their power and intensity.

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The Holy Ghost

To Jung, the archetype of spirit is central to Christianity because he identifies it with the image of the Holy Ghost. In the essay, 'A psychological approach to the dogma of the Trinity' (1942), Jung discusses the Holy Ghost as the part of the Trinity which brings comfort, redemption and development to humankind. Christ came to Earth to redeem and heal the suffering of mankind and, according to Jung, the Holy Ghost is continuing this work by acting as an infusion of the breath of God into the soul of the ailing individual and humanity. Because of its healing and soothing quality, Jung refers to the Holy Ghost as 'the breath that heals and makes whole' (Jung 1948c, para. 276). Hence, the Christian version of spirit is a healing and redeeming force that may ease the pain of a suffering individual as an act of God.

It is also the Holy Ghost that brings life to the otherwise inanimate human body, and here spirit and life itself are again closely connected. God breathes the Holy Spirit into dead matter and thereby creates life. In this way, the Holy Ghost equates to the principle of life itself. However, being a phenomenon of wind and air, the Holy Ghost is primarily connected with the life of the mind. Jung writes that 'the Holy Ghost is a hypostasis of "life", posited by an act of reflection' (ibid., para. 241). Jung also writes that the Holy Ghost is how 'God becomes manifest in the human act of reflection' (ibid., para. 238). Hence, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost is primarily related to the development of new ideas or the creation of a wider consciousness which may arrive as a Grace of God in times of trouble, turmoil or stagnation when a new attitude, a more encompassing consciousness, or a new understanding is required.

It is the Holy Ghost that continually brings development and renewal to the individual and the culture. It is the influence of the Holy Ghost that allows a constant development of the faith through the visions, revelations, prophesies, and mystical experiences that it bestows upon some individuals. In Jung's interpretation, the Holy Ghost is an impulse from the unconscious side of the Self that presses for expression and integration into the conscious attitude of an individual and the present culture. Thereby the Holy Ghost serves the 'strengthening and widening consciousness' (ibid., para. 238). In 'Answer to Job' (1952), the Holy Ghost is also discussed as the central vessel of a continual renewal of Christianity: 'with the assistance of the Holy Ghost the dogma can progressively develop and unfold' (ibid., para. 655). The Holy Ghost is the influence of God that 'eternally wanted to become man' (ibid., para. 749), which equals the Self that continually seeks incarnation and integration into the world and into the conscious personality of the individual.

While Jung sees the influence of spirit as a necessity for the continual renewal of both the individual and of culture, he is characteristically dialectic and cautious in his discussion on the Holy Spirit; its influence may be a mixture

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of good and evil, and it always demands our conscious reflection and discrimination. It is not always easy to know whether spiritual impulses originate from the Holy Ghost or its dark counterparts, the demonic spirits of the Devil himself. It is written in the Gospel of St. John: 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit' (John, 3:8). Jung's comment to this warning is that we should carefully judge the inspiration and influence that spirit sends us, because it may not be a beneficial influence seen in relation to our human and personal situation: 'its action, like that of fire, may be no less destructive than beneficial when regarded from a purely human standpoint' (Jung 1948c, para. 289).

The spirit of Nietzsche's Zarathustra

From 1934 to 1939, Jung held a seminar at the Zürich Psychological Club and the theme was Friedrich Nietzsche's book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, originally published between 1883 and 1891. In the Zarathustra seminar, Jung and the other participants at the seminar enter into a thorough discussion of the book, and one of the recurring themes of the seminar is the phenomenon of spirit. The topic of the spirit is central to the book because Jung understands the figure of Zarathustra as a personification of spirit. Since the figure of Zarathustra is the voice that speaks throughout the book and since Zarathustra is a depiction of spirit, it is essentially spirit itself that speaks on the pages of Nietzsche's book. In Jung's understanding, Nietzsche is seized by the archetype of spirit and the book is essentially written while he is under the influence of this archetype: '*Zarathustra* is the confession of one who has been overtaken by the spirit' (Jung 1989, p. 1141).

