

# THE UNDISCOVERED SELF



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The Undiscovered Self  
By Carl Gustav Jung  
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# THE UNDISCOVERED SELF

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# 1

## *The Plight of the Individual in Modern Society*

What will the future bring? Since ancient times, this question has occupied people's minds—though not always with the same intensity.

Historically, it is mostly during times of physical, political, economic, and spiritual hardship that people look toward the future with anxious hope, and during such times, expectations, utopian ideas, and apocalyptic visions multiply.

For example, one might think of the millenarian hopes during the Augustan age at the beginning of the Christian era, or the shifts in the spirit of Western civilization that occurred around the end of the first millennium.

Today, as we near the end of the second millennium, we are once again living in a time filled with apocalyptic images of worldwide destruction.

What does it mean that humanity is divided into two halves by the thing we call the “Iron Curtain”?

What will become of our civilization, and of human beings themselves, if hydrogen bombs begin to explode, or if the spiritual and moral darkness of totalitarian state power spreads across Europe?

We have no reason to treat this threat lightly.

All across the Western world, there are subversive minority groups who, protected by our humanitarian ideals and our sense of justice, stand ready with their torches—prepared to ignite destruction.

There is nothing preventing the spread of their ideas except the critical thinking of a small segment of the population—those who are reasonably intelligent and mentally stable.

However, we should not overestimate the size of this group.

It varies from one country to another depending on national temperament.

It also varies by region based on the quality of public education, and it is highly vulnerable to sudden and severe political and economic disturbances.

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If we use public referendums as a way to estimate, then with an optimistic outlook, one might place this group's maximum at about 40 percent of voters.

A more pessimistic estimate would also be justified, because the gift of reason and critical thinking is not one of humanity's most prominent characteristics.

And even where such qualities do exist, they often prove to be unstable and unreliable—especially as political groups grow larger.

The masses tend to crush the individual's capacity for insight and reflection.

And when that happens, it inevitably leads to rigid ideology and authoritarian tyranny—especially if the constitutional state happens to fall into a moment of weakness.

Rational argument can only be carried out with some hope of success as long as the emotional intensity of a situation does not go beyond a certain critical level.

If the emotional “temperature” rises above that point, the possibility that reason will have any effect disappears, and it is replaced by slogans and fantastical wish-dreams.

In other words, a kind of collective possession takes place, which quickly develops into a psychological epidemic.

In such a state, all those aspects of human nature that are merely tolerated under the rule of reason—because they are antisocial—rise to the surface.

The people who embody these qualities are by no means rare curiosities who can only be found in prisons or psychiatric hospitals.

For every obvious case of insanity, there are, in my opinion, at least ten hidden cases—people who rarely reach the point of openly breaking down, but whose thoughts and behavior, for all their appearance of normality, are shaped by unconscious, sick, and distorted influences.

There are, of course, no medical statistics available on how frequently these hidden psychoses occur—for understandable reasons.

But even if their numbers are less than ten times that of the clearly psychotic or criminal, the small percentage of the population they represent is more than made up for by the unique danger they pose.

Their mental condition resembles that of a group emotionally stirred up and governed by feelings and fantasy-driven desires.

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In this state of “collective possession,” they are the ones who are well-adapted, and therefore they feel completely at home in it.

They know this psychological environment firsthand and understand the language of these emotional states—they know how to function within them.

Their imaginary beliefs, carried by fanatical resentment, appeal to the irrational side of the collective and find fertile ground there, because they give voice to all the motives and resentments that exist in more “normal” people, though hidden under a layer of reason and insight.

For this reason, despite being few in number compared to the general population, they are dangerous sources of infection—precisely because the so-called normal person has only a limited amount of self-knowledge.

Most people confuse “self-knowledge” with knowledge of their conscious ego personalities.

Anyone who has any degree of ego-consciousness automatically assumes that they know themselves.

But the ego only knows what is within its own awareness—it does not know the unconscious or what it contains.

People assess their self-knowledge by comparing it to what the average person in their social circle knows about themselves, rather than by looking at the actual psychological facts, which are, for the most part, hidden from them.

In this regard, the psyche behaves like the body, with its physical and anatomical structure, about which the average person also knows very little.

Although a person lives in and with their body, most of it is completely unknown to them, and it takes specialized scientific knowledge to bring into awareness what is known about the body—let alone all the things that are not yet known, but still exist.

What is usually referred to as “self-knowledge” is therefore a very limited form of knowledge, most of it shaped by social influences, concerning what takes place in the human psyche.

That is why one constantly runs into the bias that certain things “don’t happen to us,” or “not in our family,” or “not among our friends and acquaintances.”

And at the same time, one also encounters equally mistaken assumptions about supposed virtues or traits that actually only serve to cover up the real truth of the situation.

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In this wide realm of unconsciousness—which is immune to conscious criticism and control—we are left defenseless, open to all kinds of outside influences and psychological infections.

As with any danger, we can protect ourselves from the risk of psychological infection only when we know what is attacking us, and how, where, and when that attack is likely to occur.

Because self-knowledge is about learning specific, individual facts, general theories are of very limited help in this area.

The more a theory claims to have universal validity, the less able it is to accurately reflect individual realities.

Any theory that's based on experience is necessarily statistical in nature—that is, it creates an ideal average that eliminates all the extreme outliers on either end of the scale and replaces them with an abstract middle value.

This average may be logically valid, even though it doesn't have to exist in actual reality.

Nevertheless, it is treated by the theory as an unshakable fundamental fact.

The outliers on either end—although just as real—are not included in the result at all, because they cancel each other out.

If, for example, I determine the weight of every stone in a bed of pebbles and come up with an average weight of 145 grams, that average tells me almost nothing about the real, individual nature of the pebbles.

Someone who thought, based on this information, that they could simply reach in and pick up a pebble weighing exactly 145 grams would be in for a serious letdown.

In fact, it's entirely possible that, no matter how long they search, they might never find even one pebble that weighs exactly 145 grams.

The statistical method presents the facts through the lens of an ideal average, but it doesn't show us their true, empirical reality.

Although it reflects a real and undeniable aspect of the truth, it can distort the actual truth in a highly misleading way.

This is especially true for theories that rely on statistics.

What makes real facts unique, however, is precisely their individuality.

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To put it bluntly, one could say that the real picture is made up entirely of exceptions to the rule—and, as a result, ultimate reality has the character of being mostly irregular.

These points must be kept in mind whenever someone speaks of a theory serving as a guide to self-knowledge.

There is—and can be—no self-knowledge based on theoretical assumptions, because the subject of self-knowledge is the individual—a relative exception, and an irregular phenomenon.

That means it is not the universal or the regular that defines the individual, but rather the unique.

An individual should not be understood as a recurring type, but as something entirely one-of-a-kind and singular, which ultimately cannot be fully known or meaningfully compared to anything else.

At the same time, however, man—as a member of the human species—can and must be described statistically; otherwise, it would be impossible to say anything general about humanity.

For that purpose, the individual must be viewed as a unit of comparison.

This approach results in a universally applicable anthropology or psychology, which produces an abstract picture of “man” as an average unit, stripped of all individual characteristics.

But those very characteristics—the individual features—are the most important when it comes to understanding a person.

If I want to understand a specific human being, I must set aside all scientific knowledge about the average person and discard every theory.

I must instead take up an entirely fresh and unbiased attitude.

I can only begin the task of understanding with an open and unprejudiced mind—whereas gaining knowledge of “man” or developing insight into human nature assumes a broad base of knowledge about humanity in general.

Now, whether the goal is to understand another person or to come to know oneself, in both cases I must abandon all theoretical assumptions.

Because scientific knowledge not only enjoys universal respect, but is also regarded by modern people as the only true intellectual and spiritual authority, trying to understand an individual forces me, so to speak, to commit a kind of symbolic treason—to ignore scientific knowledge.

This is not an easy sacrifice to make, because the scientific mindset cannot easily separate itself from its deep sense of responsibility.

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And if the psychologist is also a physician who wants not only to classify their patient according to scientific categories but also to understand them as a human being, then that psychologist faces a real conflict of duties—between two fundamentally opposed and mutually exclusive approaches: knowledge on the one hand, and understanding on the other.

This conflict cannot be resolved with a simple either-or decision. It can only be approached through a kind of dual-minded thinking: doing one thing while never losing sight of the other.

Given the fact that, in principle, the strengths of knowledge actually work to the disadvantage of understanding, any judgment that results from this tension is likely to seem paradoxical.

From a scientific point of view, the individual is nothing more than a unit that repeats endlessly, and could just as easily be represented by a letter of the alphabet.

From the perspective of understanding, however, it is precisely the unique individual human being—stripped of all the uniformities and patterns so beloved by scientists—who becomes the highest and only truly valid subject of investigation.

The physician, more than anyone, should be aware of this contradiction.

On one side, he possesses the statistical truths taught to him through scientific training.

On the other, he is faced with the practical task of treating a patient—one who, especially in the case of psychological suffering, requires to be understood as an individual.

The more standardized the treatment becomes, the more resistance it provokes in the patient—and rightly so—and the more the chances of healing are endangered.

The psychotherapist is therefore forced—whether he wants to be or not—to treat the individuality of the patient as a central and concrete reality, and to adapt his therapeutic approach accordingly.

Today, across the entire field of medicine, it is widely recognized that the doctor's job is to treat the patient, not just an abstract disease.

This example from the field of medicine is just one specific case of a broader problem that applies to education and training as a whole.

Scientific education is mostly based on statistical truths and abstract knowledge, and therefore it presents an unrealistic, rational image of the world—one in which the individual, as a marginal exception, plays no meaningful role.

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However, the individual—as an irrational, concrete reality—is the actual and authentic bearer of existence: the real human being, as opposed to the idealized or “normal” man that scientific statements usually describe.

What's more, most of the natural sciences attempt to present the results of their research as though these results came into being without any involvement from the human observer—so that the role of the psyche, which is an essential factor, remains hidden from view.

(An exception to this is modern physics, which acknowledges that the thing being observed is not independent of the one doing the observing.)

So in this area as well, science presents a picture of the world from which the real human psyche is missing—something completely opposite to the spirit of the “humanities.”

Under the influence of scientific assumptions, not only the psyche but also the individual person—and, in fact, all individual events—undergo a kind of flattening and blurring that distorts the true image of reality into a generalized concept or statistical average.

We should not underestimate the psychological impact of this statistical worldview: it pushes aside the individual in favor of anonymous units that merge into collective masses.

Instead of offering us the concrete individual, science gives us the names of institutions and, at the highest level, the abstract concept of the State as the foundation of political reality.

As a result, the moral responsibility of the individual is inevitably replaced by the policy of the State—*raison d'état*.

Instead of the personal and psychological development of the individual, we get public welfare programs and efforts to raise the standard of living.

The goal and meaning of individual life—which is the only kind of real life—are no longer found in personal growth, but in the policies of the State, which are imposed from the outside and consist of carrying out an abstract idea that ultimately seeks to absorb all life into itself.

The individual is increasingly stripped of the moral freedom to decide how to live his own life, and instead is ruled, fed, clothed, and educated as part of a social unit, placed in the proper type of housing unit, and entertained according to the preferences and pleasures of the masses.

The rulers, for their part, are just as much social units as those they govern. The only difference is that they serve as specialized spokespersons for the doctrine of the State.

They don't need to be individuals capable of independent judgment, but rather full-fledged specialists—people who are essentially useless outside their narrow area of expertise.

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It is State policy that determines what will be taught and what will be studied.

The seemingly all-powerful doctrine of the State, in turn, is manipulated in the name of that same State policy by those who hold the highest offices in government—where all the real power is concentrated.

Whoever, whether by election or by whim, ends up in one of these positions is no longer subject to higher authority, because he now *is* the State policy itself—and within the limits of his role, he is free to act at his own discretion.

Like Louis XIV, he can say, “L'état, c'est moi”—“I am the State.”

He is therefore the only individual—or at least one of the very few—who could actually exercise his individuality, if only he knew how to distinguish himself from the doctrine of the State.

More often, however, such people end up being the slaves of their own illusions.

One-sidedness like this is always psychologically balanced out by unconscious, rebellious tendencies.

Slavery and rebellion are inseparable—they go hand in hand.

As a result, competition for power and an exaggerated atmosphere of mistrust spread throughout the entire system, from top to bottom.

