THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE HERE AND THE HEREAFTER

LIFE AFTER DEATH IN THE PSYCHOTHERAPY OF C. G. JUNG

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Abstract

This thesis explores the claims and experiences of Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) regarding death, including his encounters with figures he referred to as “the dead” and his near-death experience following a heart attack in 1944. Through a close reading of Jung’s texts, it examines how these experiences influenced Jung’s psychotherapeutic methods, particularly his views on psychological development in relation to death and the notion of an afterlife. Organized chronologically, the thesis divides Jung’s life into three key periods—university years, midlife, and later years—focusing on his most significant works related to death and the dead.

The key findings are as follows: First, Jung’s psychotherapeutic approach can be seen as a response to the reductive materialism of science prevalent both in his time and in modern science. Second, the individuation process, a central theme in his therapeutic approach, came to be understood by Jung as a preparation for death. Third, Jung regarded some figures of the dead as actual souls without bodies, and their presence profoundly shaped his therapeutic approach. His framework, particularly after his 1944 near-death experience, expanded to allow for the ontological possibility of these figures and the existence of life after death. Finally, Jung believed that psychological development continued beyond physical life, with the potential to achieve psychological wholeness after death, a central aim of his therapeutic practice.

In conclusion, this thesis argues that Jung’s psychotherapeutic work represents an effort to address the mystery of what happens after death.

Table of Content

INTRODUCTION

The world is not to be narrowed
till it will go into the understanding...
but the understanding to be expanded and opened
till it can take on the image of the world
as it is in fact.
F. Bacon

Throughout the process of working on this thesis, I was often asked by friends and colleagues about the subject of my research. Nearly every time I replied with, "It's about death," I was met with puzzled expressions, as if they were not sure how to respond. I would then add, "It's not just about death itself, but how death influenced the development of C. G. Jung's psychotherapy." This explanation rarely clarified things. These brief exchanges made me realize that my topic was quite unconventional and not immediately easy to understand. Even among Jungian analysts the connection between death and Jung's psychology is not always obvious.

I can see how the connection is not straightforward. Jungian psychology for many has its roots in Jung's collaboration with Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) (Shamdasani, 1998, p. 116). For others, Jungian psychology was born from the years of Jung's confrontation with the unconscious (Stein, 2017, p. 5). Whereas for others, Jungian psychology is associated with Jung's life-long search for the Self (Smith, 1990, p. 3). From the very first time I read Jung, in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963/1995),[1] his psychology became associated with death and

[1] As shown by historian Sonu Shamdasani (1995), *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* has been misunderstood as Jung's autobiography. Jung did not consider this book as his autobiography. In fact, he wrote only a few chapters of it, the rest he dictated to Aniela Jaffé, his secretary at the time. Having said that, Jung's conversations with Jaffé and his private letters, are probably the closest information that we have about Jung's private thoughts on death and life after death, coming from Jung himself.

its mystery. This is probably because for me, as it was for Jung as well, death is not just an end; it is above all a question. A question full of mystery.

STRUCTURE OF THESIS

My thesis presents the first comprehensive exploration of Jung's views on life after death over the course of his life and their implications for his approach to psychotherapy.[2] More specifically, the central argument of my thesis is that Jung regarded his therapeutic work as a means of exploring the relationship between life and death. To support this claim, the thesis examines Jung's writings from three distinct stages of his life, demonstrating how his efforts to confront the mystery of death remained consistent, from his university years to his later works. The methodology of my thesis is chronological, focusing on two main aspects: Jung's different life phases and the corresponding works produced during those times.

Chapter 1 provides a historical context of Jung's time regarding the study of life after death. This contextualization is important to do since the question of whether there is life after death was studied by different thinkers of the time, not just Jung. I argue that Jung's works can be seen as a response to the mainstream reductive materialism prevalent at the time, which dismissed the idea of life after death as irrelevant to scientific inquiry. Seen from this perspective, Jung's psychotherapeutic techniques encourage the creation of a *Weltanschauung* (worldview) of death. Chapter 1 argues that Jung's psychoanalytic four pillars can be understood as an attempt to wrestle with the mystery of death.

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[2] There have been other works that explore Jung's writings in relation to death and the dead. Stephanie Stephens's *C. G. Jung and the Dead: Visions, Active Imagination and the Unconscious Terrain* is a recent example. However, my work seeks to explore Jung's psychotherapeutic writings on death and the dead throughout his entire life, a perspective that has never before been published.

Chapter 2 explores Jung's very first public writings: his *Zofingia Lectures* (1896-1899) and doctoral thesis (1902). This chapter argues that core ideas Jung would later develop to support his belief that his psychotherapeutic method serves as a preparation for death were already present in his university writings. This argument challenges the notion that Jung's main psychological concepts arise from his confrontation with the unconscious, which begins in 1913. In addition, Chapter 2 provides examples of how Jung and contemporary Jungian therapists use theoretical notions, that Jung would first present in his university years, to confront death.

The main text studied in Chapter 3 is *The Red Book*, representing Jung's midlife. Studying Jung's *Weltanschauung* of death closely, the argument of this chapter is, on the one hand, that the dead played a central role in the creation of Jung's psychology, and on the other hand, it defends the notion that the dead that Jung's "I" interacts with in *The Red Book* were understood by Jung as literal dead, souls without bodies. The implication of my argument has a direct impact on how a Jungian analyst may deal with dead figures in dreams and how death is understood in an analytical setting.

Using a case study, Chapter 4 argues that Jung's ultimate psychological goal, namely cosmic wholeness, can be only approached when possessing a *Weltanschauung* that includes a life after death. This chapter explores Jung's late concepts, including the *psychoid* aspect of the archetype, synchronicity and the *unus mundus*, from the perspective of how these concepts help to bring death to life in the therapeutic setting.

In the Conclusion I summarize the findings of this thesis and discuss its limitations, as well as possible future avenues of work.

FINDINGS OF THESIS

The findings of Chapter 1 argue that even though Jung was as interested in researching questions about life after death as other thinkers of his time, he elaborated a unique psychological framework- appreciated in the four pillars of his psychotherapy- that encourage individuals to wrestle with these questions themselves. His psychotherapeutic method can indeed be seen as a response to the reductive, materialistic worldview of his days, by empowering the subjective experiences of the individual, using these four pillars.

The findings of Chapter 2 argue that Jungian analysis can be seen as a way of preparing for death. Jung himself came to regard his therapeutic method in a similar light, much like Plato saw philosophy. The chapter argues that Jung's work promotes the development of a *Weltanschauung* that incorporates an image of the afterlife, enabling individuals to confront and explore these images. And the above can be appreciated as early as in Jung's university writings, as well as in his latest major work, *Mysterium Coniunctionis.* This chapter demonstrates that Jung grappled with the question of life after death from his youth through to the years leading up to his death.

The findings of Chapter 3 show that Jung's *Weltanschauung* incorporates the idea of life after death, and that his conception of the afterlife is vividly depicted in *The Red Book*. The chapter shows different characteristics of Jung's *Weltanschauung* such as the notion that development continues after death and that the dead and the living help each other in this development. Additionally, figures Jung's "I" calls the dead in *The Red Book* were understood by Jung as literal, disembodied souls, as different scholars have proposed. In addition, this chapter argues that the dead, as understood by Jung, had a fundamental influence in the creation of his psychotherapeutic framework.

The findings of Chapter 4 argue that by understanding cosmic wholeness at the highest level of human development, Jung placed death as a state when this high *coniunctio* may happen. Jung stated that "*vivum* (living) / *mortuum* (dead, inert)" (1955-1956/1970, para. 1) are "factos which come together in the coniunctio" (para. 1). The second finding of Chapter 4 is that Jung's later works and theoretical expansions—including the development of the *psychoid* aspect of the archetype, synchronicity, and the notion of the *unus mundus*—point to an understanding of existence in which life and death are parts of a unified whole. These concepts have psychotherapeutic significance, as they allow Jungian analysts and patients to explore death as another side of existence which needs to be incorporated to life. This exploration is mainly done through carefully paying attention to dreams and unusual phenomena.

The overall finding of this thesis supports Jung's following statement: "my works… are fundamentally nothing but attempts, ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the 'here' and the 'hereafter'" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330).

WHERE I COME FROM

The motivation for the creation of my thesis has two roots: a professional one, and also a personal one. I come from a culture, the south of Chile, where stories of ghosts and bewitched houses are not unusual. It is common to meet someone who can still today tell a story about a ghost or a haunted house. These stories are not told as jokes: they are always serious things not to mess around with. In my family, my paternal great-grandmother, Cotito, is remembered for her deep interest in and possession of allegedly paranormal powers. She was a short, skinny old lady, with beautiful white hair, as I have seen in pictures. I'm told she was kind and warm but had a mysterious side: she spoke to the dead. My mother tells me how every thirty-first of

December, some minutes before midnight, Cotito demanded that all lights in her old, large house be turned off. While neighbors outside would be getting ready to celebrate the beginning of a new cycle with music and wine, Cotito would come out of the bedroom dressed in a long and voluminous black dress, face covered, holding a big chandelier with her right hand. The many candles would penetrate the black clothing covering her face revealing the solemnity of her face. The entire family had to be quiet as she would pray while walking around the entire house demanding the bad spirits leave her household and asking for the good spirits to stay. In addition, Cotito had a three-legged table she used during the séances that she organized to connect with the spirits of the dead. In a conversation I had with my father—who was an introverted sensing-thinking type—he told me that in some séances he saw the table moving on its own as the spirits of the dead were responding to Cotito's questions. I do not think my father was the type of person to believe in these sorts of things easily. In fact, I think he was the opposite: as an accountant, he dwelt among concrete, touchable facts. My older sister, Mita, grew up hearing these stories just like the rest of us, and it appears that she also developed paranormal abilities: during my childhood we moved out of two different houses that were, according to Mita, haunted. In each of these houses, Mita claimed, there was a ghost. She would describe it in detail, for the ghost would bother her at night while in bed—which, of course, terrified my other sister and me. I grew up profoundly afraid of ghosts. We literally ran away from them during my childhood. The possibility of a life after death—one that could affect us—was not just a possibility for me as a child, it was reality. And reality, accordingly, was rich, complex, and, above all, mysterious.

So the idea of ghosts or uncanny stories is not only something very familiar to me, literarily speaking, but also the profound spiritual sense I have had since I was a young teenager, has a base in these stories and experiences. I am not claiming that ghosts exist. But I certainly

cannot say the contrary. When I first read Jung, that is what I picked up from the reading: whether ghosts exist, whether there is life after death or not, were real, seriously taken, and ever-present questions for him. They are also for me. They are not just matters of intellectual curiosity; these questions feed and enrich my life in a profound way.

RESEARCH ON LIFE AFTER DEATH

When I would see the perplexity in the face of someone asking me about the theme of my thesis, especially at the beginning of my work, I had difficulties explaining my interest in death with easily understandable terms. Over time, however, I began articulating my interest more clearly. I started explaining that while death is commonly viewed as a sorrowful end, it is not universally understood in this way. The essence of the human condition—though frequently reduced to a materialistic perspective—remains a profound mystery. The relationship between matter and mind is still subject to debate, and despite our technological advancements, there are no conclusive answers. Many contemporary researchers challenge the narrow, materialistic view of existence.

Even though scientific psychology has from the beginning had difficulties reconciling "the problem of relations between the inherently private, subjective, 'first-person' world of human mental life and the publicly observable, objective, 'third-person' world of physiological events and processes in the body and brain" (Kelly, 2007, p. xvii), recent academic research, like the projects led by Edward F. Kelly, research professor at the Division of Perceptual Studies at the University of Virginia, is based in the belief that "in order to get an adequate scientific account of the mind we *must* be prepared to take seriously all relevant data and to modify as necessary even our most fundamental theoretical ideas" (Kelly, 2007b, p. 46). One significant

area of research includes claims of the continuation of consciousness after the death of the body, which I believe is crucial to addressing the modern, disenchanted worldview, which has

> accumulated enormous cultural momentum and become especially self-perpetuating by deliberately and systematically gaining near-total control of key structures of modern society such as our educational institutions and the media. Over the past century, our secondary schools, colleges, and universities have in effect become advocates for the prevailing physicist worldview, which by now not only dominates mainstream scientific disciplines such as biology, neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and the social sciences but also has destructively impacted other academic specialties, including the humanities in general and—perhaps most surprisingly—religious studies in particular. (Kelly, 2021, p. 484).

However, people like Bruce Greyson, who has researched and written about near-death experiences (NDEs) for over forty years, states that, “Once thought to be rare, several prospective studies from different countries have found NDEs to be reported by 10 to 20 percent of people who have come close to death” (Greyson, 2021, p. 17). These reports indicate that individuals pronounced clinically dead but then revived could recall and describe their experiences while being diagnosed dead (p. 17). This of course indicates that death, being the end of the body, might not necessarily mean the end of the mind or consciousness. It is interesting to note that “cross-cultural studies show few differences in NDE content from differing societies” (pp. 20-21), and that the description of the NDEs is usually not affected by

belief or expectations of a life after death (p. 21). Michael Grosso, author of several books on psychic anomalies that challenge reductive materialism, states that

> If the basic data of the NDE are as solid as they appear after thirty-five years of research, we may have a key for unlocking the door to the greatest adventure: exploring the outer limits of consciousness. The great discovery that has yet to penetrate the filter of the prevailing paradigm is that consciousness is able to persist without a functioning brain. The data seem to support the view claiming that consciousness is an original, primitive factor in nature, and therefore that brain-death does not automatically entail consciousness-death. (Grosso, 2014, p. 65)

Scientific research focusing on experiences that claim life after death is certainly not new. A substantial amount of "empirical evidence suggestive of post-mortem survival has in fact been laboriously accumulated over the past 130 years by serious and capable scientists" (Kelly & Kelly, 2014, p. 2). This research "can provide sustenance to persons who view themselves as 'spirituals but not religious' and to those who remain anchored in a traditional faith but are troubled by conflicts between elements of religious doctrines and findings of modern science" (Kelly, 2021, p. 486). As I shall argue in Chapter 1 of this thesis, early research on the possibility of life after death had an important influence on the creation and development of the subject of my work, Jung.

LIFE AFTER DEATH IN JUNG'S LIFE

Jung, like other psychologists and thinkers of his time, was indeed interested in research on life after death. In fact, the concept of life after death is a fundamental pillar in the creation of his psychology—so much so that the main argument of my thesis is that Jung's psychotherapeutic method can be understood as an attempt to create an answer to the question of the relationship between the here and the hereafter (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330), because it understands life after death as an ontological possibility. Life after death in the psychology of Jung is taken seriously; it is not discarded, and as I shall argue, Jung considered it healthy to do our best to create an image of life after death. In fact, whereas Jung could describe the collective unconscious as "a potentiality handed down to us from primordial times in the specific form of mnemonic images or inherited in the anatomical structure of the brain" (Jung, 1922/2014m, para. 126), toward the end of his life he "simply" stated that "the psyche might be that existence in which the hereafter or the land of the dead might be located" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 352).

As I have argued elsewhere (Moris, 2024), the mystery that death brings to life was a constant preoccupation for Jung. Is there life after death? Are ghosts real? How do we understand apparitions? These were some of the questions that Jung tried to answer throughout his life. It is no exaggeration that Jung's life was, from birth until death, surrounded by the theme of death.

Childhood

Jung was born in a family where it was common to speak to the spirits of the dead (Ellenberger, 1970; Charet, 1993; Jaffé, 1997, among others). In fact, Jung's grandfather Samuel Preiswerk (1799-1871) claimed to speak to spirits of the dead on a regular basis. So did Preiswerk's second wife, Augusta Faber (1805-1865). Preiswerk's children, including Emilie

(1848-1923)—Jung's mother—were asked by their father to chase the spirits of the dead from around his back because he would complain that they would not allow him to study. Jung's mother was also believed to have the ability to speak to the dead and organized spiritualistic séances (Charet, 1993, pp. 59-82). In addition, as the son of a pastor, Jung saw how dead bodies were brought to his home and witnessed funerals led by his father in the nearby cemetery (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 22–24). Remembering his childhood, he stated that "At that time I also had vague fears at night. I would hear things walking about in the house... People drowned, bodies were swept over the rocks" (p. 24). Jung remembers that in this cemetery "the sexton would dig a hole- heaps of brown, upturned earth. Black, solemn men in long frock coats with unusually tall hats and shiny black boots would bring a black box. My father would be there in his clerical gown, speaking in a resounding voice" (p, 24).

Jung also experienced apparitions. For instance, remembering his childhood, he writes that,

> One night I saw coming from [my mother's] door a faintly luminous, indefinite figure whose head detached itself from the neck and floated along in front of it, in the air, like a little moon Immediately another head was produced and again detached itself. This process was repeated six or seven times. (pp. 33–34)

These sort of experiences were not seen as bizarre by the young Jung, since he writes that "there were dreams which foresaw the death of certain persons, clocks which stopped at the moment of death, glasses which shattered at the critical moment. *All these things had been taken*

for granted in the world of my childhood" (p. 121. Emphasis added). In short, "paranormal experiences were virtually commonplace in Jung's family" (Main, 2004, p. 66).

University years

As an adolescent Jung attended spiritual séances organized by his mother, where his cousin Helene was the medium. Shamdasani writes that "from the transcripts, it is clear that [Jung] appears to have initially accepted communications from figures such as his paternal and maternal grandfathers through Helene Preiswerk as veridical" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 15). The séances, however, were stopped when she was found trying to fabricate the apparitions. The observation and analysis of these séances with his cousin became Jung's doctoral thesis. During the second semester at university, Jung "courageously schooled himself, intensively studying occult literature" (Oeri, 1970, p. 187), as he read virtually all that was available to him at the time on the topic of spiritualism (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 120). In particular, Jung read a book about the beginnings of the nineteenth-century movement of spiritualism, which made him conclude that the phenomena detailed in the book were essentially similar to the stories he had repeatedly heard throughout his childhood in the countryside. For him, there was no doubt that the material was genuine (p. 11). Many years later, in 1925 Jung claimed that during his student years he "thought that after all there might be ghosts" (Jung, 1989/2014, p. 5). Emilie "sympathized wholeheartedly with [her son's] enthusiasm" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 120) about occult phenomena.

In his second *Zofingia* lecture, "Some Thoughts on Psychology," delivered in 1897 at the University of Basel, Jung aimed "to establish the immortality of the soul" (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 200), as he stated that the "soul does not represent a force in a material form, and ... subsists outside the concepts of space and time" (Jung, 1897/2014ab, p. 32), concluding that the soul is

immortal. In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963/1995), when remembering his university years, he wrote: "why, after all, should there not be ghosts? How did we know something was 'impossible'? … For myself I found such possibilities extremely interesting and attractive. They added another dimension to my life; the world gained depth and background" (p. 120).

After graduating from university as a medical doctor, even though Jung did not express himself with the same enthusiasm that he had done as a student about the claims of the spiritualists (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 201), he continued to research spiritualistic phenomena. By 1905, being a psychiatrist at the Burghölzli Clinic in Zurich, Jung claimed to have studied eight mediums (1905/2014k, para. 724). In fact, Mark Saban has argued that what has been postulated as Jung's sterile and soulless years (roughly from 1902 to 1912) were not necessarily so. Relying on the concept of "the secret," Jung's inner life, Saban argues that Jung constantly tried to bring personality number two (the "occult", "death", "ghosts", among other definitions) into contact with personality number one ("the ordinary," "Empirical investigation," "the logical" among other definitions) (Saban, 2019, p. 16). He writes that "despite all the considerable professional and personal achievements of the period 1902-06, Jung remained disturbingly prone to the magnetic influences of No. 2 personality", and adds that "the period 1906-12, Jung in fact made several serious attempts... to communicate those ideas, feelings, and motifs that he places into the category of 'the secret'" (pp. 59-73). Jung tried to do so through interpersonal relationships, particularly the one with Freud. However, when Jung brought up the topic of the occult to Freud in their very first meeting in Vienna in 1907, Freud's answer was to make Jung promise him to stand fast against the "black tide of mud occultism" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 173). This should be understood as Jung's attempt to express not only his interest but also his intuition or deep feeling on the soul's survival after bodily death. I am referring to his assertion that

> ...there was *always*, deep in the background, the feeling that something other than myself was involved. It was as though a breath of the great world of stars and endless space had touched me, or as if a spirit and invisibly entered the room—the spirit of one who had long been dead and yet was perpetually present in timelessness until far into the future. (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 84. Emphasis added)

In 1909 his interest for the theme of the occult continued. During the trip with Freud to Clark University in the United States, it was only in private that Jung discussed twice with William James (1842-1910) subjects that were not part of the program at the Clark conference: parapsychology, spiritualism and nonmedical applications to psychotherapy (Blair, 2003, p. 167).

Midlife

Jung's confrontation with the unconscious, depicted in *The Red Book* (the main text studied in Chapter 3) is filled with images that Jung called the dead. Arguably, one of the most relevant sections of *The Red Book* is in *Scrutinies,* where Philemon teaches the dead "because these dead ended their lives too early. These were seekers and therefore still hover over their graves. Their lives were incomplete … [so he] must teach them, so that their life may be fulfilled and they can enter into death" (2009/2012, p. 514). What is relevant to mention in this section is that these dead were not only experienced by Jung in his active imaginations, they were also experienced in outer life. What stimulated Jung to write to the dead was experiencing the presence of spirits in his house, Jung argues. During these days in the winter of 1916 his house seemed to be haunted (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 215). His two of his daughters saw "a white figure

passing through the room" (p. 215) and one afternoon Jung and his two maids saw and heard the bell from the front door ringing frantically, but after checking, there was no one there to make the bell ring. Remembering the genesis of *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos*, Jung writes that the "whole house was filled as if there were a crowd present, crammed full of spirits. They were packed deep right up to the door, and the air was so thick it was scarcely possible to breathe" (p. 216). He remembers that they finally spoke as "they cried out in chorus, 'We have come back from Jerusalem where we found not what we sought'" (p. 216). As soon as Jung took up the pen to answer to these ghosts, "the whole ghostly assemblage evaporated... The haunting was over" (p. 216).

In September 1920, Jung was invited to give a series of lectures in England to an emerging group of individuals interested in his psychology. The main organizer of these talks was Peter Baynes, and he also was the person who arranged a house for the weekends for Jung to rest (Bair, 2003, p. 328). The "charming cottage" (1950/2014i, para. 764) was in Buckinghamshire, and Jung spent five weekends there. However, as he narrated in 1950 in a short contribution for a book by Fanny Moser called "Spuk: Irrglaube oder Wahrglaube? [Ghost: False Belief or True?]," he "was convinced the house was haunted" (para. 775). Indeed, during the weekends that Jung spent in the cottage, he experienced being in a house where there were inexplicable noises, visions and even smells at night. It was a ghost that would not allow him to rest at night, Jung claimed. During his fifth weekend there, he experienced the following:

> I saw the head of an old woman, and the right eye, wide open, glared at me. The left half of the face was missing below the eye. The sight of it was so sudden and unexpected that I leap

> out of the bed with one bound, lit the candle, and spent the rest of the night in an armchair. (para. 774)

After spending five weekends there, Jung told Baynes he was "convinced the house was haunted, but he dismissed this explanation with smiling skepticism" (para. 775). Jung then challenged Baynes to also spend a night at the cottage, and when he did, he also had similar paranormal experiences of a visitation from the ghost. Baynes later told Jung that the house had been destroyed because the owner was unable to sell or rent the house because it was haunted by ghosts (para. 774).

A few years later, during the winter of 1923-1924, Jung had similar experiences in which he perceived, not only in terms of visions but also in the form of sound, what could be called visitations, while he was staying at Bollingen.[3] In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung recounts an experience where, while boiling water by the fireplace, he heard a type of polyphonic music for over an hour. It felt as if one orchestra was inside the tower and another outside, both producing all the dissonances of nature. On another night during the same period, he heard footsteps, laughter, music and talk from outside the tower while sleeping. He woke up and looked outside, but there was nothing there. He went back to sleep and the same thing occurred again, but this time Jung also had the vision of several hundred dark-clad figures, most likely peasant boys who had come down from the mountain and were playing music and talking around the tower. Jung woke up and again he found nothing outside. This experience was so intense that Jung found it difficult to

[3] Bollingen is situated on the shores of Lake Zurich. Jung bought a plot of land there in the 1920s, few years before the death of his mother, and later built a retreat made of stone. Jung visited Bollingen often, alone and with company, and its architecture and construction "represent his innermost thoughts" (Hannah, 1997, p 153).

distinguish between the dream and waking reality. At the time he thought that this experience was "a case of haunting." Later, through reading a chronicle from the seventeenth century, Jung concluded that what he experienced might have been a group of *Reislaüfer* (mercenaries) from the Middle Ages (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 255-58).

Jung's mother died suddenly in January 1923, and a few months later the construction of the first tower in Bollingen began. As mentioned above, Emilie Preiswerk was probably the most influential person Jung had during his early years, in terms of encouraging him to study the existence of ghosts. Until her last days, Jung's mother kept a firm belief in the existence of spirits and would share these stories with her granddaughter, Agathe (Bair, 2003, pp. 316-17), Jung's oldest daughter—who rightly sensed the presence of a dead body of a Napoleonic solder at the construction site of Bollingen (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 259). Jung called Bollingen "a place for spiritual contemplation" (p. 251), and he stated that the death of his mother and the beginning of the first tower were linked, as the tower "is connected to the dead" (p. 252). This connection was related to answering the dead.

From 1929 to 1934, Jung presented his more mature thoughts about the mystery of death in three separate essays.[4] In one of these essays, he stated that "anyone should draw the conclusion that the psyche, in its deepest reaches, participates in a form of existence beyond space and time, and thus partakes of what is inadequately and symbolically described as 'eternity'" (1934/2014ac, para. 815). Because of this, he also stated that as "a doctor, I make every effort to strengthen the belief in immortality, especially with older patients ... For ... death is not an end but a goal, and life's inclination towards death begins as soon as the meridian is

[4] "Commentary on 'The Secret of the Golden Flower'" (1929); "The Stages of Life" (1930); "The Soul and Death" (1934). These will be discussed in Chapter 3.

passed" (Jung, 1931/2014g, para. 68). Jung argued that the crisis of the second half of life is a sign that "nature prepares itself for death" (1934/2014ac, para. 808), hence, "it is hygienic … to discover in death a goal towards which one can strive" (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 792), since "dying ... has its onset long before actual death" (Jung, 1934/2014ac, para. 809). Jung concluded that "the unconscious is all the more interested in how one dies; that is, whether the attitude of consciousness is adjusted to dying or not" (para. 809). Death, then, became for Jung not only a goal but also a reality that could enrich life. Death begins before it happens, in midlife, so how one lives with death, how one approaches that goal became for Jung of paramount importance.

Old age

In 1944, following a heart attack, Jung had a near-death experience which led him to have "deliriums and visions" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 320) that he described as "the most tremendous things [he had] ever experienced" (p. 326). His visions not only made him consider "that he had died and had returned to life" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 23), but also provided him with the courage to work and publish new formulations. Two years after his heart attack Jung enlarged his concept of the archetype, introducing the "psychoid nature of the archetype" (Jung, 1946/1978a, para. 419). This new theoretical development allowed Jung later to present the concept of synchronicity (1952/2014af), which, according to Shamdasani, was an attempt to integrate "postmortem transcendence" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 21) into his psychology. In his late work *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (Jung, 1955-1956/1970), referring to the sixteenth-century alchemist Gerhard Dorn (ca. 1530-1584), Jung presents the individuation process as consisting of three stages of psychological development, or "three conjunctions" (para. 760). The third and highest conjunction Jung describes is the union of "the whole man" (para. 760), that is, "the

integrated mind and body" (Main, 2021a, p. 23), with the *unus mundus*. Jung defines the *unus mundus* as "the potential world of the first day of creation, when nothing was yet 'in actu,' i.e., divided into two and many, but was still one" (Jung, 1955-1956/1970, para. 760). In the *unus mundus*, matter is not separated from spirit, inner is not separated from outer, and death is not separated from life (para. 1). The notion of the *unus mundus* points to the idea that only in death, or through the experience of death, can the individual attain the highest degree of psychological development. "Over there," Jung writes referring to death, "separation does not exist: everything is being-in-one" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 170). With the concept of the *unus mundus*, Jung created a psychological framework that not only allows us to speak of the dead and of life after death within his psychology, but also encourages us to view death as a goal, as an experience of the other side of existence, as a culmination of our psychological development.

As shown above, Jung's encounters with the dead persisted throughout his adult life, and he often perceived these figures not merely symbolically, but as actual deceased individuals. Knowing how intellectually challenging this is for some people, Jung expressed this conviction by stating that "The intellect, of course, would like to arrogate to itself some scientific, physical knowledge of the affair, or, preferably, to write the whole off as a violation of the rules. But what a dreary world it would be if the rules were not violated sometimes!" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 216).

In short, when James Hillman wrote that "To understand early Jung, we must read late Jung. To understand events of 1896, we must turn to his writings of 1946" (1976, p. 133), he was probably thinking of the following sentence from *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* that summarizes my point: "my works ... are fundamentally nothing but attempts, ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the 'here' and the 'hereafter'" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330).

INTELLECTUAL DIFFICULTIES

Understanding these experiences from above as literal "dead" or literal "hauntings," as Jung writes, can be challenging for most people, including Jungian analysts. Stephens, author of *C. G. Jung and the Dead: Visions, Active Imagination and the Unconscious Terrain*, writes that "Historically, the symbolic interpretation of the dead has been the traditional Jungian method of approach" (Stephens, 2020, p. 11). Personally, I am a Zurich trained Jungian analyst, several of my teachers are themselves students and analysands of the so-called "first generation analysts" like von Franz, Jaffé or Hannah, and during my entire training here in Zurich, most of the times that the dead were mentioned, they were understood symbolically, subjectively. This tendency is understandable; as mentioned above, the rise of a reductive, materialistic science has created "an *epistemological* commitment to a narrow empiricism that grounds knowledge on a sense perception only" (Marshall, 2021, p. 407). Consequently, this has created "a *metaphysical* claim that nature is fundamentally material, enriched in materialist and dualist philosophies; and a *naturalistic* exclusion of supernatural agencies from the natural world, including soul or mind if understood as distinct from nature" (p. 407). This scientific mainstream worldview, even sometimes for Jungians, makes the idea of ghosts or a life after death where consciousness continues developing difficult pictures to imagine. It seems to me that in general it is easier to speak of a collective unconscious than to speak of the land of the dead.

In addition, Jung himself constantly stated that that one should not deal with metaphysical statements. Speaking of the dead becomes problematic because the very nature of the discussion is metaphysical; discussing the reality of the dead that Jung writes about in different places and periods of his life goes against his own repeated advice.

Another intellectual difficulty in understanding the dead that Jung writes about in *The Red Book* and other places as literal dead is the fact that in different instances, particularly before 1927, he publicly wrote and spoke critically about such claims. For example, in his medical dissertation he interpreted the spirits that his cousin the medium was claiming to talk to as "two different subconscious personalities appearing under various different names" (Jung, 1902/1957, para. 126). In 1905, when speaking at the Bernoullianum, in Basel, he said "That many spiritualists brag about the 'science' and 'scientific knowledge' is, of course, irritating nonsense. These people are lacking not only in criticism but in the most elementary knowledge of psychology" (1905/2014l, para. 740). In 1919, Jung stated that he found no evidence for the existence of ghosts or spirits, suggesting that such topics should be relegated to an appendix in a psychology book (Jung 1919/2014s, para. 600). These statements completely contradict the idea of understanding the dead or spirits as literally deceased.

However, there is an evolution about how Jung publicly spoke and wrote about such claims. Jaffé writes that "While [Jung] had originally explained spirits... as projected complexes of the collective unconscious, he later did not completely exclude the possibility that ghosts and spirits were aspects of a transpersonal reality" (Jung & Jaffe, 2023, p. 108). Indeed, for instance, at the age of 73, in 1948, almost thirty years after writing that the question of the existence of spirits should be part of an appendix of psychology, Jung revised it and included the following footnote:

> I doubt whether an exclusively psychological approach can do justice to the phenomena in question. Not only the findings of parapsychology, but my own theoretical reflections, outlined in 'On the Nature of the Psyche,' have led me to certain postulates which touch on the realm of nuclear physics and the conception of the space-time continuum. This opens up

> the whole question of the transpsychic reality immediately underlying the psyche (Jung, 1919/2014s, para. 318).

Jung came to define the collective unconscious as "limitless, unknowable, without space and time, just as the so-called 'hereafter' is described" (Jung & Jaffe, 2023, p. 152), and he stated that "what we call events in the land of the dead may actually take place in the unconscious psyche... It would seem that the psyche, or rather the unconscious, could be the region in which the dead live on" (p. 152). So, it seems that Jung himself came to see the literal dead not only as real possibilities in themselves, but also that they can affect us. In fact, as we will see in Chapter 4, Jung's revision of his theory of archetypes in 1946 helped precisely to accommodate the possibility of life after death within his psychological framework.

After Jung, respected Jungian scholars and writers have stated that the dead found in *The Red Book* were indeed understood by Jung as literal dead. Sonu Shamdasani, editor of *The Red Book,* writes that when Jung "talks about the dead he means the dead... They still live on" (Hillman & Shamdasani, 2013, p. 2). Shamdasani states that, particularly when reading *Sermones*, one can see a conception of a worldview, one that includes the dead, obtained through the exploration of his inner images. Shamdasani calls this worldview of death Jung's "private cosmology" (Shamdasani 2008, p. 20). He writes that after *The Red Book* experience Jung's task became one of "conveying to the living what he had already conveyed to the dead" (p. 20).

James Hillman stated that *The Red Book*

> opens the door or the mouth of the dead. Jung calls attention to the one deep, missing part of our culture, which is the realm of the dead. The realm not just of your personal ancestors but the realm of the dead, the weight of human history... we are living in a world which is alive with the dead, they're around us, they're with us, they *are* us. The figures, the memories, the ghosts, it's all there... (Hillman & Shamdasani, 2013, p. 83)

Roderick Main, quoting Jung, writes that Jung's ultimate concern in his life and in his work could be framed in different ways, one of them being that

> the "images in which [he had] lived," [were] "fundamentally nothing but attempts, ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the 'here' and the 'hereafter'" (1963/1995, p. 330). That Jung did not denigrate the limited "here" in favor of the boundlessness of the "hereafter" is powerfully shown by the myth of the afterlife that he developed, in which he speculated that "the souls of the dead" are "dependent on the living for receiving answers to their questions, that is, on those who have survived them and exist in a world of change" (p. 339), for "only here, in life on earth, where the opposites clash together, can the general level of consciousness be raised. That seems to be man's metaphysical task" (p. 343). (Main, 2020, p. 164)

Christine Maillard, professor of German studies at the University of Strasbourg and author of books and essays dedicated to *The Red Book*, observes that an important idea of *The Red Book*

is that "we should 'deliver the dead'" (Maillard, 2022, p. 195), and that "*The Red Book* endows the dead with a real, or at least 'effective' existence" (p. 195).

Stephens also agrees that in *The Red Book* "the dead proved themselves to be souls without bodies... [and that in] all exchanges with the dead is the notion that the human being is both soul and body and that the soul possesses immortal qualities" (Stephens, 2020, p. 6).

Whether one can entertain the idea that Jung did experience the dead themselves remains ultimately a personal matter. But Jung himself writes about the dead as literal dead, as these respected Jungian scholars seem to agree.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is important to notice that in addition to writing about death in its objective sense; the death of the body, Jung also wrote about death from a symbolic perspective. For instance, he wrote about "the eternal cycle of birth and death... represented in ancient alchemy by the symbol of the uroboros" (Jung, 1937/2014ak, para. 105). He also wrote about "the growth, expansion, death and rebirth of the philosophical tree" (Jung, 1945/2014o, para. 376). Writing about the negative aspect of the mother archetype, Jung stated that she "may connote anything secret, hidden, dark; the abyss, the world of the dead, anything that devours, seduces, and poisons" (Jung, 1938/2014b, para. 158). In other words, Jung was interested in the psychological transformation symbolized by death/rebirth "in ego consciousness from working with dissociated, 'deadness' soul aspects of the psyche" (Brodersen, 2024, p. 2). But this thesis is not about how Jung used the symbol of death for speaking about psychological development. This

thesis is about how Jung saw the actual death of the body as an opportunity for psychological development.

Even though there have been more published works about Jung's relationship with actual death and life after death following the publication of Jung's *Red Book* in 2009,[5] there remains much more to explore on the topic of death. Jung himself hoped that analysts would research this area. When setting out topics for further research in his address on the founding of the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich in 1948, he said "The investigation of pre- and post-mortal phenomena … are particularly important because of the relativization of space and time that accompanies them" (Jung, 1948/2014a, para. 1138). Shamdasani, editor of *The Red Book*, writes that Jung "would have been quite disappointed" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 24) since "there has been a dearth of literature on it. (p. 13).

The following literature review is divided into three sections: the historical works that have been done in relation to Jung's thoughts on death and life after death, the more conceptual works written on the matter, and last, the more therapeutically oriented works on death and life after death by Jungian analysts.

Scientific context

When considering the historical research conducted on Jung's relationship with death and the afterlife, it can be categorized into two main areas: the scientific context of his time and the familial environment in which he was raised. A significant amount of attention from historians,

[5] Even though works on the theme of death from Jungians were created before *The Red Book*, since 2009 death and particularly the dead have gained more attention from Jungians scholars and analysts. This is due to the fact that *The Red Book* is filled with figures that Jung's "I" calls the dead. This will be covered more in depth in Chapter 3.

scholars, and Jungian analysts has focused on his interest with nineteenth-century spiritualism, the occult, and psychical research.

Arguably, the historian that has contributed the most to understanding the influence of nineteenth century spiritualism and the occult on Jung's psychology is Shamdasani. In 1993, Shamdasani argued that through automatic writing, as used by Myers, who "affirms the possibility, albeit rare, of communicating with the 'dead'" (Shamdasani, 1993, p. 122), the concept of "multiple personalities" (p. 119) arose, as well as the "claim that the secondary personalities were potentially of a higher intelligence than one's waking personality" (p. 119). Indeed, in 1946 Jung called Myers the unconscious psyche's discoverer (Jung, 1946/1978a, para. 356n23). In 1994, Shamdasani argued that for Myers, "the pioneer of the psychological study of mediumship" (1994, p. xv), the study of psychology "was merely a vehicle to approach what he claimed was the one question worth asking: namely, does love survive the grave?" (p. xv). In that same essay, Shamdasani stated that, whereas Myers ended up embracing the spiritualist hypothesis—namely that there is life after death and that we can communicate with the dead through mediums and other techniques—Theodore Flournoy (1854-1920) adopted a purely psychological view to understand the claims of mediums (p. xv). In 1998, Shamdasani argued that the Freudocentric reading of Jung, meaning understanding analytical psychology as a descendant of Freud's psychoanalysis, "represents nothing less than the complete mislocation of Jung and analytical psychology in the intellectual history of the twentieth century" (1998, p. 116). According to Shamdasani, Jung's psychology should be seen as a continuation of the "French psychology of the subconscious and Swiss-Anglo-American psychical research and subliminal psychology" (p. 120). In 1999, responding to Charet, Shamdasani argues that Flournoy's influence on the psychology of Jung would have been impossible without the work of Myers. Shamdasani states that

> Flournoy's work was fundamentally based on the work of Myers. Without Myers's concept of subliminal consciousness—which was informed by James's notions of consciousness—and Myers's psychologization of mediumistic experience, *From India to Planet Mars* simply could not have been written. (2000, p. 120)

F.X. Charet's *Spiritualism and the Foundation of C. G. Jung's Psychology* (1993) traces Jung's early life and shows convincingly how he was not only influenced personally by the spiritualistic movement of the nineteenth century, but more importantly, how his own psychology was built, in part, because of this influence. In fact, he argues that spiritualism should be regarded as one of the most important influences in the creation of Jung's psychology. This work is the closest possible to a full-scale study of Jung's life and work in relation to his thinking about life after death. The book was published in 1993, so even though Charet makes some reference to the period of the creation of *The Red Book*, this latter was published only in 2009, so there is an important period and work of Jung's life that could not be included in Charet's book.

More broadly, where Douglas (1997), writing about the historical content of analytical psychology, states that Jung's major sources for the creation of his psychology come from knowledge on philosophy, psychology, history, art, religion and "interest in parapsychological phenomena and the occult" (1997, p. 27), Taylor (1980) argues that William James (1842-1910), who viewed the human personality as a holistic totality and became fervently interested in psychic phenomena (p. 157), "played no small part in Jung's thought and its subsequent evolution" (p. 157). According to Main, "Jung's own interest in spiritualism, psychical research,

parapsychology, Western esoterism, and just about everything that might be encompassed by the term occult, could scarcely have been greater that it was" (Main, 2015, p. 737). Seeing it from a slightly different perspective, Hillman argues that rather than being interested in the occult as such, Jung's main goal in his student years, as in later years with themes such as flying saurces or synchronicity, was "the integration of the parapsychological within a broadened psychological theory" (1976, p. 126).

Family context

In addition to the scientific context of the time, historians have paid particular attention to Jung's family context. As shown by Hannah, some members of Jung's maternal side of the family showed clear interest in the occult, like his maternal grandfather, for instance, who claimed "to have had second sight and to have carried on lively conversations with the dead" (Hannah, 1997, p. 21). Jung's mother, growing up with her father who claimed to speak with the dead regularly, naturally became interested in spiritualism and was active in the organizations of spiritualist seances, where Jung also became an active participant (Bair, 2003, pp. 46-50).

As mentioned above, Jung's doctoral dissertation was the interpretation of Jung's observation and analysis of a medium that claimed to be able to communicate with spirits of the dead. This medium was his maternal cousin Helene. Henri Ellenberger in his *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (1970) states nothing less than that the "germinal cell of Jung's analytical psychology is to be found in his discussions in his experiments with his young medium cousin, Helene Preiswerk" (1970, p. 687). In his article "Some Early Background to Jung's Ideas: Notes on *C. G. Jung's Medium: Die Geschichte der Helly Preiswerk* by Stefanie Zumstein-Preiswerk," published in 1976, Hillman not only gives a

strong response to Zumstein-Preiswerk's claims about the romantic relationship between his cousin Helene and Jung, but is also states that Jung's early work with his cousin allowed him to see "the dissociability of the psyche, the projection of the repressed, the relativization of the ego, the psychology of the transference, the autonomy of the complex—more, the very reality of the psyche" (1976, p. 124).

Conceptual ideas on death

Departing from a purely historical account and entering more into the conceptual aspect of Jung's ideas, Shamdasani's most important contribution to my thesis is from an essay written in 2008; "The Boundless Expanse: Jung's Reflections on Death and Life," which still today is one of the most comprehensive works written about Jung's mature thoughts of death and life after death. This seventeen-page essay is filled with what were, at the time (one year before the publication of *The Red Book*), thought-provoking suggestions. Shamdasani, who explores Jung's reflections on death and life from three angles—the personal experiences, the public scholarly writings, and what he calls Jung's private cosmology—writes about some of the most important events of Jung's life in terms of death and life after death, ranging from his university years to his death. Among other ideas, Shamdasani proposes that Jung came up with the theory of synchronicity "to render parapsychological phenomena comprehensible in terms of physics, and as such, opened the door to postmortem transcendence" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 21). Shamdasani also introduces the concept of Jung's private cosmology, a "theology of the dead" (p. 18), which in part consists of the living helping the dead continue to develop, since "further development of the dead is dependent on the increase of consciousness of the living" (p. 20). In this essay, Shamdasani expresses how with the publication of *The Red Book*, in 2009, "the in-depth study of

his private cosmology as well as its interplay with his scholarly writings will finally be able to commence" (p. 18).

