

Remembering Dr. Carl Gustav Jung: 50 Years Later

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June 6, 2011 marked fifty years since Dr. Carl Gustav Jung—one of the greatest psychologists of all time--died at his villa at Küsnacht, on the shore of Lake Zurich, Switzerland at the age of 85.

If you have ever thought of yourself as an introvert or extrovert; if you've ever explored the concepts of the archetypes of the collective unconscious, the anima, the animus, the shadow, the ego, and the self; if you have ever done a Myers-Briggs personality or spirituality test; if you've ever been in counseling and sat opposite your therapist – in all these cases, you have been influenced by Jungian ideas.

Carl Gustav Jung was born on July 26, 1875. His father, Rev. Paul Achilles Jung, was a rural pastor of the Swiss Reformed Church. His grandfather, who was also named Carl Gustav Jung and who was also a Doctor of Medicine, served as rector of Basel University and as Grand Master of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Switzerland. After graduating from medical school at the University of Basel in 1900, the younger Carl Jung worked at the Burghölzli Psychiatric hospital in Zürich, working with Eugen Bleuler, the physician who coined the word "schizophrenia." While at Burghölzli, Jung helped to develop a word association test that provided a window into the distressed world of the mentally ill. People are not simply mad, he concluded. Rather, there is a method in their madness. In one case, Jung showed that a patient who for 50 years had been fixated on the apparently meaningless task of making illusory shoes, had never gotten over a broken relationship with a cobbler.

Jung's dissertation, published in 1903, was titled *On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena*. In 1906, he published *Studies in Word Association* and later sent a copy of this book to Sigmund Freud, after which a close friendship between these two men followed for some six years. In 1912, Jung published *Symbols of Transformation*, which challenged some of Freud's ideas, especially related to sexuality and spirituality, and permanently ended their friendship. After this falling-out, Jung went through a pivotal and difficult psychological transformation (described by his biographers as "creative illness"), which was exacerbated by news of the First World War.

Jung had a private practice in Zurich, traveled and lectured extensively, and wrote prolifically. His *Collected Works* total 19 large volumes. His 1916 work *Seven Sermons to the Dead* was privately printed but made available to a wider audience only at the end of his life when it was included as an appendix to his autobiography *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. He and his heirs have been even more protective of his *Red Book*—written during the same difficult period of his life. It was not made available to the public until 2009.

One of Jung's most important trips was undertaken to East Africa in 1925. He was 50 at the time and in the middle of his career. His experiences in Kenya and his journey up the Nile into Egypt greatly influenced the development of his psychological theories.

There are many organizations dedicated to Jung throughout the United States and in other countries as well. The C. G. Jung Society of North Texas sponsors lectures and workshops at Saint Thomas Episcopal Church in Dallas. On March 19, 2011, I attended this organization's Vernal Equinox Celebration. For many years, a leader in this organization has been Rev. Gene Baker, with whom I worked during the 1980s at Terrell State Hospital. In 2010, Gene celebrated fifty years as an Episcopal priest and 40 years as a clinical social worker.

Various events are being held in various countries this year to mark the half century since Jung's departure. For example, the C. G. Jung Institute of San Francisco is hosting a conference in which "We will not only look back in appreciation of Jung's contribution to the theory and practice of depth psychology, but we will look forward to reflect on which of Jung's ideas and theories we think will continue to enrich the art and practice of psychotherapy as well as enliven various cultural, social, and political enterprises around the globe. Jungian analysts from the United Kingdom and Australia will join with senior Jungian analysts of the San Francisco Institute to share their reflections with conference participants." Such is a fitting tribute to such an outstanding psychologist!

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