And in order to compensate for its inner chaos and lack of structure, a mass will always produce a “Leader”—someone who, almost without exception, ends up becoming a victim of his own overinflated ego, as history has shown time and time again.

This development becomes logically inevitable the moment the individual merges into the crowd and loses his relevance.

Besides the sheer gathering of enormous masses of people—within which the individual already tends to disappear—one of the main forces responsible for this kind of psychological mass-mindedness is scientific rationalism, which strips the individual of his foundations and his dignity.

As part of a social unit, he has lost his individuality and become nothing more than an abstract number in a statistical office.

He can now only serve as a replaceable unit of minimal importance.

Viewed rationally and from the outside, that's exactly what he is.

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From this perspective, it even begins to seem absurd to keep talking about the value or meaning of the individual.

In fact, one can hardly imagine how people ever came to assign such dignity to individual human life, when the opposite truth seems as clear as the palm of your hand.

Seen in this light, the individual truly appears to be losing significance, and anyone who tries to argue otherwise quickly runs out of things to say.

The fact that someone feels themselves, or their family members, or close friends to be important only highlights the slightly comical subjectivity of such feelings.

After all, what are a few people compared to ten thousand—or a hundred thousand—or even a million?

This brings to mind a comment made by a thoughtful friend of mine when we once found ourselves caught in a huge crowd.

He suddenly said, “Here you have the most convincing reason not to believe in immortality: all these people want to be immortal!”

The larger the crowd, the more insignificant the individual becomes.

But if the individual, overwhelmed by a sense of his own smallness and powerlessness, begins to feel that his life has lost its meaning—which, after all, is not the same as public welfare or a higher standard of living—then he is already on the path toward State slavery.

Without realizing it or intending it, he has become a convert to that system.

A person who only looks outward and shrinks in fear before the vastness of collective powers has no inner resource to oppose what his senses and reason are telling him.

Yet that is exactly what is happening today: we are all spellbound and intimidated by statistical facts and large numbers, and we are constantly reminded of the meaninglessness and futility of the individual personality—since it is not represented or embodied by any mass organization.

On the other hand, public figures who strut across the world stage and whose voices are heard everywhere seem, to an uncritical public, to be swept along by some kind of mass movement or current of public opinion—and for that reason, they are either cheered or cursed.

Because mass suggestion plays the dominant role here, it remains uncertain whether their message is truly their own—for which they would be personally responsible—or whether they are simply acting as loudspeakers for the collective opinion.

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In this environment, it's no surprise that individual judgment becomes more and more unsure of itself, and that responsibility is increasingly pushed onto the collective—that is, the individual tries to avoid it and instead shifts it to a larger group or institution.

In this way, the individual becomes more and more just a function of society.

Society, in turn, takes over the role of being the bearer of life's meaning—when in reality, society is nothing but an abstract concept, just like the State.

Both of these—society and the State—are hypostatized, meaning they are treated as if they were real, independent beings.

The State in particular is turned into something like a living person, from whom everything is expected.

But in reality, it is only a disguise for those individuals who know how to manipulate it.

As a result, the constitutional State begins to drift toward the condition of a primitive society—in particular, the form of primitive communism found in early tribes, where everyone is under the absolute rule of a chief or a small ruling group.

## 2

### *Religion as the Counterbalance to Mass-Mindedness*

In order to liberate the fiction of the sovereign State—that is, the unchecked will of those who manipulate it—from every healthy limitation, all sociopolitical movements that lean in this direction inevitably try to undermine religion.

That's because, in order to reduce the individual to nothing more than a function of the State, any sense of dependence on something beyond the State must be taken away from him.

But religion involves a dependence on—and submission to—irrational aspects of human experience.

These aspects don't directly concern social or physical conditions; rather, they are primarily about the individual's inner, psychological orientation.

It's only possible to form a perspective on the external conditions of life when there is a reference point outside those conditions.

Religions provide—or at least claim to provide—such a reference point, which allows individuals to exercise their own judgment and make decisions.

They establish, in a sense, a reserve force within the person—a spiritual buffer—against the overwhelming and unavoidable pressure of external circumstances that affects anyone who lives solely in the outer world and has no foundation beneath them except the hard pavement.

If statistical reality is considered the only reality, then it becomes the only authority.

In that case, there is only one possible condition of existence—and since no opposing condition is recognized, personal judgment and decision-making are not just unnecessary but impossible.

The individual then becomes nothing more than a function of statistics, and therefore a function of the State—or of whatever abstract organizing principle is in power.

Religions, however, teach about a different authority—one that stands in opposition to the authority of the “world.”

The doctrine that the individual is dependent on God makes just as strong a claim on him as the world does.

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Sometimes, the absoluteness of this religious claim can distance a person from the world just as much as he becomes estranged from himself when he gives in to collective thinking.

He can give up his ability to judge and decide for himself in the name of religious doctrine just as easily as he can when surrendering to the group mentality.

This surrender is exactly what religions openly aim for—unless they make compromises with the State.

When they do compromise, I prefer not to call them “religions,” but rather “creeds.”

A creed expresses a clear collective belief, while the word *religion* refers to a personal relationship with certain metaphysical, otherworldly realities.

A creed is a public declaration of faith, aimed primarily at the world and rooted in worldly affairs, whereas the meaning and purpose of religion lie in the relationship of the individual to God (as in Christianity, Judaism, Islam), or to the path of spiritual liberation and salvation (as in Buddhism).

From this fundamental fact, all true ethics is derived—ethics that, without the individual’s responsibility before God, can be reduced to nothing more than conventional social morality.

Because creeds are compromises with worldly reality, they have increasingly felt the need to formalize and codify their views, doctrines, and customs.

In doing so, they have become so externalized that the truly religious element—the living relationship and direct engagement with the transcendent point of reference—has been pushed into the background.

The denominational viewpoint judges the value and importance of someone’s personal religious experience by the standard of traditional doctrine.

And in places where this is less common—as in Protestantism—one quickly hears accusations of pietism, sectarianism, eccentricity, and the like, whenever someone claims to be guided by the will of God.

A creed coincides with an established Church, or at the very least forms a public institution whose members include not only genuine believers but also large numbers of people who can only be described as religiously indifferent—and who belong to the institution simply out of habit.

It is here that the difference between a *creed* and a *religion* becomes clear and unmistakable.

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Being a follower of a creed, therefore, is not always a religious matter—it is more often a social one.

And as a social matter, it does nothing to give the individual any solid foundation.

To find real support, the individual must depend entirely on his relationship with an authority that is not of this world.

The real test here is not whether someone pays lip service to a creed, but the psychological reality that a person's life is not determined solely by the ego and its opinions, or by external social forces, but just as much—and often more—by a transcendent authority.

It is not lofty ethical principles, nor strictly orthodox creeds, that provide the foundation for an individual's freedom and autonomy.

Rather, it is the actual, lived experience—the undeniable psychological awareness—of a deeply personal and reciprocal relationship between a human being and an otherworldly authority that serves as a counterweight to the “world” and its “rationality.”

This idea will be displeasing to both the “mass man” and the “collective believer.”

For the mass man, the policy of the State is the highest principle that governs his thinking and actions.

In fact, that's exactly what his enlightenment was meant to achieve: to shape him into someone who grants the individual the right to exist only inasmuch as that individual serves a function within the State.

The believer, on the other hand, although he may acknowledge that the State has moral and factual authority, still maintains that both man and the State that governs him are subject to the higher authority of “God.”

In cases of conflict, it is God—and not the State—who must have the final say.

Since I do not claim to have metaphysical knowledge, I must leave open the question of whether the “world”—that is, the observable world of humanity, and nature more broadly—is truly the “opposite” of God or not.

What I can say is this: the psychological opposition between these two realms of experience is not only affirmed in the New Testament, but is also clearly seen today—most obviously in the hostile stance that authoritarian States take toward religion, and the equally negative stance that the Church takes toward atheism and materialism.

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Just as a human being, as a social creature, cannot survive in the long term without some connection to a community, the individual will likewise never find true justification for his existence—or his own spiritual and moral independence—anywhere except in a principle beyond this world, one that is capable of putting the overwhelming force of external influences into perspective.

An individual who is not rooted in God has no strength of his own with which to resist the physical and moral seductions of the world.

To withstand these, he needs the proof of an inner, transcendent experience—something that alone can protect him from otherwise inevitable absorption into the mass.

Simply having intellectual or even moral insight into the dulling and morally irresponsible nature of the mass mentality is only a negative realization, and doesn't amount to much more than hesitation on the way to the fragmentation of the individual.

It lacks the powerful motivation of religious conviction because it is purely rational.

The totalitarian State has one major advantage over middle-class reasoning: it devours the individual along with his religious energy.

The State has taken the place of God; from this perspective, socialist dictatorships function as religions, and submission to the State becomes a kind of worship.

But the religious function cannot be displaced and corrupted like this without producing hidden doubts.

These doubts are immediately repressed in order to avoid conflict with the dominant trend toward mass-mindedness.

As always in such situations, the result is overcompensation in the form of fanaticism, which is then used as a tool to extinguish even the faintest signs of dissent.

Free thinking is silenced, and moral decision-making is brutally suppressed, all under the pretense that the ends justify the means—even the most vile ones.

The State's policy is elevated to the status of a creed; the leader or party boss becomes a kind of demigod, placed above good and evil, and his loyal followers are celebrated as heroes, martyrs, apostles, or missionaries.

There is only one truth, and no truth beside it.

It is sacred and above all criticism.

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Anyone who thinks differently is labeled a heretic—and as history shows, heretics face all sorts of unpleasant consequences.

Only the party boss, who holds political power in his hands, is allowed to give the official interpretation of State doctrine—and he does so however it suits him.

When, through the rule of the masses, the individual becomes just social unit number such-and-such, and the State is raised to the highest principle, it's only natural that the religious function will also be pulled into the same vortex.

Religion—the attentive recognition and consideration of certain invisible and uncontrollable forces—is an instinctive attitude that is unique to human beings, and its various expressions can be observed throughout all of human history.

Its obvious purpose is to preserve psychological balance, because the natural human being has a natural kind of "knowledge" that his conscious thoughts and actions may at any time be disrupted by forces beyond his control, coming either from within or from the outside world.

For this reason, humans have always been careful to ensure that any important decision—especially one with consequences for themselves and others—is protected or reinforced by appropriate religious practices.

Offerings are made to unseen powers, powerful blessings are pronounced, and all sorts of solemn rituals are performed.

Everywhere, and in every era, there have been rituals for beginnings and endings (*rites d'entrée et de sortie*), whose supposed magical effectiveness is often denied and dismissed as mere superstition by rationalists who lack psychological insight.

But magic, above all, has a psychological effect whose significance should not be overlooked.

The performance of a "magical" act gives the person involved a sense of security—and this feeling is absolutely essential for making a decision, because every decision is necessarily one-sided and therefore naturally feels risky.

Even a dictator feels the need not only to accompany his actions of state with threats, but to stage them with elaborate ceremony.

Brass bands, flags, banners, parades, and massive demonstrations are essentially no different from church processions, cannon fire, or fireworks intended to ward off evil spirits.

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The only difference is that the display of State power creates a collective feeling of safety—but unlike religious ceremonies, this feeling provides the individual with no protection against his own inner demons.

As a result, he clings even more desperately to the power of the State—that is, to the mass—thereby surrendering himself to it psychologically as well as morally, and completing the process of his personal disempowerment.

The State, like the Church, demands enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, and love—and just as religion calls for or presupposes the “fear of God,” the totalitarian State makes sure to provide the necessary fear.

When the rationalist focuses the main force of his criticism on the supposed magical effects of religious rites, as claimed by tradition, he completely misses the point.

What he overlooks is the key element: the psychological effect—though both sides actually use this effect, but for opposite ends.

A similar contrast exists between how each side views their respective goals.

The aims of religion—such as deliverance from evil, reconciliation with God, rewards in the afterlife, and so on—are transformed into secular promises: freedom from the daily struggle for food, fair distribution of material wealth, universal future prosperity, and shorter working hours.

The fact that these promises are just as far off as Paradise only highlights another parallel and makes it even clearer that the masses have shifted their faith from an otherworldly goal to a purely worldly belief—one that is proclaimed with the same religious intensity and exclusivity that traditional creeds direct toward the supernatural.