My thesis rests upon an important statement from Hillman, also expressed by Jung (1934/2014ac, para. 800): when we reject or avoid confrontation with death, "we also refuse the essential question of life and leave life unaccomplished" (Hillman, 1964/2020, p. 51). Bringing death to life is a fundamental notion for my entire thesis, since "any act that holds off death prevents life" (p. 51). More recently, Hillman, agreeing with Shamdasani, stated that *The Red Book* could be called "Jung's 'Book of the Dead'" (Hillman & Shamdasani, 2013, p. 84), since the dead are not dead; "the dead are animating us" (p. 1).

Main's most prominent writings have explored Jung's critique of modernity. Through such themes as synchronicity (2004, 2014, 2019), holism (2019, 2021b), panentheism (2017) and the so-called disenchanted world (2013, 2015, 2022), Main has explored ways in which Jung's psychology responds to the unmysterious worldview of modernity. For Main, Jung, who was raised in an atmosphere where paranormal experiences were seen as ordinary (Main, 2004, p. 66), at times applies his theory of synchronicity "to events that in themselves are radically paranormal and inexplicable in terms of ordinary causes and effects" (p. 50). Most recently, Main has proposed that Jung's process of individuation aims at the "realization of the self, the archetype of wholeness, and the culminating stage of this realization for Jung was the experience of the *unio mystica*" (Main, 2022, p. 37). Last, Main writes that for Jung, "man's metaphysical task" (Main, 2021b, p. 164) consists of increasing consciousness since "'the souls of the dead' are 'dependent on the living for receiving answers to their questions'" (p.164). So far Main has not written a work exclusively dedicated to Jung's relationship with death and life after death.

Another important contribution to understanding Jung's relationship with the dead and the elaboration of his psychology comes from Maillard. Maillard's main contribution has been the exploration of Jung's "The Seven Sermons to the Dead," found in *The Red Book.* Her *Les Sept Sermons aux Morts de Carl Gustav Jung* (1993) is a thorough study of the sources and interpretations of each of the sermons. According to Maillard, the first stone, the germ of Jungian psychology, is found in the interactions that Jung's "I" had with the dead in 1916.[6] All his basic later theories can be traced back to "The Seven Sermons to the Dead," , she argues. In addition, in 2022 she wrote that a fundamental concept of *The Red Book* is that "we should 'deliver the dead'" (Maillard, 2022, p. 195), and that "*The Red Book* endows the dead with a real, or at least 'effective' existence" (p. 195).

Stephens has claimed that the dead that Jung's "I" encounters in *The Red Book* were understood by Jung as literal dead, not symbols. For Stephens, Jung's professional writings, after 1916, "see him attempting to grapple with some of the issues that the literal dead posed to his model of the psyche" (Stephens, 2020, p. 165). Stephens's work is a thorough study of *The Red Book* in relation to the dead and its implications in Jung's thinking. However, it limits itself to studying only that specific period of Jung's life.

Knowing him closely and understanding his profound interest in the subject, it might not be a surprise that some of the important books and essays on the subject that still today are studied by Jungian students, analysts and scholars were written by close collaborators of Jung. Barbara Hannah, Aniela Jaffé and Marie-Louise von Franz wrote their own reflections on life after death in different places. In Hannah's lecture "Beyond," (1992) she writes that she was partly urged to write about life after death because of Jung's words: "a man should be able to say

[6] My translation from French.

that he has done his best to form a conception of life after death" (p. 37). She stated that another source of motivation for exploring this theme was von Franz, who "suggested I should take up this theme." (Hannah, 1992, p. 37) In this essay Hannah uses Chinese philosophy and Jungian concepts to explain her own thoughts about what happens to the soul after death. One could say that it is through this essay that she tried to her best to form her own conception of life after death. Von Franz, among other works, wrote *On Dreams and Death* (1984a). This is a very helpful text that, using Jung's idea first espoused in 1928, shows how the psyche, through dreams, prepares for death and for an afterlife. Basing her arguments on Jung's concepts, von Franz uses patients' dreams and mythological themes to develop her ideas. Von Franz studied dreams of dying people, and from these she argued that these dreams "are not about death" (Boa, 1992, p. 213). Instead, they are about getting "ready for a journey, or they have to go through a dark tunnel and be reborn into another world" (p. 213), meaning, she states, they are about "rebirth" (p. 214), about "transformation, that is partial destruction out of which something survives" (p. 214). As a psychotherapist I find von Franz's works particularly useful. These are works that explore one main idea of Jung's: the psyche's preparation for an afterlife. Another person close to Jung who contributed to the literature on death was Jaffé. Among other works, she wrote *Archetypal Approach to Death Dreams and Ghosts* (1958), which is a collection of dreams and stories of apparitions from various parts of Switzerland, analyzed from a psychological perspective. This is a rich book that shows how the concepts of analytical psychology can be very useful in understanding paranormal phenomena. Jung wrote a foreword for this book. One can only appreciate how Jung would approve of this type of research and books.

A useful selection, introduced by Jenny Yates, on some writings from Jung's thoughts on death is found in *Encountering Jung: Jung on Death and Immortality* (1999). This book is part

of a Routledge series of selections on different themes from Jung's published works. As useful as the selected texts are, I find that there is very little information in the introduction about Jung's actual thoughts on the matter.

One of the most relevant death-related events in Jung's life happened towards the end of his life, in 1944, when he had a heart attack and consequently a near-death experience. Main has argued that what Jung went through at the hospital was a mystical experience, from which metaphysical implications can be drawn, such as seeing the highest psychological development as a mystical union with oneness (Main, 2021b, p 164). One conclusion John Dourley (2014) drew from Jung's near-death experience was that because dreams prepare dreamers for death, death should not be seen as a termination but as a change. In addition, he writes that Jung speculated that unembodied or post-embodied consciousness could exist after death, and that both the living and the dead together are involved in the process of humanity becoming conscious (pp. 115-119).

Jungian psychotherapy and death

When Shamdasani claims that there has been "a dearth of literature on" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 13) death, he is partly right. There has been a dearth in the literature on how bringing death to life by creating a *Weltanschauung* that included a conception of life after death was central to Jung's own psychology. There have also been just a few works dedicated to how Jungian psychology may help the individual prepare for death (Moris, 2024, p. 1). However, psychotherapeutically speaking, Jungian psychotherapists have been using Jung's thoughts and therapeutic techniques to help patients mourn. Using dreams and imagination has been the most written topic related to helping with the mourning process that Jungians analysts have written

about. Verena Kast's *A Time to Mourn: Growing through the Grief Process,* published in 1982, was one of the first Jungian works dedicated to mourning. In her book she argues that if we pay attention to dreams, we come to realize that they can promote the mourning process. More recently, in her essay "Deceased loved one in dreams" (2024), following the argument from 1982, she states that dreams during the mourning process "are consolation and signposts for the psychological confrontation with the loss," and that the dead in dreams "look amazingly alive in the dream" helping us "realize that the deceased are always with us" (Kast, 2024, pp, 181-182). In her book *Mourning Unlived Lives: A Psychological Study of Childbearing Loss* (1989), Judith Savage wrote about the process of the archetypal unfolding of mourning in the traumatic experience of the death of a child. She argues that Jungian psychology is well equipped to help the parents to truly deal with the pain and desperation of the premature death of a child. Because of the archetypal dimensions that Jungian psychology takes into consideration, Savage writes that analysis can help "parents to vow never to forget, to relive the horror of the death repeatedly, and eventually to discover its meaning to their personal life" (Savage, 1989, p. 101). Greg Mogenson has been another Jungian analyst who has written about the mourning process from a Jungian perspective. The "imaginal approach to the mourning process" (Mogenson, 2004, p. 97) is a unique contribution from Jungian psychotherapy, Mogenson argues, when helping with the loss of a loved one. Instead of staying only with the historical memory of the person that died, the Jungian analyst encourages the patient to follow "the image through its transformations and changes" (p. 96), particularly in dreams. This helps the patient realize the changes of the dead person through time and own the changes of the mourner. Charlotte Mathes's *And a Sword Shall Pierce Your Heart: Moving from Despair to Meaning after the Death of a Child* is a deeply personal and powerful book that recounts her journey to find meaning and healing after one of life's most devastating experiences: the loss of a child. Drawing on her own grief, she also works

with other women who have endured similar tragedies. By focusing on archetypal patterns, Mathes shows how it is possible to rediscover a sense of purpose and meaning in the face of profound loss. One of the most helpful works written about the mourning process from a Jungian perspective is Susan Olson's *Images of the Dead in Grief Dreams: A Jungian View of Mourning*. Written first in 2010, the revised edition of the book (2021) is a personal exploration of how dreams helped the author overcome the tragic death of her teenage daughter in a car accident. Like the rest of the authors above, Olson found a great help in dreams by seeing how the image of her daughter changed, grew, to the point of becoming a guide to Olson herself.

Departing from therapeutic help through the mourning process, one of the most prominent Jungian analysts who took the theme of the dead and the land of the dead as part of psychotherapy has been Hillman. In his provocative *The Dream of the Underworld* (1979), Hillman states that

> the soul's process of individuation moves towards the underworld. Then every resurrection fantasy of theology may be a defense against death, every rebirth fantasy in psychology may be a defense against depth, and every dream interpretation that translate images into daily life and its concerns, a defense against soul. (Hillman, 1979, p. 90)

Hillman departs from Jung's classical approach to dream analysis by questioning the concept of the ego and hence the role of interpreting a dream.

Elizabeth Brodersen's book, *Jungian Dimensions of the mourning process, burial rituals and access to the land of the dead: intimations of immortality* (2024), is a cross-cultural study of

mourning and burial rituals. The book contains essays that explore cultural connections to death as well as concepts of immortality. One of the essays that supports my thesis is written by Jungian analyst John Hill, who states that "Jung stood on the cusp between the pre-modern literal belief in an afterlife, modern skepticism and a post-modern attitude that is symbolic and mindful of the unique values and limits of personal experience" (Hill, 2014, p. 65). According to Hill, it is the importance of personal experiences that allowed Jung to postulate "a metaphysical level of being that survives life on earth" (p. 65).

My recently published book *Confronting Death* (2024) is a collection of essays from recognized Jungian analysts and scholars writing about how Jung's works help them personally to prepare for death. Since most of the psychotherapeutic writings on death from Jungian analysts are about working through grief, I wanted to publish on a different aspect of death. My book was directly influenced by my research work for my thesis. This thesis focuses partly on the subject of bringing death to life, regardless of suffering from grief, as the collection of *Confronting Death* does.

In summary, the works that have been created in terms of Jung's relationship with death and life after death have not been many (in comparison with other Jungian themes) and they tend to focus on one specific area. The historical accounts, the conceptual elaborations, and the therapeutic works have all been helpful for the creation of my thesis.

MY THESIS

As mentioned above, the main argument of my thesis is that Jung viewed his therapeutic work as a means of addressing the relationship between this life and the next. My thesis stands in

a unique place in the literature as an attempt to not only name and develop Jung's personal experiences and professional writings in terms of death and a notion of an afterlife, but most importantly, it proposes and elaborates Jung's conceptual endeavors as practical, useful in a clinical setting, and not only for people who are suffering from grief. Bringing death to life by creating a *Weltanschauung* that includes a vision of life after death was for Jung a central element to all analysis.

Even though my thesis explores historical accounts about the scientific perspective on life after death at the end of the nineteenth century, my thesis is not a historical work. I also write about Jung's family context in terms of attitudes toward death and life after death, but my thesis is not a study of Jung's family. My thesis explores in depth Jung's conceptual conclusions from his experiences with death and life after death, but my thesis has a practical side too, which rests on its reflections about psychotherapy—Jungian psychotherapy.

It is worth noting that the argument of my thesis is something I discovered over time. When I initially began my research on Jung's reflections on life after death, I intended to write a historical and biographical account in relation to his thoughts on the subject. I had, like others, difficulties seeing how the notion of a life after death could play a role in psychotherapy. For me, Jung's views on death were more conceptual than practical. This was the case until I took the following statement from Jung towards the end of his life seriously: "my works... are fundamentally nothing but attempts, ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the 'here' and the 'hereafter'" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330). I had read this sentence multiple times before, but I had never taken the time to reflect on it deeply. Once I began to consider it seriously, Jung's works began to clarify as a psychotherapeutic approach that incorporates grappling with the mystery of death as an essential part of psychological

development. This is significant because integrating the concept of death into life is a core aspect of Jung's notion of wholeness.

This thesis by no means argues that Jungian psychology is only about creating a view of life after death or about preparing to die. My argument is created with the aim of adding another dimension to the analytic work. My goal is to enlarge the literature that on the one hand was central to Jung, that he in fact suggests for research, and on the other hand, one that had received limited attention from Jungians. As strange as my proposal may seem, I invite the reader to explore my thesis with an open spirit, always remembering that we do not have any certitude about what happens after death, and that being uncertain can be our greatest blessing.

CHAPTER 1

The Crisis of Life After Death

INTRODUCTION

The question of whether there is life after death has probably been asked since humans have had the capacity for cognition. Most cultures in the history of humanity, if not all, have in one way or another tried to deal with this question. Through the creation of myths, and later religions, or through intuitive ceremonies or shamanic works, the attempt to give an explanation or to illustrate what comes after death has been constant in human history. In 1919, speaking for the first time as a member of the Society of Psychical Research, Jung said: "If we look back into the past history of mankind, we find… a universal belief in the existence of phantoms or ethereal beings who dwell in the neighborhood of men and who exercise an invisible powerful upon them. This belief is supposed to be the spirits or souls of the dead" (1919/2014s, para. 570). Indeed, the belief in ghosts or souls that survive bodily death is a phenomenon that can be found in different cultures at different periods in history. In fact, John Beloff (1920-2006), former professor of psychology at the University of Edinburgh and author of numerous scholarly books on psychology and parapsychology, stated that there "was probably never a time when belief in an afterlife did not exist and, to my knowledge, there is no society known to anthropology where it is absent. This suggests that, for whatever reason, such a belief has deep-seated roots in human nature" (Beloff, 1993, p. 38). Even though "most cultures have agreed… that death is not the end of anything; there has always been the prospect of a life to come" (Kerrigan, 2017, p. 21), the seventeenth century saw the beginning of what I here call the crisis of life after death. By this, I mean that the ordinary individual in Europe was never as alone and unequipped to wrestle with the question of whether there is life after the death of the body as he was from the beginning of

the Enlightenment period, when the separation of the divine from the world is first witnessed. This separation led to a worldview free from mysterious forces and where reason, in principle, could explain everything (Asprem, 2014, pp. 1-2). This crisis showed its intensity and depth particularly during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, where science pictured a world "stripped of genuine mystery, lacking inherent meaning and being unrelated to any spiritual or divine realities" (Main, 2022, p. 4).

The latter is the period where Jung developed his psychology, which can be understood not only as a healing method for the psychological disturbances that the unanswered question of whether there is life after death can bring to the individual, but also as a psychoanalytic approach that understands such questions as promoting psychological growth. Indeed, in this present chapter I present two main arguments: first, that the Jungian psychotherapeutic approach can be understood as a space where working with the question of whether or not there is life after death is not only possible but actually encouraged, for the question itself is seen as promoting human wholeness. The Jungian analyst is theoretically and psychotherapeutically equipped to work with this question and Jung himself encouraged it. My second argument is that through the elaboration of his psychology, Jung was offering a response to the very present cultural question of his time of whether the soul survives death. Furthermore, I argue that the answer that Jung provided to his own era is still valid in our contemporary world. My arguments rest on Jung's own affirmations that, on the one hand, his works attempt to provide an answer to the mystery of life after death (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330), and on the other hand, that "A man should be able to say that he has done his best to form a conception of life after death...—even if he must confess his failure. Not to have done so is a vital loss. For the question posed to him... seeks to add itself to our own individual life in order to make it whole" (p. 333).

To present my arguments, I have divided this chapter into two sections: the first part gives a brief overview of the crisis of life after death at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seen from the perspective of natural science and the emerging scientific psychology of the time. This section explores the world and our place in it during this period, and how the worldview of science, despite providing knowledge about the natural world, left the ordinary person unequipped to wrestle with the question of life after death by picturing the world and humans as cause-and-effect machines that lacked any mystery. This first section also shows how, reacting to this reductive way of thinking, several individuals from different professional backgrounds challenged this view. Among them was Jung. The section ends by introducing how Jung's psychology understands the world and humans. The second half of this chapter argues that Jungian psychotherapy offers a framework for addressing this crisis by utilizing the four pillars of Jungian psychoanalysis. These pillars, seen as psychotherapeutic techniques, equip the Jungian analyst with tools and concepts to confront the question of life after death, which is viewed as a crucial element in the pursuit of human wholeness.

SUPPLANTATION OF RELIGION

When it came to asking and wrestling with the question of whether existence ends with the death of the body, the pre-enlightened western European individual had a clear place to go for guidance and even answers: the Church. "A widespread popular account… pictures religion as having been more or less undisputedly the dominant worldview up until the seventeenth century" (Main, 2004, p. 93). In fact, Charles Taylor, author of *A Secular Age* (2007), writes that "If we go back a few centuries in our civilization, we see that God was present in... a whole host of social practices—not just the political—and at all levels of society... In those societies, you

couldn't engage in any kind of public activity without 'encountering God'" (Taylor, 2007, pp. 1-2). It is difficult to picture Europe before the seventeenth century without the influence of the Church, since "the political organization of all pre-modern societies was in some way connected to, based on, guaranteed by some faith in, or adherence to God" (Taylor, 2007, p. 1). The Church then was not only omnipresent in the political and social spheres of society but also was the undisputed authority when it came to answering metaphysical questions, questions that "postulated [a] realm of reality that transcends the empirical world" (Main, 2022, p. 101). The Church not only provided a worldview which gives the individual a soul, but it also indicated how to best live life for that soul to dwell in Heaven after death. Therefore, one could fantasize about the average pre-enlightened individual not bothered with the question of life after death, because, at least in Europe, it was mainly the Church that formulated and answered that question. It can be assumed that the individual was expected to believe and attend Church, where they would listen to the sermons delivered by religious authorities; this was their responsibility, while the religion itself provided the remaining guidance. Up until around the seventeenth century, the average person relied on the Church and God for many different questions, since there simply was not another type of knowledge, authority or technology to invite different thought or to question what the Church proclaimed.

With the revolution of science, the place and authority that religion had begun to be seriously questioned. According to Taylor, believing "in God is no longer axiomatic" (Taylor, 2007, p. 3), and this "has been a recognizable experience in our societies, at least since the mid-nineteenth century" (p. 3). Main writes that after the seventeenth century,

> developments in natural science presented a series of increasingly compelling challenges to the claims of religion, and eventually, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, science supplanted religion altogether as the intellectually most satisfying and credible explanation of the world and our being in it. (Main, 2004, p. 93)

The "world and our being in it" can be seen as two separate things. The "world" can be understood as the physical, natural, empirical world, which natural science clearly took over since the early developments of the enlightenment. "Our being in it" (Main, 2004, p. 93) can be understood as we humans in that world, which does not restrict itself only to our physicality in the world, but also includes our inner reality. Our being in the world brings questions such as: what are thoughts? What is mental? What is the relationship between mind and matter? Do we have a soul? Does the soul survive after the body dies?

The crisis of the question whether there is life after death was directly influenced by the decline of religion and rise of science, its view of "the world and our being in it" (Main, 2004, p. 93) and the technology that developed from it. We shall briefly review "the world and our being in it" during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

THE WORLD

Not only did science equip men with knowledge and intellectual ascendancy, but also—and perhaps more importantly for the average man in economically developed countries at the time—through technological advances, it had a tremendous influence in daily social and professional life. Trevor Hamilton, author of scholarly books on parapsychology from the

nineteenth century, writes that “the application of the steam engine to production and transport, the laying of electrical cable and the expansion of the telegraph, gas and electricity, and the great improvements in health and sanitation, all proclaimed the power of science” (Hamilton, 2009, p. 81). These technological developments opposed directly the traditional views of religion, of God being the creator of all things. Slowly religion started losing the ground of the physical world and science, and as John Milbank, professor of theology and religious studies at the University of Nottingham, writes, since then “religion in the West has gradually been excluded from the public sphere, has attracted gradually fewer avowed believers and practitioners of any kind, and has become reflexively questionable for almost all modern persons” (Milbank, 2010, p. 56). At the same time, the public credibility and prestige of scientists of the time grew significantly, as they “were often called upon to act as expert witnesses both in criminal and in patent cases” (p.56), for science and its methodology “became more visible and powerful in arguments and debate” (p. 56). Men of natural science of the mid-nineteenth century “argued that the structure, function, and process of the universe could be explained by clear, physically based laws that did not require any supernatural intervention” (p. 56). As Egil Asprem, author of *The Problem of Disenchantment, Scientific Naturalism and Esoteric Discourse 1900- 1939*, writes, this type of thinking ultimately contributed to the birth of Victorian naturalism, an intellectual movement developed during the second half of the nineteenth century in Britain, that can be understood as being part of a broader family of science of which German scientific materialism and Comtean positivism in France are also parts. These intellectual movements all share roots that go back to Enlightenment philosophy. This general scientific worldview argued that living things can be understood and fully explained in terms of the mechanical interaction of their constituent parts (Asprem, 2014, p. 119). The major goal of these intellectual movements was to identify and describe with precision the basic elements and processes from which a physical system is built.

The assumption of this mechanical determinism was what made the physical sciences so successful during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, creating the idea that the world was primarily a kind of machine that not only could be understood and measured but also controlled (Kelly, 2007, p. 49). From this perspective then, the world became a place without mystery and ultimately soulless, since the new scientific view of the world presented "nature as governed wholly by impersonal, mechanistic laws" (p. 50).

When it came to the soul and its survival, the average individual could not look to the world for guidance or answers. So, for instance, the universal belief in ghosts that wander around the neighborhood, which Jung had mentioned in his 1919 lecture, could not take place in this new worldview, unless of course it was scientifically observed, measured and proven. "Belief in souls is a correlate of belief in spirits. Since, according to primitive belief, a spirit is usually the ghost of one dead, it must once have been the soul of a living person," writes Jung (1919/2014s, para. 577). But a ghost, or any paranormal event for that sake, was "not possible" in the world that the natural sciences proclaimed at the end of the nineteenth century. As Jung summarized then, the "belief in spirits has been counteracted by the rationalism and scientific enlightenment of the last one hundred years, so that among the majority of educated people today it has been suppressed along with other metaphysical beliefs" (para. 570). In short, if human beings had a soul that survived bodily death, there was no hint of it to be found in the world.

No mysterious incalculable forces

It was partly through the perspective of the worldview that science and scientific psychology was offering at the time, which reduced the world and our being in it into a soulless, mechanical deterministic existence, that at the end of 1917 Max Weber (1864-1920) gave a

lecture at the University of Munich entitled "Science as a Vocation [*Wissenschaft als Beruf*]."[7] It was in this lecture that he famously proclaimed that "the 'fate of our times' is the disenchantment of the world" (Asprem, 2014, p. 17). According to Weber, the disenchantment of the world has a theological origin: the gods and their magical powers were pushed away from the mundane world by the creation of monotheism in antiquity, setting the ideal scenario for a rationalization of ethical systems, for economic behavior and epistemology. This meant the departure from blind belief and obedience to individual reason as the source of knowledge, which brought a fundamental change in what Asprem calls the *epistemic attitude* (p. 17); men no longer expected to encounter mystery in the world. Despite all the technological advances, according to Weber, modern people do not understand the world any better than the "savage" human did. Weber explains what this process of intellectualization means:

> The knowledge or belief that if one but wished one could learn [anything] at any time. Hence, it means that principally there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play, but rather that one can, in principle, master all things by calculation. This means that the world is disenchanted. One need no longer have recourse to magical means in order to master or implore the spirits, as did the savage, for whom such mysterious powers existed. Technical means and calculation performs the service. (Weber, 1919/2014, p. 7)

[7] It should be noted that the discourse of the "disenchantment" was present long before Weber's lecture in 1919; it is seen for instance in the works of Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), who wrote about the "de-divinisation" of nature (Asprem, 2014, p.17n2).

Main (2022) describes Weber's understanding of the disenchantment of the modern world as "a world that has been stripped of genuine mystery" (p, 3), "a world that lacks inherent meaning" (p, 4), and, particularly important for this thesis, a world "unrelated to any spiritual, divine, or other metaphysical realities" (p, 4). This description of "the European intellectual and cultural environment" (p.5) at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to "many, then and now... has rung true, and it remains one of the most powerful narratives of modernity" (p, 5). Indeed, the crisis of the question of life after death exists still today for the ordinary person.

The world—an alternative world

This reductive view of the world was not shared by all agents of natural sciences. Asprem demonstrates that some eminent natural scientists of the time, philosophers, and thinkers "shared an opposition to certain epistemological presuppositions that had been dominant since the Enlightenment" (Asprem, 2014, p. 1). For different reasons, from scientific contexts of laboratory research to the philosophical and religious contexts of the time, thinkers unsatisfied with the established worldview sought out theoretical alternatives to the mechanistic understanding of existence. Even though the materialistic mechanism was fundamental to Victorian naturalism, during the three first decades of the twentieth century, a number of outstanding biologists sought alternative ways of researching organisms while rejecting the mechanistic and reductionist framework. An example of this way of thinking was proposed by the vitalistic alternative, famously defended by the embryologist Hans Driesch (1897-1941), who, having initially committed to the mechanistic view, announced his conversion to vitalism in 1899. Driesch formally introduced his views at the Gifford lectures in 1907 and 1908, and,

presenting his experiments with sea urchins, theorized "the existence of some innate teleological developmental factor" (Shamdasani 2003, p. 181), an individual form-production, that represented a vital force separated and independent from matter (p. 158). In his *The Science and Philosophy of Organism* (1908), Driesch wrote:

> No kind of causality based upon the constellation of single physical and chemical acts can account for organic individual development; this development is not to be explained by any hypothesis about configuration of physical and chemical agents. Therefore there must be something else which is to be regarded as the sufficient reason of individual form-production. (cited in Asprem 2014, 158; cf. Driesch 1908)

This *something else* represents a mysterious and vital force, irreducible, that drives the life of organisms and explains life as a phenomenon entirely *sui generis*. Driesch, in honor of Aristotle, called this *entelechy*; an immaterial organizing force which consumes no energy while at the same time possessing some mysterious agency in the development of organisms. Entelechy operates in a teleological way instead of a mechanistic manner, and it gradually expresses its potential through the evolution of species and the development of individual organisms.

In his book, Asprem not only shows alternative biological ways of thinking but works from different fields of science and humanities that "sought to explore the outer limits of reason" (p. 1). These works, as important as they are, Asprem makes clear, were attempts that "may appear heterodox" (p. 1) since, as presented above, the "dominant position" (p. 205) of science was to see the world as a soulless and mechanical thing.

Jung's approach to the world

Another thinker who challenged this reductive way of seeing the world was Jung. Main writes that Jung, claiming throughout his life to be a scientist or empiricist, criticized the dominant science of his day particularly for its one-sidedness and incapacity to incorporate the complexity of individual psychology (Main, 2004, p. 123). Jung's understanding of science was not straightforward, and it is possible to appreciate different understandings of science at different periods of his life, or even within the same period, depending on whom he was addressing. Jung seemed to have understood "science" in two main ways, what Main calls a narrow and a broad way (p. 123). Narrowly, Jung referred to the dominant science of his day that rested on the assumptions of materialism and reductionism. Broadly, he referred to any empirical and systematic study that seeks knowledge through careful observation of facts.

The science of his day, the science that pictured a world without mystery, was criticized by Jung in many ways, writes Main (p. 123). First, as a psychologist Jung criticized science for concentrating exclusively on the study of outer, materialistic phenomena, leaving untouched the inner nature of human beings. Second, Jung criticized the one-sided intellectualism of science, which disregards the feeling tones, which are of highest importance when forming value judgements. Third, since it is based on the causal principle, science is reductive and therefore "unable to grasp 'the psyche as a creative function', for which 'the constructive standpoint (elaborating things into something higher and more complicated rather than reducing them into their elements) requires'" (p. 123). Jung also thought that, since science is based on direct thinking, fantasy thinking should also be incorporated into its methodology. Fifth, since science "restricts itself to 'the common, the probable, the average'" (p. 123), it leaves little or no room

for the exceptional or extraordinary. Last, Jung thought that science pictured the world in an unreal way, since it does so only rationally, "marginalizing the individual person who, as 'an irrational datum', is 'the authentic carrier of reality'" (pp. 121-124). In sum, Jung criticized the dominant science of his day for its materialistic, reductive, causal and rationalistic one-sidedness (p. 125).[8] He challenged this view, in fact he challenged "the very foundations of modern western science" (p. 123) by proposing a psychology that would emphasize the integration of opposites, including those of psyche and matter, with the aim of wholeness. And in doing so, he proposed a world that is not only non-reductive, but in fact one that is embedded in mystery.[9]

The separation of the world from human beings, established by the dominant science during and before Jung's time, was a concept that he did not adhere to. For Jung, "since psyche and matter are contained in one and the same world, and moreover are in continuous contact with one another and ultimately rest on irrepresentable, transcendental factors, it is not only possible but fairly probable, even, that psyche and matter are two different aspects of one and the same thing" (1946/1978a, para. 419). The science of Jung's day separated the world from humans based on the assumption that science needed to devote itself to what is observable and hence measurable, and since the inner world of human beings is not directly observable, either the psyche could not be part of the study of science, or the psyche needed to be reduced to a materialistic object to become one. However, Jung assumed that "psychic reality is the only reality of which we have direct experience" (Main, 2004, p. 124), which, as we will see more in

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[8] For more on Jung's critique of science see Main's *The Rupture of Time, Synchronicity and Jung`s Critique of Modern Western Culture*.

[9] It should be said that the expansion that Jung was advocating has already initiated, for example with advent quantum theory, that

> has resulted in a seismic shift in the foundation of physics, and despite ongoing controversies about its proper interpretation, it has undermined the received classical physicalist conception of the ultimate nature of Reality, brought the mystery of consciousness back into the foreground, and opened up new theoretical possibilities of numerous sorts while simultaneously preserving all that was good in the classical formulations (Kelly, 2015, p. 494).

detail in Chapter 4, led him to postulate that "the intimate non-causal connection that can be experienced between the outer physical world and one's inner subjectivity implies that the separateness usually experienced between inner and outer, psychic and physical, or self and world can to a significant degree be dissolved" (p. 146). To better understand how Jung came to frame the world and psyche as part of one underlying existence, the following section briefly reviews Jung's psychological framework.

Jung's psychological framework

Jung theorized that the psyche is divided into a conscious and an unconscious layer. The center of consciousness is the ego, which is understood as "the complex factor to which all conscious contents are related" (1951/2014f, para. 1), and "subject of all personal acts of consciousness" (para. 1). The unconscious is divided into two layers, the personal and the collective unconscious. Whereas the personal unconscious "contains lost memories, painful ideas that are repressed (i.e., forgotten on purpose), subliminal perceptions... and finally, contents that are not yet ripe for consciousness" (1917/2014ae, para. 103), the collective unconscious "is detached from anything personal and is entirely universal" (para. 103). What "constitute[s] the structure of the collective unconscious" (1952/2014af, para. 840) is what Jung called the archetypes. The archetypes "are formal factors responsible for the organization of unconscious psychic processes: they are inherited 'patterns of behavior.' At the same time, they have a 'specific charge' and develop numinous effects which express themselves as *affects*" (para. 841). Furthermore, two years after his near-death experience in 1944, Jung presented the enlargement of his concept of archetypes by stating that they are not just psychic, but what he defined as "psychoid." The archetype "is a psychoid factor," meaning that its nature is "transcendent," and

hence “it does not appear, in itself, to be capable of reaching consciousness” (1946/1978a, para. 417). What the ego can perceive are representations of the archetype, archetypal images and ideas, but not the archetype itself. While archetypes are conceptualized as organizers of unconscious psychic processes, because of their nature, “the position of the archetype would be located beyond the psychic sphere... and, with its psychoid nature, forms the bridge to matter in general” (para. 420). The theoretical enlargement of the archetype allowed Jung late in life to introduce the notion of *unus mundus* (one world), by which he referred to the experience of the highest possible degree of psychological development: the realization of “the potential world of the first day of creation, when nothing was yet ‘in actu,’ i.e., the world was divided into two and many, but was still one.” Jung calls this “the eternal Ground of all empirical being” (1955-1956/1970, para. 534). In the *unus mundus*, the world is not separated from psyche, inner is not separated from outer, and death is not separated from life.

The view of the world for Jung, then, as presented by the dominant science of his time, was incomplete and hence only relatively true. In addition to the principles of time and space, Jung understood causality as one of the principles that underlies the conception of natural law, but, he wrote, “if the connection between cause and effect turns out to be only statistically valid and only relatively true, then the causal principle is only of relative use for explaining natural processes and therefore presupposes the existence of one or more other factors which would be necessary for an explanation” (1952/2014af, para. 819). The response from Jung to this only relative explanation of the world was the introduction of his theory of synchronicity, which for him “could be added as a fourth [principle] to the recognized triad of space, time, and causality” (para. 958). Synchronicity, which will be examined in Chapter 4, was defined by Jung in different ways, but generally speaking, synchronicity is “the simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events which appear as meaningful parallels to the

momentary subjective state" (para. 850). For Jung, then, in the world, "at the microphysical (i.e. subatomic) level, there can occur events which are acausal" (Main, 2004, p. 37), for there is a certain level of continuity between psyche and matter, since these two at their deepest levels come together in the single unified system.

Now that we have seen how Jung's psychology challenges the mechanical view of the world dominant of his day, and how it can also be seen as a response to the disenchantment of the world described by Weber (Main, 2022; Cambray, 2024), we can look at how "our being in the world" was imagined by the sciences at the turn of the century.

OUR BEING IN THE WORLD

Our being in the world was not exempt from scrutiny by the established scientific worldview of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Natural scientists did not restrict their studies and claims to the physical world; human beings and their inner reality were also the subject of examination and debate. Influential thinkers in the field of psychology were of the strong opinion that psychology should follow and restrict itself to the same methodology of study and research as natural sciences did. This, of course, brought an immediate conflict: psychology deals with the mind, and what the mind is and how we study it is still today a debate in psychology. Kelly summarizes the state of psychology at the time quite eloquently:

> In the second half of the 19th century, psychology was undergoing a major and rapid transformation from moral philosophy to naturalistic science, and central to this

> transformation were efforts to grapple with questions as fundamental to psychology as the nature of the mind, the nature of the relationship between mental and physical processes, and the relationship of psychology to the rest of science. By the early years of the 20th century, however, such fundamental questions had, for all intents and purposes, been written off as "metaphysical" problems unsuitable for a scientific psychology. (Kelly, 2007, p. 48)

Moral philosophy, which can be traced back to Greek philosophers, typically dealt with the concept of the soul, which was (among other attributes) understood as separate from the body and dwelling in the hereafter once the body dies (Bostock, 1986, p. 21). The new scientific psychology, though, saw the world as "operating according to a uniform and unvarying mechanical system of causes and effects" (Kelly, 2007, p. 49), which wanted to separate itself from philosophical tradition, could not accept concepts such as *soul* and was forced to speak of *mind*. This term was also problematic, and the new scientific psychology "reconceptualize[d] mind as a natural, not supernatural, phenomenon" (p. 51). Hence, the mind became part of an organ, "solely the product of a nervous system shaped over the course of evolution in response to the demands of the environment" (p. 52). Influential figures of the time, such as the British biologist Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), stated that men were "conscious machines," automata working solely on reflex-actions, and their sensations, feelings, desires or free will merely "consequents of physical antecedents" (Asprem, 2014, p. 155). He claimed that in men as in brutes, "there is no proof that any state of consciousness is the cause of change in the motion of the matter of the organism," and added, "we are able to do as we like—but none the less parts of the great series of causes and effects which, in unbroken continuity, composes that which is,

and has been, and shall be—the sum of existence" (p. 68). In short, the meaningless worldview of reducing external reality as a machine had also been adopted to understand people.

Scientific psychology

The new scientific psychology, which intended to be part of the of the natural sciences not only departed from anything related to soul but also from concepts such as mind or even volition. The average person of the late nineteenth century who looked for answers in science to questions about the soul found that there was soul neither in the world, as we saw above, nor in human beings, for the world and our being in it were understood as a machine of causes and effects. The initial hope of scientific psychology was that it "would be able to solve questions that had vexed thinkers for centuries, and to replace superstition, folk wisdom, and metaphysical speculation with the rule of universal law" (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 4). Following this hope, Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), referred to still today in many universities as the father of modern psychology, founded the school of structuralism in 1879, also known as physiological psychology, for its emphasis on physiological reactions as means for understanding the mind, particularly the physiology of perception (p. 33). Wundt, using "materialistic positions... sought to liberate psychology from philosophy and make it an independent empirical scientific discipline during the second half of the nineteenth century" (Asprem, 2014, p. 167). He attempted to do this by, for example, dropping introspection as a tool for experimentation, and focusing strictly on physiological reactions. Such questions as whether human beings have a soul and whether it survives the death of the body, were obviously not asked in this psychology.

One of the most charismatic people in the field of psychology at the beginning of the twentieth century was the American psychologist John B. Watson (1878- 1958), founder of

behaviorism. Certainly influenced by figures like Wundt and also Huxley, in 1913, in the journal *Psychology Review*, the leading psychology journal in the United States at the time, Watson published "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It", where he proclaimed that the goal of behavioral psychology is the "prediction and control of behavior" (Watson, 1913, p. 158), since "the behaviorist, in his efforts to get a unitary scheme of animal response, recognizes no dividing line between man and brute" (p. 158). Watson was a professor of psychology at Johns Hopkins University, and his psychology is thought to have been the most influential and dominant movement in modern psychology in the United States for decades. He firmly and constantly maintained that psychology needed to belong to the natural sciences, and anything that could not be observed should not belong to psychology. Hence, "Watson's programmatic call to make psychology scientific by throwing out introspection, mentalistic language, and the entire philosophical tradition" (Asprem, 2014, p. 173) made the study of human beings strictly about what is observable, and since all inner experience such as thinking, emotions, dreaming and reasoning could not be directly observed, the inner life of men could only belong to unscientific fields of study (p. 173). William McDougall (1871-1938), author of *An Introduction to Social Psychology* (1908) and successor to William James as the chair of the psychology department at Harvard University, described the mechanistic view of Watson's psychology as follows:

> The narrower formulation runs: Man is a machine and his every action is the outcome of mechanical processes that in theory can be exactly calculated and foretold according to strictly mechanistic principles. The wider formulation runs: Every human activity and process like every other process in the world, is strictly determined by antecedent processes, and therefore, in principle, can be predicted with complete accuracy. (Cited in Asprem, 2014, 182; cf. McDougall 1929)

In a sense, whereas Huxley had proclaimed that the soul belonged to the brain, thereby transforming the soul into a part of a physical organ, Watson went one step further and said that the soul was an irrelevant concept for psychology and hence should not be considered in the study of human beings. Watson and his psychology are worth mentioning here since behaviorism was the dominant psychology in the United States until the 1950s, when cognitive psychology and the study of mental processes regained ground, in part due to the creation of computers during the 1940s, which gave psychologists analogies for the study of human thinking (Goldstein, 2015, p. 12).

In summary, the world and our being in it, from the perspective of natural science and scientific psychology at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, can be understood as a sterile and soulless place. Established science considered concepts like soul unsuitable for their studies, and so did scientific psychology. Religion, of course, was the place where soul and life after death were welcomed topics, but as discussed above, religion had lost not only considerable followers, but also influence and credibility. The ordinary person of the time was rather alone whenever the question of whether his soul would continue to exist after death was raised.

Our being in it—Alternative Views

The exile of life after death by a world that has neither mystery nor meaning and that lacks relatedness to metaphysical realities brought about, in the nineteenth century, cultural

movements arising to claim that our being in the world was actually richer and more complex than what natural science and scientific psychology would acknowledge. In fact,

> the nineteenth century saw the emergence of a "religious naturalism," which broke with post-Reformation and Enlightenment tendencies to dichotomise 'nature' and 'religion'... a new trend taking shape from German romanticism, Mesmerism, somnambulism, psychical research, and the emerging psychological discourse on 'the unconscious' rejected this dichotomy and instead sought to reconcile natural explanations with the experiences that were being deemed 'religious'. (Asprem, 2014, p. 9)

Spiritualism in the nineteenth century, which "challenged the dominant tendency to dichotomize religious experience and naturalistic explanation" (Taves, 1999, p. 1), emerged from "religious naturalism." The spiritualistic movement in relation to Jung has been well reviewed (among others: Jung 1933/2019; Ellenberger 1970; Charet 1993; Shamdasani 2003), but in brief, spiritualism as a whole was a cultural movement that insisted that not only did humans have a soul, but that the soul continues to exist after the death of the body, and that the living can in fact communicate with the souls of the dead.[10]

[10] Spiritualism had as its protagonists the mediums, "remarkable 'psychic' personalities" according to Jung (1933/2019, p. 38)—individuals who in a trance state claimed to be able to communicate with the spirits of the dead. The beginnings of spiritualism are associated with the two young daughters of the Fox family, a farm family from Hydesville, New York State, who in 1847 apparently communicated with spirits of the dead. Spiritualism is thought to have arrived in Europe from the United States in 1852, first traveling to England and Germany, to later in 1853 spread over France and the rest of the civilized world (Ellenberger, 1970, p. 84). Mediums became not only known in different scientific circles, but because of their apparent powers, they became subjects of studies and of models for new ways of approaching and understanding the human mind (Ellenberger, 1970, p. 84). Ellenberger writes that "some mediums were able to write automatically, speak in a trance, and allegedly call forth the occurrence of physical phenomena. Around 1860 'spirits' began manifesting themselves visually during the séances, and in 1862 photographs purportedly taken of them as well as casts of their hands were shown. This was followed by the period of the extraordinary mediums: Florence Cook, Stainton Moses, Slade, Home, and others" (Ellenberger, 1970, p. 85).

Spiritualism and its claims are important to mention here because they not only became a new way for psychologists to understand the mind, but spiritualism also had cultural impact: it "revived the age-old question of a life after death" (Beloff, 1993, p. 38), bringing up an old and at the same time new way of seeing the world and our being in it during the middle of the nineteenth century. Spiritualism is also important, because as we will see in the next section, it had an influence on Jung's psychology. The crisis of a world without soul and with limited capacity for envisioning a life after the death of the body now had an alternative, a possibility as it were.[11]

Spiritualism and its protagonists had a direct influence on the psychologists of the time. As a matter of fact, "much of the original interest in depth psychology came from people involved in parapsychological investigation" (Douglas, 1997, p. 27), and spiritualism "attracted the interest of psychologists, including Freud, Ferenczi, Bleuler, James, Myers, Janet, Bergson, Stanley Hall, Schrenck-Notzing, Moll, Dessoir, Ritchet, and Flournoy" (Shamdasani, 2009, p. 7). Spiritualism also influenced the foundation of the Society of Psychical Research in England in 1882, an institution that challenged the worldview of natural science at the turn of the century by "explor[ing] the empirical claims of spiritualists in a scientific manner" (Asprem, 2014, p. 290).

