



**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ROOTS OF POLITICAL  
AND IDEOLOGICAL VIOLENCE:  
A JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper discusses the problem of political and ideological violence from the perspective of the psychological theories developed by the Swiss psychologist C. G. Jung. Drawing from primary and secondary sources in the field of Jungian psychology, the paper focuses on two concepts central to Jung's thought--shadow and archetype--and addresses their broader implications as psychological factors in the processes of political and ideological conflict and violence. The paper initially outlines the role of the shadow, the term used by Jung to describe the dark, un-lived aspects of a person's personality, as a determinative factor in conflict and violence, not only on personal and social levels but on political and ideological levels as well. The broader role of the shadow as a source of political and ideological violence is then illustrated in a review of Jung's analysis of Nazi Germany, the only in-depth analysis of a single nation undertaken by Jung. The problem of the shadow is further treated as a source of misunderstanding and fear that has complicated immeasurably United States-Soviet Union relations in the post-World War II era and has contributed significantly to the nuclear dilemma confronting the world. Finally, the relationship between ideology and archetype, the most ontologically fundamental of Jung's concepts, is discussed in the context of the phenomenon of the shadow inherent in twentieth-century ideological belief systems in general.

## **RESUMEN**

Este ensayo discute el problema de la violencia política e ideológica desde la perspectiva de las teorías psicológicas desarrolladas por el psicólogo suizo C. G. Jung. De acuerdo con las fuentes primarias y secundarias en el campo de la psicología de Jung, el ensayo se enfoca en dos conceptos centrales en el pensamiento de Jung, "sombra" y "arquetipo", y considera sus implicaciones generales como factores psicológicos en los procesos de conflicto y violencia políticos e ideológicos. El ensayo traza inicialmente el rol de la "sombra", término usado por Jung para describir los aspectos oscuros, no-vividos de la personalidad de una persona, como un factor determinante en el conflicto y la violencia, a nivel no sólo personal y social sino también político e ideológico. El rol general de la "sombra" como una fuente de violencia política e ideológica es entonces ilustrada en un repaso al análisis de Jung de la Alemania Nazi, el único análisis a fondo de una sola nación llevada a cabo por Jung. El problema de la "sombra" es entonces considerado como una fuente de malentendido y temor que ha complicado inmensamente las relaciones Estados Unidos-Unión Soviética en la era posterior a la Segunda Guerra Mundial y que ha contribuido significativamente al dilema nuclear que confronta el mundo. Finalmente, la relación entre ideología y arquetipo, ontológicamente el más fundamental de los conceptos de Jung, es discutido en el contexto del fenómeno de la "sombra" inherente en los sistemas de creencias ideológicas del siglo veinte en general.



## I. Introduction

One of the most threatening and seemingly intractable problems facing humankind in the twentieth century is human violence in its political and ideological manifestations. Because of the enormity of this problem and the dark cloud it casts over the future of humankind, it has been the subject of extensive analysis, with many explanations being adduced for its causes. The problem of political and ideological violence, however, has proven to be highly complex, one that lends itself to neither easy explanations nor simple solutions. Nevertheless, if political and ideological violence is not to continue to wreak death and destruction in the lives of countless millions of people and threaten the survival of the human race, continued efforts must be made to understand this phenomenon in all its many facets.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the psychologist Carl Gustav Jung developed an understanding of the psyche that has profound implications not only for the field of psychology but for all fields of human knowledge. Jung's understanding of the psyche and the theories derived from this understanding have provided important insights into the psychic forces underlying and motivating human action and have illuminated what previously had been only quite dimly, and often mistakenly, perceived as the psychological roots of human action. As such, his insights offer an important tool for gaining a deeper understanding of problems such as human violence in general and its political and ideological manifestations in particular.

Any treatment of human violence from the perspective of Jung's work must begin with his understanding of what he called the "shadow," or the

dark, un-lived aspects of the psyche, which is discussed in Section II. In Section III the broader implications of the shadow and the extent to which it can influence the social and political destiny of a nation are illustrated in the framework of Jung's analysis of Germany under Hitler and Nazism during the period from 1933 to 1945. In Section IV the role of the shadow as a factor in the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union in the post-World War II era and the nuclear dilemma stemming from this conflict is discussed. Finally, the singularly important role the shadow plays in ideological conflict and violence is treated in Section V.

What is presented herein, therefore, is a picture of the inner dynamics at work in the process of political and ideological violence in today's world, a picture whose drawing is made possible by the understanding of the human psyche developed by Jung. This understanding of the psychological roots of political and ideological violence can serve to complement much of the existing analysis of the political, social and economic causes of political and ideological violence and thereby offer a more complete account of the nature and scope of political and ideological violence as well as suggest possible avenues to be explored for its resolution.

## II. Human Violence and The Problem of the Shadow

Most theories of human violence are based on the widely accepted belief that man is inherently aggressive. As stated by the psychiatrist and ethnologist Anthony Stevens, "the evidence that aggressive behavior is an a priori characteristic in social mammals has been abundantly provided by ethology, and has been confirmed in man by all major schools of depth psychology." 1/

Aggression among animals is essential for the survival of the species. It supports such vital needs as: defense; access to valued resources (e.g., territory, food, water and females in oestrus); ensuring optimum use of available habitat by dissemination of population; providing an effective means of settling disputes within a group; establishing leadership for the group, which may prove critical for survival in times of danger; and promoting differential reproduction. 2/ However, once such needs have been met, the aggressive behavior of animals usually subsides; and appeasement gestures by which a defeated animal shows that it concedes victory to an opponent of the same species, such as presenting a vulnerable part of his anatomy to the foe or turning away his own aggressive weapons, usually suffice to halt any further aggression. 3/ Consequently, unnecessary violence and cruelty for its own sake are relatively unknown in the animal world. 4/

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1/ Anthony Stevens, Archetypes, pp. 224-5.

2/ Ibid., pp. 226-7.

3/ Anthony Storr, Human Aggression, (Antheum, 1968), pp. 90-1.

4/ Ibid., p. 91. With reference to animals of the same species, Storr writes that "when an animal attacks another of the same species, it is generally content to prove its superior strength without

Human attempts at appeasement, in contrast, often fail to have any effect whatsoever, and the constantly recurring instances of victors' ruthless elimination of the vanquished throughout human history are well-documented. Observing that the cruelty of animals is largely a myth whereas the cruelty of man is a grim reality, the psychologist Anthony Storr has written:

That man is an aggressive creature will hardly be disputed. With the exception of rodents, no other vertebrate habitually destroys members of its own species. No other animal takes positive pleasure in the exercise of cruelty upon another of his own kind. We generally describe the most repulsive examples of man's cruelty as brutal or bestial, implying by these adjectives that such behaviour is characteristic of less highly developed animals than ourselves. In truth, however, the extremes of "brutal" behaviour are confined to man; and there is no parallel in nature to our savage treatment of each other. The sombre fact is that we are the cruelest and most ruthless species that has ever walked the earth; and that, although we may recoil in horror when we read in newspaper or history book of the atrocities committed by man upon man, we know in our hearts that each one of us harbors within himself those same savage impulses which lead to murder, to torture and to war. 5/

Innate aggression by itself, therefore, does not adequately account for the senselessness and wanton cruelty often associated with acts of human violence. If the instinct of aggression, which human beings share with animals, does not account for much of human violence and cruelty, the question arises whether there are characteristics or qualities

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proceeding to maim or seriously injure its opponent. Except in the special circumstances of over-crowding or actual shortage of food, most intra-specific struggles are ritualized tests of strength. The defeated animal is allowed to retreat and is not pursued; the victor is satisfied with proof of status and with the demonstration that he can defend his family and territory." With respect to predatory animals, he notes that "even animals which prey upon one another do not rejoice in cruelty for its own sake." Ibid., pp. 90-1.

5/ Ibid., p. 1.



unique to human beings that make them so overwhelmingly more violent and cruel than animals.

Jung, on the basis of his extensive clinical experience and deep understanding of the human psyche, explained human violence from a psychological perspective not only in terms of the instinct of aggression but also in terms of another feature uniquely characteristic of human beings. Jung believed that aggression is innate in human beings and that it manifests itself in a two-fold manner: biologically through instinct and psychologically through specific types of archetypal images and ideas. However, in addition, he discovered present in the human psyche a phenomenon often associated with acts of human aggression that he considered to be a causal factor in most human conflict as well as a determinative element in whether human aggression is directed toward creative or destructive ends. He called this phenomenon the "shadow".

Jung defined the shadow as "the sum of all those unpleasant qualities (of the personality) we like to hide, together with the insufficiently developed functions and contents of the personal unconscious." <sup>6/</sup> This phenomenon has been defined in similar terms by other psychologists. Marie Louise von Franz, for instance, describes the shadow as "the personification of certain aspects of the unconscious personality which could be added to the ego complex but which for various reasons are not," and adds that "from these repressed qualities, which are not admitted or accepted because they are incompatible with that chosen, the

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<sup>6/</sup> C. G. Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology (New York and Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1971), p. 76, n. 5.

shadow is built up." 7/ She thus defines the shadow as "the dark, unloved and repressed side of the ego complex." 8/ The psychologist Edmond Whitmont defines the shadow simply as "those parts of the personality which have been repressed for the sake of the ego ideal." 9/

Jung first encountered the phenomenon of the shadow in personified forms in his dreams and in those of his patients. 10/ He found these figures generally to be personifications of the dark, dubious or sinister qualities of the dreamer's personality of which the dreamer is unaware and generally does not want to become aware, while they also may represent positive aspects of the personality which for some reason the dreamer has not recognized or accepted. 11/ Jung further found that, because the contents of the shadow were repressed or unrecognized aspects of the personality, for most people it was the source of neurotic behavior and that recognition of these parts of the personality, whether deemed to be negative or positive, was usually a necessary step for psychological healing. Moreover, he learned from his own experience

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7/ Marie-Louise von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales (Irving, Texas: Spring Publications, 1980), pp. 5-6.

8/ Ibid., p. 6.

9/ Edward C. Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 160. For brief discussions of the development of the shadow, particularly as a stage of ego development in childhood, see *ibid.*, pp. 162-3, and von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, p. 6. Briefly stated, the shadow initially develops as a child encounters personal, familial, educational, religious, social or cultural influences that result in the child repressing or failing to recognize certain parts of his or her personality. As a consequence, a dark or shadow side of the personality, consisting of personal qualities, behavior patterns, complexes and instinctual drives, is built up.

10/ For example, C. G. Jung, Memories, Dreams and Reflections (New York: Random House, 1973), pp. 179-181.

11/ For examples of shadow contents personified as dream images, see Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest, pp. 160-9.

and that of his patients that becoming aware of the shadow contents of one's personality is also essential for self knowledge and psychological and spiritual growth. He thus concluded that the contents of the shadow, once accepted, could be a source of personal renewal and often lead a person out of a deadening impasse or sterile period in his or her life. 12/

Jung further discovered, on the basis of extensive study of mythology and comparative religions, that the experience of the shadow was not limited to neurotic symptoms in individuals but was a universal human experience finding expression in varied forms in different societies and cultures. For example, he found the shadow phenomenon embodied in certain rituals and myths of different cultures, such as the trickster figures in the rituals and tales of some North American Indian tribes, which serve to make people aware of the unaccepted or unrecognized aspects of their personalities. 13/ He therefore concluded that the shadow does not necessarily take on pathological characteristics, provided a person has achieved some awareness of the shadow contents of his or her personality. However, he found that if a

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12/ Accepting one's shadow does not mean that the shadow qualities or impulses should be taken literally and lived out indiscriminately, especially if it involves harm to oneself or to others. Jung urged great discretion in this regard, emphasizing the symbolic nature of the psyche's manifestations in dreams and other expressions of the unconscious and, therefore, the need to recognize the essentially symbolic nature of these experiences. For a discussion of how to relate to the shadow contents of the personality, see Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest, pp. 163-8.

