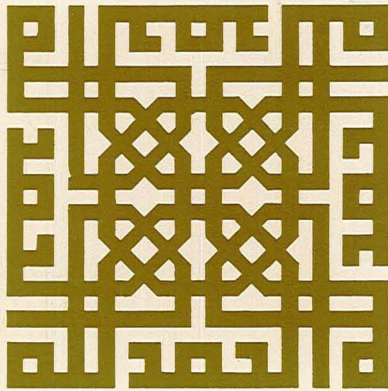


ISLAM
AND
THE WEST

AN ANALYSIS OF C. G. JUNG'S
UNDERSTANDING OF ISLAM



Dr. Durre S. Ahmed

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IQBAL ACADEMY PAKISTAN

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INTRODUCTION

In a widely disseminated article, interview and book, Harvard political scientist Sam Huntington suggests that future international conflicts will not be so much geopolitical as geocultural and involve a clash of civilizations featuring the "West versus the rest"¹. The idea is not an isolated one and is shared by other foreign policy intellectuals in the United States such as Zbigniew Brzezinski who also believes that international issues are now primarily "cultural and philosophical"². A cursory examination of such views indicates that Islam, as religion/culture, is perceived as the foremost protagonist among the "rest":

The conflict among civilizations will be increasingly central: The West and Islam, Islam and Hindu civilizations in India. Islam vs the Slavic Orthodox Russian civilization, China and Japan as civilizations. These are going to be the major entities among which international relations will take place...³

By now there are extensive scholarly materials which have attempted to break down the monolithic stereotypes regarding Islam, fundamentalism and the geopolitics of the subject after the end of the Cold War.⁴ As one scans this material, however, there is a certain sense of *deja vu*, leaving one wondering about the capacity of those who teach, to learn themselves. The intellectual enterprise of 'Soviet Studies' is a case in point.

In an article about the collapse of the Soviet Union titled "Why Were We Surprised?", (The American Scholar, Spring 1991) W.R. Connors asked a crucial question implicating the western approach to knowledge about such issues; and the academic tendency to view phenomena through the "thin slit of social science" which pays attention to only a very narrow range of factors: data on military force, economics, agricultural

productivity and the relationships among leaders. Frequently ignored are:

the passions ... the appeal of ethnic loyalty and nationalism, the demands for freedom of religious practice and cultural expression - these conditions were "soft" or "unscientific" and those who emphasized them could be scorned.

Connors' views were echoed by a spectrum of intellectuals and academics and are summed up by an extensive editorial in the *Wilson Quarterly* on the demise of Soviet Studies.⁵ As it points out, Soviet Studies had as much to do with the various intellectual positions within U.S. academe as without, in what was the Soviet Union itself. As a consequence of these different, essentially philosophical perspectives (e.g. liberal versus conservative) and despite "prodigious intellectual labours and the prodigious sums spent to make them possible", proponents of different views could not even vaguely anticipate the events which led to the final collapse.

While one applauds the western inclination for doing such academic post-mortems, it must also be said that they are nevertheless, post-mortems, conducted in hindsight by specialists whose primary task was to gauge and monitor the future. It is perhaps premature to conclude that the ghost of Soviet Studies has returned to haunt the scholarship on Islam. At the same time, there is as yet scant evidence that the experience of Soviet Studies has been absorbed and adapted to the West's newfound interest in what is now being called "another despotic creed seeking to infiltrate the West".⁶

Once again, economics, and especially politics, dominates the flow of analysis. It remains to be seen also, if this particular endeavour will receive the same degree of academic and research support in universities and think-tanks as did Soviet Studies. With time, the substance of this research effort will become a major indicator of the extent to which any genuine shift has occurred in western intellectual consciousness and its theories and methods of knowledge.

At present, one can say that in the same way that it has taken the social sciences almost 20 years to begin a serious re-

examination of 'development', it has yet to come to a substantive understanding of religion *per se* and especially Islam. The current situation cannot be considered anti-Islamic as much as anti-religion, stemming as it does, from the modern academic belief that there is an 'inconsistency' between faith and knowledge and thus 'those who believe cannot think and those who think cannot believe'. As one has discussed elsewhere, this attitude is slowly changing and there is now an openness and even an active return to religion in some western academic circles. However, the direction of this change does not bode well, in one's opinion, for either the West or the rest - and for women on both sides. While it claims to base itself on a rejection of modernity, it goes on to endorse what one understands as basically a return to fundamentalist Christianity and Judaism.⁷

That the focus in the West has been on Islam's militant/fundamentalist aspect, in a sense highlights and puts to question many basic assumptions about religion and the approach of modern knowledge systems to the study of religion. On the one hand, Islam has been historically lumped with Judaism and Christianity as part of a particular moral-partriarchal world view labelled 'monotheism'. Yet, it sticks out like a sore thumb, generating immense passions on both sides of an ever increasing and violent divide the other side of which is precisely those religious systems of which it is supposedly a confused, received, and therefore invented version. The fact is that Islam largely remains to be studied either in post-modern or its own terms, that is, from a framework not only of comparative theology but its specific psychology, as distinct from other religions, each of which in fact have also different psychologies.

SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Paranoia:

In psychological terms, the present relationship between the West and Islam can be considered one of a mutual growing paranoia. Paranoia is a psychological condition *par excellence* about a real or imaginary 'other' and is today one of the few psychopathologies which has not been reduced to a biochemical basis. The dictionary defines paranoia as "a mental disorder

characterized by systematized delusions, as of grandeur or especially persecution".⁸ Both psychiatry and the dictionary define delusion as a "false belief" Without commenting on the peculiarities of modern psychology, according to the definitions, it can be said that both Islam and the West are entangled in a spectrum of "false beliefs" spanning feelings of grandeur at one end, and what is in fact the inevitable and logical counterpart of feelings of persecution at the other end.

In the context of its treatment, paranoia is an exceedingly intransigent condition. Therapy relying on the ideal of insight into oneself rarely works, not least because the majority of paranoids are highly intelligent. Given the initial "false belief", whatever the therapist may say and however rational and factual it may be, the paranoid person interprets information which simply confirms the initial belief. The roots of paranoia are thus deeply related to two currently popular intellectual themes: epistemology and interpretation. Indeed, as one considers the official material on paranoia, it seems to be a peculiarly intellectual(s') disease:

The Committee on Nomenclature and Statistics of the American Psychology Association grouped paranoia and paranoid states as *psychoses without known brain pathology*. It defined them as cases showing persistent delusions, generally persecutory and grandiose, and ordinarily without hallucinations ... Emotional response and behaviour are consistent with the ideas held ... *Intelligence is well preserved* ... It is characterized by an intricate, complex and slowly developing system, often *logically elaborated after a false interpretation of an actual occurrence*. The patient frequently considers himself endowed with superior or unique abilities ... older psychiatrists called it *monomania* ... *essentially a disorder of the intellect* ... *but without general personality deterioration*.⁹ (My emphases)

Applying these criteria to the mutual paranoia of the West and Islam, there seems little cause for an optimistic resolution between the two. However, since this discourse aims to remain within an analytic framework as set down by the West itself, it will continue to rely on the assumptions of western depth psychology/psychiatry regarding insight, knowledge and change. As a psychotherapeutic endeavour then, this paper is part of a series addressed to the academic/intellectual mentality of both

sides. For reasons of both structure and space, the present focus is the West and the nature and extent of Islam as the 'other' in Western consciousness which is not to say that the reverse does not hold. In fact it does. But for reasons related to clarity and different psychological concerns, the stance of the protagonists will be discussed individually.

RAPPORT AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

The necessity of a common language is a pre-requisite for the psychotherapeutic process. The earliest Freudian model was based on the notion that it was the therapist's task to understand and 'make sense' of the patient's condition hence the field of depth psychology. Within the massive enterprise of what constitutes psychotherapy in the West, today it is taken for granted that it is important for the therapist to "speak the language" of the patient, of "entering the patient's world" and so on, as the first and most crucial step towards successful therapy. The degree of rapport then is inextricably related to the therapist's ability to speak the language(s) of the patient.

In trying to establish an intellectual rapport between Islam and the West, it is not enough to be simply writing in English in order to attack the West for being prejudiced, hypocritical etc, or then belligerently insisting on a different 'indigenous' vision, stating it, and leaving it at that. While to a certain extent such an attitude can be justified for asserting a post-colonial identity and contrasting vision(s) it presents no solution as to how to bridge the growing polarization between the protagonists. The need for such bridges is becoming imperative in the light of problems which are global in scope such as AIDS and the state of the environment. The pragmatics of human communication are such that simply blaming the other rarely proves to be conducive to dialogue or change.¹⁰ In psychological terms, such an approach is essentially Freudian in which most problems are laid at the door of powerful parental figures which, theoretically, can lead into an infinite regress of blameworthy progenitors. It is also conceptually fruitless since the 'other' is seen only as a protagonist to be either repelled or conquered.

This particular discourse then is based on the assumption that communication is more effective through a common theoretical/analytic language, one belonging to the West. In this instance it is the Jungian method of analytical psychology. Apart from offering a conceptually rich field of ideas, it is suitable since it takes into account widely divergent cultures and religions in its view of collective and individual behaviour. At times, in the course of the analysis, the shortcomings inherent in the theory will be difficult to ignore. Yet, the main purpose is not to do a critique of Jungian theory. Rather, as a first step towards mutual understanding, the aim at this initial stage is to set out the West's understanding of the psychology of Islam. Even in the context of criticism, it is preferable not to launch into a diatribe on behalf of 'the rest'. One of the most distinctive and admirable features of the Western approach to knowledge is a healthy tendency towards self-criticism which is markedly lacking in its opponents.¹¹ In sum, the effort is to be neither acrimonious nor condemnatory but to communicate, on the basis of facts, one view of Islam from within the West.

THE OTHER

The term 'other' is rapidly becoming a cliché in sociology and anthropology but in its source context of psychology, it continues to be an important concept. Uprooted from its original matrix and made into a label, the term has been claimed mostly by the rest to bash the West. At the same time, all sides tend to overlook the psychological fact that such a division between 'self' and 'other', serves a crucial function in the advancement of the evolution of human consciousness. That is, the 'other' is vital to knowledge about oneself, regardless of whether this self belongs to the West or the rest. As Jung pointed out, the ability to differentiate is the *sine qua non* of consciousness and all knowledge (including morality) presupposes such a consciousness.¹²

The necessity of differentiation-as-knowledge can be considered a law, functioning as it does at the most basic levels of human perception. The human sensorium can only function on the basis of contrast and difference. There can be no information/knowledge without contrast.¹³ For example, subjects

placed in a room painted a uniform white with absolutely no present of contrast start experiencing visual distortion and then 'blindness' until contrast is introduced even as a spot of black thereby restoring perspective and balance. The same holds for all the other senses. Similarly, knowledge of oneself, individual or cultural, is possible only in the context of difference, which is perhaps why, since antiquity, the sages have looked to travel as a source of wisdom. Thus, the current negative viewing of the notion of the 'other' is both fruitless and limiting. And the observation that "to understand himself man needs to be understood by another; to be understood by another, he needs to understand the other",¹⁴ is applicable to the rest and the West.

The issue of the other is also close to the heart of the therapeutic enterprise. More than most disciplines, the structure of psychotherapy insists on the recognition of this other. The therapeutic context becomes a microcosmic arena in which different levels of other-ness and their relationship(s) with both therapist and the client are played out on the assumption that these encounters will lead to further insight and change. At one level, patient and therapist mutually reflect another. Similarly, most depth psychology theories assume the existence of another—or others—within each individual. The therapist's training assumes that he/she has developed a knowledge of, and therefore a comfortable relationship with, the 'other(s)' within. Based on this sort of self-knowledge, the therapist can assist the patient to do the same.

Thus, for example, the Freudian 'id' and its counterpart of the 'superego' can be postulated as different 'others' which have to be firstly recognized and subsequently brought under the control of the rational 'ego'. The Jungian approach assumes a host of psychological 'others' which need to be 'integrated' in order for a person to feel whole and 'individuated'. To quote Jung:

No one who does not know himself can know others. And in each of us there is another whom we do not know. He speaks to us in dreams and tells us how differently he sees us from the way we see ourselves. When therefore we find ourselves in a difficult situation to which there is no solution, he can sometimes kindle a light that

radically alters our attitude—the very attitude that led us into there difficult situation.¹⁵

To simply say then, that the West sees Islam as the 'other' is to trivialize and render irrelevant what is obviously becoming a serious situation. After all, if the 'other' is basically a matter of difference, the question arises as to how to distinguish the quality of response between, for example, Hinduism as 'other' and Islam?

Setting aside obvious disparities of numerical scale, the question needs a frame of reference which would permit reasonable comparisons. Within psychology and psychiatry, such a frame is provided by *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, its author being taken here as a symbol of the best of the West.

CARL JUNG: BIOGRAPHY AND BACKGROUND.

Perhaps even more than Freud, Carl Jung remains a controversial figure in western intellectual history. Numerous biographies and commentaries have been written on Jung's life and work, many of them linking personal events with the formulation of his theories. The wide and intense spectrum of response that he generated can be gauged by a sampling of just the titles of some of these texts. Paul Stern's *C.G. Jung: The Haunted Prophet*¹⁶ is a highly critical biography verging on character assassination. A Freudian analyst, Stern saw Jung as a man of bad conscience, an extortionist, a terrible family man not interested in his children who married his wife primarily for her money. Stern is also convinced of Jung's anti-Semitism. At the other extreme is a book by the prolific author, traveller and latter day renaissance man, Laurens van der Post and his *Jung and the Story of Our Times*.¹⁷ It is Post's conviction that sooner rather than later, Jung "will be seen for what he is, one of the great turning points in history, already being recognized by the Old and New Worlds". Insofar as Post is not a psychologist, his undoubtedly adulatory tone can be considered a forerunner to the current absorption of the 'New Age' in the West with Jungian and post-Jungian concepts. As Post notes, Jung enabled the opening of a dialogue and a meeting point between East and West. In this sense, Post's view is perhaps the most widespread and

representative for our purpose of a mutually acceptable analytic framework.

A third biography on Jung is by Vincent Brome who like Stern, is a psychiatrist. Academically, however, his approach is far more balanced. Thus in the book *Jung: Man and Myth*,¹⁸ Brome notes the facts regarding Jung's bisexual impulses, his forays into adultery and his remaining "unreconciled to Christianity". Yet, there are other facets which are also highlighted. Brome takes care to establish Jung's academic credentials including the awarding of numerous honorary degrees by prestigious universities across the continents. He confirms what is anyway evident in Jung's *Collected Works* of an erudition on a gigantic scale. Brome's assessment of Jung's influence on other disciplines is similarly comprehensive. He notes the frequently obscured fact that despite the bitter differences with Freud, Jung's ideas were to clearly influence psychoanalysis itself. Similarly, his careful consideration of the anti-Semitic accusation, exonerates Jung from the essentially Freudian motivated charge.

JUNG'S CONTEMPORARY STATUS AND INFLUENCE

Today, Jung's obscurity is no longer an issue. While he has yet to have the same impact as Freud on academe, the comparison is perhaps misplaced since in many ways academe has itself undergone a transformation since the advent of Freud. As Brome has pointed out, analogies to Jungian concepts are not difficult to find in fields ranging from anthropology to sociology. The feminist movement and its mostly successful insistence on the centrality of gender and interpretation, owes a substantial debt to Jung.