So as not to repeat myself unnecessarily, I won’t list every single parallel between worldly and spiritual beliefs, but I do want to stress this point:

A natural human function like the religious impulse—which has existed from the beginning of our history—cannot be eliminated by rationalist or so-called enlightened criticism.

You can, of course, ridicule the doctrines of the creeds and treat them as nonsense, but that entirely misses the underlying reality: the religious function itself, which those creeds are built upon.

Religion, understood as a serious and conscientious acknowledgment of the irrational forces at work in the psyche and in a person’s fate, reemerges—though in a corrupted and twisted form—in the worship of the State and the dictator.

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**Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurret** (“You can drive Nature out with a pitchfork, but she always comes back.”)

Leaders and dictators, having accurately assessed the situation, do everything they can to hide the glaring parallels with the deification of figures like Caesar.

They conceal their real authority behind the fiction of the State—though, of course, this changes nothing.

As I've already explained, the totalitarian State not only robs the individual of his rights, it also undermines his psychological foundation by stripping him of the metaphysical basis of his existence.

The ethical decisions of the individual no longer matter—what counts now is only the blind momentum of the masses.

And with that, the lie has become the driving force of political action.

The State has followed this logic to its conclusion, as the existence of millions of enslaved citizens—stripped of all rights—silently proves.

Both the totalitarian State and organized religion place a special emphasis on the idea of community.

This is the core ideal behind “communism,” and it is forced on people so aggressively that it ends up producing the opposite effect: it breeds division and mistrust.

The Church, which also emphasizes community, presents it as a sacred ideal on the other end of the spectrum.

And in places where the Church is especially weak—such as in Protestantism—the hope for, or belief in, a “communal experience” tries to make up for the painful absence of unity.

As is easy to observe, the concept of “community” is a crucial tool in organizing masses of people, and therefore it is a double-edged sword.

Just as adding up however many zeros will never give you a whole number, the value of a community depends entirely on the spiritual and moral quality of the individuals who make it up.

For this reason, one cannot expect a community to create any influence stronger than the suggestive pressure of its environment—that is, one cannot expect a community to bring about a real and lasting transformation in individuals, whether for better or worse.

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Such transformation can only arise from genuine personal encounters—one human being meeting another—not from mass communist or Christian baptisms, which leave the inner self untouched.

How shallow the impact of collective propaganda really is can be seen in recent events in Eastern Europe.\*

The ideal of community overlooks a crucial factor: the individual human being—who, in the end, will always insist on making his own claims.

## 3

### *The Position of the West on the Question of Religion*

Faced with this development in the twentieth century of our Christian era, the Western world stands with the inheritance of Roman law, the wealth of Judaeo-Christian ethics rooted in metaphysical thought, and its ideal of the inalienable rights of the individual.

It anxiously asks itself: How can this development be stopped—or even reversed?

It is pointless to label the socialist dictatorship as utopian or to denounce its economic policies as irrational, because, first of all, the critical voices from the West are only speaking to themselves—these arguments are heard only on this side of the Iron Curtain.

And second, any set of economic policies can be implemented if one is willing to accept the sacrifices required to make them work.

You can put any kind of social or economic reform into effect—if, like Stalin, you are willing to let three million peasants starve and have several million unpaid laborers at your disposal.

A State like this has nothing to fear from economic or social crises.

As long as its power remains intact—meaning, as long as there is a disciplined and well-fed police force at the ready—it can survive indefinitely and can continue expanding its power without limit.

Given its high birth rate, it can increase the number of unpaid workers virtually at will in order to compete with its rivals—completely disregarding the global market, which depends in large part on wages.

The only real threat such a State faces would have to come from outside, in the form of a military attack.

But that danger decreases with each passing year, first because the military power of the dictator States keeps growing, and second because the West cannot afford to provoke latent Russian or Chinese nationalism or patriotism through any kind of attack—since that would push their otherwise well-intentioned programs down a disastrously wrong path.

As far as we can tell, only one real possibility remains: the breakdown of power from within.

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But that process must be allowed to unfold on its own, following its own internal development.

At present, any outside support would have little effect, given the strict internal security measures and the risk of provoking nationalistic backlash.

The totalitarian State has at its disposal an army of fanatical missionaries to carry out its foreign policy objectives, and these missionaries, in turn, can rely on a “fifth column”—sympathizers in the West—who are protected by the laws and constitutions of Western nations.

Additionally, the local communities of true believers—which are quite strong in some areas—significantly limit the Western governments' ability to act decisively.

Meanwhile, the West has no comparable opportunity to influence our opponents in the same way.

Still, we are probably right to suspect that some degree of opposition exists among the Eastern populations.

There are always decent, honest, and truth-loving people who cannot stand lies and tyranny.

But we cannot say whether they have any real influence over the broader masses living under police regimes.\*

In light of this difficult and uncomfortable situation, the question is asked again and again in the West: What can we do to counter the threat coming from the East?

Even though the West possesses substantial industrial strength and significant military power, we cannot allow ourselves to feel secure with just that—because we know that even the largest guns and the strongest industries, along with their relatively high standards of living, are not enough to stop the kind of psychological contagion that spreads through religious fanaticism.

Unfortunately, the West has still not woken up to the fact that our appeals to idealism, reason, and other admirable virtues—though delivered with great enthusiasm—amount to nothing more than noise.

They are like a gust of wind swept away by the storm of religious faith, no matter how distorted that faith might seem to us.

What we are facing is not a situation that can be solved through rational or moral arguments, but a release of emotional forces and ideas shaped by the spirit of the age—forces that, as we know from experience, are not strongly influenced by rational thinking and even less by moral preaching.

It has been rightly recognized in many circles that the proper antidote—*the alexiphamic*—in this case would need to be a faith just as powerful, but of a different and non-materialistic kind.

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Only a religious attitude based on such a faith would be an effective defense against the danger of psychological infection.

Unfortunately, the little word “*should*”, which always pops up in this context, reveals a certain weakness—or even the absence—of the very thing needed.

Not only does the West lack a unified faith strong enough to stop the advance of a fanatical ideology, but as the birthplace of Marxist philosophy, it shares many of the same underlying spiritual assumptions, arguments, and goals.

Even though the Churches in the West enjoy complete freedom, they are neither more nor less full—or empty—than those in the East.

And despite their freedom, they have no noticeable influence on the broad direction of politics.

One of the disadvantages of a creed that functions as a public institution is that it ends up serving two masters:

On one hand, it owes its existence to the relationship between humans and God; on the other hand, it has obligations to the State—that is, to the world.

To justify this, it can quote “Render unto Caesar...” and other teachings from the New Testament.

In earlier times—and even up to the fairly recent past—there was frequent reference to the “powers ordained by God” (*Romans 13:1*).

But today, that idea is considered outdated.

The Churches now represent a collection of traditional and collective beliefs, which for many of their members are no longer rooted in personal inner experience, but in unexamined faith—something that tends to vanish the moment it is seriously questioned.

Once someone begins to reflect, belief can come into conflict with knowledge, and in that clash, the irrational nature of belief often cannot stand up to the reasoning power of knowledge.

Belief is not an adequate substitute for inner experience.

And when that inner experience is missing, even a strong faith that once came—miraculously—as a gift of grace, may vanish just as suddenly.

People often call faith the true religious experience, but they don't stop to realize that faith is actually a secondary phenomenon.

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It arises only because something first happened to us—something that gave us *pistis*, meaning trust and loyalty.

That experience has a definite content, and it can be interpreted through one or another of the established creeds.

But the more this interpretation is emphasized, the more opportunities there are for conflict with knowledge to arise—and such conflicts are ultimately meaningless.

This is because the position of the creeds is archaic.

They are filled with powerful mythological imagery, which—if taken literally—ends up clashing intolerably with modern knowledge.

But if, for example, the statement that Christ rose from the dead is understood symbolically rather than literally, then it can be interpreted in various ways that don't conflict with knowledge and still preserve the significance of the statement.

The argument that symbolic interpretation destroys the Christian's hope for immortality is invalid.

Long before the rise of Christianity, human beings already believed in life after death, and therefore didn't need the Easter event as proof of immortality.

Today, the danger is greater than ever that a mythology taught too literally—such as the one upheld by the Church—will be rejected outright and completely abandoned.

Isn't it time, at last, that Christian mythology was understood symbolically instead of being erased?

It's still too early to say what might happen if people widely recognized the dangerous similarities between the Marxist State religion and the Church when it acts as a State religion.

The absolute claim of a *Civitas Dei*—a divine society represented on Earth by human beings—bears an unsettling resemblance to the supposed “divinity” of the State.

And the moral conclusion drawn by Ignatius Loyola from the authority of the Church—that “the end justifies the means”—prefigures the use of lies as political tools in an extremely dangerous way.

Both systems demand absolute submission to belief, and in doing so, they restrict human freedom: one curtails freedom before God, the other freedom before the State—both ultimately digging the grave for the individual.

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The fragile existence of the individual—the unique bearer of life—is under threat from both sides, despite the promises they offer of future spiritual or material paradise.

And how many of us, in the long run, can truly resist the truth behind the old saying, “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush”?

Beyond that, the West clings to the same “scientific” and rationalistic worldview—*Weltanschauung*—with its tendency to level down everything statistically and its focus on material goals, just like the State religion of the Eastern bloc, as I’ve already discussed.

So, what does the West—divided politically and religiously—have to offer modern man in his time of need?

Sadly, nothing but a variety of paths that all lead to essentially the same destination as the Marxist ideal.

It doesn’t take any special insight to understand where Communist ideology gets its deep confidence that time is on its side and that the world is ready to be converted.

The facts speak for themselves here, in the clearest possible terms.

It will do us no good in the West to close our eyes to this—to ignore the real vulnerability that lies at the heart of our system.

Anyone who has once learned to surrender completely to a collective belief, and to give up both his eternal right to freedom and his equally eternal duty to individual responsibility, will remain in that mindset.

That person will be able to move just as blindly and uncritically in the opposite direction, if a different but seemingly “better” belief system is imposed on his so-called idealism.

What happened not so long ago to a civilized European nation?

We blame the Germans for already forgetting, but the truth is we can’t say with certainty that something similar couldn’t happen elsewhere.

It wouldn’t be surprising at all if it did—and if another civilized nation were overtaken by the infection of a uniform, one-sided idea.

America—which, *O quae mutatio rerum!* (O what a change of fortune!)—now serves as the real political backbone of Western Europe, may appear immune due to the firm position she’s taken,

But in reality, she might be even more vulnerable than Europe, because her education system is the most deeply shaped by the scientific worldview, with its statistical truths.

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And her diverse population has difficulty putting down roots in a land that is, for the most part, without historical depth.

The kind of historical and humanistic education that is so badly needed in such a setting lives, instead, like Cinderella—ignored and undervalued.

Europe, on the other hand, does have that kind of education, but she misuses it—turning it into a tool of nationalistic egoism and paralyzing skepticism.

What both regions share is the same materialistic and collectivist end goal.

And both lack the one thing that could truly speak to the whole human being and grip him completely: an idea that puts the individual person at the center, as the true measure of all things.

This idea alone—the idea that the individual should be the center—provokes the strongest doubts and resistance from all sides.

One could almost go so far as to say that the worthlessness of the individual compared to the power of large numbers is the one belief that everyone everywhere agrees on.

Of course, we all say that this is the century of the common man—that he rules the land, the skies, and the seas, and that the fate of nations rests on his choices.

But this proud image of human greatness is, sadly, nothing more than an illusion.

It is sharply contrasted by a reality that is completely different.

In truth, man is the slave and the victim of the very machines that have conquered space and time for his benefit.

He is intimidated and put in danger by the power of military technology that was supposed to protect his physical existence.

His spiritual and moral freedom—though technically guaranteed within limits in one half of the world—is disoriented and teetering on the edge of chaos.

And in the other half of the world, that freedom has been completely eliminated.

To top it all off—adding comedy to tragedy—this so-called master of the elements, this supposed universal decision-maker, clings tightly to beliefs that mark his dignity as worthless and make his personal freedom look absurd.

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All his accomplishments and all his possessions don't make him greater; on the contrary, they shrink him—just as we see in the fate of the factory worker living under a system of so-called "fair" distribution of goods.

## 4

### *The Individual's Understanding of Himself*

It is truly astounding that man—the one who initiates, invents, and carries out all of these developments; the originator of all judgment and decision; the one who plans the future—should reduce himself to something so insignificant.