13/ See C. G. Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 9, Part I (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), par. 456-488. (Hereinafter all references to Jung's Collected Works will be cited as "CW" followed by the volume number and paragraph reference).

person is estranged from the contents of his or her shadow, it manifests pathologically and becomes a problem that needs to be recognized and addressed. 14/

Jung realized that the use of the term "shadow" to describe the repressed or unrecognized aspects of the personality was somewhat poetic. However, he chose this term because he feared that the intellectualization of the psychological phenomenon he was attempting to describe would be fatal to any true grasping of its meaning. 15/ He maintained that the realization of the personality's shadow aspects required not only understanding but, more importantly, the experience of the affective qualities of the shadow's contents and the suffering and passion which that often entails. 16/ In this respect, he warned against "substituting for psychic reality an apparently secure, artificial, but merely two-dimensional conceptual world in which the reality of life is well covered up by so-called clear concepts." Under such conditions, he found, "experience is stripped of its substance, and instead mere names are substituted, which are henceforth put in the place of reality." 17/ At the same time, he advised against taking the term "shadow" too literally, emphasizing the need to keep in mind that a person may experience the shadow aspects of his or her personality in varied forms under different conditions and circumstances. 18/

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14/ As Whitmont explains, the shadow "becomes pathological only when we assume that we do not have it; because then it has us." The Symbolic Quest, p. 168.

15/ CW 8, par. 409.

16/ CW 9-II, par. 15 and CW 8, par. 409.

17/ Jung, Memories, Dreams and Reflections, p. 144.

18/ Von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, p. 5.

Because he believed becoming aware of the shadow contents of one's personality was a necessary step for personal growth and self-knowledge, Jung viewed the shadow not only as a psychological problem but as a moral one as well. He wrote:

[T]he shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality; for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge, and it therefore, as a rule, meets with considerable resistance. 19/

He therefore warned that becoming aware of the shadow was neither a theoretical nor intellectual exercise, but rather an arduous psychological and moral task engaging the total person.

In addition to the personal character of the shadow, Jung also found that the shadow takes on a collective character in the form of unrecognized or repressed aspects or qualities of the personalities of persons belonging to the same group, nation or culture. He referred to this as the collective shadow. Whereas the personal shadow is derived from aspects of an individual's personality that are incompatible with his or her particular conscious attitudes and values, the collective shadow is derived from the influence of broader social, cultural and religious factors that make certain qualities and characteristics of the personalities of persons belonging to the same group, nation or culture incompatible with a prevailing ethos or world view. Such characteristics or qualities are mutually unrecognized or repressed by the members of the same group, nation or culture in response to the same

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19/ CW 9-II, par. 14.

collectively prescribed ego ideal. As a result, such persons experience in common the same lack of awareness regarding certain aspects or qualities of their personalities.

The effects of the collective shadow are such that certain characteristics of a particular group, nation or culture that appear totally normal to the persons who belong to or identify with the values and attitudes of that group, nation or culture may often appear unacceptable or shocking to persons from a different background and imbued with different values and attitudes. As an example, von Franz cites the differences between the psychological orientations of Eastern and Western cultures. She observes that in India, where introversion is the predominant psychological orientation and spiritual and philosophical attitudes are highly developed, Westerners often appear as quite naive about certain metaphysical truths and hopelessly caught up in the illusions of the outer world. In contrast, most Westerners, who in general have well developed extraverted orientations to life, are shocked when they confront the prevailing attitudes regarding poverty and physical suffering in India, which allow passersby to ignore a person starving in the streets because of a belief that one's outer, physical existence is relatively unimportant in comparison to one's inner, spiritual life. 20/

Jung realized that if the problem of the shadow, in its either personal or collective forms, were contained within the boundaries of the individual psyche, it would constitute little more than a psychological or, perhaps at best, religious concern without any broader implications.

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20/ Von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, pp. 7-8.

However, he found that to the extent aspects of a person's psyche for any reason remain unconscious, the corresponding psychic energy is projected outward onto persons, objects and events and that such projections then play an important role in shaping a person's perception and experience of the external world. He wrote regarding projection:

(T)he effect of projection is to isolate the subject from his environment, since instead of a real relation to it there is now only an illusory one. Projections change the world into the replica of one's own unknown face. In the last analysis, therefore, they lead to an autoerotic or autistic condition in which one dreams the world whose reality remains forever unattainable. The resultant sentiment d'incomplétude and the still worse feeling of sterility are in their turn explained by projection as the malevolence of the environment, and by means of this vicious circle the isolation is intensified. The more projections are thrust in between the subject and the environment, the harder it is for the ego to see through its illusions. 21/

Accordingly, if the shadow aspects of one's personality remain unconscious, they will be experienced externally as projections and greatly influence one's perception of and relationship to persons, objects and events in the outer world. Moreover, to the extent this occurs, the shadow contents of the personality will be encountered unconsciously as fate in the external world. 22/ In such a case, a person will live out unconsciously in the external world the inner psychic drama of the shadow through his or her relationships with the persons, objects or events upon which the shadow is projected. Jung therefore found that the problem of the shadow has implications extending far beyond the domain of the individual psyche.

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21/ CW 9-11, par. 17.

22/ See *ibid.*, par. 126 and Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest, pp. 165-6.

It is important to note with respect to projection that, according to Jung, the ego, or conscious part of the personality, does not do the projecting of unconscious contents. "It is not the conscious subject but the unconscious which does the projecting. Hence one meets with projections, one does not make them." <sup>23/</sup> The individual is thus usually unconscious not only of the contents of his shadow but also of their projection onto persons, objects and events in the world around him. This is a critical point in understanding and dealing with psychological projection in general because it means that the withdrawal of projections is almost never accomplished solely by an act of will, i.e., by the intentional act of withdrawing a projection, but rather by means of becoming aware of the repressed or unrecognized contents of the psyche. <sup>24/</sup>

It is not difficult for a person to recognize his or her personal shadow and its specific qualities. Because the contents of the personal shadow are projected usually onto persons in one's immediate environment (e.g., family members or co-workers), those characteristics that one finds irritating or unacceptable in others usually correspond to those aspects of one's own personality that are unrecognized or repressed. Von Franz describes what typically occurs when shadow contents are projected onto others:

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<sup>23/</sup> CW 9-II, par. 17.

<sup>24/</sup> See Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest, p. 166. For an extensive treatment of projection in Jungian psychology, see Marie-Louise von Franz, Projection and Re-Collection in Jungian Psychology (La Salle and London: Open Court, 1980).



If we do not see the shadow in ourselves, it is projected onto outer people who then exert a fascinating power over us--we have to think about them all the time; we get emotional about them, or even pursue them. This does not mean some people, whom we hate, are not really nasty creatures but, even so, we could handle them quite reasonably or avoid them if it were not for the projection of the shadow, which always causes all kinds of emotional exaggerations and fantasies. 25/

Unlike the personal shadow, however, the collective shadow is less easily identified. Because the characteristics of the collective shadow are common to a group, nation or culture, it is extremely difficult for a member of the particular group, nation or culture to recognize them. One often finds that those around him share many of the same attitudes, beliefs or values and that only persons pertaining to another group, nation or culture deviate from them. As von Franz explains, the collective shadow is "in some way the sum of the personal shadows, and also within the group...something which does not disturb the group and which is apparent only to outer groups." 26/ She adds that the collective shadow is particularly difficult to deal with because "people support each other in their blindness--it is only in wars, or in hate for other nations, that an aspect of the collective shadow reveals itself." 27/

Jung found that it was through psychological projection that individuals, as well as groups and nations, confront those aspects of their psyches that they have not consciously accepted. He therefore believed that recognizing one's shadow projections in other persons can have a salutary effect because it usually constitutes the first step toward

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25/ Von Franz, "Jung and Society," In the Wake of Jung (London: Coventure Ltd., 1983), p. 27.

26/ Von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, p. 9.

27/ Ibid., p. 8.

becoming aware of them. However, if the shadow contents are seen to be especially undesirable or pernicious by the person whose shadow is projected, it will be all the more difficult for that person to accept the projection as personifying an aspect or quality found in his or her personality inasmuch as most people are loathe to accept those parts of their psyches that they fear or find to be truly despicable. Moreover, the more deeply the shadow contents are repressed or despised, the more sinister and threatening will they appear in their projected forms in the external world.

Jung found that one of the principal causes of inter-personal and social conflicts is shadow projection. In this regard, von Franz notes that "countless quarrels both useless and time and energy consuming are due to the fact that we are far too unconscious of our shadow and project it accordingly onto others." 28/ Similarly, the roots of racial and ethnic enmity and persecution also can be found in the projection of the shadow. The repressed or unrecognized aspects of the personalities of members of racial or ethnic groups are projected onto persons belonging to other racial or ethnic groups, and the latter are then persecuted because they carry the projections of their oppressors' inner darkness.

Jung believed that the problem of the shadow has far-reaching consequences not only in the personal and social realms of life but in the political realm as well. He found that the collective shadow of a group or nation is usually projected onto political and ideological adversaries, and such "enemies" then become identified with the seemingly

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28/ Von Franz, "Jung and Society," In the Wake of Jung, pp. 27-8.

inferior and negative aspects corresponding to the group's or nation's shadow. Under such circumstances, he observed, "we simply accuse our enemies of own hidden faults" 29/ and we then fear the enemy with the same involuntary and secret fear we feel towards the contents of our own shadows which initiated the repression on a personal level in the first place. Moreover, he noted, "projections provoke counter-projections when the object (carrier of the projection) is unaware of the quality projected upon it," 30/ with hostility therefore begetting hostility. Furthermore, as a result of the projection of the collective shadow onto political adversaries, the latter often take on the formidable characteristics of the archetypal enemy, which is closely linked to the problem of evil. 31/ Jung thus ascribed to the problem of the shadow the strong proclivity of most people to look outside themselves for the causes of their problems and for the sources of evil in the world rather than looking into the depths of their own souls. "You can then at least say, without hesitation, who the devil is; you are quite certain that the cause of your misfortune is outside and not in your own attitude." 32/

Whitmont has written in regard to the broader implications of the shadow problem:

[T]hey are staggering, for here lie the roots of social, racial and national bias and discrimination. Every minority and every dissenting group carries the shadow projection of

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29/ CW 8, par. 516.

30/ Ibid., par. 519.

31/ See for example CW 10, par. 572-3; Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest, pp. 163-4; and von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, p. 9. For a further treatment of Jung's view of evil, see "Answer to Job", CW 11, par. 553-758, and John Sanford, Evil: the Shadow Side of Reality, (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1981), pp. 129-55.

32/ CW 8, par. 518.

the majority, be it Negro, white, Gentile, Jew, Italian, Irish, Chinese or French. Moreover, since the shadow is the archetype of the enemy, its projection is likely to involve us in the bloodiest of wars precisely in the times of the greatest complacency about peace and our own righteousness. The enemy and the conflict with the enemy are archetypal factors, projections of our own inner split, and cannot be legislated or wished away. They can be dealt with--if at all--only in terms of shadow confrontation and in the healing of our individual split. The most dangerous times, both collectively and individually, are those in which we have assumed we have eliminated it. 33/

If Jung's theory of the shadow, grounded in his extensive clinical experience and his in-depth study of mythology and comparative religions, is correct, it would provide important insights into the seemingly blind and irrational acts of human violence and cruelty that extend far beyond legitimate psychological and biological manifestations of human aggression as expressed in image and instinct respectively. As such, the phenomenon of the shadow would constitute an important causal factor not only in personal and social conflict but in many forms of political and ideological conflict as well. Confirming Jung's view of the broader implications of the shadow problem, Stevens has written that "Shadow projection is an intractable vice in our species; it is at the bottom of all internecine strife and suspicion, all pogroms and wars." 34/ Moreover, linking aggression directly with the problem of the shadow, Stevens has observed: "In man aggression becomes a moral problem--the problem of dealing with the Shadow without being possessed by it." 35/

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33/ Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest, p. 168.