Numerous writers have described how the quarrel between Freud and Jung can be seen as a battle between the Freudian masculine patriarch and Jung's effort to restore the lost elements of the Great Mother Goddess. Many books have documented the story of the separation between Freud and Jung as a battle between father and son. The battle, of course, was over the human Psyche, classically a female, and who among the two men had the more appropriate theory and method to formulate a logos of the psyche: Psychology. Half a century later, while the

battle continues, Jung stands if not vindicated then at least in a position where a different feminine voice is now an audible contrast to Freud's masculine one. The dethroning of Freud, with his virulent anti-female bias, has been a major force in the search for alternative explanations of what can be called normal and abnormal. While one has argued that much of what is considered post-Freudian psychology is in fact more of the same,¹⁹ the feminist reaction to Freud has at least succeeded in making space for other views, including Jung's. This is not to say that Jungian theory is a particularly sympathetic and accurate portrait of the psychology of women. That is another story. This one is about Jung and how he can be considered a symbol of a particular type of geopolitical/cultural consciousness.

Brome's review of Jung's influence is important since it reveals long-obscured facts pertaining to a range of contemporary knowledge systems. It illustrates that, unlike Freud whose methods have long been discarded by disciplines other than psychology, Jungian concepts continue to flourish in many fields, albeit unacknowledged. According to Brome, within psychology, neo-Freudians owe much to Jung whose concept of 'individuation' anticipated the notion of 'self-actualization'. Existential analysts are similarly indebted in their theoretical constructs. Painting as a means of insight is today a common therapeutic method and has its origins in Jung's analytic psychology. Terms such as 'complex', 'introvert' and 'extrovert' inspired even Freud to revise his libido theory. Subsequently, the introversion/extraversion model was employed by Eysenk as one important dimension of personality.

Jung's early work on word association inspired the Rorschach test and other projective techniques leading to the invention of the lie-detector. His preoccupation with myths, fairy tales, symbols and archetypes led to a new understanding of not only schizophrenia but of the psychological significance of these materials for individuals and entire cultures.

In literary criticism, the cross fertilization has been equally rich. For example, Northrop Frye's classic text *The Anatomy of Criticism* is clearly influenced by Jung. Frye's subsequent and

highly influential writing's reflect a continuing deepening of this influence. Similarly, another critical classic, *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* by Maud Bodkin is directly derivative in its very title. Jung's influence is also evident in the writings of Gillbert Murray, J.B. Priestley's *Literature and Western Man*, Gottfried Diener's study of *Faust* and James Kirsch's *Shakespeare's Hamlet*.

In the artistic domain, an entire aesthetic based on Jungian principles has been worked out by Phipson. Eric Neumann's analysis of Henry Moore, Herbert Read's studies of painting and Michael Tippett's musical criticism are all anchored in Jungian concepts. David Reisman's *The Lonely Crowd* developed the introversion-extraversion categories in sociological terms. Jung's views on religions provided lively debates in both Catholic and Protestant theologians and Paul Tillich especially found a reaffirmation of Protestant theology in many Jungian ideas.

As Brome documents, in Europe especially, Jung's ideas were brought to bear on political philosophy, jurisprudence and even economics. The historian Arnold Toynbee classified many world religions in terms of Jung's psychological types. Long before Derrida et al, Jung talked of signs, symbols and semiotics. Similarly, Chomsky's innate structures, Levi-Strauss's structuralism, and Piaget's theories are derived from an essentially Jungian methodology:

Extrapolate some of the structures underlying Jung's thinking—the principle of opposites, of complementarity of phylogenetic structures, of feminine and masculine, conscious and unconscious and it is not difficult to find analogies in many fields (p.293)

While Brome's review attempts to redress the balance of ignorance regarding Jung in the academic world, it does not go into related reasons regarding the reasons for Jung's obscurity and the explanatory detour can be considered marginal to the purpose at hand (the West and Islam), it does provide a context to understanding western consciousness and certain dominant motifs in its intellectual history.

FREUD VERSUS JUNG

Starting from his initial position as one of Freud's most brilliant and devoted disciples, to his subsequent departure from

the inner circle of psychoanalysis, Jung's conception of human behaviour forms the other pillar of the house of psychology which until recently was inhabited primarily by the heirs of the Freudian tradition. Both had the same academic and practical credentials and Jung's opus is possibly more extensive than Freud's. Jung's relative obscurity in academia can be briefly summed up within two broad categories. The first was related to the accusations emerging from the Freudian camp regarding Jung's alleged anti-semitism which for anyone thoroughly familiar with Jung's sprawling *Collected Works* is essentially anti-Freud not anti-semitic. The fact that Jung gave greater importance to factors such as culture, history and religion, coupled with applying certain analytic principles propounded by Freud to Freud himself, were grist for the "anti-semitic" mill.

The second reason for Jung's obscurity is linked to the inner workings of the disciplines/professions of psychiatry and clinical psychology. Unlike Freud, Jung never gave a specific etiology of neurosis or psychosis. Mental illness for Jung was basically a one-sidedness in the presence of multiplicity. Related to this theoretical frame, the Freudian emphasis on sexuality was for Jung an incomplete and exceedingly narrow view of human behaviour—normal or otherwise. A more comprehensive picture was only possible if the practitioner was aware of numerous cultural and historical factors which also affect psychological consciousness, including the domains of culture, art, religion, and spirituality. The practice of psychotherapy within such broad intellectual parameters without the benefit of a well-structured etiology is not an easy task.

It becomes even more difficult to accomplish when one takes into account the considerable time required to qualify simply as a medical doctor. Thus, it was the Freudian perspective with its singular emphasis on sexuality and the dismissing of religion as "infantile neurosis", which was absorbed into the mainstream of the newly emerging discipline of psychiatry. While both Freud and Jung eventually declared that psychotherapy need not be restricted to only medical doctors, the status of psychiatry over all other non-medical forms of therapy, consolidated Freud's

position over Jung. In the last fifty years, until recently, this situation has remained basically the same, especially with psychiatry. Even though the method initiated by Freud, psychoanalysis, is today a crumbling fortress, Freud's legacy lives on in numerous schools and theories of psychology.²⁰ Similarly, it would be no exaggeration to say that worldwide, in the public imagination, people are still more apt to recognize and think in Freudian rather than in Jungian concepts. Id, ego, superego are popularly much more 'accessible' than, for example, the concepts of archetype, anima and enantrodromia. But with the advent of postmodernism, this is slowly changing.

JUNG, THE 'NEW AGE' MOVEMENT AND RELIGION

The New Age movement and its academic counterpart of Alternatives suggest a significant change in western attitudes regarding self, other and society.²¹ Underlying, and in many instances pre-empting this change, is Jung's vision of complexity and diversity in human nature and the centrality of a mode of consciousness that can be loosely termed the Feminine and the critical need for western civilization to consider the consequences of what Jung termed its loss of soul. Many of the ideas (and practices) of the New Age movement can be traced to Jungian perspectives on physical and mental health. This historical link is evident insofar as Jung was among the first medical scientists who, as early as the 40s and 50s, suggested that modern man's search for mental health would be better served by many of the psychological principles underlying eastern spiritual practices rather than mainstream Protestant Christianity or Freudian analysis.

Presently, Jung's ideas are finding an even larger audience, thanks primarily to outstanding post-Jungian scholars such as James Hillman. The present almost cult like status of the poet Robert Bly, author of *Iron John*, and the swirl of debate over masculine and feminine modes of consciousness, are almost entirely due to the writings of post-Jungians such as Hillman. The ubiquitous use of terms such as 'soul', 'meditation', 'visualization', 'holism', 'wholeness', etc, all emerge from a Jungian matrix now

dispersed by time and by the sheer volume of concepts it has generated.

It was mainly Jung's writings on religion and psychology which led him to being called a "new Messiah" and "psychiatrist to God". He made no secret of his enthusiasm regarding numerous aspects of these 'alien' philosophies and saw a profound resonance between his own ideas and these traditions. His range and grasp of the psychology of religion is immense, ranging from ancient African beliefs to those of the American Indian, the Chinese, Hindus and other lesser known systems. His personal and cultural milieu assured him of a strong grasp of Christianity and Judaism. The extensive and enormously erudite writings on many aspects of the Judaeo-Christian tradition ensured his being branded anti-semitic on the one hand, and a heretic on the other. Post-Jungians such as James Hillman continue to fight the battle initiated by Jung, especially with mainstream psychology/psychiatry and Protestant Christianity.

All this needed to be set down as part of the attempt to make way for a common ground and language regarding the West versus the rest and especially Islam. As one has tried to show, this ground/language exists in the West and the effort will be to stay within its boundaries. When it comes to understanding other cultures and religions, Jung is a symbol of the best of the West: Liberal, enlightened, capable of being self-critical, always pursuing knowledge regardless of cultural prejudice, and prevailing academic fashion. The present widespread acceptance of his ideas, directly or indirectly, indicate that such a consciousness (i.e. postmodernism) is well established and growing in the West. It is a consciousness which one both relates to and even admires and to which this paper is addressed.

II

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF C.G. JUNG: A Content Analysis

The Collected Works of Carl Jung are scholarly and eloquent testimony to his life-long effort to serve as a mediator between the Judaeo-Christian West and other religions. While this may not have been his primary intention, which he maintained was essentially psychotherapeutic and rooted in scientific psychology, *The Collected Works* can, nevertheless, be regarded as a mediative corpus especially in its use of two broad methods. The first was Jung's attempt to view religion psychologically. This was based on drawing a distinction between the psychology of a religious person as posed to the "psychology of religion proper, that is of religious contents"²². For Jung, the content of a religion, that is, issues of dogma and belief, are not a question of 'facts'. Most religious assertions are impossible to prove in the usual sense of the word. The study of any religion then must take into account the psychology of its symbols, not just the literal dogma. Thus, religious assertions have to do primarily with the reality of the psyche not physics.²³

For example, in the process of uncovering the forgotten and neglected world of the Divine Feminine as represented by Sophia and Mary in Judaism and Christianity, Jung repeatedly demonstrated the line between the bias against the feminine aspects of the psyche and the Judaeo-Christian contribution towards this bias. James Hillman and other post-Jungians have carried this view further, showing how modern systems of knowledge— scientific, and secular-human— are in fact still

anchored in the religious worldview of what Hillman calls "Cartesian-Christianism".²⁴

One aspect of Jung's work then, attempts to de-link knowledge not from the Judaeo-Christian tradition as such but from what he perceived were patriarchal accretions and the extreme masculinization of these traditions. From this perspective, the bulk of *The Collected Works* is primarily addressed to 'modern man', and thus primarily to the West. Jung's secondary effort was concerned with the religions and philosophies of "the rest", that is, non-western civilizations and cultures. The study of these other modes of religious psychology was done not with the purpose of offering them as a substitute for, what for Jung was, a highly frayed Christianity. Rather, it was to illustrate the correspondence and fundamental harmony between these seemingly alien systems and the sort of Christianity that, according to Jung, had originally existed.

Apart from commenting in depth on a range of western and non-western sacred texts, rituals, art(ifacts) and other religious/spiritual/cultural expressions both public and private, the main source of his sweeping comparative vision was again twofold. The first was mythology and its related areas such as folk tales, legends, etc. The second was his foray into alchemy which had long been dismissed in the West as simply a primitive forerunner to the modern science of chemistry. His work in this area can be considered a *tour de force* of academic and scholarly research demonstrating the deep links of this arena with psychological processes of transformation. As he has brilliantly shown, much of alchemy was a symbolic representation of certain psycho-spiritual processes which form the core of the 'message(s)' of many sacred texts and practices.

It would be no exaggeration to say that in the 20th century, Jung was one of the few western authors who tried to create a vast and challenging conceptual space for a mutual understanding between the West and the rest. This space offers the best prospect for a continuing dialogue. The parameters then are *The Collected Works* of C.G. Jung, consisting of twenty volumes. As stated earlier, it is primarily addressed to the inheritors of the

Judaeo-Christian worldview. Simultaneously, it is one of the most comprehensive surveys available on the psychological study of religions.

METHODOLOGY

Taking Jung as a symbol representing the best of the West, this paper will examine the precise nature of Jung's understanding of Islam as reflected in *The Collected Works*. Rather than prematurely imposing one's interpretation of this understanding the first step is to examine the corpus through empirical means.

One relatively standard technique is of a content analysis. This will be done firstly by noting the numerical frequency of references to Islam in comparison to all the major religions examined by Jung. For example, one can note the frequency of reference to certain primary features which constitute the most visible profile of a religion such as the main person (Moses, Lao Tzu, Mohammad), place (Benaras, Jerusalem, Mecca) and scripture (Vedas, Qur'an, Torah, Bible). These data can then be viewed from a more comprehensive angle in terms of comparison.

The second, deeper level would examine the substantive nature of all the references to Islam. Using methods of contextual analysis one will attempt to delineate more precisely Jung's understanding of the psychology of Islam as distinct from other religions, along with his grasp of areas of similarity. Such a cross-referential method or a dual analytic level which takes into account both quantity and quality of knowledge about Islam, would enable one to gauge the extent and depth of Jung's understanding of the subject. The emergent proportions would indicate the extent to which Islam can be considered the 'other', or in Jungian terms the 'shadow' in western religious and psychological consciousness. The data for the quantitative content analysis have been compiled/identified from the General Index (Vol.20)

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF REFERENCES TO ISLAM.

As the tables indicate, Islam has the least number of references to it in every category. This despite the fact that even

during Jung's time it was the second largest religion in the world and is today moving towards having the most adherents. Apart from the massive amount of material on Judaism and Christianity, combined references to Indo-Chinese traditions exceed one hundred. Whereas all other religions have entries under related categories, the only related category to 'Islam' is 'Arabs' which consists of 15 references and the names of eight Arab alchemists. Even without a substantive review, the figures indicate a certain lack of interest, indicating that Islam was the least of Jung's priority in his pursuit of understanding the psychology of various religions.

The order of priority suggested by the figures seems to be constant at the most basic levels. For example, within Jungian theory considerable attention is devoted to different religious rituals and their psycho-symbolic significance. The low priority of Islam in these categories is also evident if a comparison is made, for example, among Passover, Christmas, and the Muslim festival of Eid or the rite of the pilgrimage to Mecca, the Haj. There are two detailed references to Passover, 14 to Christmas, 11 to Easter, many of these extensive. There are no references to any Islamic rite or ritual. Again, in the context of symbols, the cross, for example, has almost an entire page of references as does the 'Star' (of both the Messiah and David). The prototypical symbol of Islam, the crescent, is not referred to even once in this context. Even though within the realm of classical symbols it is highly significant and extensively documented. While there are extensive references to the symbolic significance of the 'moon', none of these is specifically discussed in the context of Islam.

This seeming lack of interest in Islam becomes clearer when one moves on to the next level of analysis which is an examination of the precise context and extent to which these 19 references to Islam and its allied concepts occur.

QUALITATIVE CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF REFERENCES TO ISLAM.

The review is based on the following structure: Apart from Islam(is), all major related concepts will also be noted, such as 'Allah', 'Muhammad' and other names, themes etc. specific to the

Islamic religious/spiritual universe. Two broad categories of references can be discerned. The first consists of what can be termed block or passing references. That is, while 'Islam' or 'Allah' or 'Muhammad' is certainly mentioned, nothing more specific is said in what is a general statement about, for example, Yahweh, Allah, Brahma or the 'monotheisms' etc. The second category is when more substantive observations are made. These, in turn, can be examined for positive or negative comments and other insights into the subject.