This contradiction, this paradoxical way in which humanity judges itself, is genuinely remarkable.

And the only way to explain it is by recognizing the deep uncertainty in our self-understanding—in other words, man is a mystery to himself.

This is understandable, since he lacks the necessary point of comparison that would make true self-knowledge possible.

He knows how to distinguish himself from other animals in terms of anatomy and physiology,

But as a conscious, reflective being with the gift of speech, he has no standard by which to judge himself.

On this planet, he is a unique phenomenon—something that cannot be compared to anything else.

The possibility of comparison, and therefore the potential for self-knowledge, would only arise if he could establish contact with quasi-human beings living on other stars.

Until then, man remains like a solitary hermit who knows that, anatomically, he shares certain features with the apes—

But who also knows that, based on appearances, he is vastly different from his evolutionary cousins in terms of his inner life, or psyche.

And it is precisely in this most important trait of his species—the psyche—that he is unable to understand himself, and so he remains a riddle to himself.

The differences between individuals within the human species mean very little compared to the kind of self-knowledge that might be gained through contact with a being of similar structure but entirely different origin.

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Our psyche, which is ultimately responsible for all the historical transformations that humans have brought to the face of this planet, remains an unsolvable puzzle and an incomprehensible wonder—

An enduring source of confusion, like all the deepest mysteries of nature.

In regard to those mysteries of nature, we still hold out hope for future discoveries and the eventual solution of even the hardest problems.

But when it comes to the psyche and the science of psychology, there seems to be a strange reluctance.

Not only is psychology the youngest of all the empirical sciences, but it also struggles profoundly to come anywhere close to its true subject.

Just as our old misunderstanding of the solar system had to be freed from prejudice by the work of Copernicus, it took efforts that were nearly revolutionary in nature to liberate psychology—

First from the grip of mythological thinking, and then from the mistaken belief that the psyche is either just a byproduct of biochemical processes in the brain, or else something entirely unreachable and obscure.

The brain's involvement with the psyche does not, by itself, prove that the psyche is merely an epiphenomenon—a secondary effect caused by brain chemistry.

Still, we are all too aware of how much mental functioning can be affected by observable changes in the brain—

And this fact is so compelling that it makes the idea of the psyche being merely secondary seem like an almost unavoidable conclusion.

But the phenomena of parapsychology caution us against drawing conclusions too quickly.

They suggest that psychic processes may, in fact, alter our normal understanding of space and time—

And this challenges our simplistic and hasty attempts to explain away the similarities between the psychic and the physical.

In order to preserve such explanations, people often reject the findings of parapsychology outright—whether for philosophical reasons or simply due to intellectual laziness.

But this refusal can hardly be called a scientifically responsible stance, even if it's a convenient escape from a very difficult intellectual challenge.

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If we are to evaluate psychic phenomena properly, we must also consider the full range of other phenomena that come along with them.

As a result, we can no longer practice any psychology that ignores the existence of the unconscious—or dismisses the reality of parapsychology.

The structure and functioning of the brain offer no true explanation for psychic processes.

The psyche has a unique nature that cannot be reduced to anything else.

Like physiology, it constitutes a relatively self-contained domain of experience—one we must assign special significance to,

Because it contains within itself one of the two essential conditions for existence: the phenomenon of consciousness.

Without consciousness, the world would, for all practical purposes, not exist—

Because the world exists *as such* only to the extent that it is consciously perceived and expressed by a psyche.

Consciousness is a prerequisite for being.

Therefore, the psyche possesses the dignity of a *cosmic principle*—

Which, both philosophically and factually, gives it a status equal to that of physical existence.

The bearer of this consciousness is the individual—

Who does not create the psyche at will, but is, on the contrary, shaped by it—

And who is nurtured by the gradual unfolding of consciousness that begins in early childhood.

If the psyche must be granted supreme empirical significance,

Then so must the individual—who is its only direct and immediate expression.

This fact must be clearly emphasized for two reasons.

First, the individual psyche—precisely because it is individual—is an exception to statistical rules, and when it is subjected to the flattening effect of statistical analysis, it is stripped of one of its essential qualities.

Second, the Churches recognize its validity only if it accepts their dogmas—in other words, only when it surrenders to a collective category.

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In both instances, the desire for individuality is viewed as selfish stubbornness.

Science dismisses it as subjectivism, and the Churches condemn it morally as heresy or spiritual arrogance.

But on that latter point, we should not forget that, unlike other religions, Christianity is centered around a symbol that expresses the individual life path of a man—the Son of Man—

And it even sees this process of individuation as the incarnation and revelation of God Himself.

Because of this, the development of the self takes on a significance whose full meaning has barely begun to be recognized—

Largely because people's overemphasis on outward things blocks the path to direct inner experience.

If it were not for the fact that personal autonomy is a secret longing for many people, this much-oppressed phenomenon—the individual—could hardly survive the pressure of collective suppression, either morally or spiritually.

All these obstacles make it harder to reach a proper understanding of the human psyche—

But they are relatively minor compared to one other astonishing fact that must be pointed out.

This is a well-known observation in psychiatry: that the tendency to devalue the psyche—and the broader resistance to psychological insight—are based, to a large extent, on fear—

A deep, panic-level fear about what might be discovered in the unconscious.

This fear exists not only in people who are disturbed by Freud's portrayal of the unconscious—

It even affected Freud himself.

He once told me that it was necessary to make his theory of sexuality into a dogma, because it was the only rational barrier against what he called the "black flood of occultism."

In saying this, Freud was expressing his belief that the unconscious still contained many elements that could be interpreted as "occult"—and this is, in fact, true.

These "archaic remnants"—or archetypal patterns rooted in instinct and expressing those instincts—carry a mysterious, numinous quality that can provoke fear.

They cannot be eliminated, because they represent the deepest foundations of the psyche itself.

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They cannot be fully grasped by intellect alone, and even if you manage to suppress one form of them, they will reappear in another.

It is this fear of the unconscious mind that not only blocks self-knowledge but also stands as the greatest obstacle to deeper psychological insight and understanding.

Often, the fear is so intense that a person doesn't even dare to admit it to themselves.

This is a question every religious person should reflect on very seriously—

They might receive a truly eye-opening answer.

A scientifically oriented psychology is necessarily abstract; that is, it maintains just enough distance from its subject to avoid losing sight of it entirely.

That's why, for all practical purposes, the findings of laboratory psychology are often surprisingly uninformative and uninteresting.

The more the individual subject takes center stage in observation, the more practical, detailed, and vivid the resulting knowledge will be.

This also means that the subjects of study become increasingly complex, and the uncertainty around individual factors grows in proportion to their number—

Which, in turn, raises the likelihood of error.

Understandably, academic psychology is wary of this risk and tends to avoid these complexities altogether, since it has complete freedom in choosing the questions it poses to Nature.

Medical psychology, however, does not enjoy this relatively comfortable position.

Here, it is not the experimenter who asks the questions—rather, the question is posed by the case itself.

The doctor is confronted with facts he did not choose and likely would not choose if he had the option.

It is the illness—or the patient—that raises the essential questions.

In other words, Nature experiments with the doctor, demanding an answer from him.

The uniqueness of the individual and their situation confronts the physician directly and demands a response.

His responsibility as a doctor compels him to deal with a situation filled with unknowns.

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At first, he may rely on principles drawn from general experience,

But he will soon discover that such general principles do not fully express the reality of the situation or address its particular nature.

The deeper his understanding goes, the less meaningful these general principles become.

Yet these principles are the foundation of objective knowledge and the standard by which such knowledge is evaluated.

As both doctor and patient begin to feel that a kind of “understanding” is developing, the situation becomes increasingly subjective.

What began as an advantage can start to turn into a dangerous drawback.

This subjectivity—in technical terms, *transference* and *countertransference*—leads to isolation from the surrounding social environment.

Neither party intends or desires this isolation, but it inevitably arises when understanding overtakes and is no longer kept in balance by knowledge.

The deeper the understanding becomes, the further it moves away from objective knowledge.

An ideal form of understanding would ultimately mean that each person uncritically accepts the other’s experience—

A state of passive agreement, marked by extreme subjectivity and the loss of social responsibility.

But understanding taken to this extreme is actually impossible, because it would require two different individuals to become virtually identical.

Sooner or later, the relationship reaches a point where one person feels pressured to sacrifice their own individuality in order to be absorbed by the other.

This unavoidable outcome destroys the mutual understanding,

Because true understanding presupposes that both individuals retain their full individuality.

For this reason, it’s wise to pursue understanding only up to the point where a healthy balance between understanding and knowledge is achieved.

Seeking understanding at all costs harms both people involved.

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This problem comes up whenever complex, individual situations need to be understood and explored.

Providing that kind of knowledge and understanding is precisely the task of psychology.

It would also be the task of the confessor who is truly committed to the care of souls—

If it weren't for the fact that his role inevitably requires him to apply the standards of his specific religious denomination at the most crucial moment.

As a result, the individual's right to exist as an individual gets cut short by a collective bias—often in the most vulnerable and sensitive area of their life.

This only doesn't happen when the religious symbol—for example, the life of Christ as a model—is grasped in a concrete, personal way and felt by the individual to be genuinely relevant.

How often that happens today, I will leave to the judgment of others.

In any case, doctors frequently treat patients for whom denominational boundaries and traditions mean little or nothing.

Because of this, the doctor's role requires him to hold as few personal biases as possible.

Likewise, while respecting metaphysical beliefs (that is, beliefs that cannot be verified), he must be careful not to assume they are universally valid.

Such caution is necessary, because the unique traits of a person's personality should not be bent out of shape by arbitrary outside interference.

Instead, the doctor must leave that to external influences, to the person's own internal development, and—in the broadest sense—to fate, with all its wisdom or lack thereof.

Some people may think this high level of caution is excessive.

But considering that, even in the most careful and respectful exchange between two people, countless mutual influences are already at work,

A responsible doctor will take care not to add to the collective pressures that have already shaped and burdened the patient.

He also knows well that even the most noble advice often triggers open rebellion or hidden resistance in the patient—

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And so, preaching moral truths often does nothing but endanger the goal of the treatment.

The psychological state of the individual today is already so threatened by advertising, propaganda, and all kinds of well-meaning advice and suggestions,

That for once in his life, the patient should be able to experience a relationship that does not just repeat the tiresome chorus of "you should" and "you must"—

Phrases that are really nothing more than signs of powerlessness.

In the face of constant pressure from the outside world—and the echoes of that pressure inside the patient's own mind—the doctor finds himself forced to take on the role of defense attorney.

The fear that this will unleash wild, anarchic instincts is a huge exaggeration, especially since there are already obvious safeguards in place, both internally and externally.

Above all, there is the natural cowardice of most people to be reckoned with—

Not to mention morality, basic decency, and—last but not least—the law.

That fear is nothing compared to the immense effort it usually takes for people just to bring the first stirrings of their individuality into consciousness—let alone actually act on them.

And when those impulses do break through too forcefully or recklessly,

It becomes the doctor's responsibility to protect the patient from his own impulsive shortsightedness, ruthlessness, and cynicism.

As the dialectical discussion unfolds, a point is reached where an evaluation of these individual impulses becomes necessary.

By this time, the patient should have gained enough clarity of judgment to act on his own insights and decisions—not simply out of a desire to conform to social norms—even if he agrees with the collective opinion.

Unless the individual stands firmly on his own two feet, the so-called objective values are of no use to him, since they will merely serve as a substitute for true character and, in doing so, suppress his individuality.

Of course, society has an unquestionable right to protect itself against extreme subjectivism.

But to the extent that society is made up of de-individualized people, it is completely at the mercy of ruthless individualists.

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Let it organize itself into groups and associations as much as it likes—it is precisely this grouping together and the resulting loss of individual identity that makes it so susceptible to a dictator.

A million zeros, unfortunately, do not add up to one.

Ultimately, everything depends on the quality of the individual, but the dangerously shortsighted habit of our time is to focus solely on large numbers and mass organizations.

You would think the world has seen more than enough of what a disciplined mob can achieve in the hands of a single madman.

Unfortunately, this realization has not penetrated deeply enough—and our blindness in this area is extremely dangerous.

People continue to organize and place their faith in the magic of mass action, with no awareness that the most powerful organizations can only function through the greatest ruthlessness on the part of their leaders and the simplest of slogans.