34/ Stevens, Archetypes, p. 216.

35/ Ibid., p. 227.

III. Jung's Analysis of the German Shadow as a Factor in the Rise  
of Hitler and National Socialism in Germany

In the aftermath of World War I Jung closely observed from the vantage point of his native Switzerland the events in Germany that culminated in the rise to power of Nazism and Hitler and in the outbreak of World War II. Jung believed that the roots of Nazism and Hitler's ascendancy lay in a deep-seated and unresolved shadow problem in the psyche of the German people, a conflict that he felt affected all of Germanic life and culture in a very profound way. In several articles written between 1919 and 1946, he discussed the psychological conditions underlying events in Germany prior to and during the Nazi period. These articles provide important insights into Jung's views concerning the broader political and social implications of the shadow as discussed in the preceding section. 36/

Jung held that a group or nation possesses its own particular psychology consisting of the sum of the individual psychologies of the persons comprising the group or nation. 37/ He likewise held that the psychopathology of a group or of an entire nation is rooted in the individual psychopathologies of the persons constituting the group or nation. He thus observed: "Nations have their own peculiar psychology, and in the same way they also have their own particular kind of psychopathology. It consists in the accumulation of a large number of

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36/ These articles are reprinted in CW 10, par. 371-487.

37/ Ibid., par. 457.

abnormal features, the most striking of which is a suggestibility affecting the entire nation." 38/

On the basis of his German patients' dreams in the post World War I period and his broad understanding of the cultural, religious and psychological roots of the German people (he was German Swiss), Jung identified two basic characteristics of the shadow problem in the German psyche which, he believed, turned pathological and eventually incarnated in the form of Hitler and National Socialism. 39/ He maintained that an understanding of these two characteristics of the German psyche is essential for a complete understanding of the events that occurred in Germany from 1933-1945.

The first of these related to a part of the German psyche Jung identified in its personified form as the ancient Teutonic god of storm and frenzy Wotan (or Odin). With remarkable prescience he wrote in 1918:

Christianity split the Germanic barbarian into an upper and lower half, and enabled him, by repressing the dark side, to domesticate the brighter half and fit it for civilization. But the lower, dark half still awaits redemption and a second spell of domestication. Until then, it will remain associated with the vestiges of the prehistoric age, with the collective unconscious, which is subject to peculiar and ever-increasing activation. As the Christian view of the world loses its authority, the more menacingly will the "blond beast" be heard prowling about in its underground prison, ready at any moment to burst out with devastating consequences. When this happens

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38/ Ibid., par. 466. See also *ibid.*, par. 467, 429 and 445.

39/ For examples of dreams of Germans prior to and during World War II that reveal aspects of the shadow elements underlying Nazism, see Anneliese Aumuller, "Dreams in Nazi Germany," Psychological Perspectives, vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 1978), pp. 13-23.

in the individual it brings about a psychological revolution, but it can also take a social form. 40/

The "blond beast" to which Jung referred in this passage is the psychic force he later called Wotan, which he believed was reawakening in the German psyche after a long period of quiescence. Jung held that mythological gods such as Wotan were personifications of unconscious archetypal forces grounded in the deeper, transpersonal layer of the psyche, a truth he believed has been lost to modern man with the latter's one-sided emphasis on scientific rationalism. In a 1936 article on Wotan he wrote:

A mind that is still childish thinks of the gods as metaphysical entities existing in their own right, or else regards them as playful or superstitious inventions. From either point of view the parallel between Wotan redivivus and the social, political and psychic storm that is shaking Germany might have at least the value of a parable. But since the gods are without doubt personifications of psychic forces, to assert their metaphysical existence is as much an intellectual presumption as the opinion that they could ever be invented. 41/

According to Jung, such archetypal forces, which manifest as instinct on a physical level and as images and ideas on a psychic level, influence the behavior of individuals in distinctive ways and thereby make known their own attributes and characteristics. He believed that these archetypal forces, through their influence on individuals, likewise affect the collective behavior of groups, nations and races. 42/

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40/ CW 10, par. 17.

41/ CW 10, par. 387.

42/ For a further discussion of Jung's theory of the archetypes, see pp. 51-4 infra.

Elaborating further in the same article on the nature of the archetypal Wotan and its effect on modern Germany, Jung wrote:

The disturber of the peace is a wind that blows into Europe from Asia's vastness, sweeping in on a wide front from Thrace to the Baltic, scattering the nations before it like dry leaves, or inspiring thoughts that shake the world to its foundations. It is an elemental Dionysius breaking into the Apollonian order. The rouser of the tempest is named Wotan, and we can learn a good deal about him from the political confusion and spiritual upheaval he has caused throughout history. For a more exact investigation of his character, however, we must go back to the age of myths, which did not explain everything in terms of man and his limited capacities but sought the deeper cause in the psyche and its autonomous powers. Man's earliest intuitions personified these powers as gods, and described them in the myths with great care and circumstantiality according to their various characters. This could be done the more readily on account of the firmly established primordial types or images which are innate in the unconscious of many races and exercise direct influence upon them. Because the behavior of a race takes on its specific character from its underlying images we can speak of an archetype "Wotan". As an autonomous psychic factor, Wotan produces effects in the collective life of a people and thereby reveals its own nature. 43/ (footnote omitted)

Jung believed that the archetypal force personified as Wotan, like all such forces, has both positive and negative qualities. He pointed out that in prior epochs Wotan was also known as a shamanistic god of ecstasy with an intuitive and inspiring nature and was often associated with the figure of Dionysius, as noted above, or Christ. 44/ Commenting

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43/ CW 10, par. 391. Jung fully understood the risk of being misunderstood in his use of the term "Wotan" to describe what he believed was a fundamental attribute of the German character. He therefore suggested that in its place the term "furor teutonicus" might be used. However, he felt this term failed to convey as effectively as "Wotan" one of the basic features of the phenomenon he was attempting to describe: that the German nation had become possessed by this unrecognized aspect of their individual and collective psyches. Thus, for Jung the use of the more graphic term "Wotan" better captured the true nature of the force that had the German nation in its grip. Ibid., par. 386-388.

44/ Ibid., par. 373-375 and 393.



on Wotan's dual nature, he observed that Wotan was both "a god of storm and a god of secret musings." 45/

Jung in fact ascribed to this fundamental tension between the pre-Christian and Christian heritages of the German people much of their abundant spiritual potentialities, creativity and inspiration, which found expression in the high level of Germanic culture and in its impressive achievements in science, philosophy, literature and the arts. He believed, however, that when the pre-Christian side of the German psyche became activated in the unconscious of millions of Germans, as revealed in their dreams, but was not accepted and integrated on a

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45/ Ibid., par. 384. The primary impulse underlying the longing of many Germans during the post World War I period for a return to their Germanic spiritual roots, which had been increasingly lost to modern consciousness, can be attributed to the deep desire they felt for the rebirth of the pre-Christian aspect of their German heritage that Jung identified as Wotan. The historian Paul Johnson, describing the fundamental conflict in the German soul as it manifested as an East-West tension in German society after World War I, with the East being identified with the longing of many Germans for a return to their spiritual roots and the West with modern civilization, has written:

These Easterners drew a fundamental distinction between "civilization", which they defined as rootless, cosmopolitan, immoral, un-German, Western, materialistic and racially defiled; and "culture", which was pure, national, German, spiritual and authentic. Civilization pulled Germany to the West, culture to the East. The real Germany was not part of the international civilization but a national race-culture of its own. When Germany responded to the pull of the West, it met disaster; when it pursued its destiny in the East, it fulfilled itself. Modern Times (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 111. (footnote omitted)

Johnson thus describes on a social and cultural level what Jung had described on a psychological level: Wotan's powerful influence on the German people during the post World War I period. Johnson argues that the East-West division in German consciousness constitutes one of the central themes in modern history because of its direct impact on Germany's destiny and the critical role Germany played in shaping the modern political world. Ibid.

conscious level by enough individuals, it burst into consciousness with destructive consequences. He noted: "If an archetype is not brought into reality consciously, there is no guarantee whatever that it will be realized in its favorable form; on the contrary, there is all the more danger of a destructive regression." 46/ He thus described Wotan as "a fundamental attribute of the German psyche, an irrational psychic factor which acts on the high pressure of civilization like a cyclone and blows it away." 47/

Jung did not discount the role of other factors in the emergence of Hitler and National Socialism in Germany. Like most observers, he believed that the economic and political conditions in Germany after World War I, together with the ensuing psychological difficulties, were also important factors. Unlike most observers, however, he found it implausible to ascribe exclusively to such conditions the primary causes of the emergence of National Socialism and the irrationality and destructiveness of the German people under Hitler. Instead, he believed that these conditions acted to exacerbate an already existing and deep-seated tension in the German psyche. In 1936 he wrote:

We are always convinced that the modern world is a reasonable world, basing our opinion on economic, political and psychological factors. But if we may forget for a moment that we are living in the year of Our Lord 1936, and, laying aside our well-meaning, all-too-human reasonableness, may burden God or the gods with the responsibility of contemporary events instead of man, we would find Wotan quite suitable as a causal hypothesis. In fact I venture the heretical suggestion that the unfathomable depths of Wotan's character explain more of National Socialism than all three reasonable factors put together. There is no doubt that each of these factors explains an important aspect of what is going on in Germany, but Wotan

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46/ CW 10, par. 475.

47/ Ibid., par. 389.

explains yet more. He is particularly enlightening in regard to a general phenomenon which is so strange to anybody not a German that it remains incomprehensible even after the deepest reflection. 48/

By identifying Wotan as a primary cause of the Nazi phenomenon, Jung was not suggesting that the German people be absolved of their responsibility for what was occurring in Germany at that time. Rather, he was attempting to provide a broader framework for understanding the behavior of the German nation under Hitler. The events that occurred in Germany under Hitler, he believed, could only be explained by the effects of powerful archetypal forces such as Wotan on the behavior of the German people. Because this aspect of the German psyche had not been accepted and related to consciously by enough Germans, it formed part of their personal and collective shadows. For Jung, it was the refusal to recognize this vital aspect of their psychic lives and heritage that constituted the German people's fundamental abrogation of responsibility.

As noted in the preceding section, the great danger of the unrecognized or repressed shadow, regardless of its specific contents which may vary among individuals and groups, is that it leads inescapably to a state of unconscious possession, which ultimately will be lived out in the external world as fate. Once the German people had become possessed by the unassimilated Wotan aspect of their psyches, they were destined to live it out unconsciously with all the attendant consequences. The German case thus provides a tragic illustration of why Jung repeatedly stressed that recognition of the shadow aspects of one's psyche is not

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48/ Ibid., par. 385.

only necessary for psychological growth but also a moral imperative with implications extending far beyond the personal life of the individual.

Underscoring the dangers inherent in ignoring one's shadow, Jung warned that "the psyche not only disturbs the natural order but, if it loses its balance, actually destroys its own creation. Therefore the careful consideration of psychic factors is of importance in restoring not merely the individual's balance, but society's as well, otherwise the destructive tendencies easily gain the upper hand." 49/ He thus concluded that: "Confrontation with an archetype or instinct is an ethical problem of the first magnitude, the urgency of which is felt only by people who find themselves faced with the need to assimilate the unconscious and integrate their personalities." 50/

The far-reaching and destructive consequences of refusing to deal with psychic forces such as Wotan was one of the primary reasons Jung steadfastly maintained that it was of the utmost importance that modern man recognize the reality and nature of the psyche. In this regard he observed:

If we deny the existence of the autonomous systems, imagining that we have got rid of them by a mere critique of the name, then the effect which they still continue to exert can no longer be understood, nor can they be assimilated to consciousness. They become an inexplicable source of disturbance which we finally assume must exist somewhere outside ourselves. The resultant projection creates a dangerous situation in that the disturbing effects are now attributed to a wicked will outside ourselves, which is naturally not to be found anywhere but with our neighbor de l'autre coté de la rivière. This leads to collective delusions, "incidents," revolutions, war--in a word, to destructive mass psychoses. 51/

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49/ CW 8, par. 428.