In the example of Nietzsche and Zarathustra, the ambivalent nature of spirit becomes evident. When writing the book, Nietzsche was seized by spirit and this brought forth in him extraordinary creativity and originality which resulted in an extraordinary book, but Nietzsche as a man did not come out of the process unscathed. As Jung sees it, Nietzsche gave his life over to spirit, which gave life to a strong creative impulse, but this influence also depleted Nietzsche's life as an ordinary human being: 'it is not worthwhile really to speak of the man Nietzsche, for he was robbed; he lived only that Zarathustra might speak' (ibid., p. 60).

It is especially the tensions between the creative influence of spirit on the one hand and the demands of body and everyday life on the other that Nietzsche did not navigate successfully. The voice of spirit/Zarathustra fills Nietzsche with a creativity of ideas and a passion for expressing these ideas but, for Nietzsche, these strong creative impulses become a substitute for life in the material world, which includes taking care of his own basic needs and establishing himself in the surrounding social world. Jung identifies crucial points in the

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book where Nietzsche ought to have listened to his body and to his needs as an ordinary person, but where Nietzsche instead follows the flight of spirit and gradually increases the distance between his identification with Zarathustra and spirit on the one hand and himself as a frail human person on the other. Therefore, Jung reads an important lesson about spirit into the book Zarathustra as reflected in the light of Nietzsche's own life: spirit is a phenomenon that may infuse a person with extraordinary creativity, originality, and inspiration, but since spirit lacks concern for ordinary human affairs, one should approach it with caution and a good deal of common sense. Jung says as a warning: 'The spirit has no human psychology – it is not human' (ibid., p. 852). Jung also says about Nietzsche's tragic mistake in his contact with spirit: 'he identified with the spirit instead of realizing what the very weak human suffering creature feels when the spirit is taking possession of that frail thing which can so easily break' (ibid., p. 863).

Even though Jung's discussion of Nietzsche and his Zarathustra are often filled with such warnings about giving oneself over to the influence of spirit, he does not forget the positive aspect of spirit. The spirit that Nietzsche discovers fills him with inspiration and creative energy which gave birth to extraordinary ideas that still inspire many. As spirit seizes Nietzsche, it fuels his life as a writer and philosopher. For Jung, true creativity does not come from us persons but rather it is the archetype of spirit that expresses itself through the creative person: 'We are not creating. We are only instrumental in the creative process: it creates in us, through us' (ibid., p. 61).

The spirit of Germany in the 1930s

A topic which appears in the Nietzsche-seminar is the influence of spirit in Germany at the time. The Zarathustra seminar took place in Switzerland, a neighbour of Germany, in the years leading up to the Second World War. The participants at the seminar discuss the current events in Germany where Hitler had recently (in 1933) become Chancellor and the movement of National Socialism was flourishing. In a presentation at the seminar in February 1936, Jung argues that the spread of National Socialism in Germany is a result of the archetype of spirit, which moves like a hot wind across the continent and incites strong passions and wild ideas. This influence of spirit has all the disregard for the frailty and suffering of ordinary human beings that often characterizes a powerful and uninhibited influence of spirit. To Jung, Nietzsche was a prophet of what happened half a century later in Germany since he was among the first to channel that wild spirit of the depths that pressed towards the surface of consciousness. Jung says about Nietzsche: 'he anticipated in his own life and his own body what the future of his people would be' (ibid., p. 496). While discussing the events in Germany,

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Jung argues that it is the pagan god Odin (Wotan), who is a representation of spirit, that moves through Germany and incites the minds and hearts everywhere: 'Wotan expresses the spirit of the time to an extent which is uncanny, and that wisdom or knowledge is really wild – it is nature's wisdom' (ibid., p. 869).

The spirit which rises up in Germany and which is akin to the mythological figure of Wotan or Odin, is a Spirit of the Depths rather than a spirit descending from above. Jung argues that this spirit had been repressed by 2000 years of influence by first Christianity and later denied existence by the ideology of reason and science of the Enlightenment: 'modern development led first to the descent of the spirit into mind, and from mind into words, and then the spirit was utterly gone, so that we don't know what spirit is' (ibid., p. 367). However, that chthonic spirit was never gone but only repressed, and therefore it appears with all the force of an instinct, which has been suppressed and dammed up over centuries. The spirit coming from below represents the energy of the body and the energy of instinct which has been repressed or cultivated by modern society. Below the high ideals of Christianity, below the cultivated manners of modern society, below our faculties of reason, and below our belief in science and logic, there exists another layer of spirit which is entirely uncivilized and irrational. This spirit, that seized Nietzsche and that later rose in Germany, has similarities with The Spirit of the Depths that speaks to Jung in *The Red Book*, since this spirit also comes from below.

