

**Earthrise:  
Symbol, Culture and the Individual**

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Dedicated to my father,  
Harry R. Funk  
(1924-2009)  
who taught me to dream,  
to survey the starry heavens at day's end,  
to treat Earth and all her life forms with compassion.



“Earthrise”

“...the most powerful image in the mythological imagination—the first time the Earth was able to look back on itself through the eyes it had grown in human beings” (Joseph Campbell qtd. in Karen Schuckman, “Earth Observation: The Geography of Realization,” printed in *Spring* 2007, 29).

# Earthrise: Symbol, Culture and the Individual

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction: Earthrise</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter One: The Role of the Collective Symbol</b> .....	<b>6</b>
The Symbol as Libido-analogue .....	6
The History-making Function of the Libido-analogue .....	11
The Kogi .....	18
<b>Chapter Two: The Psyche of the United States</b> .....	<b>22</b>
The Collective Mythologem .....	22
The Collective Ego, Persona and Shadow .....	24
The Collective Complex .....	31
<b>Chapter Three: Society and the Individual Psyche</b> .....	<b>40</b>
The Cultural Layer of the Psyche .....	41
I'm Great but <i>Who</i> Am I? .....	46
A Moses Complex .....	50
<b>Chapter Four: Earthrise and A Culture in Flux</b> .....	<b>55</b>
The Movement of the Feminine .....	58
The Environmental Movement .....	63
By the Hands of Individuals .....	65
<b>Chapter Five: The Significance of the Personal Symbol</b> .....	<b>68</b>
Psychological Coming-of-Age .....	68
Symbol and Personal Re-orientation .....	70
Individual Culture .....	73
<b>Chapter Six: Tara's Symbol</b> .....	<b>78</b>
<b>Conclusion: Symbol, Culture and the Individual</b> .....	<b>92</b>
Hypothesis and Thesis .....	92
Questions and Remarks .....	95
Closing Thoughts .....	97
<b>References</b> .....	<b>98</b>

## Introduction: Earthrise

The image of the earth as seen from space turned the attention of humanity from the mysteries of outer space to the beauty of our planet. As part of the space race between the Soviet Union and the U.S., the intention of Apollo 8 was to explore “the great out-there,” sending back data on the moon’s atmosphere and terrain. It did that, and much, much more. Through its photo of Earth suspended in space, the mission accomplished a remarkable feat: humankind turned around and saw with new eyes what we have, right beneath our feet. In the flash of an image on a television screen, our attention pivoted from conquering space toward understanding our own planet.

This event constitutes what C. G. Jung calls a “libido-analogue,” a term that he uses only once in his *Collected Works* (vol. 8, para. 92). In general, a libido-analogue refers to a symbol—the transformer of psychic energy. It can be collective or personal. In this thesis, I use the word to specify a collective symbol.

Jung uses the phrase “libido-analogue” during a discussion about psychic energy and the advancement of civilization.\* When I came across the term “libido-analogue,” it piqued my interest. Familiar with the transforming power of my personal symbols, I became curious about transformation on a collective level. I wondered what “libido-analogue” means, how it looks in lived life, how it might manifest today—culturally. In working with dictionaries, ancient rituals, and the context in which Jung employs the designation, I came to a working grasp of the libido-analogue which I apply, in this thesis, to the process of cultural change.

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\*Volume Five of Jung’s *Collected Works* provides a hands-on, in-depth treatment of symbols that are fundamental to the process of individuation in an individual: the night sea journey, the mother, rebirth and sacrifice, for instance.

For the purposes of this paper, a libido-analogue is an idea that influences a collective unit through giving expression to an energy which is beyond total comprehension. At the same time, this idea also entices the energy away from its source and into a new form while maintaining its primary function. (Jung, CW8:92) Here, my use of the word denotes a symbol that transforms on a cultural level.

The Apollo 8 photo provided a libido-analogue that drew the collective psyche toward a reordering of its values. Inspiring worldwide concern for, and interest in, Earth and its environment, the picture stimulated a psychological transition in North American culture that continues to labor toward realization. It is my hypothesis that we are moving from a forceful structure sourced in patriarchal power to a yielding structure sourced in feminine relatedness, and that seeing Earth from space contributed to this development in a significant way.

Such a passage is a complex affair involving society, individual and symbol. This thesis is about the reciprocity between these three factors. How does culture affect the individual, and vice versa? What function does the symbol play in the mutual exchange between individual and society? What happens on an individual level when a symbol catches the imagination of a nation? What are the collective implications of the personal symbol?

These questions shape the context within which I explore the intricacies of the libido-analogue as I understand it. I substantiate my proposition of the Earth-from-space photograph as a libido-analogue by tracing its more obvious social effects in the United States during the last forty-plus years. The processes of the psyche provide the

hub around which my consideration of the give-and-take between symbol, culture and individual orbits.

The subject of culture and the individual covers a large and extensive area of human experience. This paper confines itself to one aspect of one culture's process of changing consciousness, viewed through the lens of Jungian psychology.