Jung and Spiritualism

[11] The response to such possibility "spread like a brush fire" (Charet, 1993, p. 35): "Halls were rented at the direction of the spirits, lectures given... By 1853 ten spiritualist periodicals had been established. Two years later it was claimed there were 2.5 million spiritualists and four years after, in 1859, a Catholic conversion put the number at 11 million" (Charet, 1993, p. 35).

One of the leading figures from the Society of Psychical Research was Frederic W. H. Myers (1843-1901), who was not a professional psychologist but a Victorian poet, classical scholar and Neoplatonic philosopher. Myers was one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research and the author of important books in the field, such as his two-volume *Human Personality and its Survival of bodily Death* (1903). For Myers, "the nature of the human personality" is "as at once profoundly unitary and almost indefinitely composite, as inheriting from earthly ancestors a multiplex and 'colonial' organism" and "also as ruling and unifying that organism by a soul or spirit absolutely beyond our present analysis... which will still subsists therein after the body's decay" (Myers, 1903/1998a, p. 34). To Myers, the unconscious, or the subliminal, as he coined it– secondary personalities outside of one's waking state– possesses "supernormal knowledge" (Myers, 1903/1998b, p. 124). It is these personalities, he claimed, that are revealed through trance states, dreaming or automatic writing. Shamdasani argues that Myers had an influence on identifying what were considered spiritual phenomena as "psychoscopes", which could have revolutionary effects in revealing the hidden and invisible dimensions of the psyche (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 127). Doing this, Myers, "arguably the most important pioneer of psychical research" (Beloff, 1993, p. 60), influenced different thinkers of his time, including Swiss psychologist Theodore Flournoy.

Flournoy, who in 1891 was appointed chairman of the first department of psychology that belonged to a Faculty of Science (instead of Philosophy), at the University of Geneva (Shamdasani, 1994, p. xiii), challenged the scientific psychology of his days, stating that, "due to the enormous place of spiritualist, mediumistic, and occult phenomena in the preoccupations of the public at large that psychology should concern itself with such phenomena and subject them to rigorous experimental study" (p. xiii). In 1899 he published *From India to the Planet Mars: A Study of a Case of Somnambulism with Glossolalia*, a work that "was, and remains, the most

thorough and detailed study of a medium from a psychological point of view" (Charet, 1993, p. 43). Jung became profoundly influenced by the work of Flournoy, to the point of adopting Flournoy's model for studying mediums for his medical dissertation. As a matter of fact, Jung—who came to see Flournoy as a "fatherly friend" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 186)—offered to translate *From India to the Planet Mars* into German, since "it made a great impression" on him, but to Jung's regret, Flournoy had already found a translator by the time Jung asked him (Jung, 1914. Cited in Shamdasani, 1994, p. ix). Shamdasani argues that through the work of Flournoy, Jung's psychology can partly be understood as continuing in the line of Myers's subliminal psychology (Shamdasani, 1998, p. 116).

Another psychologist interested in spiritualism who had an important influence on Jung's psychology was William James (1842-1910); he "impressed Jung with the importance of viewing personality as a holistic totality that quite transcends the bounds imposed on it by the rational mind" (Taylor, 1980, p. 157). In fact, "James articulated Myers's notion that the subliminal intelligence ranged from bestial to archaic, through the visible portion of the psychic spectrum, out of the farthest possible reaches of the divine and transcendent" (p. 164). Myers's psychology thus became "a key source for James's uniquely pre-analytic definition of the unconscious and hence an important influence on Jung" (p. 164). In fact, agreeing with James, Jung states that Myers became the discoverer of the unconscious psyche (1946/1978a, para. 356n23).

In addition, in 1933 Jung began giving open lectures at the Swiss Federal Institute for Technology (ETH) on what he called the history of "Modern Psychology" (Jung, 2019/1933, p. 2). At the beginning of these lectures, he dedicated considerable time to exploring the importance of spiritualism and psychical research in the development of psychology. Looking at historical

figures of spiritualism, Jung dedicated five lectures to the work of Justinus Kerner's *The Seeress of Prevorst* (1829). He also spent two lectures speaking about Flournoy's *From India to the Planet Mars*. These thinkers "had a considerable impact on Jung. As well as elucidating their historical significance, his consideration of them enables us to understand the role that his reading of them played in his early work" (Falzeder, et al., 2019, p. xxi). It is surprising to see that in these lectures he mentioned the work of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) only once, since there are repeated references of Swedenborg in Jung's works. The very first time Jung wrote about Swedenborg was in fact in his *Zofingia Lectures* (1898/2014ai, para. 129), and he continued mentioning him in later works. For instance, Jung writes about the vision Swedenborg had about the fire in Stokholm in his essays "Synchronicity: an acausal principle" (1952, para. 706-707), and in "On synchronicity" (1951, para. 902). Swedenborg was a Swedish scientist, philosopher and mystic, most known for his book on the afterlife, *Heaven and Hell* (1758). We know that Jung read *Heaven and Hell* during the middle of his medical training, as he checked out of the Basel library several works of Swedenborg, including *Heaven and Hell* (Taylor, 2017, p. 30). Allegedly, Swedenborg "could speak with the spirits of the dead" (p. 28) and his work *Heaven and Hell* can be understood on one hand "as his communication on the nature of life after death" (p. 31), and on the other as "the iconography of a person's interior, phenomenological world view, much as Jung would reconstruct the interior world of his patients, or ask his clients to reconstruct in their artistic depiction of states of individuation" (p. 31). The influence of Swedenborg in the work of Jung should not be underestimated since in his student years "Jung devoured Swedenborg" (Hallengren, 2010, p. 1074) and "would draw on his observations in his writings on the Collective Unconscious and Archetypes, explicit in his Introduction to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead"* (p. 1074).

By the above, I do not mean that Jungian psychology emerges solely from psychologists and thinkers interested in spiritualism or in worldviews that challenged scientific psychology of his time; Jung's sources for his mature psychology find roots among other fields in the study of philosophy, religion, mythology, psychiatry, microphysics, alchemy, and history. Indeed, for Jung, "there was no field of human endeavor that was irrelevant for psychology" (Shamdasani, 2003, pp. 18-20). Having said that, as Main (2004, pp. 66-72), Charet (1993, pp. 231-283) or again Shamdasani (1998, pp. 217-122) have argued, spiritualism, as an alternative way of seeing the world and our being in it, had an important influence on Jung's psychology. Research questions that the Society of Psychical Research and the spiritualists dealt with are found and worked through in the psychology of Jung.

Jung framed his psychology as a response to the materialist and reductive worldview. The central experience, or *prima materia* as Jung called it, that led to the creation of his psychology was his confrontation with the unconscious (pp. 194-225). This process can be summarized as how "Jung regains his soul and overcomes the contemporary malaise of spiritual alienation" (Shamdasani, 2009, p. 48).

For the rest of this chapter I will argue that Jungian psychology can be understood as an answer to the crisis of life after death, experienced in Jung's days and today. This is because of his creation of a theoretical framework that allows the survival of the soul after the death of the body and also—more importantly and unique—by the elaboration of a psychotherapeutic method that takes the possibility of life after death seriously, as part of therapy and as part of psychological development.

JUNG'S APPROACH TO OUR BEING IN THE WORLD—THE INDIVIDUATION PROCESS

Unlike Myers, Jung was a psychiatrist, and unlike Flournoy and James, Jung was a psychotherapist. Jung's work and writings on death and on life after death need to be seen from this perspective, since as "a psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Jung's primary concern was with processes of psychological healing and development" (Main, 2021, p. 22). Hence, when I propose that Jung's works address the reductionist, materialistic view of the world and our being in it as presented by natural sciences and scientific psychology at the turn of the century, it is imperative to remind ourselves that Jung's intention, as he repeatedly claimed, was to do so from a scientific, psychological point of view. It is helpful to look at his theory of psychological development, namely the individuation process, from this perspective. In fact, "Jung's psychological model, in particular its core process of individuation, can be understood as a particularly rich response to disenchantment" (Main, 2022, p. 11). The following section will briefly describe Jung's individuation process.

The individuation process is "the total experience of wholeness over an entire lifetime—the emergence of the self in psychological structure and in consciousness" (Stein, 1998, p. 171). Individuation begins in childhood by the development of an ego capable of dealing with the pressures of inner forces and outer demands. As mentioned above, the ego can be understood as "the conscious factor to which all conscious contents are related" (Jung, 1951/2014f, para. 1). As the ego develops and becomes functional and adapted to the demands of the outer world, different aspects of the personality inevitably rest unintegrated and hence unconscious. A division then takes place in the personality between ego-consciousness and the unconscious. For Jung, the unconscious has an innate drive to be reunited with and integrated by the ego. This can

be appreciated, for example, through dreams that portray other aspects of the personality, such as the shadow or the syzygy (para. 8-22), which can be interpreted as parts of the personality wanting to become conscious. Jung understood these aspects of the personality as "*parts of the self*" (Jung, 1951/2014f, para. 43) and writes that "the goal of the individuation process is the synthesis of the self" (para. 278). In a successful individuation process, the self becomes the new center of the personality. Jung describes this process thusly: "Not that the new personality is a third thing midway between conscious and unconscious, it is both together" (1946/1978a, para. 474). This should be understood as "transcendent, which means that it is not defined by or contained within the psychic realm but rather lies beyond it and, in an important sense, defines it" (Stein, 1998, p. 152). Ultimately, at least theoretically, the highest levels of psychological development obtained in an individuation process experience existence as a unitary system, where the divisions between life and death are dissolved (Jung, 1955-1956/1970, para. 767).

Therefore, for Jung, being in the world in its essence meant constant psychological development, whether the ego is aware of it or not. This development is autonomously driven by the unconscious psyche (Jung, 1921/2014ag, para. 267). As mentioned above, the psyche itself was understood by Jung as being partly psychic, partly transcendent. Hence, questions such as whether or not humans have an immortal soul (Myers 1903/1998, p. 1) or whether ghosts are real (Myers 1903/1998b, pp. 1-80) are questions that in Jung's psychological framework not only are welcomed but in fact are understood as "vital" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 333) for psychological development.

LIFE AFTER DEATH, *WELTANSCHAUUNG* AND JUNG'S PSYCHOLOGY

The question of the existence of life after death was of "burning interest" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 155), for Jung because it "seeks to add itself to our own individual life in order to make it whole" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 333). Creating a conception of the world and our being in it that included life after death was of paramount importance for Jung, and he called the process a *Weltanschauung*; "a philosophy of life" (Jung, 1935/1968, para 1042). He states that a *Weltanschauung* "is a hypothesis and not an act of faith" (Jung, 1928/2014c, para. 700), since "Any science worthy of the name must critize its own assumptions" (1935/1968, para 1042). For Jung, "consciousness determines *Weltanschauung*" (para. 696). One's worldview changes as consciousness increases, since every "new thought must be tested to see whether or not it adds something to our *Weltanschauung*" (para. 700). The world and our being in it are two inseparable concepts within Jung's *Weltanschauung,* since to have a worldview "means to create a picture of the world and of oneself, to know what the world is and who I am" (para. 698). Therefore, for the rest of this thesis I shall argue that Jung's thoughts on death and on life after death can be understood as an on-going psychological hypothesis in which the main variable is the individual's consciousness.

Before presenting Jung's psychology as an answer to the crisis of life after death, I find it pertinent to go over some general aspects of Jung's psychology, such as his scientific and private statements about life after death, and his overall attitude about metaphysical statements.

JUNG'S SCIENTIFIC WRITINGS OF LIFE AFTER DEATH

When approaching Jung and his writings on death and on life after death one might quickly find oneself in a space of uncertainty or even confusion, as Jung was not a

straightforward theorist in general,[12] particularly on this subject. The difficulty of writing both as an objective scientist and as a psychologist who gives paramount importance to subjective experience is perceived as we read and compare Jung's scholarly and private writings. In reviews of his papers, we also find modifications, alterations, or even changes in his posture, particularly after the enlargement of his theory of archetypes in 1946. Here, I briefly provide a few examples of Jung's writings, from a scientist's perspective, one might say, on life after death.

In his doctoral dissertation "On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena," as the medium being observed claimed to speak to spirits of the dead, Jung interpreted these spirits as "primary unconscious personalities... that could be classified under two different types, the *serio-religious* and the *gay-hilarious"* (1902/1957, para. 126). These subconscious personalities, Jung claimed, were shaped by individuals that the medium was emotionally attached to earlier in her life—repressed thoughts, beginning "to lead an independent existence as autonomous personalities" (para. 132). In 1905 he wrote that "one must approach a medium with a minimum of expectations if one does not want to be disappointed. The results are of purely psychological interest" (1905/2014l, para. 724), and later adds, "[e]verything that may be considered a scientifically established fact belongs to the domain of the mental and cerebral processes and is fully explicable in terms of the laws already known to science" (para. 724). In 1919, speaking to the Society of Psychical Research in England, he stated that "Spirits, therefore, viewed from the psychological angle, are unconscious autonomous complexes which appear as projections because the have no direct association with the ego" (1919/2014s, para. 600). He ended that talk by saying that "I see no proof whatever of the

[12] Stein writes that "Jung did not think systematically in the way a philosopher does, building on basic premises and making certain that the parts fit together without contradiction. He claimed to be an empirical scientist, and so his theorizing matches the disorderliness of the empirical world. An intuitive thinker, Jung lays out big concepts, elaborates them in some detail, and then proceeds to other big concepts. He backtracks frequently, repeats himself, and fills in gaps as he goes along. This quality makes for difficulty in reading him" (Stein, 1998, p. 11).

existence of real spirits, and until such proof is forthcoming I must regard this whole territory as an appendix of psychology" (para. 600). Later in life, at the age of 59, in "The Soul and Death," writing about the idea of life after death, Jung stated: "I do not want suddenly to pull a belief out of my pocket and invite my reader to do what nobody can do—that is, believe something. I must confess that I myself could never do it either" (1934/2014ac, para. 804), adding of religious symbols, such as a life after death, that "in the course of the millennia, they have developed, plant-like, as natural manifestations of the human psyche" (para. 805). In 1955 he wrote that "I don't think that the human mind is eternal and therefore I don't assume that we can think eternal subjects like infinity, immortality, etc" (1955/1976, p. 276). Furthermore, towards the end of his life, in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963/1995), Jung writes: "It is not that I wish we had a life after death. In fact, I would prefer not to foster such ideas" (p. 330). And then added,

> What the myths of stories about a life after death really mean, or what kind of reality lies behind them, we certainly do not know. We cannot tell whether they possess any validity beyond their indubitable value as anthropomorphic projections. Rather, we must hold clearly in mind that there is no possible way for us to attain certainty concerning things which pass our understanding. (p. 331)

These examples show how Jung throughout his life could, on the one hand, present ideas about life after death from a scientific perspective; on the other hand, he could also venture into more spiritual dimensions, as the next section shows.

JUNG'S PRIVATE AND REVIEWED WRITINGS ON LIFE AFTER DEATH

At the age of 73, in 1948, almost thirty years after delivering the 1919 lecture to the Society of Psychical Research where he saw "this whole territory as an appendix of psychology" (1919/1948/2014s, para. 600), he stated that "I no longer feel as certain as I did when I wrote this sentence" (para. 600n15), and that "The question whether spirits exist *in themselves* is far from having been settled" (587n5).

Furthermore, in his second *Zofingia* lecture, "Some Thoughts on Psychology," delivered in 1897, Jung aimed to stablish that the soul is immortal (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 200), as he argued that there are enough reasons "to postulate the immortality of the soul" (1897/2014ab, para. 99). In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963/1995), when remembering this period of his life, he stated that thinking in the possibility of the existence of ghosts gave him the feeling that the world gained layers of meaning and perspective (p. 120). In 1934 Jung stated that the psyche at its deepest levels exists in a form beyond time and space (1934/2014ac, para. 815). Because of this, he tried to "strengthen the belief in immortality" with patients of old age (1929/2014h, para. 68). Jung argued that the crisis of the second half of life is a sign that nature inherently readies itself for death (1934/2014ac, para. 808), hence, it is healthy to see death as part of life and prepare for it (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 792), since the birth of death happens long before the actual death of the body (1934/2014ac, para. 809). In short, for Jung "It is normal to think about immortality, and abnormal not to do so or not to bother about it" (1939/2014i, para. 743). A few years before his death, Jung stated that he was convinced that consciousness continues developing after death (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 149).

Furthermore, we find in a few places, primarily private letters, Jung stating that life after death is an actual reality. In a letter to E. A. Bennet from 1947, Jung wrote: "I am absolutely

convinced of personal survival [after the death of the body]..., + of the marvelous experience of being dead" (Cited in Shamdasani, 2008, p. 23). In another letter from 1945 to Kristina Mann, he stated that his visions during the time in hospital in 1944 "proved to be the most valuable experience, which gave me the inestimable opportunity of a glimpse behind the veil" (Jung, 1973, p. 357). Shamdasani believes that the experiences from 1944 gave "Jung complete conviction concerning the survival of bodily death" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 23).

The dead can visit the living

In addition to the writings above, Jung wrote about three different ways in which the dead, the souls of the departed, can visit the living: through apparitions, through dreams, and through synchronistic events.

As mentioned above, the first apparition that Jung seems to have experienced was during his childhood when one night he saw several times a ghost-like figure floating with its head detached from its body coming from his mother's room (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 33-34). Later, in December of 1916 he believed his "house was haunted" (p. 215) as his eldest daughter "saw a white figure passing through the room" (p. 215), and independently his second daughter "related that twice in the night her blanket had been snatched away" (p. 215). Jung also wrote about another instance where he was convinced that a cottage where he was staying at in Buckinghamshire, England in 1920, "was haunted" (1950/2014i, para. 773) by an old female ghost.

Jung also stated that the dead can visit the living in dreams. Jung theorized that dreams can be interpreted in two separate ways: the objective level, when dream images are interpreted

as real objects, and the subjective level, meaning that dream images are related to or are part of the dreamer himself (1917/2014ae, para. 130). To give one example, after the death of von Franz's father, she had a dream in which he came to visit her home. In the dream, von Franz wanted to show him around, but her father told her that he could not stay too long, since the dead and the living should not spend too much time together. He then left and she woke up. When von Franz told Jung the dream, Jung's interpretation was an objective one. He told von Franz that this was her actual dead father visiting her in the dream (Von Franz, 1984a, pp. 111-112).

A third way in which Jung claimed that the dead communicate with the living is through synchronistic events. In fact, paranormal phenomena were one of the important influences on the creation of Jung's theory of synchronicity (Main, 2004, p. 66). When giving examples for illustrating his theory of synchronicity, Jung wrote about a patient's wife who told him that before her husband died, even though she was far from him she knew he was about to die, as birds alighted outside her house, just as they had alighted outside the death chamber upon the deaths of her mother and grandmother (Jung, 1952/2014af, para. 844). She was right; the husband died at that moment. Another example that involves a dream and a synchronicity is written by Jung in relation to his wife's family:

> I dreamed that my wife's bed was a deep pit with stone walls. It was a grave, and somehow had a suggestion of classical antiquity about it. Then I heard a deep sigh, as if someone were giving up the ghost. A figure that resembled my wife sat up in the pit and floated upwards. It wore a white gown into which curious black symbols were woven. I awoke, roused my wife, and checked the time. It was three o'clock in the morning. The dream was so curious that I thought at once that it might signify a death. At seven o'clock

> came the news that a cousin of my wife had died at three o'clock in the morning. (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 334)

As the next section will argue, the way Jung arranged the discrepancy between his scientific and personal views on the actual existence of dead was by treating metaphysical statement and experiences as psychological facts. Indeed, what these three ways of communicating with the dead and Jung's scientific and private writings have in common is *experience*. As we will see, for Jung metaphysical statements can be actual impediments to further development if they are disconnected from experience (Main, 2022, p. 104). Metaphysical questions, as philosophical questions, "were generally subordinated to [Jung's] primary aim of developing viable psychotherapeutic theory and practice" (p. 103). Therefore, whenever Jung refers to actual connection to the dead, he is referring to the psychological experience of it, a psychological fact, either through an apparition, a dream, or a synchronistic event. Never as a belief or a hope.

JUNG'S PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE METHAPHYSICS OF LIFE AFTER DEATH

While Jung does not deny the possibility of a life after death, and in fact at times affirms it, he treats this statement psychologically. In the following passage, Jung explains bluntly how he treats metaphysical statements, such as a life after death:

> I quite deliberately bring everything that purports to be metaphysical into the daylight of psychological understanding, and do my best to prevent people from believing in nebulous power-words... *One cannot grasp anything metaphysical, one can only do so psychologically*. Therefore I strip things of their metaphysical wrappings in order to make them objects of psychology. In that way I can at least extract something understandable from them... and discover psychological facts and processes that before were veiled in symbols and beyond comprehension...and if in the end there should be something ineffably metaphysical behind it all, it would then have the best opportunity to showing itself. (Jung, 1931/2014g, para. 73. Italics added)

Jung's approach to metaphysical statement comes from the practical side of a psychotherapist; he wants to use these statements and experiences for healing and psychotherapeutic purposes. This gives the metaphysical statement the best opportunity to contribute to enlarging consciousness and hence to creating a *Weltanschauung* that the individual can truly relate to. As Main points out (2022), for "Jung metaphysical ideas were not necessarily valueless" (p. 104), as long as they maintain their connection to the experience, for by doing so they can be "understood in the first instance as 'statement of the psyche' and therefore as 'psychological'" (p. 104). Jung's psychotherapeutic use of metaphysical statements turns them "experienceable, factual, readable (as archetypal images), and hence intellectually and practically valuable" (p. 104).

This practical approach to the metaphysical concept of a life after death is attached to his theoretical elaboration. For Jung, who considered the notion of life after death as an archetypal idea, a primordial thought (Jung, 1930-1931/2014ad, para. 794), the psychotherapeutic

examination of an experience of death can lead anyone to come to the conclusion that at its core, the psyche connects with a form of existence that transcends space and time (Jung, 1934/2014ac, para. 815). By "its core" Jung refers to the nature of the archetype, which again, "can be known and determined only approximately" (Jung, 1952/2014af, para. 964). If there is a life after death, it is through the representations (e.g., images) of this ultimately unknown existence that we may experience it. In other words, for Jung, the psyche is a reality in its own right. When referring to the archetypal idea of life after death, Jung stated the following:

> The dead appear to exist in a sphere to which we are connected through our inner world of images. In psychological terms, what we call events in the land of the dead may actually take place in the unconscious psyche. In the traditions of many native peoples, the dream world is often the same as the land of the dead, and this connection or concordance should not be completely rejected out of hand. It would seem that the psyche, or rather the unconscious, could be the region in which the dead live on. (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 152)

However, this non-empirical approach presents clear limitations that keep many away from embracing Jung's ideas. Statements such as "Far... from being a material world, this is a psychic world" (Jung, 1933/1978c, para. 747), simply, "to Jung's more philosophically-minded critics... apt as it may be in conveying the robustness of his sense of psychic reality, goes much too far" (Mogenson, 2004, p. 90). For those open to exploring the boundaries of the psyche and existence through introspection, Jungian ideas are highly appealing. However, for others, the

clear limitations and lack of empirical evidence of these claims transform these statements as purely speculative. These critics become hesitant to embrace Jung's perspective.

For other psychotherapists, e.g., Freud, "psychic reality is a secondary reality, an epiphenomenon that is reducible in its every aspect to biology" (p. 90). Hence the idea of an afterlife for Freud or the image of a dead person in a dream "is predominately a function of the needs and wishes of the bereaved patient who is suffering that loss and who had the image" (p. 92). In his work *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) Freud makes clear that for him religious doctrines are illusions "created, born from man's need to make his helplessness tolerable and built up from the material of memories of the helplessness of his own childhood and the childhood of the human race" (Freud, 1989/1927, p. 695). Notions like God, for instance, are then wishes to counter-balance the "terrifying impression of helplessness in childhood" (p. 703). Likewise, the idea of a life after death has been a creation, a psychological construction which has as its main purpose to reduce the "senseless anxiety" (p. 694) that death brings to us.

Whereas for Paul Kugler, author of *Raids of the Unthinkable: Freudian and Jungian Psychoanalysis* (2005), "in his most significant book on the belief in ghosts and death of the dead," *Totem and Taboo* (1912-1913), Freud postulates that "fear of the dead has to do with the fundamental ambivalence of emotions in close human relations" (p. 117), for Peter Gay, Freud's writings on religious phenomena "was fueled by his principled, highly aggressive, anti-religious stance" (Gay, 1989, p. 685). Hence, Jung's psychology, that sees creating an image of life after death as "vital" (Jung, 1995/1963, p. 333) for psychological health because it can be understood as the other side of existence, would arguably seem infantile for Freud. Jung's openness to the spiritual aspect of existence is a clear contrast to Freud's reductive approach when confronting death. When the latter is looking at the past to resolve childhood trauma, the former is looking at what lies beyond our personal experience for guidance.

Irvin Yalom criticizes Freud for not paying attention to what he calls “the wound of mortality” (Yalom, 2011, p. 1), namely the ever-present fear of death. For Yalom, Freud’s emphasis on a “person’s repression of sexuality” (p. 7) is in fact “a retreat from the future and from confrontation with death” (p.19).

Yalom approaches the theme of death in therapy from an existential perspective, emphasizing the fact that existence is constantly shadowed by the awareness of the inevitable diminishing and dying of all of us (p. 1). The concentration in therapy then is given to alleviating the fear of death because it “can totally immobilize some people, often the fear is covert and expressed in symptoms that appear to have nothing to do with one’s mortality” (p.7). For Yalom, who bases his therapeutic work on rational thinking and “eschews supernatural beliefs” (p. 202) the notion of life after death is a “death-denial tale” (p. 3), which in one way or another tries to decrease the fear of the existential reality of our finitude (p. 5).

For Jung these reductive approaches miss the point that “psyche alone has immediate reality, and this includes all forms of the psychic, even ‘unreal’ ideas and thoughts which refer to nothing ‘external’” (Jung, 1933/1978c, para. 747). Freud’s and Yalom’s approaches, with their emphasis on childhood experiences and rational thinking, reduce the human psyche to personal experience and to what is observable and measurable. Notions like a life after death are seen as wishes created to avoid anxiety. Little room, if any, is given to the possibility of the real existence of a life after death. Claiming there is no life after death is just as much a metaphysical assertion as claiming there is one.

In contrast, the ontological reality of a life after death is possible in the Jungian framework, but that possibility is *treated* psychologically. Jung’s practical approach to metaphysical statements is based on the idea that the psychoid aspect of archetypes—being *indefinite* (1952/2014af, para. 964)—can be described as “transgressive.” This means that

archetypes are not limited to the psychic realm but can also manifest in non-psychic circumstances (para. 964). Thus, Jung can state that the "unconscious is limitless, unknowable, without time and space, just as the so-called 'hereafter' is described as limitless, unknowable, and outside of all notions of time and space" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 152). This, once again, poses significant challenges when examined from a purely empirical perspective.

Keeping these concepts in mind, we can now explore how Jungian psychology can be understood as an answer to the crisis of the question of life after death in Jung's time.

JUNG'S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS OF LIFE AFTER DEATH

Jungian psychology is in a unique position to deal with the question of life after death for two reasons: it claims to be a science, and most importantly, it provides a psychotherapeutic setting that takes seriously the possibility of the continuation of existence after death.

Jungian Psychology as a Science

Unlike such cultural movements of the nineteenth century as spiritualism and occultism, Jungian psychology not only claims to approach the question of whether there is life after death from a scientific perspective, but it is also actually accepted as a scientific, psychotherapeutic methodology by health departments in different countries, like Switzerland and Germany for example. As mentioned above, Jung himself "often presents himself as a metaphysical skeptic" (Main, 2022, p. 103) who adopts a strict scientific stance when it comes to occult phenomena such as apparitions and ghosts (among others, see: Jung, 1905/2014l, para. 722; 1919/2014s, para. 585; 1930-1931/2014ad, para. 680; 1933/2019, pp. 41-42). Indeed, even though privately

he could have written bold statements about life after death, throughout his life, Jung often presented his psychology as scientific and empirical (Main, 2004, p. 121). So it is as a scientist that Jung "criticises the dominant science of his day above all for its one-sidedness and inability to deal with the complexity of individual psychology" (p. 123), seeing it as "materialistic, causal, reductive, and excessively rationalistic" (p. 125). As a scientist, he advocated for a more holistic enlargement of it, since "Our practical conception of reality... [is] is in need of revision... for there is something really not quite right about the way we look at the world" (1933/1978c, para. 745)—which, I should mention again; "Contemporary science has already initiated the needed expansion itself, perhaps most dramatically in connection with the advent of quantum theory" (Kelly, 2015, p. 494). Even though Jungian psychology is often criticized for lacking sufficient empirical evidence in its claims, and Jung himself critiqued the science of his time for being overly reductive and failing to account for the human psyche in its observations, the fact remains that today Jungian psychology is recognized as a legitimate scientific and psychotherapeutic method by various health departments.

Jung's background as a psychiatrist and his self-identification as a scientist gave his psychology a reputation that can appeal to secular individuals seeking spiritual guidance while also valuing scientific progress. A clear example of this is that, even today, Jungian training institutes in various countries are officially recognized as accredited psychotherapeutic institutions by their respective health departments. In fact, I obtained Swiss federal licenses to practice psychotherapy after graduating from the International School of Analytical Psychology in Zurich, a Jungian institute. All basic health insurances in the country recognize my work as psychotherapist. Jungian psychology, with its presentation as a scientific psychology that goes all the way back to Jung himself, has been able from its beginnings to present itself as a *tertium quid* that, always claiming its scientific approach, incorporates the possibility of life after death within

its framework and thus welcomes such questions as whether or not there is life after the death of the body. This approach, for the ordinary person caught between the Church and science, can be most welcome.

It is pertinent to mention here that it would be misleading on my part to present Jungian psychology as a well-accepted scientific psychology by mainstream thinking or academia. On the contrary, Jungian psychology has not shared the same level of acceptance as scientific psychology. Jung's intention was "to establish psychology as a *science* that... recognizes the suprapersonal (as manifested in the soul) as well as psychology's metaphysical references" (Von Stuckrad, 2022, p. 82). Partly because of this holistic, non-reductionist approach, Jungian psychology has typically been rejected in academia (p. 78). In academia still "today there is a general bias that favours a form of naive neuro-fundamentalism: it is automatically assumed that the brain can explain everything about human performance" (Grosso, 2014, p. 45). One example of this is to look at how many universities around the world offer PhD degrees in Jungian psychology. Few.[13] Another striking example is my experience, again in Switzerland, at the University of Geneva, where in 2017 I took a course in the history of psychology as part of the requirements for the recognition of my American psychology degrees in Switzerland. Jung was not mentioned once in this history course. Neither was Flournoy, who as mentioned above was in 1891 appointed professor of psychophysiology of such a university (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 127). Instead, psychologists like Wundt, Watson, and of course Jean Piaget (1896- 1980) were widely covered. One can surmise that because the psychologies of Jung and Flournoy, in academic

[13] In terms of university departments that have a staff of Jungian scholars that offer PhD's in Jungian studies, I am aware that only the University of Essex, and Pacifica Graduate Institute—which is a private university in California—offer these. In the faculty of Arts and Humanities, University College London has a group of scholars dedicated to studies related to the history of Jung's works.

circles, are seen as not being scientific enough, the lecturer of this course preferred not to even mention these two Swiss psychologists.

Having said that, the fact remains that some universities do offer a PhD in Jungian psychology; that there are Master's degrees in Jungian psychology;[14] and that Jungian psychology is covered in clinical psychology courses in different universities around the globe. And again, most importantly, Jungian psychotherapeutic methods have remained current and recognized by health departments as a psychotherapeutic method.

Jungian psychotherapy

The second reason for arguing that Jungian psychology could, in Jung's days and still today, be seen as an answer to the crisis of life after death, is because of the psychotherapeutic method it provides. In addition to dealing with the psychological results of a death, such as grief, mourning, or depression,[15] as probably all other psychotherapeutic schools do,[16] what is distinct about Jungian analysis is not only that it takes life after death as a real possibility but also that, regardless of whether the individual is suffering from the loss of a loved one, questioning the real possibility of life after death in therapy and actually creating a view of it is seen as a necessity for psychological growth and psychological wholeness. I argue that Jungian psychotherapy attempts to bring death to life, for it sees it not as an end but as the other half of wholeness.

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[14] To name a few examples, I am aware that the University of Essex, Texas A&M University, Pacifica Graduate Institute, Universidad Mayor (Chile), are universities that offer a Master's degree in Jungian studies.

[15] As Chapter 2 shows, Jungian analysts have written about death in relation to psychotherapy predominantly interms of mourning and grief (Kast, 1982; Savage, 1989; Mogenson, 1992; Mathes, 2005; Olson, 2021).

[16] Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's popular book, *On Death and Dying* (1969), gives a general view of how most if not all psychotherapeutic approaches can deal with psychological implications around the theme of death, such as fear of death, and the stages of psychological steps in front of death: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance.

In reflecting on what makes Jungian analysis distinct from other schools of psychotherapy, Stein proposes four essential features to describe the central Jungian approach. He calls them the four pillars of Jungian psychoanalysis. These are the individuation process, the therapeutic relationship, active imagination, and dream interpretation (Stein, 2022, p. 340).

The Individuation Process

The individuation process, being "archetypal" (p. 341), is universal and defined as "becoming a unified but also unique personality, an individual, an undivided and integrated person" (Stein, 1998, p. 175). Stein writes of two psychological movements preceding the individuation process: separation and union. In the first movement, occurring in the first half of life, there is a separation from identification with the family of origin to develop a sense of self, ego-consciousness, and to develop a suitable persona (Stein, 2022, p. 358). In the second half of life, one integrates aspects of the personality left behind by the ego. The union of "the opposites create a new sense of self and a new identity made up of disparate parts of the self, conscious and unconscious" (p. 359). As mentioned above, Jung writes that the goal of the individuation process is not about ego development solely, but to help "the patient becomes what he really is" (Jung, 1935/2014q, para. 11) through "the progressive assimilation of unconscious contents" leading "ultimately to the integration of his personality" (para. 27). In a successful individuation process, the self becomes the new center of the personality.

As presented by Stein, the individuation process is traditionally thought to be "the realisation of a potential self that begins its existence in the mother's womb and ends at death at whatever age has been achieved" (Stein, 2022, p. 342). However, towards the end of his life Jung stated that he was convinced that psychological development continues after death (Jung & Jaffé,

2023, p. 149). With the help of a clinical example, Chapter 4 will show how the Jungian framework allows one to wrestle with the possibility of psychological growth continuing after the death of the body. We will also see in Chapter 4 that the individuation process shows Jung's primary concern: "psychological wholeness" (Main, 2020, p. 23), understood as "the union of the conscious and unconscious personalities" (p. 22), which at "its deepest levels" (p. 24) shows "Jung's holism" (p. 24) being "cosmic and mystical" (p. 24). From this perspective the individuation process not only can lead to the realization that death and life are two sides of one underlying existence but does not end with death.

The therapeutic relationship

The therapeutic relationship is central to Jungian analysis and is considered "a sacred space, or temenos" (Stein, 2022, p. 361). It not only consists of the relationship between analyst and analysand but also of "the cooperation of the unconscious and the self in the process that makes the critical difference between success and failure in analysis" (p. 361). From this perspective, the Jungian analyst then is expected to have done his or her own inner work, which would have exposed him or her to the unconscious psyche and its depths, opening the therapist to be receptive to non-rational information and hints from deeper layers of the psyche. Indeed, for Jung, "the crucial thing [in therapy] is no longer the medical diploma, but the human quality" (1929/2014r, para. 174).

Since "studies generally suggest that the quality of the therapist is more important than the theory being used" (Stein, 2022, p. 339), one can only imagine that there must be a difference in doing psychotherapy with a therapist who is open to and serious about the question of whether there is or not life after death, compared to with one who is not. Indeed, as "the relationship

between analyst and client is the container that houses the therapeutic process and makes psychological change and development possible" (p. 361), the personal experiences of the analyst with the question of life after death become most important. Stein argues that the faith of the analysts, "based on personal experiences of the transcendent" (Stein, 2022b, p. 239) helps them to sustain "the pressures of taking a deep dive into the unconscious with their patients" (p. 239). But "in the strongest sense" (p. 250), the faith of the Jungian analyst, understood as "knowledge of and trust in transcendent factors that lie entirely beyond the psychological realm and extend into what Jung called the psychoid dimension, and even beyond that to altogether trans- or non- human material and spiritual dimensions of reality" (p. 250), has a direct impact on how therapy can address the question of immortality. In other words, the analyst's philosophy "guides the life of the therapist and shapes the spirit of his therapy" (Jung, 1942/2014, para. 180).

Chapter 2 of this thesis, which argues that Jungian psychotherapy is, among other things, a preparation for death, will give the example of a Jungian analyst who, based on her faith on the transcendent, was able to help hundreds of AIDS patients in their preparation for death.

Active imagination

Active imagination, rooted in Jung's personal experience, helps the individual "to bring conscious and unconscious together and so arrive at a new attitude" (Jung, 1957/2014ak, para. 146). According to Stein, active imagination "is a form of self-engagement, and it requires the intentional introversion of psychic energy" (Stein, 2022, p. 405). It is a "kind of meditation" (p. 406) "similar to dreaming, only it is carried out while the subject is awake and fully conscious and therefore has control over the frame" (p. 407). The individual needs to find a space of solitude, in which "a dream image" or a "mood or a feeling" is mentally evoked. Instead of

letting the image go and emptying the mind, as many traditions of meditation advise doing, in active imagination the individual is told to actively engage with the image. In explaining how he works with these fantasies, Jung wrote the following:

> I therefore took up a dream-image or an association of the patient's, and, with this as a point of departure, set him the task of elaborating or developing his theme by giving free rein to his fantasy. This, according to individual taste and talent, could be done in any number of ways, dramatic, dialectic, visual, acoustic, or in the form of dancing, painting, drawing, or modeling. The result of this technique was a vast number of complicated designs whose diversity puzzled me for years, until I was able to recognize that in this method I was witnessing the spontaneous manifestation of an unconscious process... (1946/1978a, para. 400)

Jung's *Red Book* (2009/2012) is mostly composed of active imaginations. Shamdasani, editor of *The Red Book*, argues that the dead that Jung's "I" interacts with in different parts of *The Red Book* are "the dead. This is no mere metaphor. This is no cipher for the unconscious or something like that. When he talks about the dead he means the dead. And they are present in images. They still live on" (Hillman & Shamdasani, 2013, p. 2). Shamdasani's statement probably rests on Jung's idea that the dead seem to reside in a realm that we access through our inner world of images. Psychologically speaking, what we refer to as occurrences in the land of the dead may actually unfold within the unconscious mind. (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 152).

Active imagination can be understood as a Jungian psychotherapeutic technique that at its deepest levels—since "image *is* psyche" (1931/2014g, para. 75)—can help the individual interact with figures that one might call the dead. This Jungian technique is another way of understanding how Jungian psychotherapy can be seen as a response to the crisis of life after death. Jung's relationship to the dead, including through his active imagination, is the focus of Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Dream analysis

Stein writes that dream analysis, or dream interpretation, can tell us "what is going on below the surface of consciousness" (Stein, 2022, p. 383) and "also about possible developments for the future" (p. 383). Jung postulated that the "unconscious has a direction that is aimed toward the development of the personality" (p. 404) and dreams "build the way to psychological wholeness" (p. 383).

As previously mentioned, Jung understood that dreams could provide representations of the afterlife as "hints" (Jung 1963/1995, p. 332) from the unconscious. A hint is a symbol, charged with meaning, and not "a sign that disguises something generally known. Its meaning resides in the fact that it is an attempt to elucidate, by a more or less apt analogy, something that is still entirely unknown or still in the process of formation" (1917/2014ae, para. 494). The Jungian analyst, then, interpreting a dream of a dead figure has the opportunity to ask whether the dream might have a subjective meaning (the dead person symbolizing a part of the dreamer's psyche) or an objective interpretation (the dead person symbolizing the actual dead person). Jung himself occasionally interpreted dreams of dead figures objectively (von Franz, 1984a, p. xv).

The Jungian analyst is invited to wrestle with the interpretation of such phenomena, because “if an idea about [the afterlife] is offered to me—in dreams or in mythic traditions—I ought to take a note of it” (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 332-33). The Jungian analyst, through dream interpretation, is not only psychotherapeutically equipped to avoid dismissing the question of whether there is a life after death, but is actually encouraged by Jung to constantly wrestle with building up an idea of the hereafter. Jung writes how not only his dreams but also the dreams of others helped him to create, revise or confirm his views on a life after death. (p. 336) He gives the example of a dream of a pupil of his that, few months before her death dreamt that she needed to teach the dead about her recent experiences. The dead in the dream were very interested in what she had to say, because the experiences in life seem to be the decisive ones (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 336). This dream helped Jung theorize that the dead wait for answers from the living, since it is only in life that consciousness can be increased. This, according to Shamdasani, is an aspect of what he calls Jung’s “personal cosmology”: Jung’s hypothesis about life after death (Shamdasani, 2008, pp. 18-21). This statement will be studied in Chapter 4.

The four pillars of Jungian psychoanalysis demonstrate how the Jungian therapeutic approach is designed to engage with the question of life after death. Whether for individuals from the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, or for people today, the Jungian framework encourages this exploration, viewing it as essential to the process of individuation.

“New Thought Must Be Tested”

It would be misleading to claim that Jungian analysis offers a definitive answer to the question of life after death. As previously noted, this inquiry is limited by empirical boundaries and relies on subjective experience. One may need to accept uncertainty or, more accurately,

acknowledge that the answer remains incomplete or unresolved. Any answer is only temporary; it is subject to updates, revisions and confirmations (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 336). It is the creation of a worldview, and as such a process in which "new thought must be tested to see whether or not it adds something to our *Weltanschauung*" (Jung, 1928/2014c, para. 700). However, the goal of the therapeutic process is not to arrive at definitive answers; rather, it involves a deep engagement with unconscious material, aiming to gain insights that are not solely rational but also emotional and connected to archetypal images. This engagement is intended to expand consciousness in the pursuit of wholeness. (Stein, 2022, p. 16).

Even though towards the end of his life Jung stated that he was completely certain of one's own survival (cited in Shamdasani, 2008, p. 23), and that psychological growth extends beyond death (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, 149), he, too, continued revising and testing his hypothesis about life after death.

Meaning in Confronting Death

An important therapeutic implication that may come up from the process of seriously taking up this question of whether there is life after death is meaning. Main has argued (2022) that "Jung's "process of individuation, through predominantly a form of reenchantment, can also be seen as a recursive process of enchantment, disenchantment, and reenchantment" (p. 11). Main notes that during the period examined in this chapter, science viewed the world as fundamentally meaningless, which directly impacted the portrayal of the individual.