In May 1935, Jung says that this spirit rising up from the depths in Germany cannot be denied existence, since it is a part of our nature as human beings. We cannot pray or think away the instinctual and irrational shadow of Western culture, and therefore it must be approached and, where possible, assimilated into culture in 'some reasonable form' (ibid., p. 499). Jung also warns that if we are to approach this wild spirit in order to capture some of its energy and integrate it into culture and society, the individual must be well-grounded in this world if he or she is not to be swept up by it. In the face of this spirit, one should keep calm and remain reasonable and then carefully 'try how far it is possible to canalize the flow of blood, that spirit is issuing from the depths' (ibid., p. 500). Jung also warns that this is a very dangerous time precisely because the spirit that has emerged in Germany comes from below; it comes from the body itself and it is a wild and untamed spirit, which erupts into the collective consciousness with the force of a volcano. Jung warns that this eruption of spirit should be approached with the greatest of care and nobody should try to shape it into an organization or a kind of national church. As we know now, and as Jung increasingly realizes through the duration of the seminars, these warnings were not heard or followed and the spirit that rose from the depths in Germany was not integrated peacefully into society and thereby transformed 'into the fertile water of life' (ibid., p. 500).

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The spirit of alchemy

In Jung's studies of alchemy, the work of spirit is again a central component. In several places, Jung states that the central goal of the medieval alchemists was to unite the opposites of the material body and the pneumatic spirit. According to Jung, Christianity had divided spirit and body: God was up in Heaven, in the realm of spirit, and nature, matter, and the body were desacralized or unspirited. Alchemy, as a compensating trend to Christianity, sought to re-unite what was being separated.

In a lecture from 1937 on the visions of the Egyptian alchemist Zosimos (Jung 1954b), Jung describes how the central goal of alchemy is to reunite body with spirit in order to create a spiritualized body in which spirit and matter is united: 'the grossness of the body becomes spirit' (ibid., para. 86). In a later study of the Swiss physician and alchemist Paracelsus (1942), Jung describes how spirit does not only descend from heaven as the Holy Ghost but it also ascends from below, from nature, as a spirit of nature or *lumen naturae*: 'Nature is not matter only, she is also spirit. Were that not so, the only source of spirit would be human reason. It is the great achievement of Paracelsus to have elevated "the light of nature" to a principle. … The *lumen naturae* is the natural spirit' (ibid., para. 229). The goal of alchemical work is the healing of the split between spirit and matter through bringing together our physical nature with our nature as spiritual beings; this is 'the union of man's two natures' (ibid., para. 200).

Central to Jung's work on alchemy is the figure of Mercurius, whom he often describes as the component of the alchemical process that sets things in motion and brings the process forward. In the lecture, 'The Spirit of Mercurius', from 1941, Jung (1948d) describes Mercurius as a representation of spirit and as the alchemical equivalent to the Holy Spirit of Christianity. However, contrary to the Christian understanding of the Holy Ghost, Mercurius is an ambiguous spirit, not entirely good and not entirely evil, not only spirit but also body. Mercurius is the union of all opposites; he is material and spiritual, he is the process in which the material and the spiritual aspects of our nature are united, and he is the end-goal of this process in which the body has been brought alive by union with the redeeming 'spirit of life'.

It is in his final work on alchemy, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, that Jung (1963/1970) most explicitly states how the alchemists sought to unite body, soul, and spirit. In the alchemical work (the *opus*), the first task is to separate body and spirit which exist in a state of unconscious fusion with each other. Psychologically speaking, the affects and instincts of the body still operate autonomously, and the first task is therefore to acquire a conscious attitude in which the mind is separated from the body so that we are no longer slaves to the impulses and emotions of the body. This is the mental union, the *unio mentalis*, which Christianity accomplished by the separation of God and matter and of body and spirit.