Chapter One examines the concept of "libido-analogue." Etymology, amplifications from the natural world and rituals from aboriginal peoples uncover its culture-making quality. Specific facets of the Apollo 8 experience that effected historical change support my identification of the event as an agent of transformation. While the Earthrise photo appeared in the midst of a transition already underway, the archetypal truth contained in this picture, and the synchronistic timing of its appearance, provided a focal point around which various social concerns gathered.

The second chapter looks at the cultural psyche of my homeland, the United States. Living in Canada gives me some distance, allowing me to perceive the persona, shadow, mythologem and complex of the U.S. from a vantage point I never had while residing there. For these reasons, featuring the U.S. society in my thesis makes sense to me. All clinical examples cited in this thesis come from analysands with a U.S. background. Understanding an individual's psyche requires some knowledge of the person's culture-of-origin. Chapter Two describes the psychology of the U.S. collective based on the country's stories, beliefs and behaviors. Comments on the compensating function of "Earthrise" as a libido-analogue close the chapter.

Individuals assimilate elements of the societal complexes and shadow material that surround them as they grow up. Chapter Three considers the cultural layer of the

individual psyche. A clinical illustration traces the societal contributions to a complex in an analysand. Personal and collective well-being requires that these cultural influences be brought into consciousness. This chapter makes a case for the centrality of the individual in societal transformation; only through individuals is a libido-analogue received by the collective, and converted into social reform.

A synopsis of the repercussions that seeing Earth from space has had on U.S. culture specifically, and North American culture in general, over the last four decades makes up Chapter Four. Many ideas and individual voices were already pushing for social change when technology recorded the image of Earth suspended in space and sent it back to Earth. A tipping point was achieved when the masses saw the picture on television. The flurry of awareness and action that followed signals cultural evolution in the making, and evidences the participation of humans in this progression.

Ultimately, the advancement of a nation depends on the maturing of its individual members. Personal symbols pave the way for moving from a biological orientation in life to a cultural one. Chapter Five discusses the duty and substance of deepening one's personality. Amplifications of this higher rung of maturity include modern stories as well as examples from the Old Testament.

The spontaneous vision of an analysand makes up Chapter Six. This contemporary case shows the transitioning of the ego through various stages in an attempt to come to grips with the psychological demands accompanying the second half of life. On an individual plane, this vision, as a symbol, produced an effect similar to what seeing our planet from a distance worked on the collective level: both returned the experiencer to the ageless ground of human existence.

In this paper, I am using the word “culture” as synonymous with a group that is somewhat differentiated out from the historical and global collective, and conscious of itself as a distinct segment within the human race. As a person has to separate him/herself from the group in order to become individual—to be one among the many—so a group has to separate itself from the greater collective in order to establish its own norms and values. As a person is a member of a society, so a culture belongs to the human collective spanning time and the globe.

For the sake of brevity and ease of reading, I use the terms “America” and “Americans” to refer to the nation and populace of the United States throughout the thesis. Technically, these words can apply to any of the countries and peoples of North, Central and South America; the lower case “americas” specifies that grouping.

## Chapter One: The Role of the Collective Symbol

Central to Jung's psychological theory is the symbol and its function in the psyche. As the catalyst for change, the symbol moves, shakes up, transforms psychic energy. In his Collected Works, Jung writes extensively about symbols of transformation, applying them to the psyche of the individual. The one reference he makes to the symbol as a "libido-analogue" comes in the context of the creation and advancement of culture. His amplifications of the libido-analogue draw from communal activities that convert psychological energy into physical work on a societal level. This chapter focuses on the purpose and potency of the collective symbol.

### The Symbol as Libido-analogue

Energy is that certain something that makes things happen. It keeps the world alive and happening, but for anything to come about, there has to be a transfer of energy. This holds true for both psychological and physical life. Although Jung studied the life of the psyche, he noted that "...our physiological life, regarded as an energy process, is entirely solar...our source of energy and life actually is the sun..." (CW5:176).

Most living things draw life from the sun, provided the appropriate conversion occurs. Photosynthesis is a major player in this process. It converts the electromagnetic energy of the sun into chemical energy that is stored in plants. Humans eat the plants. Through cellular respiration, our bodies transform the chemical energy into mechanical work and heat, and we experience kinetic energy.

A comparable procedure happens in the human psyche. "Psychic processes seem to be balances of energy flowing between spirit and instinct..." (Jung, CW8:407).

Jung calls the energy of the psyche “libido,” describing it as a natural impulse, a life urge, an appetite unchecked by notions of right and wrong. (CW5:194) Its drive is to fulfill its own order, moving along its groove unless something pulls it onto a different course. (Jung, CW7:76) The aim of such alteration in trajectory is to direct the libido into productive work and a life with meaning. The mechanism by which the psyche accomplishes this switchover is the symbol.

Symbols are stepping-stones to new activities. Carrying archetypal energies, the symbol emits a numinous quality. By virtue of this characteristic, the symbol organizes and directs the energetic flow, because libido goes toward whatever grips us. In this way, the symbol can provide direction for activity and lifestyle. (Murray Stein & Brigitte Egger, “Energy! The Ecology of the Psyche and the World Seminar”)

In plant photosynthesis, sunlight, water and air are transformed into glucose, enlivening plants and animals. A similar process occurs in psychological synthesis. The symbol embodies ancient meanings capable of nourishing contemporary people, when it is adapted to the current milieu.

