



JUNG, CARL (1875–1961)

Carl Gustav Jung was a Swiss-German psychoanalyst who, with Sigmund Freud, was instrumental in ushering depth psychology (theories of the unconscious) into the 20th century.

Jung was educated at the University of Zurich and as a young man he developed the concept of the autonomous, unconscious complex and the technique of free association, well before joining forces with Freud's Viennese School. Along with Alfred Adler and Sigmund Freud, Jung worked to advance the concept of unconscious motivation. Despite their initial collaboration, however, Jung broke with Freud over the latter's reductionist, psychosexual view of the unconscious and his own espousal of phenomena that Freud regarded as occult.

Just before the outbreak of World War I, Jung experienced a spontaneous series of "visions" that nearly led him to psychosis. These visions awoke in him a revolutionary appreciation of how close his own unconscious life was to the primitive myths and rituals of humankind. The importance of occult experiences was apparent in Jung's first published paper, "On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena." In Jung's writings the unconscious encompassed not only the biological drives that Freud had emphasized, but also those "spiritual" or occult aspirations that Jung believed were just as integral and innate a part of human individuality. Thus Jung acknowledged forces within the human psyche for which the Freudian view had little explanation. This fundamental difference in their view of the human personality ultimately led to their break.

In formulating his theories on the collective unconscious and the archetypes, Jung posited an unconscious—and hereditary—source for all of humankind's creative endeavors and spiritual yearnings. Jung divided the unconscious into two levels. The superficial personal unconscious houses memories that are too weak to reach consciousness, and memories and traumas that are so threatening they are suppressed by the ego. The *collective unconscious*—sometimes referred to as the *racial memory*—is the repository of the universal religious, spiritual, and mythological symbols and experiences of humankind. The primary structures of the collective unconscious that form the foundation of the human psyche are the archetypes. Jung believed these structures are biologically based and inherited.

Jung defined the *archetype* as a "primordial" psychic image or pattern, representative of our ancestral experiences, that recurs throughout human history in dreams, fantasies, myths, and art. The major archetypal figures of the collective unconscious, Jung proposed, are the shadow, anima, animus, and self. The *shadow* is the amoral, prehuman, animal aspect of personality that is instinctively focused on reproduction and survival. The *anima* is the female aspect of personality present in the collective unconscious of men. The *animus* is the male aspect of personality present in the collective unconscious of women. The *Self* is the unified personality that integrates conflicting aspects of the personality such as the *anima* and *animus*. The unconscious is centered around the *Self*.

Jung also developed a groundbreaking personality theory that introduced the concepts of extraversion and introversion, and that explained human behavior as a combination of four psychic functions—thinking, feeling, intuition, and sensation. (This psychological

typology would provide the theoretical foundation for the well-known Myers-Briggs personality survey.) Other crucial Jungian formulations include compensation, synchronicity, and individuation. *Compensation* refers to the ongoing efforts of the unconscious to correct the ego's one-sided view of reality. *Synchronicity* reflects the importance Jung attributed to occult events. He believed that some meaningful events are not the result of mechanistic causation nor of human intention. Most psychologists and laypersons would call these events coincidences, but Jung believed they are indications that we are connected with other humams and with nature in general through our collective unconscious. *Individuation* refers to the lifelong psychological process of the ego's encounters with, and acceptance of, the archetypes within, especially the unconscious Self.

Jung spent his later years beside Lake Zurich carving in stone the mythological figures to which he had devoted his life. For example, Jung represented the self as the circle, cross, and mandala. One possibly apocryphal story is that on the night of Jung's death, thousands of his friends and disciples throughout the world dreamed of his passing, and his favorite tree beside the lake was split in two by lightning. Whether true or not, Jung would most certainly have been delighted, for the story honors his lifelong advocacy of occult experience and illustrates his concept of synchronicity, namely, that all humans are connected through the collective unconscious. Perhaps now he was a part of that collective realm that had been the great subject of his life's work.

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See also Defenses, Psychological (v2); Ego Strength (v2); Free Association (v2); Freud, Sigmund (v2); Personality

Theories, Psychodynamic (v2); Psychoanalysis and Psychodynamic Approaches to Therapy (v2); Religion/Religious Belief Systems (v3); Spirituality (v3); Spirituality/Religion (v2); Therapist Techniques/Behaviors (v2); Therapy Process, Individual (v2)

Further Readings

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