Before approaching the data, a few points need to be kept in mind. Firstly, while *The Collected Works* were written over a period of a lifetime, they are arranged thematically. Thus, if some volumes contain no references to Islam, it is by itself no indication of Jung's lack of interest in the subject. In this case, any conclusions to be drawn must come from the whole and not any one part. Secondly, while the main discussion will be done after the review, the rather technical and frequently arcane nature of many contexts necessitate some brief comments, if only to retain the reader's interest.

The references can be approached keeping three broad categories in mind: Positive, negative and neutral/indifferent. The last would consist of all those that have been earlier classified as passing, since no conclusion can be drawn from them. It should also be noted that there is one central and repeated reference to Islam. This has to do with an interpretation of the 18th Surah of the Qur'an and the figure of *Al-Khidr* (or Khadir). It is an interesting and insightful analysis regarding certain psychological aspects of Islam. Given the relatively large number of repeated references to it, as well as the positivity which characterises them, this aspect of Jung's writings will be examined at length after the overall review of *The Collected Works*.

Vol. 1	<i>Psychiatric Studies.</i>	No reference.
Vol.2	<i>Experimental Researches.</i>	No reference
Vol.3	<i>The Psychogenesis of Mental Disease.</i>	No reference
Vol.4	<i>Freud and Psychoanalysis.</i>	No reference

Vol.5 *Symbols of Transformation:*

Khidr.

(i) An extensive reference to the 18th Surah of the Qur'an about the legend of Moses and Khidr. (See detailed discussion). The context is the essay titled 'The Origins of the Hero' and pertains to a series of dreams of an anonymous "Miss Miller" who was the subject of another extensive Jungian analysis titled "The Miller Fantasies". The reference occurs in the course of tracing an association given by Miss Miller about 'Ahasuerus' whom Jung links to the archetype of the wandering Jew:

Although the stories about Ahasuerus cannot be traced beyond the thirteenth century, the oral tradition may go much further back, and it is possible that a link with the Orient once existed. There, the parallel figure is Khadir or El-Khadir, the "eternally youthful Chidher" celebrated in song by Friedrich Rückert. The legend is purely Islamic. The strange thing is, however, that Khidr is not only regarded as a saint, but in Sufic circles even has the status of a deity. In view of the strict monotheism of Islam, one is inclined to think of him as a pre-Islamic, Arabian deity who, though not officially recognized by the new religion, was tolerated for reasons of expediency. But there is nothing to prove that. The first traces of Khidr are to be found in the commentaries on the Koran by al-Bukhari (d.870) and al-Tabari (d.923), and especially in the commentary on a note-worthy passage in the 18th Surah. This is entitled 'The Cave' after the cave of the seven sleepers who, according to legend, slept in it for 309 years, thus escaping the persecution, and woke up in a new age. It is interesting to see how the Koran after lengthy moral reflection in the course of this same Surah, comes to the following passage, which is especially important as regards the origin of the Khidr myth. I quote the Koran literally(5.194)

There are no other reference to Islam or related categories in a total text of 462 pages.

Vol.6. *Psychological Types.*

In an essay 'The Type Problem in Classical and Medieval Thought', Jung alludes to certain aspects of Islamic mysticism (Sufism) in which certain techniques are geared towards rapid psychological and spiritual transformation:

How easily the primitive reality of the psychic image re-appears is shown by the dreams of normal people and the hallucinations that accompany mental derangement. The mystics even endeavour to recapture primitive reality of the imago (image) by means of an artificial introversion, in order to counterbalance extraversion. There is an excellent example of this in the initiation of the

Mohammedan mystic Tewekkul-Beg, by Molla-Shah. Tewekkul-Beg relates: "after these words he called me to seat myself opposite to him, while still my senses were as though bemused, and commanded me to create his own image in my inner self; and after he had bound my eyes, he made me gather all the forces of the soul into my heart. I obeyed, and in the twinkling of an eye, by divine favour, and with the spiritual succour of the Sheikh, my heart was opened. I beheld there in my innermost self something resembling an overturned bowl; when this vessel was righted, a feeling of boundless joy flooded through my whole being. I said to the Master: "From this cell, in which I am seated before you, I beheld within me a true vision, and it is as though another Tewekkul-Beg were seated before another Molla-Shah". The Master explained this to him as the first phenomenon of his initiation. Other visions soon followed, once the way to the primitive image of the real had been opened (p.31).

Despite the considerably rich psychological material, no connections are drawn between it and Islamic symbols, imagery, theology. Instead, the reference is to "a Mohammedan mystic". Nevertheless, it cannot be considered a negative reference and can be categorized either as positive or neutral. This is the only reference in a total text of 555 pages.

Vol.7 *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology.* No reference.

Vol.8. *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche.*

There is one reference to Islam, in the essay "Basic Postulates of Analytical Psychology". It is difficult to assess the connotations in terms of positive/negative, though from the Muslim point of view it can be considered negative, insofar as it alludes to the absence of 'reason' in Islam which is mentioned alongwith other historical facts of a negative nature. In either case, it remains an essentially passing reference, since it does not substantiate the observation on Islam:

Truth that appeals to the testimony of the senses may satisfy reason, but it offers nothing that stirs our feelings and expresses them by giving meaning to human life. Yet it is most often feeling that is decisive in matters of good and evil, and if feeling does not come to the aid of reason, the latter is usually powerless. Did reason and good intentions save us from the World War, or have they ever saved us from any other catastrophic stupidity? Have any of the great spiritual and social revolution sprung from reason - for instance, the transformation of the Greco-Roman world into the age of feudalism, or the explosive spread of Islam? (p.355)

This is the only reference in a total text of 531 pages.

Vol.9 (Part-1) *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious.*

(i) This text contains the most substantive reference to the Qur'an/Islam in *The Collected Works*. It discusses the 18th Surah (*The Cave*), as descriptive of a psychological process of transformation in the essay "*A Typical set of Symbols Illustrating The Process of Transformation*". It will be discussed separately, after the main review.

(ii) A footnote citing a German scholar citing the Arab astronomer Abu Mansur who says symbolic parallels in astronomy with lives of Christ and Mohammad. The text of the footnote: "*The light of Mohammad has the form of a peacock and the angels were made out of the peacock's sweat....*" (331 n)

Vol.9 (Part-II) *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self.*

(i) A footnote citing the German scholar Harnack's work on the 'Clementine Homilies', a collection of gnostic-Christian writing of A.D.150. It is an intriguing footnote, unfortunately not carried through:

Harnack ascribes the Clementine Homilies to the beginning of the 4th century and is of the opinion that they contain "no source that could be attributed to the 2nd century". He thinks that Islam is far superior to this theology. Yahweh and Allah are unreflected God-images, whereas in the Clementine Homilies there is a psychological and reflective spirit at work. It is not immediately evident why this should bring about a disintegration of the God-concept, as Harnack thinks. Fear of psychology should not be carried too far (p.54 n)

(ii) A block/passing reference to the advents of "Judaism, Christianity and Islam" as seen through astrology (p.76)

(iii) An interesting series of footnotes about Islam and Mohammad in the essay "*The Prophecies of Nostradamus*". They are significant for their mostly pejorative connotations of Islam, by various western medieval authors/astrologers, and Jung himself. The first footnote:

(a) *...The quartile aspect between Mercury and Mars "injures" Mercury by "martial" violence. According to Cardan, (some astrological symbols) signify the "law of Mahomet". This aspect could therefore indicate an attack by Islam. Albumasar regards (the symbols) in the same way: "And if Mars shall be in conjunction with him (Jupiter) it signifies the fiery civilization of the pagan faith" (that is Islam). On the analogy of history the evil events to come*

are ascribed to the crescent moon, but one never reflects that the opponent of Christianity dwells in the European unconscious. History repeats itself. (p. 95 n)

(b) A footnote to Nostradamus' statement "Then the beginning of that year (1792) shall see a great persecution against the Christian Church than ever was in Africa". Jung's note states that this was "when Roman Christendom succumbed to Islam" (964n)

(c) Quoting Nostradamus:

"... a mighty one will come after Mahomet, who will set up an evil and magical law. Thus we may surmise with credible probability that after the sect of Mahomet none other will come save the law of the Anti-Christ" (9.97)

(d) A passing reference, not followed through, "The year 589 foretell Islam, and 1189 the significant reign of Pope Innocent III...." (99).

(e) There is one reference to Mohammad in the essay on the "Prophecies of Nostradamus". "...it is possible that Nostradamus calls the Antichrist who was to appear after 1792, the "second Antichrist" because the first had already appeared in the guise of the German reformer (Luther) or much earlier with Nero or Mohammad...." (p.102)

(vi) Discussing how Europe accepted Christianity only at the point of the sword of Roman legions, thereby abandoning paganism, but which is held back only by a "thin wall":

"...Doubtless the spread of Christianity among barbarian people not only favoured, but actually necessitated, a certain inflexibility of dogma. Much the same thing can be observed in the spread of Islam, which was likewise obliged resort to fanaticism and rigidity...." (p.175).

(v) Footnote mentioning "Qur'an and 18th Surah" (III n).

None of these references in a text of 269 pages can be considered substantive. At best they are all passing/block and hence neutral though they can be construed as negative, e.g. Mohammad as anti-Christ, and the "fanaticism and rigidity of Islam":

Vol.10 *Civilization in Transition*:

(i) Passing/block reference... "The meaning of and purpose of religion lie in the relationship of the individual to God (Christianity, Judaism, Islam...) (p. 257).

(ii) In the famous essay, "Woman", Jung tried to explain Christian psychology and its tendency to self-righteously judged Nazi Germany: "...The Semitic experience of Allah was for a long time an extremely painful affair for the whole of Christendom..." (p.298). This is not followed through.

(iii) Two passing references to Khidr as "a human personification of Allah" (0.328). The second is more significant:

...Living in the West, I would have to say Christ instead of "self", in the Near East it would be Khidr, in the Far East Atman or Tao or the Buddha, in the Far West may be a hare or Mondamin and in cabalism it would be Tifereth. Our world has shrunk and it is dawning on us that humanity is one, with one psyche (p.410).

(iv) In a review of a book by Keyserling there is a reference which is not followed through" *"...In order to find the criterion for contemporary events Keyserling harks back to the rise of Islam..."* (p. 497)

(v) In the essay *"The Dreamlike World of India"*, we get, apart from the 18th Surah, perhaps the only other psychological statement on Islam albeit in a context of calling a "cult" what was even in Jung's time, a world religion. Given his perception that the "beauty" of the "Islamic Eros" is universally invisible and "all too jealously guarded", the great religious researcher, it seems, was either unable or uninterested in probing the secret. After giving a rich description of Hinduism and his personal reactions to the Indian landscape he states:

In comparison, Islam seems to be a superior, more spiritual and more advanced religion. Its mosques are pure and beautiful, and of course wholly Asiatic. There is not much mind about it, not a great deal of feeling. The cult is one wailing cry for the all-Merciful. It is a desire, an ardent longing and even a greed for God; I would not call it love. But there is love, the most poetic, most exquisite love of beauty in these old Moguls ... I marvel at that love which discovered the genius of Shah Jehan and used it as an instrument of self-realization. This is the one place in the world where the - alas - all too invisible and all too jealously guarded beauty of the Islamic Eros has been revealed by a well-nigh divine miracle... The Taj Mahal is a revelation. It is thoroughly un-Indian. It is more like a plant that could thrive and flower in the rich Indian earth as it could nowhere else. It is Eros in its purest form; There is nothing mysterious nothing symbolic about it... the Taj Mahal is the secret of Islam... (p.519-20)

(vi) Stretching the framework of categories as far as possible further, there is, finally, one reference to 'mosque' in the context of different experiences of sacred space:

...One breathed a sigh of relief oneself when one emerged from the haze of an orthodox church with its multitude of lamps and entered an honest mosque, where the sublime and invisible omnipresence of God was not crowded out by a superfluity of sacred paraphernalia (p.132)

There is also one reference suggesting that certain features of mosque architecture are derived from Christianity. (p.155) Except for the comments on the Taj Mahal and a mosque, the references

can be considered passing ones. The comments on the Taj allude to significant Jungian concepts such as 'Eros' that are not examined upon further here or elsewhere in *The Collected Works*. Similarly, the notion that Islam has "little mind to it" is not elaborated upon. Jung's intrigued and rapturous response is really not explored further either in contrasting traditions or even with Hinduism which, at the outset, he distinguishes from Islam.

Vol.11 *Psychology and Religion: West and East*.

As the title suggests, the book is a sweeping survey of world religions and deserves careful scrutiny for what it may have to say regarding Islam. The book is divided into nine sections. Part 1 consists of what are known as "The Terry Lectures" given at Yale in 1939, and deal with principles of Jungian psychology and the study of religion. Its only reference to Islam is in a passing/block context, of religions being similar yet different:

(i) ... a definite framework with definite contents which cannot be combined with or supplemented by Buddhist or Islamic ideas or feelings... (p.9).

Part-II is titled "*A Psychological Approach to the Dogma of the Trinity*". In this section there is considerable background material regarding Egypt and Greece. The one reference here is typical of the western tendency to lump Islam with Judaism simply on the basis of some obvious common elements: "...modern anti-trinitarianism has a conception of God that is more Old Testament or Islamic in character than Christian..." (p.153). There is also a line referring to "*early Christianity and the rise of Islam*" (151) Neither of these are followed through.

Part-III is an analysis of the "*Transformation Symbolism in the Mass*". Part-IV consists of three prefaces written to books on religion by various authors. Part-V consists of two essays: "*Psychotherapists and the Clergy*" and "*Psychoanalysis and the Cure of Souls*". Part-VI consists of the famous and controversial "Answer to Job", which discusses elements of the psychology of Judaism. None of these carry any type of reference to Islam.

The Second half of the book is devoted to "*Eastern Religions*" and consists of three parts. The first consists of essays on "*Yoga and the West*", a forward to Suzuki's "*Introduction to Zen Buddhism*," and essays on "*The Psychology of Eastern Meditation*" and the "Holy Men of India". The third and final part of this section is an extensive foreword to Richard Willhelm's translation of the "*I Ching*". There is just one reference to Islam in the essay on Yoga

and the West. It is a passing one, in the historical context of the Renaissance and the by then well-established split between science and philosophy in the West:

At the time, there arose a widespread and passionate interest in antiquity stimulated by the fall of the Byzantine Empire under the onslaught of Islam. Then, for the first time, knowledge of the Greek language and Greek literature was carried to every corner of Europe. As a direct result of this invasion of so called pagan philosophy there arose the great schism in the Roman Church—Protestantism, which soon covered the whole of northern Europe (p.530-531).