In the physical world, molecules of oxygen, hydrogen and carbon dioxide are broken apart and recombined in new form through plant photosynthesis. Similarly, the examination and amplification of the symbol reveals its relevance to today’s conditions and people. In human photosynthesis, the archetypal substance contained in the symbol returns to the collective in a form that is useable in conscious life.

The Earthrise picture synthesizes lunar and solar consciousness. We saw the earth from the moon (lunar) but neither the planet nor its moon is visible without the sun’s light (solar). Through the use of masculine consciousness, which brought the

space mission into reality, humankind had the feminine experience of comprehending its Mother.

As a symbol, “Earthrise” comes from the ultraviolet end of Jung’s psychic spectrum (CW8:417, 420); it is an image and an ideation. Archetypal in nature, it “...signifies and evokes the instinct...” (Jung, CW8:414) of survival, which lies at the red end of the spectrum. The image connects humans with the primordial idea of Earth as the source and sustainer of life, making integration of the instinctual energies on a higher level possible. Thus the concept of survival expands to include psychological as well as biological meaning. For instance, the expression “quality of life” is a fairly recent development in our thinking. It extends beyond and beneath the physical survival of the human species, bringing various aspects of holistic well-being into awareness.

A collective symbol that changes not only the course along which the psychic energy flows, but *alters the energy itself*, is a libido-analogue. A common definition of “analogue” says that if something is an analogue of something else, it is similar in some way. This means that the symbol resembles the substance of the energy that it draws away from an old path or position. Like calls to like, facilitating the mediatory purpose of the symbol. Libido flows toward the attractor, creating movement in the psyche.

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary offers a more differentiated view of the analogue, identifying it as being similar in function but differing in structure and origin. As a libido-analogue, then, the symbol approximates the function of the energy targeted, but carries a dissimilar form and issues from a different source. Jung affirms the correspondence in function: “...libido does not leave a structure as pure intensity and pass without trace into another but takes the character of the old function into the

new...” (CW8:38). For example, when converted, the instinctual survival energy that would normally go into physical reproduction fulfills its role of insuring the survival of the species through the physical work of food production.

Through his amplifications, Jung points to the libido-analogue as a culture-making phenomenon. He cites the Wachandi men’s ritual of simulating sex by circling, and thrusting their spears into, a hole in the ground while chanting, “Not a pit, not a pit, but a c---!” This repetitive and rhythmic activity transferred to the earth the psychological energy that, when left to follow its natural gradient, normally led to physical reproduction. Viewing the earth as a woman waiting to be fertilized by their penetrating energy made it possible for the men to carry out the work of plowing and seeding their fields. Performed in small communities over many decades, the ritual-activity transformed libido into the cultural achievement of agriculture. (Jung, CW8:83-85)

This transition took place long ago, allowing us to look back now and see the extension in human consciousness that occurred. A contemporary symbol that a number of people identify as a possibility for effecting a cultural transformation in North America today is the image of “Earthrise.” Joseph Campbell stated, in his well-known interview with Bill Moyers, that

“...the only myth that is going to be worth thinking about in the immediate future is one that is talking about the planet, not the city, not these people, but the planet and everybody on it...When you see the earth from the moon, you don’t see any division there of nations or states. This might be the symbol, really, for the new mythology to come (“The Power of Myth,” Episode 1).

Although America’s space program started out with the goal of landing on the moon and discovering its secrets, Apollo 8 gave us new instructions about Earth and

earthly life. Once the sight of our own planet from a detached distance attracted us, the moon became secondary. Within a year, space exploration began to lose its appeal for the U.S. public (Deborah Cadbury, *Space Race*, p. 335); NASA's budget shrank by sixty percent (Roger Wiens, *Red Rover*, p. 10). Interest in the planet on which we live gained momentum.

The sight of Earth floating alone in space re-oriented our focus from outer space to our home planet, *and* changed the original energy—marked by a probing-for-data quality—to one of curiosity tempered with relatedness and a teachable attitude. The function of the libido remained the same: exploration, discovery, learning. In structure, the energy started to shift from imposing our will on the earth toward observing the earth without judgment.

A feature of the libido-analogue is its resonance to the needs of the current era. Proof of a collective symbol's relevance resides in the emergence of rituals, stories and ideas that "catch-on" with the masses. These novelties materialize through the inspirations, loyalties and efforts of individuals. Cuisine, music, technology, laws, education and science are examples of transformed energy utilized by the collective. (Stein & Egger) These things aid in the social development and organization of human beings, and are part of what makes a civilization. An image or a story that expands the consciousness of the human collective transforms that society's psychological energy so that it operates on a higher level. (Jung, *CW5:203*; Ira Progoff, *Jung's Psychology and Its Social Meaning*, pp. 181-191) In the case of the Wachandi people, a ritual transformed instinctual libido, raised it to another biological level and fueled the development of land cultivation.