> Since science, despite its spectacular explanatory successes, is unable to discern any meaning in the physical world, the physical world appears to be fundamentally devoid of

> meaning. And since, in dominant versions of the disenchanted worldview, life and consciousness are deemed to be epiphenomena of psychical processes, they too, in all their manifold expressions, are also ultimately devoid of meaning. (pp. 72–73)

This meaningless existence can lead to serious psychological problems, which indeed are not unusual to see in the therapeutic space. Main writes that opposing this view of the world, Jung proposed that "there is inherent meaning in the world" (p. 97). "The key to this conjecture", Main argues, "is the shift from viewing archetypes as purely psychic to viewing them as psychoid, that is, as expressions of a psychophysically neutral substrate of empirical reality, what Jung called the *unus mundus*" (p. 97).

As mentioned above, it is precisely through this theoretical shift that the mystery and meaning of life after death is welcomed in the analytic room of a Jungian psychotherapist, since the notion of the *unus mundus* invalidates the separation between death and life, and since "in death" Jung experienced "meaning fulfillment" (Jung, 1973, p. 358). Meaning will be reviewed in more detail in Chapter 4.

In summary, approaching experiences with death—whether through a dream, active imagination, or a synchronistic event—is not only within the theoretical and therapeutic capabilities of the Jungian analyst, but is also considered to foster meaningful psychological wholeness.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued that Jungian psychology can be understood as an answer to the crisis of life after death. The crisis arose in part because of the decline of religion and rise of science, since around the seventeenth century, which meant that the metaphysical idea of a life after death has become increasingly difficult to conceive. I have argued that Jungian psychotherapy can be understood as a space where the idea of life after death is understood and experienced as a real possibility, and that this is so not only because Jung's psychological framework allows one to think of a possible life after death, but also because Jung himself encouraged psychotherapists and patients to do so. The latter is particularly palpable when one reflects on what Jung's closest collaborators did regarding what I am proposing. As mentioned in the Introduction, analysts like von Franz, Hannah and Jaffé, three very close colleagues of Jung, took seriously his words about creating a conception of life after death. They did so by writing works on the subject. The mystery of death was something to work with and spend time on, to avoid the essencial loss that occurs when one does not imagine an afterlife (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 333).

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate that Jungian psychotherapy, in addition to being a rather typical psychotherapeutic approach that aims at healing the individual from psychopathological symptoms, can be thought of a psychological space that aims to bring death to life. Bringing death to life means creating a *Weltanschauung* that includes an image of life after death, to wrestle with it, to test it. Since the idea of life after death is an archetypal idea, it is healthy and wise to return to it (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 794); death is understood not as an end but as the other half of a whole. Jungian psychotherapy's goal is to integrate the opposites of the human personality and of existence into consciousness. Death is one of these opposites.

Understanding Jungian psychoanalysis as a therapeutic space that can assist individuals in gaining insights from the hereafter is a claim that many find difficult to accept. My argument, much like Jung's proposed psychological framework, has clear limitations when evaluated from a strictly empirical standpoint. This approach emphasizes the individual inner experience, giving it paramount importance because, for Jung, existence as a whole can be experienced internally. Whereas Jung's approach is practical and therapeutically helpful, the attitude of the individual that undergoes it is key. However, this concept remains unimaginable for many, as mainstream and academic psychology often find it difficult to accept this perspective on the individual.

The following chapters are chronologically divided into three different periods of Jung's life and works. Now that the historical background in terms of Jung's psychology in relation to life after death has been explored, Chapter 2 will expose the theme of life after death in the first period of Jung's life: his first works on death as a university student. The influence of the crisis of life after death will be clear and, I believe, compelling in Jung's university lectures.

CHAPTER 2

Analysis as a Preparation for Death

To understand early Jung, we must read late Jung.
To understand events of 1896,
we must turn to his writings of 1946.
James Hillman

INTRODUCTION

This epigraph from Hillman reveals what this chapter demonstrates: important psychological concepts from Jung published late in his life find roots in Jung's intuitions, experiences, reflections, and interests from his early and young adult life. In this chapter, I will connect an idea that Jung articulated in 1958, at the age of eighty-three, with concepts he introduced in his university papers written between 1899 and 1902, when he was in his early twenties. This idea is Jung's understanding of the individuation process as a preparation for death. Indeed, late in his life Jung came to see his therapeutic approach as a preparation for death, as philosophy was for Plato. Foundational concepts to propose this idea, my findings argue, are found in writings that Jung would present in his *Zofingia Lectures* and in his doctoral dissertation during his years as a university student. In other words, as Hillman suggests, a thread can be found in Jung's latest ideas which goes back all the way to the years before the turn of the century. There are three concepts that Jung wrote about in the *Zofingia Lectures* that I link with his understanding of the individuation process as a preparation for death: the intelligence and the independence of time and space of the soul; teleology; and the experience of the *unio mystica*. This chapter aims to show that these concepts offered Jung the intellectual groundwork to later

assert that his therapeutic process can assist individuals in preparing for death. Furthermore, these same concepts provided him with a theoretical foundation to advocate for the immortality of the soul and to propose that the ultimate goal of life is death.

This chapter is important for various reasons. First, Jung's psychotherapeutic approach as preparation for death is something that has not been extensively written about. This chapter aims to enlarge the literature on this subject. Second, studying Jungian analysis from the perspective of preparation for death and linking this idea to early writings of Jung allows the reader to appreciate Jung's constant preoccupation and dedication to the subject, as the quote from Hillman suggests. Third, the psychotherapeutic implications of seeing analysis as a preparation for death can be beneficial for psychotherapeutic work, particularly with older patients, as Jung repeatedly wrote (1931/2014g, para. 69; 1930-1931/2014ad, para. 792; 1934/2014ac, para. 803). And a fourth reason for this chapter's relevance is what Shamdasani has called the misconception of the Freudocentric reading of Jung (1998): seeing Jung's psychology as a result of his interaction and intellectual exchanges with Freud. The present chapter, as with Chapter 1, not only supports Shamdasani's argument but goes even further by linking these early concepts with ideas that Jung proposed late in life, showing a certain constancy in Jung's thinking when it came to death. Indeed, Jung wrestled with the questions of death and life after death throughout his entire life, even as a young man.

As I mentioned in the Introduction, I am by no means arguing that the individuation process is only a preparation for death or that preparation for death is even its main purpose. Being a Jungian analyst and a Swiss licensed psychotherapist, I witness the benefits of framing psychotherapy from a Jungian perspective in terms of psychological healing every day. My intention here is simply to add yet another dimension to Jungian analysis, one that has not received enough attention from Jungians but one that Jung himself explicitly writes about.

This chapter is divided into three sections: the first section discusses Jung's early concept of soul, the second discusses Jung's early concept of *unio mystica*, and the last looks at Jung's early concept of teleology. Each of these sections is divided into three subsections: first, what Jung wrote about and how he presented the concept; next how Jung presented and maintained the concept later in life when arguing that analysis is a preparation for death; and lastly, how contemporary Jungians use the concept still today.

JUNG'S *PRIMA MATERIA*

However, before exploring the three sections of Jung's university writings, it is important to mention an important notion about a work created years after Jung finished his university studies: *The Red Book*. At the beginning of *The Red Book* Jung writes the following phrases:

> My soul, where are you? Do you hear me? I speak, I call you—are you there? I have returned, I am here again. I have shaken the dust of all the lands from my feet, and I have come to you, I am with you. After long years of long wandering, I have come to you again. (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 127)

The phrases "I have *returned*, I am here *again*... I have come to you *again*" (p. 127. Emphasized added), indicate that Jung's connection to his soul existed before this period of "long wandering." Hence the idea of *returning* to his soul. Later in *The Red Book* Jung continues talking to his soul; "I wandered for many years, so long that I forgot that I possessed a soul" (p.

131). Partly following on these phrases, Shamdasani writes that the overall theme of *The Red Book* "is how Jung regains his soul" (Shamdasani 2009/2012, p. 48). Indeed, Jung *re*gains his soul since he was in contact with it before writing *The Red Book*. Jung stopped writing in his personal journals in 1902 (Shamdasani, 2009/2012, p. 131), a year that marked the beginning of many extroverted activities for him. Indeed, in the summer of 1902 Jung left the Burghölzli clinic to spend time in Paris studying under Janet (Shamdasani, 2012, p. 42). Upon his return to Zurich, Jung engaged in arguably the busiest and most rapidly changing times of his life. As Deirdre Bair, author of *Jung: A Biography,* writes (2003), in February 1903 he got married to Emma Rauschenbach; in early spring of 1904 Jung was back at Burghölzli substituting doctors on military duty, to then become once again officially part of the Burghölzli medical staff as Eugen Bleuler's (1857-1939) first assistant. A couple of months later, in December 1904, Jung was given the position of adjunct lecturer at the University of Zurich. During that same month in 1904, Emma gave birth to their first child, Agathe Regina. By then the Jungs were living in Burghölzli, where Jung would be immersed in his research on the association experiment and on his theory of complexes. His lectures at the University of Zurich became so popular that they were moved to the largest room available at the time. His lectures were open to the public, and this seemed to have facilitated a local audience to begin following his academic teachings. In addition, Jung at this time also gained the respect from social authorities in the country, such as officers from the Zurich courts, who would seek Jung's testimony on different proceedings of criminals. His comments were held with the highest regard (Bair, 2003, pp. 81-95). It is thus safe to say that by 1905, Jung not only had achieved a local and international reputation as one of the most prominent psychiatrists of the time, but also was very busy with many different extroverted duties. Hence, most likely this acute feeling of soul's absence emerged as he realized on his excessively extroverted, and often conflict-laden life during these years. Jung stated that starting

in 1902, “I belonged to men and things. I did not belong to myself” (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 131). *The Red Book,* then, can be seen as the testimony of the return to belonging to himself, through the reconnection with his soul. Jung’s writings from the *Zofingia Lectures* show that he was not only connected to his soul but actually publicly defended its existence and immortality.

I mention *The Red Book* here because it “can be seen to form the foundation for the theories that were to come in Jung’s later psychological writings and seminars” (Stein, 2017, p. 5). In fact, in Jung’s own words, “The years when I was pursuing my inner images were the most important in my life—in them everything essential was decided... It was the *prima materia* for a lifetime’s work” (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 225. Emphasized added). Indeed, *The Red Book* is widely understood as the origin, as it were, of Jungian psychology. However, without denying the experiences recorded in *The Red Book* as central experiences that define his psychology, what I am here proposing is that an important foundation of Jungian psychology, namely the understanding and experience of soul and its immortality, is found in writings prior to the experiences recorded in *The Red Book*. Renos Papadopoulos has also argued that Jung first experienced “the Other” (Papadopoulos, 1984, p. 56), referring to “the other personality within himself whose contribution he valued very much” (p. 57) for it offered him “profound experiences” (p. 57), already in childhood. Likewise, von Franz, when introducing “Thoughts on Christianity,” implicitly suggests that we can understand Jung’s argument that we are intrinsically religious beings when we look at his childhood, since “from earliest youth [Jung] had had deeply numinous religious experiences” (von Franz, 1983, xxiii). Indeed, Jung’s family background, childhood experiences, and early interest in spiritualism not only should not be underestimated but should also be understood as foundational influences on Jung’s mature thoughts on soul, death, and life after death.

Even though Jung's family background in relationship to paranormal phenomena has been covered already by several authors (Ellenberger, 1970; Jaffe, 1984, 1997; Charet, 1993; Shamdasani, 2003; Main, 2004, among others), it is important to mention that Jung began studying experiments on table tilting as early as June 1895, between the end of his Gymnasium and the beginning of university, at the age of nineteen, six months before the death of his father (Hillman, 1976, p. 126). Bair supports this by stating that it was Emilie, Jung's mother, who organized the first three séances. During the same summer that Jung's father Paul's condition was deteriorating, Emilie found herself gravitating to the home of her sister-in-law, Celestine, whose husband Rudolph, Emilie's brother, was also lying on his sickbed. Emilie and Celestine not only experienced the illnesses of their husbands but also reported "unexplainable happenings" in both of their homes, including nighttime visitations by spirits and poltergeists. In June 1895, what is thought to be the first séance was held. The participants were Helene (better known as Helly, daughter of Celestine and Rudolph), Aunt Gusteli, Luggy Preiswerk, Emilie and her son Carl Gustav Jung. Both Paul and Rudolph were unaware of these meetings. The first séance was so successful that a second séance was planned a few weeks later. During this second séance Jung used a homemade Ouija board. It became a custom to hold the séances on Saturday nights, and they were a much-anticipated event for the participants (Blair, 2003, pp. 47-49).[17] In fact, due to his family background, it is difficult to imagine that Jung did not think or wonder about life after death already in childhood, since stories of spirits of the dead visiting the living were "the stories I had heard again and again in the country since my earliest childhood" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 119).

[17] In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* Jung states that the first time he thought about life after death was six weeks after the death of his father, when he appeared to Jung in a dream (1963/1995, p. 117). The above argues against this claim.

In terms of Jung's childhood experiences, as we saw in the Introduction, Jung grew up in a world where ghost stories were not seen as foreign—in fact, it was quite the opposite; he grew up in an environment where stories of uncanny happenings were taken for granted during his childhood (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 121).

The influence of the cultural movement of spiritualism on Jung's thoughts on life after death and overall psychology has already been covered in Chapter 1. In short, I have argued that partly following research questions that thinkers like Myers, James, and Flournoy had, Jung's psychology can be understood as responding to fundamental questions spiritualism had from a psychological perspective. Among others, Main (2004, pp. 66–72), Charet (1993, pp. 231–283), Taylor (1980, pp. 157-162) and Shamdasani (1998, pp. 217- 122) have argued that spiritualism had an important influence in Jung's psychology.

Therefore, what I am also proposing in this chapter is that as central as *The Red Book* period was for the elaboration of Jungian psychology, the ideas found in Jung's university years reveal that core notions such as soul, death and life after death are found before *The Red Book*, and that these ideas stayed true for Jung for the rest of his life and became intellectual foundations for later arguments that his psychotherapeutic approach can serve to prepare for death. With this in mind, we can now explore the first public lectures of Jung's.

JUNG'S UNIVERSITY WRITINGS

Jung was admitted to the medical school of the University of Basel on April 18, 1895, at the age of nineteen, and joined the Basel section of the colour-wearing fraternity *Zofingia* on May 18, 1895, where it was a tradition for the members to give lectures in areas of specific interest to the students (von Franz, 1983, xiii). From 1896 to 1899 Jung delivered four lectures to

his *Zofingia* colleagues. These lectures, in addition to providing a good presentation of the early philosophical, psychological, biological, and religious conception that were of interest to Jung (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 197), show Jung's deep interest in the soul and its survival after death (Stephens, 2011, p. 22). According to Marie Louise von Franz, they show "how consistent his views of what that youthful time are with his later thought and which questions tortured him at that time—questions for which he found answers in later life" (von Franz, 1983, p. xvi).

In his first lecture, "The Border Zones of Exact Science" delivered on November 1896, Jung forcefully criticized the inertia, stupidity and conventionality of scientists who adhered to the philosophy of materialism (von Franz, 1983, p. xvi). In his second lecture, "Some Thoughts on Psychology," delivered in May 1897, in addition to arguing the necessity of bringing morality back to science, he postulated the existence of a soul that extends itself beyond consciousness. In his third lecture, "Thoughts on the Nature and Value of Speculative Inquiry," presented in the summer of 1898, Jung delivers a philosophical presentation, including the aims and meaning of science and the senselessness of external success, and goals that may lead to man's happiness. Jung's last lecture at the Zofingia, "Thoughts on the Interpretation of Christianity, with Reference to the Theory of Albrecht Ritschl," delivered on January 1899, is a criticism to theologians, especially Albrecht Ritschl, that attempted to reintegrate Christianity as a rational and ethical system. In addition, in this lecture Jung strongly defends the notion of *unio mystica*. All in all, in these lectures Jung exposed debates between materialism and spiritualism, and materialism and vitalism. It was only through defending the existence of a vital principle, irreducible to chemical and physical terms, that he could deliver an acceptable epistemology for spiritualism that squared the postmortem existence of the soul with biology (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 200).

Towards the end of his medical studies in Basel, at the beginning of the school year in 1899, Jung sent an application to the Burghölzli psychiatric clinic of the University of Zurich. In October 1900 Jung received a letter stating that he had been accepted at the hospital and that he needed to present himself in December of that same year, ready to work. Bleuler, then head of the asylum, had signed the letter (Bair, 2003, p. 58). While at the Burghölzli clinic, influenced by Bleuler, Jung wrote his doctoral dissertation "On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena" (1902/1957). His dissertation consists of his study of a medium. One of the important concepts he uses in his dissertation is the concept of teleology.

Writings from Jung's *Zofingia Lectures* and from his doctoral dissertation are the main subjects of the following pages.

SOUL

Soul is a concept found in Jung's writings from the beginning to the end. The very first time that Jung wrote about soul was in the *Zofingia* lecture, "Some Thoughts on Psychology" (1897/2014ab), at the age of 21. This is the earliest published document where Jung addresses the issue of the autonomy of life, which he connects with his main intention in the lecture, which is "to establish the immortality of the soul" (Shamdasani, 2003 p. 200). The text shows the different influences Jung had in postulating his first definition of soul. "Some Thoughts on Psychology" incorporates philosophical references[18] from Strauss, Schopenhauer, and Kant

[18] Jung read Schopenhauer and Kant during his university years, and in his Zofingia lectures quotes from both philosophers are often found. Charet argues that Jung used Kant's precritical studies on spiritualism and Schopenhauer's comments on these as sources for what he called Jung's Kantianism, the philosophical foundation for the erection of his psychology of spiritualistic experience (1993, p, 287). He argues that Kant's theory of knowledge, explained in his *Critic of Pure Reason* (1781), helped Jung to conceptualize that soul belongs to the world of noumena, since space and time are not objective realities, but rather *a priori* forms of human perception. Having said that, Jung differed from Kant, since the wall he created between the noumena and phenomena was at times transparent, hence the possible conscious experience of the soul. In addition, in Kant's *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*

(Jung, 1897/2014ab, para. 67-142). Borrowing from vitalistic ideas, he introduces notions such as "intellectual being" (para. 87) or a "life force." (para. 95) which "extends far beyond our consciousness" (para. 96). Lastly, the influence of spiritualism[19] from the nineteenth century is evident as Jung suggests the existence of "spirits" (para. 74-81) dwelling beyond our bodies and of "another world" (para. 74-81) with which the soul is already connected in life. Furthermore, to argue for the idea of a soul that exists after the death of the body, Jung provides a substantial amount of documentation about materialization and extrasensory demonstrations, including hypnotism, clairvoyance, and telepathic phenomena, obtained from spiritualistic research (para. 117-134).

Jung's first definition of soul calls it "an intelligence independent of space and time" (para. 96), and later adds,

> The soul does not represent a force in a material form, and thus there can be no judgement concerning it. But everything that cannot be judged subsists outside the concepts of space and time. Thus sufficient reason exists for us to postulate the immortality of the soul. (para. 99)

(1766), a text used by Jung in his Zofingia talk, the philosopher argues that the soul could "occupy a given time and space simultaneously with a material substance... and identify spirit and soul and concluded that communication between spirit and body might be possible through inner states by a kind of telepathic rapport" (Charet, 1993, p. 105). Lastly, Schopenhauer's "Essay on Spirit Seeing," another text used repeatedly by Jung in his Zofingia lectures, addressed the possibility of communication with the spirit of a dead person.

[19] Besides the thinkers interested in spiritualism mentioned in Chapter 1, one spiritualist who can clearly illustrate how Jung adopted the thesis of spiritualism in order to enrich his own conception of soul is Carl du Prel (1839-1899). In his famous book, *The Philosophy of Mysticism* (1885), du Prel studies dreams, as for him "dreams established the atemporal and spatial existence of the soul" (Shamdasani, 2012, p. 30). Following the spiritualistic thesis that proposed the existence of the soul as an entity that survives the bodily death and is able to communicate with the living through certain techniques, e.g., those acquired by mediums, du Prel believed that in their capacity for healing, dreams are a symbolic representation of the psyche and "truly disclosive of the soul" (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 125).

Jung's first definition of soul then contains three aspects: it is immortal, intelligent, and independent from time and space. The next section shows how all "three aspects of the psyche are concepts that Jung retained throughout his life" (von Franz, 1983, pp. xvii- iii).

Immortality of soul

It would take years before Jung would write or speak so explicitly about the immortality of the soul as he did in "Some Thoughts on Psychology." In fact, "between Jung's *Zofingia Lectures* and his first publications, there are considerable discontinuities in language, conceptions, and epistemology, as the far-reaching speculations on metaphysical issues characteristic of the *Zofingia Lectures* largely disappeared" (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 201).[20] Indeed, after the *Zofingia Lectures*, Jung's approach to this and other metaphysical statements was rather consistent: "...I approach [metaphysical] problems in a way that has often been charged with 'psychologism.' If 'psychology' were meant, I should indeed be flattered, for my

[20] It is possible to imagine that Jung's changes of language and conceptions were due not to a lack of interest or intuition in the immortality of the soul, but partly due to Jung's apprehension of his reputation. His *Zofingia lectures* were not always well received or understood by his colleagues and he often felt lonely (von Franz 1983, xiii). Talking about this, Jung wrote:

> This insight proved dangerous, because it tricked me into fits of superiority, misplaced criticism, and aggressiveness, which got me deservedly disliked. This eventually brought back all the old doubts, inferiority feelings, and depressions — a vicious circle I was resolved to break at all costs. No longer would I stand outside the world, enjoying the dubious reputation of a freak. (Jung, 1963/1995, p, 121)

Not only had Jung rarely experienced being accepted or understood by his peers during childhood (p. 34) and adolescence (p. 47), but he now wanted to stand "inside of the world" and most importantly he wanted to build a career in psychiatry and become a known scientific doctor. Such themes as soul and its immortality were not going to be accepted or appreciated in the scientific medical circles of the time. Jung refrained from publicly discussing such topics until 1927. And it was only in 1944 that he would be as straightforward as he was in his university years concerning this topic.

aim as a psychologist is to dismiss without mercy the metaphysical claims of all esoteric teachings... One cannot grasp anything metaphysically, one can do so only psychologically" (Jung 1931/2014g, para. 73). *The Red Book* is of course an exception, but again, *The Red Book* was not published until 2009, and themes like the immortality of the soul or the existence of real spirits, defended by Jung in the *Zofingia Lectures*, were approached by Jung from a purely psychological perspective.

The event that brought back the straightforward language first seen in the *Zofingia Lectures* about the immortality of the soul was his near-death experience in 1944. This will be examined in Chapter 4, but for now it is important to notice that the visions that Jung experienced convinced him of immortality. Following his near-death experience, Jung viewed life as a temporary assumption, a working hypothesis for the time being (Jung, 1973, p. 358).

In addition, four years after his visions, in 1948, during the speech Jung delivered at the inauguration of the Jung Institute in Zürich, he clearly indicated that, among other themes, students should focus their research projects on pre- and post-mortal phenomena, since they are closely related to the relativization of time and space (1948/2014a, para, 1138). Towards the end of his life, in private conversations with Jaffé, Jung stated that his "burning interest now is of course the situation after death, and what one can experience there" (p. 155) since conscious development continues after death (p. 149).

In brief, even though there was a gap between the *Zofingia Lectures* and his visions from 1944 in terms of how direct his language was about his conviction of the immortality of the soul, Jung's late statements about the immortality of the soul can be traced back to his *Zofingia Lectures*. My research and this chapter argue that even though Shamdasani states "It is not clear at what point Jung became convinced of survival" (p. 20) and that that the near-death experience

from 1944 "seems to have given Jung complete conviction concerning the survival of bodily death" (p. 24), it would be misleading to relate Jung's conviction of life after death solely to his near-death experience from 1944. His conviction seems to have been always there, even since childhood, as Chapter 3 shall argue.

Soul as Independent from Time and Space

Defining soul as independent from time and space during his university years allowed Jung to later argue for a part of the human psyche that rests beyond rational understanding and that in part is ultimately immortal. For instance, towards the end of his life, Jung writes that if we ever assume a life after death, "we cannot conceive of any other form of existence except a psychic one; for the life of the psyche requires no space and no time" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 351). In 1934, Jung writes that the psyche (soul)[21] "under certain conditions... [can] break through the barriers of space and time precisely because of a quality essential to it, that is, its relatively trans-special and trans–personal nature" (1934/2014ac, para. 813). In 1931 he writes that while "everything else that exists takes up a certain amount of room, the soul cannot be located in space" (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 669). In 1960 Jung wrote that "like all our concepts, time and space are not axiomatic but are statistical truths. This is proved by the fact that the psyche does not fit entirely into these categories... We may therefore expect postmortal phenomena to occur which must be regarded as authentic" (Jung, 1976, p. 561) In his essay "The Soul and Death" Jung writes,

[21] At times Jung used the terms soul, psyche, and anima interchangeably (Jung, 1931/2014d, para, 662-664).

> The fact that we are totally unable to imagine a form of existence without space and time by no means proves that such existence in itself is impossible... It is not only permissible to doubt the absolute validity of space-time perception; it is, in view of the available facts, even imperative to do so... anyone should draw the conclusion that the psyche, in its deepest reaches, participates in a form of existence beyond space and time, and thus partakes of what is inadequately and symbolically described as "eternity" (1934/2014ac, para 814-5).

Furthermore, as we will see in more detail in Chapter 4, the concepts of the independence of time and space were foundational for the construction of arguably Jung's most daring theory: synchronicity. Shamdasani states that the theory of synchronicity "was clearly an attempt to render parapsychological phenomena comprehensible in terms of physics, and as such, opened the door to postmortem transcendence" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 21); he adds that the relativization of time and space, articulated in the expansion of the theory of the archetype, "could be considered as the basis for an epistemology of survival" (p. 21). Whether Shamdasani'[22] when introducing the theory for the first time to the public, one of the examples Jung gives to argue for the phenomenon of synchronicity was the near-death experience of a woman who saw "the entrance to another world" as she was about to die in the hospital (1952/2014af, para. 950-951). Jung argues that her perception of this other world, death, should not be immediately denied,

[22] Contrastingly, Main (2004) argues that even though paranormal phenomena were an important source and influence for the creation of the theory of synchronicity; philosophy, astrology, and the *I Ching* were among other influences for the theory. In addition, synchronistic phenomena can be understood not only as arguments for a life after death, but for a range of different experiences noted by Jung that do not find explanations in mainstream psychology.

precisely “in view of the existence of ESP, i.e., of perceptions independent of space and time which cannot be explained as processes in the biological substrate” (para. 954).

In summary, the concepts of the independence of time and space first exposed in the *Zofingia Lectures* were not only used to argue for the immortality of the soul in late years by Jung, but also for the formulation of theories such as synchronicity.

Soul as Intelligence

Another relevant premise in Jung’s early concept of soul is its intelligence. The soul is “intelligent” (1897/2014ab, para. 97) states Jung in the *Zofingia* lecture, meaning it is “purposeful in its acts” (von Franz, 1984b, p. xviii). This concept of soul will later not only have a major influence in the development of Jung’s psychological framework and psychotherapeutic method, but indeed also in his view of preparing for death and life after death.

In *The Red Book* soul appears as a guiding figure that instructs Jung first to wait, leading him later to the desert of his own self (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 141). Stein describes Jung’s interaction with his soul in *The Red Book* as a “relationship between himself and a highly autonomous figure with a mind of her own and capable of manifesting as a serpent and a dove as well as a woman” (Stein, 2022, p. 14). Writing about the individual that has connected with his soul, Jung states in 1932 that to “the patient it is nothing less than a revelation when something altogether strange rises up to confront him from the hidden depths of the psyche—something that is not his ego and is therefore beyond the reach of his personal will. He has regained access to the sources of psychic life, and this marks the beginning of the cure” (1932/2014y, para. 534). In *The Red Book*, autonomously, first guiding him to the desert as a preparation to meet the images of his inner world, first experienced as the murder of Siegfried and then by meeting Elijah and

Salome, soul helped Jung regain access to the source of psychic life. In *The Red Book*, in short, soul is described as an autonomous guide to Jung's "I" in his "exploration of the inner images" (Jung & Jaffé, 2003, p. 150) that again, according to Shamdasani, *transformed* Jung; and prepared him for his own death (Shamdasani, 2020, p. 104).

Later in life, in his essay "Paracelsus as a Spiritual Phenomenon" Jung defines soul, or anima, as follows:

> The anima belongs to those borderline phenomena which chiefly occur in special psychic situations. They are characterized by the more or less sudden collapse of a form or style of life which till then seemed the indispensable foundation of the individual's whole career. When such a catastrophe occurs, not only are all bridges back into the past broken, but there seems to be no way forward into the future. One is confronted with a hopeless and impenetrable darkness, an abysmal void that is now suddenly filled with an alluring vision, the palpably real presence of a strange yet helpful being, in the same way that when one lives for a long time in great solitude the silence of darkness become visible, audibly and tangibly alive, and the unknown in oneself steps up in an unknown guise. (1942/2014n, para. 216)

The fundamental purpose of the soul is to connect the individual to the inner world, "to all the 'true instincts' of which Jung speaks and to the archetypal images of the collective unconscious" (Stein, 2006, p. 119), with the goal of self-development and growth. Towards the end of his life Jung stated the following about soul's intelligence:

> If the human soul is anything, it must be of unimaginable complexity and diversity, so that it cannot possibly be approached through a mere psychology of instinct. I can only gaze with wonder and awe at the depths and heights of our psychic nature. Its non-spatial universe conceals an untold abundance of images which have accumulated over millions of years of living development and become fixed in the organism. My consciousness is like an eye that penetrates to the most distant spaces, yet it is the psychic non-ego that fills them with non-spatial images. And these images are not pale shadows, but tremendously psychic factors... Besides this picture I would like to place the spectacle of the starry heavens at night, for the only equivalent of the universe within is the universe without, and just as I reach this world through the medium of the body, so I reach that world through the medium of the psyche. (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 418-419)

The intelligence of the soul can be found from Jung's early writings until his last texts. The purpose of the soul, which is to connect to these "tremendously psychic factors" (p. 419) first written about in his *Zofingia Lectures*, is a notion that Jung maintained throughout his life.

JUNG'S USE OF SOUL AS A PREPARATION FOR DEATH

Understanding soul as immortal, intelligent, independent from time and space, played a central, fundamental role in Jung's psychotherapeutic approach. More importantly for this chapter, towards the end of his life Jung came to frame the individuation process as a preparation for death, and soul plays a central role in that understanding.

A couple of years after the publication of *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, in 1958, and three years before his death, in a conversation with Jaffé, his secretary, Jung postulated that his

psychotherapeutic method, namely the individuation process, served him to prepare to die. In this conversation, recorded by Jaffé, Jung said:

> My exploration of the inner images serves the same purpose for me as philosophy did for Plato: it is a preparation for death. In a way it helps me to avoid ending my life in retrospection. Some old people are completely caught up in reminiscence and retrospection. They are imprisoned in their memories, while for me it is rather a case of *reculer pour mieux sauter*: I am trying to see the thread that had led me into my life, into the world, and will lead me out again. (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, pp. 150-151)

The first part of this paragraph states that Jung's exploration of his inner images served him as a preparation for death, as philosophy did for Plato. By exploration of inner images Jung refers to the very core and ultimate goal of analysis: to pay close attention to the emergence of archetypal images of the collective unconscious as they appear in dreams, in active imagination or in synchronistic events, to integrate them into consciousness to be able to have a more whole experience of existence. The exploration of the inner images first happened to Jung during the period he immersed himself in creating *The Red Book*, where, as we saw above, his soul became his guide.

After his visions from 1944 Jung described again how his soul helped him to see that his psychotherapeutic approach can be seen as a preparation for death. In a letter from November 1945 to Cary Baynes, Jung writes:

> The soul seems to detach from the body pretty early and there seems to be almost no realization of death. What follows is well-nigh incredible... *Whatever we do and try in analysis is the first step towards that goal*. That is the only thing, which has accompanied me across the threshold. (Jung, 1973, p. 357. Emphasis added)

Because of the above, seeing Jungian analysis as a preparation for death, Shamdasani has reframed analysis as an *ars moriendi.* "Not how is your life going," he writes, "but how is your death coming along, would be the critical question from this perspective" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 24).

Soul then not only became a guide to Jung in his exploration of inner images but also the reason for Jung to state that the goal of the second half of life is death. Jung stated that "I am trying to see the thread that had led me into my life, into the world, and will lead me out again" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, pp. 150-151). Soul, being immortal, leads the individual out again from this world, and analysis can become "the first step towards that goal" (Jung, 1973, p. 357). Death is a goal because it is a beginning, it is where soul detaches from the body and leads it to "an adventure greater and more unexpected than anything one could dream of" (Jung, 1945. Cited in Shamdasani, 2008, p. 24).

Jungian analysis is best suited for people in the second half of life, since most of Jung's psychotherapeutic writings address the adult individual. In fact, Jung stated that "Fully two thirds of my patients are in the second half of life" (1931/2014b, para. 83). Stein writes that "the most significant and interesting contribution of Jungian psychology to the idea of psychological development is what it says about the part of life that follows the second stage of individuation"

(Stein, 2016, p. 132). Working with so many adults in the contemporary second half of life influenced Jung to state:

> As a doctor, I make every effort to strengthen the belief in immortality, especially with older patients when such questions come threatening close. For, seen in correct psychological perspective, death is not an end but a goal, and life's inclination towards death begins as soon as the meridian is passed. (1931/2014g, para, 68)

For Jung, the idea of soul being immortal, independent from time and space, as the idea of a life after death, is an immemorial idea, so from a psychotherapeutic perspective, "It is only possible to live the fullest life when we are in harmony with these symbols; wisdom is a return to them" (1930-1931/2014ad, para, 794). Therefore, "why should not the older man prepare himself twenty years and more for his death?" (1934/2014ac, para. 803)

JUNGIANS' USE OF SOUL AS A PREPARATION FOR DEATH

Even though Jung was explicit about viewing the individuation process as preparation for death, most contemporary Jungians do not adopt this concept in their writings.[23] As mentioned in the Introduction, contemporary Jungian psychotherapists have used Jung's ideas to speak about dealing with the loss of a loved one. Grief and mourning are indeed experiences that can, when

[23] An exception is my recently published book *Confronting Death*, where as editor, I invited recognized Jungian analysts from different parts of the world to respond to the following questions: do you prepare for death? If so, how? Have the writings of Jung helped you to prepare for death? To my surprise, the responses from the people I contacted was enthusiastic. Analysts such as Murray Stein, Ann Casement, Ann Ulanov, John Beebe, and Joe Cambray, among others, accepted to be part of the book, in part because of the lack of literature on the subject from Jungian analysts.

worked through, prepare an individual for death. However, what I am arguing in this chapter is that Jung came to see the confrontation with his inner images, regardless of the death of a loved one, as a preparation for death. Analysis in itself is, or can be, a preparation for death. By taking seriously in analysis the different experiences that one may have with death, through either dreams, synchronistic events, apparitions, or near-death experiences, the individual is invited to create a *Weltanschauung* that includes a vision of death. This in itself is a process that prepares one for death. Having said that, Jungians, particularly through imagination and dream analysis, find Jung's concepts helpful when dealing with death. For the rest of the chapter, I include writings from different internationally respected Jungian analysts to illustrate how Jung's concepts are useful when confronting death.

Today, Jungian analysts continue to use the concept of the soul, as Jung described it in his *Zofingia Lectures*, when working psychotherapeutically with death. In my recent book *Confronting Death* (2024), Claire Costello writes how in the 1980's, she started working in California "during the initial AIDS crisis, when almost all were dying, before there was hope" (Costello, 2024, p. 95). At the time, most of her patients were young men trying to survive AIDS. Costello witnessed and mourned the deaths of over 200 men during the seven years she worked with men with AIDS. She would drive

> through the Bay Area knocking on patient doors, one home after the other, three days a week for the next seven years. I entered the privacy of my patients' universes weekly or bimonthly—often for about two years, sometimes shorter, until death came. We created a temenos, a sacred space, in living rooms, around kitchen tables, or in bedrooms—a chair

> at their bedside, and later still I followed my patients into hospitals, skilled nursing facilities or hospices. (Costello, 2024, p. 95)

During these seven years, the soul was a fundamental pillar of strength for Costello. She writes that "the work to cultivate analytic presence would entrain me to trust the liminal experiences of soul that traveling the land of in-between required as I cared for my patients dying of AIDS" (p. 100). And then adds, "It was through the reading of Carl Jung that I was taught to trust the relationships I had with the spiritual, to know my vocation was in line with my soul" (p. 101). When working with death, the concept of soul as defined by Jung already in his *Zofingia Lectures* allowed Costello not only to trust in the experience of her own soul facing death but also to "feel the numinous quality of the dying process as a person began to step out into the beyond, then come back for brief periods to seek comfort and courage for the final journey" (p. 96). Jungian psychology with its emphasis on the spiritual and soulful aspects of existence helped Costello "bear what was unbearable and taught me to trust that I was being companioned by the invisible world, through the tears of grief" (p. 99).

John Beebe, emphasizing the concepts of intelligence and immortality of the soul, writes about the importance of the presence of soul at the moment of death. He writes that

> the anima, though the archetype of life itself, is not something to be left behind by our dying. She needs to be allowed to be part of it. This was a gift of the pioneering work of Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, who broke the deal of silence about death that was being dispensed to patients who were not even told by the doctors of the 1950s that they were dying, since that was deemed sadistic. But it also is what the Jungian analysis of death

> and dying needs to take aboard. The return of the soul to accompany someone who is dying, enables the soul to exercise its immortality. *L'Atalante*, like the Egyptian and the Tibetan Books of the Dead, should be a document for the ages. The dying body wants to be with the anima that has loved and ensouled it in life, and the anima wants to be with the dying body. (Beebe, 2024, pp. 410-411)

Considering the concept of the independence of time and space, that Jung included in the definition of the soul at the *Zofingia Lectures*, Joseph Cambray writes that

> if death is taken as a realm of ultimate mystery beyond ordinary human understanding, then synchronicities may indeed offer a portal to the afterlife, in the sense that they compel us to consider the impact of an acausal coincidental meaning of certain events, which only comes through reflection after the events have been "lived" in an immediate manner. (Cambray, 2024, p. 139)

Writing about a dream of his, Cambray states that "occasionally dreams involving deceased friends or relatives have synchronicities associated with them, which tend to give a profound feeling of existence of the soul" (p. 126). The dream he had provided "comfort and felt a preparation by the world for death, revealing the deep bonds that transcend our mortality" (p. 127).

Greg Mogenson writes that since for Jung “long after the body is gone, soul carries on” (Mogenson, 2004, p. 92), the process of mourning can be understood as a mythologizing about life after death (p. 108). He states that

> Death, from Jung’s point of view, is too important *not* to talk about. Although well aware of the impossibility, on epistemological grounds, of ever acquiring certain knowledge of the “hereafter” or of the status of the soul after death, Jung stressed the importance of formulating a myth of death. (p. 108)

One last example is Susan Olson, author of *Images of the Dead in Grief Dreams, A Jungian View of Mourning* (2021), who writes how soul not only survives the death of the body but in fact can become a guide for the living. Writing about a dream, she describes how the dead

> emerged from the alchemical vessel and assumed the role of messenger and guide. Now she seems comfortable in that role, crossing thresholds with ease and acting very much at home in the dream space. She sets the dream’s action in motion and introduces new images, showing the other dream figures how to play, move, drive, and even kiss. She greets Michael, arranges a meeting between him and his mother, and introduces him for me. Finally, she guides us down tree—lined streets and seems to take great pleasure on the ride. Her mediating energy moves us into, through, and out of various locations and levels of experience. It is the catalyzing agent that “drives” the dream to its surprising conclusion. (Olson, 2021, p. 90)

The purpose of this discussion on the soul is not only to demonstrate that Jung's concern with death and life after death can be traced back to his university years, but also to highlight how his early concept of the soul remains a valuable and creative resource for contemporary Jungian psychotherapists. For both Jung and Jungian analysts, the process of individuation can be seen as a preparation for death, with the soul playing a central role in that preparation.

UNIO MYSTICA

Jung first wrote about the *unio mystica* in 1898, in his *Zofingia* lecture "Thoughts on the Interpretation of Christianity, with Reference to the Theory of Albrecht Ritschl," at the age of twenty-three. Jung described the *unio mystica* as "the direct relationship of a human being to God and Christ" (1898/2014ai, para 255. Also, para. 272), which has served as an "illuministic or subjective knowledge... [to] all medieval mysticism" (para. 257). Later Jung said that anyone who calls himself a Christian will conclude that the *unio mystica* is possible and added that in "its train follow the entire mystical tradition, the problems of asceticism and of ecstatic knowledge, and those of the divinity of Christ and the infallibility of his teachings" (para. 290). In short, the *unio mystica* for Jung is the possibility for the individual to consciously experience transcendence.

This understanding of *unio mystica* seems consistent with Jung's later definitions of it. For example, in 1912 Jung writes that the *unio mystica* is "an incubation with the Saviour" (Jung, 1912/1991, para 438). In "The Psychology of the Kundalini Yoga" (1932/1996), pointing to the direct union with transcendence, Jung writes that there is a stage of psychological development in Hindu tradition called *manipūra*, which Jung understands as …

> the center of the identification with the god, where one becomes part of the divine substance, having an immortal soul. You are already part of that which is no longer in time, in three-dimensional space; you belong now to a fourth-dimensional order of things where time is an extension, where space does not exist and time is not, where there is only infinite duration—eternity. (p. 31)

So even though he does not explicitly use the term *unio mystica* in "The Psychology of the Kundalini Yoga" Jung repeats his conviction that the ego can experience union with the transcendence consciously. Later, in "Psychology of the Transference," Jung writes that the direct union with the self, "the total, timeless man... is expressed most forcibly by the mystics in the idea of the *unio mystica*, and above all in the philosophy and religion of India, in Chinese Taoism, and in the Zen Buddhism of Japan" (1946/2014x, para 532).

Tracing the concept of *unio mystica* back to the *Zofingia Lectures* allows us to appreciate how this concept influenced Jung to later present the notion of *unus mundus*. Again, remembering Hillman's epigraph, in 1955-1956, in *Mysterium Coniunctionis,* Jung describes a psychological state of development where the possibility of experiencing existence outside time and space is possible. Jung used the perspective of the alchemist Gerhard Dorn (ca. 1530-1584). For Dorn, "the third and highest degree of conjunction was the union of the whole man with the *unus mundus*" (1955-1956/1970, para. 760). Jung writes that by *unus mundus* Dorn meant "the potential world of the first day of creation, when nothing was yet 'in actu,' i.e., divided into two and many, but was still one" (para.760). Therefore, the division between life and death does not apply to the *unus mundus* because the latter is understood as the "transcendental psychophysical

background" (para. 769). In addition, Jung writes that this stage of development is "not a fusion of the individual with his environment, or even his adaptation to it, but a *unio mystica* with the potential world" (para. 767).

In short, the *unio mystica* can be understood as a temporary state, an experience of union with "the background of our empirical world" (para. 769). Jung understood this experience as indeed potentially enhancing psychological development.

By linking Jung's early essay "Thoughts on Christianity" (1899) with his later work, *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (1955-1956), we can see that the core ideas behind his mature concept of individuation were already forming during his university years. The mystical experience of union with what Jung later termed the *unus mundus* reveals that as a student, he was already contemplating concepts that would later support his claim that one can experience what is "symbolically described as 'eternity'" (1934/2014ac, para. 815). Thus, individuation, with its focus on confronting inner images, can be a vehicle for death preparation, and mystical experiences—something Jung staunchly defended even in his student years—serve a similar purpose.