Here again, the connection between 'paganism' and elements of Islam are ignored, despite the fact that medieval authors frequently saw Islam as a 'pagan' belief system. Thus, in a text of a more than 600 pages, suggesting a comprehensive approach to religion— East and West— there are exactly four references to Islam. Not a single one is remotely substantive. Drawing on all related categories the situation remains the same, that is, they are passing/block references:

- i) "...Buddha and Mohammad ... Confucius and Zarthustra..." (p.10)
- ii) "...The importation on a mass scale of exotic religious systems...Abdul Baha, the Sufi sects, Ramakrishna..."(861).
- iii) In a comment on the Nazis: "...our blight is ideologies— they are the long awaited Anti-Christ.... National Socialism comes as near to being a religious movement as any movement since A.D.622..". (A footnote informs us that A. D. 622 is the date of the Hejira, Mohammad's flight from Mecca and the beginning of the Moslem era. (p. 488 n)
- iv) "... 'God', can just as well mean Yahweh, Allah, Zeus, Shiva..."(454)

Summing up the review for (Volumes 1 through 11) the emergent picture of Islam contains mostly blank spaces, in the sense of an overwhelming number of passing/block references. The one exception is the analysis of the 18th *Surah* in Vol.9, which will be discussed separately. The only other substantive reference to the Islamic Eros as epitomized by the Taj is not followed through, nor is the subject referred to in any of the other volumes. Simultaneously, there are a number of passing, negative references such as Islam's "rigidity and fanaticism" and Muhammad in the same conceptual category as Nero, Anti-Christ, Hitler.

III

JUNG, PSYCHOLOGY AND ALCHEMY

Taken collectively, Volumes 12, 13, 14, namely, *Psychology and Alchemy*, *Mysterium Coniunctionis* and *Alchemical Studies*, can be considered Jung's magnum opus. The three texts form the core of his theories about the psyche as derived from the alchemical traditions. As he recounts in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, the task of retrieving the alchemical texts was foretold in a dream in which he discovers a library of ancient manuscripts. Fifteen years later, Jung realized that he had unwittingly amassed a similar collection of books on the subject of alchemy.²⁵

While many Jungians find Jung's alchemical writings an embarrassment, it would be a gross distortion to present him without this aspect of his work. Jung devoted the last 30 years of his research on this subject, published perhaps a quarter of his printed pages on alchemical texts and themes, and said in his autobiography that it was alchemy which provided the true background to his psychology. As Hillman states:

Alchemy is thus not merely of scholarly interest and a separate field of research, nor is it Jung's quirk or private passion. It is in fact fundamental to his conception of personality structure.²⁶

Most Westerners, including many Jungians, are unaware of the profound and living alchemical tradition in Islam. This ignorance is due to the general decay and decline to the point of extinction, of alchemy in the West. Hence, in fact, the significance of Jung's researches into the subject. In any case, there is firstly no doubt that Islam has an ancient and highly developed and active alchemical tradition. Secondly, there is also no doubt as to the historic role played by the Arabs who were of course, Muslims, in

the retransmission of many types of knowledge, including alchemy going back to the Greeks and Egyptians. As is evident from Jung's own work, significant alchemical text by European authors which he 'decoded' are largely drawn from Arabic writings on the subject. Thus, at one level Jung was well aware of the highly developed alchemical tradition within Islam, as well as its considerable strong links to the West. At least eight Arab authors are cited in this connection. Yet there are absolutely no psychological insights regarding Islam.

The fact that, by and large, Jung's alchemical studies do not go further back than the 12th century still does not explain this neglect. Nor can it be explained on the grounds that his focus was the European/Christian psyche, since one needs to keep in mind the all-important context of a general psychology of religion. Thus, while he was able to skilfully extrapolate connections between western alchemy, Judaic/Christian beliefs and psychology, and even Chinese alchemy and religion, there is a complete absence of similar connections between Islam and alchemy. Certainly, there are numerous nods of acknowledgement to 'Arab' sources in the footnotes, but remarkably no comments as to how these were, as they undoubtedly are, embedded in the symbolic idiom of Islam. These points become evident on a closer examination of references to Islam in the three volumes.

Volumes 12, *Psychology and Alchemy*

- (i) A passing/block reference in a sentence on "...a world religion, such as Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam" (p.19)
- (ii) Two references to Khidr and the 18th Surah. (See detailed discussion in the same context). "... In Islam, the plan of the 'temenos' with the foundation developed under the influence of early Christian architecture into the court of the mosque with the ritual washhouse in the center...". (p. 118).
- (iii) A footnote on the "Muhammedan legend of the rock in the mosque of Omar, at Jerusalem...." (390n).
- (iv) A reference to "mosque/Koran" in the dream of a female patient. Surprisingly, neither is picked up in the subsequent analysis: "...we go in. The interior resembles a mosque, more particularly, the Hagia Sophia: no seats, wonderful effect of space, no images, only framed texts decorating the walls (like the Koran texts in the Hagia Sophia)..." (p.138)

Apart from these, there are a good number of references to prominent Arab alchemists such as Khalid, Abdul Qasim, Geber and Senior. Some of them are central to Western alchemy since the 12th century. However, none of them are linked psychologically with Islam. Naturally then, the obvious links between Islamic alchemy and Greek philosophy also remain unmentioned and unexplored. For example, in the essay "*Religious Ideas in Alchemy*":

... in the writing of the Church Fathers the south wind is an allegory of the Holy Ghost, presumably because it is not dry. For the same reason the process of sublimation is known in Arabic alchemy as the "great south wind"when therefore Abu'l Qasim speaks of the fire as the "great south wind", he is in agreement with the ancient Greek view that Hermes was a wind-god. (p.383).

There are, thus, numerous references to Arabs/Arabic/Arabian alchemy; mostly in footnotes, but also other extensive quotations from Arab authors in the text. Yet, not a single one is directly or indirectly linked with the symbolic imagery or psychological aspects of Islam and alchemy. Instead, the main focus is Christianity and Judaism. This neglect becomes even more evident insofar as other religions, apart from Judaism and Christianity, are examined in varying detail for their alchemical symbolism, such as the Chinese and Hindu. Thus, in the entire 483 pages of a text on the psychological aspects of a range of religious and alchemical traditions, there is in fact, not a single substantive reference to Islam.

Vol. 13 *Alchemical Studies*

There are two references to Arabs and Arabian alchemy, illustrating the point made earlier.

- (i) The first is the context of four categories of sources used by Jung. Category I is titled "Texts by Ancient Authors", consisting of mainly Greek texts and "*those transmitted by the Arabs...*" The second group is texts by early Latinists: "*The most important of these are translations from the Arabic.. to this group belong certain texts whose Arabic origin is doubtful but which at least show some Arabic influence... of Geber and the Aristotle and Avicenna treatises*". This period extends from the 9th to 13th century. The third group is by later Latinists from 14th to 17th century. The last group of texts is in modern European languages up to the 18th century. (p.206)

- (ii) The second reference to Arabs is a passing one: "*Connections between Greek and Arabic alchemy and India are not unlikely*" (p.231). This is not followed through.

Other than these, there is no mention of Islam in the entire book, except an indirect one regarding Khidr and the 18th Surah (p.321)
Vol. 14 *Mysterium Coniunctionis*

This book is a masterpiece of research and psychological insights. However, the nature of the references to Islam continue to reflect an attitude towards Arabs and Islam in which glimpses of significant information regarding Arabs are rarely connected in a meaningful manner with psychological insights, racial or religious. The word 'Islam' does not appear once in the entire text of 599 pages. Following are all the references in the spectrum categories:

- (i) A footnote refers to the Qur'an Surah XIX regarding Marry giving birth under a palm tree. (418 n).
- (ii) A footnote: *'the stag appears as the emblem of 'Mahomet Philosophus'.* (p.159)
- (iii) *"...In Athens the day of the new moon was considered favorable for collaborating marriages, and it is still an Arabian custom to marry on this day; sun and moon are marriage partners who embrace on the twenty eighth day of the month"* (p.129).
- (iv) The only reference to the Ka'ba, is not followed through, even though it is complex and profound symbol in Islam:
In Arabian tradition Adam also built the Ka'ba for which purpose the angel Gabriel gave him the ground plan and a precious stone. Later the stone turned black because of the sins of men (p.398).

The following group of references, first, clearly allude to the significant impact of 'Arabic' (i.e. Islamic) alchemy on the Western tradition of not only scientific knowledge, but also gnosticism and most importantly, health and healing rooted in a specific spiritual *Weltanschauung*. Secondly, they also allude to the direct link between the Greeks and Egyptians on the one hand and Gnostic Christianity on the other as mediated by the 'Arabs'. Yet, the line between the transmission of these sources of knowledge is not once connected to their matrix of Islam:

- (v) *"... The Johanine interpretation of Christ as the pre-worldly Logos is an early attempt of this kind to put into other words the "meaning" of Christ's essence. The late medievalists, and in particular the "natural philosophers" created a new nature myth. In this they were very much influenced by the writings of the Arabs and of the Harrites, the last exponents of Greek philosophy and*

- gnosis, whose chief representative was Tabit ibn Qurra in the tenth century (p.142).*
- (vi) *'The physicians and natural philosophers of the Middle Ages nevertheless found themselves faced with the problems for which the church had no answer. Confronted with sickness and death, the physicians did not hesitate to seek counsel with the Arabs and so resuscitated that bit of the Ancient world which the Church thought she had exterminated for ever, namely the Mandaeau and Sabeian remnants of Hellenistic syncretism. From them (Arabs) they derived a 'sal sapientia' that seemed so unlike the doctrine of the Church.... (p. 243)*
- (vii) *...In the face of all this one is driven to the conjecture that medieval alchemy, which evolved out of the Arabic tradition sometimes in the 13th century,... was in the last resort a contamination of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost which never came to very much in the church...(p. 318)*

ISLAM AND ALCHEMY

The preceding statements clearly indicate Jung's thorough understanding of the history of western alchemy and its fertilization and "resuscitation" through Arabic texts. The *General Index* contains a separate section on 'Arab Alchemical Writers' cited by Jung, many of whom he called "classical authorities". (p.288). They include Abul Qasim, El-Halib, Geber (Jabir) Kalid, Magus, Nadi, Senior, Rhazes and Al-Iraqi. As Jung states about the most significant roots of Hermetic philosophy in which alchemy is embedded:

In the oldest alchemy known to the West the Hermetic fragments were handed down mostly through Arabic originals. Direct contact with the Corpus Hermeticum was only established in the second half of the fifteenth century, when the Greek manuscript reached Italy from Macedonia and was translated into Latin by Marsilio Ficino. (Volume 12. p. 390)

While Jung indeed acknowledges, but mostly indirectly, these historical elements of the Judaeo-Christian alchemical and spiritual universe, he was content to regard the 'Arabs' simply as such. This may have been appropriate (albeit at a stretch) if he had been involved in documenting a sort of secular history of alchemy, which was patently not the case. His principal focus was psycho-spiritual, devoted to illustrating the parallels between alchemical language, a given religion and psychology.

As Hillman points out, Jung saw alchemy as a "pre-scientific psychology of personality disguised as metaphors". Alchemical formulation such as 'lead', 'salt', 'sulphur', 'mercury' correspond

with different psychological and archetypal experiences and figures. The processes that go on in the personality are also depicted in alchemy as a series of operations. According to Jung, by 'projecting' what were essentially unconscious contents/ideas onto (or into) various alchemical materials/elements, the alchemists generated a process which in today's popular parlance could be called 'consciousness raising'. The names of many of these processes have found their way into clinical psychology: Projection, dissolution, sublimation, fixation, condensation were all alchemical terms. The two main ones— solution and coagulation — are another way of stating the main work of psychotherapy: taking apart and putting together, analyzing and synthesizing. Thus, methods which modern analysis believes it has invented for furthering personality development were already known to alchemy as description of psychological processes, not ideals (such as making gold) to be attained literally.²⁷

The main point is that throughout the three texts under review, the connections between religion and alchemy are considerable. This is evident even in the thematic arrangement of *Psychology and Alchemy* (Volume 12). It is divided into three areas having the following headings:

- (i) Introduction to the Religious and Psychological Problems of Alchemy.
- (ii) Individual Dream Symbolism in Relation to Alchemy.
- (iii) Religious Ideas in Alchemy.

In this overwhelmingly religious context of the study of a system of knowledge and its relationship with western psychology, along with considerable familiarity of key Arab sources, there is no mention of the religion which informed the heart of this Arab enterprise, that is, Islam. An even more unusual aspect is that the majority of the Arab sources cited by Jung considered themselves, and are considered by scholars of Islamic culture, as being deeply influenced by the spiritual teachings of Islam.

In keeping with the history of this scholarship, Jung also confirmed the connections between Egyptian and Hermetic philosophy on the one hand and its "resuscitation" by the Arabs and subsequent transmission to the West on the other, As

Burckhardt has pointed out, the expression 'alchemia' could have been derived from the Greek "chyma" (smelting and casting) or from the Arabic "al-Kimiya" which is said to come from the ancient 'keme'—reference to the 'black earth' which was a designation of Egypt and which may also have been a symbol of the alchemists' *prima materia*.

In his book *Alchemy*,²⁸ Burckhardt shows how it was possible for alchemy and its mythological background to be incorporated into the three monotheistic religions. The main reason was that the cosmological perspectives of alchemy were in resonance with the cosmologies of these religions. The cosmological background was taken over, along with the craft, simply as a science of nature (physics) in the broadest sense of the term. The process is similar to the way Christianity and Islam appropriated the Pythagorean tradition in music and architecture, and assimilated the corresponding spiritual perspective:

By its assimilation into Christian belief, alchemy was fecundated, while Christianity found in it a way which, through the contemplation of nature, led to a true gnosis. (p. 18).

What Jung failed to discern is the deep resonance between Islam and the Hermetic perspective, even though he was aware of the contributions of the Arabs to what he called the "resuscitation" of European thought. As Burckhardt states:

Even more easily did the Hermetic art enter into the spiritual world of Islam, the latter was always ready to recognize any pre-Islamic art which appeared under the aspect 'wisdom' ('hikmah') as a heritage of earlier prophets. Thus in the Islamic world Hermes Trismegistos is often identified with Enoch (Idris). It was the doctrine of the "oneness of existence" (Wahdat-al-Wujud)—the esoteric interpretation of the Islamic confession of faith - which gave to Hermetism a new spiritual axis, or in other words re-established its original spiritual horizon in all its fullness ... (p.18, 19).

Reviewing the history of alchemy, Burckhardt confirms some of Jung's historical observations but more importantly, he articulates what seems obvious but was nevertheless not evident to Jung:

....Alchemy made its entry into western Christendom through Byzantium, and later, and even more richly, through Arab dominated Spain. It was in the Islamic world that alchemy reached its fullest flowering. Jabir Ibn Hayyan, a pupil of the sixth century Shiite Imam Jafar as-Sadiq, founded in the eighth

century A.D. a whole school, from which hundreds of alchemical texts flowed forth. No doubt it was because the name Jabir had become the hallmark of much alchemical lore that the author of the 'Summa Perfectionism', a 13th century Italian or Catalan, also assumed the name in its Latinized form of Jaber. (p. 19)

Names such as Jabir (Geber), Al-Iraqi, Avicenna etc, are, in the context of Islamic civilization, prominent not only as spiritual alchemists but also as scientists and philosophers. However, as Nasr has suggested, with the possible exception of Rhazes, these individuals functioned from within a profoundly Islamic *Weltanschauung*. He reiterates: "we must remember that ancient and medieval man did not separate the material from the psychological and spiritual in the categorical manner that has become customary".²⁹ Jung's rediscovery of alchemy in the 20th century arrived at a similar conclusion, indeed, he was one of the first western scientists to highlight the dangers inherent in the contemporary separation of the material and spiritual. Hence his impassioned appeal for a different type of religious psychology more suited to the emotional and mental condition of modern Westerners.

