

What Is *The Red Book* for Analytical Psychology?

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Abstract

In 2009, a remarkable and much belated addition to the oeuvre arrived at the field's doorstep: The Red Book. For more than seventy years, this medieval-like illuminated calligraphic manuscript lay first on the shelves of Jung's private library and then in a bank vault. Evidently, Jung himself was at least somewhat ambivalent about its place in his over-all oeuvre, since he kept it to himself and a very few close associates in his lifetime, and when he passed away he left behind no instructions concerning its publication posthumously. Moreover, it is an unfinished work, a fragment. Liber Novus (Jung's title for this work) comes into the field somewhat like a long concealed illegitimate child into an established and distinguished family. This mystery member of the family may turn out to be quite exceptional and display remarkable gifts, but there is also some trepidation concerning potential embarrassment. With its public appearance, The Red Book must now be considered as part and parcel of the field's heritage, whether one likes it or not. What is The Red Book for analytical psychology? Does it belong to the body of seminal works beside Jung's other major writings, or is it to be ranked as the equivalent of a writer's personal diary and sketchbook, akin to Leonardo's Notebooks, which shows the early workings of a brilliant mind as the creator prepares for his more serious later contributions to a scientific or cultural enterprise? Conversely, one can also wonder if all of Jung's later writings were nothing more than an attempt to explicate this monumental foundational work and make its ideas and insights, which are here expressed in colorful image and high-flown rhetorical style, digestible for modern readers and thinkers.

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Introduction

Although the field of analytical psychology, as it is constituted today, shows many diverse influences from a wide variety of overlapping theoretical perspectives and is deeply multicultural, it must nevertheless be recognized that the common ancestor of all who participate in it is C.G. Jung and that his published *oeuvre* remains its ineluctable baseline for theorizing and praxis. There is of course by now also a vast library of secondary works that must be included as central though perhaps not canonical if one speaks of analytical psychology as a field, some of which have achieved nearly the status of Jung's own foundational texts, e.g., books by Erich Neumann and Marie-Louise von Franz. Some of

Jung's works are essential and central, while others may be seen as peripheral and readily dispensable. People will always have their favorites among the many books and papers that Jung left as a heritage, and they will also have their most disliked and even despised pieces. We all make selections. Which of them should be selected as canonical and which are secondary or dispensable has thus far not been determined.

Now comes an addition to the *oeuvre*, a long withheld and controversial work, newly published as *The Red Book*, and the question is: what does this mean and how does it fit into the overall legacy? For more than seventy years, this medieval-like illuminated calligraphic manuscript lay first on the shelves of Jung's private library and then in a bank vault. It is quite evident that Jung was highly ambivalent about its place in his official *oeuvre*, since he kept it private in his lifetime and left no instructions concerning its publication posthumously. The publication of one piece of it in his lifetime, *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos*, he looked upon as "a sin of his youth and regretted it," according to Aniela Jaffe (Jung & Jaffe, 1963). It is also an unfinished work. It comes to us like a long concealed illegitimate child who may, however, be quite exceptional in many ways. With its publication in 2009, it too must now be considered as part and parcel of the heritage, whether one likes it or not.

What is *The Red Book* for analytical psychology? Does it belong in the canon of seminal works for analytical psychology beside Jung's other major works, or is it to be ranked as the equivalent of a writer's diary and sketchbook, akin to Leonardo's *Notebooks*, which shows the early workings of a brilliant mind as the creator prepares for his more serious contributions to a scientific enterprise? Conversely, one can also wonder if all of Jung's later writings were an attempt to explicate this monumental foundational work and make its ideas and insights, which are expressed in image and old-fashioned rhetorical style, digestible for modern readers and thinkers.