50/ Ibid., par. 410.

51/ CW 13, par. 52.

In 1946, looking back on the tragic events of the preceding years, he wrote:

National Socialism was one of those psychological mass phenomena, one of the outbreaks of the collective unconscious, about which I have been speaking for twenty years. The driving forces of a psychological mass-movement are essentially archetypal. 52/

Jung felt that if enough Germans had recognized the Wotan aspect of their psyches and related on a conscious level to this tremendously powerful force, the German people could have become creatively reconnected to their spiritual roots and the tragedy that befell Germany and the world in the form of Hitler and World War II might have been averted. Noting the critical role of the individual in arresting mass-movements such as National Socialism, he wrote:

During a collective manifestation of archetypes there is always a great danger of a mass movement, and a catastrophe can be avoided only if the effect of the archetypes can be intercepted and assimilated by a sufficiently large majority of individuals. At the very least there must be a certain number of individuals who are still capable of making their influence felt. 53/

However, he observed that under the circumstances prevailing in Germany at that time most people remained unaware of the psychic forces at work in their lives. 54/ "Defeat and social disaster had increased the herd instinct in Germany, so that it became more and more probable that Germany would be the first victim among Western nations--victim of a

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52/ CW 10, par. 474.

53/ Ibid., par. 461.

54/ Jung noted that attempts were made by some groups to bring to consciousness the Wotan aspect of the German character, especially in the form of the Germanic religious movements in the 1920s and 1930s. See *ibid.*, par. 397-398.

mass movement brought about by an upheaval of forces lying dormant in the unconscious, ready to break through all moral barriers." 55/

The second characteristic of the German shadow problem that Jung identified as pathological was the German nation's acute sense of national inferiority, particularly vis-à-vis its European neighbors. He attributed this sense of inferiority in part to the relatively late founding of the German nation, especially in comparison to France and England, which prevented Germany from participating fully in the European division of the world into colonial empires. In his opinion, this sense of national inferiority, which he believed was exacerbated by the bitter military defeat in World War I and the ensuing social, political and economic turmoil, was an important factor influencing German policy under Hitler.

Jung believed that acute forms of hysteria could lead to a loosening and systematic disassociation of opposites in the psyche and that such a condition is usually characterized by total ignorance of the shadow. 56/ Describing the effects of acute inferiority, he observed: "(It) can easily lead to an hysterical disassociation of the personality, which consists essentially in one hand not knowing what the other is doing, in wanting to jump over one's shadow, and in looking for everything dark, inferior and culpable in others". 57/ He believed that the Germans' heightened sense of inferiority during the post-World War I period resulted in such a hysteric disassociation on a collective level.

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55/ Ibid., par. 448.

56/ Ibid., par. 424.

57/ Ibid., par. 417.

More specifically, he felt that the Germans' increased sense of inferiority after the bitter defeat of World War I acted to accentuate the already deep-rooted shadow problem of most Germans, and ultimately resulted for many Germans in a complete disassociation of their shadows from their conscious personalities. 58/

The disassociation of the shadow from consciousness in so many Germans, Jung believed, was one of the principal factors in Hitler's rise to power, which Jung did not view as a mere coincidence. In Jung's view, Germany's fate became tied to Hitler's because Hitler embodied the pathological characteristics associated with the German sense of inferiority, characteristics not uncommon to dictators in general, which he identified as:

- complete lack of insight into one's own character,
- auto-erotic self-admiration and self-extenuation,
- denigration and terrorization of others,
- projection of the shadow,
- lying and falsification of reality,
- determination to impress by fair means or foul, and
- bluffing and double-crossing.

He observed that all these features were united in a person who, having been diagnosed clinically as an hysteric, eventually became the political, moral and religious spokesman of Germany for twelve years. 59/ He asked: "Is this pure chance?" 60/

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58/ See *ibid.*, par. 416-427.

59/ *Ibid.*, par. 418.

60/ *Ibid.* P. W. Martin observed: "Few things are more incredible in the history of humanity than the manner in which the German people cast the mantle of the hero-saviour upon Adolph Hitler. Yet such are the forces evoked that, in the course of twenty years, this sixth member of an obscure political party, meeting in a Munich beer-house, was within an ace of becoming the master of the world." Experiment in Depth: A Study of the Work of Jung, Eliot and Toynebee (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 108.

Jung further observed that Hitler's mannerisms, which he viewed as theatrical and obviously hysterical, struck most foreigners as ridiculous, whereas Hitler made an immensely favorable impression on most Germans. Jung accounts for this wide discrepancy between the perceptions of foreigners, many of whom viewed Hitler as something akin to a "psychic scarecrow", and the perception of many Germans, who viewed Hitler as a savior, in terms of this collective sense of inferiority. He wrote: "The German people would never had been taken in and carried away so completely by Hitler if this figure had not been a reflected image of the collective German hysteria." 61/ He further noted:

[The Germans] did not understand wherein Hitler's significance lay, that he symbolized something in every individual. He was the most prodigious personification of all human inferiorities. He was an utterly incapable, unadapted, irresponsible, psychopathic personality, full of empty, infantile fantasies, but cursed with the keen intuition of a rat or a guttersnipe. He represented the shadow, the inferior part of everybody's personality, in an overwhelming degree, and this was another reason why they fell for him. 62/

This situation in which it was far easier for foreigners than for most Germans to see through Hitler and recognize an inferior personality illustrates what von Franz has observed regarding the effects of the collective shadow: that each person in a group or nation reinforces others in his or her blindness and the collective shadow is therefore extremely difficult to identify when one is caught up in it. She noted that in their homes many Germans were often anti-Nazi, but when they went to a Nazi meeting they would be infected by the collective shadow

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61/ CW 10, par. 419.

62/ CW 10, par. 454. See also William McGuire and R. F. C. Hull (eds.) C. G. Jung Speaking (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 118.



on an unconscious level and lose their rational perspective and judgment. 63/

The Germans therefore were not only possessed inwardly by the unrecognized and repressed shadow aspects of their psyches from which they had been cut off, but this inner state of possession became externalized in the form of Hitler and his total control over the German people and the fate of the German nation. The inner shadow problem thus was blindly lived out in the political arena as millions of Germans forfeited control over their lives and destinies to Hitler and the machinations of his political system.

In Jung's view, the German nation's acute sense of inferiority also was associated with an underdeveloped or inferior feeling function, which he believed to be generally characteristic of most Germans. According to Jung's widely accepted theory of psychological types, a person possesses four psychological functions: thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition. It has been found that people of certain nations often have certain of these functions more developed and others less developed. Jung believed the German people in general enjoyed a highly developed thinking function but suffered from a less developed or inferior feeling function. 64/

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63/ Von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, pp. 8-9. The link Jung identified between the German shadow and the rise to power of Hitler and Nazism is not uncommon to other situations in which dictators and demagogues appear to foreigners as "psychic scarecrows" or worse, but cast a binding spell over large segments of their own populations and enjoy considerable popular support. When this occurs, one may expect to find implicated the collective shadow.

64/ CW 10, par. 416.

In an essay on the feeling function, Hillman describes inferior feeling as follows:

Inferior feeling...may be characterized by contamination with the repressed which tends to manifest, as the Scholastics would have said, in ira and cupiditas. Inferior feeling is loaded with anger and rage and ambition and aggression as well as with greed and desire. Here we find ourselves with huge claims for love, with massive needs for recognition, and discover our feeling connection to life to be one vast expectation composed of thousands of tiny angry resentments. 65/

Jung believed that such effects of inferior feeling compounded Germany's shadow problem and deepened its already acute sense of national inferiority. This sense of inferiority, he felt, ultimately came to be compensated for by military aggression and in the irrational, inflated and pseudo-scientific race theories underlying Nazism. 66/

Jung believed that the two characteristics of the German nation's shadow problem implicated in the rise to power of Hitler and Nazism were adumbrated in Goethe's Faust and in the life and writings of Nietzsche. Finding in the character of Faust the same tensions existing in the psyches of many Germans, Jung wrote:

Nobody but a German could ever have devised such a figure, it is so intrinsically, so infinitely German. In Faust we see the same "hungering for the infinite" born from inner contradiction and dichotomy, the same eschatological expectation of the Great Fulfillment. In him we experience the loftiest flight of the mind and the descent into the depths of guilt and darkness, and still worse, a fall so low that Faust sinks to the level of a mountebank and wholesale murderer as the outcome of his pact with the devil. Faust, too, is split and sets up "evil" outside himself in the shape of Mephistopheles, to serve as an alibi in case of need. He likewise "knows

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65/ Marie Louise von Franz and James Hillman, Jung's Typology (Dallas: Spring Publications, Inc., 1984), p. 111. For a further discussion of inferior feeling, see ibid., pp. 104-12.

66/ CW 10, par. 416 and C. G. Jung Speaking, pp. 118-23.

nothing of what has happened," i.e., what the devil did to Philemon and Baucis. 67/

The figures of Faust and Mephistopheles mirror the deep-rooted conflict beginning to emerge in the German psyche. 68/ As many Germans became increasingly imbued with rationalism and cut-off from their spiritual and instinctual roots in the unconscious, they became susceptible to possession by those shadow contents of their psyches, personified in the figure of Mephistopheles, that eventually possessed not only Faust but, less than a century later, the entire German nation. In this sense the story of Faust can be viewed as a collective myth of the German nation. As Jung wrote:

"God-Almightiness" does not make man divine, it merely fills him with arrogance and arouses everything evil in him. It produces a diabolical caricature of man and this inhuman mask is so unendurable, such a torture to wear, that he tortures others. He is split in himself, a prey to inexplicable contradictions. Here we have the picture of the hysterical state of mind, of Nietzsche's "pale criminal." Fate has confronted every German with his inner counterpart: Faust is face to face with Mephistopheles and can no longer say, "So that was the essence of the brute!" He must confess instead: "That was my other side, my alter ego, my all too palpable shadow that can no longer be denied." 69/

In the life and writings of Nietzsche, the German shadow problem took a somewhat different turn than with Faust, but with the same tragic consequences. As Jung noted, references to the "blond beast" are found throughout Nietzsche's writings and his proclamation of the death of God led to Zarathustra's fateful meeting with an unknown god, indicating that Nietzsche was confronting the archetypal reality of Wotan in his

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67/ CW 10, par. 423.

68/ CW 10, par. 434.

69/ CW 10, par. 439.

own psyche. 70/ Jung observed of Nietzsche that "he was but one of the thousands and millions of Germans yet unborn in whose unconscious the Teutonic cousin of Dionysius--Wotan--came to birth during the Great War." 71/ However, instead of integrating this archetypal force by relating to it consciously, Nietzsche identified with it. Identification with an archetype invariably brings about a dangerous state of psychological inflation, and Nietzsche's life and writings clearly reflected such a state.

Jung also observed that Nietzsche attempted to avoid his shadow by "jumping over" it. In this respect, he thought that Nietzsche was clearly a harbinger of future events in Germany. Nietzsche's refusal to accept his shadow and his ensuing state of psychic inflation resulted in personal tragedy. Likewise, the refusal of the German people under Hitler to accept their shadows and the ensuing state of collective inflation resulted in a tragedy suffered not only by the German nation but by the entire world as well. 72/

Jung deeply lamented the Germans' failure to heed the prophetic warnings sounded in Faust's tragic encounter with his shadow, personified in the figure of Mephistopheles, and in Nietzsche's inflated identification with the archetypal force Wotan, personified in the image of the blond beast. 73/ Noting the parallels between Nietzsche's life and the fate of the German nation, Jung wrote in 1946:

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70/ CW 10, par. 376-383 and CW 11, par. 44.