Curiously, the Churches also wish to use mass action to drive out the devil with Beelzebub—the very Churches whose mission is the salvation of the individual soul.

They, too, do not seem to have grasped the basic principle of mass psychology—that the individual becomes morally and spiritually inferior within the mass.

Because of this, they do not seem overly concerned with their real task: helping the individual undergo metanoia—the rebirth of the spirit—*deo concedente* (if God grants it).

It is, unfortunately, all too clear that if the individual is not truly regenerated in spirit, society cannot be either, because society is simply the sum of individuals in need of redemption.

I can, therefore, only see it as a delusion when the Churches attempt—apparently so—to tie the individual into a social organization and reduce him to a state of diminished responsibility,

Rather than lifting him out of the stagnant, mindless mass and showing him that he, as an individual, is the crucial factor—that the salvation of the world depends on the salvation of the individual soul.

It is true that mass gatherings promote such ideas and try to impress them on the individual through mass suggestion, but the result is far from edifying.

For once the intoxication wears off, the mass man falls prey to another, even more obvious, and louder slogan.

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His personal relationship to God would act as an effective defense against these harmful influences.

Did Christ ever call his disciples together at a mass meeting?

Did the feeding of the five thousand bring any followers who did not later shout "Crucify him!" with the rest, when even the rock named Peter wavered?

And are not Jesus and Paul prototypes of those who, trusting in their inner experience, walked their own individual paths, disregarding public opinion?

This argument should not cause us to overlook the reality of the situation the Church faces.

When the Church attempts to give form to the amorphous mass by uniting individuals into a community of believers through suggestion, and tries to maintain such an organization,

It is not only performing a significant social service, but it also provides the individual with the invaluable gift of a meaningful way of life.

However, these are gifts that typically reinforce existing tendencies rather than changing them.

As unfortunate experience has shown, the inner man remains unchanged, no matter how much community he belongs to.

His environment cannot give him what he can only achieve through personal effort and suffering.

On the contrary, a supportive environment merely strengthens the dangerous tendency to expect everything to come from the outside—even that transformation which external reality cannot provide:

A deep, inner change that is all the more necessary given today's mass phenomena and the even greater challenges posed by the future rise in population.

It's time we ask ourselves exactly what we are lumping together in mass organizations and what makes up the true nature of the individual human being—that is, the real person, not the statistical one.

This can hardly be achieved except through a new process of self-nourishment.

As expected, all mass movements easily slide down the inclined plane of large numbers.

Where the many are, there is safety; what the many believe must, of course, be true; what the many desire must be worth pursuing, necessary, and therefore good.

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In the roar of the many, there is the power to claim wish-fulfillment by force; sweetest of all, though, is the gentle and painless return to the kingdom of childhood—

To the paradise of parental care, to a carefree existence and irresponsibility.

All the thinking and the decision-making are done from above; every question has an answer, and all needs are met.

The infantile dream state of the mass man is so unrealistic that he never thinks to ask who is paying for this paradise.

The balancing of the books is left to a higher political or social authority, which is happy to take on the task, for it increases its own power.

And the more power it has, the weaker and more helpless the individual becomes.

Wherever social conditions of this kind develop on a large scale, the road to tyranny is laid bare, and the freedom of the individual turns into both spiritual and physical slavery.

Since every tyranny is, by its very nature, immoral and ruthless, it has much greater freedom in choosing its methods than an institution that still takes the individual into account.

If such an institution comes into conflict with the organized State, it will quickly realize the real disadvantage of its morality and will thus feel compelled to use the same methods as its opponent.

In this way, evil spreads almost inevitably, even when direct contamination might be avoided.

The danger of infection becomes greater where large numbers and statistical values are given decisive importance—just as they are everywhere in our Western world.

The suffocating power of the masses is put on display for us in one form or another every day in the newspapers, and the insignificance of the individual is so deeply ingrained that he loses all hope of being heard.

The outdated ideals of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* offer him no help, as he can only direct his appeal to his executioners—the spokespeople for the masses.

Resistance to the organized mass can only be made by the individual who is as well-organized in his individuality as the mass itself.

I fully realize that this statement might sound nearly unintelligible to the modern person.

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The helpful medieval view that man is a microcosm—a reflection of the great cosmos in miniature—has long since been discarded, even though the very existence of his all-encompassing, world-conditioning psyche should have taught him better.

Not only is the image of the macrocosm imprinted upon him as a psychic being, but he also continually creates this image for himself on an ever-expanding scale.

He carries this cosmic "correspondence" within him thanks to his reflective consciousness on one hand, and on the other hand, due to the hereditary, archetypal nature of his instincts, which bind him to his environment.

But his instincts do more than just attach him to the macrocosm—they also, in a sense, tear him apart, because his desires pull him in different directions.

This creates a constant inner conflict, and he very rarely succeeds in giving his life a unified purpose—one which, as a rule, he must pay dearly for by repressing other parts of his nature.

In such cases, one often has to ask oneself whether this kind of one-sidedness is really worth forcing, considering that the natural state of the human psyche consists in a certain jumbling together of its components and the contradictions in their behavior—that is, in a certain degree of dissociation.

Buddhism refers to this as attachment to the "ten thousand things."

Such a state cries out for order and synthesis.

Just as the chaotic movements of the crowd, all leading to mutual frustration, are driven in a specific direction by a dictatorial will,

So, the individual in his dissociated state also needs a guiding and organizing principle.

Ego-consciousness would like to take on this role, but it overlooks the existence of powerful unconscious factors that thwart its intentions.

If it seeks to achieve synthesis, it must first understand the nature of these factors.

It must experience them, or it must possess a numinous symbol that expresses them and leads toward synthesis.

A religious symbol that encompasses and visibly represents what is seeking expression in modern man could probably fulfill this role.

But our current conception of the Christian symbol certainly has not been able to do so.

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On the contrary, that devastating split in the world runs right through the domains of the “Christian” white man, and our Christian outlook on life has proven powerless to stop the resurgence of an archaic social order like communism.

This is not to say that Christianity is finished.

On the contrary, I am convinced that it is not Christianity itself, but rather our conception and interpretation of it, that has become outdated in the face of the current world situation.

The Christian symbol is a living entity that holds within it the seeds of further development.

It can continue to evolve; it depends only on us, whether we can decide to reflect once again—and more thoroughly—on the Christian foundations.

This requires a radically different attitude toward the individual, toward the microcosm of the self, from the one we have held until now.

That is why no one knows what paths are open to man, what inner experiences he can still undergo, or what psychic truths lie behind the religious myth.

A darkness so universal hangs over this that no one can see why they should be interested, or to what end they could commit themselves.

Before this challenge, we stand helpless.

This is not surprising, since practically all the advantages are in the hands of our opponents.

They can appeal to the large armies and their overwhelming power.

Politics, science, and technology are all aligned with them.

The compelling arguments of science represent the highest degree of intellectual certainty achieved by human thought.

At least, that is how it appears to the modern person, who has been thoroughly enlightened about the backwardness and superstitions of past eras.

That his educators have themselves gone seriously astray by making false comparisons between incomparable factors never crosses his mind.

This is even more true as the intellectual elite, to whom he looks for answers, almost universally agrees that what science deems impossible today was impossible in all other times as well.

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Above all, the facts of faith, which might offer him the chance of a perspective beyond the material world, are treated in the same way as the facts of science.

So, when the individual questions the Churches and their representatives—those entrusted with the care of souls—

He is told that belonging to a creed (a distinctly worldly institution) is more or less necessary for religious belief;

That the facts of faith, which have become questionable for him, were once concrete historical events;

That certain rituals produce miraculous effects;

And that the sufferings of Christ have vicariously saved him from sin and its consequences—namely, eternal damnation.

If, with the limited tools at his disposal, he starts to reflect on these matters, he will have to admit that he does not understand them at all.

He will then see only two options: either to believe without question, or to reject these statements because they are simply incomprehensible.

While the modern man can easily think about and understand all the “truths” presented to him by the State, his understanding of religion is made much harder due to the lack of explanations.

(“*Do you understand what you are reading?*” *And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?”* Acts 8:30).

If, despite this, he still has not discarded all his religious convictions, it is because the religious impulse has an instinctive foundation and is, therefore, a uniquely human function.

You can take away a man’s gods, but only to give him others in return.

The leaders of the mass State cannot avoid being deified, and wherever crude versions of this idea have not yet been forced upon people, obsessive factors arise in their place—charged with demonic energy, such as money, work, political influence, and so on.

When any natural human function is lost—i.e., when it is denied conscious and intentional expression—a general disturbance follows.

Therefore, it is natural that with the triumph of the Goddess of Reason, a general neuroticism should set in among modern people—

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A dissociation of personality, analogous to the division of the world today by the Iron Curtain.

This boundary line, bristling with barbed wire, runs through the psyche of modern man, no matter which side he lives on.

And just as the typical neurotic is unaware of his shadow side, so the normal individual, like the neurotic, sees his shadow in his neighbor or in the person beyond the great divide.

It has even become a political and social duty to vilify the capitalism of one side and the communism of the other as the very embodiment of evil,

To captivate the public eye and prevent it from looking at the individual life within.

But just as the neurotic, despite being unconscious of his shadow side, has a faint intuition that all is not right with his psychic balance,

So, Western man has developed an instinctive interest in his psyche and in "psychology."

Thus, it is that the doctor is called upon, whether he likes it or not, to appear on the world stage,

And questions are directed at him that primarily concern the most intimate and hidden aspects of the individual's life,

But which, in the end, are direct effects of the *Zeitgeist* (the spirit of the times).

Because of their personal symptomatology, this material is usually considered to be "neurotic"—and rightly so,

Since it consists of infantile fantasies that don't align with the contents of an adult psyche,

And therefore, they are repressed by our moral judgment, as far as they reach consciousness at all.

Most fantasies like this do not, by their nature, reach consciousness in their infantile form,

And it is highly unlikely—at the very least—that they were ever consciously experienced and then repressed.

Rather, these fantasies seem to have always been present, or at least to have arisen unconsciously and persisted in that state,

Until the intervention of the psychologist allowed them to cross the threshold of consciousness.

The activation of unconscious fantasies is a process that occurs when consciousness finds itself in a critical situation.

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If that weren't the case, the fantasies would be produced in the usual way and would then lead to the typical neurotic disturbances.

In reality, these kinds of fantasies belong to the world of childhood and only cause disturbances when they are prematurely reinforced by abnormal conditions in conscious life.

This is especially likely to happen when unfavorable influences come from the parents, poisoning the atmosphere and creating conflicts that disrupt the child's psychic balance.

When a neurosis emerges in an adult, the fantasy world of childhood reappears,

And one might be tempted to explain the onset of the neurosis by causally attributing it to the presence of infantile fantasies.

But that explanation does not account for why these fantasies did not cause any pathological effects during the intervening period.

These effects only emerge when the individual faces a situation that he cannot resolve by conscious means.

This resulting standstill in the development of personality opens the door for infantile fantasies,

Which, of course, are latent in everyone, but remain inactive as long as the conscious personality is able to continue its path without obstruction.

When these fantasies reach a certain level of intensity, they begin to break through into consciousness and create a conflict situation that the patient himself can perceive,

Splitting him into two personalities with different characters.

However, this dissociation had been prepared long before in the unconscious,

When the energy that had flowed from consciousness (because it was unused) strengthened the negative traits of the unconscious personality, particularly its infantile characteristics.

Since the normal fantasies of a child are nothing more, at their core, than the imagination born from instinctive impulses,

They can be seen as preliminary exercises in the use of future conscious activities.

It follows that the fantasies of the neurotic, even though they are pathologically altered and perhaps distorted by the regression of energy,

Contain a core of normal instinct, the hallmark of which is adaptability.

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A neurotic illness always involves an unadapted alteration and distortion of normal dynamism and the "imagination" specific to these instincts.

However, instincts are highly conservative and extremely ancient, both in terms of their dynamism and their form.

When instincts are represented in the mind, they appear as an image that visually and concretely expresses the nature of the instinctive impulse, like a picture.

If we could look into the psyche of the yucca moth, for example, we would find within it a pattern of ideas that are numinous or fascinating in character,

Which not only compel the moth to carry out its fertilizing activity on the yucca plant, but also help it to "recognize" the overall situation.

Instinct is anything but a blind or indefinite impulse, since it proves to be attuned and adapted to a specific external situation.