As a commercial publishing venture, *The Red Book* has been phenomenally successful, with sales figures soaring far beyond anyone's wildest calculations. Whether the people who purchase it read it or not (I call it the "unread red book"), its surprising popular reception and its ubiquity in the media show that it has an astonishing appeal to general audiences, especially in the United States but also in other countries and now in several other translations. The sudden wave of attention generated by this colorful work, moreover, has had the unintended consequence of greatly increasing the visibility of Jung and Jungian analysts in public awareness. Some people have celebrated this, while others have found it threatening or distasteful. Putting that aside, I would here like to consider the question of *The Red Book's* place and possible role in the field of analytical psychology as a professional psychoanalytic tradition. We who are Jungian psychoanalysts are, after all, heirs of the common ancestor C.G. Jung, and this newly published work is now a part of the inherited package. I am speaking, therefore, not from a commercial viewpoint but rather from the perspective of what *The Red Book* might contribute

(plus or minus!) to those who carry on the work of psychoanalysis today and tomorrow in the spirit of C.G. Jung.

Analytical Psychology, a Tradition

The professional members of the field of analytical psychology belong to a tradition that is now nearly 100 years old since its founding in Zurich, Switzerland by Jung and a group of others who were separating themselves from Freud's school in Vienna. By using the term "tradition" (from the Latin *tradere* hand over, deliver), I mean a culture-with-a-history that contains a more or less well defined and precise set of values, perspectives, ideas and attitudes that is delivered or handed over from one generation to the next for an indefinite period of time. There are long, venerable and very old traditions, and there are new ones. In modern history, one speaks of the 'scientific tradition,' for example, which is made up of a culture of like-minded people who employ a method of investigation with generally accepted rules of verification, who subscribe to such values as honesty and integrity, and who pass these methods and values from teachers to students through the generations.

If one looks at how traditions are transmitted, one finds a variety of channels. Sometimes, a tradition is borne along importantly by texts (Scriptures and Sacred Books); sometimes, it is handed on primarily through oral transmission and ritual, as in non-literate cultures; sometimes (as in our tradition of depth psychology and praxis), it is handed down by a combination of texts, oral transmissions from teachers and supervisors to students, trainees, and supervisees, and rituals of initiation (passing exams, receiving diplomas, advancing from analyst to training analyst to supervising analyst, etc.).

The Jungian psychoanalysts of today are in what can be thought of as the third, fourth, fifth and perhaps even in some cases the sixth generation of a family of clinicians who work in and with the perspectives offered by the progenitor, C.G. Jung. The first and founding generation was made up of Jung himself (perhaps one can also include Freud) and a few other figures who were close to him, such as Emma Jung and Toni Wolff; the second generation was composed of those who worked directly with Jung (e.g., H.G. Baynes, Gerhard Adler, James Kirsch, Esther Harding, C.A. Meier, Erich Neumann, Marie-Louis von Franz, Barbara Hannah, and Joseph Henderson among others); in the third generation were those who studied and analyzed with the members of the second generation (importantly, Michael Fordham, Elie Humbert, Hans Dieckmann, Mario Jacoby, Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig, James Hillman, Helmut Barz, June Singer). Each of us Jungians can establish our own specific generation by tracing the lineage back to Jung. In my case, I am of the fourth generation, and those who have worked with me in analysis and supervision would be the fifth generation, and so on.

Many of our teachers had a more direct link to Jung himself than we do, and our students have a yet more distant one. What difference does this make? Does Jung's figure and the influence of his ideas fade and diminish through the generations, or do they change and gain features due to projections from afar?

Here I would like to consider how a tradition maintains itself *spiritually* speaking (that is, in the "spirit of the founding figure"), and how it retains a living sense of the symbolic presence of its founder(s), also what this means and what its importance may be for the tradition. Into this reflection, I will then fold the discussion of a potential role for *The Red Book* in analytical psychology.