Writers such as Burckhardt and Nasr confirm the historical aspect of Jung's research but also place the same information in its crucial religious context. Nasr's review of the alchemical tradition can also be considered a 'who's who' of Jung's exploration into the subject:

In Arabic or Islamic alchemy, which arose soon after the rise of Islam in the first/seventh century, and has a continuous tradition until today there is a very large number of texts, written during the past twelve centuries and dealing with all phases of the art. The most important corpus is that of Jabir ibn Hayyan, the alchemist, who became the greatest authority on the subject not only in the Islamic world but also in the West, where as "Geber" he became universally accepted as the leading authority.... By the sixth/twelfth century, following the translation of alchemical texts from Arabic into Latin, interest in alchemy grew in the Latin West, continuing into the seventeenth and even eighteenth centuries. The earlier Latin text however is the "Turban Philosophorum", which was translated from the Arabic; among the earliest students of alchemy who wrote on the subject one may mention Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, Arnold of Villanova, Raymond Lully, and somewhat later Nicolas Flamel. (p. 244).

It is on the basis of such well-established historic linkages that Sufism—the most popular and widespread form of Islam—claims men such as Lull, Bacon and many other medieval scientists and philosophers as being Sufis (and thereby Muslims) or certainly having been deeply influenced by Islam. While this may not be the right place to enlarge on this little known aspect to the present relationship between Islam and the West, it is nevertheless worth noting that such claims to a mutuality of vision are more frequently forthcoming from Muslim writers rather than the West.

The point here is not to suggest that Jung's forays into alchemy do not give 'credit' to the Islamic/ Arabic contributions in this domain. Strictly speaking, this would be impossible since, by an large, he does reaffirm these seminal connections, albeit mostly through footnotes. The question is not so much credit for the Islamic spiritual perspective but of an absence of meaningful connections *vis a vis* Islam and alchemy, whereas these connections are brought out in contexts of other religions. Given the unavoidable links between religion and alchemy, and given the highly significant contributions of the Arabs (i.e. Muslims), there is virtually no substantive reference to Islam throughout the three volumes on alchemy, religion and psychology.

One raises these points not in order to be churlish or to insist on such academic issues regarding citations/acknowledgement. Regardless of Jung's neglect, other western writers have been more accurate regarding the role of Islam and the history of alchemy. Nor is one implying that this was somehow an intentional omission by Jung in keeping with the perceived western bias against Islam. The issue is not one of credit or prejudice but *knowledge* about Islam in the context of substantive psychological materials (and insights about them) which are inextricably a part of religion - and the stated Jungian endeavour. Basically, the texts communicate nothing about Islam, one way or another. But since it is impossible to discount the role of the Arabs in this field, one is left with the impression that their contribution was akin to that of holding the hot potato (of alchemy) until it was cool enough to be lobbed back to the

rightful owners in Europe as they emerged from the Dark and Middle Age. This view, of seeing Islam and Muslims as unthinking ("no mind") and therefore simply mechanically holding and 'preserving' alchemy through a certain period in history, is symptomatic of the West's attitude about other branches of knowledge which the Arabs conserved, explored and developed during this period. There is nothing to explain what was present *psychologically* in Islam which encouraged and resonated with this quest for preservation and exploration of different forms of knowledge. Thus, whether alchemy or other disciplines, one is left with the 'role' of the Arabs but not Islam, and the impression is of a passivity, devoid of anything other than a mechanical wait-to-pass-it-on attitude.

Such a neglect takes on added significance when one considers the fact that unlike the Christian West, alchemy as a science of the soul has been an uninterrupted, living tradition in the Islamic world or, as Nasr states, a "continuous tradition up to today". While such facts may be of no significance to a sociologist or political scientist, they are pertinent in the context of Jung's survey of alchemy and its connections with religion and psychology.

To sum up: The preceding review of *The Collected Works* upto Volume 14 reflect the initial level of content analysis regarding Islam. Both levels indicate not so much a prejudiced view but one giving the lowest priority to Islam in terms of scholarly attention. Compared to other religions and especially Judaism and Christianity, Islam remains at best a shadowy impression with many of the references to it primarily in the form of footnotes. Hardly any significant statements are to be found either on Islam *per se* or in the context of comparison with other religions.

The shadowy impression of Islam is especially evident in the three texts on alchemy. Since there is scant Islamic material, one cannot conclude that prejudice dominates Jung's understanding. Naturally then, there is little evidence thus far of any substantive understanding of the religion in terms of its symbols or psychology. In short, there is what can be called a neglect or lack

of interest in the subject. Before trying to analyze this lack of interest, one needs to conclude the review of the remaining texts.

Volume 15 *The Spirit in Man, Art and Literature*

No reference to Islam or related categories.

Volume 16 *The Practice of Psychotherapy*

- (i) *"The Christian doctrine of original sin on the one hand, and of the meaning and value of suffering on the other, is therefore of profound therapeutic significance and is undoubtedly far better suited to western man than Islamic fatalism". (186)*

This is the only reference to Islam and it is not followed through with any illustrative examples. One can note that firstly the notion of Islamic fatalism is a stereotypical one reminiscent of Edward Said's observations in *Culture and Imperialism* about colonialism in terms of 'action' versus the 'passivity' of the colonized. More significantly, this stereotype of passive 'fatalism' is in direct contrast to the present portrayal of the Islamic fundamentalist as a violent, agitative agent.

Volume 17, *The Development of Personality*

No reference to Islam or related categories.

Volume 18, *The Symbolic Life*

This volume consists of miscellaneous writings, notes, lectures, speeches, radio/press interviews. In a sense it is a distillation of many of Jung's views. It consists of 820 pages. The nature of reference to 'Islam', 'Arabs' and 'Mohammed' are as follows:

- (i) In the transcript of a seminar to the Guild of Pastoral Psychology, London, just before World War II. Prior to expressing his views on Islam, Jung spoke of the shadow within Christianity and the need for the West to accept, as Christ did, "the least of our brethren". For Jung "Christ..carried through his hypothesis to the bitter end..."

How was Christ hewn? In the greatest misery. Who was his father? He was an illegitimate child - humanly the most miserable situation: a poor girl having a little son. That is our symbol, that is ourselves; we are all that ... that is modern psychology and that is the future...(p.281)

The future which Jung spoke of was a psychological, not necessarily a literal future. Strange for a man who otherwise saw the two as inextricably linked. But perhaps it is not so strange when the text is considered further:

... Of course the historical future might be quite different, we do not know whether it is not the Catholic Church that will reap the harvest that is now going to be cut down. We do not know that. We do not know whether Hitler is going to found a new Islam. (He is already on the way; he is like Mohammad. The emotion in Germany is Islamic; warlike and Islamic. They are all drunk with a wild god). That can be the historic future..... (p. 281)

In the discussion following the seminar, there is another exchange which illustrates the point at hand:

The Bishop of Southward:

Would you say the same of the Nazi or the Mohammedan, that they are right to go on their faith?

Jung:

God is terrible. The living God is a living fear. I think it is an instrument, as Mohammad was for that people.... (p. 281)

We shall return to this observation subsequently. For the moment, one can note that in an overall context of very few substantive statements on Islam, Muhammad and Hitler are closely linked in the European imagination.

(ii) A general/passing reference, reflective of Jung's tolerance towards other religions:

"... Nor should one doubt than the devotees of other faiths, including Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and so on, have the same living relationship to "God" ... (p. 663)

(iii) A passing reference: 'Yahweh and Allah are nomads ... the Christian God a triad...' (1611)

(iv) The final reference to Islam is in the context of a letter to a Father Bruno, in response to the latter's queries regarding the figure of Elijah who, according to Islamic tradition, and Jung, is a variant of the archetype known in Islam as Khidr. The figure of Khidr in fact forms the basis of the only substantive comment by Jung on Islam in the essay "On Psychological Re-birth" (Vol. 9). It is the only motif in Islam to which Jung did give considerable attention. Khidr is mentioned in five of the 18 texts.

IV

JUNG AND THE 18TH SURAH

Apart from the observations about the beauty of the Taj Mahal and the "jealously guarded secret of the Islamic Eros", (Volume 10), the other substantive reference to Islam concerns the figure of Khidr and Jung's analysis of the 18th *Surah* of the Qur'an. In fact, more than half the references to Islam in *The Collected Works* are repetitions of this motif, its most detailed exposition being in Volume 5, and especially Volume 9, in the section titled 'On Rebirth' and the essay 'A Typical Set of Symbols Illustrating the Process of Transformation'. The entire essay is devoted to the 18th *Surah*. Similarly, in Volume 18, there is an extensive reference to Khidr in a letter from Jung to Pere Bruno, a priest who had queried Jung on "how to establish the existence of an archetype." Jung's response was to give Bruno an illustration through what "I think about the probably historical personage Elijah".

The letter is a gem of erudition drawing from all the monotheistic traditions to describe the nature of Elias/Elijah whom Jung saw as analogous to John the Baptist, Christ and Khidr. Citing the Leiden *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Jung states that Ilyas/Elias (Elijah) and al-Khadir (Khidr) are immortal friends/twins. He refers to the legend of them spending Ramadan at Jerusalem every year and afterwards they take part in the pilgrimage to Mecca without being recognized. He also very clearly cites the claims of many schools of Islamic mysticism regarding their unbroken chain going back not only to Mohammad but to Egypt, the source of all such ancient knowledge, including especially, alchemy. "*Ilyas is identified with*

Enoch and Idris (Hermes Trismegistos). Later Ilyas and al-Khadir are identified with St. George” (p. 676)

The 18th *Surah* was selected by Jung as a prototypical description of a psychological process of transformation that is of such an intense nature that it can be considered a sort of rebirth. Entitled ‘The Cave’, the *surah* can be divided into three sections. It opens with the Judaeo-Christian legend of the seven sleepers in a cave and their prolonged state of sleep over many hundred years. This story is followed by an account of Moses and his companion (Joshua) and their encounter with an unnamed person. Moses wants to learn from this man who reluctantly takes him as a pupil. A series of events occur which are handled by this teacher in a most unusual fashion, baffling Moses. The third section of the *surah* deals with the character of Dhulquarnein (Alexander) and his fight with the mythical monsters, Gog and Magog.

Jung’s reading of the *surah* claims that it is a “purely an Islamic legend”, and an “almost perfect” description of the process of transformation of consciousness:

The legend has the following meaning: Anyone who gets into that cave, that is to say into the cave which everyone has in himself, or into the darkness that lies behind consciousness, will find himself involved in an unconsciousness process of transformation ... a connection with his unconscious contents... may result in a momentous change of personality in the positive or negative sense ... (p.136).

MOSES AND KHIDR

Central to Jung’s analysis is the section on Moses and the mysterious teacher. As stated in the Qur’an:

And Moses said to his servant: “I will not cease from my wanderings until I have reached the place where the two seas meet, even though I journey for eighty years”. But when they had reached the place where the two seas meet, they forgot their fish, and it took its way through a stream to the sea.

And when they had journeyed past this place, Moses said to his servant: “Bring us our breakfast, for we are weary from this journey”.

But the other replied: “See what has befallen me! when we were resting there by the rock, I forgot the fish. Only Satan can have put it out of my mind, and in wondrous fashion it took its way to the sea”.

Then Moses said: "That is the place we seek". And they went back the way they had come. And they found one of Our servants, whom we had endowed with Our grace and Our wisdom. Moses said to him "Shall I follow you, that you may teach me for my guidance some of the wisdom you have learnt?"

But he answered: "You will not bear with me, for how should you bear patiently with things you cannot comprehend?"

Moses said: "If Allah wills, you shall find me patient: I shall not in anything disobey you".

He said: "If you are bent on following me, you must ask no question about anything till I myself speak to you concerning it".

The two set forth, but as soon as they embarked, Moses' companion bored a hole in the bottom of the ship.

"A strange thing you have done! exclaimed Moses, "Is it to drown her passengers that you have bored a hole in her?"

"Did I not tell you", he replied, "that you would not bear with me?"

"Pardon my forgetfulness", said Moses, "Do not be angry with me on this account".

They journeyed on until they fell in with a certain youth. Moses' companion slew him, and Moses said: "You have killed an innocent man who has done no harm. Surely you have committed a wicked crime".

"Did I not tell you", he replied, "that you would not bear with me?"

Moses said: "If ever I question you again, abandon me; for then I should deserve it".

They travelled on until they came to a certain city. They asked the people for some food, but the people declined to receive them as their guests. There they found a wall on the point of falling down. The other raised it up, and Moses said; "Had you wished, you could have demanded payment for your labours".

"Now the time has arrived when we must part", said the other, "But first I will explain to you those acts of mine which you could not bear with in patience.

Know that the ship belong to some poor fishermen. I damaged it because in their rear was a king who was taking every ship by force.

"As for the youth, his parents both are true believers, and we feared lest he should plague them with his wickedness and unbelief. It was our wish that their Lord should grant them another in his place, a son more righteous and more filial.

"As for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city whose father was an honest man. Beneath it their treasure is buried. Your Lord decreed in His mercy that they should dig out their treasure when they grew to manhood. What I did was not done by caprice. That is the meaning of the things you could not bear with in patience ...³⁰

The person referred to as "One of our servants, whom We had endowed with Our grace and Our wisdom" is the figure of Khidr, "the Verdant One" who plays a pivotal role in Islamic mysticism. According to Jung, Moses is the man who seeks a sort of Everyman on the 'quest'. On this pilgrimage he is accompanied by his "shadow", the "servant" or "lower" man. Joshua, the son of *Nun*, is the name for "fish" suggesting the notion of watery depth and darkness, the shadow-world. The critical place is reached "where the two seas meet" which is interpreted as the isthmus of Suez, where the western and eastern seas come close together. For Jung, "it is that place in the middle", that all-important point between two opposite but equally vital extremes, e.g. conscious and unconscious. Initially, Moses and his companion do not recognize the significance of this middle place, but then the recognition comes from the humble source of nourishment, the fish (*Nun*) which leaps out to return to its home. It represents "the animal ancestor and creator of life separating himself from the conscious man, an event which amounts to "loss of the instinctive psyche" (p. 139). In psychological terms this is a symptom of dissociation or fragmentation, when there is an overwhelming one-sidedness of any given conscious attitude. The unconscious then compensates for this by "splitting off", leading to feelings which diminish one's sense of "wholeness", or what the primitive called a "loss of soul".

Moses and his servant soon notice what happened. The fatigue ("worn out") that he feels is a common symptom in a process that is typical when, according to Jung, one "fails to recognize a moment of crucial (psychological) importance". That is, Moses realizes that he had unconsciously found the source of life and then lost it again.

At this stage Jung draws extensively on alchemical commentaries regarding the symbol of the fish and other related terms such as the "philosopher's stone". The unacknowledged link between Islam and alchemy is quite evident when one considers the sources for Jung's explanations. Foremost among them is Nicolas Flamel, whom Nasr has discussed as an

important example of the extent of the influence of Islam on Christian/western alchemy. Based on these alchemical symbols, Jung concludes that Khidr is a symbol of the "self" which he defines elsewhere as "our life's goal, for it is the completest expression of that fateful combination we call individuality":

Khidr may well be a symbol of the self. His qualities symbolize him as such; he is said to have been born in a cave i.e. in darkness. He is the "Long-lived One" who continually renews himself, like Elijah. He is analogous to the second Adam he is a counsellor, a Paraclete, "Brother Khidr". Anyway, Moses looks up to him for instruction. Then follow these incomprehensible deeds which show how ego-consciousness reacts to the superior guidance of the self through the twists and turns of fate. To the initiate who is capable of transformation it is a comforting tale; to the obedient believer, an exhortation not to murmur against Allah's incomprehensible omnipotence. Khidr symbolizes not only the higher wisdom but also a way of acting. Anyone hearing such a mystery tale will recognize himself in the questing Moses and forgetful Joshua (p. 141)

The analysis moves on to certain comments which are quite significant.