71/ CW 11, par. 44.

72/ CW 8, par. 359.

73/ CW 10, par. 432-439.

The phenomenon we have witnessed in Germany was nothing more than the first outbreak of epidemic insanity, an irruption of the unconscious into what seemed to be a tolerably well-ordered world. A whole nation, as well as countless millions belonging to other nations, were swept into the blood-drenched madness of a war of extermination. No one knew what was happening to him, but least of all the Germans, who allowed themselves to be drawn to the slaughterhouse by their leading psychopaths like hypnotized sheep. Maybe the Germans were predestined to this fate, for they showed the least resistance to the mental contagion that threatened every European. But their peculiar gifts might also have enabled them to be the very people to draw helpful conclusions from the prophetic example of Nietzsche. Nietzsche was German to the marrow of his bones, even to the abstruse symbolism of his madness. It was the psychopath's weakness that prompted him to play with the "blond beast" and the "Superman". It was certainly not the healthy elements in the German nation that led to the triumph of these pathological fantasies on a scale never known before.... Here again the Germans had a priceless opportunity for self-knowledge--and let it slip. 74/

He found that the same pathological conditions reflected in Faust and in Nietzsche's life and writings began to appear in the dreams of his German patients after World War I. In 1946 he wrote:

As early as 1918, I noticed peculiar disturbances in the unconscious of my German patients which could not be ascribed to their personal psychology....There was a disturbance in the collective unconscious in every single one of my German patients. One can explain these disorders causally, but such an explanation is apt to be unsatisfactory, as it is easier to understand archetypes by their aim rather than by their causality. The archetypes I observed expressed primitivity, violence and cruelty. 75/

The dream material to which Jung refers in this passage formed the basis of his observation in 1918, quoted above, that the "blond beast" was beginning to stir in the German psyche and an outbreak was possible. Moreover, on the basis of these and subsequent dreams, he concluded that there was a direct link between the psychic conditions of the German

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74/ Ibid., par. 432.

75/ Ibid., par. 447.

people and the catastrophe that befell them and the world in the form of Hitler and World War II. 76/

[T]he tide that rose in the unconscious after the first World War was reflected in individual dreams, in the form of collective, mythological symbols which expressed primitivity, violence, cruelty: in short, all the powers of darkness. When such symbols occur in a large number of individuals and are not understood, they begin to draw these individuals together as if by magnetic force, and thus a mob is formed. Its leader will soon be found in the individual who has the least resistance, the least sense of responsibility and, because of his inferiority, the greatest will to power. He will let loose everything that is ready to burst forth and the mob will follow with the irresistible force of an avalanche. 77/

The link Jung found between the German shadow problem and the emergence of Hitler and National Socialism provided support for his hypotheses that fundamental social and political movements often are determined more by underlying psychic forces rather than by outer events and circumstances and that conditions giving rise to such movements are initially experienced on an individual level. 78/ Moreover, it lends weight to his strong conviction that the individual is the critical factor in the broader social and political events that shape the history of peoples and nations. "Incisive changes in history are generally attributed exclusively to external causes. It seems to me, however, that external circumstances often serve merely as occasions for a new attitude to life and the world, long prepared in the unconscious, to become manifest." 79/

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76/ CW 11, par. 44.

77/ CW 10, par. 449.

78/ See Volodymyr W. Odajnyk, Jung and Politics (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), pp. 121-2. For a further discussion of Jung's analysis of the German situation under Hitler, see *ibid.*, pp. 86-108.

79/ CW 8, par. 594.

The German experience of Hitler and National Socialism embodied three of the most significant political phenomena shaping the course of history in the twentieth century: totalitarianism, military aggression and genocide. In the German case, Jung believed these phenomena were inextricably linked to the shadow problem in the German psyche. Totalitarianism, military aggression and genocide, of course, have not been limited to Nazi Germany but have become all too common-place in this century. In this regard, Jung believed that, although the contemporary problem of the shadow was experienced acutely by the German people, it was by no means limited to them but is a broader problem in modern culture. He viewed the "blond beast" as representing, in general, modern man's primitive shadow side which had become disassociated from his conscious personality as a result of an over-emphasis on scientific rationalism in modern society. He wrote: "This condition was not by any means a purely Teutonic phenomenon, as became evident in the following years. The onslaught of primitive forces was more or less universal." 80/

Further emphasizing the universal nature of this problem, he stated:

But what could [the Germans] have done? In Hitler, every German should have seen his own shadow, his own worst danger. It is everybody's allotted fate to become conscious of and learn to deal with the shadow. But how could the Germans be expected to understand this, when nobody in the world can understand such a simple truth? The world will never reach a state of order until this truth is generally recognized. 81/

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80/ CW 10, par. 448.

81/ CW 10, par. 455.

He thus admonished that "we must all open our eyes to the shadow who looms behind contemporary man. We have no need to hold up the devil's mask before the Germans." 82/

From a psychological perspective, therefore, the German experience may be viewed as paradigmatic of the role that the shadow plays as a factor underlying totalitarianism, military aggression and genocide, which have become endemic to the twentieth century and which appear to be symptomatic of a deeper conflict in the souls of modern men and women. In the immediate wake of Germany's defeat in World War II the problem of the shadow began to play a critical role in United States-Soviet relations and the nuclear arms race, which for the first time in history posed the stark threat of global annihilation.

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82/ CW 10, par. 440.



IV. The Role of the Shadow in United States-Soviet Relations  
and the Nuclear Dilemma

Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in the post-World War II era have been characterized by acute polarization with respect to the two super-powers themselves as well as with respect to their impact throughout the world. Jung, who viewed with alarm the emergence of this political and ideological rift on a global scale, was concerned not only with its political implications but also with what he believed it reflected in the psyche of modern man. In a small book written in 1956, The Undiscovered Self, 83/ Jung raises what perhaps is the most critical issue of the modern era: "Today, as the end of the second millennium draws near, we are again living in an age filled with apocalyptic images of universal destruction. What is the significance of that split, symbolized by the 'Iron Curtain,' which divides humanity into two halves?" 84/

Jung held that the unresolved shadow problem in the psyches of modern men and women lies at the root of the political and ideological division between the East and the West. In his view, the problem of the shadow, which he believed always has been especially difficult for Western man as a consequence of the philosophical dualism inherent in Christianity, 85/ became increasingly troublesome in the modern world as a result of the emergence of scientific rationalism in the eighteenth

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83/ Reprinted in CW 10, par. 488-588.

84/ Ibid., par. 488.

85/ CW 9-II, par. 126.

century. He felt that the one-sidedness of scientific rationalism has created a deep fissure in the psyche of modern man, characterized by an identification with the intellect and an ensuing loss of instinct and alienation from the imaginal world of the unconscious. 86/ He wrote:

When any natural human function gets lost, i.e., is denied consciousness and intentional expression, a general disturbance results. Hence, it is quite natural that with the triumph of the Goddess of Reason a general neuroticizing of modern man should set in, a disassociation of personality analogous to the splitting of the world today by the Iron Curtain. This boundary line bristling with barbed wire runs through the psyche of modern man, no matter on which side he lives. And just as the typical neurotic is unconscious of his shadow side, so the normal individual, like the neurotic, sees his shadow in his neighbor or in the man beyond the great divide. 87/

Jung viewed this deep split in the psyche of modern man as the greatest threat to today's world because of the awesome forces present in the human psyche, as evidenced by the destructive consequences of the German nation's unconscious confrontation with the archetypal Wotan. He thus commented:

What our age thinks of the "shadow" and and inferior part of the psyche contains more than something merely negative. The very fact that through self-knowledge, that is, by exploring our own souls, we come upon the instincts and their world of imagery should throw some light on the powers slumbering in the psyche, of which we are seldom aware so long as all goes well. They are the potentialities of the greatest dynamism, and it depends entirely on the preparedness and attitude of the conscious mind whether the irruption of these forces, and the images and ideas associated with them, will tend towards construction or catastrophe. 88/

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86/ For Jung's view on the relationship between instinct and the unconscious, see CW 8, par. 263-282 and par. 371-442. Cf. Stevens, Archetypes, pp. 1-78.

87/ CW 10, par. 544.

88/ Ibid., par. 582.

He recognized the precariousness of this condition of neurotic disassociation in the psyche of modern man and its direct political implications and attempted in The Undiscovered Self as well as in other writings to warn of the consequences arising from a failure to recognize the nature and scope of the problem. However, his warnings have gone largely unheeded, while the collective shadow of modern man continues to exert ever-growing control over those persons who ignore the repressed elements of their own psyches.

Jung believed the psychology of the East-West conflict to be characteristic of war psychology in general, in which each side carries the other's projections and without which war would be difficult if not in many cases impossible to wage. It is the dehumanization of the adversary, which results from the projection of inferior or despised shadow qualities onto him, that facilitates the killing of human beings, even non-combatant women and children, in times of war. <sup>89/</sup> He wrote: "As events in wartime have clearly shown, our mentality is distinguished by the shameless naiveté with which we judge our enemy, and in the judgement we pronounce upon him we unwittingly reveal our own defects: we simply accuse our own enemy of our own unadmitted faults." <sup>90/</sup> He further commented:

War psychology has made this abundantly clear: everything my country does is good, everything the others do is bad. The center of all iniquity is invariably found to lie a few miles behind the enemy lines.... Naturally one would like to have

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<sup>89/</sup> For example, see Sanford, Evil: The Shadow Side of Reality, p. 60-1. "War not only gives us an opportunity to project our shadow onto the enemy; it virtually requires us to do this, since a human being can only be brought to kill another human being when he has depersonalized that person." Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>90/</sup> CW 10, par. 516.

better relations with one's fellows, but only on the condition that they live up to our expectations--in other words, that they become walking carriers of our projections. 91/

Jung believed that, while the West abhors the political and economic systems characteristic of Communism, which are inherently destructive of the individual and his striving for psychological and spiritual wholeness, it has been slow to recognize the full implications of its own materialistic and rationalistic world view, which he found shares the same intellectual assumptions, arguments and aims as that of the East. 92/ Thus, although the West despises Communism's materialism and atheism and prides itself on its religious and political freedom, it has been unwilling to accept that Western society in the twentieth century has become mired in materialistic consumerism and numbing mass-mindedness, which denigrate the uniqueness and dignity of the individual and increasingly cut him off from his psychological and spiritual roots in the unconscious. Believing that what the West sees reflected in Communism is the projection of the loss of its own psychological and spiritual identity, Jung wrote:

What, then, has the West, with its political and denominational schisms, to offer to modern man in his need? Nothing unfortunately, except a variety of paths all leading to one goal which is practically indistinguishable from the Marxist ideal.... Common to both is the materialistic and collectivist goal, and both lack the very thing that expresses and grips the whole man, namely, an idea which puts the individual human being in the centre as the measure of all things. 93/

Similarly, Communism's rejection of the religious and the

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91/ CW 8, par. 517.

92/ CW 10, par. 520-524.