This is what gives it its unique and irreducible form.

Just as instinct is original and hereditary, so too is its form age-old, meaning archetypal.

It is even older and more conservative than the body's physical form.

These biological principles naturally apply to *Homo sapiens* as well, who still remains within the framework of general biology despite possessing consciousness, will, and reason.

The fact that our conscious activity is rooted in instinct and derives from it both its dynamism and the basic features of its ideational forms,

Holds the same significance for human psychology as it does for all other members of the animal kingdom.

Human knowledge consists essentially of the continuous adaptation of the primordial patterns of ideas that were given to us a priori.

These need certain modifications because, in their original form, they were suited to an archaic mode of life, but not to the demands of a specifically differentiated environment.

If the flow of instinctive dynamism is to be maintained in our lives, which is absolutely necessary for our existence,

Then it is imperative that we reshape these archetypal forms into ideas that are adequate to the challenges of the present.

## 5

### *The Philosophical and the Psychological Approach to Life*

Our ideas, however, have the unfortunate but inevitable tendency to lag behind changes in the overall situation.

They can hardly do otherwise, because, as long as nothing changes in the world, they remain more or less adapted and therefore function in a satisfactory way.

At that point, there is no compelling reason to change or readapt them.

It is only when conditions have changed so drastically that there is an unbearable rift between the outer situation and our now outdated ideas,

That the general problem of our *Weltanschauung* (worldview) or philosophy of life arises,

Along with the question of how the primordial images that maintain the flow of instinctive energy are to be reoriented or readapted.

These cannot simply be replaced by a new rational configuration,

Because this would be molded too much by the outer situation and not enough by humanity's biological needs.

Moreover, not only would this build no bridge to the original man, but it would block the approach to him altogether.

This aligns with the aims of Marxist education, which seeks, like God himself, to shape man, but in the image of the State.

Today, our basic beliefs have become increasingly rationalistic.

Our philosophy is no longer a way of life, as it was in ancient times; it has turned into an exclusively intellectual and academic affair.

Our denominational religions, with their archaic rites and concepts—justified enough in themselves—express a view of the world that caused no great difficulties in the Middle Ages but has become strange and unintelligible to the modern person.

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Despite this conflict with the modern scientific outlook, a deep instinct drives him to hold onto ideas which, if taken literally, ignore all the mental developments of the last five hundred years.

The clear purpose of this is to prevent him from falling into the abyss of nihilistic despair.

But even when, as rationalists, we feel compelled to criticize contemporary religion as literalistic, narrow-minded, and outdated,

We must never forget that the creeds proclaim a doctrine whose symbols—though their interpretation may be debated—nonetheless possess a life of their own due to their archetypal nature.

Consequently, intellectual understanding is not always necessary in all cases,

But is called for only when evaluation through feeling and intuition does not suffice,

That is, for people for whom the intellect holds the primary power of conviction.

Nothing is more characteristic and symptomatic in this respect than the gulf that has opened between faith and knowledge.

The contrast has become so vast that one is forced to speak of the incommensurability of these two categories and their distinct ways of interpreting the world.

And yet, they are concerned with the same empirical world in which we live,

For even theology tells us that faith is supported by facts that became historically perceptible in this known world of ours,

Namely, that Christ was born as a real human being, performed many miracles, suffered his fate, died under Pontius Pilate, and rose in the flesh after his death.

Theology rejects any tendency to treat the statements of its earliest records as written myths and, accordingly, to interpret them symbolically.

In fact, it is the theologians themselves who have recently attempted—no doubt as a concession to “knowledge”—to “demythologize” the object of their faith,

While drawing the line quite arbitrarily at the crucial points.

But to the critical intellect, it is all too clear that myth is an integral component of all religions and therefore cannot be excluded from the assertions of faith without damaging them.

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The rift between faith and knowledge is a symptom of the split consciousness that is so characteristic of the mental disorder of our time.

It is as though two different people were making statements about the same thing, each from their own point of view,

Or as if one person, in two different frames of mind, were sketching a picture of his experience.

If we substitute “person” with “modern society,” it is evident that society is suffering from a mental dissociation—that is, a neurotic disturbance.

In light of this, it does not help matters if one side pulls stubbornly to the right and the other to the left.

This is what happens in every neurotic psyche, to its own deep distress, and it is precisely this distress that brings the patient to the doctor.

As I mentioned earlier, albeit briefly—and without neglecting certain practical details whose omission might have perplexed the reader—

The doctor must establish a relationship with both halves of the patient's personality,

Because only from both of them—and not merely from one half while suppressing the other—can the doctor piece together a whole and complete person.

The latter alternative is what the patient has been doing all along, because the modern *Weltanschauung* gives him no other guidance.

His individual situation mirrors the collective situation.

He is a social microcosm, reflecting, on the smallest scale, the dynamics of society at large, or conversely, as the smallest social unit, cumulatively contributing to the collective dissociation.

The latter possibility is the more likely, as the only direct and concrete carrier of life is the individual personality,

While society and the State are conventional ideas and can only claim reality insofar as they are represented by a certain number of individuals.

Far too little attention has been paid to the fact that our age, despite its irreligiousness, is hereditarily burdened with the specific achievement of the Christian epoch: the supremacy of the word, of the Logos,

Which stands for the central figure of our Christian faith.

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The word has literally become our god, and it has remained so, even if we only know of Christianity from hearsay.

Words like “society” and “State” have become so concretized that they are almost personified.

In the opinion of the average person, the “State,” far more than any king in history, is the inexhaustible giver of all good;

The “State” is invoked, made responsible, grumbled at, and so on.

Society is elevated to the rank of a supreme ethical principle; indeed, it is credited with positively creative capacities.

No one seems to notice that the veneration of the word, which was necessary for a certain phase of historical development, has a perilous shadow side.

That is to say, the moment the word, as a result of centuries of education, attains universal validity,

It severs its original link with the divine person.

There is then a personified Church, a personified State; belief in the word becomes credulity, and the word itself turns into an infernal slogan capable of any deception.

With credulity come propaganda and advertising to deceive the citizen with political maneuvering and compromises,

And the lie reaches proportions never before seen in the history of the world.

Thus, the word, originally meant to announce the unity of all men and their union in the figure of one great Man,

Has in our day become the source of suspicion and distrust of all against all.

Credulity is one of our worst enemies, but it is the makeshift that the neurotic always resorts to in order to silence the doubter within himself or to make him disappear.

People think that you only have to “tell” someone that they “ought” to do something in order to put them on the right track.

But whether they can or will do it is another matter.

The psychologist has come to see that nothing is achieved by merely telling, persuading, admonishing, or giving good advice.

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He must also get acquainted with the details and have authentic knowledge of the psychic makeup of his patient.

He must relate to the individuality of the sufferer and feel his way into all the nooks and crannies of his mind, to a degree that far exceeds the capacity of a teacher or even a spiritual guide.

His scientific objectivity, which excludes nothing, enables him to see his patient not only as a human being but also as a subhuman who is bound to his body, like an animal.

The development of science has directed his interest beyond the range of the conscious personality to the world of unconscious instincts dominated by sexuality and the drive for power (or self-assertion),

Which correspond to the twin moral concepts of Saint Augustine: *concupiscentia* and *superbia*.

The clash between these two fundamental instincts (preservation of the species and self-preservation) is the source of numerous conflicts.

They are, therefore, the chief object of moral judgment, whose purpose is to prevent these instinctual collisions as far as possible.

As I explained above, instinct has two main aspects: on the one hand, that of dynamism, drive, or drift, and on the other, specific meaning and intention.

It is highly probable that all of man's psychic functions have an instinctual foundation, as is obviously the case with animals.

It is easy to see that in animals, instinct functions as the *spiritus rector* (guiding principle) of all their behavior.

This observation lacks certainty only where the capacity for learning begins to develop, for instance, in the higher apes and in humans.

In animals, as a result of their learning capacity, instinct undergoes numerous modifications and differentiations;

In civilized humans, the instincts are so fragmented that only a few of the basic ones can be recognized with any certainty in their original form.

The most important are the two fundamental instincts and their derivatives, and these have been the exclusive concern of medical psychology so far.

Investigators found, however, that in following the ramifications of the instincts, they encountered configurations that could not be definitively attributed to either group.

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To take just one example: the discoverer of the power instinct was uncertain whether an apparently unmistakable expression of the sexual instinct might not be better explained as a “power arrangement.”

And Freud himself felt compelled to acknowledge the existence of “ego instincts” in addition to the dominant sex instinct—a clear concession to the Adlerian standpoint.

In light of this uncertainty, it is hardly surprising that in most cases, neurotic symptoms can be explained, almost without contradiction, by either theory.

This confusion does not mean that one or the other standpoint, or both, is incorrect.

Rather, they are both relatively valid and, unlike certain one-sided and dogmatic preferences, allow for the existence and competition of other instincts.

Although, as I have said, the question of human instinct is far from simple,

We will probably not be wrong in assuming that the learning capacity, a quality almost exclusive to humans, is based on the instinct for imitation found in animals.

It is in the nature of this instinct to disturb other instinctive activities and eventually to modify them, as can be observed, for example, in the songs of birds when they adopt other melodies.

Nothing estranges man more from the foundation of his instincts than his learning capacity,

Which turns out to be a genuine drive towards the progressive transformation of human modes of behavior.

It is, more than anything else, responsible for the altered conditions of our existence and the need for new adaptations that civilization brings.

It is also the source of numerous psychic disturbances and difficulties caused by man's progressive alienation from his instinctual foundation,

That is, by his uprootedness and identification with his conscious knowledge of himself,

By his concern with consciousness at the expense of the unconscious.

The result is that modern man can know himself only insofar as he can become conscious of himself—

A capacity largely dependent on environmental conditions,

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The drive for knowledge and control of which necessitated or suggested certain modifications of his original instinctive tendencies.

His consciousness, therefore, orients itself chiefly by observing and investigating the world around him,

And it is to these peculiarities that he must adapt his psychic and technical resources.

This task is so demanding, and its fulfillment so advantageous, that he forgets himself in the process,

Losing sight of his instinctual nature and putting his own conception of himself in place of his real being.

In this way, he slips imperceptibly into a purely conceptual world where the products of his conscious activity progressively replace reality.

Separation from his instinctual nature inevitably plunges civilized man into the conflict between conscious and unconscious, spirit and nature, knowledge and faith,

A split that becomes pathological the moment his consciousness is no longer able to neglect or suppress his instinctual side.

The accumulation of individuals who have reached this critical state starts a mass movement, which purports to be the champion of the suppressed.

In accordance with the prevailing tendency of consciousness to seek the source of all ills in the outside world, the cry goes up for political and social changes

Which, it is supposed, would automatically solve the much deeper problem of split personality.

Hence, whenever this demand is fulfilled, political and social conditions arise that bring the same ills back again in altered form.

What happens then is a simple reversal: the underside comes to the top, and the shadow takes the place of the light,

And since the former is always anarchic and turbulent, the freedom of the "liberated" underdog must suffer Draconian curtailment.

All this is unavoidable, because the root of the evil is untouched, and only the counterposition has come to light.

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The Communist revolution has debased man far lower than democratic collective psychology has done,

Because it robs him of his freedom not only in the social sense but in the moral and spiritual sense as well.

Aside from the political difficulties, the West has suffered a great psychological disadvantage that made itself unpleasantly felt even during the days of German Nazism:

The existence of a dictator allows us to point the finger away from ourselves and at the shadow.

He is clearly on the other side of the political frontier, while we are on the side of good and enjoy the possession of the right ideals.

Did not a well-known statesman recently confess that he had “no imagination in evil”?

In the name of the multitude, he was here giving expression to the fact that Western man is in danger of losing his shadow altogether,

Of identifying himself with his fictive personality and of identifying the world with the abstract picture painted by scientific rationalism.

His spiritual and moral opponent, who is just as real as he is, no longer dwells in his own breast but beyond the geographical line of division,

Which no longer represents an outward political barrier but increasingly splits off the conscious from the unconscious man in a more menacing way.

Thinking and feeling lose their inner polarity, and where religious orientation has grown ineffective,

Not even a god is at hand to check the sovereign sway of unleashed psychic functions.

Our rational philosophy does not concern itself with whether the other person in us, pejoratively described as the “shadow,”

Is in sympathy with our conscious plans and intentions.