The Transmission of Spirit in Tradition

To begin, I reach back to somewhat obscure source, to one of Jung's earliest published writings, his fifth and last Zofingian Lecture, given in January 1899, titled "Thoughts on the Interpretation of Christianity, with reference to the Theory of Albrecht Ritschl." In that early piece delivered to his fraternity brothers at the university of Basel, which was composed before he took up the study of psychiatry and psychology, Jung shows his interest in theology and boldly criticizes a view expressed by Protestant theologian Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889), who held that the spiritual influence of Christ is passed on from generation to generation more or less mechanically through a process of teaching and learning within the community of believers, the church. This is a strictly causal, material theory of the process of historical transmission of a spiritual content. The spiritual reality of Christ is kept alive in the minds and hearts of Christians by virtue of their membership in the community of believers and by their education in this community's values, ideas, and teachings. The community transmits Christ from one generation to the next by rigorous teaching and learning. A text like the Bible is important as an object of study and a sourcebook for orientation, but its deep understanding and personal integration are strictly dependent upon the effectiveness of the teaching of the community in which one participates as a Christian. The Bible's inspirational power and effect on the minds and hearts of believers does not depend upon the Holy Spirit or any other supernatural agency. Ritschl was intent on ridding theology of metaphysics and the influence of mystical or supernatural elements, and so he brought his theological views into line with mechanistic learning theories of the day. In his view, the reality of Christ is transmitted through the ages by the means of communities of faith passing on the teachings and memories from earliest generations down to the later ones, each generation investing these received materials anew with its own energy. One believes what one learns and receives in the community of faith. There is nothing metaphysical or mystical about this process of transmission. It is pure cognitive-behavioral psychology, to put it in today's psychological language. For theologian

Ritschl, spiritual transmission has nothing to do with archetypal images and energies, or with synchronicity.

As a twenty-four year old medical student with only a youthful amateur's understanding of theology, for which he apologizes profusely in the introduction, Jung objects strongly to this theory of transmission of spiritual reality. In *Memories Dreams Reflections*, Jung says: "Ritschl's theology was much in fashion in those days. Its historicism irritated me, especially the comparison with a railway train." Aniela Jaffe adds the footnote: "Albrecht Ritschl compared Christ's coming to the shunting of a railroad train. The engine gives a push from behind, the motion passes through the entire train, and the foremost car begins to move. Thus the impulse given by Christ is transmitted down the centuries." (Jung & Jaffe, 1963, p. 97). His objection is precisely that it leaves out the mystical element: "The mystery of a metaphysical world, a metaphysical order, of the kind that Christ taught and embodied in his own person, must be placed in center stage of the Christian religion," Jung argues. "No religion has survived, or ever will, without mystery, to which the devotee is most intimately bound" (Jung, 1985, p. 109). In describing Ritschl, quite correctly, as having shorn theology of metaphysical and mystical elements and reduced the explanation for the continuity of spiritual tradition to purely rational transmission processes, Jung identified a basic problem in 19th century liberal Protestant theology. In this early essay, Jung sees numinous experience of the Divine Other (in this case, Christ) as foundational for a living spiritual tradition, without which it becomes sterile, nothing more than the routine mouthings of received doctrine. This was, of course, his own experience of the Swiss Reformed Church, as he reports in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, and it was what he diagnosed to be the source of the spiritual illness from which his pastor father, Paul Jung, suffered (Jung & Jaffe, 1963).

What is surprising to us today as we read this early Zofingian essay is Jung's explicitly positive regard for the term "metaphysical." In all of his later psychological writings, he would eschew anything having to do with "metaphysical" terminology, saying repeatedly that he is speaking only as a psychologist and not as a theologian. However, what he actually did, subtly, with his later psychological theory was to find a way around speaking about transcendence as "metaphysical" while retaining much of the sense of what this term conveys. For "metaphysical" he substituted the term "archetypal" and for "the supernatural world of ghosts, gods and angels" he used the concept of "the unconscious." More properly said, he discovered a channel of communication whereby numinous figures and powers can be transmitted without requiring any sort of metaphysical or supernatural agency. This is similar to what science has done by explaining the creation of the universe, electromagnetic force, gravity, the nature of light and so forth without reference to God. What was previously attributed to supernatural powers and sources has been explained by natural ones. Jung did the same with respect to the forces of the mental world. Visions and mystical experiences are not the appearances of supernatural beings and energies in human consciousness, but rather the manifestations of the autonomous archetypes of

the collective unconscious. Later, the theory of synchronicity would be added, which introduces the notion of objective meaning due to the manifestation of “creative acts... the continuous creation of a pattern that exists from all eternity” (Jung, 2014). Synchronistic events are neither the eternally predestined actions of God (John Calvin) nor the products of a subtle chain of causality in the physical world (Albert Einstein), but rather the regular discontinuities in the psycho-physical cosmos that are not predicable except in a statistical sense and convey an objective source of meaning (“meaningful coincidences”) but imply objective meaning (Jung, 2014). Jung’s is another way of thinking about this that some have associated with the quantum mechanics of Wolfgang Pauli, with whom Jung had a thirty year correspondence.