“Earthrise” put forward the possibility for something similar to happen today. The picture of Earth from space came on Christmas Eve, the most holy night of Christendom. That evening in 1968, the Apollo 8 crew sent a Christmas message to the world. Accompanying this first-time image of the earth, each astronaut read one portion of the Genesis creation story having to do with bringing the earth and the heavens into being, and dividing them; the firmament was above and the land and seas were below. “And God saw that it was good.” The message from the astronauts ended with the words, “...from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas, and God bless all of you—all of you on the good Earth” (Wiens, p. 8). Suddenly, we felt ourselves to be children of the earth.

The entire scenario—the space journey, the objective photograph of our planet, the astronauts’ voices reading the ancient story—combined to evoke wonder and gratitude in us, strengthening a sense of collective identity. Ever so slowly, our motivations turn from conquering Nature toward cooperating with Nature.

Libido accompanying “Earthrise” sprang from the feminine principle, setting in motion a rotation from the masculine side of the great archetypal pair at the foundation of the psyche to the opposite pole. A process ensued, and continues to unfold. This involves balancing a one-sided mindset of acting-upon with a state of being-with, of analytical taking-apart with big-picture comprehension.

#### The History-making Function of the Libido-analogue

Progoff refers to the libido-analogue as the “history-making function of the psyche” (p. 189). The symbol that transforms us carries a primal quality and comes

from the depths of the psyche, which itself is the world and carries the nature of Nature. The libido-analogue that sways the course of collective history uses a symbol or image that is alive deep in the psyche, adapts it to the cultural era, and activates change in a given historical situation. Paradoxically, it also exhibits a universalizing function because it uses psychological contents that are common to the human race. (Andrew Samuels, *A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis*, pp. 144-146)

In the example of Apollo 8, the project was part of the space race between the Soviet Union and the United States—a mid-to-late 20th century competition for supremacy in space exploration. This rivalry between the two nations focused on attaining firsts in the arena of outer space, which were seen as necessary for national security and symbolic of technological and ideological superiority. (Cadbury, pp. ix-xii)

1968, the year of Apollo 8 and “Earthrise,” proved to be a particularly tumultuous year for the United States. U.S. casualties in Vietnam peaked. Antiwar protests, civil rights demonstrations and the famous bra-burning sentiments of the feminist movement filled the news media. Riots broke out in the wake of Martin Luther King’s assassination; Robert Kennedy was killed two months later. The Democratic Convention in Chicago turned violent. Two American athletes embarrassed their country by executing the black power salute during the performance of “The Star-Spangled Banner” at the Summer Olympics in Mexico City.

After a half-century of world wars, domestic agricultural and economic depression, and the then-current social upheaval, Americans were ripe for projecting onto an outer image their feelings of fragility and vulnerability. They yearned for the assurance of a safe future, of the continuation of life. Perhaps they were even ready to

tend to life rather than destroy it. It can be said that for the public, and to some degree the U.S. government, space returned Americans to Earth.

The formation of a symbol requires that several factors be present. One is that psychic energy is left over after the demands of daily life are met (Jung, CW8:91). There must also be a regression of libido inward and downward, causing a lowering of consciousness (Jung, CW8:62). This prepares the psychic soil for the appearance of a symbol.

In the collective life of the United States, the end of World War II triggered a withdrawal of public attention from the world stage to the domestic arena. People wanted peace. They wanted their families back together. They wanted a stable home-life and an orderly society. They fancied rest, reunion and predictability.

Men returned to their homeland and women returned to their homes from the factories. For a time, stability and a sense of safety were achieved. We see evidence of this in the '50s stereotype of the perfect family life involving an employed male, his happy housewife and well-behaved children together in a house surrounded by the proverbial white picket fence. Employers expected loyalty from their workers and reciprocated with job security and various forms of reward for longevity, productivity and low absenteeism.

Or that's how things appeared, and are remembered by many in nostalgic references to the '50s. In truth, Hiroshima and the Korean War happened during that decade, and the Cold War lasted well beyond the '50s. Fear, uncertainty and a tenuous peace characterized the *zeitgeist*, or spirit of the times. Yet the U.S. remained a relatively free society at home; their mainland was untouched by war and their losses in

World War II tallied in at much less than their allies or the countries in which they went to war. (Ronald Wright, *What Is America?* pp. 198-207) During that time, the government (as the embodiment of the ordering/acting principle called the collective ego) embraced a fair degree of domesticity. Internal affairs received government attention.

Psychic energy that had been tied up in collective and personal survival during World War II became freed up. In accord with the polarizing nature of the psyche, the excess libido fueled unrest, and people started demanding change on a deeper level. Contents that had lain dormant in the collective unconscious began to break through into civil and governmental awareness. Late in the decade, public concern coalesced around opposition to the nuclear weapons race.

In the early '60s, government submitted to popular opinion, with the result that investment in space exploration trumped military spending. (Cadbury) Citizen rights and environmental issues acquired places on government agenda. (Adam Rome, "Give Earth a Chance: The Environmental Movement and the Sixties") Activation of the Earthrise libido-analogue occurred at the end of 1968.