JUNG'S USE OF *UNIO MYSTICA* AS A PREPARATION FOR DEATH

Having the direct experience of the *unio mystica* is an unusual thing. Throughout his life Jung experienced different events that could be considered mystical experiences (see among others, Main, 2004, pp. 66-72; Moris, 2024, pp. 3-9); however, the one event that he described as a direct contact with the *unus mundus* happened during his near-death experience in 1944. This experience will be the central theme of Chapter 4, but for now it is important to mention that Jung understood the visions during his near-death experience as "utterly real... of absolute

objectivity" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 326) and that "there was a pneuma of inexplicable sanctity in the room [of the hospital], whose manifestation was the *mysterium coniunctionis*" (p. 326).

Ten years before his heart attack, one year after the publication of "The Soul and Death" in 1934, Jung was asked by Walter Evans-Wentz, an American anthropologist, to write a commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* or *Bardo Thödol*. Jung described the book as

> at bottom, nothing less than an initiation of the dead into the *Bardo* life, just as the initiation of the living was a preparation for the Beyond …
>
> The only "initiation process" that is still alive and practiced today in the West is the analysis of the unconscious as used by doctors in the therapeutic purposes. (Jung, 1935/2014r, para. 842)

Having said that, Jung's visions during his near-death experience were indeed transformative for Jung. Bruce Greyson, a leading psychiatrist and researcher on near-death experiences, writes that "near-death experiences (NDE's) are vivid, realistic, and profoundly life-changing experiences occurring to people who have been physiologically close to death, as in cardiac arrest, or psychologically close to death, as in accidents in which they feared they would die" (Greyson, 2021, p. 17). This describes well how Jung understood his experience, as profoundly life-changing. In these visions Jung experienced "giving up the crazy will to live... fall[ing] into a bottomless mist, then the truly *real* life begins with everything which you were meant to be and never reached... once inside you taste of such completeness and peace and fulfillment that you don't want to return" (Jung 1973, p. 358). Hence, Jung's near-death experience or rather the experience of "the *mysterium coniunctionis*" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 326)

led him to postulate that “Whatever we do and try in analysis is the first step towards that goal [death]” (Jung, 1973, p. 357).

In summary, Jung’s experiences of the *unus mundus* in connection with death, a concept rooted in the *unio mystica*, that led him to believe analysis is inherently a practice that prepares individuals for death. This topic will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 4.

JUNGIANS’S USE OF *UNIO MYSTICA* AS A PREPARATION FOR DEATH

Direct contact with transcendence, a *unio mystica* as Jung describes in the *Zofingia Lectures*, is a rather unusual thing, but indirect contact with it is not as unusual. Jung gave room to these experiences by developing his theory of synchronicity, and Jungians have used it as a way of dealing with death. For instance, Stein writes that synchronicity at its core “connects time and eternity” (Stein, 2017, pp. 33) permitting the unfolding of the experience of ultimate unity. This sense of unity, between now and eternity, is how we can experience Jung’s *unus mundus*. The possibility of speaking about life after death, and even the experience of it in life within Jung’s psychological framework, can be seen by the following example.

Stein recounts an experience he had with his wife Jan as they were driving back home from a funeral. The funeral was for a dear friend of theirs, a Jungian analyst, whose husband, also a Jungian analyst, had died a couple of years prior. In life, Stein writes, this couple was inseparable; they had met in their teens years and had married in their early twenties, “you never saw one without the other” (p. 32). As Stein was driving back home and was speaking to his wife about their close friends, remembering the many occasions they had shared, they found themselves “in a kind of reverie, I suppose, about our missing friends” (p. 32). As they were in this reverie state, an unusual thing happened: as they were entering into a road through the forest

up in the hills, they saw in front of them a woman who stepped out of her car and waved her arms to stop them. Stein was confused, he had never experienced that before on that road and it has never happened again ever since. He stopped the car, and as he was wondering what all of that was about, they saw a couple of Mandarin ducks[24] padding across the road. Slowly and with dignity, the ducks crossed the road and disappeared into the forest. This was a powerful moment, and Stein writes that

> [t]here was no doubt in our mind that this was a signal from the other side- an inseparable couple in life and an inseparable couple in death. Imagination instantly told us who they were, and we were in an intermediate realm where psyche and matter come together in a moment of transcendent meaning. The seal was broken, and we were present to another world. We felt ourselves to be a part of this world and the next. (pp. 32-3)

Hence, for Stein, "individuation in its fullest expression is a lasting impression of the timeless moment, symbolized as light... Time and eternity fuse together, and consciousness is permanently transformed. This can happen at any time in life... and most impressively at the point of death" (Stein, 2024, p. 23). This transformation that Stein writes about prepares him for death, since "my life" Stein writes, "has shown a distinct pattern of meaningful coincidences. I call this grace. In retrospect, I would say that most, if not all, of the most important decisions in my life have had the element of synchronicity at their center" (p. 37) and as "a consequence, I have the strong feeling that a hidden hand has guided my destiny" (p. 37).

[24] Mandarin ducks are known for their monogamy for life.

Another example comes from Jungian analyst Costello, already mentioned above. To prepare herself for the work with men dying from AIDS, Costello engaged in what she calls "spiritual practices of renewal" (Costello, 2024, p. 98). Her first vision quest happened in the sacred Marble Mountains of California. The goal of this quest "was to seek understanding and inspiration to be with the dying" (p. 99). For three days, she went on a hike with no food or water, five miles from anyone. She decided not to tell anyone where she had gone. After the first couple of days, Costello says "I began to feel what my patients might feel as they lay in their weakened state prior to death. My mind was clear; my body was hardly able to move" (p. 99). She experienced dreams, visions, and "extraordinary realizations came, as I looked all night into the stars and encountered a brown snake as I swam in a stream" (p. 99). As she started the return journey from where the black and white marble of the mountain joined, she felt that she had been "guided by a force that protected" her during these days and nights. Back in the camp, she was taken directly into the sweat lodge and given a sip of water. Later, she learned that one of her patients had died during the same days she was in her retreat. She writes that "This synchronicity of returning to life and leaving life helped me realize that there was wisdom in what had been experienced that may reveal itself over time" (p. 100).

Reflecting on her experience, Costello concluded that "Moments of synchronicity, analysis, and consultation were my salve. There were moments of sanctity, glimpses of grace that held me to this earth and allowed me to reach for Spirit" (p. 99). And adds that "Sacred practices offered by earth-based religions, when practiced for the intention of understanding healing and broadening one's capacity to observe and communicate with the invisible realms, guided by wisdom teachers, helps prepare us for death: our own and others" (p. 99).

Experiencing the invisible realms, just like the hidden hand that Stein feels has guided his life, can be understood as how Jungian analysts prepare themselves and their patients for death.

Taking synchronistic events seriously as experiences that point to a unitary system, the *unus mundus*, and integrating them to consciousness is one of the ways Jungian analysts bring death to life.

The *unio mystica* is a concept that Jung first wrote about in the *Zofingia Lectures*, presenting to his student colleagues the notion that direct contact with transcendence is possible. This idea became one of the foundations for Jung's later development of his theory of synchronicity and notion of the *unus mundus*. It is through reexperiencing these events in analysis and integrating them as real possibilities that Jung, and later Jungians, prepare for death.

TELEOLOGY

The elaboration of a teleological perspective is seen in Jung's doctoral dissertation as he interpreted the spirits of the dead that allegedly spoke through the medium he observed. Jung's doctoral dissertation, "On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena," published in 1902, is the psychological analysis of his spiritualistic medium cousin, Helene. Specifically, during these séances different spirits of the dead were evoked by the medium, and Jung's notes of these meetings, his observations and psychological interpretations are what constitute his dissertation. Jung himself, writing the fifth revision of "The Psychology of the Unconscious" in 1942 (first published in 1917), stated; "I observed for a long period a case of a somnambulistic in a young girl... For one acquainted with my scientific writings it may not be without interest to compare this forty-year-old study with my later ideas" (1917/2014ae, para. 199).

One of the important concepts that we see in Jung's dissertation is what he called "subconscious personalities" (1902/1957, para. 134). Helene claimed to become possessed by

different spirits of the dead. These spirits would communicate through her, and Jung would observe and record the messages. Even though Jung admitted that during the period his dissertation was written he "thought that after all there might be ghosts" (1925/1989, p. 5), in his doctoral dissertation he adopted a psychological perspective to understand this phenomenon and concluded that these spirits are "a new character formation, or attempts of the future personality to break through" (1902/1957, para. 136). To interpret these alleged ghosts in terms of future personalities of the individual wanting to reach consciousness meant that Jung had adopted a teleological position, stating that these subconscious personalities were beginning "to lead an independent existence as autonomous personalities" (para 136). In addition, Jung also calls these phenomena of double consciousness "teleological hallucinations" (para. 136).

As shown by Shamdasani (2003),[25] the teleological automatism interpreted by Jung was influenced by his reading of Flournoy's *From India to the Planet Mars, a Case with Multiple Personalities with Imaginary Languages* (1900). Indeed, Jung writes that "I was still a doctor at the Burghölzli when I read his book *From India to the Planet Mars*, it made a great impression on me" (Shamdasani, 1998, p.117). In fact, after reading Jung's dissertation, Flournoy wrote a very complimentary letter praising the psychological interpretation that Jung developed in his work:

> M. Jung shows that Ivenes is nothing other than the future adult personality, in the course of elaborating itself... All in all, M. Jung thinks that, with natures of heredity and neuropathic temperament like his subject, somnambulistic phenomena at the time of puberty (experiences of double consciousness, etc.) can have a teleological character:

[25] For more see Shamdasani`s "From Geneva to Zürich: Jung and French Switzerland." The Journal of Analytical Psychology, 1998.

> they express the transformations and neoformations of character, and represent the irruptions of the future personality through the obstacles which unfavourable circumstances oppose to her normal development. (Flournoy, 1903, pp. 85-86)

Flournoy made clear that the teleological approach Jung adopted equipped him to state that the psyche, regardless of the ego, is purposeful and striving for development.

Jung's adoption of a teleological perspective on the energy of the psyche was probably also influenced by his reading of vitalism theories, as seen in his *Zofingia* lecture "The Border Zones of Exact Science," delivered in 1896. Theories like the one from the neo-vitalist biologist, Driesch, as mentioned above, who concluded after his experiments in 1892 that the living organism is constantly striving toward a state of wholeness, carried through by a teleological life force, were probably influential ideas to Jung who, as pointed out by von Franz (1984), was aware of these concepts at the time of his lectures at the *Zofingia* fraternity. In addition, as mentioned by Ann Addison, author of *Jung's Psychoid Concept Contextualized* (2019), by the time of his student lectures Jung described organic phenomena from a vitalistic perspective. Jung explained the vitalist principle as governing not only mental functions such as consciousness but also vegetative functions of the body. Addison writes that Jung "linked the vital principle with the purposeful and organizational activity of the soul," demonstrating the important influence that neo-vitalistic views had on Jung's construction of his concept of the psyche and its autonomous urge for development (Addison, 2019, pp. 18-20).

In summary, in his doctoral thesis we see that Jung was familiar with the concept of teleology and used it to understand psychic phenomena. The following section shows how this became a fundamental notion for his later understanding of psychological preparation for death.

JUNG'S USE OF TELEOLOGY AS A PREPARATION FOR DEATH

Teleology is a foundational concept Jung uses to formulate that the goal of the second half of life is death. To best understand this, it is helpful to examine an essay Jung wrote in 1930 called "The Stages of Life," where he framed life as being divided into two halves, illustrated by the trajectory of the sun:

> I must take for comparison the daily course of the sun—but a sun that is endowed with human feeling and man's limited consciousness. In the morning it rises from the nocturnal sea of unconsciousness and looks upon the wide, bright world which lies right before it in an expanse that steadily widens the higher it climbs in the firmament. In this extension of its field of action caused by its own rising, the sun discovers its significance; it will see the attainment of the greatest possible height, and the widest possible dissemination of its blessings, at its goal. In his conviction the sun pursues its course to the unforeseen zenith, unforeseen, because its career is unique to the individual, and the culminating point could not be calculated in advance. At the stroke of noon, the descent begins. And the descent means the reversal of all the ideals and values that were cherished in the morning. The sun falls into contradiction with itself. It is as though it should draw in its rays instead of emitting them. Light and warmth decline and are at last extinguished. (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 778)

Driven by a teleological force from within, the first half of life can be understood as an "expansion of life, usefulness, efficiency, the cutting of a figure in society, the shrewd steering of

offspring into suitable marriages and good positions" (para. 789). But the second half of life has a different goal: starting at noon or at the age of thirty-five or forty, as Jung shows, the psyche's goal is to return to a state of repose, death (para. 798). The teleological perspective that Jung adopts permitted him to propose that the psyche, independent from the ego, has a direction and a goal. As Jung states, "for enlightenment or no enlightenment, consciousness or no consciousness, nature prepares itself for death" (1934/2014ac, para. 808). It is up to the ego to realize it and live accordingly. Jung worked with many older patients and witnessed how some old people in the second half of life continued to live by the values and goals of the first half. For him, this is a terrible psychological mistake. When Jung writes that some "old people are completely caught up in reminiscence and retrospection. They are imprisoned in their memories" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, pp. 150), he means that:

> Natural life is the nourishing soil of the soul. Anyone who fails to go along with life remains suspended, stiff and rigid in midair. That is why so many people get wooden in old age; they look back and cling to the past with a secret fear of death in their hearts. They withdraw from life–process, at least psychologically, and consequently remain fixed like nostalgic pillars of salt, with vivid recollection of youth but no living relation to the present... The negation of life's fulfillment is synonymous with the refusal to accept its ending. Both mean not wanting to live, and not wanting to live is identical with not wanting to die (1934/2014ac, para. 800).

For the old person, looking back is a natural and healthy phenomenon, according to Jung. People in old age begin evaluating their past, their accomplishments and failures, the things they did and did not do. Jung considers this quite normal. In fact, when Jung says that he

prefers "to *reculer pour mieux sauter*" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 151) he indicates that he too participates in the act of remembering the past; however, he does it with the purpose of being ready when facing death. His act of looking back serves him to better look at the future. The unhealthy aspect of turning back is *staying* there, becoming "imprisoned in memories," trying to live and achieve the same goals as in the first half of life.

But according to Jung, the old person also looks to the future, thinks and fantasizes about it, not just the past. Jung understands these fantasies as anticipations of death (Jung, 1934/2014ac, para. 808). He writes:

> Thoughts of death pile up to an astonishing degree as the years increase. Willynilly, the ageing person prepares himself for death. That is why I think that nature herself is already preparing for the end. Objectively it is a matter of indifference what the individual consciousness might think about this. But subjectively it makes an enormous difference whether consciousness keeps in step with the psyche or whether it clings to opinions of which the heart knows nothing. (para. 808)

Indeed, Jung strongly argues that the second half of life has its own agenda, and the individual must pay attention to the signs life shows him as he enters into this phase of life, since "for the ageing person it is a duty and a necessity to devote serious attention to himself" (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 785). The signs of entering the second half of life usually involve a crisis: a depression, a lack of interest in what before was meaningful, a divorce, or the death of a parent. In 1930, Jung wrote about the crisis of midlife as signifying the beginning of the second half of life. A rite of passage, as it were. But in addition to writing about it only as the start of another

phase in life, he framed the crisis as preparation for death. He writes: “we see that in this phase of life—between thirty-five and forty—an important change in the human psyche is in preparation” (para. 773) for death, since death is the goal of the second half of life, and “shrinking away from it is something unhealthy and abnormal which robs the second half of life of its purpose” (para. 792). From this perspective, from the “middle of life onward, only he remains vitally alive who is ready to *die with life*. For in the secret hour of life’s midday the parabola is reversed, death is born” (1934/2014ac, para. 800). Being prepared to die with life could be seen, from this perspective, as a beneficial result of an individuation process. Jung’s understanding of death being the goal one must look forward to in the second half of life is so strong that he actually advises one should prepare for death (para. 803) Thus, looking back and trying to live following the values of the first half of life would be seen as betrayal of nature, going against an innate force that demands the opposite.

Jung writes that “life is teleology *par excellence*; it is the intrinsic striving towards a goal, and the living organism is a system of directed aims which seek to fulfill themselves” (para. 798). And this can be seen in how Jung, practically speaking, approaches death: as nature fulfilling itself. Jung, who was “concerned [with the philosophical question of] how best to live” (Main, 2022, p. 103), insisted that seeing death as a goal is healthy and natural. The opposite, he claims, is neurotic. He writes that it is “as neurotic in old age not to focus upon the goal of death as it is in youth to repress fantasies which have to do with the future” (Jung, 1934/2014ac, para. 808). For the ageing person, recognizing the fantasies about the future, including the one of death, can help him or her to live better. It is practically and psychotherapeutically advisable to see death as a goal to live a better life, for “it seems that the unconscious is all the more interested in *how* one dies; that is, whether the attitude of consciousness is adjusted to dying or not” (para. 809). In an interview for the BBC with John Freeman in 1959, Jung said that he had

observed that the unconscious disregards death as a complete end. Jung treated many old people and their dreams often show continuation. He consequently states that it is healthier to live life as if one would have to spend centuries living. He then says,

> Of course, it's quite obvious that we're all going to die, and this is the sad finale of everything; but nevertheless, there is something in us that doesn't believe it apparently. But this is merely a fact, a psychological fact. It simply is so... And I think that if you think along the lines of nature then you think properly. (Jung, 1977b, p. 438)

When Jung writes that dying "has its onset long before actual death" (1934/2014ac, para. 809), he refers to dreams that are of change, not of an end. "As a rule," Jung writes, "the approaching end was indicated by those symbols which, in normal life also, proclaim changes of psychological condition- rebirth, symbols as changes of locality, journeys, and the like" (para. 809). By exploring the symbols of the unconscious Jung realized that the unconscious is not presenting images of ending, but of change. And to me, this is essential for understanding Jung's idea about seeing death as a goal. The unconscious disregards death, as Jung stated in the BBC interview. That is why I argue that when Jung says, in his conversation with Aniela Jaffé in 1958, "I am trying to see the thread that had led me into my life, into the world, and *will lead me out again*" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, pp. 150-151), he understood that only by following nature, by following the teleological movement of the psyche, one "lives properly" (Jung, 1977b, p. 438).

In summary, much like his ideas of the soul and *unio mystica*, it is clear that Jung adopted the concept of teleology during his university years. These early ideas became foundational for his later argument that death is the ultimate goal of life. Teleology was not a concept Jung

adopted due to his midlife crisis, his encounters with Freud, or even his heart attack in 1944. Instead, it partly originated from his early readings of neo-vitalistic theories and Flournoy, when he was deeply engaged in studying occult phenomena and the spiritualists' claims about life after death. This underscores the enduring relevance of Jung's early interest in spiritualism, shaped by his family background and childhood experiences, in developing ideas central to his later work—such as viewing his psychotherapeutic approach as a preparation for death.

JUNGIANS' USE OF TELEOLOGY AS A PREPARATION FOR DEATH

Arguably, the most important use that Jungian psychotherapists have acquired from the concept of teleology is what Jung concluded in terms of death being the goal of the second half of life. Since death is born in midlife, death *is* with us, not only as a reminder that we are going to die, but as a reminder that life is precisely about dying. As Hillman puts it:

> As I go on living, I am dying. Death is entered continuously, not just at the moment of death as legally and medically defined. Each event in my life makes its contribution to my death, and I build my death as I go along day by day... Life matures, develops and aims at death. Death is its very purpose... Life takes on its value through death, and the pursuit of death is the kind of life philosophers have often recommended. If only the living can die, only the dying are really alive. (Hillman, 1964/2000, p. 49)

For Hillman, "analysts cannot get on without a philosophy of death" (p. 50) since "death and existence may exclude each other in rational philosophy, but they are not psychological

contraries" (p. 50). For Hillman then, since death is part of life, it must be included in life, in analysis, for "the death experience is needed to separate from the collective flow of life and to discover individuality" (p. 53). Jungian analysis encourages one to do this using its four pillars, which are necessary for the individuation process to reach its highest potential.

Out of the four pillars of Jungian psychoanalysis dreams is the one most used when confronting death. Kast, for instance, states that "Dreams which depict the impending death of a loved one or the approaching end of a relationship as a 'catastrophic situation' are common" (Kast, 1982, p. 51). She writes about a "dream series of a young woman as an example of the way in which the unconscious depicts the shock triggered by the death of a loved one and how the essential impulses for coping with the loss came from the dreams" (p. 21). Based on the notion of teleology and the independence of time and space, Jungian analysts understand one function of dreams to be "preparing the way for *the* great separation, presenting it as a catastrophe and showing what a tremendous change will be demanded" (p. 29). This of course is in line with Jung, who as mentioned above, stated that "nature prepares itself for death" (1934/2014ac, para. 808). In fact, for Kast, paying attention to dreams can serve to promote "the awareness of death which [can] become a dimension of [one's] own self-consciousness" (Kast, 1982, p. 49). Ultimately, for Kast, if one pays attention to dreams of the mourning person to work through the pain of the loss, "then the death of a loved one can contribute in an essential way to self-realization, to individuation" (p. 46).

As I shall argue in Chapter 4, from the concept of teleology one can think that wholeness, Jung's ultimate preoccupation in terms of psychological development (Main, 2021, pp. 22-23), can be attained in death. In a similar way, Ann Ulanov, a widely read Jungian analyst, writes that "We resonate with our own *psyche's seeking a wholeness*, not perfect but completely, including all the parts of us, good and bad, then facing death gains a curiosity" (Ulanov, 2024, p. 175.

Italics added). The teleological movement of the psyche that seeks wholeness sees death not as an end or a loss or a catastrophe, but as Jung pointed out from his studies on dreams, “arriving on the other side, one is greeted with celebration, dancing, a festive occasion. We bring news to the dead. The truth we learn again is that the biggest mistake is unlived life, missing our chance because we wandered off, lay about in inertia, denial, ran away all the time” (p. 175). Ulanov concludes that the

> Unconscious psyche is like water finding its entrance at our lowest point through the gradient that goes down. We cannot make change happen by wishing it, nor by willpower, nor sets of “shoulds,” nor even by sound common sense, nor by remaining unconscious, nor by swallowing wholesale a traditional view of what is to come after death without having our own experience factored in—does it click or not? Jung says life can flow forward only along the path of the gradient. (p. 175)

Haruko Kuwabara writes that facing the death of a patient has been one of the most difficult aspects of psychotherapy for her. Kuwabara worked with a woman who had a long history of eating disorders and suicidal tendencies. Due to body pain, she had tried to kill herself by choking and cutting herself. Kuwabara writes that when her patient died, not by suicide but from natural causes, “My experience of my father’s death, Jung’s writings, and studying and training to be a Jungian analyst all helped me to accept her death” (Kuwabara, 2024, p. 338). Indeed, she states that

> When I heard the news of her death, the first thing that came to my mind was that she was now free from her suffering. Her body, or her "somatic unconscious," must have taken control of her life and released her soul now. I thought that her body responded to her unconscious by saying, "It's too much for her to endure." The body released her spirit so that it could go on. Her soul continues to go on, or in a Buddhist sense, she is now born in the Pure Land as Buddha, where there is no suffering, only beauty and purity. Jung's idea that death is a "goal" and that the soul continues to develop after death was reassuring for me. I accompanied her only for a part of her journey, but I am thankful that I could meet her in this world. (Kuwabara, 2024, p. 338)

In summary, contemporary Jungian analysts continue to apply the concept of teleology, which Jung introduced at the start of the twentieth century, by viewing death as the ultimate goal of the second half of life. This idea aids both their patients and themselves in preparing for death.

NOT PREPARING FOR DEATH

Although Jung was clear about seeing his psychology as a preparation for death, contemporary Jungians appear reluctant to fully embrace this idea. In this chapter, I have referenced various Jungian therapists who write about Jung's concepts to confront the death of a loved one or their own impending death. However, with only a few exceptions, none of these authors explicitly state that analysis in itself is a space for preparing for death. I was surprised to find that almost none of the contributors to my book, *Confronting Death*, explicitly endorsed this notion, even though it was the central theme of the book.

According to Grosso (2014), Plato defined the practice of preparing for death as *melete thanatou*, or the "practice of death." This concept refers to the process of releasing the psyche from the distortions caused by being entangled in bodily existence, along with the concepts and emotions tied to the body that dominate much of human life (Grosso, 2014, p. 53). This practice closely mirrors the work of a Jungian analyst when addressing psychological complexes. Through his word association studies, Jung observed that complexes are an organized group of ideas, thoughts, perceptions or feelings attached to a *feeling-tone* core, that significantly "influence... thinking and behavior" (Jung, 1906/1971b, para. 733). A key aim of Jungian therapy is to free individuals from the grip of these complexes, since without paying attention to them and working through them, "a complex will behave like an animated foreign body or an infection. In the grip of a complex, a person can feel quite helpless and emotionally out of control" (Stein, 1998, p. 50). Although "a complex can never be completely eliminated" (p. 50), Jung personally experienced a sense of freedom from them—what he termed "wholeness"—in a dream involving his deceased wife.

In the dream, Jung observed his wife from a distance, noticing her expression was neither joyful nor sad but marked by objective wisdom, as though "beyond the mist of affects" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 327). Jung interpreted this objectivity as representing a completed individuation, symbolizing detachment from emotional ties and subjective valuations (p. 328). He concluded that "Only through objective cognition is the real *coniunctio* possible" (p. 328), referring to the union of opposites in the process of individuation.

From this perspective, most likely all Jungian analysts are, in essence, engaging in *melete thanatou*—the practice of preparing for death—through their therapeutic work. By addressing psychological complexes and helping individuals withdraw projections, they aim to "clear the

path" for living more authentically, allowing the transcendent to be integrated into everyday life. As Grosso notes, "Plato's conception of philosophy as an activity aimed at afterlife freedom and gnosis of the psyche anticipates the transformative drift of the modern near-death experience" (Grosso, 2014, p. 54). The detachment from complexes has a similar aim, if one pays attention to Jung's interpretation of the dream of his wife. Both approaches, then, share a common goal: preparing the soul for death by bringing it into conscious awareness, leading the individual toward an experience of transcendence.

Jungian analysts today still struggle to fully embrace this idea, or to write about it. Although this is speculative, the relative scarcity of work on the theme of death in general suggests that many Jungians tend to avoid engaging with the metaphysical concept of an afterlife, even if it is proposed from a psychological angle.

CONCLUSION

My attempt in this chapter has been first to demonstrate how Jung came to conceive his psychotherapeutic process as a preparation for death. Second, to show how consistent Jung's dedication to the question of life after death was for him, as stated in the epigraph from Hillman. Experiences with death and with life after death started for Jung in early life, in childhood, and they continued throughout his life. Connecting his *Zofingia Lectures* with *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (1955-1956) attests precisely to that. The connection will become even clearer, I hope, in Chapter 4.

Jung's openness to death, to the mystery of it, on the one hand forces Jungian analysts to wrestle with their own concept of death. On the other hand, it brings death to life by incorporating it in the analytic room, since from this perspective analysis is reframed as a preparation for death

(Shamdasani, 2008, p. 24). Jungian analysis, then, challenges the idea that "it is not merely that we are more alone in the secular world; our dead are more alone now as well" (Mogenson, 2004, p. 108). It challenges it by understanding "death [as] an integral part of life, and if we are going to inhabit our lives fully, we must 'have a myth which encourages [us] to look deeper into this whole realm'" (p. 108). Understanding Jungian analysis as a preparation for death is not something that most Jungians feel comfortable embracing or presenting in writing. The purpose of this chapter has been to demonstrate that Jung himself embraced this notion, and that, whether explicitly or not, contemporary Jungian analysts help their patients prepare to die using concepts that Jung would first present when he was in his early twenties.

Looking back to Chapter 1, this chapter not only supports Shamdasani's argument that states that the Freudocentric reading of Jung is "the complete mislocation of Jung and analytical psychology in the intellectual history of the twentieth century" (Shamdasani, 1998, p. 116), but also helps to locate Jung and analytical psychology "as continuing in the line of the French psychology of the subconscious and Swiss-Anglo-American psychical research and subliminal psychology" (p. 121).

Looking forward to Chapter 3, a central element for preparing for death, according to Jung, is the creation of a conception about life after death. A *Weltanschauung* that includes death. Now that we understand some of the intellectual concepts that Jung used to argue for that creation, the next chapter will focus on Jung's experiences that shaped his own *Weltanschauung.* Chapter 3 will examine Jung's experiences with the dead, and how these provided him with information that would influence his psychotherapeutic method.

CHAPTER 3

The Dead

Turn to the dead, listen to their lament

and accept them with love.

C. G. Jung

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores Jung's relationship to the dead and how they affected his conception of psychotherapy. Jung's encounters with the dead and their impact on his psychology are not only important for scholarly purposes but also for psychotherapeutic work. My argument is that learning about Jung's *Weltanschauung* of death and life after death can have a direct impact on how Jungian analysis is understood and practiced. Jung did not take the concepts of death and life after death lightly. Questions about the existence of life after death, the continued existence of the dead, and the possibility of communicating with them were serious and ongoing concerns for Jung. He allowed these questions to be explored within the analytical space, treating them as important aspects of psychological inquiry. In other words, Jung's *Weltanschauung* of death and life after death was his own, private, at the same time, he did not hesitate to let his personal conception of life after death influence his psychotherapeutic work with others, integrating these ideas into his practice when appropriate. Lastly, and importantly, I do not think that knowing Jung's *Weltanschauung* and wrestling with it leads to believing in it and blindly incorporating it into one's own practice. Jung, of course, did not intend that. Jung's *Weltanschauung* was created from experience. Jung hoped that each person creates a *Weltanschauung* of death according to his or her own inner experiences, since "one can only find one's own myth if one was together with one's

dead" (Shamdasani, 2008, pp. 25-26). Copying his *Weltanschauung* would be a mistake and dangerous since "the answers" he came up with in his confrontation with the unconscious "were applicable to *his* dead" (p. 26).

This chapter begins by giving a short historical account of Jung's interactions with the dead. This is done with the purpose of providing the context of the theme of this chapter: the dead in Jung's life. From then, Jung's *Weltanschauung* of death and life after death are explored, as seen in *The Red Book* and other texts. The chapter concludes by discussing the psychotherapeutic implications of a *Weltanschauung* that includes life after death.

MIDLIFE CRISIS

The publication of *Transformations and Symbols of The Libido* (1912) led to the final and decisive separation between Freud and Jung, in professional collaboration and personal relationship. By the time this happened, Jung had achieved international recognition as one of the leading European psychiatrists. He was president of the growing International Psychoanalytical Association and had published celebrated texts, particularly about the association experiments. In other words, Jung seemed to have reached then a pinnacle point of his professional career, achieving everything he could have hoped for at the time. Additionally, his personal life appeared fulfilled—he was a married man with a family, enjoying financial stability. However, it was at this point in his life that his desire for social status and external recognition faded. Jung experienced then what he would later call a midlife transition, a crisis. During this crisis, though he felt an intense inner turmoil, he was able to keep a practice, but "for three years he couldn't get himself to read a professional book and he published relatively little. He suffered from lethargy and fears,

his moods threatened to overwhelm him" (Chodorow, 1997, p. 1).[26] As we saw in Chapter 2, later in life Jung came to understand the midlife crises as the first sign of the soul preparing for death. How Jung experienced this crisis was first recorded in *The Black Books* to later be transcribed in *The Red Book* (Shamdasani, 2020, p. 11). Murray Stein describes *The Red Book* as

> a record of Jung's inner experiences during a critical time in his life as he broke from Freud and psychoanalysis and looked for a way to make a new and different kind of future for himself. In many ways, *The Red Book* is a summary of how Jung became a Jungian, as distinct from a Freudian. It is an account of his midlife crisis and his transition into being the independent thinker he would become for the rest of his life. (Stein, 2017, p. 5)

The Red Book was written from 1913 to 1932 and contains Jung's active imagination, the description of his mental states, and his reflections on these. The most intense years of his self-experimentation were from 1913 to 1916 (Shamdasani 2020, 12). Particularly important for this thesis is the fact that in *The Red Book* we find several encounters that Jung had with images that he calls the dead. Indeed, from the beginning until the very end of the book Jung describes encounters with images that he calls the dead. But before exploring his understanding of the dead in *The Red Book,* it is important to mention that Jung had different experiences with what he called the dead before and after 1913. These experiences have been already mentioned in the

[26] According to Shamdasani, a pivotal event that encouraged Jung to search for his soul again was the vision he had in the train on his way to Schaffhausen in 1913, where he saw Europe covered with blood and wondered whether these fantasies were symptoms of a forming psychosis. Two weeks later he experienced the same vision, but this time a voice spoke to him and told him these images were showing the future. From that moment Jung started addressing his soul, but it took a month before he received a reply (Shamdasani, 2020, p. 22).

Introduction, but to provide some context for the rest of the chapter, in the following two sections I will summarize some these experiences.

JUNG AND THE DEAD

As shown in the Introduction (from page 11 to 21), Jung's experiences with the dead began already in childhood, where he not only had apparitions (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 33–34) but also witnessed corpses being brought to his home and his father conducting burial ceremonies regularly in the cemetery next to his home (pp. 22–24). With family members, as an adolescent Jung participated in séances where the spirits of the dead were called (Charet, 1993, pp. 59-82). His cousin Helene was the medium and according to Shamdasani Jung thought that the communications his cousin was experiencing were veridical (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 15). By 1905 Jung had studied about eight mediums and their alleged communication with the dead (1905/2014k, para. 724). In repeated occasions, Jung acknowledged that he was not convinced that the existence of spirits of the dead was something impossible (Jung, 1989/2014, p. 5; 1963/1995, p. 120). As an adult Jung experienced the presence of ghosts on different occasions; in his home in Küsnacht (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 215), in Bollingen (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 255-58), and in other houses too (Jung, 1950/2014i, para. 764). Jung had a near-death experience and believed that he had actually died and came back to life (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 23). By the end of his life Jung postulated that the ultimate state of psychological development, the *mysterium coniunctionis,* consists of uniting, among other opposites, death and life (Jung, 1955-1956/1970, para. 1).

In short, before, during and after the creation of *The Red Book* Jung had personal experiences with the dead. Indeed, also through dreams Jung believed to have experienced the spirits of the dead. The next section summarizes, arguably, anticipatory dreams to *The Red Book*.

JUNG AND DREAMS OF THE DEAD

Years before his confrontation with the unconscious, between 1911 and 1912, Jung experienced a series of dreams featuring dead figures. One notable incident occurred in the autumn of 1910 when he took a bicycle trip to northern Italy. During this trip, Jung had the following dream:

> In the dream I was in an assemblage of distinguished spirits of earlier centuries; the feeling was similar to the one I had later towards the 'illustrious ancestors' in the black rock temple of my 1944 vision. The conversation was conducted in Latin. A gentleman with a long, curly wig addressed me and asked a difficult question, the gist of which I could no longer recall after I woke up. I understood him, but did not have sufficient command of the language to answer him in Latin. I felt profoundly humiliated by this that the emotion awakened me. At the very moment of awakening I thought of the book I was working on, Transformation and Symbols of the Libido, and had such inferiority feelings about the unanswered question that I immediately took the train home in order to get back to work... I had to work, to find the question. Not until years later did I understand the dream and my reaction. The bewigged gentleman was a kind of ancestral spirit or spirit of the dead, who had addressed questions to me- in vain! It was still too soon, I had not yet come so far, but I had an obscure feeling that by working on my book I would be

> answering the question that had been asked. It had been asked by, as it were, my spiritual forefathers, in the hope and expectation that they would learn what they had not been able to find out during their time on earth, since the answer had first to be created in the centuries that followed. (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 338)

Whereas Shamdasani states that this dream points to a central theme in Jung's view of the dead, which is "our relation to the past in its continued relevance in the present" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 17), Stephens argues that this dream and others that Jung had "anticipated his confrontation with the unconscious in 1913" (Stephens, 2020, p. 40) and helped Jung to view the unconscious as a "dynamic venue of transformation" (p. 40). For Jung, this dream depicted what we will see as one of the central features of Jung's *Weltanschauung*: the need "to instruct the figures of the unconscious, or that other group which is often indistinguishable from them, 'the spirits of the departed'" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 338). Upon waking from this dream, Jung promptly canceled the remainder of his bicycle trip and returned to Zurich. He felt compelled to focus on his work, a book titled *The Psychology of the Unconscious*, as he was overwhelmed by intense feelings of inferiority regarding the unanswered questions it raised (p. 338).

After this dream, Jung experienced three other dreams with dead figures. In 1912 Jung had a dream with the image of a ghost Austrian officer, which has been understood as a pivotal dream for his break with Freud (p. 186). In December of the same year Jung had a dream in an Italian loggia where a bird came down and transformed itself into a blonde girl. The girl told Jung that "I transform myself into a human, while the male dove is busy with the twelve dead" (p. 195). The last dream Jung had during this period was the dream in which he finds himself walking along a lane with tombs adorned with effigies. One of these stone figures came to life,

as Jung was intensively looking at it (p. 196). The figures of the dead were indeed visiting Jung in his dreams before his confrontation with the unconscious.

As he stated years later, during this period "one fantasy kept returning; there was something dead present, but it was also still alive" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 196). Jung's reaction was, like the one from the dream above, to take these dead figures seriously and to not jump into interpreting the dreams as part of his own personality. The possibility that these dead figures were real dead was very alive for Jung.

Whether one can entertain the idea that Jung did experience the dead themselves remains ultimately a personal matter. But Jung himself writes about the dead as literal dead, as these respected Jungian scholars seem to agree. In what follows, I too take the position that Jung writes about the literal dead. Further, I will show that even though Jung "can do no more than tell stories—mythologise" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330), he not only articulated these concepts but also integrated them into his life and practice, which I refer to as his *Weltanschauung*. Ultimately, I will assert that these ideas remain relevant for contemporary analytical practice.

THE RED BOOK

The overall aim of this thesis has been to take seriously Jung's words when he writes that his works "are fundamentally nothing but attempts, ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the 'here' and the 'hereafter'" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330). Considering that, there is probably no other text as important as *The Red Book*, not only because the dead are repeatedly mentioned in it as in no other text of Jung, but also because towards the end of it, answers are given to the dead. Indeed, the dead play a central role in *The Red Book,* even to the

point of Hillman and Shamdasani agreeing that *The Red Book* could be called "Jung's Book of the Dead" (Hillman & Shamdasani, 2013, p. 84).

The Red Book is divided into three different books: *Liber Novus, Liber Secundus* and *Scrutinies*. All three books describe scenes of death and encounters with the dead, but probably the two most relevant books for this thesis are *Liber Secundus*, where Jung's "I" is asked to deliver the dead, and *Scrutinies*, where Philemon teaches the dead seven sermons. *Sermones*, "a psychological cosmology cast in the form of a Gnostic creation myth" (Shamdasani, 2020, p. 50), was the culmination of a series of paranormal experiences Jung had in his home in January of 1916, mentioned above. Whereas *Liber Novus* and *Liber Secundus* took years for their completion, *Sermones* was written in the space of three evenings (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 216), and according to Maillard, this text is the first stone, the germ, from which the entire psychology of Jung would be built (Maillard, 1993, p. 32). As Jung engaged in active imagination during this period, we see that the figure of Philemon appears to Jung's "I," and he does so to teach the dead, who have returned from Jerusalem, where they did not find what they had sought. Philemon then teaches the dead seven *Sermones*.

JUNG'S *WELTANSCHAUUNG*

The following sections aim to illustrate that key aspects of Jung's *Weltanschauung* regarding death and the dead can be extracted from both *The Red Book* and his other writings. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Jung's understanding of his *Weltanschauung* was not fixed, but flexible and in constant revision. Jung thought that a *Weltanschauung* is a "therapeutic necessity" (Jung, 1956/1977a, p. 698) but it should not be thought of as a belief system or a dogma or "an act of faith" (Jung, 1928/2014c, para. 700). Rather, Jung's *Weltanschauung* should be understood as "a

hypothesis" (para. 700) that "Consciousness determines" (para. 696).[27] As I will show, the "stories" or "myths" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330) that Jung writes about were not taken lightly by him. On the contrary, his *Weltanschauung* contained images of the afterlife that he not only lived by but that also influenced the way he saw psychotherapy.

I will show in the next sections that from *The Red Book* we first learn that Jung's *Weltanschauung* of death is thought to include an after-death state or states. Second, we can identify what might be considered the factor that determines whether a departed soul stays in the after-death state or not. Third, we also learn that "in" this state or states the dead are thought to be able to develop. Lastly, Jung's *Weltanschauung* presents the idea that humanity is on a quest for wholeness.

After-Death State(s)

One of the most striking and challenging concepts I encountered in *The Red Book*, especially in the first sermon delivered by Philemon to the dead, is the notion of a state that follows death. In this state, it seems that some or all of the deceased must wait before they can fully "enter death" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 514). It is as if death had at least two states, the first one occurring right after the physical death—what Jung called the "after-death state" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 353). It seems that in this state or states the deceased individual must continue developing until fulfillment is

[27] Writing what a *Weltanschauung* is, close collaborator of Jung, Jolanda Jacobi writes that only psychology "can provide a basis for a *Weltanschauung* which is not just taken over unreflectingly from tradition, but which every individual can work out and shape for himself" (Jacobi, 1942/1973, p. 151). For Jacobi a *Weltanschauung* can only be done after embarking in the journey of self-realization, which she understands as "the return stream in which birth and death are only stations of passage and the meaning of life no longer resides in the ego" (pp. 150-151).

reached in order to enter death. Only then does the deceased individual transition into the second state, which can be understood as the true experience of death or eternity.

The first sermon that Philemon delivers to the dead consists primarily in the explanation of the concepts of pleroma and creation and of the importance of the process of individuation. The pleroma can be seen as a psycho-cosmological notion, being on the one hand a myth for the origins of existence, and on the other a concept about humans (Maillard, 1993, p. 63). One cannot really speak of pleroma because it has no qualities, since it is nothing and fullness, endless and eternal, all at once. Philemon says that

> We are, however, the Pleroma itself, for we are a part of the eternal and the endless. But we have no share therein, as we are infinitely removed from the Pleroma; not spatially or temporally, but essentially, since we are distinguished from the Pleroma in our *essence* as creation, which is confined within time and space. (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 510)

Creation has qualities, limits, and "Creation is not in the Pleroma but in itself" (p. 510). Philemon teaches that differentiation from the pleroma is necessary, and says that "differentiation is creation... Therefore man differentiates, since his essence is differentiation. Therefore he also differentiates the qualities of the Pleroma that do not exist. He differentiates them on account of his own essence" (p. 514). If he does not differentiate, he falls into the nondifferentiation, which is the other quality of the pleroma, which leads to falling "into the Pleroma itself and ceasing to be created beings" (p. 514).[28] Philemon says then that this striving towards differentiation is called

[28] Jung also writes about the Pleroma when he meets "Death." In an active imagination from January 1914, Jung found himself in the northern land, "under a gray sky in misty-hazy cool-moist air." As he is approaching his

principium individuationis. In the principle of individuation, Philemon says, "at bottom... there is only one striving, namely the striving for one's own essence" (p. 514).