Evidently, it does not recognize that we carry within ourselves a real shadow whose existence is grounded in our instinctual nature.

The dynamism and imagery of the instincts together form an a priori which no man can overlook without the gravest risk to himself.

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Violation or neglect of instinct has painful consequences of both a physiological and psychological nature,

For which the removal of medical help, above all, is required.

For more than fifty years, we have known, or could have known, that there is an unconscious as a counterbalance to consciousness.

Medical psychology has provided all the necessary empirical and experimental proofs of this.

There is an unconscious psychic reality that demonstrably influences consciousness and its contents.

All this is known, but no practical conclusions have been drawn from it.

We still go on thinking and acting as before, as if we were simplex and not duplex.

Accordingly, we imagine ourselves to be innocuous, reasonable, and humane.

We do not think of distrusting our motives or of asking ourselves how the inner man feels about the things we do in the outside world.

But actually, it is frivolous, superficial, and unreasonable of us, as well as psychically unhygienic, to overlook the reaction and standpoint of the unconscious.

One can regard one's stomach or heart as unimportant and worthy of contempt, but that does not prevent overeating or overexertion from having consequences that affect the whole man.

Yet we think that psychic mistakes and their consequences can be gotten rid of with mere words,

For "psychic" means less than air to most people.

All the same, nobody can deny that without the psyche there would be no world at all, and still less, a human world.

Virtually everything depends on the human soul and its functions.

It should be worthy of all the attention we can give it, especially today, when everyone admits that the weal or woe of the future will be decided neither by the attacks of wild animals, nor by natural catastrophes, nor by the danger of world-wide epidemics, but simply and solely by the psychic changes in man.

It needs only an almost imperceptible disturbance of equilibrium in a few of our rulers' heads to plunge the world into blood, fire, and radioactivity.

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The technical means necessary for this are present on both sides.

And certain conscious deliberations, uncontrolled by any inner opponent, can be indulged in all too easily, as we have seen already from the example of one "Leader."

The consciousness of modern man still clings so much to outward objects that he makes them exclusively responsible, as if it were on them that the decision depended.

That the psychic state of certain individuals could emancipate itself for once from the behavior of objects is something that is considered far too little,

Although irrationalities of this sort are observed every day and can happen to everyone.

The forlornness of consciousness in our world is due primarily to the loss of instinct,

And the reason for this lies in the development of the human mind over the past aeon.

The more power man had over nature, the more his knowledge and skill went to his head,

And the deeper became his contempt for the merely natural and accidental, for that which is irrationally given – including the objective psyche, which is all that consciousness is not.

In contrast to the subjectivism of the conscious mind, the unconscious is objective, manifesting itself mainly in the form of contrary feelings, fantasies, emotions, impulses, and dreams,

None of which one makes oneself but which come upon one objectively.

Even today, psychology is still, for the most part, the science of conscious contents,

Measured as far as possible by collective standards.

The individual psyche has become a mere accident, a "random" phenomenon,

While the unconscious, which can manifest itself only in the real, "irrationally given" human being, has been ignored altogether.

This was not the result of carelessness or of lack of knowledge, but of downright resistance to the mere possibility of there being a second psychic authority besides the ego.

It seems a positive menace to the ego that its monarchy can be doubted.

The religious person, on the other hand, is accustomed to the thought of not being sole master in his own house.

He believes that God, and not he himself, decides in the end.

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But how many of us would dare to let the will of God decide, and which of us would not feel embarrassed if he had to say how far the decision came from God himself?

The religious person, so far as one can judge, stands directly under the influence of the reaction from the unconscious.

As a rule, he calls this the operation of conscience.

But since the same psychic background produces reactions other than moral ones,

The believer is measuring his conscience by the traditional ethical standard and thus by a collective value, in which endeavor he is assiduously supported by his Church.

So long as the individual can hold fast to his traditional beliefs, and the circumstances of his time do not demand stronger emphasis on individual autonomy,

He can rest content with the situation.

But the situation is radically altered when the worldly-minded man who is oriented to external factors and has lost his religious beliefs appears en masse, as is the case today.

The believer is then forced onto the defensive and must catechize himself on the foundation of his beliefs.

He is no longer sustained by the tremendous suggestive power of the consensus omnium, and is keenly aware of the weakening of the Church and the precariousness of its dogmatic assumptions.

To counter this, the Church recommends more faith, as if this gift of grace depended on man's good will and pleasure.

The seat of faith, however, is not consciousness but spontaneous religious experience, which brings the individual's faith into immediate relation with God.

Here we must ask: Have I any religious experience and immediate relation to God,

And hence that certainty which will keep me, as an individual, from dissolving in the crowd?

# 6

## *Self-Knowledge*

To this question there is a positive answer only when the individual is willing to fulfill the demands of rigorous self-examination and self-knowledge.

If he follows through on his intention, he will not only discover some important truths about himself, but will also have gained a psychological advantage:

He will have succeeded in deeming himself worthy of serious attention and sympathetic interest.

He will have set his hand, as it were, to a declaration of his own human dignity and taken the first step towards the foundations of his consciousness – that is, towards the unconscious, the only accessible source of religious experience.

This is certainly not to say that what we call the unconscious is identical with God or is set up in his place.

It is the medium from which the religious experience seems to flow.

As to what the further cause of such an experience may be, the answer to this lies beyond the range of human knowledge.

Knowledge of God is a transcendental problem.

The religious person enjoys a great advantage when it comes to answering the crucial question that hangs over our time like a threat:

He has a clear idea of the way his subjective existence is grounded in his relation to “God.”

I put the word “God” in quotes in order to indicate that we are dealing with an anthropomorphic idea whose dynamism and symbolism are filtered through the medium of the unconscious psyche.

Anyone who wants to can at least draw near to the source of such experiences, no matter whether he believes in God or not.

Without this approach, it is only in rare cases that we witness those miraculous conversions of which Paul’s Damascus experience is the prototype.

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That religious experiences exist no longer needs proof.

But it will always remain doubtful whether what metaphysics and theology call God and the gods is the real ground of these experiences.

The question is idle, actually, and answers itself by reason of the subjectively overwhelming numinosity of the experience.

Anyone who has had it is seized by it and therefore not in a position to indulge in fruitless metaphysical or epistemological speculations.

Absolute certainty brings its own evidence and has no need of anthropomorphic proofs.

In view of the general ignorance of and bias against psychology, it must be accounted a misfortune that the one experience which makes sense of individual existence should seem to have its origin in a medium that is certain to catch everybody's prejudices.

Once more the doubt is heard: "What good can come out of Nazareth?"

The unconscious, if not regarded outright as a sort of refuse bin underneath the conscious mind, is at any rate supposed to be of "merely animal nature."

In reality, however, and by definition, it is of uncertain extent and constitution, so that overvaluation or undervaluation of it is groundless and can be dismissed as mere prejudice.

At all events, such judgments sound very queer in the mouths of Christians, whose Lord was himself born on the straw of a stable, among the domestic animals.

It would have been more to the taste of the multitude if he had got himself born in a temple.

In the same way, the worldly-minded mass man looks for the numinous experience in the mass meeting, which provides an infinitely more imposing background than the individual soul.

Even Church Christians share this pernicious delusion.

Psychology's insistence on the importance of unconscious processes for religious experience is extremely unpopular, no less with the political Right than with the Left.

For the former, the deciding factor is the historical revelation that came to man from outside; to the latter, this is sheer nonsense, and man has no religious function at all, except belief in the party doctrine, when suddenly the most intense faith is called for.

On top of this, the various creeds assert quite different things, and each of them claims to possess the absolute truth.

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Yet today we live in a unitary world where distances are reckoned by hours and no longer by weeks and months.

Exotic races have ceased to be peepshows in ethnological museums. They have become our neighbors, and what was yesterday the prerogative of the ethnologist is today a political, social, and psychological problem.

Already the ideological spheres begin to touch, to interpenetrate, and the time may not be so far off when the question of mutual understanding in this field will become acute.

To make oneself understood is certainly impossible without far-reaching comprehension of the other's standpoint. The insight needed for this will have repercussions on both sides.

History will undoubtedly pass over those who feel it is their vocation to resist this inevitable development, however desirable and psychologically necessary it may be to cling to what is essential and good in our own tradition.

Despite all the differences, the unity of mankind will assert itself irresistibly. On this card, Marxist doctrine has staked its life, while the West hopes to get by with technology and economic aid.

Communism has not overlooked the enormous importance of the ideological element and the universality of basic principles. The nations of the Far East share our ideological weakness and are just as vulnerable as we are.

The underestimation of the psychological factor is likely to take a bitter revenge.

It is therefore high time we caught up with ourselves in this matter. For the present, this must remain a pious wish, because self-knowledge, as well as being highly unpopular, seems to be an unpleasantly idealistic goal, reeks of morality, and is preoccupied with the psychological shadow, which is normally denied whenever possible or at least not spoken of.

The task that faces our age is indeed almost insuperably difficult. It makes the highest demands on our responsibility if we are not to be guilty of another *trahison des clercs*.

It addresses itself to those guiding and influential personalities who have the necessary intelligence to understand the situation our world is in. One might expect them to consult their consciences.

But since it is a matter not only of intellectual understanding but of moral conclusions, there is unfortunately no cause for optimism.

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Nature, as we know, is not so lavish with her boons that she joins to a high intelligence the gifts of the heart also.

As a rule, where one is present, the other is lacking, and where one capacity is present in perfection, it is generally at the cost of all the others.

The discrepancy between intellect and feeling, which get in each other's way at the best of times, is a particularly painful chapter in the history of the human psyche.

There is no sense in formulating the task that our age has forced upon us as a moral demand.

We can, at best, merely make the psychological world situation so clear that it can be seen even by the myopic, and give utterance to words and ideas which even the hard of hearing can hear.

We may hope for men of understanding and men of goodwill, and must therefore not grow weary of reiterating those thoughts and insights which are needed.

Finally, even the truth can spread and not only the popular lie.

With these words, I want to draw the reader's attention to the central difficulty they must confront. The horror brought upon humanity by dictator states is nothing less than the culmination of all the atrocities our ancestors have committed in the not-so-distant past. Beyond the barbaric bloodbaths carried out by Christian nations among themselves throughout European history, the European also bears responsibility for the crimes committed against the dark-skinned peoples during the colonization process. In this regard, the white man carries an immense burden. It presents us with an image of the common human shadow that could hardly be painted more darkly. The evil that emerges in man, which undoubtedly resides within him, is of colossal proportions. For the Church to talk about original sin and trace it back to Adam's relatively innocent mistake with Eve is almost a euphemism. The reality is far graver, and it is grossly underestimated.

Since it is widely believed that man is only what his consciousness knows of himself, he regards himself as harmless, adding stupidity to wickedness. He does not deny that terrible things have happened and continue to happen, but it's always "the others" who commit them. When such deeds belong to the recent or distant past, they quickly fade into the sea of forgetfulness, and a state of chronic woolly-mindedness returns, which we call "normality." In shocking contrast to this is the fact that nothing has truly disappeared, and nothing has been rectified. The evil, the guilt, the profound unease of conscience, the obscure misgiving—these are before our eyes, if only we would see. Man has done these things; I am a man, who carries my share of human nature; therefore, I am guilty alongside the rest and bear within me, unaltered and indelibly, the capacity and the inclination to do them again at any time. Even if, legally speaking, we were not accessories to the crime, we are always, due to our human nature, potential criminals. In reality,

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we simply lacked the right opportunity to be drawn into the infernal chaos. None of us stands outside humanity's collective shadow. Whether the crime occurred many generations ago or is happening today, it remains a symptom of a disposition that is always and everywhere present. We would do well to possess some "imagination in evil," because only the fool can permanently ignore the conditions of his own nature. In fact, this negligence is the best way to make oneself an instrument of evil. Harmlessness and naïveté are as unhelpful as it would be for a cholera patient and those around them to remain unaware of the contagious nature of the disease. On the contrary, they lead to the projection of unrecognized evil onto the "other." This strengthens the opponent's position most effectively, because the projection transfers the fear we secretly feel for our own evil onto the other side, making their threat appear far more formidable.

