

methods of dealing with such high-sounding oddities as elyriphobia, or the modern developments in geriatrics. There is no question but that the setting of the mind and heart of a patient at rest is a prime factor in dealing with many medical cases. This demands of a doctor in a notable degree those qualities of sympathy, understanding and occasional firmness, already referred to, which make him so often the guide, philosopher and friend of his patients, and which incidentally tend more and more to disappear under a state-controlled medical service. In the interests of medicine itself this necessary relation must be a personal and humane one, and it must move to the easing of the mind and the heart if it is to be wholly effective. In other words the doctor must be interested in the whole good of the patient, a good that is attainable only when a man is orientated towards his final purpose. It may happen that the doctor does not find his ethical learning equal to his medical; in which case, if he is wise, he will turn to the ethical expert for guidance. Thus we so often find the doctor and the priest in grateful collaboration at the bedside of the sick. That is a practical application of a fundamental principle in the humane art of medicine. The ethico-medical problems that have arisen and will arise are not textbook problems but real problems of human life and death. Nevertheless they are to be solved only by an appreciation of the supreme part played by morality in all human concerns and by the steadfast application of the immutable principles of ethics to medical practice.

FOUR CHALLENGES TO RELIGION

II—Jung¹

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IT may seem odd to count the psychology of C. G. Jung as a challenge to religion. It is more usual to complain that, as Freud doffed the physician's coat for the professor's gown, so Jung, still more incongruously, has assumed the clergyman's surplice—if not the robes of the magician, the prophet, the mystagogue. Yet I think that the friendliness of Jung presents a far more serious and radical challenge to religion as we know it than did ever the hostility of Freud.

¹ The second of a series of broadcasts given on the B.B.C. European Service on the Sundays of January, 1952.

For Freud, religion was an obsessional neurosis. For Jung it seems to be rather the *absence* of religion that is at the root of most present-day neurosis among adults. Already in 1932 he wrote: 'During the past thirty years, people from all the civilised countries of the earth have consulted me. . . . Among all my patients in the second half of life (that is to say, over thirty-five) there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers.'

How did it come about, this diametrically opposite evaluation of religion—by two psychologists who once worked together in close harmony and considerable mutual admiration? Their early differences, on the surface at least, had nothing whatever to do with religion or philosophy. Jung was every bit as sceptical of both as was Freud. Theirs were wholly professional differences, concerned with the interpretation of actual psychological facts, and with what was, and was not, therapeutically successful.

The coming rift was already visible in Jung's *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*, written in 1911. Jung still accepted, even stressed, Freud's ideas about the origin, and the illusoriness, of religion. But he recognised that traditional religious beliefs and practices (whatever else they may have been) had in fact functioned as a sort of mass-therapy, or at least as a preventive against the sort of neuroses that afflict modern man. He still told us that 'the religious instinct feeds upon the incestuous libido of the infantile period'; but all that is becoming less important. Jung was becoming sceptical of the value of reducing all psychological phenomena back to their origins in the experiences of the patient's lifetime; the hoped-for, healing 'abreaction' by no means always occurred; this stirring up of forgotten memories seemed often to have the effect of making the patient more rather than less absorbed in his own past and miseries. Bygone illusions were destroyed right enough, but nothing positive and constructive took their place to enable him to cope with the present and the future. Jung was already beginning to see that the psychologist should attend, not just to the cause of the complex in the past, but to its function in the present, its possibilities of growth and integration in the future. Later, this will involve a complete reevaluation of Freud's own conception of religion: from this new standpoint

of growth and function, God—psychologically speaking—will be less an exalted, substitute Father, than the physical father, the child's little substitute for God.

But Jung was becoming fascinated with a new interest: the astonishing resemblances he found between the dreams and phantasies of modern people and the religious beliefs and ritual practices of past ages, not only in Europe but all over the globe. Soon it began to appear also—at least in certain cases and stages of psycho-analysis—that it was very much better for the patient's health and sanity to talk about these resemblances as they emerged in his dreams than to follow the old way of purely reductive analysis. Later, Jung came to believe that dream-symbols, for instance, were very much more than he and Freud had hitherto supposed. They had treated them as if they were merely signs and symptoms: sources of disguised information about the patient's repressions. But Jung began to notice that, when for instance a patient has a series of dreams which resemble an ancient initiation rite, they can have upon him very much the same effect as the rites were intended to have—release from the inhibiting family ties, a better adaptability to the demands of society. We have not exhausted all that is in a symbol when we have translated it into some scientific terminology; on the contrary, we have probably killed it. A living symbol 'does something to us'; it moves us, shifts our centre of awareness, changes our values. Whether it is just looked at, or heard, acted out, painted out, written out or danced out, it arouses not only thought, but delight, fear, awe, horror, perhaps a deeper insight. It is psychologically effective for good or ill in its own right, and is not just a cipher for something else. A symbol, Jung will say, is the psychological machine which transforms psychic energy into work, much as a turbine transforms the untamed useless energy of a torrent into power that can be controlled and applied.