"A DISGUISED MOHAMMEDAN"

In the preceding review of Jung's contributions to psychology and alchemy, it was discussed how the psychology of Islam was consistently overlooked. Even though, as Nasr, or a vast number of 'average' Muslims would affirm, the alchemical tradition in Islam continues to flourish till today. In contrast, no comparable claim of similar proportion and scale can be made for Judaism and Christianity. Indeed, it was the absence of just such an alchemical tradition and its subsequent study by Jung, which made it one of his main achievements. These facts were not entirely lost on Jung who, in his discussion of the 18th Surah, discusses a personal experience of this aspect of Islam, including the exceedingly significant archetype of Khidr.

The character of the self as a personality comes out very plainly in the Khidr legend. This feature is most strikingly expressed in the non-Koranic stories about Khidr, of which Vollers gives some telling examples. During my trip through Kenya, the headman of our safari was a Somali who had been brought up in the sufi faith. To him Khidr was in every way a living person, and he assured me that I might at any time meet Khidr, because I was, as he put it, a Mty-ya-kitabu, a Man of the Book', meaning the Koran. He had gathered

from our talks that I knew the Koran better than he did himself (which was, by the way, not saying a great deal). For this reason he regarded me as "islamu". He told me I might meet Khidr in the street in the shape of a man, or he might appear to me during the night as a pure white light, or - he smilingly picked a blade of grass - The Verdant One might even look like that. He said he himself had once been comforted and helped by Khidr.... This shows that, even in our own day, Khidr still lives on in the religion of the people, as friend, advisor, comforter, and teacher of revealed wisdom.... (p. 143).

The preceding passage tells something not only about Jung's personal exposure to Islam, but also indirectly, about one key difference between Islam and Christianity in the twentieth century. As Jung himself admits, the Somali tribesman's view of Jung was not exactly of the stereotypical "infidel" or "unbeliever", rather it was an insistence on seeing Jung as a Muslim ("islamu"), a person who was familiar with the Koran. Similarly, as Jung states, the frequent experience of Khidr, "psychologically" and/or spiritually, is not an uncommon occurrence in the Muslim psycho-spiritual world. His encounter with the Somali confirms this at the most basic, 'popular' level insofar as the individual was not a religious scholar but a tribal and a safari headman. Recounting the same episode in his autobiographical writings, Jung stated that the Somali insisted that he was a "disguised Muhammedan".³¹

This episode and Jung's observations about Khidr and the 18th *Surah*, clearly indicates a major difference between the psychology of Islam as compared to Judaism and Christianity. It is the difference between historical fact and present reality, between a theoretical explanation and lived experience. The point is not to suggest that the wide-spread alchemical aspect of Islam as lived experience makes it automatically superior. Rather, it is to, first, juxtapose these perceptions and encounters of Jung regarding the 18th *Surah* and Islam on the one hand, with the overall substantive place of the subject in *The Collected Works*. Related to this, secondly, the point is that the information vacuum *vis a vis* Islam is all the more prominent given its distinctiveness as a lived and hence living tradition, one which Jung had not only

theoretically grasped in the 18th *Surah* but also personally witnessed. It must be reiterated that this is not to imply wilful prejudice. Rather, that these oversights are typical of psychodynamics pertaining to the 'other'-as-shadow.

TWO PAIRS OF FRIENDS

Returning to the essay and analysis of the transformative nature of the 18th *Surah*, Jung does an insightful interpretation of certain key motifs and archetypes, as he perceived them in the narrative. However, as he himself acknowledges, his analysis is almost wholly derived from the German scholar Vollers whose commentaries, in turn, are directly derived from sources in Islamic mysticism. According to Jung, the aspect of Khidr-as-Friend is evident in the abrupt introduction of the figure of Dhulqarnein who in Islamic mysticism is equated with Alexander the Great ("The Two horned One"), and also Moses. The *Surah* continues:

They will ask you about Dhulqarnein. Say: "I will give you an account of him. We made him mighty in the land and gave him means to achieve all things. He journeyed on a certain road until he reached the West and saw the sun setting in a pool of black mud. Nearby he found a certain people.

" 'Dhulqarnein', We said, 'you must either punish them or show them kindness'".

"He replied: 'The wicked we shall surely punish. Then they shall return to their Lord and be sternly punished by Him. As for those that have faith and do good works, we shall bestow on them a rich reward and deal indulgently with them'".

"He then journeyed along another road until he reached the East and saw the sun rising upon a people whom We had utterly exposed to its flaming rays. So he did; and We had full knowledge of all the forces at his command.

"Then he followed yet another route until he came between the Two Mountains and found a people who could barely understand a word. 'Dhulqarnein', they said 'Gog and Magog are ravaging this land. Build us a rampart against them and we will pay you tribute'.

"He replied: 'The power which my Lord has given me is better than any tribute. Lend me a force of labourers, and I will raise a rampart between you and them. Come, bring me blocks of iron'.

"He dammed up the valley between the Two Mountains, and said: 'Ply your bellows'. And when the iron blocks were red with heat, he said: 'Bring me molten brass to pour on them'.

"Gog and Magog could not scale it, nor could they dig their way through it. He said: 'This is a blessing from my Lord. But when my Lord's promise is fulfilled, He will level it to dust. The promise of my Lord is true'".

On that day We will let them come in tumultuous throngs. The Trumpet shall be sounded and We will gather them all together.

On that day Hell shall be laid bare before the unbelievers, who have turned a blind eye to My admonition and a deaf ear to My warning.

Summing up the Qur'anic narrative in psychological terms, Jung sees the story continuing along its transformative trajectory, that is, descriptive of a process of psychological change incorporating the 'self'. Accordingly:

Moses has to recount the deeds of the two friends to his people in the manner of an impersonal mystery legend. Psychologically this means that the transformation has to be described or felt as happening to the "other" although it is Moses himself who, in his experience with Khidr stands in Dulqarnein's place he has to name the latter instead of himself in telling the story.

According to Jung, the substitution "can hardly be accidental" and is in fact a part of a conscious recognition and remedy for the danger that occurs when ego-consciousness comes closer to the 'self' and its connection with primordial forces. With the discerning that these forces are within oneself, (the other) there is the danger that consciousness may get carried away, so to speak, and the individual may start believing that, for example, he is endowed with extraordinary powers, is Christ, a visionary etc. This belief is what is termed ego-inflation which is a consequence of seeing no difference between one's individual ego (conscious) and the 'self' whose matrix is essentially collective (unconscious). There is, therefore, the danger of consciousness being overwhelmed through a contact with the 'self'. As Jung points out, most "primitive" cultures have mechanisms of dealing with this possibility. One can add that within many Sufi practices similar systems/methods are used to take care of such contingencies. To quote Jung:

All the more primitive or older cultures show a fine sense for the "perils of the soul" and for the dangerousness and general unreliability of the gods. That is, they have not yet lost their psychic instinct for the barely perceptible and yet vital processes going on in the background, which can hardly be said of our modern culture.

Jung contrasts the motif of friendship between Khidr and Dhulqarnein with its dark opposite(s) as they appear in Western culture:

To be sure we have before our eyes as a warning just such a pair of friends distorted by inflation - Nietzsche and Zarathustra - but the warning has not been heeded. And what are we to make of Faust and Mephistopheles? The Faustian hybrid is already the first step toward madness. The fact that the unimpressive beginning of the transformation in Faust is a dog and not an edible fish, and that the transformed figure is the devil and not a wise friend, "endowed with Our grace and Our wisdom" might, I am inclined to think, offer a key to our understanding of the highly enigmatic German soul. (p.146).

The essay continues the analysis of the 18th Surah as a sort of blueprint of psychological change and an enlarging of the field of consciousness. Whether Muslims agree with this interpretation or not, two points are evident. First, as acknowledged by Jung himself, his approach is clearly derived from Islamic mystical texts. Secondly, the essay is ample illustration of Jung's creative genius and a vision which when focused on the mystical heart of Islam perceived therein the inherent psychological principles and truths that lie at the heart of all religions. Yet, as one approaches Jung's concluding remarks, certain comments once again indicate a general conception of Islam in very stereotypical terms:

In spite of its apparently disconnected and allusive character, (the 18th Surah) gives an almost perfect picture of a psychic transformation or rebirth which today, with our greater psychological insight, we would recognize as an individuation process. Because of the great age of the legend and the Islamic prophet's primitive cast of mind, the process takes place entirely outside the sphere of consciousness and is projected in the form of a mystery legend of a friend or a pair of friends and the deeds they perform. That is why it is all so allusive and lacking in logical sequence. Nevertheless, the legend expresses the obscure archetype of transformation so admirably that the passionate religious Eros of the Arab finds it completely satisfying. It is for this reason that the figure of Khidr plays such an important part in Islamic mysticism. (147).

One can note here that despite the stereotypes, the observation that what the "passionate religious Eros of the Arab finds completely satisfying", Jung also found to be a "perfect picture of psychic transformation" with the proviso that today ("with our greater psychological insight") this transformation is the goal of Jungian psychology/therapy/analysis— "...the

individuation process". Such parallel statements would not be possible if Jung's personal religious Eros were not to have found the narrative a "perfect picture". In short, it must have been in resonance with something in Jung himself, and to that extent "satisfying".

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

To recapitulate: In the context of comparative frequency of reference in *The Collected Works*, Islam is consistently overshadowed by all the major religions and even the minor ones such as that of the American Indians. A contextual analysis of these references reveals very little substantive psychological insights on Islam.

The single exception in terms of psychological interpretations is Jung's analysis of the 18th *Surah* that, in his own words, is "an almost perfect picture of psychological transformation". The fact that Jung simply restated an essentially mystical reading of this *surah* in his own language of "analytical psychology" is significant insofar as it illustrates a fundamental harmony between his psychological concepts and those of Islamic mysticism. This is not surprising since the bulk of Jung's researches into religion and especially alchemy are inextricably related to the mystical aspect of all the religions he considered. The point is thus not so much a lack of understanding or the need for somehow a different method in approaching Islam, but a relative lack of interest in the subject. Different types of data, drawn from art, culture and religious rituals, are fundamental to the Jungian method. Apart from the text of the *surah*, no other aspect of Islam, in terms of its rituals, beliefs or personalities such as the prophet, are touched upon. As the analysis of the 18th *Surah* suggests, when interest is focused, powerful psychological insights follow, but since these are not anchored in or connected to other concepts and information as they occur in *The Collected Works*, any substantial or sophisticated understanding of Islam is not possible. In contrast, such scholarly sophistication is evident throughout *The Collected Works* regarding the other major religions.

The essay on the 18th *Surah* and the figure of Khidr while no doubt mostly a positive portrayal of Islam, remains an isolated exception. One will discuss subsequently other equally Jungian but different elaborations of the 18th *Surah*. For the moment, its place in the Jungian opus can be considered one pole of a spectrum of Jung's intellectual and psychological understanding of Islam. Moving along this spectrum the only other psychologically substantive and positive statement is the paragraph about Jung's response to the Taj Mahal as an epitome of the "jealously guarded Islamic Eros".

The notion of *Eros* is a major conceptual cornerstone in Jungian psychology. It pertains to the feeling and emotive aspect of behaviour as opposed to logos which pertains to the impersonal and logical side. One can note in passing that any effort to uncover the mystery of powerful emotions which no doubt inform the Islamic fundamentalist venture, would in a sense entail the outlining of what exactly constitutes the "*Islamic Eros*". Unfortunately, beyond its manifestation in the 18th *Surah* and in Jung's enthusiastic witnessing of the Taj Mahal, there are no more clues. In terms of any glimpse into the psychology of the Islamic Eros, the information is limited to its almost "perfect picture" as evinced in the 18th *Surah*, on the one hand, and on the other to a brief comment regarding the Taj Mahal. It would be no exaggeration to say that for someone not familiar with Islam or its culture - these two references would hardly be adequate in understanding what Jung himself saw as a "jealously guarded secret".

Moving on from the two positive and substantial comments towards the other end of the spectrum, midway are the main bulk of references that in effect say nothing, one way or another, regarding Islam. As the content analysis suggests, the overwhelming number of references in *The Collected Works* to Islam and all related categories, are essentially non-sequiturs. They are primarily either block/passing ones ("Yahweh, Brahma, Allah") or then foot notes citing Arabic alchemical writers. The subsuming of a distinct and powerful Islamic alchemical tradition into an entirely western one along with the tendency to either

ignore Islam or dissolve it within the general label of the 'Arabs' or monotheism, suggests a particular stance which is not so much one of prejudice as it is of a self-convinced paternalism. It regards Islam as a sort of primitive and largely incoherent appendage to Judaism and Christianity, and from this perspective—considerably widespread in the West—Islam remains an essentially hodgepodge version of the preceding monotheisms. This attitude is part of the same mindset that sees Islam as being spread by the sword, lacking analytic refinement and intellectual substance (“no mind to it”), and thus reliant on brutality to force its view on others (“rigidity and fanaticism”). For example, throughout *The Collected Works* there is no mention as to how “Islamic fatalism” is actually manifested psychologically in text and ritual in the light of the observation that “Islamic fatalism is not suited to the European.”

Finally, between the two positive references to Islam and the vast majority of non-informative, non-substantial statements on the subject, there is the other end of the spectrum consisting of statements that most Muslims would consider derogatory. Thus, for example, more than once Muhammad (pbuh) compared to Nero, Hitler and Anti-Christ. He was a person whose sense of “chronology leaves much to be desired”, having a “primitive cast of mind”.

ODD MAN OUT

The Odd-Civilization-Out status of Islam³² as religion and culture is partly related to the ‘odd-man out’ status of Muhammad (pbuh) *vis a vis* western ideas about religion and personality. Compared with founders of other religions, his life is an exceedingly well-documented one lived in what has been called “the glare of history”.³³ In fact, it is the established details of his life that suggest a distinct portrait setting him apart from the usual conception of a prophet. For example, compared to Jesus, Buddha and Moses, the life of Muhammad was replete with a wide range of experiences, events (and emotions) that unfolded either parallel to or in direct relation to his particular religious mission. These range from his involvement in managing business and financial affairs to direct participation in what can be considered as much social and political battles as they were

conflicts and confrontation over theological issues. (Note that the theological issues concerned *both* 'paganism' and the Semitic religions). Simultaneously, and equally well known were his predispositions for perfume, and, of course, women (and family).

The prominent differences between the personalities around which a religion is structured can be considered paradigmatic to the religion itself, leading to different social, psychological and spiritual emphases which constitute the profile of a religion and evoke a certain psychology in its adherents. One explanation then for Jung's lack of substance regarding Islam could be related to this consistently negative portrayal regarding the prophet of Islam and his "primitive cast of mind". This negativity, it must be stressed, is a consequence not so much of prejudice but ignorance due to the tendency to regard Islam as an incoherent re-hash of Judaism and Christianity, and Mohammad (pbuh) is compared when Nero and Hitler. Whereas, in fact, it is possible to suggest that the clues to the "jealously guarded Islamic Eros" may be first found in the Prophet's life and subsequently his teaching. However, since neither of these is considered as being significantly different, especially from Judaism and Christianity, the Islamic Eros, which Jung himself perceived as "passionate", remains a secret, shadowy mystery.