93/ CW 10, par. 523.

transcendent, both of which are rooted in the unconscious, are part of its shadow projected onto the West. The repression of the religious and transcendent dimensions of life, which is institutionalized in Communist systems, prevents the individual from recognizing the nature and meaning of the psyche, as well as the contents of his own shadow, and ultimately leads to psychological and spiritual disintegration. Moreover, the refusal to acknowledge these repressed elements of the psyche results in a rigidity and sterility in the face of the need for change and renewal, which is generally characteristic of Communist systems on both an individual and collective level. In addition, dogmatic materialism's rejection of the unconscious makes the shadow equivalent, in effect, to the whole unconscious, which when projected in its entirety onto an adversary appears as a truly formidable threat. 94/

Sharing Jung's view, Stevens has written: "The contemporary Zeitgeist has created on both sides of the iron curtain...societies which are materially preoccupied, spiritually impoverished and technologically possessed; in a sense, the state socialism of the East and the consumer capitalism of the West are but opposite sides of the same coin--a purely materialistic conception of life." 95/ Stevens further observes that the two great secular myths of our time--Marxism and what Eliade termed the myth of infinite material progress--have resulted in the desacralization of both cosmos and society on both sides of the world-wide political rift. 96/ It was against this materialization and

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94/ Cf. Martin, Experiment in Depth, pp. 194-8 and von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, p. 5.

95/ Stevens, Archetypes, p. 279.

96/ Ibid., p. 278.

desacralization that Jung spent much of his life struggling in the practice of psychological healing with his patients and in his efforts to articulate an alternative world view to a broader public through his writings. This struggle forms a continuous thread running through much of Jung's work. 97/

The contents of the shadow projected across the East-West split are not limited to repressed aspects of the personal psyche. Political and ideological opponents often carry not only the projections of the repressed or unrecognized aspects of their adversaries' psyches, but projections of archetypal evil as well. 98/ Von Franz has pointed out that in psychological terms the image of the devil is a personification of the collective shadow and that the more a person loses touch with his or her personal shadow, the more it becomes infected by the collective shadow personified in images of evil. 99/ This type of unfettered projection of evil, which has become the norm in United States-Soviet relations, is one of the principal reasons why prevailing patterns of

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97/ See Peter Homans, Jung in Context (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp. 178-81.

98/ Remarks by political leaders often reveal the projection of evil onto political and ideological adversaries. In recent years, for example, one finds Khomeini identifying the United States as the source of evil in the world, the Argentine nation vilifying Prime Minister Thatcher as diabolical during the Falklands-Malvinas war, and President Reagan characterizing the Soviet Union as an evil empire. Such statements could be dismissed as mere political rhetoric if they did not reveal that some world leaders and, in certain cases, entire nations may be caught in the grip of the collective shadow personified as archetypal evil.

99/ Von Franz, Shadow and Evil in Fairytales, p. 9. "[W]e could say that as long as such collective demons get us, we must have a little bit of them in us; otherwise, they would not get us, for then our psychic door would not be open to infection. When parts of the personal shadow are not sufficiently integrated, the collective shadow can sneak through this door." *Ibid.*

conflict and misunderstanding between the two superpowers are so difficult to reverse; without a convenient "hook" for the collective shadow, each side would have to admit its own capacity for evil.

In its collective form, therefore, the shadow can become personified as evil and take on archetypal characteristics. However, as Jung observed, while a person can face his personal shadow without too much difficulty, to confront the collective shadow in the form of archetypal evil is much more problematic and even dangerous because it would amount to gazing into the face of absolute evil and this would shatter a person. 100/ Nevertheless, in Jung's view, because of the shadow, the problem of evil is lodged in human nature, and each person consequently has the responsibility to recognize his or her own capacity for evil in the concrete form of his or her shadow. 101/ This, he believed, was the greatest moral imperative facing modern men and women.

Because he feared Western man was in danger of completely losing touch with his shadow, as occurred to the German nation under Hitler, he felt the problem of evil was especially urgent in the present nuclear age. He wrote:

...Western man is in danger of losing his shadow altogether, of identifying himself with his fictive personality and the world with the abstract picture painted by scientific rationalism. His spiritual and moral opponent, who is just as real as he, no longer dwells in his own breast but beyond the geographical line of division, which no longer represents an outward political barrier but splits off the conscious from the unconscious more and more menacingly. 102/

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100/ "[I]t is quite within the bounds of possibility for a man to recognize the relative evil of his nature, but it is a rare and shattering experience for him to gaze into the face of absolute evil." CW 9-11, par. 19.

101/ CW 10, par. 573.

102/ Ibid., par. 559.

It was because of this increasing disassociation of the shadow from the conscious personality of modern man that Jung viewed with alarm the political and ideological schism between the East and West. He realized that the more the shadow and the capacity for evil remain unrecognized within the individual psyche, the more they will be projected outward and experienced unconsciously as fate in the external world.

Today humanity, as never before, is split into two apparently irreconcilable halves. The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate. That is to say, when an individual does not become conscious of his inner opposite, the world must perforce act out the conflict and be torn into opposing halves. 103/

The consequences of this situation are profound. As Jung noted, the projection of evil onto one's adversary "strengthens the opponent's position in the most effective way, because the projection carries the fear which we involuntarily and secretly feel for our own evil over to the other side and considerably increases the formidableness of his threat. What is even worse, our lack of insight deprives us of the capacity to deal with evil." 104/ He believed the heightened sense of fear and distrust resulting from mutual projections confounds immeasurably the political difficulties present in the East-West conflict. At the same time he realized that these projections constitute a major obstacle in dealing with the shadow and evil on a personal level inasmuch as large numbers of people are convinced that iniquity and evil exist solely outside themselves and thus feel no moral compulsion to confront their own inner darkness.

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103/ CW 9-11, par. 126.

104/ Ibid., par. 572.



The costs of this failure to recognize the shadow and evil as phenomena that need to be dealt with first and foremost on an inner level have been enormous in the context of U.S.-Soviet relations. The gulf separating the East and West in the past twenty-five years has turned into an insatiable vortex devouring a large portion of the \$800 billion spent annually on armaments. Moreover, aggravating regional tensions throughout the world, it impedes efforts for economic and social progress in many non-industrialized countries. Most significant, however, is the threat of nuclear annihilation and the sense of pessimism and futility it engenders in succeeding generations of young people, the psychological and spiritual cost of which is incalculable.

From the very inception of the nuclear age Jung was quite concerned with the psychological and moral consequences of the splitting of the atom. He viewed atomic fission as an external manifestation of the inner psychic split in modern man. He recognized in the image of the atom a symbolic representation of the fundamental structure of the human psyche, noting the root of the word "atom" is derived from the Greek word meaning indivisible. <sup>105/</sup> However, just as the earlier notions of the atom as an indivisible structure of nature were shown by modern physics to be false, the supposed indivisibility of the human psyche at its most fundamental levels has been found by depth psychology to be equally erroneous. The present-day fragmentation of the human psyche is evidenced by the widely reported occurrences of dreams in which appear

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<sup>105/</sup> See CW 9-I, par. 116-117; CW 9-II, par. 376, 380, 391 and 411; and CW 8, par. 278 and 471.

images of nuclear explosions, often in the form of a bright flash of light followed by the ominous mushroom-shaped cloud. Such nocturnal visions convey to consciousness images of the psyche as it suffers some deep fission resulting from the splitting of psychic contents and the disassociation of the shadow from consciousness.

Jung felt that nuclear fission would never have come about if the inner psychic conditions of modern man were not in some way disposed to it. Thus, in Jung's view, the inner split in the human psyche has resulted not only in a world-wide political and ideological schism, but also in the division of one of nature's most fundamental elements. He wrote:

In theory, it lies within the power of reason to desist from experiments of such hellish scope as nuclear fission if only because of their dangerousness. But fear of the evil which one does not see in one's own bosom but always in somebody else's checks reason every time, although everyone knows that the use of this weapon means the certain end of our present human world. The fear of universal destruction may spare us the worst, yet the possibility of it will nevertheless hang over us like a dark cloud so long as no bridge is found across the world-wide psychic and political split--a bridge as certain as the existence of the hydrogen bomb. If only a world-wide consciousness could arise that all division and fission are due to the splitting of opposites in the psyche, then we should know where to begin. 106/

Jung's belief that the roots of the nuclear problem can be found in the human psyche provides a much-needed antidote to the pervasive sense of helplessness many people feel in the face of the nuclear dilemma. If Jung's view is correct, inner healing and transformation of the individual is crucial to the resolution of the nuclear problem. Replying to a question about the probability of nuclear war, he remarked: "I think

it depends on how many people can stand the tension of opposites in themselves. If enough can, I think we can stand the worst." 107/

Jung therefore rejected the inevitability of nuclear annihilation and held that such a fate could be avoided if enough individuals recognized the imperative of becoming conscious of their own inner splits and undertook the process of inner healing. However, he believed that the emergence of such a consciousness required nothing less than a spiritual rebirth in which modern man recognizes the need to reconnect with his spiritual and psychological roots in the unconscious. He maintained that just as it was necessary in the seventeenth-century for the Copernican revolution to free the picture of the world from a geocentric view of the universe, it was necessary in this century for a revolution of comparable magnitude to free modern man from the pervasive notion that psychic activities are grounded solely in the biochemical processes of the brain. 108/

When writing of spiritual rebirth, Jung often referred to the New Testament story in which Nicodemus asks Christ if it is necessary for a man to reenter his mother's womb a second time to be born again. Christ responded that the rebirth of which he spoke was of the spirit, and chided Nicodemus on his literal interpretation. 109/ For Jung, this story illustrates one of the fundamental differences between his and Freud's theories of the unconscious. Freud, he believed, remained tied

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107/ Barbara Hannah, Encounters with the Soul (Santa Monica, California: Sigo Press, 1981), p. 8.

108/ For example, CW 10, par. 527, CW 9-I, par. 118 and CW 8, par. 369.

109/ John 3:1-10.

to the materialism and literalism of the positivist world view of his day and consequently foundered on what he referred to as the Nicodemus question. 110/ Contrasting his and Freud's views of the unconscious, Jung wrote:

[The psyche] is a whole which embraces consciousness and is the mother of consciousness. Scientific thought, being only one of its functions, can never exhaust all the possibilities of life. The psychotherapist must even be able to admit that the ego is ill for the very reason that it is cut off from the whole, and has lost its connection with mankind as well as the spirit. The ego is indeed the "place of of fears" as Freud says in the The Ego and the Id, but only so long as it has not returned to the "father" (spirit) and "mother" (nature). Freud shipwrecks on the question of Nicodemus: "Can a man enter his mother's womb a second time and be born again?" 111/

Jung thus believed that the Western scientific world view in general and Freudian psychology in particular trap man in the illusory perception of an inexorable cycle of biological events, which blinds him to the reality of his psychic nature and all it entails. 112/ In this sense the Nicodemus story can be viewed as a metaphor for the current plight of modern man caught in the destructive cycles of the materialism and literalism characteristic of a one-sided rationalistic world view that continues to prevail in many sectors of society. The more feverishly modern man attempts to extricate himself from such problems as the nuclear arms race, the more entangled in them he becomes, as the recent escalation of the arms race reveals, and the more precarious becomes his individual and collective plight.

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110/ CW 5, par. 332 ff.

111/ C. G. Jung, Modern Man in Search for a Soul (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1933), p. 123.

112/ Ibid., p. 121.

Jung arrived at his understanding of the psyche and its relationship to outer events and circumstances in his capacity as a physician. He discovered that the modern world view precluded what he came to view as the most essential factor in healing: a transformation in perception and attitude with respect to the autonomous factors operating in the individual's psyche. Once he grasped the primary role of the psyche in both sickness and healing, he found himself obligated, morally and ethically, to explore the broader implications of the psyche, which in turn lead him to a view of the world substantially different from that of his contemporaries. He wrote: "We owe it to the difficulties presented by the daily treatment of the sick that we were driven to formulate views which shake the foundations of our everyday beliefs." 113/

For Jung, a broader and deeper understanding of the individual, one not encrusted in an out-moded world view, was essential for the solution to many of today's problems. Such an understanding, he maintained, was critical not only for healing on a personal level but also for the resolution of broader social and political problems that threaten the well-being and survival of humankind, including the seemingly intractable conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and the threat of nuclear annihilation. Thus, for Jung the outcome of outer problems, no less than the outcome of inner ones, hinges to a large degree on the individual and the individual's recognition of psychic reality and its effects upon him and, through him, on society.