Completion of the symbolic process happens only through an appropriate attitude on the part of the ego. When the libido-analogue is received, the riches it contains can be recognized and claimed. Subsequently, the ego needs to step away from the position of control and put itself into the service of the symbol and its meaning. Libido then flows upward and outward, providing impetus to give the symbolic message a form that takes hold in human life.

The significance contained in the image of our solitary planet—that Earth is our home, and the preservation of life is interdependent with the earth—was comprehended by some people and on some levels of collective influence. As I show in Chapter Four, a flurry of public activity followed the sight of Earth from outer space, launching a long and arduous struggle to advance civilization through the realization in outer life of this priceless revelation. The government-ego showed a degree of willingness to partner with Nature rather than dominate Her. However, the handing over of ego-control in service to the greater and global good has not yet fully transpired.

A brief account of humanity's relationship with Nature might help here. The archetype of Earth has taken different forms throughout the history of humankind, depending on our perception of it, and attitude toward it. The earliest world views we know anything about date back to the Old Stone Age. During these ice ages, people saw Nature as a great mother who gave them life and all that was needed to sustain them. Learning from her nurturing and resourceful ways, humans fostered cultural growth through agriculture and art. (Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, pp. 94-119; Elisabet Sahtouris, *Gaia*, pp. 146-170; Monica Sjoo & Barbara Mor, *The Great Cosmic Mother*, pp. 46-49)

The fourth century BCE introduced the most influential philosophers in the west. Socrates challenged people to think in an orderly way. Plato followed, with his ideas of a perfect world beyond the senses. Then came Aristotle's static view of Nature. A new religion encapsulated these lines of philosophy. Judeo-Christian teachings espoused a perfect Father-God who created a paradise for his human creatures. The first couple fell from perfection through the devious influence of Nature and Woman, and can return

only through seeking forgiveness and obeying God's commandments. Under the influence of this paternal god, we came to see ourselves as separate from Nature. Mother Nature, alive and creative in her imperfection and chaos, faded from our memory as we found security in the laws and orderly cosmos of an authoritarian Father-God. (Neumann, p. 331; Sahtouris, pp. 146-191)

More recently, humanity began challenging religious "facts" about the world with scientific observations. Science presented Nature as evolving by accident, without purpose or design. This opened the door to a view of the world as something to be taken apart, examined and improved upon. Scientific discoveries and technological developments allowed us to treat Nature as something to be used for human purposes. (Sahtouris, pp. 146-191)

In 1972, only three years after humanity saw Earth from space, James Lovelock published his first book on his Gaia theory, nudging us back to an understanding of Nature as a living system. This idea of Nature seems to be taking root at some level in the U.S. psyche: politicians face persistent expressions of social concern for the natural world.

At the same time, America experiences a contravailing energy field. Many authorities downplay notions that human activities result in negative consequences for the earth and its environment. Warnings about global warming and the dangers of genetically modified food meet stiff opposition. Some corporations, political sectors and pockets of the populace ignore, or openly scoff at, these censures. Such resistance invites a change-back to old ways of viewing the world.

This is a normal reaction to the enantiodromia that occurs when an established and too-narrow attitude encounters opposition. Today's conflict manifests the great struggle of the collective psyche to switch from one archetypal structure to another. Embedded in this tension lies the potential for the advancement of civilization, perhaps involving a moral consciousness. I see the backlash as an indicator of the depth and breadth of the cultural impact that the awakening to Earth as home delivered.

Life magazine calls the "Earthrise" picture "the most influential environmental photograph ever taken," saying that "it inspired contemplation of our fragile existence and our place in the cosmos" (Life Magazine: 100 Photographs That Changed the World, p. 172). The stunning portrait of our planet seen from space turned out to be a harbinger of realities facing the United States—and, indeed, all modern cultures—today. Words like "globalization" and "multiculturalism" reflect our current thinking and experience. I do not recall hearing either of these terms in the late '60's when the picture sent to us from Apollo 8 opened our minds to a more complete view of the planet. Since then, human migration exposes most cultures to other cultures in an up-close and personal way. Technology connects us all with images and news. It is like the Apollo portrait prepared us for the notion of "our" world—a concept that continues to deepen and differentiate into lived experience.

In our minds, Earth is morphing from something abstract to a living being, from globe to shared home. Consciousness of ourselves as citizens of the world, wherever we happen to be born or live, is developing. This process of evolving awareness reminds the peoples of North and South America that we are not the first or only inhabitants of the Americas; indigenous clans resided on these lands for thousands of

years before Europeans arrived. Increased understanding also confronts us with our exploitation of Nature.

Through the decades since Earth was seen from space, consideration of humanity's impact on the environment has grown. In many countries—though not all—the electorate demands compassion and sensitivity to ecology and human welfare as well as the traditional issues of security, expansion and the economy. The conception of the ideal leader is shifting from the hero and warrior to something more balanced. One-sided aggressiveness and masculine prowess appeals less to the masses than it once did. (Murray Stein, "On the Politics of Individuation in the Americas," p. 7)

While we North Americans stumble toward a paradigm shift, a South American tribe that still follows the ancient ways of its ancestors holds the opposing masculine and feminine energies in balance through spiritual attitudes and the performance of sacred rituals. They see themselves as keepers of the earth.