The lack of knowledge regarding fundamental facts of the life of Mohammad (pbuh) and the psychological relationship of Muslims with that life is self-reflexively related to the virtual void regarding psychological insights about Islam and is reinforced by other erroneous assumptions. Whereas Jung's specific vision was perhaps influenced by his colonial/imperial context, some of these assumptions are evident even today in the western imagination.

'Specialist' knowledge notwithstanding, the western intellectual's attitude towards Islam can be gauged from a recent textual analysis on the subject of the return to religion in western academe. Part of this process can be discerned in a series of advertising texts promoting an academy journal on religion in various 'highbrow' publications such as *The New York Review of Books*. Over the last five years, the ongoing series of prominent

ads have published the names of more than 50 personalities whom the editors consider as having contributed to "religious, literary and philosophical riches". Their names range from Moses, Jesus, Buddha and St. Francis to even Tolstoy, Graham Greene and Flannery O'Connor. Yet, the name of Muhammad (pbuh), or any writer/philosopher, Muslim or otherwise, known for scholarship on Islam does not appear even once.³⁴

Partly linked to the stereotypes of the Prophet is the other popular and erroneous assumption about Islam being synonymous with 'Arabs'. As has been discussed, this merging is especially evident in Jung's alchemical studies. As a religion, Islam is overshadowed by 'Arabs', leaving the reader either with established racial stereotypes, or at best no wiser about either Arabs or their religion. A cursory survey of the countries that have Islam as a major religion would show that it covers a vast and varied network of cultures many of them far removed from the Middle East. Such a view would be akin to calling Jews and Christians 'Europeans', or more precisely, 'Middle Easterners'. In either case, the example would exclude societies such as South America and Africa/Asia that have large Christian populations. The point is that in keeping with the dominant paradigms and ethos of his age, Jung's understanding of Islam shows little evidence of depth, discernment and detail.

A final example of the Jungian blind spot is related to the mandala. One of Jung's most widely acclaimed 'discoveries' concerned the archetypal significance of the configuration of the square and the circle appearing almost universally in sacred art and architecture. Jung wrote extensively on the mandala and its psycho-symbolic significance in almost every religion. He showed how the image of the circling of the square (and vice versa) was closely related to the archetype of the 'self' as a symbol of wholeness. *The Collected Works* contain numerous images of mandalas from different religions including many drawn by his patients and Jung himself. According to him, in a condition of extreme psychological stress, some people spontaneously produce the mandala form as a symbolic expression of unity and wholeness as a counter balance to the inner experience of

fragmentation. Here again one can see some of the bases on which Jung concluded that psychological health is inextricably linked with spiritual concerns.

Given the significant place of the mandala in Jungian theory, remarkably no mention is made of what is not only a massive mandala but also possibly the only human (and thus living) mandala on earth. This is the *Ka'bah* in Mecca and the ritual of the pilgrimage performed by millions of Muslims during the Haj and in fact throughout the year. The central ritual of the circumambulation of the sacred cube, makes it a supremely mandala motif and that too in life and motion, not just static architecture or art. Yet, this most significant Islamic rite and rich symbolism remained unnoticed. Mecca does not appear at all in *The Collected Works* and the *Ka'bah* is mentioned once in passing, in the context of alchemy and the 'philosopher's stone'. (Volume 14, p. 398).

The Collected Works of C.G. Jung References to Religions

Judaism	Christianity	Buddhism	Hinduism	Confucianism	Taoism	Islam
Including entries on <i>Jews/Jewish</i> tradition: more than 100 references plus numerous related subjects.	Two and a half pages of references with an average of 300 per page. Numerous related subjects.	Also <i>Buddhists</i> : More than 150 including numerous extensive references.	Also <i>Hindu</i> : 36 plus many related subjects e.g., lingam, tantra etc. listed separately.	Also Confucius 11.	Also <i>Tao</i> . More than 100, including extensive ones. Plus separate entries on related subjects e.g., yin/yang.	19 references, one related entry on <i>Arabs</i> .
100+	600+	150+	36+	11+	100+	19

There are 15 references to Arabs along with 8 more in the section on alchemical writers. One can note that unlike 'personalized' categories such as "Jews", "Christians", "Buddhists", "Hindus" etc, there is no entry for Muslims/Mohammedans.

References to Founder of a Religion

Moses/Judaism	Christianity	Buddha/Buddhism	Confucianism/Taoism	Islam
Moses: 50 Including extensive comments	Christ: 6 pages or approximately 500	100 including extensive comments	Confucius: 11 Lao Tzu: 32 including extensive comments	Mohammad/ Mohamet: 10, six of which are footnotes
50+	500+	100+	43	10

References to Religious Scriptures

Judaism	Christianity	Hinduism	Taoism	Islam
Talmud: 42	Bible: 10 pages approximately 900+ including the Testaments.	Bhagwad Gita: 14 Vedas: 50 Upanishads: 70, many extensive	1 Ching: almost 100. Many extensive.	Koran: 15 Hadith: 0
42	900+	134	100	15

References to Principal Deity

Judaism	Christianity	Islam
Yahweh: 102	Brahma: 43 Plus numerous others e.g., Rama Krishna etc.	Allah: 4
102	43	4

Number of References to Central Holy Site

Judaism	Christianity	Hinduism	Islam
Jerusalem: 27	Bethlehem: 4	Benares: 3	Mecca: 0
27	4	3	0

JUNG, POSTMODERNITY AND ISLAM

It is ironic that whereas Jung's conceptual approach to psychology and religion makes him a cornerstone of the postmodern movement, his attitude to Islam reflects a distinctly modern mindset. Despite the considerable skilful analysis of the 18th *Surah*, Jung's modernist mentality is revealed by his comments on the Qur'an. For example, in the essay on the 18th *Surah* and the abrupt transition from Moses to Dhulqarnain, he states:

*We see here another instance of the lack of coherence which is not uncommon in the Koran.....Apart from the unheard-of anachronism, Mohammad's chronology in general leaves much to be desired....*³⁵

Subsequently, he refers to the "apparently disconnected and allusive character" of the *surah* that he partly relates to "the Islamic prophet's primitive cast of mind".³⁶

The difference between modernism and postmodernism is essentially a difference of a "cast of mind". The nature of this difference was in fact solidly put forth by Jung himself. In so far as this specific debate was barely emerging at that time, the terminology is of course different. Nevertheless, it can be claimed that Jung almost single-handedly established the postmodern vision of human behaviour in psychology. In contrast to Freud's relatively neat compartmentalization of psychic life into id, ego and superego, dominated by western notions of science, ego-rationality and will power, Jung never gave a specific aetiology of neurosis other than its being a "one-sidedness in the presence of many". This one-sidedness especially as it was manifested in the European psyche, he termed as "monotheism of consciousness". The choice of "monotheism" instead of the contemporary

“monist” or “monolithic” was not entirely unrelated to the Judaeo-Christian ethos. Indeed it was deliberate insofar as he was of the view that there were certain elements of dogma in the Jewish-Christian vision which were at the root of European psychology and which were responsible for its lopsided and, to that extent, mentally unbalanced individual and collective condition. His forays into alchemy and the Hindu, Taoist, Confucian and African religions can be considered firstly an attempt to juxtapose alternative visions of the role of religion in psychological life. Secondly, by cross-relating this material with certain strains within Christianity and Judaism, he attempted to establish the possibility of a less rigid and psychologically healthier approach to religion in the West. An approach, he always insisted, which was not in fact incompatible with the fundamentals of Christianity. In short, he argued for a more pluralistic and diverse attitude towards not only what is psychologically normal and abnormal, but also religious. However, as is evident from *The Collected Works*, in his effort to throw out what he saw as the stagnant (bath) waters of Judaeo-Christian monotheism, Jung perhaps unwittingly, threw out the baby of Islam.

THE 18TH SURAH RECONSIDERED

Jung's essentially modern mindset which regarded the Qur'an as largely “incoherent” is in resonance with the ethos of his age. It can be summed up in the words of Carlyle, who according to the philosopher-psychologist Norman O. Brown, “perfectly articulated the response of every honest Englishman” to the Qur'an:

I must say, it is a toilsome reading as I ever undertook. A wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite endless iteration, long-windedness, entanglement, most crude, incondite - unsupportable stupidity, in short! Nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through the Koran ... with every allowance, one feels it is difficult to see how any mortal ever could consider this Koran as a Book written in heaven, too good for the Earth; as a well-written book, or indeed as a book at all.³⁷

Brown's essay “The Apocalypse of Islam”³⁸ is also an analysis of the 18th *Surah*. It remains rooted in Jungian concepts

especially of mythology, folklore, and archetypes, but arrives at different psychological conclusions. At the outset, Brown identifies those features of the *Surah* which “the bewildered Western mind discerns and fastens onto”, namely the three mysterious episodes: (1) The sleepers in the cave. (2) Moses’ journey and encounter with Khidr (3) Dhulqarnain’s appearance and erecting the Wall against Gog and Magog.

Like Jung, Brown also identifies certain elements of the *Surah* as being connected to Judaeo-Christian-Hellenic motifs, especially the episodes of the Sleepers and Dhulqarnain. (Alexander). Similarly both Brown and Jung choose to focus on the episode of Moses and Khidr as the most bafflingly elliptical of the three episodes and the centrepiece of the *Surah*. This is the section in which, as Brown says: *The new Moses, having become a seeker, submits to spiritual direction by a mysterious master who bewilders Moses through a series of Zen-like absurd actions....*

Whereas Jung chose to interpret this encounter between Moses and Khidr as a symbolic quest towards individual transformation, Brown tends to regard it as also illustrative of the psychological relationship between Islam and the Judaeo-Christian traditions. Thus, whereas both authors rely on similar source materials, unlike Jung, Brown focuses on the Judaeo-Christian connections only to lead one to the point of divergence. Whereas Jung simply piled up the facts indicating the synonymous nature of Elijah and Khidr, Brown regards the relevant passages as a purposive attempt to “mobilize, without naming, the powerful contrast latent in Jewish tradition, between Moses and Elijah”:

Elijah the most popular figure in the legendary world of post-Biblical Judaism.... Elijah the omnipresent Comforter-Spirit present at every Jewish circumcision ceremony and every Jewish Passover; Elijah who knows the secret of heaven and is claimed as the direct source of revelation by Jewish mystics including Cabalists. The Koran sends Moses to Elijah’s school - “It was taught in Elijah’s school”, Jewish mystics say. (p.148)

Brown goes on to suggest that the Qur’anic episode about Moses and Khidr/Elijah is in fact the archetypal essence of an ancient folk-tale derived from Talmudic wisdom. At the same time, by a “creative confusion” of certain key figures such as of

Moses and Alexander, the Qur'an also "breaks with Judaic ethno-centrism and re-projects the prophetic tradition of a new trans-cultural, universal, world-historical plane." (p. 148).

What interests Brown, (and Jung) however, is not so much the theological aspect of the Moses/Khidr episode, but its archetypal essence as distilled in a folktale. As Brown points out, conventional western commentators who are quite sure that there is nothing new in the Qur'an, assume without hesitation that the folktale is to be taken literally and all that is going on in the passage is the transmission of conventional Aggadic-Talmudic piety.

For Brown, however, the episode is prototypical of a particularly prominent dimension of Islamic psychology, namely, a simultaneous perception of two levels of existence, the material and the spiritual, and the need to distinguish between them. In this process, the central issue becomes that of interpretation:

The Koran makes evident the folktale form and thereby alerts the intelligence to the problem of interpretation. Folktales, like dreams are not to be interpreted literally and the content of the folktale - the episode of the ship, the youth and the wall - tells us in the most literal, even crude way, three times reiterated, that there is a distinction between "what actually happened", events as seen by the eye of historical materialism, and "what is really going on", events sub specie aeternitatis, as seen by the inward, the clairvoyant eye, the second sight. The form and the content of the folktale oblige us, as they have obliged all subsequent Islamic culture, to make the distinction between literal meaning and something beyond - in Islamic terminology between Zahir and Batin ... between external-visible-patent and internal-invisible-latent; between materialist and spiritual meaning (p.150).

The distinction between levels of interpretation and meaning is of course fundamental to both Freudian and Jungian psychology, in the former's view of dreams and behaviour having a manifest and latent content, and the latter's notions of the symbolic and the literal. Among post-Jungians, James Hillman has perhaps articulated best these different levels of interpretation, highlighting the necessity for an archetypal/symbolic reading of history via interpretations which "see through" behaviour, events, emotions into their symbolic meanings.

Remaining within an interpretive framework which is in consonance with both Jungian and Islamic psychology, Brown's postmodern/Jungian vision sees the Qur'an in quite a different manner from Jung. Whereas for Jung it was "a product of Mohammad's primitive cast of mind ... incoherent"; Brown sees it as a quintessentially postmodern text. In this connection, Brown cites the existing and dominant mindset that even the most scholarly of Westerners bring to the Qur'an. Similar in spirit to Jung for example, was R. A. Nicholson, translator of many Sufi classics, who remarked that:

Muhammed with his excitable temperament does not shine as raconteur ... most of the stories in the Koran are narrated in a rather clumsy and incoherent fashion full of vague, cryptic allusions and dim references and digressions... (p. 149)

Brown's rejoinder to this type of analytical approach is to examine the 18th *Surah* from within the various debates in Islamic theodicy, suggesting a very different conception of and psychological relationship to history. For example, Jung interpreted the closing passages of the *surah* which are descriptions of an apocalypse, as symbolic of the culmination of the inner process of 'individuation' and the subjective experience of the end of the world; that is, when consciousness is obliterated and "sinks into" the unconscious. The apocalypse then is as much an inner psychological event as it is an outer and material possibility. The point here is that while Jung's insight into the psychological dimensions of the *surah* may be considerably accurate, he was unable to see it as a *leitmotif* of the Qur'an itself and by implication, in the Muslim individual and collective psyche. As Brown points out:

Surah XVIII is a resume, an epitome of the whole Koran. The Koran is not like the Bible, historical, running from genesis to Apocalypse. The Koran is altogether apocalyptic. The Koran backs off from the linear organization of time, revelation, and history which became the backbone of orthodox Christianity and remains the backbone of western culture after the death of God. Islam is wholly apocalyptic its eschatology is not teleology... only the moment is real. There is no necessary connection between cause and effect. Time does not accumulate... the only continuity is the utterly inscrutable will of God, who creates every atomic point anew at every moment... (p. 154).

The apocalyptic sense of history in which cause and effect are subsumed into a perpetual ever-present cycle of creation-recreation, is further reinforced since it is part of a consciousness that is distinctly non-linear. The rejection of linearity involves a rejection of narrative, something which has irritated and bewildered western minds from Carlyle to Jung as they grappled to impose a sense of meaning through modern notions of 'order' onto the Qur'an. Brown makes the startling but crucial comments on the Qur'an:

... there is a mysterious regression to a more primitive stratum, archetypal, folkloristic ... Historical material is fragmented into its archetypal constituents and then subjected to displacement and condensation, as in dreams, It is a rebirth of images, as in the Book of revelation, or Finnegans Wake. The apocalyptic style is totum simul, simultaneous totality, the whole in every part. Hodgson on the Koran: "almost every element which goes to make up its message is somehow present in any given passage". Simultaneous totality, as in Finnegans Wake, or more generally in what Umberto Eco called "the poetics of the Open Work" ... "We can see it as an infinite contained within finiteness. The work therefore has infinite aspects, because each of them, and any moment of it, contains the totality of the work". Eco is trying to characterize a revolution in the aesthetic sensibility of the West: we are the first generation in the West able to read the Qur'an, if we are able to read Finnegans Wake... The affinity between this most recalcitrant of sacred texts and this most avant-garde of literary experiments is a sign of our times. Joyce was fully aware of the connection.... (p. 157).