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The next stage of the work is to bring the body back to life through contact with spirit, which is now rising up from below. This is the intermediate stage in which what was dead or unconscious is brought to life by the touch of spirit. In the third part of the process, the *soul*, which is captured in body and matter, is brought forth from the body through the work of the spirit. Psychologically speaking, this process means that the inner image (i.e. the soul), which has until now led an unconscious existence in the body and in projections, is now drawn forth into the light of consciousness: we become conscious of our unconscious projections. This stage is the painful stage of *nigredo* and the *massa confusa* in which old convictions disappear while repressed parts of the personality are made conscious.

The final and redeeming stage of the work, the *chymical wedding*, is a stage in which body and spirit are reunited by the spirit rising from below. In this stage, it is realized that God dwells in both outer nature and in our own body. Body and spirit, emotions and mind, are no longer each other's enemies and both are made conscious. It may not be a state of eternal harmony between affects, instincts, and impulses of the body on the one hand and our spiritual aspirations and convictions on the other hand, but at least the tensions and conflicts between them can now be consciously experienced and worked through. In this final stage, the realization of the spiritual nature of body and nature may contain a mystical realization of a connection (the *unus mundus*) between all of humanity as well as union between humanity and the world as such.

Jung found much wisdom in the work of the alchemists, which acted as a compensatory background to the dominant Christian culture. However, Jung remarks towards the end of *Mysterium Coniunctionis* that the alchemists did in fact not really succeed in the union of spirit and body. They did not have a psychological understanding of their work, and therefore they tried to create a solution in the chemical processes of the alchemical work and not in life itself. The psychologist, on the other hand, tries to assist this union in the patient in his or her actual personality and life.

A culture-creating spirit

Five years after Jung's death in 1961, the 15th volume of his *Collected Works* was published in English. This volume was entitled *The Spirit in Man, Art and Literature* (Jung 1966). As the title suggests, the essays in this volume illustrate how the spirit operates through works of culture, such as philosophy, psychology, poetry, literature and painting. In the editorial note to the volume, the editors write that the collection of papers illustrate how the archetype of spirit is as a culture-creating force that operates through the works of modern writers, artists, scientists, and philosophers as well as their medieval forerunners in alchemy, astrology, physics and medicine: 'The source

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of scientific and artistic creativity in archetypal structures, and particularly in the dynamics of the "spirit archetype", forms the essential counterpoint to the theme underlying this collection of essays' (ibid., p. v). These words are not the words of Jung himself, but elsewhere he speaks of the spirit as 'a culture-creating spirit', which is the impulse that complements our life as physical beings:

> there is a culture-creating spirit. This spirit is a living spirit and not a mere rationalizing intellect. … Important as it is for a man to be able to earn his daily bread and if possible to support a family, he will have achieved nothing that could give his life its full meaning. He will not even be able to bring his children up properly, and will thus have neglected to take care of the brood, which is an undoubted biological ideal. A spiritual goal that points beyond the purely natural man and his worldly existence is an absolute necessity for the health of the soul; it is the Archimedean point from which alone it is possible to lift the world off its hinges and to transform the natural state into a cultural one.
>
> (Jung 1946, para. 159)

It is not easy to know exactly how Jung envisions that the products of culture give meaning to our lives, transform our natural state into a cultural one and further our psychological health ('the health of the soul'), but it is clear that Jung regards the works of culture as essential to our well-being and existence. One way to understand this is that works of art, religious faith, literature and philosophy, which are inspired by the spirit, may act as a way of relating to the world and to ourselves in which body and mind, intellect and emotions, are not separated but are given shape in a united mode of expression. It is a consistent theme in Jung's work that it is not healthy when intellect and reason are separated from our body and its emotions: 'The intellect does indeed do harm to the soul when it dares to possess itself of the heritage of the spirit. It is in no way fitted to do this, for spirit is something higher than intellect since it embraces the latter and includes the feelings as well' (Jung 1957, para. 7). It may be that the culture-creating spirit is the remedy for these divisions within ourselves, and that is why culture (art, religion, literature, etc.) is essentially good for us.