Later, Jung could therefore speak of the power of numinous archetypal images, energies and processes emerging within the space-and-time-limited world as the consequence of synchronistic concatenations in the depths of the collective unconscious where psyche and matter are one and constitute two sides of a single whole. These occur at moments of significance in the lives of individuals and communities, and they have the effect of enlivening and energizing them with a sense of transcendent meaning. It is these acausal meaningful events that most deeply keep a spiritual tradition alive and vital, and not the rational teachings of texts and techniques that go on within the communities of the committed. They are, in religious terms, signs of the working of the Holy Spirit and the continuous presence of God within the historical process (Jung & Jaffe, 1963). In other words, Jung concludes that it takes spirit to keep spirit alive.

Transmission of “Jung” in analytical psychology

What about the transmission of “Jung” in our tradition of analytical psychology and psychoanalytic practice? I deliberately put quotation marks around the name of the founding figure. By asking how is “Jung” transmitted in our tradition, I do not mean to ask how veneration for C.G. Jung the man is fostered through the generations, but rather how the spirit that he embodied for the circle that gathered around him is kept alive, a spirit that nourished their hearts and minds and inspired them to form a tradition that continues to thrive today. Does what Jung says in that early Zoffingia Lecture have relevance for this question? Does a transmission of symbolic and numinous images that convey transcendence and meaning take place in the tradition of analytical psychology?

In purely practical and mundane terms, the tradition of analytical psychology is today passed down, though only in part, by means of the training programs that have been created by professional Jungian institutions worldwide, all of which are housed within the International Association for Analytical Psychology.

In addition to these recognized institutional channels, there are many others that pass through academic circles, study groups, Friends of Jung societies, readers of Jungian books, and nowadays denizens of the Internet. In the training programs of the professional institutes, candidates are required to study the texts of the discipline and to master the methods and techniques needed to practice Jungian psychoanalysis competently, legally, and with some measure of confidence. But like the Swiss Reformed tradition did for Jung, our psychological tradition can lose its aliveness and deeper qualities of significance and meaning if there are no archetypal and synchronistic supports. If people read Jung's works and are not moved by something deeply embedded within their own souls, in other words if symbolic resonance is absent, then the text quickly fades in significance and dies. The words become marks on a page, and such students may become teachers who are dogmatic and dry manipulators of words, concepts and techniques. More likely, new influences when they arrive on the scene capture their interest, and the "ancestor" becomes an old-fashioned portrait of a fine gentleman hanging on the wall of an antiquated house.

As time goes by, the picture fades, and newer and more exciting images beckon the later generations, who go off in other directions and build new houses of their own, occasionally lifting a toast to the old Swiss ancestor with a funny moustache who was a bit cranky and eccentric but thankfully left them some money to do their own thing. In this way, the tradition fades and passes into history. In time, it withers as a living matrix for inspiration and will become a footnote in the history of depth psychology, which is itself a footnote in the history of psychology, which is a footnote in the history in philosophy, and so forth. History moves on.

On the other hand, if the transmission of "Jung" is augmented by numinous experience, including synchronicities, by dreams and life transforming "moments of meeting" with the spirit that Jung the man embodied and voiced in his writings, the tradition will continue to be revitalized over long and indefinite and perhaps even endless stretches of time. The fading that mundane movements suffer over time for want of transcendent grounding will not then be characteristic of this one.

Does this mean that we should look upon Jung as a sort of god, a Christ figure to be worshipped and mystically united with in ecstatic visions? Personally, I find this approach quite distasteful and in fact seriously off the mark, because it leads to obscurantism and defensive distortions of history. However, one does need to discover and experience an archetypal ground in, around or beneath the ancestor figure, one that can emanate transcendence and constellate symbolic resonance. There must be synchronicities involved in "meeting Jung," whether in dream or text. If this numinous figure cannot be the biographical Jung himself, then what is this image in our tradition? What or who symbolizes "Jung" for us?