### The Kogi

The Kogi of Columbia live secluded within the Sierra Nevada mountains. Like Jung's Wachandi, the men of this tribe mimic the sexual act ritually. In this case, it is a time-honored practice for *containing* masculine energy (Alan Ereira, "From the Heart of the World") rather than intensifying it, as the Wachandi did.

Each man carries a small, tubular gourd that has a hole in the top. Inside the gourd are crushed seashells. The man wets a small stick with his saliva, inserts it into the gourd to coat it with shell dust, then pulls it out and circles the rim of the hole with

the stick. This builds up a yellow ridge formed by the mixture of shell dust and spittle. He licks the stick again, starting the exercise over.

This entire process is considered an ingestion of feminine energy, for “without it the masculine becomes unbalanced” (Ereira). Over and over and over, throughout each day, when a man’s hands are not engaged in work, they are occupied with the gourd. Such rhythmic occupation “...is a classic device for impressing certain ideas or activities on the mind...” (Jung, CW5:219). The ritual “represents a clearly defined procedure for canalizing the libido...” (Jung, CW5:250), in this case, toward the equalization of masculine and feminine energies.

The creation story of the Kogi says that Aluna—understood as the mind inside Nature, the thought underpinning all existence—created the earth during her menstrual period. Her blood flowed into the earth and became the gold in the seams of Earth’s rocky interior. Using her spindle, she spun nine daughters into being, which are nine worlds, and nine sons who are lords of the earth and charged with the responsibility of caring for the plants and animals. (Ereira)

Called “Mamos,” the spiritual leaders watch the condition of their surrounding environment, which, within a fifty-mile radius, represents most of the geographical and climate patterns found over the entire planet. (Alan Ereira, *The Elder Brothers’ Warning*, pp. 4-5) Concerned about the warming and drying conditions they witness, they periodically travel down to the seashore where they spin in imitation of Aluna’s spindle, attempting to soothe her distress. These leaders also engage in divination, using beads and water to commune with the core of all being. One of the things they want to know is how they can communicate their concern about the earth with the rest of the world—

their “younger brothers”—in a way that will be comprehended and acted upon. (Ereira, “From the Heart of the World”)

The role of Mamo is taken very seriously. Chosen as a baby, a boy is secluded inside a cave where he lives in darkness for nine years, exposed to just enough light to prevent blindness. The child is cared for but not taught; he learns to listen spiritually by living in the dark with little stimulation. When he begins to hear the music of the universe, he dances. After that, the child enters instruction about the offerings that must be made to keep the energies of the planet in harmony.

Even then, he only imagines the natural world until, at the end of the nine years, he is led outside. His first view of Nature leaves him awestruck. Forever after, he perceives the splendor of the physical world. This induces a reverence and devotion out of which he conducts the balancing rituals he has learned. It insures “...the correct and careful performance of ceremonies which sustain, strengthen and propitiate the...numen” (Jung, CW11:385) of the vital spirit infusing all life. The Mamo carries out these rites in the physical world and also in the unseen realm of potential and memory. (Ereira, “From the Heart of the World;” *The Elder Brothers’ Warning*, pp. 119-126)

To the Kogi, without thought, there is no life. When we plunder the earth, we destroy both its physical structure and the intelligence underlying and supporting existence. Therefore, we are threatening life itself. (Ereira, “From the Heart of the World”)

The Kogi embrace Earth as their home, and therefore tend to its maintenance. Human nature being what it is, most people take care of what they consider to be home, whether that is a house, a place, or a relationship. Therefore, experiencing Earth as

home, even by chance, as we in North America did through the stunning sight of our planet from space, ranks as a significant event. It holds the potential for a shift in understanding and behavior.

In 1968, the beginnings of the environmental and feminist movements were already underway. The Earthrise image added enough momentum that a critical mass of interest in those issues was reached, as will be seen in Chapter Four

## Chapter Two: The Psyche of the United States

Applying Jung's structural concepts of the individual human psyche to the collective psyche has its risks. Notions such as ego, persona, shadow and complex do not necessarily evidence themselves as succinctly in a group as they do in a person. Nor do they manifest in exactly the same way. However, they adapt well enough to be used, in a general way, for the purposes of this thesis. In this chapter, I consider these features of the U.S. psyche. I begin with the nation's founding story because it influences America's view, and presentation, of itself.

### The Collective Mythologem

"Myth," says Ronald Wright in *A Short History of Progress*, "is an arrangement of the past, whether real or imagined, in patterns that reinforce a culture's deepest values and aspirations...Myths are the maps by which cultures navigate through time" (p. 4). For the U.S., that myth is built on a history of conquest and expansion. This is not explicit, for the stories are couched in softer words: conquest is pitched as "settlement," colonizing as "opening up," and American expansion is called "the winning of the West."

The traditional story says that the Puritans and Pilgrims were a divinely chosen people on a God-ordained mission to transform a wilderness into a promised land. They identified with Abraham, whom the Lord called out with the covenant "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing" (Genesis 12:1-2 KJV). In the early 1600's,

the founder of the Boston colony alluded to the book of Revelation when he pronounced, “We shall be a city set upon a hill...the eyes of all people are upon us.”