After this first sermon, as "the dead faded away grumbling and moaning" (p. 511), Jung's "I" interrogated Philemon about why he was teaching this, and whether he was sure about his teaching. Philemon's reply gives us the first hint about the after-death state before eternity. He states: "these dead ended their lives too early. These were seekers and therefore *still hover over their graves*. Their lives were incomplete" (p. 512. Emphasis added). Philemon adds that he "must teach them, *so that their life may be fulfilled and they can enter into death*" (p. 512. Emphasis added).

The idea that these dead have not yet entered death implies that they are in an after-death state. They are dead, meaning their bodies have died, but their souls have not entered death. Philemon says that these dead are "there" because their lives have not been completed.

About two years prior to the creation of *Sermones*, Jung wrote the chapter "Nox Secunda" in *Liber Secundus*. In this section, Jung's "I" encounters the figure of Ezechiel with "fellow believers" (p. 334), a group of anabaptists. Jung's "I" asks Ezechiel why they are rushing off, and Ezechiel answers that they are going to Jerusalem, that they cannot stop, that they must make a pilgrimage to all the holy places. Jung asks Ezechiel to take him with them, but Ezechiel tells Jung he cannot come because he has a body, while they are dead. Ezechiel then tells Jung's "I" that it seems that they have no peace, adding that "it always seems to me as if we had not come to a proper end with life... It seems to me that *we forgot something important that should also have been lived*" (pp.

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destiny, he realizes that he is approaching "the supreme embrace, entering the womb of the source, the boundless expansion and immeasurable depths." Jung then sees a dead lake, and arrives to an "unspeakably remote horizon, where the sky and the sea are fused into infinity." There he sees someone standing, wearing a black wrinkled coat, not moving at all and looking into the distance. Jung's "I" then begins a dialogue with death. He asks to stand next to him and death accepts but warns him that it is cold, and that his heart has never beaten. "The living are never guests here," death says. Death then gives a description of what death is like: "*...here leads into the undifferentiable*, where none is equal or unequal, but all are one with one another" (Jung, 2009, pp. 262-264. Emphasis added)

334-5. Emphasis added). Ezechiel and his companions seemed confused as to why they were prevented from fully entering death. This indicates that they were stuck in a state of limbo after death, as it were, unable to move on.

A few years before his death, in *Memories*, *Dreams, Reflections*, using Buddhist concepts such as reincarnation and nirvana, Jung also presents the idea of death being composed of an after-death state. There he writes:

> It seems probable to me that in the hereafter, too, there exist certain limitations, but that the souls of the dead only gradually find out where the limits of the liberated state lie. Somewhere "out there" there must be a determinant, a necessity conditioning the world, which seeks to put an end to the after-life state. This creative determinant—so I imagine it—must decide what souls will plunge again into birth. Certain souls, I imagine, feel the state of three-dimensional existence to be more blissful than that of Eternity. But perhaps that depends upon how much completeness or incompleteness they have taken across with them from their human existence.
>
> It is possible that any further spell of three-dimensional life would have no more meaning once the soul had reached a certain stage of understanding; it would then no longer have to return, fuller understanding having put to rout the desire for re-embodiment. Then the soul would vanish from the three-dimensional world and attain what the Buddhists call nirvana. But if karma still remains to be disposed of, then the soul relapses again into desires and returns to life once more, perhaps even doing so out of the realization that something remains to be completed. (Jung 1963/1995, pp. 353-354)

Furthermore, on September 23, 1957, Jung told Jaffé about a dream he had in which Toni Wolff had come back to life: “Her death had only occurred due to a sort of mix-up—as if she had died through some misunderstanding. And so now she was here again, in order to somehow live a further part of her life” (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 161). Jaffe asked Jung whether the dream might relate to the idea of rebirth. Jung answered: “With my wife I have the feeling of a much greater detachment or distance than with Toni Wolff. With Toni I have noticed that she still seems to be nearby. My wife has attained something that Toni has not” (p. 161). This statement clearly indicates that Jung thought of death as having different states. Toni seemed to him in a closer state than Emma. Jung then added:

> I have always had the conscious and distinct impression that Toni is still closer to earth, which is why she manifests herself to me more easily than my wife. *My wife is as if on another level, beyond my reach*. Toni seems to me to be close enough that one could possibly reach her. She seems to have remained much closer to the sphere of our three-dimensional existence and would thus have the opportunity to slip back in... (p 161. Emphasis added)

Concerning the question about the possibility of rebirth,[29] Jung replied that he was “tormented from within to give an answer” (p. 162) to it, but at the end, he came back to his usual position in regard to metaphysical questions: “I have nothing to say to that. I cannot answer the question” (p. 162).

[29] In the essay “Concerning Rebirth” (1939/1969a) Jung explores the symbolic interpretations of rebirth, by linking the idea to the renewal process happening in the individuation process. In this essay he does write about the real possibility of rebirth.

Commenting again about his wife's unreachable state in the afterlife, Jung writes in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* about a dream he had: "I had another experience of *the evolution of the soul after death* when—about a year after my wife's death—I suddenly awoke one night and knew that I had spent an entire day with her" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 341. Emphasis added). The evolution of the soul after death points out again to the idea of an after-death state, or states, that Jung seems to have experienced and expressed in *Sermones*.

The natural question then is what is the factor that determines whether a person enters or not in the second after-death state; death?

Living the animal

At the conclusion of the interaction in "Nox Secunda," Ezechiel reached out "greedily and uncannily towards [Jung's "I"], his eyes shining as if from inner heat" (2009/2012, p. 335), demanding Jung's "I" to reveal to him what he himself had not lived. Jung's "I" then realized that these fellow believers had not lived their animal.

Jung's writing about living the animal can be understood in two different ways; first, he refers to living an authentic life based on one's own true nature. He also refers to integrating the evil aspect humans into consciousness. To write about the first sense, animals live their lives according to their nature, Jung explains in the second layer of "Nox Secunda." He writes that the "animal lives fittingly and true to the life of its species, neither exceeding nor falling short of it." In the *Visions* seminar, given in 1930, Jung says that

> ...in nature the animal is a well-behaved citizen. It is pious, it follows the path with great regularity, it does nothing extravagant. Only man is extravagant. So if you assimilate the character of the animal you become a peculiarly law-abiding citizen, you go very slowly, and you become very reasonable in your ways, in as much as you can afford it (Jung, 1930/1998, p. 168. See also footnote of Shamdasani, 2009/2012, p. 342).

Ezechiel did not live his animal—his truer, more complete self, as it were—hence he did not enter death. In 1918, commenting on the dream of an older woman, Jung wrote:

> ...we shall see that the dream is an attempt on the part of the unconscious to bring the Christian principle into harmony with its apparently irreconcilable opposite—animal instinct—by means of understanding and compassion. It is no accident that official Christianity has no relation to the animal (Jung, 1918/2014aa, para. 32).

Not living one's life fully seems to be what brought Ezechiel and his fellow believers into the after-death space where they "hover over their graves" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 512). Referring to the second sense of not living the animal, experiencing a full life would have meant living what was repressed, what Christianity has repressed, for "Without the integration of evil there is no totality" (Jung, 1942/2014t, para. 232). In 1918 Jung writes that when the animal is repressed and split off from consciousness, its outer expression takes on an unregulated and uncontrolled manner. He writes that

> By being repressed into the unconscious, the source from which it originated, the animal in us only becomes more beastlike, and that is no doubt the reason why no religion is so defiled with the spilling of innocent blood as Christianity, and why the world has never seen a bloodier war than the war of the Christian nations (Jung, 1918/2014aa, para. 32).

The connection of living the animal and reaching "immortality" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 433) was also made by Jung's "I" as he interacted with evil, symbolized by the serpent, in the chapter "The Magician" (pp. 395-458). Jung's "I" explains how by integrating his own evil he satisfies the dead. He writes that "the devil is the sum of the darkness of human nature... Because I wanted to live in the light, the sun went out for me when I touched the depths. It was dark and serpentlike. I united myself with it and did not overpower it" (p. 432). Then he adds, "If I had not become like the serpent, the devil, the quintessence of everything serpentlike, would have held this bit of power over me" (pp. 432-433). It is through the integration of evil, the withdrawal of the projection, that Jung's "I" takes away the possibility of its influence over him. Through this process of integration, Jung's "I" created a more solid psychic structure to handle evil. "Through this I myself gained stability and duration and could withstand the fluctuations of the personal. *Therefore the immortal in me is saved*" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 433). Jung's integration of evil helps both, the dead and himself:

> I am no longer threatened by the dead, since I accepted their demands through accepting the serpent. But through this I have also taken over something of the dead into my day. Yet it was necessary, since death is the most enduring of all things, that which can never be canceled out (Jung, 2009/2012, pp. 432-3).

Living the animal, living a more authentic life by integrating evil, for Jung, meant a direct impact on the dead: "Through drawing the darkness from my beyond over into the day, I emptied my beyond. Therefore, the demands of the dead disappeared as they were satisfied" (p. 433). This again points to the idea that Ezechiel was still in the after-death state, unsatisfied, because he had not lived his animal. The differentiation of evil within us, the animal in us, seems to be a condition for Jung for not hovering over the grave in the after-death state. Philemon, in his first sermon, says that

> When we strive for the good or the beautiful, we forget our essence, which is differentiation, and we fall subject to the spell of the qualities of the Pleroma, which are the pairs of opposites. We endeavor to attain the good and the beautiful, yet at the same time we also seize the evil and the ugly, since in the Pleroma these are one with the good and the beautiful. But if we remain true to our essence, which is differentiation, we differentiate ourselves from the good and the beautiful, and hence from the evil and the ugly. And thus we do not fall under the spell of the Pleroma, namely nothingness and dissolution (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 513).

In other words, the nondifferentiated life, the life that has not individuated, seems to be the one that cannot fully die. It is then possible to say that in Jung's *Weltanschauung*, the unindividuated life stays in the after-death state. "Somewhere 'out there' must be a determinant, a necessity conditioning the world, which seeks to put an end to the after-death state" (Jung,

1963/1995, p. 353), he wrote. Individuation seems to have been that determinant factor for Jung: "Certain souls, I imagine, feel the state of three-dimensional existence to be more blissful than that of Eternity. But perhaps that depends upon how much of completeness or incompleteness they have taken across with them from their human existence" (p. 353).

By embracing the serpent, Jung satisfied his dead; he answered their demands. With this, Jung's "I" introduces another element of his *Weltanschauung* of death: the living help the dead to continue their individuation process.

Development After Death

Whereas the initial reaction of Jung's "I" is to reject Ezechiel after realizing that he had not lived his animal, Jung later realizes that what "was originally something dangerous now becomes something to be pitied, something that really needs our compassion" (Jung, 1918/2014aa, para. 31). The idea of compassion is also expressed in "Nox Secunda" as Jung emphatically advises to "turn to the dead, listen to their lament and accept them with love" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 344).

The entire *Sermones* consists of teaching the dead what they had not found in life, but also what they had not learned in the after-death state. At the beginning of *Sermones* the dead implored Jung's "I" to let them in; they say: "You have what we desire. Not your blood, but *your light*. That is it" (p. 508). This then brings forth the idea that the dead that have not entered death need consciousness from the living to enter it. The dead need compassion and love from the living, since it is only the living who can provide consciousness. Writing about Jung's reaction to this, Shamdasani says

> One element that astonished [Jung] was the fact that the dead appeared to know no more than they did when they died. One would have assumed that they had attained greater knowledge since death. This explained the tendency of the dead to encroach upon life, and why in China important family events have to be reported to the ancestors. *He felt that the dead were waiting for the answers of the living* (Shamdasani, 2009/2012, p 508. Emphasis added).

Reflecting on how Jung understood the dead and the teachings of Philemon, Maillard writes that "...the recurrent theme of teaching the dead, gives more weight to the 1916 text since this is precisely one of its essential discourses, and it allows us to conclude that... it is possible to understand the dead from *Sermones* in a literal sense" (Maillard, 1993, p. 45). She argues that all indications given by Jung in *Sermones* allow us to understand not only his conception of the relationship between the dead and the living, but also his conception of the hereafter. This conception seems to have been a fairly constant throughout his life. In addition, she argues that Jung postulates that it is the living that can achieve the highest degree of consciousness; "beyond death, the dead do not have any other resource for alleviating their incompleteness besides 'coming back' to ask for help to the living, who are the only ones capable of shining the light of consciousness" (p. 45). This conception, she emphasizes, links itself with the traditional idea, in particular in Hindu and Buddhist practice, that the human condition is the privileged one for accessing salvation (p. 45).[30]

[30] Maillard also compares *Sermones* to *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, the *Bardo-Thödol*, and the *Pistis Sophia*, and argues that it is possible to find parallels in Jung's writings with these other texts in terms of assuring salvation to the dead, indicating a sort of destiny to the post-mortal soul, and these two notions are symbolized by a light that in *Sermones* is represented by the star, Abraxas. Maillard would argue that this elevation of the soul after the physical death to its real condition, its divine condition, is a concept that Jung would stay faithful to throughout his life. Alchemy would allow Jung later in his life to come back to this topic of the unity of the soul through death with its lacking other side by the writing of *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (Maillard, 1993, p. 48). This argument of Maillard will be reviewed in Chapter 4.

As noted in the Introduction, Jung shares a useful example in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* of a dream experienced by one of his pupils, a woman of sixty, approximately two months before her death. This dream led him to reconsider and affirm his belief that the dead require assistance from the living in order to attain consciousness. In the dream

> There was a class going on, and various deceased women friends of hers sat on the front bench. An atmosphere of general expectation prevailed. She looked around for a teacher or lecturer, but could find none. Then it became plain that she herself was the lecturer, for immediately after death people had to give accounts of the total experience of their lives. The dead were extremely interested in the life experiences that the newly deceased brought with them, *just as if the acts and experiences taking place in earthly life, in space and time, were the decisive ones.* (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 336. Emphasis added)

The dead in the dream from above, "the audience," are waiting for the knowledge obtained in life, Jung is certain, because they can continue their psychological development after death (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 149), but they cannot do it by themselves. The development obtained by the living is the decisive knowledge for the dead, so it seems.

By stating that the dead continue developing after death with the help of the living, Jung's *Weltanschauung* is not only creating a direct relationship between the dead and the living but also, he is implicitly adding another layer of meaning of his psychotherapeutic method, the process of individuation.

Helping the Dead Die

In Chapter 2 we saw how death and dying play a key role in Jung's concept of psychotherapy: Individuation came to be understood by Jung as a preparation for death. In this chapter, we see how confronting the images of the unconscious informed Jung about how figures of the dead need his insights and teachings to continue developing.

In *Scrutinies* Jung's "I" meets a dead woman he recognized, as "she recovered the mysteries of the Egyptians for [him]" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 483) while still alive. She asks Jung's "I" for "the symbol, the mediator, we need the symbol, we hunger for it, make light for us" (p. 484). Jung replies by saying that he did not understand what symbol she was referring to, but at that precise moment HAP[31] is placed in Jung's hand. A long conversation continues between the two. At one point the woman tells Jung's "I" about her situation:

> The air of the shadow world is thin since we hover over the ocean of the air like birds above the sea. Many went beyond limits, fluttering on indeterminate paths of outer space, bumping at hazards into alien worlds. *But we, we who are still near and incomplete, would like to immerse ourselves in the sea of the air and return to earth, to the living*.
>
> ... To me you are of unspeakable worth, all my hope, that still clings to earth. *I would still like to see completed what I left too soon.* (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 486. Emphasis added)

[31] Shamdasani explains that HAP may be understood as the son of Horus, who together with his three siblings "shared the protection of the deceased among them" (Shamdasani, 2009/2012, p. 484n44).

With this, Jung's process of individuation can be seen not only as a personal endevour but also as a historical one, since his *Weltanschauung* suggests that attaining consciousness also aids the dead in their own transformation. Towards the end of the conversation with the woman, she said: "Community with the dead is what you and the dead need. Do not commingle with any of the dead, but stand apart from them and give to each his due. The dead demand your expiatory prayers" (p. 492). Then, she raised her voice and evoked the dead in the name of Jung's "I":

> You dead, I call you.
>
> You shades of the departed, who have cast off the torment of living, come here.
>
> My blood, the juice of my life, will be your meal and your drink...
>
> Come, you dark and restless ones, I will refresh you with my blood, the blood of a living one so that you will gain speech and life, in me and through me...
>
> Let us build the bond of community so that the living and the dead image will become one and the past will live on in the present. (p. 493)

Jung appears to have offered guidance on how to listen to the lament of the dead. He emphasized that this process must be undertaken in solitude. One must turn inward, using methods such as active imagination, and establish a connection with one's soul. Jung's instructions are here depicted:

> There is one necessary but hidden and strange work—a major work—which you must do in secret, for the sake of the dead. He who cannot attain his own visible field and vineyard is held fast by the dead, who demand the work of atonement from him. And until he has fulfilled this, he cannot get to his outer work, since the dead do not let him. He shall have to search his soul and act in stillness at their behest and complete the mystery, so that the dead will not let him. Do not look forward so much, but back and into yourself, so that you will not fail to hear the dead. (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 346)

The dead seemed to have had a strong presence in Jung's *Weltanschauung* and demanded him to help them in their development. Thus, it is through the process of individuation—especially by utilizing active imagination—that one can connect with their own deceased and assist them in their post-mortal development.

Wholeness

Listening to the dead, as part of Jung's *Weltanschauung* of the afterlife, and helping them gain consciousness, has been as mentioned above discussed by different scholars (Maillard, 1993; Shamdasani, 2008; Dourley, 2014; Stephens, 2020; Main, 2020) and clearly expressed by Jung himself (Jung & Hannah, 2023, p. 153). However, my research indicates that the reverse is also true: in Jung's *Weltanschauung* the dead assist the living in attaining consciousness. Both the living and the dead support each other in the quest for greater awareness and understanding of humanity.

This will be covered in the section "Greater Company—The other dead," in Chapter 4, which studies Jung's understanding and conclusions of his near-death experience and focuses on Jung's ultimate goal: psychological wholeness through the *unio mystica* with the *unus mundus*.

HELPING THE DEAD, LITERALLY

One of the most notable aspects of Jung's *Weltanschauung* is that these were not merely fantasies he entertained in his mind; he actively lived out the ideas in actual facts. If we look at how Jung dealt with the notion of helping the dead, we realize that he actually answered the dead, literally, at times. For instance, in 1925 Jung published an article called "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship." This paper appeared as Hermann von Keyserling asked Jung to write an essay for *The Book of Marriage* (Bair, 2003, p. 393). During his lifetime Jung published papers concerning relationships, but "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship" (1925/1969b) stands alone, with no paper that precedes it or follows it in which the institution of marriage is addressed by Jung. In fact, the editors of the *Collected Works* in English seem to have had trouble placing this paper in the work, since it finds itself in volume 17, a volume dedicated to Jung's essays on education and the child's psychological development. It is hence doubtful that the only reason Jung had for writing this paper was Keyserling's invitation. One could imagine that Jung, one of the most widely recognized psychiatrists at the time, received invitations to write about different topics from several book projects, not always accepting the invitations. I would then like to postulate that the genesis of this essay has roots in Jung's intention to answer the dead, most particularly his dead father. Indeed, in the chapter "On Life After Death" from *Memories*, *Dreams, Reflections*, when speaking about his experiences and thoughts about the hereafter, Jung narrates how in 1922 he had a dream of his dead father, coming back from a long journey. In the dream Paul Jung

looked rejuvenated, and had shed his appearance of paternal authoritarianism. I went into my library with him, and was greatly pleased at the prospect of finding out what he had been up to. I was also looking forward with particular joy to introducing my wife and children to him, to showing him my house, and to telling him all that had happened to me and what I had become in the meanwhile. I wanted also to tell him about my book on psychological types, which had recently been published. But I quickly saw that all this would be inopportune, for my father looked preoccupied. *Apparently he wanted something from me*. I felt that plainly, and so I refrained from talking about my own concerns.

He then said to me that since I was after all a psychologist, *he would like to consult me about marital psychology*. I made ready to give him a lengthy lecture on the complexities of marriage, but at this point I awoke. I could not properly understand the dream, for it never occurred to me that it might refer to my mother's death. I realized that only when she died suddenly in January 1923... (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 346-347. Emphasis added)

The idea of doing a "hidden and secret work... for the sake of the dead" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 346), as expressed in "Nox Secunda," can serve as a possible answer to the question of why Jung would have dedicated time to writing a text about marital psychology. Jung's mother died suddenly in January 1923; less than two years later Jung's only known text on marital psychology was published. Speaking about the dream, and most likely thinking about the knowledge gained in the years of "confrontation with the unconscious," Jung wrote the following:

> ... My dream was a forecast of my mother's death, for here was my father who, after an absence of twenty-six years, wished to ask a psychologist about the newest insights and information on marital problems, since he would soon have to resume this relationship again. *Evidently he had acquired no better understanding in his timeless state and therefore had to appeal to someone among the living who, enjoying the benefits of changed times, might have a fresh approach to the whole thing*... (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 347. Emphasis added)

Helping the dead develop, in this case his dead father, seems to be what Jung was doing, at least in part, as he wrote "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship." It is known that the relationship between Paul Jung and his wife was not a happy one, but instead difficult and full of mistakes made by both of them (p. 347). It is possible to say that Jung's father was at the after-death state and needed his living son, a psychologist, to help him to develop in terms of how to relate to his feminine side. For the public this was simply an essay written for a book about marriage; for Jung, one could argue, it was his "hidden and secret work".

Bollingen seems to have been another avenue for answering the dead and hence delivering them. About Bollingen, "a place for spiritual contemplation" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 251), Jung writes

> …my ancestors' souls are sustained in the atmosphere of the house, since *I answer for them the questions that their lives since left behind*. I carve out rough answers the best I can. I have drawn them on the walls. It is as if a silent, greater family, stretching down the centuries, were peopling the house. There I live in my second personality and see life in the round, as

something forever coming into being and passing on." (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 265; Emphasis added)

Jung seems to have taken seriously the idea of listening to the lament of the dead and answering them, with actual deeds.

Summarizing Jung's conception of life after death—his *Weltanschauung* of death—we can say that, as Stephens writes, Jung thought of death as a "dynamic venue of transformation" (Stephens, 2020, p. 40) where there seems to be different "states," that are determined by the level of consciousness that the dead have reached. Furthermore, how individuated the person has become and, in particular for Jung, how much evil has been integrated into the personality seem to be crucial factors for "where" the dead might be in the afterlife. What is clear is that Jung thought that psychological development does not end with death, and that both the living and the dead are responsible for helping each other in gaining consciousness.

PROBLEMS WITH JUNG'S *WELTANSCHAUUNG*

As with the other chapters, it is astonishing to see how little work has been done from the part of Jungians in terms of relating to the dead, considering how central this topic was for Jung. Besides the intellectual difficulties mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Jungian analysts may struggle to reconcile two ideas: that we can genuinely access the realm of the dead through imagination, and that this realm—or the dead themselves—actually exist. Probably most Jungian analysts feel comfortable by speaking of these ideas as "mythical figures correspond[ing] to inner psychic experiences" (1954/1966b, para. 457) or as "splitting-off, or of archetypal projections"

(Jung & Jaffé, 2021, p. 108), since "image *is* psyche" (1931/2014g, para. 75) and psyche "should be given the same validity as the empirical world" (para. 75). However, when Jung states "a purely psychological explanation" (1946/1978a, para, 600n15) might not do justice to the "existence of real spirit" (para, 600) since his research led him to "postulate... the conception of the space-time continuum... [which] opens up [the possibility] of transpsychic reality" (para. 600n15), probably most critical Jungian thinkers face difficulties going that far. Believing that the soul separates from the body and continues to exist after death does not automatically imply that the soul retains the individual's identity. In other words, the idea that ego-consciousness continues after death is not a straightforward assumption, even for Jungians (Mogenson, 2004, p. 90).

Jung suggested that we should listen to the lament of the dead and respond to them. For many, accepting the existence of the dead in an ontological sense feels like a leap too far (p. 90), especially if they have not experienced or imagined the afterlife in that way. What is important to value from a therapeutic perspective is the wrestling with the question of whether or not there is a life after the death of the body, and if so, to form a conception of it.

Having said that, thinking that after death ego-consciousness continues to exist is a rather common belief that not only Jung, but close collaborators of Jung were certain of. For instance, von Franz, a very close colleague of Jung, stated explicitly about her own certainty on the ontological existence of spirits. In 1972 she wrote:

> In many peasant communities people still believe that the dead go around in the country and bless and visit certain people who have second sight; they can see and talk to them. I had not been more than about a fortnight in my house when a peasant woman from the neighborhood visited me and, with a very anxious expression gave me a long sermon on

> the fact that the souls of the dead live and go around and that one should treat them decently so that they can protect the house and prevent it from being set afire or burglarized, etc. She obviously assumed that I was a city rationalist and that she should introduce me to the habits of the surroundings. When I assured her that I was a hundred percent convinced of this anyhow, she looked rather amazed, and really a little disappointed, because the whole point of her sermon had gone off, and then realized that she herself had doubted what she had told me and after a while felt rather agreeable reassured. In about six months she was dead, unexpectedly, after an operation. She had had appendicitis and following that something went wrong. Her concern had been also a premonition of death and therefore she was in such a passion to convince me, or rather herself, to the survival of those ancestral souls roaming about in the woods. She was very pleased when I assured her that I had absolutely no difficulty in believing what she told me. (von Franz, 1972, p. 211-212)

Not only did Jung's psychological theories influence his close collaborators and students, but his ideas on metaphysical matters seem to also have had an impact. From this perspective, the lack of contemporary Jungians writing about how they respond to the lament of their own deceased may indicate a certain distance from his concepts of life after death. This topic will be explored in more depth in Chapter 4.

THERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS

According to Shamdasani, Jung's emphasis on listening and answering the dead would mean that "through our terrestrial development, we are in fact aiding the post-mortem development of the dead" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 20). Maillard, on the other hand, writes that "Delivering [the

dead] means undertaking a work of collective remembering, which individuals as well as societies need to accomplish to be able to face their past and present and its disasters" (Maillard, 2022, p. 198). These two notions of helping the dead but also the living have a direct impact, as I shall argue in the following sections, in how analysis is practiced.

Dream Interpretation

From the perspective of analysis, a major implication of Jung's myths is the fact that inner images of the dead might not always be interpreted subjectively. This has direct repercussions on arguably the two foundational pillars of Jungian psychotherapy, active imagination and dream analysis. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, in Jungian training programs like the one that I attended, we learn to think symbolically. When a patient comes to us with a symptom, we learn to ask ourselves, what does this symptom represent? What does it symbolize? Thinking symbolically is the very core of Jungian therapy. When it comes to dream interpretation, we learn that there are mainly two ways of interpreting a dream; the subjective and objective way. The objective level refers to when a dream image is interpreted as a real object, and the subjective level means that the dream image is related to or part of the dreamer himself. (Jung 1917/1966b, para. 128-130) When interpreting images of dead people, it is likely that analysts tend to interpret the image subjectively, as a part of the dreamer. Of course, this is only a guess on my part, a guess that I dare to make after spending hundreds of hours in group supervision and InterVision with colleagues here in Zurich. But Jung himself did not have this tendency. He probably interpreted most dreams subjectively, but he did not automatically discard the possibility of objective interpretation when it came to figures of the dead. Von Franz, close collaborator of Jung, writes that "I have had myself certain dreams [with dead figures] which Jung interpreted in this way [objectively], which at the

time was rather astonishing to me. He gave no reason for understanding precisely those dreams on the objective level...” (von Franz, 1984, p. xv). She continues by giving some indirect advice on how to apply an objective interpretation to a dream of the dead:

> It seems to me that one can “feel” whether the figure of a dead person in a dream is being used as a symbol for some inner reality or whether it “really” represents the dead. It is difficult, however, to set up universally valid criteria for this “feeling.” At best it can be said that if interpretation on the subjective level makes little or no sense, even though the dream has an especially strong numinous effect, the interpretation on the objective level might be taken into consideration. (p. xv)

There are numerous recorded occasions where Jung interpreted dreams of dead figures objectively: I mentioned above how he interpreted the dream of his patient giving a lecture to an audience in the hereafter. The dream of his dead father asking for marital advice and the dream of his dead wife working on the Grail in the South of France, which “struck [him] as meaningful and held a measure or reassurance for [him]” (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 341). Another example is upon his return to Zurich from his bicycle trip, in 1911. While in Northen Italy, Jung for the first time “learned that it was necessary for [him] to instruct the figures of the unconscious, or that other group which is often indistinguishable from them, ‘the spirits of the departed’” (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 338). Not being able to answer *in the dream* the question that this “assembly of distinguished spirits of earlier centuries” (p. 338) had posed to him made Jung feel “such intense inferiority feeling about the unanswered question that [he] immediately took the train home in order to get back to work” (p. 338). Allowing the possibility of an objective interpretation of figures of the

dead, as Jung did there, automatically brings into the analytical room the old metaphysical question of whether there is life after death.

Live Better

Because of Jung's approach to figures of the dead, a second major implication for Jungian analysts is bringing death to life, or rather, death to the analytical room. Jung is eloquent about this in *The Red Book:* "How much our life needs death!" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 267). He continues writing: "We need the coldness of death to see clearly. Life wants to live and to die, to begin and to end... Life and death must strike a balance in your existence... If I accept death then my tree greens, since dying increases life" (p. 267). In short, to Jung, we need to bring death to life, into everyday consciousness, for it works as a therapeutic apparatus: death helps us live better. By minding death, we are reminded of our limitations, as our mortality teaches us to find happiness in small things in life.

> Joy at the smallest things comes to you only when you have accepted death. But if you look out greedily for all that you could still live, then nothing is great enough for your pleasure, and the smallest things that continue to surround you are no longer a joy. Therefore I behold death, since it teaches me how to live. (p. 267)

Death can be a creator of meaning, which can be very useful from a therapeutic perspective. "Without death, life would be meaningless" (p. 267), writes Jung. Minding death in analysis, that is, not avoiding the topic but instead speaking about the death of others and about one's own end

of existence can facilitate the individuation process. “To be, and to enjoy your being, you need death, and limitation enables you to fulfill your being” (p. 267). In “The Soul and Death,” speaking about *consensus gentium*, Jung also highlighted the connection between death and meaning: “It would seem to be more in accord with the collective psyche of humanity to regard death as the fulfillment of life’s meaning and as its goal in the truest sense, instead of a mere meaningless cessation” (1934/2014ac, para. 807). The acceptance of death aligned with the never-ending search of connection with the soul in analysis can be greatly helpful for the process of individuation: “when we penetrate the depths of the soul... we shall discern that death is not a meaningless end, the mere vanishing into nothingness, it is an accomplishment, a ripe fruit on the tree of life” (1927/2014j, para. 1706).

Creating a Conception of Life After Death

A third direct implication for therapy to be taken from Jung’s *Weltanschauung* of death is the importance of creating a conception of life after death. This chapter showed that Jung not only created one but lived life interacting with it. Creating a conception of a life after death can have profoundly healing implications. First, death is brought to life when thinking or imagining a life after death. The end of life, death, is implicit in the conversation of a life after death. This simple act of acknowledging one’s own death can be for many extremely difficult and at the same time profoundly relieving. Speaking about death for many is taboo, something to avoid, which in itself is unhealthy, since death is the only aspect of life that we know we all are going to experience. Talking about death, embracing our end is embracing life fully, with all its changes, including the very last one. Another important implication is that creating a *Weltanschauung* allows one to imagine the other half of existence, which is what Jung refers to when he writes that the question

of whether life after death exists "seeks to add itself to our own individual life in order to make it whole" (p. 333). This is the subject of the next chapter.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this chapter has attempted to demonstrate that on the one hand the dead had a relevant impact in the creation of Jung's psychology. On the other hand, this chapter has argued that experiences with figures that Jung calls the dead in different texts, most particularly in *The Red Book*, became the baseline for his *Weltanschauung*, which he later did not hesitate to live by. Jung answered to the lament of the dead by writing psychological papers, by painting (Jung, 2009), drawing them (Hoerni, et al., 2019, p. 173), by dedicating a room in Bollingen for the painting of Philemon (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 252), and by enlarging his psychological framework in 1946 partly to leave room for the dead to exist in his psychology. In fact, it is difficult to see where the dead did not influence Jung's psychology.

Therapeutically, minding death and the dead had a direct impact for Jung on the way he conceived and practiced analysis. First, it shaped the way he could analyze a dream of a dead figure, by interpreting it objectively and hence giving it reality. Second, death and the possible attribution of reality to the dead became a potential meaning-creator for existence, and this enhances the individuation process due to the openness to other dimensions of existence. Last, as we have seen with Jung's close collaborators and read in his *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, creating a conception of life after death for Jung became "vital" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 333). Having said that, whereas understanding the dead as "projections" can be used by many Jungian analysts, the real existence of the dead is something that many are not ready to adhere to.

To end the chapter, a useful reminder is that Jung himself felt "there was a danger that others would repeat [or copy his *Weltanschauung* in a] parrot-fashion to avoid answering their own dead" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 26). We all need to confront and satisfy our own dead and their demands, Jung suggests. Integrating evil and not repressing it as Christianity has done is a key element of Jung's *Weltanschauung.* But what about for someone with a Hindu or Taoist background? What about someone with a violent and abusive dead mother? We all have different dead, close and distant dead. Jung responded to his family dead, but he also responded to intellectual ancestors. For instance, "Freud had left him an inheritance, a question directed towards him, which he had tried to take further" (p. 26). What about Kant, Nietzsche, Plato? Finding out who are our one's own dead and how we can help them in their development by answering their unanswered questions seems to be the beginning of creating one's our own *Weltanschauung* of death.

CHAPTER 4

Wholeness in Death

INTRODUCTION

Arguing that Jung's works can be understood as an attempt to create an interplay between the here and the hereafter, this thesis has so far focused on seeing how Jungian psychotherapy can be understood as a psychotherapeutic method that addresses the crisis around the question of life after death that Jung himself witnessed (Chapter 1), how Jungian analysis can be understood as a preparation for death (Chapter 2), and how the dead played a foundational role in the creation of Jung's psychotherapeutic approach (Chapter 3). Chapter 4 of this thesis focuses on Jung's 1944 near-death experience and subsequent visions and argues that these influenced his view of existence by convincing him of the continuation of life after death. This made him postulate that death is another side of existence and the awareness and integration of such a reality can enhance psychological growth.

This chapter concentrates on the personal and professional consequences of Jung's 1944 visions. These experiences, on the one hand, allowed him to continue developing his personal *Weltanschauung*, by confirming his views of post-mortal development and the continuation of ego-consciousness. On the other hand, professionally, these experiences also gave him the courage to enlarge his psychological framework, giving psychological wholeness a higher meaning. Theories such as the psychoid, synchronicity, and the notion of the *unus mundus* point to an existence of underpinning unity, where polarities, including that of life and death, cease to exist.

In addition, this chapter tries to show the practicality and psychotherapeutic usefulness of Jung's psychological post-1944 development by presenting a case study.

I have decided to structure this chapter by mixing up these three elements: personal and professional developments and the case study. I could have presented them separately, one after the other one, but I believe they are better understood the way I am here structuring them, since they are intrinsically attached to each other.

COSMIC WHOLENESS

Main argues that even though Jung himself never used the term, one can view his "work as a form of holism" (Main, 2021a, p. 22), since it is "a concept of pervasive and arguably preeminent importance in Jung's thought" (Main, 2019, p. 61). Quoting Jung, Main explains that the goal of Jung's psychotherapeutic process, namely individuation, is "human wholeness" (p. 61), which is characterized as a union of opposites, "most generally as 'the union of the conscious and unconscious personality,' and he designated this united state with the concept of the self, the 'archetype of wholeness'" (p. 61). The symbol of the mandala was of paramount importance for Jung, as it represents the self or wholeness. Main argues that even though psychological wholeness was Jung's primary concern, his psychotherapeutic framework can lead to a wider wholeness beyond the psyche. At one level, the pursuit of individual wholeness can lead to wholeness on a social level, in so far that individual wholeness "'makes us aware of the unconscious, which unites and is common to all mankind,' [hence bringing] to birth a consciousness of human community" (Main, 2021a, p. 23). At another level or levels, "the world beyond the psyche included for Jung the physical and spiritual worlds" (p .23). To present this last level of wholeness, Main presents Jung's writings on the sixteenth-century alchemist

Gerhard Dorn. This will be covered in greater detail later in this chapter, but here it is important to mention that Dorn described three "conjunctions," which Jung understands as three stages of psychological development, the third stage being the union with the world of potential, the "one world," the *unus mundus*. This stage of development is a union of the individuated person with the "unitary source of all actualizations" (p. 23), which allows Main to frame Jung's holism as "cosmic and mystical" (p. 23).

A pivotal experience for understanding cosmic wholeness as the highest degree of psychological development for Jung was his near-death experience in 1944, during which he experienced various visions. Indeed, the visions of wholeness experienced while "close to death" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330) "gave [Jung] the courage to undertake new formulations" (p. 328), including describing the pair of opposites "*vivum* (living) / *mortuum* (dead, inert)" (1955-1956/1970, para. 1) as "factors which come together in the coniunctio" (para. 1).

VISIONS OF WHOLENESS

On the eleventh of February 1944 Jung took one of his usual morning walks. As he was walking up the hills of Küsnacht he fell and broke his fibula. He was taken to the Hirslanden hospital in Zurich where he was asked to stay immobilized for the recovery of his leg. About ten days later, while still in hospital, Jung suffered from thrombosis of the heart and then two others of the lungs (Hannah, 1976, pp. 276-277). While being treated with oxygen and camphor injections, Jung experienced what he called "deliriums and visions" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 320).

As described in the chapter "Visions," of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections,* Jung's first vision at the hospital found him floating in space, high above earth. From where he was, he could see Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and he could also see, close to him, a big rock floating in space. He

knew he was expected inside this rock, for there was a temple within. The entrance of the temple, Jung knew, led to an antechamber, where a black Hindu was seated in a lotus position. All the questions he had about where he came from and where he was going would be answered by the "greater people" (p. 321) inside the temple. While floating in space, Jung experienced being stripped of all that he once was attached to during life. This was an extremely painful process but one that left him with a feeling of fulfillment. He felt that he no longer desired anything. As he was thinking and experiencing all this, he saw the image of his doctor, in his "primal form" (p. 323), floating towards him. His doctor told Jung he was not allowed to leave earth, that he needed to come back to his life. At that point, Jung's first vision ceased (Jung, 1963/1995, pp. 320-323).

For Jung this experience meant that he had been "on the edge of death" (p. 320), and "there," he was "free and whole" (Jung, 1973, p. 358). According to Shamdasani "It is clear that Jung considered that he had died and had returned to life" (Shamdasani, 2008. p. 23). The following section of a letter, commenting on his experience to Kristine Mann, dated from February 1945, supports Shamdasani's statement:

> I was free, completely free and whole, as I never felt before... Death is the hardest thing from the outside and as long as we are outside of it. But once inside you taste of such completeness and peace and fulfilment that you don't want to return... It has become a transitory prejudice, a working hypothesis for the time being but not existence itself. (Jung, 1973, pp. 358-359)

This description indeed would correspond to what people having had a near-death experience report. Near-death experiences are "usually described a pleasant or even... 'euphoric'-extremely joyful and peaceful, and pain-free" (Kelly & Kelly, 2014, p. 16). In addition, "temporal distortion, and a life review" (Greyson, 2021, p. 18) are common cognitive features experienced during a near-death experience, as well as mystical features such as "transcendence of time and space, sense of truth... vivid visual imagery" (p. 21) and "a sense of cosmic unity or oneness" (p. 22). In short, Jung seems indeed to have experienced being dead and then came back to life.

This was "the most tremendous things [Jung] ever experienced" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 326); leading to the expansion of existence for him. He experienced cosmic wholeness, which made him realize that life on earth was only provisional and half of full existence itself.

Wholeness was experienced by Jung in another sequence of visions during his time close to death, where he experienced a *pneuma* in the room of the hospital, "whose manifestation was the *mysterium coniunctionis*" (p. 326). He writes that during the visions he saw how he took part in three different marriages. Jung first experienced being part of the wedding of Tifereth and Malchuth, as explained in the Pardes Rimmonim (The Garden of Pomegranates). He was, perhaps, he adds, Rabbi Simon Ben Jochai, "whose wedding in the afterlife was being celebrated" (p. 327). Jung could not fully discern what part he was playing at the wedding but concluded that at the end he was the marriage: he was the union of Tifereth and Malchtuth. The Cabalistic vision faded away, giving way to a Christian vision of yet another wedding. This time he experienced being part of the Marriage of the Lamb (i.e., the marriage of Christ and the Church). Jung again felt that he was the marriage. Then that vanished, too, and Jung's last vision took place, another wedding. The *hierosgamos* ('sacred marriage') was being celebrated, and "All-father Zeus and Hera were celebrating their mystic marriage" (p. 327). Jung understands the

hierosgamos as "'the earthing' of the spirit and the spiritualizing of earth, the union of opposites and the reconciliation of the divided" (1955-1956/1970, para. 207).

Jung, again pointing to the idea of having experienced cosmic wholeness, writes that he should not "shy away from the word 'eternal'" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 327) to describe such visions, and adds that the experience can be described only as a

> non-temporal state in which present, past and future are *one.* Everything that happens in time had been brought together into *a concrete whole.* Nothing was distributed over time, nothing could be measured by temporal concepts... The only thing that feeling could grasp would be a sum, an iridescent whole containing all at once expectation of a beginning, surprise at what is now happening, and satisfaction or disappointment with the result of what happened. One is interwoven into an indescribable whole and yet observes it with complete objectivity. (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 327. Emphasis added.)

This passage suggests that Jung's personal experience of death gave him a deep conviction that life continues beyond the physical body's death. More importantly, it implies that death is not just an end, but may be the culmination of the development of one's personality—the final step in achieving completeness or wholeness. While earlier (in Chapter 3), I write about Jung's after-death state(s), in this context, Jung moves further, suggesting that through the experience of death itself, one can gain a deeper understanding of a state beyond these after-death conditions, possibly leading to wholeness or total integration. He even compares this state to nirvana, a Buddhist concept of ultimate liberation or enlightenment (p. 354), where the soul transcends the three-dimensional world of existence. The quote from above indicates that death

may be experienced as a form of cosmic unity, and thus, working with these death-related experiences in therapy could offer significant psychological or spiritual benefits.

WHOLENESS BEFORE THE VISIONS

At this point it is pertinent to remind ourselves that it was not his experience of death that gave Jung the conviction of wholeness being the goal of psychological development. In *The Red Book*, as discussed in Chapter 3, Philemon conveys a similar notion by referring to the star—a symbol of the Self or wholeness—to highlight the ultimate goal of human existence. This symbol represents the deeper process of individuation and the realization of one's true essence: "This star is the God and the goal of man... in him man goes to rest, toward him goes the long journey of the soul after death..." (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 534). This kind of mystical statement from *The Red Book* however will not find room in Jung's psychology before his near-death experience and the theoretical expansions of the archetype in 1946 that appeared from it. Before that, wholeness as the goal of psychological development was presented "only" at a psychological level. Jung stated that between 1918 and 1919 he started "to understand that the goal of psychic development is the self" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 222). In 1928, Richard Wilhelm (1873-1930), the German sinologist, sent Jung the translation of a Chinese alchemical text with a note asking for a commentary on it (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 223). This provided Jung with material that would help him put forward in a different way the investigation and work that he had embarked on since 1913, particularly his concept of the self (Shamdasani, 2012, pp. 150-155). Not long before he received the book from Wilhelm, synchronistically Jung had a dream where he found himself in Liverpool.[32] This dream had a "sense of finality" that made Jung understand that "the centre is

[32] Jung writes the dream as follows: "I found myself in a dirty, sooty city. It was night, and winder, and dark, and raining. I was in Liverpool. With a number of Swiss—say half a dozen—I walked through the dark streets. I had the

the goal... the self is the principle and archetype of orientation and meaning" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 224).