The Red Book

The belated publication of Jung's *Liber Novus* and *Scrutinies (The Red Book)* landed right in the middle of the field of analytical psychology with a big splash. For some among us it is an awkward embarrassment "We have not become psychologists in order to listen to revelations and to adopt a pseudo-religious ideology of 'the self' (or each develop our own one)" (Giegerich, 2010), while for others it an awesome and inspiring addition to the Jungian heritage ("Now, for me, this material is some of the most exquisite you will find in any religious or spiritual tradition: Beauty in the Dark. Jung grapples with human embodiment on its own terms, graphically sacrificing body and soul for the sake of Soul. This book is a literary masterpiece because it embodies Jung's deepest personal, spiritual transformation, taking the reader on that perilous journey along with him" (Kathryn LaFevers Evans, 2011). Thus far, there has been considerable uncertainty among Jungians about how to receive this astonishing and complex gift from our common ancestor. Is it a curse, or a blessing?

As with all such anomalous inheritances from founding figures in intellectual or religious traditions, there is a variety of possible interpretations of its meaning. For example, Martin Luther discounted the importance of several books of the Bible and considered the last book, The Revelation to John, to show no evidence of inspiration by the Holy Spirit. For other serious readers of the Bible, Revelation lies at the very center of what the Holy Scriptures mean to communicate. It is hard to be neutral about texts like this. It seems to me that it does matter how one comes down on the value of *The Red Book*, but whatever the judgment of individuals may be, the tradition itself must from now on include this work as a major item in its inventory of received texts. For some, it will be a book of inspiration, for others a work to be avoided except perhaps for historical and biographical interest or as a preparation diary or notebook for the scientific works to follow.

For myself, I consider *The Red Book* as a potentially powerful transmission device for the numinous images that underlie and ground our tradition and link it to even deeper and older historical traditions (Jung was ever in search of links to older traditions, which he found in alchemy and gnosticism, as he writes in MDR in the chapter entitled "The Work," where he makes known his need to put analytical psychology on a historical basis). It can also serve as a text that offers people useful guidance for how to deal with experiences of the numinous images of the collective unconscious when they befall one. I would therefore locate it in the center, albeit somewhat uneasily as I will explain later, rather than on the periphery of our inheritance as Jungians. *The Red Book* is, as one person in the epicenter of the current Jungian world who prefers to remain anonymous said, "precious," and meant that in the genuine sense of the word and not ironically.

As a potentially active transmitter of the numinous ground underlying analytical psychology, *The Red Book* would play the role of a foundational text with a symbolic value beyond the literal meaning of the words inscribed in it. Such texts inspire later work and thought along certain precise lines and are returned to again and again by later generations because they transmit a foundational genius for a particular cultural domain. I use “genius” here in the Latin sense of the word: “In ancient Rome, the genius was the guiding spirit or tutelary deity of a person, family, or place (*genius loci*). The noun is related to the Latin verb *gigno, genui, genitus*, ‘to bring into being, create, produce.’ Because the achievements of exceptional individuals seemed to indicate the presence of a particularly powerful *genius*, by the time of Augustus the word began to acquire its secondary meaning of ‘inspiration, talent’ (Wikipedia entry for “genius”).

The Red Book contains such a genius in the figure of Philemon, I would argue, and makes it available for transmission to the tradition.

Philemon, Genius of *The Red Book*

What we find in *The Red Book* is the story of a very time bound and human-all-too-human narrator/protagonist (i.e., Jung) setting out at midlife on a journey with “the spirit of the depths” to rediscover his lost soul; “My soul, where are you? Do you hear me?” (Jung, Shamdasani, Kyburz & Peck, 2009). In the course of his wanderings, he passes through a number of gripping inner experiences that we can only view as profound initiations into archetypal mysteries. Moreover, in passing from passive witness to active participant in these interior visions and dialogues, the protagonist also becomes a vital actor in the transformation of the figures he encounters. In the course of the narrative, he plays a role in giving birth to a new god image, Phanes, who unites the opposites in his being. Finally, the protagonist discovers that the “genius,” who is the “spirit of the depths” and responsible for all the images and experiences in this realm, is “Philemon.”

