

## **Weaving Voices Article (Aug-Nov 2000)**

### *Contributions of the Members of the C. G. Jung Society of Sydney*

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## **Murray Stein's Jung's Map of the Soul**

REVIEW BY MARC MARUSIC

JUNG WAS FASCINATED by what happens on the borders. He loved to push at the edges of the already known. An intuitive thinker, he laid out big concepts, elaborated them in some detail, and then went on to other big concepts. He generally wasn't into building premises and making sure that the parts fit together without contradiction. Stein's thesis is that despite this, there is a profound unity of vision in Jung's oeuvre. Jung's theory can be read as a map of the soul, but we must not take the map for each territory. Stein is careful also not to impose too much precision on Jung's use of terminology, for otherwise one will create tight fits where Jung deliberately left gaps and openings. So, this book has a purpose quite different from other such books – these usually aim to show the development of Jung's thought or consider its applications in psychotherapy and analysis.

Libido theory, complexes, individuation, and synchronicity are among the topics he devotes a chapter to. This last one is a rich fruit of Jung's incessant pushing at boundaries – a challenge to the lines drawn to separate the fields of psychology, physics, biology, philosophy and spirituality. Jung was also a pioneer in opposing the view that nothing of major importance happens in psychological and character development after infancy and early childhood.

One of Jung's most controversial theories today is anima/animus. Was he a type of proto-feminist (in that he seems to avoid dividing humans into two clearly different gender groups with little in common, rather that both men and women are both masculine and feminine) or was he a supporter of stereotypic traditional views on differences between men and women? Stein thinks he was both, and, that furthermore, an account can be given of anima-us that doesn't draw in the problematic notion of gender – gender can be seen as a secondary feature of anima/us, just as an object's essence is not determined by its colour. He advocates yin and yang as more reliable and neutral terms than feminine and masculine. So, if a person is yang in their persona, he or she will be yin in the anima/us.

Plurality of the psyche is a theme in Jung's work that Stein engages with, and the recognition that the psyche is made up of many centres of consciousness is a liberation for many groups struggling against a sense of identity that has largely been socially imposed. In a society in which, under a superficial individualism, conformity is still strong (eg. Corporate culture), Jung's study of ego and persona development (how people come to adopt a conventional collective attitude and embody social and cultural stereotypes rather than taking on and living their own uniqueness) is very helpful. Little attention is paid in our culture to inner development, and so individuation (uniting of our conscious and unconscious aspects) continues to be shunted off to well into life's second half, if that. Unlike many other post-Jungians definition of individuation, which did not emphasise the connection between the individual shadow and the group scapegoat. All round, there is no real challenge to Jung's emphasis on individual psychology as the great hope for humankind.

Another key Jungian term much addressed by Stein is the Self. Jung's view of the Self is both structural and dynamic, and Stein shows both these aspects at work. While Jung's view of the psyche was dissociationist, unity and totality were his highest values. The Self, which for Jung transcends the psychic realm, is paradoxically not oneself. In the Self, subject and object, ego and other, are joined. It has a centering, ordering, unifying role, and its goal is to balance and integrate the various other factors. It undergoes continuing transformation during one's lifetime.

While Jung cannot really be called an ego psychologist, he thought that for the future of human life and culture it was vital to have greater consciousness, which itself he argued was questionable (except for short periods of time) without ego (contrary to Eastern thinking, which had a big influence on him, but is beyond the scope of this book). As Stein points out, we can attribute too much or too little to the ego – but it is simply an agent, a focus of consciousness, and has, like the Self, a balancing and integrating role.

This book is a valuable reminder that '*Rational man*' ('*homo economicus*' – see Clive Hamilton's critique, *The Mystical Economist*) – on whom the prevailing form of economic theory is based, is only a partial description of humans as we actually function.