The spirit in psychotherapy

A final question to be addressed here is the implications of the reality of spirit for the practice of psychotherapy. It is a difficult question to approach since Jung does not give us many clues regarding this matter. In addition, Jung's discussions of spirit are so varied that as a reader one sometimes struggles to find the common denominator between the many guises in which spirit appears to us. However, the fundamental assumption behind all of Jung's discussions of the phenomenon of spirit is that as human beings we are more

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than matter; we are also beings of spirit. Jung writes in his obituary of Freud: 'Whenever he could he dethroned the "spirit" as the possessing and repressing agent by reducing it to a "psychological formula". Spirit, for him, was just a "nothing but"' (Jung 1939, para. 72). In the very last sentence of this obituary, Jung connects the existence of spirit to the practice of psychotherapy: 'In reality only the spirit can cast out the "spirits" – not the intellect, which at best is a mere assistant' (ibid., para. 73). This means that if we as human beings are partly of spirit, then part of the solution to our emotional and existential problems must be found in the realm of spirit. Jung refers to the archetype of spirit as the archetype of meaning (Jung 1954c, para. 79), and this term captures the very essence of what spirit is about: spirit is about living a life that has meaning. As Jung writes: 'It is easy enough to drive the spirit out of the door, but when we have done so the meal has lost its savour – the salt of the earth' (Jung 1931, para. 783). This is why only spirit can cast out spirits. Through analysis, all of our trauma, shadow sides, and relational difficulties may be revealed and worked through, but in the end, we need something that gives meaning to our lives. In Jungian analysis, this meaning cannot be imported from outer authorities; it must be found in relation to the spirit as it emerges in the psyche of the individual.

For the practice of psychotherapy this means that our job as therapists is not only to help the patient overcome relational trauma but also to help the patient feel alive and have a life that is meaningful. As Jung points out, a central problem of individuals in modern societies is that we have lost the connection to collective systems of meaning and in this state we either have to live according to the 'nothing but', where nothing has meaning, or we have to rediscover meaning individually. As Jung wrote: 'We moderns are faced with the necessity of rediscovering the life of the spirit; we must experience it anew for ourselves' (Jung 1931, para. 780). To Jung this rediscovery of meaning started with the process documented in *The Red Book*, where The Spirit of the Depths spoke and taught him about another world behind the world of the Spirit of these Times and its view of the world as a 'nothing but'. For us as analysts this means that any analytic process is also a search for meaning, and this meaning can only be found in the realm of spirit.

The question then is where this 'realm of spirit' is to be found by the modern individual? For Jung the realm of spirit was strongly connected with the realm of the archetypes, and I suggest that whatever archetypes are made of they are experienced as intensely meaningful images. We can connect with the archetypes and the related experience of numinosity in many different ways: through dreams, through paying attention to synchronicities, through creative work, through active imagination, through working with the *I Ching* or Tarot-cards, through being in nature, through personal rituals, through connection or re-connection with an established community of faith, or through seeing our personal problems and struggles reflected in collective symbolic narratives such as myths and fairy-tales. This connection may not

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free us from our problems and symptoms but may provide a sense that life in this world and all our trials and suffering are not meaningless but have some kind of meaning.

It is important to note that Jung did not reduce all problems to spiritual problems. Just as a patient can suffer from the lack of a spiritual life, a person can also try to escape from his or her emotional and relational difficulties by trying to live only 'in the spirit': 'In the long run it does not pay to cripple life by insisting on the primacy of the spirit' (Jung 1963/1970, para. 672). This means that we must suffer what Jung calls a 'chronic duel between body and spirit' (ibid.). However, it is especially in his work on alchemy that Jung seeks (and finds) a way of overcoming this chronic duel between spirit and the body. In the process called the *Chymical Wedding* (Jung 1963/1970), body and spirit are united on a conscious level. How we help our patients achieve such a process in psychotherapy is not a simple question, but for Jung the process of unification of opposites is always achieved by first enduring a period of tension between the opposites. The transcendent function is the process by which two opposites are united on another level and this process cannot be carried out by the conscious will of either patient or analyst (Jung 1958). The transcendent function is a process that can take place if analyst and patient are willing to endure sitting in tension and suffering the moral and emotional problems until the psyche, *deo concedente*, gives birth to a new attitude in which the opposites are united. This may seem like a lofty and abstract goal but the end goal may appear rather simpler than our intellect might expect. In *The Red Book* Jung encounters his inner spiritual guide, Philemon, who is an image of spirit transformed into wisdom over the course of a long life. Philemon was once a magician (one of the guises of spirit) but his magic wand now lies unused in a cupboard. Philemon now seems satisfied to live quietly with his wife, Baucis, in their small house in the country:

> Their interests seem to have become narrow, even childish. They water their bed of tulips and tell each other about the flowers that have newly appeared. … There goes old Philemon in the garden, bent, with a watering can in his shaking hand. Baucis stands at the kitchen window and looks at him calmly and impassively.
>
> (Jung 2009, p. 312)

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Translations of Abstract

Le phénomène de l'esprit est un sujet abordé fréquemment par Jung au fil de ses écrits bien que l'esprit ne soit pas toujours considéré comme central à la pratique de la psychologie analytique. Cet article souligne l'importance de l'esprit dans la psychologie analytique en présentant une étude des discussions de Jung sur le sujet. Dans les discussions de Jung, l'esprit n'est pas traité comme un concept abstrait mais comme un phénomène empirique: pour Jung, l'esprit est une réalité psychologique pouvant être décrite et dont on peut sentir les effets. L'esprit est décrit à la fois comme un archétype et comme un élément de tous les archétypes. L'esprit est en lien avec le principe même de la vie et est une condition préalable pour le développement et la transformation personnels et culturels. Cet article documente comment la compréhension de Jung de l'esprit s'est développée sur une longue période et en lien avec différents sujets: la psychanalyse de Freud, le Livre Rouge, les contes de fées, le Christianisme, le Zarathoustra de Nietzsche, l'Allemagne dans les années 30, l'alchimie, et le travail créatif. L'article se conclut par une discussion sur la pertinence de l'esprit dans la pratique clinique.

Mots clés: esprit, Jung et Freud, le Livre Rouge, le Saint Esprit, *Mercurius*, Wotan

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Das Phänomen des Geistes ist ein Thema, das Jung in seinen Schriften häufig behandelt, obgleich der Geist nicht immer als zentral für die Praxis der Analytischen Psychologie angesehen wird. Dieser Artikel weist auf die Bedeutung des Geistes in der Analytischen Psychologie hin, indem er einen Überblick über Jungs Erörterungen dieses Themas wiedergibt. In Jungs Diskussionen wird Geist nicht als abstraktes Konzept behandelt, sondern als empirisches Phänomen: für Jung ist Geist eine psychologische Realität die beschrieben werden kann und deren Auswirkungen erfahren werden können. Geist wird sowohl als Archetyp als auch als Bestandteil aller Archetypen beschrieben. Geist ist mit dem Prinzip des Lebens selbst verbunden und eine Voraussetzung sowohl für die persönliche als auch für die kulturelle Entwicklung und Veränderung. Der Artikel dokumentiert, wie sich Jungs Verständnis des Geistes im Laufe der Zeit und in Bezug auf verschiedene Themen entwickelte: Freuds Psychoanalyse, das Rote Buch, Märchen, Christentum, Nietzsches Buch über Zarathustra, Deutschland in den 1930-er Jahren, Alchemie und kreative Arbeit. Das Papier schließt mit einer Diskussion über die Relevanz des Geistes für die klinische Praxis.

Schlüsselwörter: Geist, Jung und Freud, das Rote Buch, der Heilige Geist, Mercurius, Wotan