Who is Philemon? And what does he stand for? What is his symbolical value and meaning? It is important to become acquainted with him, since Philemon is the primary symbol for the authorial spirit that shapes *The Red Book*, and this is what will be transmitted therefore by this work to later generations of the tradition in which this work is housed.

In *The Red Book*, Philemon appears as a figure of importance primarily in the third section, *Scrutinies*. However, he is introduced to the reader in the last chapter of *Liber Secundus*, entitled “The Magician.” Jung, the Protagonist in the story, has had to work hard to get to Philemon. A prefiguration of Philemon who appears earlier in the work, in *Liber Primus*, is Elijah. By the time he approaches Philemon, Jung has undergone major initiations and encounters with many other figures. He goes in

search of Philemon because, having been given the “wand of magic,” he has to find out what it means. So he sets out to find “the Magician.” This is Philemon.

He finds him in retirement, working quietly in his garden tending tulips (Jung, Shamdasani, Kyburz & Peck, 2009). Philemon’s wife, Baucis, is present but does not play a role. The old man initially ignores Jung and his persistent questioning, saying he is now retired from the world and no longer interested in teaching. Philemon’s extreme reticence does not auger well, but in the end he relents and instructs Jung in the paradox of magic. Magic, he teaches, is the complement of reason. Reason can comprehend the part of the world that is rational but no more. It cannot understand or grasp “unreason” (Jung, Shamdasani, Kyburz & Peck, 2009). Much of reality is not susceptible to reason, and this can only be comprehended by another type of thinking. This is “magic.” Magic proceeds by way of imagination and denotes intuitive understanding of the non-rational. Magic can comprehend the portion of reality that reason misses. In our language, magic is the intuitive understanding of unconscious processes that purely rational methods cannot grasp, a kind of mythopoetic approach to knowledge. The magician is an intuitive comprehender whose mind reaches into spaces that science cannot approach directly with its methods and tools.

This is Philemon’s first teaching. He makes no further appearances in *Liber Novus*.

It is at first surprising that Philemon should be the figure selected to be Jung’s teacher about magic. In *Metamorphosis* of Ovidio, he is a simple farmer whose only claim to fame is his hospitality to the gods Hermes and Zeus as they wander the roads of the earth and look for a place to stay the night. His attitude of pious receptivity to the divine strangers is the key to Philemon’s good fortune and immortality as a figure in myth. This virtue is also precisely what Jung, the protagonist of *The Red Book*, must develop in himself. The task that is set before him throughout the text again and again is to get over his egoistic ambition and narcissistic pride and to transform his conscious attitude into a receptive womb for the seeds of the future. For this, Philemon would be a model. More than that, though, it is Philemon’s receptivity precisely to the divine that is essential. He represents the religious attitude.

In *Scrutinies*, Philemon’s role is much more prominent than in *Liber Secundus*. Here he is the dominant figure and assumes the persona of sage and wisdom figure. In his most significant extended appearance in *The Red Book*, he delivers “the Seven Sermons to the Dead.” It is particularly the Seventh Sermon, where Philemon teaches the dead about their eternal destiny and directs them to their transcendent home as symbolized by a star, that finally puts to rest the souls of the dead who are unsatisfied after returning from their trip to Jerusalem.

Throughout *The Red Book*, the protagonist is confronted with the problem of restless ghosts desperately searching for an answer that will show them the Way to they know not what. This theme

of disturbance and dissatisfaction in the ghostly world culminates in a visitation that Jung describes both in *The Red Book* and in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Here is the original version as told in *The Red Book*:

But one night a dark crowd knocked at my door, and I trembled with fear. Then my soul appeared and said in haste, "They are here and will tear open your door."

"So that the wicked herd can break into my garden? Should I be plundered and thrown out onto the street? You make me into an ape and a child's plaything. When, Oh my God, shall I be saved from this Hell of fools? But I want to hack to pieces your cursed webs, go to Hell, you fools. What do you want with me?"

But she interrupted me and said, "What are you talking about? Let the dark ones speak."

I retorted, "How can I trust you? You work for yourself not for me. What good are you, if you can't even protect me from the devil's confusion?"

"Be quiet," she replied, "or else you'll disturb the work."