In the last analysis, the essential thing is the life of the individual. This alone makes history. Here alone do the great transformations take place, and the whole future, the

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113/ CW 8, par. 516.

whole history of the world, ultimately springs as a gigantic summation from those hidden sources in individuals. In our most private and subjective lives we are not only the passive witnesses of our age, and its sufferers, but also its makers. We make our epoch. 114/

The conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union has many facets: political, military, economic and cultural. However, what appears to fuel this conflict most is the ideological differences separating the two superpowers. The peculiar ideological malady of the twentieth century continues to pose one of the most serious threats to peace in the contemporary world riven with ideological and religious fanaticism on a global scale. The following section will explore Jung's view of the psychological roots of ideology and the central role played by the shadow in ideological conflict and violence.

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114/ CW 10, par. 315.

V. Ideology and the Shadow

The twentieth century has witnessed the rise of the great ideological systems that have shaped much of its political, social and economic history. Often noted in relation to the emergence of the ideological systems in this century is the widespread breakdown of the collective symbol systems found in traditional religions as the primary mediators of the spiritual and psychological life of modern man. Jung, who believed a close link existed between religion and ideology, held that the foundations of both religion and ideology are archetypal. "The essential content of all mythologies and all religions and all isms (ideologies) is archetypal." 115/

What Jung meant by "archetypal" is to be understood in terms of his theory of the archetype, which has been described as the most ontologically fundamental of all his psychological concepts. 116/ Jung referred to the basic structures or determinants of the collective unconscious or objective psyche as archetypes and held that they constitute the foundations underlying both psychic and physical processes, which he believed were closely related. He found that on the psychic level the archetypes manifest as images and ideas and on the physical level they manifest as instinct. Explaining what he meant by archetype, he wrote:

The term archetype is not meant to denote an inherited idea, but rather an inherited mode of functioning, corresponding to the inborn way in which the chick emerges from the egg, the

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115/ CW 8, par. 406. See also CW 10, par. 544.  
116/ James Hillman, Loose Ends (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1975), p. 142.

bird builds its nest, a certain type of wasp stings the motor ganglion of the caterpillar, and eels find their way to the Bermudas. In other words, it is a 'pattern of behaviour'. This aspect of the archetype is the biological one....But this picture changes at once when looked at from the inside, that is from the realm of the objective psyche. Here the archetype presents itself as numinous, that is, it appears as an experience of fundamental importance--whether it clothes itself in the appropriate symbols, which is not always the case, it puts the individual into a state of possessedness, the consequences of which may be incalculable. 117/

Elaborating further on the nature and function of the archetypes, Jung described them as "an a priori, inborn focus or intuition, or modes of perception and apprehension, which are the necessary determinants of all psychic processes." 118/

Von Franz has described in similar terms Jung's notion of the archetypes:

[T]hat together with instinctual patterns of action, man experiences, inwardly and psychologically, the upsurge of typical fantasy-images, emotions and ideas. The latter aspect of our unconscious human structure Jung called ... the archetypes. They are inherited dispositions which cause us to react to generally outer or inner problems in a typical way. Probably every instinct has its corresponding archetypal structure. The totality of this structure is what Jung called the collective unconscious. 119/

As examples, she cites the instinct of aggression, which manifests in dreams, for instance, as war-gods such as Wotan, Mars or Shiva the destroyer; the maternal instinct, which is represented in the mother figures found in religions and myths; and the instinctual urge towards renewal and change, which appears in the myths of the divine child found

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117/ CW 18, par. 1228.

118/ CW 8, par. 270.

119/ Marie Louise von Franz, "Jung and Society", In the Wake of Jung, p. 26.



in most religions and mythological systems. 120/ Hillman, noting that the archetypes manifest in many different forms, writes: "By traditional definition, archetypes are the primary forms that govern the psyche. But they cannot be contained only by the psyche, since they manifest as well in physical, social, linguistic, aesthetic, and spiritual modes." 121/

In later formulations of his understanding of the notion of archetype, Jung distinguished between what he referred to as archetypes "per se" and their varied psychic and physical manifestations. He came to conclude in his later writings that it was possible only to have indirect knowledge of the archetypes through their psychic and physical manifestations and that the archetypes "per se," as the basic structures of the objective psyche, were inaccessible to direct experience and, by their very nature, unrepresentable. 122/

Because of the profound implications of this seminal concept, its importance cannot be understated. Although largely ignored for many years outside the field of depth psychology, it has gained increased

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120/ Ibid.

121/ James Hillman, Archetypal Psychology (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1983), p. 1.

122/ CW 8, par. 417-420 and 369. Whitmont views Jung's later formulation of the notion of archetype as analogous to field theory in modern physics whereby a field can be understood as an energy pattern or configuration that becomes perceptible through the patternings of observable elements susceptible to its influence. "What Jung calls the objective psyche may be likened to an encompassing energy stratum from which arise varying field activities discernible to the experienced observer through the patternings of image, emotion and drive configurations. These psychic field expressions Jung has called complexes and archetypes of the objective psyche." Whitmont, The Symbolic Quest, p. 42. See also Robert Avens, Imagination is Reality (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1980), p. 43, n. 41.

recognition in such diverse fields as religion, anthropology, biology and physics. Indeed, if Jung's theory of the archetypes is correct, many of the assumptions regarding the epistemological foundations of these and other fields will require reevaluation. As Jung has written:

All the most powerful ideas in history go back to archetypes. This is particularly true of religious ideas, but the central concepts of science, philosophy, and ethics are no exception to the rule. In their present form they are variants of archetypal ideas, created by consciously applying and adopting these ideas to reality. For it is the function of consciousness not only to recognize and assimilate the external world through the gateway of the senses, but to transform into visible reality the world within us. 123/

Also noting the broader implications of Jung's theory of the archetypes, von Franz has observed:

Jung was interested not only in the specific illnesses of the soul, but even more in the mystery of the human psyche itself, which is the source of all human activities. No house was ever built, no work of art ever created, no scientific discovery ever made, no religious rite ever observed without the participation of the human psyche... We can even say that the humanities, the natural sciences, religions, arts, as well as both the sociological and the individual behavior of human beings, appear in an entirely new light as a result of the discovery of the unconscious. 124/

Jung believed that one of the essential functions of religion was to connect the individual to the deeper, archetypal layers of the unconscious or objective psyche. 125/ Because of what he perceived as the archetypal foundations of ideologies and therefore their close relationship to religion, Jung took a keen interest in the emergence of the great ideological systems during his lifetime and their consequences for

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123/ CW 8, par. 342. See also von Franz, Projection and Re-Collection in Jungian Psychology, pp. 53-76.

124/ Von Franz, C. G. Jung: His Myth in Our Time (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975), p. 5.

125/ For example, CW 8, par. 427.

the spiritual and psychological well-being of modern man. He recognized that the collective systems of symbols and rituals contained in traditional religions, which had acted to mediate the relationship between the individual and the objective psyche in the past, were losing their force and meaning for many modern men and women, who were generally less capable of experiencing the powerful energies of the psyche through such collective systems. As a consequence, he realized that large numbers of people in modern society no longer have operative symbol systems, religious or otherwise, through which they can meaningfully relate to the archetypal forces of the unconscious and that this situation has profound implications not only for the individual but for modern society as well. In this regard, he wrote:

The archetypes are continuously present and active; as such they need no believing in, but only an intuition of their meaning and a certain sapient awe ... which never loses sight of their import. A consciousness sharpened by experience knows the catastrophic consequences that disregard of this entails for the individual as well as for society. 126/

The loss of force and meaning of traditional symbol systems for many people in modern society, brought about in part by an over-valuation of rationalism, as Jung and others have noted, and in part by the evolutionary need for greater individual awareness than can be achieved through the collective modalities for relating to the archetypal world of the objective psyche, has meant that many people in modern society lack a creative and meaningful relationship to the archetypal world of the objective psyche. Regarding this loss of the

traditional symbol systems as the mediators between the individual and the world of the archetypes, Edinger has observed:

This is a dangerous state of affairs because, when such categories do not exist, the ego is likely to think of itself as everything or as nothing. Furthermore, when the archetypes have no adequate container such as an established religious structure, they have to go somewhere else because the archetypes are facts of psychic life. One possibility is that they will be projected into banal or secular matters. The transpersonal value can then become how high one's standard of living is, or personal power, or some social reform movement, or any one of numerous political activities. This happens in Nazism, the radical right, and in Communism, the radical left.... Personal, secular, or political actions become charged with unconscious religious meaning. This is particularly dangerous because whenever a religious motivation is acting unconsciously it causes fanaticism with all its destructive consequences. 127/

Edinger has further observed that secular goals cannot provide adequate containers for religious meaning and that idolization occurs when the religious energies of the archetypal unconscious are projected onto secular events or objects. He claims that when this occurs, the result is spurious, unconscious religion. 128/

Jung, who described ideologies (he often used the term "isms") as "sophisticated substitutes for the lost link with psychic reality," warned that the mass-mindedness resulting when ideologies flourish destroys the meaning of both the individual and culture. 129/ "The current 'isms' are the most serious threat in this respect, because they are nothing but dangerous identifications of the subjective with the collective consciousness. Such an identity infallibly produces a mass

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127/ Edward Edinger, Ego and Archetype (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 64.

128/ Ibid., p. 68.

129/ CW 8, par. 426-427.

psyche with its irresistible urge to catastrophe." 130/ He further observed that the persons most subject to the spell of ideologies are those who have the least access to the inner world of the psyche. 131/ Or, as noted by Hillman:

Ideologies do not originate in the strength or truth of ideas; they do not require important ideas at all, and may be based more on slogans than on articulated systems. Their true source is in souls that have lost valid psychological perspectives. An idea turns into an ideology owing to the conviction it receives, the passion with which a soul lost to itself invests it. 132/

In addition, many people look to ideologies for explanations of the causes of political, social or economic ills and for solutions derived from such explanations. As necessary and urgent as the search for explanations of and solutions to many contemporary problems is, the invocation of ideologies in this process merely serves to confuse and compound the very problems the ideologies purport to explain and resolve. Because ideologies are rooted in the archetypal foundations of the objective psyche, instead of identifying a problem and its solution, they cause archetypal images and fantasies, upon which religion and myth also are grounded, to be projected onto events, objects and persons in the outer world. The result is that the realms of the inner and the outer become hopelessly entangled in both perception and experience.

Hillman has noted the close link that exists between a persons psychological state and his or her perception and experience of the outer world. He has written:

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130/ Ibid., par. 426.

131/ Ibid., par. 405.

132/ James Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 119.

... [O]n the one hand, daily practical events contain psyche--a fantasy image, private idea, or deeper emotional meaning. On the other hand, invisible ideas, emotions and fantasies are also being practiced somewhere in our public lives. For us (depth psychologists) private and public sectors connect; we assume every problem has a private sector to it and that fantasies appear first in the public sector as hard, tough, real, thorny, weighty, and urgent problems. 'Problems' are simply the dense outer shell in which fantasies are wrapped. They cannot be truly solved until we have uncovered the fantasies nourishing them from inside. 133/

Central among the images and fantasies that are constellated through ideologies is the shadow, as ideological adversaries become unconsciously identified with the darkness projected onto them. In fact, a key element of ideologies of both the right and the left, as well as of religious fanaticism, is the repression of the shadow and its consequent projection onto one's opponents or enemies. Thus, for many people one of the most compelling features of ideologies is the license they afford to project the shadow and evil onto political or ideological adversaries and thereby avoid what Jung has referred to as the moral imperative and ethical obligation of each person to become aware of his or her shadow as a source of darkness and destruction. Indeed, one of the most salient psychological characteristics of ideological and religious fanaticism is shadow possession, as tragically evidenced in the vilest acts committed in the name and for the sake of some archetypal fantasy dressed in ideological or religious garb.