What's even worse, our lack of insight robs us of the ability to deal with evil. Here, we encounter one of the main prejudices of the Christian tradition, and one that serves as a significant stumbling block in our policies. We are told to avoid evil, and if possible, not to touch or even speak of it. Evil is the thing of bad omen, the thing that is taboo and feared. This attitude towards evil, and the apparent avoidance of it, flatter the primitive instinct in us to close our eyes to evil and push it over some boundary, like the Old Testament scapegoat, which was supposed to carry the evil into the wilderness.

But if one can no longer avoid the realization that evil, without man ever choosing it, is part of human nature itself, then it stands as the equal and opposite counterpart of good in the psychological realm. This realization leads directly to a psychological dualism, already unconsciously reflected in the political division and in the even deeper unconscious split within modern man himself. The dualism doesn't come from this realization; rather, we are already in a divided state to begin with. It would be unbearable to think that we must take personal responsibility for such immense guilt. We prefer to localize evil with individual criminals or groups, while we wash our hands in innocence and ignore the general tendency towards evil. This hypocrisy cannot be sustained in the long run because, as experience shows, the evil lies within man—unless, as per the Christian view, one is willing to postulate a metaphysical principle of evil. The great advantage of this view is that it absolves man's conscience of too heavy a burden, placing the blame on the devil, recognizing psychologically that man is more a victim of his psychic nature than its creator.

Given that the evil of our time casts everything that has ever tormented mankind into the deepest shadow, one must ask: how is it that, for all our advancements in justice, medicine, and technology, and all our concern for life and health, we have invented monstrous engines of destruction capable of annihilating the human race? No one would claim that atomic physicists are criminals simply because their efforts led to the creation of the hydrogen bomb. The vast intellectual work that went into developing nuclear physics was undertaken by men who devoted themselves to the task with great effort and self-sacrifice, and whose moral achievement could have just as easily resulted in the creation of something beneficial for humanity. But even though

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the first step toward such a monumental invention may be the outcome of a conscious decision, here, as everywhere, spontaneous ideas—hunches or intuitions—play an important role. In other words, the unconscious also collaborates and often makes decisive contributions. So, it is not just conscious effort that produces the result; at some point, the unconscious, with its barely perceptible goals and intentions, has its influence. If it gives you a weapon, it is likely aiming at some form of violence. The pursuit of truth is the primary goal of science, and if, in the search for enlightenment, we stumble upon immense danger, it feels more like fate than premeditation.

It's not that modern man is capable of greater evil than those from antiquity or primitive times; he simply has far more effective means to carry out his inclination toward evil. As his consciousness has expanded and become more complex, his moral nature has not kept pace. That's the great issue we face today. Reason alone is not enough.

In theory, reason has the power to refrain from dangerous experiments such as nuclear fission simply because of their potential for destruction. But the fear of evil, which is always perceived in others rather than within oneself, limits reason every time, even though we know that using this weapon would mean the certain end of our current human world. The fear of total destruction may prevent the worst from happening, but the threat of it will always loom over us like a dark cloud unless we find a way to bridge the global psychic and political divide—a bridge as real as the existence of the hydrogen bomb itself. If a global consciousness could emerge that recognizes all division and antagonism as a result of the splitting of opposites within the psyche, we would then know where to focus our efforts. However, if even the smallest, most personal stirrings of the individual soul—seemingly insignificant—remain unconscious and unrecognized, they will continue to accumulate and give rise to mass groupings and movements that cannot be controlled rationally or directed toward a positive outcome. All direct attempts to do so are nothing more than shadow boxing, with the most deluded being the ones most involved.

The key lies with the individual, who does not have an answer to his internal conflict. This rift has opened up suddenly with the most recent events in world history, after humanity had spent centuries comfortably believing in a unitary God who created man in His own image, as a unified being. Even today, people remain largely unaware that every individual is a part of larger international systems and, therefore, involved in their conflicts. The individual knows that, as a singular entity, he is somewhat insignificant and feels like a victim of uncontrollable forces. But, on the other hand, he carries within himself a dangerous shadow—an internal adversary who unknowingly contributes to the dark forces of the political system. It is in the nature of political bodies to always attribute evil to the opposing group, just as the individual has an inherent tendency to project everything he doesn't understand or want to acknowledge about himself onto others.

Nothing divides and alienates society more than moral complacency and a lack of responsibility. On the other hand, nothing promotes understanding and reconciliation more than the mutual

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withdrawal of projections. This necessary correction requires self-criticism, because one cannot simply tell others to withdraw their projections—they don't recognize them, just as we don't recognize our own. We can only recognize our prejudices and illusions when, through a deeper psychological understanding of ourselves and others, we are ready to question the absolute correctness of our assumptions and compare them with the objective facts, carefully and honestly. Interestingly, “self-criticism” is a popular concept in Marxist countries, but there, it is subordinated to ideological goals and must serve the State, not truth or justice in human relationships.

The mass State has no interest in promoting mutual understanding or the relationship between individuals; it aims, rather, for atomization, for the psychic isolation of each person. The more disconnected individuals are, the stronger the State becomes, and vice versa.

In democracies, too, the gap between people is far wider than what is healthy for public welfare or psychologically beneficial. True, various efforts are made to address obvious social inequalities by appealing to people's idealism, enthusiasm, and ethical conscience. However, characteristically, these efforts often forget to apply the necessary self-criticism. The key question is: Who is making these idealistic demands? Could it be someone who avoids facing their own flaws and instead throws themselves into an idealistic program that provides a convenient excuse? How much respectability and apparent morality is there, masking a very different and darker inner reality?

It's crucial to first ensure that the person speaking about ideals is themselves ideal, so that their words and actions truly align. Being ideal is impossible and remains an unachieved ideal. Since we usually have a sharp sense for this, most of the idealism preached and presented to us rings hollow, and becomes acceptable only when its opposite is openly acknowledged. Without this balance, the ideal seems out of reach, becomes unbelievable because it lacks humor, and devolves into bluff, even though it's often well-meaning. Bluffing is an illegitimate way of suppressing and overpowering others, and it leads to no positive outcomes.

On the other hand, recognizing the shadow brings the humility we need to accept imperfection. This conscious recognition and consideration are exactly what are needed when establishing any human relationship. A human relationship isn't built on differentiation or perfection, as these only highlight differences or provoke the opposite; rather, it's based on imperfection, on what is weak, helpless, and in need of support — the very basis of dependence. Perfection doesn't need the other, but weakness does, because it seeks support and doesn't force its partner into an inferior or humiliating position. This humiliation can easily happen when idealism plays too dominant a role.

These reflections should not be dismissed as unnecessary sentimentalities. The issue of human relationships and the inner cohesion of society is urgent, especially with the atomization of the isolated mass man, whose personal relationships are undermined by widespread mistrust.

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Wherever justice is uncertain and surveillance and terror are in play, people fall into isolation — which, of course, is the goal of the dictatorial state, which thrives on the maximum accumulation of weakened social units. To counter this danger, a free society needs a bond of emotional connection, something like *caritas*, the Christian love for one's neighbor. But this love is most deeply affected by the lack of understanding caused by projection. It would be highly beneficial for a free society to consider human relationships from a psychological perspective because this is where its true cohesion — and therefore its strength — lies. When love fades, power, violence, and terror take over.

These thoughts are not meant to promote idealism but to bring awareness to the psychological situation. I'm not sure which is weaker: idealism or the public's understanding. What I do know is that it takes time to bring about meaningful, lasting psychological changes. Insight that emerges slowly tends to have more enduring effects than a fleeting idealism, which is unlikely to last long.

## 7

*The Meaning of Self-Knowledge*

What our age considers the “shadow” or the inferior part of the psyche holds more than just negative aspects. The very fact that through self-knowledge — by exploring our own minds — we encounter the instincts and their world of images should shed light on the forces lying dormant in the psyche, of which we are often unaware as long as everything is going well. These are powerful potentialities, and whether they lead to constructive outcomes or catastrophe depends entirely on the preparedness and attitude of the conscious mind. The psychologist seems to be the only one who knows from experience how fragile modern man’s psychic preparedness is, as he is the one who is compelled to search within human nature for the helpful forces and ideas that have repeatedly enabled individuals to navigate through darkness and danger.

For this demanding work, the psychologist needs all his patience. He cannot rely on traditional “ought’s” and “must’s,” leaving others to make the effort while he plays the easy role of adviser. Everyone knows the futility of preaching about desirable things, yet the general helplessness in this situation is so overwhelming, and the need so urgent, that people tend to repeat old mistakes rather than grappling with subjective problems. Also, it’s always a matter of treating a single individual, not ten thousand, where the effort might seem to yield more impressive results, though we know well enough that nothing has changed unless the individual changes.

The effect on all individuals, which one might wish to see achieved, may not come to fruition for hundreds of years, as the spiritual transformation of mankind moves at the slow pace of the centuries. It cannot be hurried or stopped by rational processes, and it cannot be accomplished in a single generation. However, what is within our reach is the change in individuals who have the opportunity to influence others of like mind in their circle. I don’t mean through persuasion or preaching — I am referring to the well-known fact that anyone who gains insight into their own actions, and thus access to the unconscious, unintentionally influences their environment. The deepening and broadening of their consciousness creates the kind of effect that primitive cultures refer to as “mana.” It is an unconscious influence on others, a kind of unintentional prestige, and its effect lasts only as long as it remains undisturbed by conscious intention.

The pursuit of self-knowledge does not completely avoid the possibility of social improvement, since there is a factor that, though often ignored, aligns with our expectations. This is the unconscious *Zeitgeist*. It compensates for the attitude of the conscious mind and anticipates future changes. A great example of this is modern art: although it appears to focus on aesthetic issues, it is actually serving as a psychological education for the public by breaking down and

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reshaping their previous ideas of beauty in form and meaning. The enjoyment of the artwork is replaced by abstract ideas that are deeply subjective, shutting the door on naive and romantic sensory pleasure and the obligatory love for objects. This clearly communicates to us, in simple and universal terms, that the prophetic spirit of art has turned away from the old relationship with objects and towards the currently chaotic world of subjectivism. Certainly, art, as far as we can judge, has not yet discovered in this darkness what truly unites all people or what could express their psychic wholeness. Since reflection seems to be needed for this purpose, it may be that such discoveries are meant for other fields of study.

The myth comes from the unconscious process of symbolization that has continued throughout the ages, and it will remain the root of all creation in the future as the primary manifestation of the human spirit. The development of modern art, with its seemingly nihilistic tendency towards disintegration, must be understood as both a symptom and a symbol of a mood of world destruction and renewal that has marked our age. This mood is felt everywhere—politically, socially, and philosophically. We are living in what the Greeks called the *Kairos*—the right time—for a “metamorphosis of the gods,” meaning a transformation of the fundamental principles and symbols. This unique aspect of our time, which is certainly not something we consciously chose, represents the unconscious part of ourselves that is changing. Future generations will need to account for this profound transformation if humanity is not to destroy itself through the power of its own technology and science.

Just like at the beginning of the Christian Era, we are again confronted with the problem of moral backwardness, which has failed to keep up with our scientific, technical, and social progress. So much is at stake, and so much depends on the psychological makeup of modern man. Is he capable of resisting the temptation to use his power to start a global conflict? Is he aware of the path he is walking, and does he understand the conclusions that must be drawn from the current world situation and his own inner state? Does he realize that he is on the verge of losing the life-preserving myth of the inner man that Christianity has preserved for him? Does he understand what would happen if this catastrophe were to occur? And finally, does the individual realize that he is the deciding factor in tipping the scales?

Happiness and contentment, emotional balance, and a sense of meaning in life—these can only be experienced by the individual, not by a State. A State, on one hand, is just a convention of independent individuals and, on the other, constantly threatens to paralyze and suppress the individual. The psychiatrist is one of the few who truly understands the conditions required for the well-being of the soul, which has an immense impact on the collective. While the social and political environment of the time is certainly important, its significance for an individual's well-being has often been greatly overstated when considered the sole deciding factor. In this regard, many of our social objectives make the mistake of overlooking the psychology of the individuals they are meant to serve, and often, they end up promoting nothing more than illusions.

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For this reason, I hope that a psychiatrist, who has spent many years studying the causes and effects of mental disorders, can offer his thoughts, with all the humility required, on the questions posed by the current global situation. I am not driven by excessive optimism nor by a love for lofty ideals, but am simply concerned with the fate of the individual human being—an infinitesimal unit upon whom the world depends. And in him, if we interpret the Christian message correctly, even God seeks his purpose.