(Sjoo & Mor, pp. 330-331; Wright, *What Is America?* pp. 61-93)

The account told in American schools, homes and churches is that the migrants arrived at Plymouth Rock with the Word of God in their hands, the Protestant work ethic in their bones, and love in their hearts. They befriended and civilized the Indians, pulling them up out of their own savagery and backward ways. Romantic novels and Hollywood westerns create a frontier narrative of a virgin wilderness tamed by heroic pioneers.

A piece of the story that fewer people know is that the Europeans came with smallpox on their clothes. A disease against which native Americans had no immunity, it spread like wildfire, leaving whole towns empty. Even fewer citizens know that the colonists gained a foothold in the eastern part of the country by following the decimation wreaked by smallpox, occupying the civilization and work of the dead. They didn't settle the land; they took over the towns, fields, roads and supplies of the previous inhabitants. The Great Plains and the western territories changed hands through smallpox, warfare and government-enforced removal tactics. (Charles C. Mann, 1491, pp. 31-61; Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, pp. 12-22)

Many of the first immigrants died from hunger and scurvy because they arrived in late December. Spring revealed their lack of skill on the land. The native people who had survived the plague of smallpox taught the weakened English how to grow crops and later repay the earth with the autumn festival of Thanksgiving. That first feast came from thousands of years of New World civilization: turkey, corn, beans, pumpkin,

cranberries and potatoes. Although it was the “heathen” who had saved them, the newcomers thanked their God for blessing them with such bounty. (Mann, pp. 31-61)

America, according to its mythologem, is the new Canaan, the modern land of milk and honey. Its saga would be very different if the country had been uncivilized or uninhabited when the Europeans turned up half-dead from months at sea. The background of U.S. history that is mostly ignored shows its aboriginal people to have been industrious, sophisticated, communal and principled. (Wright, What Is America?, pp. 49 & 276)

Though simple, the founding story shapes the American psyche in a profound and unique way. What must be understood is that many Americans believe that God takes a direct hand in human affairs. Most other westerners do not believe this. Many people in the U.S. are so certain that they are privy to the intentions of the Almighty that they are willing to help Him carry these designs out, whether through altruism, bigotry or war.

### The Collective Ego, Persona and Shadow

As the decision-making organ of the collective conscious, the government acts as a country’s ego. The governance system rests on a network of ideas that provides a point of reference for the society’s awareness of itself. (Jung, CW6:706; CW9ii:5,11)

Composed of, among other things, its flag-symbol, national anthem and constitution, this referential matrix gives continuity over time and creates identity for the group. Part of the ego-government’s responsibility is to lead in harmony with the ideological infrastructure. It is also obligated to stay in touch with common sense and to take

notice of reality checks; sometimes these cautions are overlooked in favor of maintaining a perception of stability.

An experiment in freedom, democracy and the sanctity of the (white) individual, America's culture grew out of a collision of worlds that started in 1492, when Europe began taking over the Western Hemisphere. (Thomas Singer & Catherine Kaplinsky, "The Cultural Complex," pp. 20-21; Wright, *What Is America?*, pp. 9-17) Chafing under the yoke of the English Crown, the folk who crossed the ocean from Europe to start a new life in what is now America were mainstream Puritans and Pilgrims seeking religious freedom and political peace. Utopian ideals about self-governance, opportunity and prosperity arrived with them, put down roots, and grew more robust with each takeover of land and tribe. Along the way, a profound belief in the resilience of the American spirit took hold. President George W. Bush's words following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center reflect the current collective ego:

Terrorists attacked a symbol of American prosperity. They did not touch its source. America is successful because of the hard work, and creativity, and enterprise of our people. These were the true strengths of our economy before September 11th, and they are our strengths today...When [the terrorists] struck, they wanted to create an atmosphere of fear...This great nation will never be intimidated (Tom Murse, "Did the President Really Tell Americans to 'Go Shopping' after 9/11?").

America views itself as the most advanced country in the world. It boasts independence, friendliness and self-assurance. Although Jung wrote his essay on American psychology more than eighty years ago, his observation that the ideal of "greatness...expresses the most fundamental hopes, desires, ambitions, and convictions of the nation" (CW18:976) still rings true today.

Persona involves selectivity: what to reveal and what to conceal. It is the face, or attitude, presented to others. In the case of a nation, it is the conscious representation of the country to the rest of the world, promoting the image that corresponds with how the culture sees itself and how it wishes to appear in the eyes of other countries. (Jung, CW6:800-803) This usually involves displays of autonomy and uprightness. Persona helps the culture manage its exposure to other cultures while protecting its own identity and awareness of itself.

More than one persona hangs in the closet of a nation. Sometimes the U.S. wears the suit of a trading partner, other times, the military uniform of an invading presence. Sometimes it is a big brother to another country; at another moment in time, or to a different nation, it is Big Brother.