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133/ James Hillman, Psychological Fantasies in Transportation Problems (The Center for Civic Leadership, University of Dallas: Irving, Texas, 1979), p. 1.

Describing the psychological roots of contemporary ideological conflicts and the role of the shadow in such conflicts, von Franz has written:

The contemporary division of society into a "right" wing and a "left" wing is nothing but a neurotic disassociation, reflecting on the world stage what is happening in the individual modern man: a division within himself, which causes the shadow--that is, what is unacceptable to consciousness--to be projected onto an opponent, while he identifies with a fictitious self-image and with the abstract picture of the world offered by scientific rationalism, which leads to a constantly greater loss of instinct and especially to the loss of caritas, the love of one's neighbor so sorely needed in the contemporary world. 134/ (footnote omitted)

She underscores the danger of the unholy admixture of the inner and the outer in the politico-social sphere: "Our freedom is threatened in equal measure from within by politico-social trends, whose 'eternal truths'--that is, whose archetypal images--overwhelm the unconscious ego with a state of possession which has a political appearance." 135/

P. W. Martin identified the psychological process often employed in ideological systems, and particularly under totalitarianism, to induce individuals to disassociate themselves from the shadow contents of their psyches and project them onto real or imaginary foes. Under such systems, he points out, people are importuned by political leaders to identify themselves with some super-human persona, such as a historical figure like the hero Siegfried, or an Anthropos-type figure that is projected onto an entire group, such as the working class or the Aryan race. Through political propaganda they are then encouraged to project their shadows, in their darkest and most demonic forms, onto real or

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134/ Von Franz, C. G. Jung: His Myth in Our Time, p. 265.

135/ Ibid., pp. 258-9.

imagined foes. Ultimately, a leader emerges who eventually becomes the carrier of unconscious projections of the hero or savior, and a great historic purpose requiring unquestioning loyalty and complete devotion is proclaimed. 136/

Martin recognized in this process a formula for psychic disintegration. The individual, through identification with an inflated persona, loses touch with his or her shadow which, instead of being confronted, is projected onto an enemy, while other positive contents of the unconscious are projected onto a messianic leader. Instead of a creative relationship with the inner, transformative energies of the psyche, which underly all the great religions, such forces are lived out unconsciously in their projected forms in the political, social and economic arenas.

According to Martin,

Leninism, Fascism, Hitlerism, Stalinism, have all been shaped to this formula. By its means immense energy can be generated: fanatical certainty, fanatical dynamism, fanatical cruelty, fanatical self-sacrifice. The forces of the deep unconscious are aroused and their tremendous power mobilized in the service of an ideological creed.... Such is the well-worn formula for splitting the human psyche and using archetypal energy so released for purposes of power.... It is the negation of wholeness at every point. 137/

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136/ Martin, Experiment in Depth, p. 194-5. The political figure that emerges need not be a contemporary one. Martin cites Marx as an example of the carrier of the image of an archetype for millions of people: "Marx is seen not as a fallible human being, industriously making notes in the British Museum, but as a latter-day prophet to whom the ultimate verities have been revealed. This, indeed, is one of the great dangers of the Wise Old Man archetype. In its projected form it can induce entire peoples to drape the panoply of absolute truth around some 'human-all-too-human' figure, and to remain caught, perhaps for a whole era, in some plausible but erroneous myth." Ibid., p. 95. Cf. Von Franz, "Jung and Society", In the Wake of Jung, pp. 36-7.

137/ Martin, Experiment in Depth, p. 195-6.



The archetypal foundation of ideological and religious fanaticism can be recognized in the psychology of many dictators. What is common to many of them is their unconscious identification with powerful psychic forces and the resultant psychological inflation. Von Franz describes this condition as follows:

... [I]t makes the individual identify with the "great man" or "wise woman" within, and thus to become hopelessly inflated. In every asylum one finds a few Jesus Christs, Napoleons, Presidents of the United States and Virgin Marys. But when people are thus plainly mad, it is not so dangerous; there are many who only secretly overestimate themselves through identification with a figure of the Self.... They are secretly inhuman through some fanatical conviction or self-righteous attitude. This is what stands behind the many massacres of our time, much more than the outbursts of affect in single individuals which is the well-known other source of killing amongst men. 138/

She notes that "ideological fanaticism or overwhelming affect comes from the constellation of an archetype," and decries the state of psychological possession, common in today's world, resulting from such an identification with unconscious forces. 139/

Ideology, therefore, not only invests political, social and economic problems and events with archetypal significance, but also leads inexorably to the constellation of the shadow in its darkest and most demonic forms. Moreover, the archetypal roots of ideology as a psychological phenomenon increase the likelihood that ideological differences will escalate into violence in that the tremendous power of the archetypal forces at work unconsciously in the individual psyche, combined with

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138/ Von Franz, "Jung and Society", In the Wake of Jung, p. 38.

139/ Ibid.

virulent shadow projection, make violence seem not only justified but, in many instances, a sacred duty.

Ideological violence has not been limited to conflict between nations but, as events in many parts of the world attest, has set brother against brother and torn societies asunder. For example, Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge savagely massacred almost half the population of Cambodia in a fanatical effort to exorcise evil from Cambodian society and construct a new and flawless system, while at the same time they were totally blinded to their own shadows and capacities for evil. In many Latin American societies, ideological fanaticism has resulted in similar barbarism, albeit on a lesser scale. When the Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa was asked why he wrote The War of the End of the World, a novel about ideological and religious fanaticism in a local conflict in nineteenth-century Brazil, he replied by describing in effect the havoc that the unrecognized shadow has wrought in Latin American societies.

I decided to write the novel because in the history of the Canudos War you could really see something that has been happening in Latin American history over the 19th and 20th centuries--the total lack of communication between sections of a society which kill each other fighting ghosts. Fighting fictional enemies who are invented out of fanaticism, out of religious or political or economic blindness. This kind of reciprocal incapacity of understanding what you have opposing you is probably the main problem we have to overcome in Latin America, if we want to civilize our countries. 140/ (Emphasis in original)

In the Mideast, ideological and religious fanaticism also continues to exact its toll as millions of people are caught up in the psychic maelstrom resulting from political upheavals and cultural changes in

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140/ Washington Post, October 1, 1984, p. B1.

Islamic societies. Corbin, the late French scholar of Islam, is reported to have said: "What is wrong with the Islamic world is that it has destroyed its images, and without these images that are so rich and full in its tradition, they are going crazy because they have no containers for their extraordinary imaginative power." <sup>141/</sup> Commenting on Corbin's research on Islamic mysticism, Hillman has remarked that "[h]is work with mystic philosophical texts, the texts that reestablish the imaginal world, can be seen as political action of the first order: it is meeting terrorism, fanaticism and nihilism right at its root in the psyche." <sup>142/</sup>

Jung did not ignore the reality of political, social and economic ills whose solutions obviously require outer action. However, he believed outer action would meet with limited success and achieve limited meaningful change if it were not accompanied by the recognition that the source of much of the world's darkness and destruction originates in the human soul. Commenting on what often occurs when people attempt to change the world around them without also looking to their shadows as a source of conflict and destruction, he wrote:

In accordance with the prevailing tendency of consciousness to seek the source of all ills in the outside world, the cry goes up for political and social changes which, it is supposed, would automatically solve the much deeper problem of split personality. Hence it is that whenever this demand is fulfilled, political and social conditions arise which bring the same ills back again in altered form. What then happens is a simple reversal: the underside comes to the top and the shadow takes the place of the light, and since the former is always anarchic and turbulent, the freedom of the "liberated" underdog must suffer Draconian curtailment.... All this is unavoidable,

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<sup>141/</sup> James Hillman, Inter Views (Harper & Row: New York, 1983), p. 142.

<sup>142/</sup> Ibid., pp. 142-3.

because the root of the evil is untouched and merely the counter position has come to light. 143/

He thus believed that any remedy for the maladies of modern society must be grounded in a greater awareness of man's psychic nature and the archetypal forces upon which all psychic activities are based. Because for many people in modern society the traditional approaches to the inner world no longer carry the same force or meaning as in earlier times, what is required is greater personal understanding and awareness of the psyche and its processes, which Jung believed was the great challenge facing modern man. Hillman has referred to the process of becoming aware of the psychic forces operating in one's life as "seeing through." 144/ It is a process whereby one becomes cognizant of the archetypal fantasies in the form of images and ideas that influence one's perceptions, attitudes and actions. Such an awareness, he notes, is relevant for all facets of life in that it allows a person to engage actively in the psychic processes that shape one's unconscious mental activity as well as one's conscious beliefs, attitudes and desires. Such awareness is especially significant for grasping the psychological dynamics inherent in ideological and political processes in which psychic forces, in the form of images and ideas, are projected onto the external world and identified with political, social and economic events and figures.

Such a process of "seeing through" thus allows one to gain insight into the images and ideas at work in one's inner life, which, if they remain unconscious, become the problems that are "the dense outer shells

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143/ CW 10, par. 558.

144/ See Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology, pp. 115-64.

in which fantasies are wrapped." The misperception of outer problems, whose meanings are often obscured by the projection onto them of the unconscious aspects of the observer's inner life, constitutes a principal obstacle to their solution, particularly inasmuch as those aspects of one's inner life of which one is unconscious are usually encountered as fate in the external world. However, once the image or fantasy identified with the outer problem is recognized, a person's perception of and response to the problem can be transformed accordingly. More specifically, once the images and fantasies, including the shadow, are no longer projected onto the external world but are reappropriated on an inner level, their energy and meaning can be used to bring about the inner transformation of the person. Under such conditions, it would be less likely that men and women in modern society would fall prey to ideological belief systems, which distort their perception of themselves and the world around them and hinder them and society from experiencing the transforming and healing effects of the images from within.

## VI. Conclusion

Political and ideological violence in the contemporary world has many different facets. In the search for an understanding of its roots, there is always the danger of simplification, looking only at certain facets of the problem while ignoring others. There can be no doubt that economic, social and political conditions are among the principal causes of political and ideological violence in today's world. However, from a psychological perspective, the role of the shadow must also be taken into account in order to arrive at a complete understanding not only of personal and social violence but of political and ideological violence as well.

Jung came to believe that the abatement of political and ideological conflict and of the awesome threat of nuclear annihilation could be achieved only if enough individuals come to recognize their own inner darkness and make the effort to heal the inner split that characterizes so many men and women in today's world. He did not advocate that this be done in lieu of responsible action in the outer world toward resolving these problems. Rather he believed that outer action would only be effective if it was accompanied by the corresponding inner transformation of the individual that occurs when one recognizes one's own inner darkness and no longer projects it onto the world around one. In effect, what Jung provides is an understanding of political and ideological violence from the perspective of the psyche, of the human soul. This perspective makes possible a radically different way of seeing the problem of political and ideological violence in today's world, one in which the psyche is seen as central not only to the inner life of the

individual but to the broader domain of political, social and economic events as well.

Aniella Jaffé, reflecting on Jung's life and work, has observed: "What Jung had to offer against the pressing dangers was not a recommendation for the governance of groups or nations but always greater consciousness, painfully achieved and difficult to endure, on the part of individuals..." 145/ Such consciousness, predicated on an awareness of the shadow as well as the autonomous factors underlying all psychic activities, which Jung called the archetypes, should not detract from any and all responsible efforts to deal with such problems as political and ideological violence through outer action. On the contrary, such awareness may constitute the indispensable and heretofore missing element for truly effective action in the outer world toward resolving these problems. At the same time, as suggested by Jaffé, it may also provide the creative counterweight to modern society's one-sided quest for knowledge and mastery of the physical world in the form of an "even more passionate regard for the spirit of the depths, or of the unconscious." 146/

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145/ Aniella Jaffé, Jung's Last Years (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1984), p. 171.

146/ Ibid.