Again, even though Jung presented the self as the goal of therapy before 1946, he "characterized wholeness as consisting in a union of opposites, mostly as the union of the conscious and unconscious personality" (Main, 2019, p. 61). It was his near-death experience and visions of death that encouraged him to describe in his psychology "the conditions of existence as I see them and understand them" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 328). Central works in Jung's opus like *Aion, Mysterium Coniunctionis* and *Answer to Job* "were not conceivable prior" to his near-death experience (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 23). As Jung stated, "A good many of my principal works were written only then" (p. 328), including the notion that at the highest levels of psychological development, the individual can experience "a *unio mystica* with the potential world" (Jung, 1955-1956/1970, para. 767).

TRANSLATING (ALMOST THE ENTIRE) *RED BOOK*

Shamdasani has stated that with the publication of several essays and a book in 1916, Jung "began to attempt to translate some of the themes of *Liber Novus* into contemporary

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feeling that there we were coming from the harbour, and that the real city was actually up above, on the cliffs. We climbed up there. It reminded me of Basel, where the market is down below and then you go up through the Totengässchen ("Alley of the Dead"), which leads to a plateau above and so to the Petersplatz and the Peterskirche. When we reached the plateau, we found a broad square dimly illuminated by streetlights, into which many streets converged. The various quarters of the city were arranged radially around the square. In the centre was a round pool, and in the middle of it a small island. While everything round about was obscured by rain, fog, smoke, and dimly lit darkness, the little island blazed with sunlight. On it stood a single tree, a magnolia, in a shower of reddish blossoms. It was as though the tree stood in the sunlight and was at the same time the source of light. My companions commented on the abominable weather, and obviously did not see the tree. They spoke of another Swiss who was living in Liverpool, and expressed surprise that he should have settled here. I was carried away by the beauty of the flowering tree and the sunlit island, and thought, "I know very well why he has settled here" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 224). Jung's interpretation of this dream was of great importance as he understood that "the centre is the goal of life, and everything is directed towards that centre." After this dream Jung gave up drawing and painting mandalas, as it was through this dream that he obtained "a sense of finality" and "understood that the self is the principle and archetype of orientation and meaning" (p. 224).

psychological language" (Shamdasani, 2009/2012, p. 49), which resulted in presenting "the first outlines of the main components of his mature psychology" (p. 49). Shamdasani is referring to the essays "The structure of the unconscious," "Adaptation" (presented to the Psychological Club that year), "Individuation and collectivity," "The transcendent function " (written in 1916 but only published in 1957), and *The Psychology of the Unconscious Processes: An Overview of the Modern Theory and Method of Analytical Psychology*, published in 1917. Central themes of Jungian psychology, such as the personal layer and the collective layer of the unconscious, the individuation process, and active imagination are covered in these works. The translation from the experiences recorded in *The Red Book,* as Shamdasani states, is evident in these papers.

However, there is one important aspect of Jung's inner experiences recorded in *The Red Book* that did not find a place in Jung's psychology in these translations, namely the experience death and of the dead as the other side of existence. *The Red Book* is filled with figures that Jung's "I" calls the dead, and as we saw in Chapter 3, many respected Jungian scholars agree that these figures were understood by Jung as literal dead. In addition, Jung also claimed to have experienced uncanny happenings in his home in Küsnacht in 1916, but these experiences too were not translated in his works of the time. Jung did not share his thoughts about death publicly until 1927, the year in which he stated, at the funeral of Jerome Schloss, one of his analysands: "Nor is death an abrupt extinction, but a goal that has been unconsciously lived and worked for during half a lifetime" (1927/2014j, para. 1706). In terms of his scholarly works, it was in 1929, in his "Commentary on 'The Secret of the Golden Flower'" that Jung writes that as a physician he attempts to "strengthen the conviction of immortality" (1931/2014g, para. 68). Two years later, in the latter part of "The Stages of Life," Jung wrote that "as a doctor, I am convinced that it is hygienic—if I may use the word—to discover in death a goal towards which one can strive, and that shrinking away from it is something unhealthy and abnormal, which robs the second

half of life of its purpose" (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 792). In 1934, in the essay "The Soul and Death", Jung states: "enlightenment or no enlightenment, consciousness or no consciousness, nature prepares itself for death" (1934/2014ac, para. 808). This essay is perhaps Jung's most comprehensive treatment on death outside of the chapter "On Life after Death," from *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, but to argue the above, Jung often relied on the concept of *consensus gentium*, which he explains as "views about death, unmistakably expressed in all the great religions of the world. One might even say that the majority of these religions are complicated systems of preparation for death" (1934/2014ac, para. 804). Whereas after his heart-attack Jung would allow himself to state in professional writings that his own theoretical formulations led him "to certain postulates which touch on the realm of nuclear physics and the conception of space-time continuum" (1919/1946/2014s, para. 600n15), or even more bluntly that he is sure that "the process of becoming conscious continues after death" (Jung & Jaffe, 2023, p. 150), before the heart-attack he would present that idea by suggesting that psychology is "concerned solely with the *phenomenology of the psyche*. The idea of immortality is a psychic phenomenon that is disseminated over the whole earth" (Jung, 1939/2014h, para. 742). In other words, in his professional works, before his heart attack, Jung could speak of life after death and the dead as archetypal ideas, whereas after his heart-attack he began to allow himself to speak publicly of them not only as primordial ideas, but also as an ontological possibility.

TRANSLATING VISIONS

It was in 1946, two years after his near-death experience and visions, that Jung could translate the dead, life after death, and the idea of cosmic wholeness into his psychological framework. In 1946, Jung enlarged his theory of archetypes, adding an "*indefinite*" (1946/1978a, para. 964) nature to them that at its deepest reaches spheres of existence beyond time and space.

This theoretical expansion permitted his psychological framework to understand symbols from the unconscious as possibilities of the real existence of the dead and of an afterlife. It is important to note that this experience also motivated Jung to continue refining his *Weltanschauung*. We will later explore the depth of Jung's statement: "The picture of the world can change at any time, just as our conception of ourselves changes... Every new thought must be tested to see whether or not it adds something to our *Weltanschauung*" (1928/2014c, para. 700). This underscores Jung's openness to evolving his perspective as new insights emerged.

The following sections will show how Jung, after his near-death experience, personally and professionally attempted "to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the here and the hereafter" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330). Personally, Jung introduced new notions to his *Weltanschauung,* and professionally, he introduced the concepts of psychoid, synchronicity and the notion of the *unus mundus*—in part to create theoretical room for the dead in his psychology, and to postulate that cosmic wholeness is the culminating experience of psychological development. To argue how these concepts and ideas are useful and important for the Jungian psychoanalyst today, I shall introduce a case study that shows us the practicality of Jung's personal and professional expansions.

SUSAN OLSON'S CASE

In her moving book, *Images of the Dead in Grief Dreams, A Jungian view of Mourning* (2021), American Susan Olson, a Jungian analyst, writes about how images of the dead in grief dreams can be of great benefit in the archetypal experience of mourning (Olson, 2021, p. xi).

In 1988, a year after Olson had come to Zurich to study at the Jung Institute, she had the following dream of her daughter:

Elizabeth and I are at the beach. We swim for a while and then get out of the water and lie on the dock. When we look out to the sea we notice that the tide is going out, exposing large stretches of sand which had been under the water. The atmosphere becomes charged and heavy, as it does just before a storm. The whole landscape is bathed in eerie red light.

Then we see a herd of horses out in the water, running back and forth from one sandbar to another. They run from left to right and back again as if choreographed, their manes and tails streaming out behind them. We look at them closely and see that they are no ordinary horses. They are running on their hind legs and seem to be people wearing horse costumes, with their human feet sticking out below. Each time they reach a certain point on the left, a few of them vanish into thin air. Then the rest of the herd turns around and runs back to the right again.

I feel cautious and do not want to get too close to these strange creatures. But Elizabeth is curious and wades into the water to investigate. As I watch, she begins to run with the horses, from left to right and back again. Then all of a sudden she turns into a horse herself. I am frightened and wade out to see what has happened. But before I can reach her, she and all the horses disappear. I run to the place where I last saw her. On the sand is a small suitcase with a few things in it— a doll, a coat, and some other small objects. I also see a small spot of blood on the sand at the spot where she disappeared. I wake up terrified, calling her name. (pp. 8-9)

Olson writes how at the time she thought about sharing this dream with her daughter and with her Jungian analyst in Zurich, but finally did not speak about it with either. The dream, as

terrifying as it had been, was forgotten as she went on with her life. Months later, she received in the mailbox an invitation to an art exhibition, and the card image of the invitation was "a white arched doorway with white shuttered doors opening into a clear blue sky. A white heart was carved on the lintel, a few white clouds drifted through the open door, and sheer white curtains floated in the breeze. The only dark figure feature was a shadowy figure standing just behind the left-hand door" (p. 1). Olson immediately knew that her daughter Elizabeth would enjoy the picture, so she mailed it to her. Then, as with the dream, she forgot about it.

Five days after she had posted the card, while having dinner with friends, Olson received a phone call from her son, announcing that Elizabeth, aged eighteen, had been killed in a hit-and-run auto accident in Canada.

In a state of utter shock, Olson managed to immediately take a flight from Zurich back to America to attend her daughter's services. Months before her death, Elisabeth had told her mother that "'if anything ever happened'" (p. 2), she wanted to be cremated. Her wish was honored.

In her book, Olson tells us how, after the death of her daughter, a series of dreams appeared to her for a period of two years. Writing from the perspective of a Jungian analyst, she writes that the dreams helped her in different ways: allowing her to connect with her sadness and mourn; to create an image "of the intangible mystery of life after death" (p. 4) by experiencing Elisabeth as a spiritual guide (p. 30); and ultimately by convincing her that life is mysterious since it does not restrict itself to the laws of time and space (p. 14). What follows will explore these benefits that Olson described.

Pre-Cognitive Dream- The Psychoid Archetype

The first element of Olson's experience to examine is the dream she had months before the death of her daughter. She understands precognitive dreams as dreams that "foretell or forewarn the dreamer of impending events" (p. 8) and that these "do not derive from the conscious ego, but emerge from a level of the unconscious that seems to exist beyond space and time" (p. 8). Her understanding of precognitive dreams that emerge from a sphere of the unconscious that is found beyond space and time come from Jung's theoretical expansion after his near-death experience. Jung was particularly interested in pre-cognitive dreams that could tell us something about death.[33] As mentioned in the Introduction, during the inaugural ceremony of the Jung institute in 1948 Jung encouraged students to research on "pre- and post-mortal phenomena … because of the relativization of space and time that accompanies them" (Jung, 1948/1978a, para. 1138). Explaining synchronistic phenomena, Jung suggests that "there is an inborn 'knowledge' or 'perception' in living organism" (Jung, 1952/2914af, para. 931), which he connects with the works of Driesch. He writes that "as soon as we begin seriously to reflect on the teleological processes in biology or to investigate the compensatory function of the unconscious" (para. 931), we come to "postulate a *foreknowledge of some kind*. It is certainly not foreknowledge that is connected with the ego... but rather a self-subsistent 'unconscious' knowledge which I prefer to call 'absolute knowledge'" (para. 931).

After the death of Toni Wolff, Jung wrote in a letter that she "died so suddenly and so entirely unexpected that one could scarcely realize her disappearance. I had seen her two days earlier—both totally unsuspecting. As early as mid-February I had Hades dreams, which I related entirely to myself, because nothing pointed to Toni. None of the people who were close to her

[33] Not only was Jung interested in statistical research that would show "precognitions of death" (Jung, 1952/2014l, para, 974), but he also thought that dreams could anticipate death. He states that dream interpretation sometimes "is a matter of life and death" (1934/1969c, para. 323-324), as he writes about a colleague that ignoring the warning of a dream, died by falling while climing a montain. Interestingly, Jung also writes that it is not unsual to dream about one's own death, however that "is no serios matter" (para, 349), for "When it is really a question of death, the dream speaks another language" (para. 349).

had any warning dreams, while people in England and Germany did, and in Zurich only some who knew her merely superficially" (Jung, 2011, p. 173). Jung was obviously very interested in finding out who had had pre-cognitive dreams before the death of Wolff.

Two years after Jung's near-death experience, in the 1946 Eranos Yearbook, Jung's lecture "The Spirit of Psychology" was published (renamed in 1954 as "On the Nature of the Psyche"). This paper presents the reformulation of Jung's theory of the archetype by introducing the psychoid factor into it. Addison discusses the historical context of Jung's use of the term *psychoid* and describes how Jung had already proposed to Freud by 1907 to use the term psychoid when referring to the unconscious. Jung's desire for this, Addison argues, presumably came from the biological and neo-vitalistic thinking of Driesch (Addison, 2019, p. 6). Presenting the theoretical extension of the archetype and introducing the concept of the psychoid, Jung writes that

> since psyche and matter are contained in one and the same world, and moreover are in continuous contact with one another and ultimately rest on irrepresentable, transcendental factors, it is not only possible but fairly probable, even, that psyche and matter are two different aspects of one and the same thing […] In my previous writings, I always treated archetypal phenomena as psychic, because the material to be expounded or investigated was concerned solely with ideas and images. The psychoid nature of the archetype, as put forward here, does not contradict these earlier formulations; it only means a further degree of conceptual differentiation. (1946/1978a, para. 419)

The psychoid can be understood as unconscious processes within the psyche that ultimately, in an unknowable way, connect the psyche with matter in a purposive dynamic. In

"On the Nature of the Psyche," Jung uses a scale to speak of the psyche and its reaches through a continuum extending from a "psychic infra-red" sphere, representing the instincts, to a "psychic ultra-violet" sphere, representing the spiritual (para. 414). The psychoid processes underpinned the psyche and connected these two spheres, or poles. On the infra-red pole, the archetype passes over the physical, thus adopting a not-purely-psychical condition.

Jung makes a clear distinction between the archetypal image and the archetype as such. The archetypal image is a representation, mediated by the unconscious, of something that is ultimately irrepresentable. The archetype, Jung writes, "is a psychoid factor that belongs, as it were, to the invisible, ultraviolet end of the psyche spectrum. It does not appear, in itself, to be capable of reaching consciousness" (para. 417). And later adds that "the real nature of the archetype is not capable of being made conscious, that it is transcendent, on which account I call it psychoid" (para. 417). This transcendent aspect of the archetype, Jung concludes, leaves him no alternative but to describe its nature as "'spirit'" (para. 420). And he states that "the position of the archetype would be located beyond the psychic sphere, analogous of the position of physiological instinct, which is immediately rooted in the stuff of the organism and, with its psychoid nature, forms the bridge to matter and in general" (para. 420). Because the archetype is transcendent in nature and cannot ultimately be known by consciousness, Jung here refers to it as psychoid, and not as psychic.

Olson therefore can understand her dream as a pre-cognitive dream because at the very bottom, the unconscious, with its psychoid factor, does not follow the laws of time as consciousness does. One can dream about the past, the present, or about the future. Jung describes his experience of death as a "non-temporal state in which present, past and future are one" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 327). The wholeness experienced in death gave Jung the courage to translate his experience of the "eternal" (p. 327) by postulating the enlargement of his theory of

archetypes, and by doing so he provided tools for the psychotherapist to frame events such as Olson's dream in a psychotherapeutic perspective and use. This dream was transformative to Olson, for it convinced her that "precognitive experience is real, and opened [her] mind to the possibility that the 'ordinary' world of space and time is only one aspect of a complex and mysterious universe" (Olson, 2021, p. 14). The effects of seeing the world as a mysterious place can be profoundly therapeutic, as the next section argues.

MEANING

A central aim of Jungian psychotherapy is summarized in the following sentence:

> Do not forget, however, that we are speaking not of people who still have to prove their social usefulness, but of those who can no longer see any sense in being socially useful and who have come upon the deeper and more dangerous question of the meaning of their own individual lives. (1931/2014b, para. 103)

Meaning plays a central role in Jungian psychoanalysis. Jung seems to have preferred working with people in their second half of life, people not necessarily looking to fix a specific psychopathology, but rather, people in search of wisdom, guidance, meaning (Stein, 1998, pp. 177-178). His psychotherapeutic approach and his psychological framework can be understood as an answer to the problem of a meaningless existence (Main, 2022, pp. 71-97). In fact, Jung at times framed psychopathology as suffering from a meaningless life:

> A psychoneurosis must be understood, ultimately, as the suffering of a soul which has not discovered its meaning. But all creativeness in the realm of the spirit as well as every psychic advance of man arises from the suffering of the soul, and the cause of the suffering is spiritual stagnation, or psychic sterility. (1932/2014y, para. 497)

For Jung, the cure for the meaningless life rests on interaction with the images rising from the unconscious.

> To the patient it is nothing less than a revelation when something altogether strange rises up to confront him from the hidden depths of the psyche—something that is not his ego and is therefore beyond the reach of his personal will. He has regained access to the sources of psychic life, and this marks the beginning of the cure. (para. 534)

Main describes how Jung's use of the term *meaning* could be understood at different levels, and indeed there does not seem "to be a clear consensus about Jung's understanding of meaning among subsequent Jungian writers, whether they focus on synchronicity or discuss analytical psychology more generally" (Main, 2022, p. 75). There can be an objective meaning, for instance, which Jung described as "*a priori* in relation to human consciousness and apparently exists outside man" (1952/2014af, para. 942, cited in Main, 2022, pp. 75-76). This would point to a transpersonal, cosmic meaning. There can be also a subjective understanding of meaning, which is not related to a greater meaning; instead, this focuses on what is meaningful to an individual (p. 77).

It is possible to argue that Olson's experiences with the pre-cognitive dream impacted both her subjective and objective levels of meaning. On a subjective level, she writes: "I will treasure my dreams and be grateful for all they have taught me about life, death, and enduring love" (Olson, 2021, p. 123). Her own individual understanding of life, death, and enduring love gained more meaning through the experience of the dream. On an objective level, this dream convinced her that precognitive experience was genuine and expanded her awareness to consider that the familiar world of space and time is only one facet of a vast and enigmatic universe. (p. 14). Olson became "convinced" (p. 14) of a larger existence beyond her subjective life. She touched a higher meaning.

Furthermore, Olson shares another dream she had about her daughter that could also be understood as affecting Olson's experiences of meaning. She writes that after receiving the news of the accident, she entered a state of "shock" (p. 2). During the flight to America, she could not cry, and neither could she in the days that followed. "I knew that my tears were welling up inside" (p. 3) she writes, "but still they would not flow" (p. 3). Then, about two weeks after Elizabeth's death, she had the following dream:

> I am grieving and wishing that I could hug Elizabeth again. Then all of a sudden she is there and I am hugging her. She is wearing the dark red sweater I had made for her father before we were married. I can feel her body clearly, her ribs against my arms and her strong arms around me. I am crying and laughing at the same time because I am so glad to see her and touch her again. As we embrace, she says to me, "Let your tears fertilize my ground." Then she is gone and I wake up. (p. 24)

Olson woke up from this dream feeling that "the brittle shell around my heart finally cracked and I wept for a long time" (p. 24). In the dream, she knew that Elizabeth was dead, but "she seemed utterly real and very much alive" (p. 24). She "did not feel like a ghost" (p. 24), and their hug was "as warm as the many we had shared during her lifetime" (p. 24). This first dream after Elizabeth's death had a healing effect on Olson and was profoundly meaningful at a subjective level: it helped Olson to connect with her sadness and finally express it through her tears. In addition, as a Jungian analyst, Olson, much later in life, could work on an interpretation of this first dream, which brought to her a sense of a higher meaning at a transpersonal level. She understood this dream as "the possibility of new life springing from the death of the old" (p. 32). This dream became a foundation for Olson's own creation of a *Weltanschauung* of death, as I shall discuss later.

Furthermore, Olson writes about how working in group settings with dreams of individuals who have experienced the loss of a loved one can be powerfully meaningful. She writes: "Workshop participants were relieved to tell their own dreams of the dead without being considered 'weird' or 'crazy.' Often, they began by saying, 'I've never told this to anyone before, but...' Their pain was eased when they were able to recount their dreams without fear of judgement or condemnation" (p. 4). To re-experience a dream of a dead loved one by sharing it in a safe space with others can have a meaningful and powerful healing effect on a subjective level. The dream in this sense can be thought of as a bridge that penetrates the "brittle shell around the heart" that was built due to the pain of death.

As the next section shows, the meaning that Olson gained is also perceived as she had simultaneous events happening to her that seem unrelated on the surface, but were experienced as meaningfully connected.

SYNCHRONICITY AND DEATH

The dream Olson had about her daughter and the invitation to an art exhibition that shows the doors to heaven can be thought as acausal events that have a connection with her daughter's death. Jung called this synchronicity. Jung defined synchronicity in diverse ways, but generally, he defined it as "the simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state" (1952/2014af, para. 850). The following gives an overview of this theory.

As Main argues that the modifications stated in "On the Nature of the Psyche" in relation to the relativization of time and space within the unconscious "were postulated by Jung largely in order to account for the synchronistic phenomena" (Main, 2004, p. 25), Shamdasani writes that the theory of synchronicity "was clearly an attempt to render parapsychological phenomena comprehensible in terms of physics, and as such, opened the door to postmortem transcendence" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 21). Shamdasani adds that the relativization of time and space, articulated in the expansion of the theory of the archetype, "could be considered as the basis for an epistemology of survival" (p. 21). In his essay "Synchronicity: An Acasual Connecting Principle" (1952), Jung suggests that the relationship between mind and body could be understood as synchronistic. As mentioned above, Jung writes about the existence of an "'absolute knowledge'" (Jung, 1952/2014af, para. 948) perceived in synchronistic phenomena, that is "not mediated by the sense organs, [which] supports the hypothesis of a self-subsistent meaning, or even expresses its existence" (para. 948). This absolute knowledge is transcendental since it does not adhere to time and space and therefore can manifest itself acausally.

To write of such knowledge, Jung provides the example of a near-death experience that, when studied closely, reminds the reader of the near-death experience Jung himself had in 1944. Jung begins his example by stating that this was the experience of a woman patient of his, "whose reliability and truthfulness I have no reason to doubt" (para. 950). This woman, after thirty hours of fruitless labor during the birth of her first child, had to go through surgery, as her doctor found it necessary. During this procedure, done under light narcosis, the woman suffered a great loss of blood. Once the surgery was done, and the doctor and the family members were gone, as the nurse was leaving the room, the patient "had the feeling that she was sinking through the bed into a bottomless void" (para. 950). At that point, the nurse returned to the bed to take her pulse, and even though the patient herself was feeling fine, the nurse became alarmed at her condition. The next thing the patient remembered was "*looking down* from a point in the ceiling and could see everything going on in the room below her: she saw herself lying in the bed, deadly pale, with closed eyes" (para. 950). She saw how the nurse was on her side, how the doctor seemed afraid and did not know what to do, and she also saw how her family had crowded to the door. As the patient was looking from above, she felt calm and knew she was not going to die. She also knew that behind her there

> was a glorious, park-like landscape shining in the brightest colours, and in particular an emerald green meadow with short grass, which sloped gently upwards beyond a wrought-iron gate leading to the park. It was spring, and little gay flowers such as she had never seen before were scattered about in the grass. The whole demesne sparkled in the sunlight, and all the colours were of an indescribable splendour. The sloping meadow was flanked on both sides by dark green trees. (para. 950)

She knew that this wonderful picture was “the entrance to another world” (para. 950) and that if she were to turn around and look at this gate, she would feel tempted to go inside and would then not return to life. But she also knew that by not turning around she would come back to life, and so she did. After this she woke up from the coma and was told by the doctor that she had been unconscious for about half an hour. The next day, when she was feeling stronger, she told the nurse all the events she had seen in the hospital room while being in the coma, which turned out to be exactly as she told them. Jung goes on to give possible explanations for this.

After clarifying that this was not due to a psychogenic twilight state of a split-off part of consciousness continuing its functioning, because the patient was in a real coma and had never shown any signs of hysteria, Jung suggests that this experience shows that the location of consciousness seems to be not in the brain, but elsewhere. He suggests either there is some other nervous substrate in humans that can perceive and think, or that “psychic processes that go on in us during loss of consciousness are synchronistic phenomena, i.e., events which have no causal connection with organic processes” (para. 955). Jung continues arguing for this possibility, stating that “where sense perceptions are impossible from the start, it can hardly be a question of anything but synchronicity” (para. 955).

Olson writes that Elizabeth never received the card to an art exhibition that she sent her. It arrived in her mailbox, but Elizabeth did not pick it up. Laura, a friend of Elizabeth found it after the accident and gave it back to Olson during Elizabeth’s services. According to Olson, “The image of the white door opening into the blue sky was a clear example of synchronicity... The card’s arrival just before Elizabeth passed through the open door into eternity convinced me that synchronicity is not only a theory, but a very real experience” (Olson, 2021, p. 3). And then adds,

> The synchronicities and dreams that I experienced during this time hint at the possibility of a transcendent level of reality existing beyond waking consciousness. As we struggle to describe it, images of places such as the spirit-world, the land of the dead, the underworld, the other side, and the kingdom of heaven come to mind, as do images of time such as the beyond, the eternal, and the hereafter. (p. 5)

Synchronicities involving death or the dead open up possibilities, and these are useful for the Jungian therapist who thinks of them as possible hints from the unconscious and hence material for psychological growth by initiating the development of a *Weltanschauung* of death. Jung gives examples of how synchronicity involving a dream of a dead loved one helped him to work on the possibility of a reality that transcends waking consciousness. For instance, Jung tells how, after the death of his mother, he dreamt that he paid a visit to her in her new home, which was a small cottage from the 18th or 19th century located in Mendoza, Argentina, at the foot of the Aconcagua, the highest mountain in the Latin America Cordillera. His mother was married to a pharmacist, and Jung also saw a younger woman whom he was told was the wife of a pharmacist. She had bandages on her head and arms as she was injured. A few days after having this dream, Jung read in the newspaper that an earthquake had destroyed the city of Mendoza. This synchronicity led Jung to write that "*For lack of something better*, one could connect this dream with a post–mortal existence of my mother and also make a connection between the earthquake and the wounded woman in the dream" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 153). And then he adds:

> We usually regard ideas about an afterlife and apparent "experiences" of the beyond as "only psychological," i.e., subjective fantasies. But actually, we do not know what kind of reality psychic contents have, and we know even less about the extent to which images and apparitions of the deceased may have something like autonomy and an objective reality. It is not always possible to distinguish them from inner images and fantasies. I am of the opinion that our fantasies from the unconscious have a certain degree of independent validity. If I cannot come up with any evidence for an afterlife with my logical reasoning, I am dependent on intuitive hints and suggestions from the unconscious, including dreams, and feel justified in taking them more or less seriously. If the unconscious says "Mendoza," it initially sounds like nonsense. But when it then appears in the newspaper...! (pp. 153-154)

This example shows how from a synchronicity Jung begins to develop the possibility of a life after death; the synchronous event caused him to contemplate the post-mortal existence of his mother. This bring us to an important question about Jung's myths about death and the dead, which is whether ego-consciousness continues to exist in the afterlife. The following section explores this aspect of Jung's *Weltanschauung*.

EGO-CONSCIOUSNESS AFTER DEATH

One of the central questions about life after death is whether ego-consciousness continues to exist after the death of the body. For Olson, this question seems to have been answered rather straightforwardly since from the beginning of her series of dreams after the death of Elizabeth, her daughter "seemed utterly real and very much alive" (p. 24). In her dream experiences of

Elizabeth, Olson could "see her, hear her, embrace her, almost smell her" (p. 24). Even though Olson asked herself whether these dreams were wish-fulfillments (p. 39), her interpretations of them are at an objective level; these dreams are about Elizabeth herself in the afterlife. Indeed, as we will see later, for Olson her daughter seems to continue developing in the afterlife, since dreams indicate that she "has matured beyond her years" (p. 109) and that "she is thriving" (p. 109) in the land of the dead.

Being cautious, Jung writes that "At most we can say that there is some probability that something of our psyche continues beyond physical death. Whether what continues to exist is conscious of itself, we do not know" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 354). Being less cautious, Jung also states that "the process of becoming conscious continues after death" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 149). All in all, after studying Jung's first vision during his near-death experience, it would seem safe to say that Jung thought that something that is related to ego-consciousness does remain. It was his ego, after all, that experienced wholeness during death, as he reported after the vision.

As Jung started to feel that everything was being stripped away from him, he also states that "something remained . . . I consisted of my own history, and I felt with great certainty: this is what I am... I existed in an objective form; I was what I had been and lived" (pp. 322-323). As Main puts it, "here, Jung attains a greater or more essential self but still seems to have individuality" (Main, 2021, p. 147). Indeed, even though Jung reaches "an objective form" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 322), where "I had everything that I was, and was that everything" (p. 322), he still could remember what had happened to him when he was no longer in the vision. His ego could remember the experience it had.

Having a different perspective, whereas von Franz calls this "Jung's altered, 'objective ego'" (von Franz, 1984, p. 108), and writes that this "new ego seems to be a kind of lived

quintessence, which at the same time is also a termination of life" (p. 108), Dourley calls the primal form the "self-operative in the maturation of everyone" (Dourley, 2014, p. 114). He argues that the bedrock of Jung's psychology is to become aware of the individual's essential truth, since it is only through it that the individual becomes who he is meant to be. In other words, Dourley equated the concept of primal form with the concept of the Self. Allowing the Self to incarnate in one's ego consciousness, he argues, is "the substance of one's contribution to humanity and is preserved in eternity" (p. 114). However, relating ego to the concept of the Self, von Franz argues that "the two aspects, ego and Self, are almost completely united here, but the ego feeling remains *part* of a larger whole; it is not the whole itself" (von Franz, 1984, p. 108).

My research suggests that this more essential self, that loses all that it "aimed at or wished for or thought" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 321) becomes closely united with what Jung called the Self. Yet, the ego, or part of it, at this stage in the death process, remains conscious. Jung writes that as "the whole phantasmagoria of earthly existence, fell away or was stripped from me" (pp. 321-322), he felt that "everything seemed to be past; what remained was a *fait accompli*, without any reference back to what had been" (p. 322). The affects of the ego seem to disappear at this stage, and what remains of the ego is a sort of objective perspective of what has been. "Together with the cessation of affects, desires and emotions, much of what one calls 'human warmth' also seems to disappear... What seems to cease therefore through the purification is the wishing, fearing, and desiring of the ego" (von Franz, 1984, p. 111). Similarly, Hannah narrates how Jung told her that as he was floating in space about to enter the temple, he did not miss or regret leaving anyone. In fact, his whole existence and Europe had simply disappeared to him; the only thing that crossed his mind were his pipes, as he hoped no one would mess with them (Hannah, 1977, p. 280).

When relating a dream he had with his wife Emma after her death, Jung also points to this "objectivity" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 327). In the dream Emma was staring at him, showing no affective response (p. 327). This lack of emotional warmth was understood by Jung as a step forward in the process of individuation in death. This was an impressive experience for Jung.

What follows could be understood as how Jung's experience during the first vision at the hospital shaped his conception of what happens to the ego after physical death and how analysis and its emphasis on the individuation process affect post-mortal experience:

> The objectivity which I experienced in this dream and in the visions is part of a completed individuation. It signifies detachment from valuations and from what we call emotional ties. In general, emotional ties are very important to human beings. But they still contain projections, and it is essential to withdraw these projections in order to attain to oneself and to objectivity. Emotional relationships are relationships of desire, tainted by coercion and constraint; something is expected from the other person, and that makes him and ourselves unfree. Objective cognition lies hidden behind the attraction of the emotional relationship; it seems to be the central secret. Only through objective cognition is the real *coniunctio* possible. (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 328)

The near-death experience and vision Jung had in 1944, as the dream he had of his wife, point to the idea that after the death of the body a part of the ego continues to exist. Stein, in an interview I recently did with him, also suggests that the ego, as a complex, with its archetypal core continues to exist after the death of the body, since it is rooted in the self. He explains that the ego-complex, as all complexes, has a double core; a personal and an archetypal core. The

personal is developed through experience, but the archetypal core, rooted in the self, continues to exist after death as it existed before birth (Moris, 2024). Main would seem to point to the same argument, as he suggests that in his later works, post-1944, Jung softened his concept of ego, not formulating it as only the centre of consciousness, but presenting it "as an integral part of the self" (Main, 2021b, p. 157). Particularly, "Jung sometimes referred to the ego as the 'exponent' of the self" (p. 157). It is this "integral part of the self," the archetypal core of the ego, that seems to continue existing after death.

The following section explores how Jung continued revising and confirming his image of the afterlife, by thinking about different ways in which the dead and the living relate to each other.

GREATER COMPANY— THE OTHER DEAD

As we saw in Chapter 3, as part of his *Weltanschauung*, Jung believed that death consists of one or more after-death state(s). During the first sermon that Philemon teaches the dead, he claims that these dead are "hovering over their graves" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 514), and that he "must teach them, so that their life may be fulfilled and *they can enter into death*" (p. 514. Emphasis added). In different passages of *The Red Book* Jung's "I" encounters dead who had "forgot something important that should also have been lived" (p. 335), since they felt "as if [they] had not come to a proper end with life" (p. 335). These dead "still ha[d] no peace" (p. 335). Only the living, so it seems, with the possibility of gaining consciousness can help these dead.

Different Jungian scholars seem to agree that from the chapter "On Life After Death" and from *The Red Book*, it is possible to argue that one aspect of Jung's myth about the souls of the

dead is that they are dependent on the living for their development (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 19; 2009/2012, p. 508; Stephens 2020, p. 41; and Main, 2021, p. 164), as if consciousness can only be obtained in earthly life. Indeed, from a patient's dream Jung concludes the following: "The dead [are] extremely interested in the life experiences that the newly deceased [bring] with them, just as if the acts and experiences taking place in earthly life, in space and time, were the decisive ones" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 336). Or as Shamdasani puts it, Jung "felt that the dead were waiting for the answers of the living" (Shamdasani, 2009/2012, p. 508).

However, as mentioned above, Jung states that a *Weltanschauung* is a theory rather than a belief, so any new idea needs to be assessed to see if it contributes to the overall worldview (1928/2014c, para. 700). After Jung's near-death experience, it seems that he indeed added something to his vision of the hereafter, making the relationship between the living and the dead not just about the living helping the dead. In his vision floating in space, as Jung approaches the temple rock he writes: "I had the certainty that I was about to enter an illuminated room and would meet there all those people to whom I belong in reality" (Jung, 1963, p. 322), the "greater company" (p. 324), and these people "knew the answer to my question about what had been before and what would come after" (p. 322). Jung was convinced that as he was floating in space he was in the process of dying, as he was "close to death" (p. 320). His doctor appeared to him in his "primal form" (p. 324), and "When anybody attains this form it means he is going to die, for already he belongs to the greater company" (p. 324). Jung felt that the greater company, the dead, would be able to give him the answers to all his questions, particularly in terms of his place in history and the meaning of his life. He writes that

> There I would at last understand—this too was a certainty—what historical nexus I or my life fitted into. I would know what had been before me, why I had come into being, and

> where my life was flowing. My life as I lived it had often seemed to me like a story that has no beginning and no end. I had the feeling that I was a historical fragment, an excerpt for which the preceding and succeeding text was missing. My life seemed to have been snipped out of a long chain of events, and many questions had remained unanswered... I felt sure that I would receive an answer to all these questions as soon as I entered the rock temple... *There I would meet the people who knew the answers to my question about what had been before and what would come after.* (p. 324. Emphasis added)

The "greater company" does not seem to be waiting for answers from the living. They are another kind of dead, not expecting answers but providing them. They belong, in other words, to wholeness, as they "would know what had been before [Jung], why [he] had come into being, and where [his] life was flowing" (p. 324). Indeed, thinking about the notion of death having different states, one could surmise that Jung contemplated the idea that the dead in the first state of development needed answers from the living, but since the process of gaining consciousness persists even after death (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, 149), they might reach a point in which no more help from the living is needed. Again, it would seem that these dead know more than the living because they are part of wholeness, "a non-temporal state in which present, past, and future are one" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 327), where "[e]verything that happens in time ha[s] been brought together into a concrete whole" (p. 327).

To summarize, after his near-death experience, Jung's *Weltanschauung* was tested and enlarged; he concluded that there are different types of dead, some that are incomplete and need the help of the living, and some that have entered "into death" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 335) and can give "an answer to all... questions" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 320).

“A NEW GUIDE OF SOULS”

In Olson’s experience, helping the dead gain consciousness was an important aspect of what she had to do for Elisabeth. The following dream is a good example of this.

> Elisabeth is telling me what happened on the night she died. She says that the “aura” or spiritual protective shield that surrounds each person was withdrawn for a few seconds, as though her guardian angel had relaxed his guard for a moment. Then she seems to understand how serious his lapse was and exclaims, “I could have died!” I start to cry, take her face in my hands, look her right in the eye and say to her, “Honey, you did die.” I realized that she still isn’t completely aware of what happened to her and that she needs reality testing from me, just as I need it from her. (Olson, 2021, p. 61)

Elizabeth needed the help of a living person, her mother, to gain consciousness about her dead state and continue developing in her new form, one could argue. This would agree with Philemon’s teachings that the living must teach the dead so “they can enter into death” (Jung, 2009, p. 514). However, about a year after the death of her daughter, Olson started realizing that the dreams with Elizabeth became different. She writes:

> When Elizabeth first appeared in my dreams, I associated her image with her historical presence and felt that I was granting her a form of eternal life by holding her in my memory. But as time passed and her dream image took on a life of its own, I realized that

> her imaginal presence was enlarging my consciousness and altering my view of the "afterlife." (Olson, 2021, p. 83)

This shift in perspective, where now it is Elizabeth who is helping her mother, is what Jung came to conclude happens after he recognized the existence of the "great company." The following dreams were helpful to Olson in realizing how her daughter's image in her dreams started to change and to assume a new role.

> I am with Elizabeth and am touching her, especially her arms. I feel amazed that she is real and that I can touch her. I want to tell people about this and show them how real she is. Then we are sitting in the rocking chair we sat in when she was a baby. She is sitting in my lap facing me as she used to do when she was little. In "real life" this would not be possible, but in the dream it is not a problem. It feels wonderful to hold her and rock her again. (p. 39)

This dream had a double effect on Olson. First, she felt how utterly real Elizabeth was in the dream. After she woke up from the dream, she was surprised to realize she had been in fact dreaming, for her daughter had felt "absolutely real" (p. 39). The second effect was that somehow, without words, Elizabeth in the dream had transmitted a message to her mother: she "had work to do, which involves writing" (p. 39), she writes. The message was clear. Olson immediately asked herself: "Is this wish-fulfillment or a visitation? A figment of my imagination or a 'real' message from Elizabeth?" (p. 39). Olson concluded that there is no possible way of

conclusively knowing the answer, but she could take these dreams as "psychic facts" (p. 39), and it was in her power "to decide what to make of them" (pp. 39-40).

The following dream shows more precisely how Elizabeth became for Olson "a guide."

> I go down into the underworld, the land of the dead. A male guide leads me there and shows me around. I watch as bodies are put into a big common box or tank. As new bodies arrive, the old ones are covered and turned over in a kind of composting process. The guide says that the dead keep each other warm in this box. Then they are moved to another place and he makes holes in their skulls to allow the matter inside to come out. He tells me that the skull would swell up and burst if he did not do this.
>
> Elizabeth's body is in the box with several others. I feel horrified as I watch her corpse undergo the composting and skull–piercing process. Finally she emerges from the box. She is alive again and I can talk to her. She looks like herself except that her hair is dyed black– but a bit of her blonde hair is shining through. She says that she is sorry for being careless on the night she died and that she didn't mean to hurt me or anyone else. Then she tells me that there is something important I can do for her. Looking me right in the eye, she says "Tell people about me." I take this to mean that she wants other young people to know what happened to her so that they will be more careful than she was. (pp-77-78)

It was only later that Olson could understand that what Elizabeth meant by "Tell people about me" was not warning young people to be careful while driving; instead, it was, Olson realized, about honoring Elizabeth "by telling my dream—not to dramatize my grief or to

immortalize her, but to communicate what mourning has taught me about the objective psyche and the ongoing connection between the living and the dead" (p. 83).

To Olson, this dream represents the emergence of Elizabeth "as my new guide" (p. 84). Olson writes that even though her daughter had been helping her in previous dreams, "by encouraging me to weep, filling me with her breath, and teaching me about guardian angels" (p. 84), the transformation Elizabeth experienced in the underworld now elevated her role and she did not have a request tone, "but a command: 'You must do this,' she seems to be saying. 'This is your task now. Take your sorrow and turn it into gold'" (p. 84). Elizabeth now, for Olson, became a "messenger and a guide" (p. 90). The roles inverted; it was no longer Olson helping Elizabeth to gain consciousness; instead, it was Elizabeth making her mother aware of what her mission in life was.

In short, Olson seems to agree with Jung's insights from his near-death experience, which points to the notion of the relationship of the dead with the living as possibly being helpful to both sides of the whole.

Before returning to the beginning of this chapter and exploring how Jung incorporated the cosmic wholeness experienced from his near-death experience into his psychological framework, I would like to examine another concept that Jung contemplated regarding life after death, namely the notion of reincarnation.

REINCARNATION

Towards the end of his life, Jung described, in a conversation with Jaffé, how present and difficult the idea of reincarnation was for him. He said "I was not able to put aside the question about reincarnation. I was tormented from within to give an answer" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 162).

He had dreams with Toni Wolf that indicated the possibility of reincarnation. In one of these dreams, Jung "dreamed that Toni came back. Her death had only occurred due to a sort of mix-up—as if she had died through some misunderstanding. And so now she was here again, in order to somehow live a further part of her life" (p. 161). Stein states that after Toni's death, a girl was born in a village close to Küsnacht and Jung went to visit the girl and was sure that she was the reincarnation of Toni (Moris, 2024). It seems that Jung contemplated the idea of reincarnation with Toni especially because she did not live a full life; she neglected the "down-to-earth" part of her personality and only too late did she admit it. So the dream of coming back made sense to Jung as a possibility of rebirth in order to complete her process of individuation (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 162).

After his near-death experience, framing reincarnation within his own *Weltanschauung*, Jung thought that in a life after death there probably were certain limitations too (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 353). Souls would find out gradually "where the limits of the liberated state lie" (p. 353). Probably thinking about the notion of individuation, he stated that a "determinant, a necessary conditioning of the world, which seeks to put an end to the after-death state" (p. 353) must exist. It is this "creative determinant- so I imagine it- must decide what souls will plunge again into birth" (p. 353). In a clearer attempt to linking his theory of individuation with the notion of reincarnation he stated the following:

> Certain souls, I imagine, feel the state of three-dimensional existence to be more blissful than that of Eternity. But perhaps that depends upon how much of completeness or incompleteness they have taken across with them from their human existence. (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 353)

The above shows how whether he was dealing with a myth of the afterlife coming from the Western mind, or whether he was dealing with a myth coming from the East, such as reincarnation, Jung continued wrestling with these images of the afterlife from the perspective of his own *Weltanschauung.*

Jung had another dream of Toni where "she was a farmer in the Umbrian countryside in Italy, working the land. It was exactly what one might have wished for her—you could imagine her getting well there (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, pp. 163-164). After this dream the idea of reincarnation started to make more sense to Jung.