In particular (and already in his 1911 book) Jung noticed the frequent recurrence of the motif of *sacrifice*. No cure, no radical change of mentality (no change of mind, or *metanoia* as the New Testament calls it) could come about, until the old ego had died; then only could rebirth or resurrection, recovery, take place—a new lease of life begin. This alone was to make collaboration with the ego-centred psychology of Freud impossible. It was to show, too, that Freud had been mistaken, not in the facts but in his

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interpretation, when he saw incestuous union with the mother as the goal of libido. The longing for the return to the womb is itself symbolic as the pre-requisite to rebirth from the spirit, the *Pneuma* (as Christ had told Nicodemus).

To cut short a very long story, Jung has been brought to the conclusion that repressed or unconscious religion is at the root of most of our modern *malaise* both in the individual and in society. As he has written: 'Whenever the Spirit of God is excluded from human consideration, an unconscious substitute takes its place'. And again, 'The gods have become diseases; not Zeus but the solar plexus now rules Olympus and causes the oddities of the professional office hour, or disturbs the brain of the politician and journalist who then unwittingly release mental epidemics. . . . When God is not recognised, selfish desires develop, and out of this selfishness comes illness.' To his Freudian colleagues who would accuse him of unconcern for scientific integrity, when he calls a neurotic illusion divine, Jung answers: 'It is not a matter of unconcern whether one calls something a "mania" or a "God"'. To serve a mania is detestable and undignified: to serve a God is . . . rich in possibilities, because it means yielding to a higher, invisible and spiritual being.' To theologians and others who accuse him of 'psychologising' God, he answers that he does not say that God is 'nothing but' a psychological function, but that it is beyond the competence of empirical psychology to say more, and that (I quote again): 'If I know that God is anyhow a mighty activity in my soul, at once I must concern myself with him; he can then become even unpleasantly important, and in practical ways too.'

All this is, of course, very suspect to those who have been trained in the mechanistic traditions of the old schools of science—it was clearly very suspect to Jung himself for many years. In spite of the lessons of more recent developments in physics, it is still not easy to admit imponderables into science, and risk the overthrow of cogent and comprehensible systems—even at the cost of disregarding manifest facts. Those critics whose writings suggest that they are more solicitous for the tidiness of the psychiatrist's own mind than for the health and happiness of their patients will doubtless continue to dub Jung an unscientific mystic and mystifier: certainly Jung's later excursions into the more exotic byways of superstition and magic will do nothing to appease them. But Jung's work is hardly less disturbing to the

professed theist and religious believer, even to a zealot for his creed or for his church. Perhaps even he has long ago ceased to think of God, and good and evil spirits, as ever active influences in his own life and conduct; almost unwittingly he has so 'objectified' them, confined them to Sundays, that is has never occurred to him that their ceaseless activities could and should become empirically observable—and a challenge to searching self-examination.

For it would be grossly misleading to quote Jung as an apologist for religion as he finds it among us Europeans today. And it is not as an apologist but as a challenge that I see him. Doubtless there is much in his own published writings that has been, and will be, itself challenged—both by the theologian on one side and by the scientist and the psychiatrist on the other. He himself would have it so, and that we take nothing on faith from him. His challenge to the unprejudiced sceptic and unbeliever is obvious enough. His challenge to the professed believer is perhaps more subtle—but no less serious. It is comparatively easy for him to dismiss Freud, who never took religion very seriously anyhow, and whose psycho-analysis can be labelled as 'science' and so somehow outside the concern of ultimate beliefs and values. Jung insists that such a dichotomy is impossible: that consciously or unconsciously religion affects everything in our lives. Whether we belong to any denomination or none, he challenges us to become more conscious, more responsible, more adult in our religion—or irreligion—if we would not destroy ourselves and our fellows. Western man fools himself when he thinks he has outgrown religion and has no need of God—as he is learning in the bitter Nemesis to his pretensions to self-sufficiency. But he *has* outgrown an infantile religiosity which is no more than an escape-mechanism, an outer and theoretic compensation for inner godlessness in practice. If Jung's work, directly or indirectly, enables us to understand what is involved when we either affirm, deny or doubt the reality of God, his searching challenge will indeed be well met.