And as she spoke these words, behold, Philemon came up to me, dressed in the white robe of a priest, and lay his hand on my shoulder.

Then I said to the dark ones, "So speak, you dead."

And immediately they cried in many voices "We have come back from Jerusalem, where we did not find what we sought. We implore you to let us in. You have what we desire. Not your blood, but your light. That is it."

Then Philemon lifted his voice and taught them, saying (and this is the first sermon to the dead):

"Now hear: I begin with nothingness..." (Jung, Shamdasani, Kyburz & Peck, 2009).

Throughout the following several nights, Philemon delivers seven sermons in the style of a Hellenistic Gnostic teacher, whom Jung renamed "Basilides" after the historical Gnostic of the second century in the privately published version of *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos* (Jung & Jaffe, 1963). In the seventh sermon, Philemon teaches them of their destiny and their eternal home, the star:

This star is the God and the goal of man.

This is his lone guiding God, in him man goes to his rest,

toward him goes the long journey of the soul after death,

in him everything that man withdraws from the greater world (Jung & Jaffe, 1963).

This teaching finally satisfies the dead, as the text reports in one of its most beautiful poetic passages:

But when Philemon had finished, the dead remained silent. Heaviness fell from them, and they ascended like smoke above the shepherd's fire, who watches over his flock by night (Jung, Shamdasani, Kyburz & Peck, 2009).

They can now move on to their resting place in eternity.

Who are these ghosts and what do they mean? In *MDR*, Jung vividly recalls the experience of their visitation and says of them: "From that time on, the dead have become ever more distinct to me as the voices of the Unanswered, Unresolved, and Unredeemed" (Jung, Shamdasani, Kyburz & Peck, 2009). They are representatives of the unhoused souls of people who have died without a sense of meaning, conflicted, faithless. Jung would have known well the New Testament's classic definition of faith: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old received divine approval. By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear" (Hebrews 11:1-3). These restless and disoriented dead are the spirits of modernity who die without mythic symbols that would contain their souls and give them guidance. Being without a guiding myth, they search for an unknown solution to an unstatable problem. They travel fruitlessly to ancient places where faith is supposed to have its home (Jerusalem, for instance), but they come away empty. This was Jung's own predicament as a "modern man."

The comforting image of the star as a symbol of transcendence would return to Jung much later in life, in a dream, and give him solace. He recounts this in a letter to Victor White, which he wrote while recovering from a serious illness in 1946:

The aspectus mortis is a mighty lonely thing, when you are stripped of everything in the presence of God... Yesterday I had a marvelous dream: One bluish diamondlike star high in heaven, reflected in a round, quiet pool – heaven above, heaven below -. The imago Dei in the darkness of the Earth, this is myself. The dream meant a great consolation. I am no more a black and endless sea of misery and suffering but a certain amount thereof contained in a divine vessel (Jung, 2007).

It was precisely this notion of a link between the human and the Divine, as symbolized by the star, which had settled the disquiet of the unsatisfied dead and given them peace. Now it provides the same settling containment for Jung in his later years. In *The Red Book*, Philemon is the mediator of this knowledge. From his own testimony, it is clear the Jung struggled to hold on to this piece of *gnosis*.

In Philemon's final appearance, which takes place in the last chapter of *The Red Book*, he welcomes Jung into his garden. Then a figure dressed in blue, identified as Christ, enters the scene, and they converse with him. Surprisingly, Christ identifies Philemon as a reincarnation of Simon Magus. Christ wonders whose garden this is, his own or Philemon's. In this decisive moment of encounter, recognition and questioning, Philemon informs Christ that this is his, Philemon's, garden and not Christ's. Thus the scales are rebalanced between an image of human wholeness (Philemon as Anthropos) and a God-image (Christ), putting them into a more evenly calibrated relation, a result that Jung has been struggling mightily to achieve in earlier pages. This is the thematic culmination of the whole narrative, and it leads directly into Jung's late reflections on the reciprocal relation between the human and images of the divine in *Answer to Job* and his magisterial late work, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*.