Brown presents some fascinating factual and literary-historical material regarding the close connections between the literary harbinger of postmodernism, the stream-of-consciousness style embodied in western culture in the writings of James Joyce, and the stylistic structure of the Qur'an. The main point he is making however, is not so much literary as psychological. That is, that "western historicism, with its well-honed methods of source criticism ... is only too delighted to lose itself in tracing the Koran to its sources, with the usual nihilistic result: the Koran is reduced to meaningless confusion". This type of historicism that attributes meaning only to the original sources seems to be at the heart of the Judaeo-Christian attitude that continues to regard Islam as a twisted, received and thus bogus version of the

original(s). Brown quotes many Jewish and Christian authorities and their assessment of the 18th *Surah* and the Qur'an:

... in Surah XVIII meaning has been "mutilated almost beyond recognition" and "mechanically combined in a most artificial and clumsy manner". Schwarzbaum refers to Muhammad as "making a brave show with borrowed trappings". The notion that Muhammad was a charlatan, who stole from the treasury of Western civilization and passed off his plagiarisms on his unsophisticated Bedouin audience as the voice of God, is still very much alive at the back of Western minds... (p.159)

To sum up Brown's analysis then, the Qur'an, like Finnegans Wake, centres on a destruction of language. (In strictly historical terms of course, the Qur'anic vision precedes the Joycean. Also, the psychological impact of the two would be varied, given the (assumed) themes and intention of their sources). While this is not the place to discuss what has been the impact of the deconstruction of language and meaning in the West, Nasr has nicely described the psychological impact of the Qur'an on Muslim consciousness:

Many people, especially non-Muslims, who read the Qur'an for the first time are struck by what appears as a kind of incoherence from the human point of view... The text of the Qur'an reveals human language crushed by the power of the Divine Word. It is as if human language were scattered into a thousand fragments... The Qur'an displays human language with all the weakness inherent in its becoming suddenly the recipient of the Divine Word and displaying its frailty before a power which is infinitely greater than man can imagine.³⁹

Brown's analysis of the 18th *Surah* and his ideas regarding the postmodern bent of Qur'anic Islamic consciousness present an interesting contrast to Jung's understanding of Islam in general and the 18th *Surah* in particular. Both essays can be considered as appreciations of certain psychological dimensions of Islam, but with significant differences, which can be summed up as differences between modern and postmodern consciousness. Thus, it is not so much a prejudice against Islam as such which made Jung unwittingly relegate it to the least of his priorities in the study of religions, but the dominant modern *Weltanschauung* of his age and its quest for meaning in certain preconceived notions of 'order'. Despite flashes of brilliant insight as in the 18th *Surah*,

when it came to Islam as a religion, he remained very much within the modern mode.

Ironically then, Sam Huntington's "West versus the rest" can be rephrased in terms of a clash between modernism and postmodernism. The psychological similarities between postmodern consciousness and that of traditional societies have been examined by disciplines other than psychology. Walter Ong's distinction between "oral" and "literate" cultures draws similar conclusions regarding perceptions and interpretations of concepts such as 'order' and 'coherence'.⁴⁰ Ong's distinction draws from and reiterates research in psycho-linguistics about the differences between, for example, the type of consciousness engendered by print as opposed to television. New media technologies, especially in the West, are creating a 'secondary orality', that is, a consciousness which is closer to the oral rather than the literate in terms of the former's ability to cope better with ambiguity, paradox and diversity, in sum, postmodernity.

CONCLUSION

In psychology, as in life, the 'other' is never totally alien since it inevitably re-presents a part of one's own suppressed, forgotten or ignored side(s). Islam is the only religion which has had a long and at times active relationship with the West. The level of knowledge of Islam and the perception of this relationship as illustrated through *The Collected Works* clearly indicates that among 'the rest', Islam is the other in western consciousness.

As stated at the outset, the perception of 'otherness' is, in fact, not a pathology but necessary and to that extent even desirable. What is pathological is the denial/suppression of the other, and a refusal to enlarge one's field of knowledge regarding oneself. It is the refusal to know and learn about the other in relationship with oneself which draws people and societies into a spiral of violence and which is experienced psychologically as either fear or arrogance. In sum: Paranoia.

The psychodynamics of paranoia between Islam and the West remains to be explored. This monograph has mainly attempted to establish through an empirical framework that Islam is the principal 'other' in the psychological and religious consciousness of the Western intellectual as exemplified by *The Collected Works*. Given the substance of the materials, it is self-evident that the Islamic 'other' in Jung's writings and thus also in this monograph, has yet to be described in detail. Having identified the 'other' in the context of a historical relationship, the next step would be to explore those elements in Islam that evoke such strong reactions. While one has alluded to them in this monograph, a detailed study of these psycho-dynamics remains to be done.

NOTES & REFERENCES

The Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Translated from the German by R.F.C. Hull, Edited by William McGuire, Herbert Read, Michael Fordham M.D., and Gerhard Adler, Ph.D. Routledge and Kegan Paul 1979 London. Also published in the U.S. by Princeton University Press.

1. Introduction

¹ Huntington, Samuel; 'Clash of Civilizations', *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993; "The Next Battleground", *Time*, June 28, 1993, Interview with Samuel Huntington. Also the *Los Angeles Times Syndicate*, June 1993.

² According to Brzezinski, The West urgently needs a "prolonged process of cultural self-examination and philosophical reevaluation". Interestingly, in a review of the book, *The Economist's* response to Brzezinski was that "Islamic fundamentalists would cheer him on - but they would, would not they?" (31.7.93). Brzezinski, Zbigniew; *Out of Control*, Scribners, N.Y. 1993.

³ Huntington; *op. cit.*

⁴ Hadar, Leon T., 'What Green Peril?' *Foreign Affairs*, Spring, 1993; Miller, Judith; The Challenge of Radical Islam, *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1993; Salame Ghassam, 'Islam and the West', *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1993; Lewis, Bernard; 'Islam and Liberal Democracy', *The Atlantic Monthly*, February 1993.

⁵ *The Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 1991.

⁶ 'Another Despotism Creed Seeks to Infiltrate the West', *International Herald Tribune*, Sept 9, 1993:

Muslim fundamentalism is fast becoming the chief threat to global peace and security... It is akin to the menace posed by Nazism and Fascism in the 1930s and then communism in the 50s. The Soviet Union and China not only wielded great military might after World War II, but also had communist party branches in the universities and towns of the democratic states, which enabled them to acquire political influence at a high level. In Britain alone, more than 20,000 educated middle and upper-class people have converted to Islam (since 1989), including a former head boy of Eton. Many keep their conversions secret for business or family reasons, but assume an Islamic name... The British converts generally join moderate gentle and mystic Sufism... It is not easy to understand why these men and women, brought up in a democracy, should embrace a faith whose laws can be interpreted to require the stoning to death of women who commit adultery and the flogging of men, or chopping off the hand of a thief. (One commonly sees cripples in the town of Saudi Arabia)...

...There are as yet no known cases of Western converts to Islam serving Allah as spies or informants in the manner of such converts to communism such as Guy Burgess and Kim Philby... Today national Islamic fervour is not only to be seen in Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia but has dramatically increased in Egypt and across North Africa. A decade

ago apart from a show of prayer and fasting at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan it was unusual for more than a few dozen men to appear at Friday prayers in most mosques. Today rich Muslims are building mosques in the secular states... For the Qur'an claims that "he who construct a Mosque for Him, the most high, will build a house in paradise". So far there has been scant reaction from the Western world, but it is increasingly important that the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization set up and pay attention to aggressive Islamic trends.

⁷ Chaudhry T. & Ahmed, D. "The Cultural Politics of Paranoia: First World/Third World", *Seminar on 'Decolonizing Knowledge'*, Institute of Development Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland.

⁸ *New Webster's: Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

⁹ Freedman, A. (M.D.) and Kaplan H.(M.D.), *Comprehensive Text book of Psychiatry*, Baltimore, The Williams and Wilkins Company, 1967.

¹⁰ Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, *The Pragmatics of Human Communication* N.Y. W.W. Norton 1967.

¹¹ Politeness aside, the West does has difficulty when an 'outsider' criticizes it. For example, an Indian anthropologist's book *Danes Are Like That* ("Saaden er Dänsekerne", Grevas Forlag, Aarhus, D. Kr 244), was met with much protest in Denmark. As *The Economist* reports:

Prakash Reddy, a professor of social anthropology chanced to visit the department of anthropology at a Danish University a few years ago. Pins in a wall may marked where the department had sent field workers. "Why are there no pins in Denmark? Professor Reddy asked. "There's nothing to study here", he was told ... His observations probably told Danes little they did not already know or suspect. But not all of them were pleased to hear it from a third-world anthropologist... Among his findings: individual independence was mixed with loneliness ... a marked lack of spirituality ... an almost complete lack of community ... extreme individualism ... His Danish studies left him feeling that white people were odd ... he was accused of moralizing not observing". "An Indian in Hvilsager". The Economist (25.1.92)

¹² Jung C. G., *Collected Works*, Volume 11, p. 372.

¹³ Bateson, Gregory, *Mind and Nature*, Dutton N.Y. 1980.

¹⁴ Hora, Thomas, "Tao, Zen, and Existential Psychotherapy", *Psychologia* 2: 236-42, 1959.

¹⁵ Jung C. G., *Collected Works*, Volume 10, p. 153.

¹⁶ Stern, P., *C. G. Jung: The Haunted Prophet*, N.Y. Delta Books, 1967.

¹⁷ Laurens van der Post, *Jung and the Story of Our Times*, Penguin, U.K., 1978.

¹⁸ Brome, Vincent, *Jung Man and Myth*, London, Grenada, 1980.

¹⁹ Ahmed, D.S., "Woman, Body, Knowledge: Notes Towards a Re-search for the Feminine Self in Psychology and Sufism", *Seminar on Development and Repression*, IDS, University of Helsinki, Finland, 1991.

²⁰ *Newsweek*: "Freud's Enduring Legacy: How His Ideas Still Shape Psychotherapy," (4.7.88).

²¹ In the following extracts from a recent essay in *Time* titled "The year 2000 — Is It the End or Just the Beginning?" Henry Grunwald, a leading U.S.

conservative commentator and former editor of Time discusses the decline of mainstream religion in the U.S. The passages are relevant for two reasons. Firstly, they summarize in accessible language the secular basis of modern academic knowledge and its present outcome. Secondly, they confirm the strong presence of the religious aspect of the New Age.

The Age of Reason exalted humankind but still admitted God as a sort of supreme philosopher-king or chairman of the board who ultimately presided over the glories achieved by reason and science. The humanist 19th century voted him out. It increasingly saw reason and science irreconcilably opposed to religion, which would fade away....

Secular humanism (a respectable term even though it became a right-wing swearword) stubbornly insisted that morality need not be based on the supernatural. But it gradually became clear that ethics without the sanction of Some higher authority simply were not compelling...

The ultimate irony or perhaps tragedy, is that secularism has not led to humanism. We have gradually dissolved-reconstructed-the human being into a bundle of reflexes, impulses, neuroses, nerve endings. The great religious heresy used to be making man the measure of all things; but we have come close to making man the measure of nothing.

... The mainstream churches have tried various ways to adapt themselves to a soecular age. The Roman Catholic Church made its liturgy accessible in the vernacular and turned increasingly from saving souls to saving society. The major Protestant denominations also increasingly emphasized social activism and tried to dilute dogma to accommodate 20th century rationality and diversity. Churches not only permitted the ordination of women - long overdue - but are seriously debating the ordination of homosexuals and sanctioning homosexual marriages. Fin de siecle?

... But none of these reforms are arresting the sharp decline of the mainstream churches. Why not? The answer seems to be that while orthodox religion can be stifling, liberal religion can be empty. Many people seem to want a faith that is rigorous and demanding, or else more personal and emotional. That explains in part why denominations outside the mainstream are doing well, including Fundamentalists (despite the decline of the scandal-ridden TV ministries)

... Equally significant is the flood of substitute religions. The most prominent of these is the so-called New Age movement - a vast, amorphous hodgepodge of spiritualism, faith healing, reincarnation, meditation, yoga, macrobiotic diets, mystical environmentalism and anything else that helps transform the self. Its followers sound as if they were born again, but without Christ. A motto often used by them is borrowed from Joseph Campbell "Follow your bliss".

The New Age bliss has grown to extraordinary proportions, with magazines, books, records, mass merchandising. Large corporations have dabbled in New Age techniques to control stress in their managers. Some New Agers often affirm that all is God, hence all is good. As Chesterton said "when men stop believing in God, they don't in nothing; they believe in anything".

But the New Age phenomenon points to a void that our society has left in people's lives. They don't need Sartre to find existence meaningless. In New Perspectives Quarterly, author Christopher Lasch laments the loss of institutions of "organic unity"

like family, neighbourhood and religion, a loss to which "liberalism never had an answer." (30.3.92)

II. *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: A Content Analysis*

²² Jung C. G. *Collected Works*, Volume 11, p. 464.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Hillman, James, *The Soul of the World*, Dallas, Spring Publications, 1992.

III. Jung, Psychology and Alchemy

²⁵ Jung C. G. and Aniela Jaffe(ed); *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, N.Y. Vintage Books, 1963, pp. 205, 212, 221.

²⁶ Hillman, James, "Archetypal Theory", in *Loose Ends*, Dallas Spring Publication, 1987.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Burckhardt, Titus, *Alchemy*, Translated from the German by William Stoddart, Dorset, Element Books 1987.

²⁹ Nasr, S.H; *Knowledge and the Sacred*, Edinburgh University Press 1981. See also: *Science and Civilization in Islam*, pp. 244.

IV. Jung and the 18th Surah

³⁰ As quoted in the *Collected Works*, Dawood's translation.

³¹ "They termed me a "Man of the Book" because of my knowledge of the Qur'an. To their minds, I was a disguised Mohammedan", *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, *ibid.* p. 265.

³² Fischer, M.J, "Is Islam the Odd-Civilization Out?" *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Spring 1992.

³³ "Unlike Abraham, Moses, or Jesus, the Prophet of Mecca lived his adult life in the glare of history", (p. 34). Desmond Stewart, *Mecca*, Newsweek Books, N.Y. 1980.

V. Jung, Postmodernity and Islam

³⁴ As the punch line states: *If you yearn to spring out of the iron cage secularism - but don't want to land in the lap of the ayatollahs, cultists, or fundamentalists - subscribe today!* For a detailed analysis of the return to religion in U.S. academe see Chaudhry and Ahmed "The Cultural Politics of Paranoia: First World/Third World", 1992. *op. cit.*

³⁵ C. G. Jung, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp 136-139.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Ong, Walter J., *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing the Word*, N.Y. Methuen, 1982.

³⁸ As quoted by Norman O. Brown: "The Apocalypse of Islam" in *Facing Apocalypse*, Andrews, Bosnak and Goodwin (eds). Dallas, Spring Publications, 1987.

³⁹ Nasr, S. H., *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, Boston 1972, pp. 24-48.

⁴⁰ Ong, Walter J., *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing the Word*, N.Y. Methuen, 1982.