However, even though Jung considered the possibility of reincarnation, he could not state anything convincing about this metaphysical concept, since for him there is always "the niggling doubt: 'Is it really so?'" (p. 162) He concluded that could simply not answer this question (p. 162).

From a therapeutic perspective Jung considered the idea of reincarnation a "healthy belief" (p. 161), for it "is an incredibly useful way of enlivening reality" (p. 161). Indeed, as "One widespread myth of the hereafter" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 348), reincarnation is part of the archetypal idea that death is not the end of existence, and for Jung "it is only possible to live the fullest life when we are in harmony with these symbols; wisdom is a return to them (1930-1931/2014ad, para. 794). He insists that "The ancient *athanasias pharmakon*, the medicine of immortality, is more profound and meaningful than we supposed" (para. 794). Indeed, from the therapeutic perspective reincarnation can be understood as a "'therapeutic myth'" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 162) because of its revitalizing effect or healing value (p. 162).

Linking the idea of living healthy and reincarnation, Jung in another interview he did for the BBC, said that "the East has a very different attitude to death and destruction" (Bennet,

1961/2006, p. 159), since reincarnation is a widely believed notion in India. Jung stated that someone that believes in reincarnation faces death differently because "when you lose this life you have plenty of others. It doesn't matter so much" (p. 159). Within the notion of reincarnation there exists innumerable possibilities ahead, Jung stated, but in the West, there exists only one life. In that interview, when asked about the possibility of a hydrogen bomb, and how people from the West react to such possibility in contrast to people from the East, Jung stated that

> The greater part of the European population doesn't even believe in immortality any more and so, once destroyed, forever destroyed... We are more vulnerable by our lack of knowledge and contact with the deep strata of the psyche; but the East is better defended in that way, because it is based upon the fundamental facts of the human soul... (Bennet, 1961/2006, pp. 160).

So, as mentioned above, for Jung being in contact with the symbols of death that the unconscious has been providing to us from time immemorial is not only healthy but in fact gives us is strength to face the end of life.

Coming back to the conversation with Jaffé about reincarnation, Jung also spoke about dreams that he had with his wife, Emma. Jung said that "My wife was much further away in my dreams. Toni remained absolutely alive and close to reality (p. 163). In his dreams, Jung's wife seemed to be "in a spiritual realm" (p. 164), whereas "Toni was in a chthonic world" (p. 164). In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, while speaking about the wholeness he experienced in death, Jung writes about a dream he had with Emma:

> She stood at some distance from me, looking at me squarely. She was in her prime, perhaps about thirty, and wearing the dress which had been made for her many years before by my cousin the medium... Her expression was neither joyful nor sad, but rather, objectively wise and understanding, without the slightest emotional reaction, as though she were beyond the mist of affects. I knew that it was not she, but a portrait she had made or commissioned for me. It contained the beginning of our relationship, the events of fifty-three years of marriage, and the end of her life also. Face to face with such wholeness one remains speechless, for it can scarcely be comprehended. (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 327)

Emma, for Jung, in that spiritual realm had attained wholeness. She was part of the "greater company," one might say. Therefore, for Jung, if the idea of reincarnation were true, he thought that, unlike Toni, Emma would not be coming back to life, for she had attained cosmic wholeness, the highest degree of psychological development.

This leads us to the last section of this chapter, which is how Jung incorporated his idea of cosmic wholeness into his psychology.

WHOLENESS IN DREAMS

Olson did not contemplate much the idea of reincarnation, since through dreams Elizabeth seemed to develop, to grow and gain wisdom in the afterlife. About ten years after the death of her daughter, Olson had the following dream:

I'm flying, floating, or shooting through space in a direction that feels like "down"– but it could be any direction. Elizabeth is there, and I realized that this is another dream encounter with her. I am overjoyed to see her and be with her again.

Then the scene changes and we are walking and talking together. I notice that she is almost thirty– the age she would be if she had lived. She is lovely and graceful, and is wearing a bit of makeup and a blue dress with a jacket. Her shoulder-length hair falls lightly around her face.

We walk and talk for a long time. I don't remember the details of the conversation, but she tells me that there is much challenging, satisfying work to do in the place where she is now. She is working hard and loving it. I realized that she has more insight than I do, and so I ask her what is next for me. What is my task now? She does not answer in words, but points to a cluster of little white kittens lying on the ground near our feet. Their eyes are barely open and their tiny paws and noses are pink and tender. We walk carefully to avoid stepping on them, and I say, "All the little Ariels!" I get the sense that they are now to be in my care. Elizabeth says matter-of-factly, "They seem to be in a pretty good place."

Then she turns to me and says shyly, "I have a new name." She is proud and happy about this, but wants my blessing and hopes that I won't feel hurt that she no longer uses the name her father and I had given her. I am curious and ask her, "What is it?" She says a word that starts with a "T," in a language that I don't know. I try to pronounce it, but I can't quite do it. Then she says shyly but proudly that she has a new job too. Again I can't quite pronounce it, but I can tell that she is full of joy about it. I blow on my

> fingernails and polish them on my shirt in a gesture that means, "Good for you! I'm so proud of you!"
>
> Then suddenly she is gone, vanishing into thin air. I want to hold her and prolong the moment, but I know that I can't. I'm laughing and crying and wanting to tell people about what has happened. I see a group of women and exclaim, "She was here! It wasn't a dream, it was a vision!" Then I wake up. (Olson, 2021, p. 119)

Olson felt that this dream was different; she experienced it as a culmination of all the other dreams. According to Olson, Elizabeth's new appearance as a matured woman in her thirties, looking comfortable with her hair down and wearing a blue dress is a "sign of her inner transformation" (p. 119). Her new job symbolizes "The profound change" (p. 119) in her. Indeed, in the dream Elizabeth has "attained a high level of wisdom" (p. 119), she "has accomplished" (p. 122) a new job, and "has achieved a new status" (p. 122). Furthermore, the incomprehensible new language, the new name and new job, also seem to point out that Elizabeth has attained a new place. This dream not only pictured Elizabeth transformed but also transformed Olson, for she realized thanks to the dream that "the time had come for me to begin to speak and write about my grief dreams" (p. 123).

Even though Olson does not frame it as such, just like the dream Jung had of his wife looking wise, understanding and whole, one might say that this dream reveals Elizabeth having attained wholeness in the afterlife.

COSMIC WHOLENESS IN JUNG'S PSYCHOLOGY— *UNUNS MUNDUS*

As we see above, Jung's near-death experience and subsequent visions of wholeness in death gave him the courage to formulate and publish new works. Some of these new formulations, such as synchronicity, had been part of Jung's thinking (and occasionally his writing) since the 1920s and 1930s. The psychoid aspect of the archetype was first presented in 1946, but as mentioned previously, already in 1907 Jung had mentioned it to Freud. As I argued in Chapter 2, some of these late formulations find intellectual roots in the *Zofingia Lectures*. However, all of these concepts received their fullest and most important formulations after 1944. Of these concepts, the *unus mundus*, which one could argue is prefigured in some sense in Jung's notion of the *pleroma* from 1916, and to a certain extent in his writing of the *unio mystica* from 1898, is the most explicit concept that Jung formulated to argue for a life after death. The *unus mundus*, simply put, states that existence rests on an underlying unity. All is part of one, including death.

In the last chapter of his late work *Mysterium Coniunctionis* (1955-1956), published in his eightieth year, Jung writes of his theory of individuation using Gerhard Dorn's (ca. 1530-1584) description of the alchemical process. Dorn's description of the alchemical opus is divided into three unions or conjunctions. The first conjunction is described as the union between soul and spirit. Dorn considered that the natural human state was the union between the body and the soul. Dorn called this inherited state *unio naturalis*, which Jung describes as "the *nigredo*, the chaos, the *massa confusa*, an inextricable interweaving of the soul with body" (1955-1956/1970, para. 696). For Jung, this natural union is dissolved as projections are withdrawn, and this establishes a "spiritual-psychic counter-position – conscious and rational insight – which would prove immune to the influences of the body" (para. 696). This separation of body and soul, and union of soul and spirit was called by Dorn *unio mentalis*. Jung thought of this internal union as "the interior oneness which today we call individuation... a psychic equilibration of opposites 'in

the overcoming of the body,' a state of equanimity transcending the body's affectivity and instinctuality" (para. 670). The second stage of Dorn's description of the opus consists of reuniting the body with the *unio mentalis*. During the first stage the body is left unintegrated, and "since the soul made the body to live and was the principle of all realization, the philosophers could not but see that after the separation the body and its world were dead" (para. 742). Hence the "reanimation" of the body was needed. Dorn described the union of the body with the *unio mentalis* through the elaboration of what he called *substantia coelestis,* or *caelum* (para. 749). This mysterious substance "assists the 'spiritualization' of the body and makes visible the essence of Mercurius, the supreme chthonic spirit" (para. 687). Mercurius, which represents "matter and spirit" was interpreted by Jung as "the self, as its symbolism proves, [since it] embraces the bodily sphere as well as the psychic" (para. 717). The transformation of the body and its union with the *unio mentalis* was considered by Dorn only as a *rite d'entrée* for what would be the last stage of development, which was described as the union of the body, soul and spirit with the *unus mundus*. For Dorn, "the third and highest degree of conjunction was the union of the whole man with the *unus mundus*" (para. 770). Jung writes that by *unus mundus* Dorn meant "the potential world of the first day of creation, when nothing was yet 'in actu,' i.e., divided into two and many, but was still one." Jung calls this "the eternal Ground of all empirical being" (para. 760).

Jung describes this potential world in *Mysterium Coniunctionis* as "the first day of creation, when there was as yet 'no second'" (para. 760). This "*mundus archetypus"* (para. 760) is based "on the assumption that the multiplicity of the empirical world rests on an underlying unity, and that not two or more fundamentally different worlds exist side by side or are mingled with one another. Rather, everything divided and different belongs to one and the same world..." (para. 767). With this concept then, using the psychological framework of Jung, it is possible to

postulate that the division between life and death ceases to be valid when considering the *unus mundus*. In other words, the visions of wholeness experienced while "close to death" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330) "gave [Jung] the courage to undertake new formulations" (p. 328), including describing the pair of opposites "*vivum* (living) / *mortuum* (dead, inert)" (1955-1956/1970, para. 1) as "factors which come together in the coniunctio" (para. 1).

ONE'S OWN *WELTANSCHAUUNG*

It is difficult to overlook the similarities between Olson's conclusions about the afterlife and Jung's worldview. In some ways, they are very alike. Yet in other ways, they differ significantly. This raises the question of how much Jung's personal experiences and visions influence how others, like Olson, interpret their own dreams and experiences of the afterlife.

My conclusion is that both Olson's and Jung's experiences were genuine inner encounters with images they understood to be from the afterlife, and this is key. While Jung's visions were filled with mythological and biblical figures, Olson's were not. Olson's dreams were focused primarily on her daughter, Elizabeth. Though other figures and settings appeared—such as an image of the underground in one dream—the central theme was Elizabeth's continued development after death.

The similarity between these two personal experiences lies in how they interpreted and responded to. First, both Olson and Jung took their visions seriously, understanding them as real communications from the dead. Second, they paid close attention to these visions, following any guidance or demands presented in their dreams. What is similar, then, is not the content of their visions, but the framework and interpretation applied to them. Olson, while deeply influenced by Jung's concepts, responded to *her own* dead and did not merely "repeat [in a] parrot-fashion"

(Shamdasani, 2008, p. 26) Jung's images of the afterlife. She used Jung's framework, to take the images of her dreams seriously and to create an image of the afterlife to wrestle with, which ultimately had a transformative effect on her (and arguably on Elizabeth as well).

Shamdasani argues that *The Red Book* is "an elaboration of a personal cosmology which is not conceptual" (Shamdasani & Hillman, 2013, p. 10). He also notes that it "is a private text initially, although it's written for others" (p. 10). While *The Red Book* has undoubtedly influenced others, it is important to remember that it reflects Jung's own personal worldview on death. These images were being constantly tested, revised, and hypothesized about. If one is to undergo that same journey, one is advised to deal with one's own dead, like Olson did.

Toward the end of his life, Jung said, "My therapy has no rules. Each patient is a new proposition, no matter how much experience or expertise one has" (Jung & Jaffé, 2021, p. 133). This, for me, clarifies how others could understand Jung's psychological works and also his worldview of death. The framework and general concepts exist, but each person's experience is unique. As Jung stated just three weeks before his death: "Many paths lead to the central experience. Those who have descended to their own depths also recognize the value and legitimacy of other paths leading to the center. Knowledge of the manifold paths gives life its fullness and meaning" (p. 195).

PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS OF JUNG'S HOLISM

The psychotherapeutic benefits of framing Jung's "work as a form of holism" (Main, 2021, p. 22) that includes death as part of its "cosmic and mystical" (p. 23) levels of existence and development, are clearly perceived in Olson's and Jung's examples. To the former, seeing

death as part of existence has helped her to deal with the loss of her daughter, to the latter, it helped him become who he really was.

Olson describes how working with the images of Elizabeth in dreams helped her deal with the long period of mourning she went through after the death of her daughter. The image of Elizabeth in dreams was a companion during Olson's grief; it gave her helpful messages and functioned as a spiritual guide (Olson, 2021, p. 1). Olson's book is a strong testimony to how the Jungian framework with its openness to the possibility of life existing after death, and its psychotherapeutic method, particularly with its emphasis on dreams, can be a very helpful approach to working with the pain of mourning. Indeed, dreams of Elizabeth after her tragic accident not only helped Olson to "experience and integrate the reality of her death" (p. 56) but also to work through the "anxiety, anger, resignation, sadness, curiosity, tenderness" (p. 57) that she experienced. Olson writes that working with dreams was "like a mirror, it reflected the affective experience of grief back to me so that I could begin to put my psychic experience into words" (p. 57). In the following sentence, Olson summarizes the healing benefit of working with grief dreams and the experience of an enlargement of reality while doing so:

> Doing this work has convinced me that we, the living, can encounter the dead in the realm of images, a dimension of reality that exists beyond the bounds of space, time and waking consciousness. There we can embrace again, share our grief, come to terms with death, give and receive messages and gifts, and say our final goodbyes. (Olson, 2021, p. 123)

Jung's experience with death and with understanding such experiences as reality can be understood as a pivotal step in his own process of individuation. Not only were some of Jung's "principal works … written only" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 328) after his near-death experience, but through the experience Jung came, he states, to the "acceptance of my own nature, as I happen to be" (p. 328). Shamdasani writes that foundational works of Jung's, such as *Aion*, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, and *Answer to Job* simply would not have been conceivable prior to this point" (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 23) and adds that his understanding of the visions from 1944 show "a critical shift in Jung's perspective on life, brought about through his experience of death" (p. 23): for Jung life became "provisional... a transitory prejudice, a working hypothesis for the time being but not existence itself" (p. 23). In other words, whereas the experiences recorded in *The Red Book* depict "Jung's individuation process" (Shamdasani, 2009/2012, p. 48) and how the dead played a role in such a process (Hillman & Shamdasani, 2013, p. 1), Jung's 1944 near-death experience contributed to his individuation by convincing him of life after death (Jung, 1973, pp. 357-359) and hence expanding both his *Weltanschauung* and his psychotherapeutic approach.

The Jungian psychotherapeutic method, then, not only welcomes experiences of life after death into its therapeutic process but considers them as a possible existence and uses them for healing and for psychological growth. The likelihood of the reality of a life after death is taken seriously in the Jungian analytic room, since Jung's psychological framework allows it. The examples of Olson and Jung testify so.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on how Jung came to understand the highest psychological development as a mystical experience with the oneness of existence, which he called *unus*

mundus. This understanding was directly influenced by his own near-death experience. Through this experience Jung obtained a confirmation about reality that he had always suspected and even written about (as we saw in Chapters 1, 2 and 3): death is the end of the body, but not the end of existence. This was the last experience Jung reported having, which greatly impacted his psychology and psychotherapeutic approach. This is of high importance because by stating that the body, specifically the brain, is not the cause of the mind, Jungian psychology belongs to what Kelly defines as

> a middle way between the warring fundamentalisms—religious *and* scientific—that have dominated contemporary public discourse: specifically, an expanded science-based understanding of nature that can accommodate empirical realities of spiritual sorts while also rejecting rationally untenable "overbeliefs" of the sorts routinely targeted by superficial critics of institutional religions. This emerging vision seems to me both scientifically defensible and spiritually satisfying, combining the best aspects of our scientific and religious heritage in an intellectually responsible effort to reconcile these two greatest forces in human history. (Kelly, 2021, p. 486)

What is unique about this middle way of Jungian psychology is the psychotherapeutic space that it provides, with therapeutic techniques that consider the existence of a life after death as a possibility.

This chapter focused on the personal and professional repercussions that Jung's near-death experience brought. Personally, the visions allowed him to experience what happens after death, as he was convinced that he was "in death." Besides characterizing the experience as

blissful, he also described it as whole. After his wife passed away, Jung had some dreams involving her that confirmed this impression of wholeness. Also, his visions allowed him to postulate that at least some aspect of ego-consciousness continues to exist after the death of the body. Furthermore, as the notion that psychological development continues after death was introduced in *The Red Book* (see Chapter 3), the visions confirmed such a notion, adding, however, that besides there being dead who need the help of the living to continue developing, there are also dead who help the living.

Professionally, while some intellectual foundations for theories were expanded or fully formulated after Jung's mystical experiences while near death, as I have pointed out above, concepts such as synchronicity, the psychoid and even the *unus mundus* can be in some ways traced back to earlier writings of Jung. It was as though the near-death experience gave Jung the courage to undertake these new formulations (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 328). These theories postulate an existence in which life and death are part of one and the same unity. These theories are useful to the Jungian psychoanalyst who sees experiences of death, through dreams, synchronicities or near-death experiences, as possible hints of an existence beyond life.

The practicality of Jung's psychotherapeutic methods is compelling in the case of Olson, who after the tragic death of her daughter, through the help of Jungian techniques and concepts, was able to start a process of acceptance and eventually transformation. A question that arises is how influenced Olson was by Jung's own *Weltanschauung*. As discussed above, what is similar is not the content of the images—not the *Weltanschauung* itself—rather how Jung's psychotherapeutic techniques of interpretation were used by Olson. Concepts such as the relativity of time in space found in the psyche, synchronicity and the *unus mundus* allowed Olson to wrestle with the images of her dead daughter and come up with her own vision of life after death.

In summary, this chapter has aimed to demonstrate that Jung's experience with death influenced him on a personal level and shaped his understanding of psychological development and the goals of the individuation process. Jung's psychotherapeutic methods enable Jungian therapists to acknowledge and explore experiences related to death within the therapeutic setting. By taking the possibility of life after death seriously, therapists can encourage clients to examine these experiences, potentially facilitating their psychological growth.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been to explore the concept of life after death within the psychotherapeutic framework of Swiss psychotherapist C. G. Jung. Throughout his life, Jung wrestled with the question of whether or not there is an afterlife, and this thesis seeks to determine whether his inquiry into life after death influenced his psychotherapeutic theories, and if so, how.

My thesis has explored two distinct aspects of Jung's psychology in relation to death and the concept of life after death: the theoretical framework and the psychotherapeutic implications of this perspective. This double approach has the hope to intervein to two different sectors where Jungian psychology is studied: academia and the practice of psychotherapy. In terms of academia, the writings of Jung related to death and life after death present an opportunity to pay more attention to the significance of his personal experiences and especially the interpretations that Jung had of these. Little scholar work has been done in this area, as Shamdasani has stated (Shamdasani, 2008, p. 13). Apart from a few books, such as Stephens's *C. G. Jung and the Dead* (2020), Olson's *Images of the Dead in Grief Dreams* (2020), Brodersen's J*ungian dimensions of the mourning process, burial rituals, and access to the land of the dead: Intimations of immortality* (2004), or my own book *Confronting Death* (2024), there has not been a extensive interest from academia to study Jung and his thoughts about death and life after death. In fact, from the academic field of neuroscience that dedicates itself to the study of near-death experiences, little has been done in relation to Jung. Greyson, arguably the most prominent researcher in the study of near-death experiences has not dedicated research to Jung. An exception needs to be named; Main was invited to collaborate with an essay in Kelly's and Marshall's last volume *Consciousness Unbound* (2021), where Main writes about Jung's

mystical experiences in relation to holism. This intervention from Main in a volume edited by leading scholars is hopeful and an example of how Jungian ideas can be received and articulated in academic neuroscientific works. My hope is that my thesis can contribute to creating a baseline of works that make this dialogue richer.

Jung's works related to death and life after death can be of great interest for the academia, because it not only emphasizes the individual, inner experience, so often left ignored by mainstream psychological studies, but Jung's interpretations and theoretical elaborations challenge conventional ways of approaching the mystery of death. Studies related to death often concentrate on dealing with grief and mourning. Jung goes beyond these experiences. He postulates that death is the other side of existence, and we need to integrate to life to live better. Jung's idea, namely that we can, through the psyche, obtain hints about a life after death is not a novel idea in itself, but the fact that this notion is presented within a psychotherapeutic format is. Since these ideas are proposed from a psychotherapeutic space, qualitative and quantitative studies can be done, by creating psychological reports and questionnaires when working with therapists and patients, for example. But more generally, as Grosso writes, in a naive neuro-fundamentalism world, where it is assumed that "the brain can explain everything about human performance" (Grosso, 2014, p. 45), Jung's challenging ideas can be most beneficial to academia and education in general since they propose a radically different existence that dominates not only our relationship to death, but our relation to ecology, education, politics, and human interactions in general. Indeed, the framework of the psyche that Jung proposes, with its emphasis on taking psychic experience as a reality where trans-psychic phenomena can be experienced, can be a useful framework when dealing with extraordinary human experiences, such as a near-death experience.

The implications of my thesis in psychotherapy have been mentioned throughout the chapters. As open as Jungian psychoanalysts tend to be in terms of unusual experiences and paranormal phenomena, it is surprising to see not only how little work has been dedicated to death and life after death but in fact how reserved Jungian analysts can be when addressing these questions. Jung and some of his close collaborators such as von Franz were much more open about their experiences and thoughts about ghosts and spirits. My thesis, emphasizing how Jung's four therapeutic pillars were used by Jung himself to postulate that there might be a life after death, forces Jungian psychoanalysts and therapists interested in dream interpretation to wrestle with the mystery of death. When studying my thesis, a therapist is invited to ask about his or her philosophy of death and is confronted with the question that there might be a life after death and the tools given by Jung might be of help to address this mystery. More specifically, my thesis, with its emphasis on Jung, his writings and his approach to death, points to the direction of understanding death as a possible beginning, as another dynamic space that has an effect on the living. In other words, and using Jung's words, death is part of the notion of the unconscious.

An academic approach is essential when addressing the question of life after death. This theme can easily be intellectualized or dismissed, even by Jungians, making it crucial for my thesis to be rooted in well-defended arguments and evidence. To have a meaningful impact on psychotherapists and readers alike, a topic like mine must be firmly grounded in scholarly work.

My hope is that my work contributes to the ongoing development of scholarly research on Jung's approach to life after death. This is a relatively new and underexplored area, and I aim for my work to serve as a meaningful contribution to this field.

As mentioned in the Introduction, I began this thesis without a specific hypothesis in mind. Initially, I considered narrowing my research to historical and biographical aspects of Jung's life. However, as my investigation deepened and my interests evolved, I realized that the notion of life after death held far greater significance in Jung's approach to psychotherapy than I had initially anticipated. The phrase, "My works... are fundamentally nothing but attempts, ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the 'here' and the 'hereafter'" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 320), began to resonate with me. The more I delved into Jung's writings, the more this statement became central to my understanding of his psychotherapy. Ultimately, this sentence served as the guiding principle for my research. In essence, my thesis revolves around first examining this idea in Jung's works, then evaluating it, and finally building an argument in support of it.

This sentence grabbed my attention for three key reasons: the notion of "my works," the idea of "renewal," and, of course, the concept of "attempting to give an answer." First, Jung's body of work, particularly his theories on psychotherapy and human development, consistently centers around psychological growth. For Jung, psychological development equates to expanding consciousness, with the ultimate goal being psychological wholeness. As a psychotherapist myself, I view psychotherapy not just as a profession, but as a vocation—a calling that gives deep meaning to my life. This personal connection made it natural for me to focus my research on a theme I find so profoundly significant. Over time, the theme of life after death shifted from being about Jung's biography and historical context to his understanding of psychotherapy as a means of engaging with the idea of death and life after death. In addition, the notion of "my works" allowed me to dive deeply into what has always fascinated me: understanding Jung's opus as thoroughly as possible. Jung's writings are not easy to grasp; he did not build his ideas in a strictly linear or logical manner. As demonstrated throughout this thesis, Jung was not always

consistent in his statements—at times he offered different views on the same subject, and sometimes he even contradicted himself. Focusing on a single topic—in this case, death—while studying his works in depth was particularly engaging for me.

The second aspect that captured my attention, "renewal", allowed me to trace Jung's *evolving* thoughts throughout his life—something, as I just mentioned, I knew I wanted to do from the very beginning of my research. More than just exploring ideas on life after death or death, I wanted to understand Jung's relationship with these concepts. His phrase "ever renewed" (p. 320) gave me the opportunity to examine his major works across his lifetime from the perspective of life after death. In this pursuit, I studied Jung both as a young university student and in his later years, seeking to determine whether this sense of renewal was genuine. Chapter 2 delves into this question and, I believe, demonstrates that renewal was indeed a recurring theme.

The final and most central aspect of the sentence—Jung's lifelong attempt to "give an answer to the question of the interplay between the 'here' and the 'hereafter'" (p. 320)—became the heart of my thesis. Even though this is a difficult concept to come to terms with, throughout my research, I gradually realized that Jung's works do indeed attempt to answer the profound mystery of death and the possibility of life beyond it. When, as a university student, he seriously asked, "why, after all, should there not be ghosts?" (p. 120), he was as sincere as when, close to death, he expressed that what happens after death remained a "burning interest" (Jung & Jaffé, 2023, p. 155). Jung truly meant these statements. He could honestly say, "I have done my best to form a conception of life after death, or to create some image of it" (p. 333). My research shows that Jung genuinely believed that exploring the question of whether or not there is an afterlife, and forming a conception of it, plays a crucial role in integrating the other side of existence. This process, according to Jung, deepens and enriches our sense of psychological wholeness.

To approach the assumption that Jung's works were ever renewed in dealing with the mystery of death, I divided this thesis into different periods of his life. However, instead of following Jung's biography throughout the years, as I had originally intended, I chose to focus on those specific works of Jung that are most relevant to the question of the interplay between the here and the hereafter across different periods of his professional life.

Jung was a man of his time, which is why Chapter 1 partly focuses on providing the historical context surrounding his work and his views on life after death. The chapter argues that the belief in an afterlife was—and still is—in a state of crisis: for many "spiritual but not religious" individuals, the concept of life after death has become difficult to grasp and deal with. However, despite being considered an unsuitable topic for mainstream science at the time, many individuals—including scientists, thinkers, and psychologists—were interested in exploring whether life continues after the death of the body. Jung was among them.

The middle and late nineteenth century saw significant divisions in the study of the mind, leading to a polarized intellectual environment. This division created space for alternative perspectives, what some called a "tertium quid" (Kelly, 2007, p. 62)—a middle ground in thinking. One such alternative was spiritualism, a movement that emerged in 1847 when the Fox sisters claimed to communicate with spirits of the dead. Communicating with ancestors through mediums gained interest not only in society but also within scientific circles. People from various professional fields—biologists, philosophers, chemists, psychologists, among others—came together to observe the claims made by these mediums. The concept of life after death became a prominent topic of discussion during this period. The main questions were: Is there truly life after death? Can we communicate with the dead?

Spiritualism, as a cultural movement, sought to answer these questions, and institutions such as the Society for Psychical Research and university laboratories emerged to study the phenomenon. Influential figures like William Crookes, a British chemist and physicist, claimed that research on mediums yielded valid results. Other notable individuals like William James, Theodore Flournoy, and Frederic Myers also researched spiritualist claims, and became important influences in Jung's thinking.

What sets Jung apart from other thinkers of his time is his creation of a psychotherapeutic methodology that not only explored the same existential questions posed by spiritualism but also empowered ordinary individuals to confront these questions on their own. He did so by postulating that a part of the psyche reaches beyond the psyche itself entering realms that are usually symbolized as eternal, and that with certain techniques we can obtain "hints" about that reality.

Jung's four pillars of psychoanalysis—individuation, the therapeutic relationship, active imagination, and dream analysis—provide a framework for addressing the question of the interplay between the "here" and the "hereafter." Moreover, because Jungian psychology has gained legitimacy in academic circles and within government health departments, it offers a meaningful and concrete approach for contemporary individuals who may have lost faith in traditional religion yet remain drawn to the mystery of death. That said, Jung's psychological framework and psychotherapeutic methods are often viewed with skepticism, particularly by those who are critical of using subjective experiences to form metaphysical statements. Jung's approach is limited in its ability to produce concrete, verifiable evidence, making it difficult to validate his claims. Moreover, there has been very little research specifically focused on creating a conception of life after death using Jungian techniques. As a result, there is currently an

insufficient number of cases to provide substantial support for the psychological benefits that creating a conception of life after death might bring to an individual. It is only at the individual level that testimonies can be obtained.

Chapter 1 is substantial enough that it could have served as the thesis itself. Various aspects of it offer opportunities for further research. For example, a comparative study of the psychologies of F.W.H. Myers and Carl Jung, particularly regarding their differing approaches to the questions of death and the afterlife, would be valuable. Scholars such as Shamdasani and Taylor have examined the influence of Theodore Flournoy and William James on Jung. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, Shamdasani argues that Jung's psychology should be viewed as "continuing in the line of the French psychology of the subconscious and Swiss-Anglo-American psychical research and subliminal psychology" (Shamdasani, 1998, p. 121). Despite this, Myers—whom Jung credited as the discoverer of the unconscious (1946/1978a, para. 356n23)—has not yet gained the same recognition as Flournoy or James. A study of Myers' psychology, which Kelly describes as "a conscious and sustained attempt to move beyond the increasingly polarized, dichotomous positions of nineteenth-century thought and to seek broader perspectives that accommodate multiple viewpoints" (Kelly, 2007, p. 62), in comparison with Jung's approach to life after death, would significantly contribute to both Jung and Myers studies.

Another underexplored area of research concerning Jung's relationship to spiritualism is his reports, interpretations, and conclusions from his own studies of mediums besides his medical dissertation. By 1905, Jung reported that he had studied eight mediums in the laboratory established by Bleuler for the investigation of mediumship (1905/2014k, para. 724). Bringing these reports to light and examining them in the context of his psychology would be a historically significant project. As noted in the Introduction, Jung's doctoral dissertation, which focused on his cousin Helly as a medium, has received attention from scholars, among others,

Ellenberger (1970), Hillman (1976), and Charet (1993). My research did not delve into Jung's broader observations of these mediums since my focus has been different. A detailed study of Jung's conclusions from these reports would offer a valuable contribution to the historical understanding of Jungian psychology.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 follow a chronological approach. Initially, I planned to structure these chapters around Jung's biography, but instead, I chose to focus on key works in relation to life after death from specific periods of his life. Chapter 2 primarily examines Jung's university writings, Chapter 3 focuses on *The Red Book*, and Chapter 4 centers on *Mysterium Coniunctionis* and the works written after Jung's near-death experience. These texts represent three distinct phases in Jung's life: young adulthood, midlife, and his later years.

In my concluding reflections, I consider Chapter 2 to be one of the most important in this thesis because it argues that Jungian analysis can be understood as a preparation for death. Jung himself came to view his psychotherapeutic approach in this way, much like Plato saw philosophy. The chapter explores this by highlighting how Jung's work brings death life, encouraging the creation of a worldview (*Weltanschauung*) that includes an image of the afterlife, allowing individuals to grapple with and test this image. According to Jung, a *Weltanschauung* is not a belief, but a hypothesis that requires constant revision and testing. Chapter 2 also makes a key point: Jung's enduring dedication to the question of life after death. It traces this consistency by connecting three ideas from his early university writings to his later work, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. These concepts are the soul as existing beyond time and space, the notion of the *unio mystica*, and the idea of teleology. The first two were introduced by Jung during his *Zofingia Lectures* while he was still in his early twenties studying at the University of Basel, while the concept of teleology appeared in his doctoral thesis. The timing of these ideas

suggests that foundational elements of Jungian psychology were already present during his youth. *The Red Book* is often seen as the germ of Jungian psychology, and without contradicting this understanding, Chapter 2 adds that many key ideas in Jung's later theories had their roots much earlier, before his midlife crisis. This emphasizes the significance of Jung's childhood and adolescence in shaping his psychological theories. Just as Chapter 1 highlights the importance of the historical context in understanding Jung's psychology, Chapter 2 focuses on the role of Jung's early writings and family influences in shaping his thoughts on life after death.

Finally, the chapter argues that these three early concepts—soul being independent of time and space, *unio mystica*, and teleology—are still used by contemporary Jungians to help patients confront death, whether it is the loss of a loved one or their own impending death. Chapter 2 ends with stating that while many still draw on these ideas, introduced by Jung in his university years, to guide patients through such challenges, no contemporary Jungian psychotherapist explicitly states that their work prepares patients for death. The notion of Jungian psychology working as a space that prepares the individual for the end of life—regardless of the experience of mourning or grief—has not been embraced by Jungians. In addition, there is a limited body of work from Jungian scholars that addresses either how to confront death or their personal views on life after death. While all Jungian therapists may be willing to endorse discussions of the spiritual or transcendent, the concepts of an afterlife or framing analysis as a preparation for death have not received much attention. In summary, Chapter 2 has two key aims: to show the consistency of Jung's lifelong concern with the question of life after death, and to demonstrate how Jungian analysis helps prepare both the patient and the analyst for death.

A potential area for future research would be to conduct a survey asking contemporary Jungians whether they view their work as a preparation for death, and if so, how they approach it. In my recently published book, *Confronting Death*, I posed these very questions to a group of Jungian analysts and scholars. More research of this kind—perhaps more systematic and structured than the essays found in my book—would be highly valuable for psychotherapists. Another important research area involves premonitory dreams of death and their psychological impact. Premonitory dreams were something that Jung was particularly interested in, because of his thinking about the psyche's relativity of time and space. In Chapter 4, Olson recounts a dream that seemed to warn her of her daughter's imminent death and the emotional impact it had on her. Investigating how such after-death reflections influence an individual's psychological state would be a compelling and valuable research topic. Another promising area of research would be to closely examine recent studies on near-death experiences, such as those by Greyson, Kelly, and Grosso, to identify potential parallels with Jung's ideas. While my thesis references these works, a more in-depth analysis could provide valuable insights for psychotherapists and further enrich the field.

The main focus of Chapter 3 is on the theme of the dead, with *The Red Book* serving as the central text of study. Unlike any other work by Jung, *The Red Book* contains numerous encounters between Jung's "I" and figures referred to as "the dead." Building on the insights from Chapters 1 and 2, I argue that Jung's *Weltanschauung* incorporates the idea of life after death, and that his conception of the afterlife is vividly depicted in *The Red Book*. The majority of this chapter is dedicated to exploring Jung's understanding of the afterlife. Additionally, I propose that the figures Jung's "I" calls the dead in *The Red Book* were understood by Jung as literal, disembodied souls. This interpretation is often met with resistance, as it presents intellectual challenges. Jung was known for his opposition to making metaphysical claims and at

times critiqued the assertions of spiritualists. Nevertheless, from 1927 onward, Jung began writing more openly about the ontological possibility of life after death and the existence of spirits, echoing the ideas he explored during his university years. Moreover, respected Jungian scholars—such as Shamdasani (1998), Maillard (2002), Hillman (2013), Main (2020), and Stephens (2020)—have argued that Jung likely saw these figures in *The Red Book* as actual disembodied souls.

My findings further suggest that Jung's *Weltanschauung* includes an intermediate state or states after physical death, and before entering "into death" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 512). This is particularly evident in the chapter "Nox Secunda" of *The Red Book*. Another crucial aspect of Jung's understanding is that the dead continue their development after death; the individuation process does not end with physical death. Not only *The Red Book* but other sources also support the idea that Jung believed in aiding the dead in expanding their consciousness. At the same time, Jung also recognized the reciprocal relationship: as noted in Chapter 4, he believed the dead could assist the living. For Jung, it seems the living and the dead help each other, with the shared goal of achieving wholeness.

Jung's views on death have direct implications for psychotherapy. One significant implication is how Jung interpreted dreams of the dead, sometimes viewing them as objective experiences. This may seem like a small point, but I consider it a major one. For a psychotherapist, interpreting a dream of a deceased figure as an objective reality means engaging with the idea of life after death. Once such an opportunity arises, the therapist can no longer remain indifferent. As Hillman notes, "analysts cannot get on without a philosophy of death" (Hillman, 1964/2000, p. 50). Another important implication for Jungian therapists is the belief that confronting death enhances life. Avoiding the subject of death has the opposite effect. By

bringing death into consciousness, we gain a greater appreciation for the present, view life as part of a larger mystery, and recognize that life is only half of a greater existence. In Jung's own words, "We need the coldness of death to see clearly. Life wants to live and to die, to begin and to end... Life and death must strike a balance in your existence... If I accept death, then my tree greens, since dying increases life" (Jung, 2009/2012, p. 267). Finally, engaging with the question of life's continuation can itself be a meaningful experience.

As I did with Chapter 1 and 2, I argue that Jung's encounters with death and the dead are not limited to the period of *The Red Book*. Jung experienced encounters with figures he called the dead throughout his life—from childhood to adulthood and into his later years. His preoccupation with life after death and the dead was a lifelong concern.

Although Jung emphasized the importance of developing a *Weltanschauung* about death and urged psychotherapists to wrestle with the question of life after death, only a few of his students or Jungian analysts have publicly shared their work on the subject. The reasons for this may vary. Some may struggle with the idea that imagination can actually access or conceptualize life after death, while others might doubt the reality of an afterlife altogether. Additionally, some may avoid writing about these topics to prevent Jungian psychology from being perceived as dogmatic or rigid in its practices. The fact remains that very little work has been done in this area. This gap highlights the need for further research and open discussion on the matter.

One of the most compelling questions raised in this chapter is whether Jung developed his *Weltanschauung* solely from his inner experiences or whether external influences also played a role. Jung was well-versed in various religious traditions, such as Indian and Buddhist cosmologies, which offer detailed descriptions of the afterlife. For instance, Jung commented on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, which outlines the stages the recently deceased pass through after

death—what we might call after-death states. At the same time, he was deeply familiar with Christian teachings on death and the afterlife, though his own worldview of life after death diverges significantly from traditional Christian beliefs. My immediate conclusion is that Jung's *Weltanschauung* reflects both his inner experiences and his reading in different religious traditions. However, this topic demands further exploration.

The main argument of Chapter 4 is that by understanding cosmic wholeness at the highest level of human development (Main, 2021, p. 23), Jung placed death as a state, when this high *coniunctio* may happen. I argue that this view was influenced by Jung's near-death experience in 1944, when he suffered a heart attack. During his hospitalization, Jung had visions of wholeness while "close to death" (Jung, 1963/1995, p. 330), which inspired him to undertake new formulations (p. 328). In these reflections, he described opposites such as *vivum* (living) and *mortuum* (dead) as elements that unite in the *coniunctio* (1955-1956/1970, para. 1). Shamdasani suggests that these experiences convinced Jung of the existence of life after death (Shamdasani, 2008). However, my findings suggest a slightly different interpretation: these near-death experiences simply confirmed what Jung had already intuited throughout his life. Chapter 3 demonstrates that Jung had encounters with the dead as early as 1913 in *The Red Book*, and Chapter 2 shows that already in 1898 Jung publicly supported the idea of the soul's immortality. Jung grew up in an environment where ghosts were taken for granted. Jung always sensed, or in Jungian terms, always had the intuition, that life was part of something larger.

The second argument of Chapter 4 is that Jung's later works and theoretical expansions—including the development of the psychoid archetype, synchronicity, and the notion of the *unus mundus*—point to an understanding of existence in which life and death are parts of a unified whole. These concepts have psychotherapeutic significance, as they allow Jungian analysts and

patients to explore the question of life after death. This argument is supported by the case study of Susan Olson, a Jungian analyst who, in her book *Images of the Dead in Grief Dreams: A Jungian View of Mourning*, describes how Jungian concepts like the psychoid, synchronicity, and *unus mundus* helped her mourn the tragic death of her teenage daughter. Olson's dreams, in which her daughter appeared, became a means of communication and ultimately it became the foundation of the construction of her own *Weltanschauung.* Jungian concepts such as synchronicity and the soul's immortal nature allowed Olson to see that her daughter continued to develop even after death. These ideas not only helped her process grief but also facilitated growth for both her and her daughter.

In summary, this chapter demonstrates that Jung's personal experience of death not only influenced his own *Weltanschauung*, but also shaped his views on psychological development and the final stages of the individuation process. His psychotherapeutic methods equip Jungian therapists to welcome and explore the topic of death in the therapeutic space, using it as a tool for psychological growth.

One cannot avoid seeing the similarities of Olson's interpretation of her dreams and Jung's *Weltanschauung.* There are, however, clear differences. The figures that both deal with, *their* dead, are very different. Olson does not contemplate the notion of reincarnation, whereas Jung did. Other than that, one may question how Jung's personal myths influence the views of Jungian psychotherapists about metaphysical statements such as life after death. Jung was clear about not wanting others copying his ideas or even his psychology. But examples like the one of Olson, as compelling as it is, leaves one wondering about the powerful influence that Jung's works have on others.

For future research, it would be valuable to create a comprehensive, chronological document that traces the development of Jung's *Weltanschauung*. While my thesis does this to some extent in Chapters 3 and 4, it also incorporates additional material. A focused essay solely on Jung's worldview could explore the external influences that shaped it, as well as his understanding of a *Weltanschauung* as a hypothesis that must be tested and refined over time.

To finish on a personal note, this thesis has had a profound impact on my life and my work as a Jungian analyst. Initially, I expected this research to be a purely intellectual exercise, not something that would change my own view of existence. I was wrong. While my core feelings about life and death remain largely unchanged—since, as I mentioned in the Introduction, I come from a culture where the dead and ghosts and life after death are integral to our worldview—the thesis has provided intellectual support for my deeply held feelings. I now draw not only from my own intuitions and adolescent experiences but also from the works of others, including Greyson, Grosso, Costello, Olson, Main, Kelly, and, of course, Jung. This intellectual foundation has instilled in me a sense of trust in my questions about life after death.

I have also noticed a shift in my work as an analyst. I am now more willing to openly discuss death with my patients when it feels appropriate, something I used to avoid. Though I have no certainties, only unusual experiences and dreams, I have found that clients are often relieved and grateful for the opportunity to talk about death. Of course, some prefer to avoid the topic entirely, and with them, I never push the subject. But for those who are open to it, discussing death can be a powerful and freeing experience.

Ultimately, I can say without reserve that this thesis has helped me—through critical thinking—become more open to viewing death not just as an end, but as a possibility.

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