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Il fenomeno dello spirito è un argomento trattato frequentemente da Jung in tutti i suoi scritti, anche se lo spirito non è sempre considerato centrale per la pratica della psicologia analitica. Questo articolo sottolinea l'importanza dello spirito nella psicologia analitica, presentando un'indagine sulle riflessioni di Jung sullo spirito. Nelle riflessioni di Jung, lo spirito non è trattato come un concetto astratto ma come un fenomeno empirico: per Jung, lo spirito è una realtà psicologica che può essere descritta ed i cui effetti possono essere sperimentati. Lo spirito è descritto sia come archetipo che come componente di tutti gli archetipi. Lo spirito è legato al principio della vita stessa ed è un prerequisito dello sviluppo e della trasformazione personale e culturale. L'articolo documenta come la comprensione dello spirito di Jung si sia sviluppata nel tempo e in relazione a diversi argomenti. La psicoanalisi di Freud, il Libro Rosso, le fiabe, il Cristianesimo, il libro di Nietzsche su Zarathustra, la Germania negli anni '30, l'alchimia ed il lavoro creativo. L'articolo si conclude con una discussione sulla pertinenza dello spirito nella pratica clinica.

Parole chiave: spirito, Jung e Freud, il Libro Rosso, lo Spirito Santo, *Mercurio*, Wotan

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Феномен духа - тема, часто обсуждаемая Юнгом в его работах, хотя дух не всегда считается центральным событием в практике аналитической психологии. Эта статья указывает на важность духа в аналитической психологии, представляя обзор дискуссий Юнга о духе. В работах Юнга дух рассматривается не как абстрактное понятие, а как эмпирический феномен: для Юнга дух - это психологическая реальность, которую можно описать и которую можно ощутить. Дух описывается как архетип и как компонент всех архетипов. Дух связан с принципом самой жизни и является предпосылкой как личного, так и культурного развития и трансформации. В статье проведен обзор, как юнговское понимание духа развивалось с течением

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времени и в связи с различными темами: психоанализ Фрейда, Красная книга, сказки, христианство, книга Ницше о Заратустре, Германия в 1930-х годах, алхимия и творчество. Статья заканчивается обсуждением актуальности духа для клинической практики.

Ключевые слова: дух, Юнг и Фрейд, Красная книга, Святой Дух, Меркурий, Вотан

El fenómeno del espíritu es un tópico discutido frecuentemente por Jung a través de sus escritos, aunque no siempre se lo considere central a la práctica de la psicología analítica. El presente artículo señala la importancia del espíritu en la psicología analítica, a través de una reseña de los debates de Jung acerca del espíritu. En los debates de Jung, el espíritu no es tratado como un fenómeno abstracto, sino como fenómeno empírico: para Jung, el espíritu es una realidad psicológica que puede ser descripta y cuyos efectos pueden ser experimentados. El espíritu es descripto como ambos, un arquetipo y como componente de todos los arquetipos. El espíritu se relaciona al principio de vida y es un prerrequisito para el desarrollo y la transformación, tanto personal, como cultural. El artículo documenta como la comprensión de Jung respecto del espíritu fue desarrollándose a través del tiempo y en relación a diversos tópicos: el psicoanálisis de Freud, el Libro Rojo, los cuentos de hadas, el Cristianismo, el Zarathustra de Nietzsche, Alemania en 1930, la alquimia y el trabajo creativo. El trabajo concluye con una discusión sobre la relevancia del espíritu en la práctica clínica.

Palabras clave: espíritu, Jung y Freud, el Libro Rojo, el Espíritu Santo, *Mercurius*, Wotan

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荣格与灵魂:荣格关于灵魂现象论述的回顾

灵魂现象的话题在荣格的论著中时常被谈及，但灵魂并不被认为是分析心理学实践的核心。文章指出分析心理学中灵魂的重要性。文章呈现了一个关于荣格对灵魂的讨论的调查。发现在荣格的论述中，灵魂不被认为是一个抽象的概念，而是一个实证的现象:对荣格来说，灵魂是一种心理真实，它可以被描述，它所产生的影响可以被经验到。灵魂被描绘为一种原型，也被描绘为所有原型的组成部分。灵魂联系着生命原则本身，它是个体和文化发展与转化的先觉条件。文章记载了荣格对灵魂的理解的发展历程，以及其与另一些主题的关系，包括:弗洛伊德对精神分析、红书、童话、基督教、尼采关于查拉图斯拉的论著、1930年代的德国、炼金术、创造性的工作。文章结束时讨论了灵魂与临床实践的关系。

关键词: 灵魂，荣格与弗洛伊德，红书，神圣鬼魂，墨丘利，沃坦

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