Philemon himself is a figure who can pass between worlds – time and eternity – and who speaks from personal knowledge and experience and not from received doctrine, theory or belief. He also links depth psychology to ancient gnosticism because of his association with Simon Magus. He is a mediator, an image for what Jung would call “the transcendent function.” But he is not final or ultimate. He is a symbol for an archetypal power and a mystery beyond himself, which can never be exhaustively described or imagined.

Jung's Philemon, it should be noted, descends to him from Goethe's *Faust* and not in the first place from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. The *Faust* connection is important because, as it turns out in the final scene of *The Red Book*, Philemon is recognized to be a reincarnation of the unscrupulous magician Simon Magus (Simon the Sorcerer) of New Testament origins (Acts 9-24), who by tradition is the prototype of the European Faust. Faust, who embodies overweening pride and egocentricity and who with the able assistance of Mephistopheles grasps greedily for the ring of power, destroys the humble cottage of Philemon and Baucis in order to realize a utopian plan of his own perverse creation. Now, in *The Red Book*, Philemon is identified as Simon Magus (aka Faust), so obviously a great transformation, indeed a kind of reversal, has taken place in the figure.

This transformation of ego ambition into wisdom is the result of several important sacrifices undertaken in the course of the protagonist's pilgrimage, starting with the slaying of the hero Siegfried (Jung, Shamdasani, Kyburz & Peck, 2009). In recognition, Jung carved a dedication to Philemon over the doorway of his tower at Bollingen: *Philemonis Sacrum – Fausti Poenitential*, Shrine of Philemon – Repentance of Faust (Jung & Jaffe, 1963). Clearly, Jung was struggling personally with a strong will to power, and Philemon represents the transformation of the trickster (Simon Magus) and power monger (Faust) into a teacher of wisdom and transcendence.

What does the Jungian tradition receive from *The Red Book*?

Overall, my conclusion is that *The Red Book* can come to function within the field of analytical psychology as a transmission instrument for the archetypal “genius” that lies beyond Jung the man and inscriber of the stories, reflections and images found in it. This genius, moreover, as symbolized in *The Red Book* by Philemon, exists beyond this work itself and has its roots in the “metaphysical” (or, as we say, in the metapsychological) world of the archetypes of the collective unconscious. It can enliven and sustain the tradition.

The danger is that we absolutize any particular symbol of this genius and turn it into a monotheistic idol or into an archetypal fundamentalism. The genius responsible for our dreams and visions, we must remember, is compensatory to our conscious world; it does not offer absolute guidance but rather balance and wholeness when brought into relation with consciousness. It can also produce states of possession (or ‘intoxication’ – German: *Rausch* – as Jung says of his exposure to Philemon in *The Red Book*), from which consciousness must be freed. Jung does not succumb to religious mania with *The Red Book*, as well he could have had he been so inclined, but rather he comes to earth and concludes his adventure with a crucial scene in a garden owned by Philemon, not by Christ, where archetypal images and humans converse on a common level. In an important sense, Jung is struggling throughout *The Red Book* to get beyond the power of the archetypal images he meets up with, including the soul, to dictate their wishes and ambitions to a servile mortal who must obey or face doom. The effort brings them into the human world where they can be integrated and made useful for humanity's consciousness as metaphors that map the unconscious psyche. On the other hand, he knows that the psyche's deepest mystery can never be completely known but must forever be allowed to show itself in new symbols, which in turn must again be integrated and relativized. This is the message of *The Red Book* – encounter and disidentification with the archetypal images of the collective unconscious. The work functions, therefore, as a model for how the human ego can meet and interact with the numinous archetypal powers of the collective unconscious (made available by the genius of the work) and can work creatively and modestly with them.

In the final analysis, Jung's *Red Book* offers a groundplan for an enlarged anthropology and humanism, which receives and embraces the divine with its awesome powers but does not fall on its face before Deity and become enslaved to it. The human maintains its dignity before the Divine, respectfully, and helps the Divine to become conscious by letting it pass through the doorway of human consciousness and enter into relationship with the human world.

Where I will put *The Red Book* in my arrangement of Jung's literary legacy is beside *Memories, Dream, Reflections*. Neither is a scientific work, both are autobiographical, and both can inspire, fascinate, and offer a touchstone. They are "timeless documents of the soul" and tell me deeply why I am a Jungian.

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