Canada has experienced the U.S. as a big brother. As is typical in nuclear families, the younger sibling tends to look up to the older. The younger child faces the task of differentiating not only from the parents but also from the older child. For a long time, Canada admired the national pride and individual confidence and international status of the U.S. while valuable characteristics of its own—such as a natural bent toward partnership, negotiation and fairness—went unappreciated by much of its government and many of its citizens. (John Ralston Saul, *A Fair Country*)

Though America's personas are donned with cultural discretion, the other country may perceive the U.S. differently than the U.S. intends. The dissonance in perception might be based on the viewing country's experience of the American government or people in the past. Two decades ago, when America's dominance in the world was unchallenged, France's foreign minister described the U.S. as a

“hyperpower,” and compared it to a “steamroller” (Kim Ghattas, *The Secretary*, p. 194). Sometimes history—such as America’s reputation identified by France above—combines with shadow aspects of another nation to skew its impressions of the U.S. For instance, Arab countries today distrust America’s militarism while their own radical fundamentalism, imaged by Osama Bin Laden and a host of terrorist organizations, frightens the rest of the world.

A young country by virtue of being recently settled, the U.S. displays a one-sided self-perception, much like the insecure ego of an adolescent individual. Americans see their nation as invincible, moral, and supported by God; as a people, they understand themselves to be honorable and deserving, having earned their privilege through the self-reliance and work ethic of the American Dream.

In accord with its self-reputation, the United States sports a persona of protecting the weak and stabilizing the troubled countries of the world. Accustomed to carrying great power and getting its way, it often seems to make irresponsible decisions with little or no foresight. At times, the assumption is that every country needs to be governed and organized like the U.S. is. As a result, the wisdom and ways of “elder” civilizations are decimated.

Heracles embodies the dual nature of the U.S.: the civic hero and the autonomous brute. This Greek myth tells us that Heracles led armies, defeated enemies and built and defended cities in assistance to many kings. He also ignored the rules at times. In one incident, he cut off the noses and ears of the enemy-ambassadors, and sent the men home with those pieces of themselves hung around their necks. At home, Heracles could tolerate domesticity only so long. He killed his

first wife and their children. His unceasing pursuit of erotic and heroic ventures led to his death at the hands of his second wife. A savior in the presence of threat or war, this kind of hero becomes a menace in times of peace. (Stephen L. Harris & Gloria Platzner, *Classical Mythology*, pp. 277-285)

Through its collective ego and persona, the U.S. often displays the civic hero, the savior. A consideration of the nation's shadow will reveal its menacing side.

Like an individual, a culture perceives itself a certain way (the collective ego) and portrays or presents itself accordingly (through the collective persona). This side of the culture's conscious life becomes well-developed. Shameful actions and betrayals of ideals get swept under the carpet, excluding them from the country's identity. Because they contradict the society's view of itself, these treacheries remain isolated from the culture's awareness. They become denied rather than corrected or checked. Suspicions, judgments and projections result, causing distorted ideas and behaviors in relation to other nations. Individual citizens become infected with the national shadow, acting it out in their behavior or internalizing aspects of it into their personal self-concept. (Jung, *CW9ii:13-19*)

Shadow contents carry describable feeling tones. (Jung, *CW9ii:53*) In the collective, these emotional undercurrents show up as stereotypes, such as welfare trash, illegal aliens and the lazy Negro. The people so pigeonholed are seen as having borrowed or filched the means by which they survive; they live off the efforts of others, and have not earned the right to be here.

These stereotypes resonate with the forgotten pieces of American history in which the newcomers benefitted from the labor of those who already occupied the land.

Through such stereotypes, the collective ego projects the negative (and rejected) side of its own patterns and attitudes onto a suitable other. (Thomas Singer, “The Cultural Complex and Archetypal Defenses of the Group Spirit,” pp. 5-6)

Another expression of shadow-parts comes in the reputation garnered by segments of the population. For instance, a militant paranoia permeates Montana, supporting its reputation of extreme individualism. A compulsion to do, perform, and achieve looms along California’s sidewalks, marking it as a birthplace of progressive ideas and spiritual trends. Judgment stalks the quiet streets of the Bible belt, associating those States with conservatism and closed-mindedness.

All of these attitudes—fierce independence, the constant need to grow and improve, and a fear of change—reveal an insecurity springing out of the nation’s relative youth as a country, its uniqueness as a culture, and its status as a big player on the world scene. The U.S. stands alone as a cultural experiment. Watched by most of the world, the country allows itself little permission to exhibit self-doubt or to admit its errors.

Beneath the confident talk and smooth presentation of the U.S., some important attributes remain undeveloped, and therefore in the shadow. Accountability and honesty receive lip service, but often remain unrealized. Oil spills, chemical spraying, underground fracturing, nuclear power plants and other invasive actions contaminate the soil, the air, the waters, and the people—and go unacknowledged by many corporations and parts of government. Defensiveness and aggression compensate the shiny persona; much of the world perceives aims of imperialism behind America’s promises. The crimes that the U.S. claims to expose and rout in other countries are

their own: terrorism, torture, tyranny. More and more, its name is associated with arrogance, self-righteousness and brutality.

Once welcomed in foreign countries—whether as tourists or troops—individual American travelers express sincere puzzlement at the anger and distrust they encounter overseas by virtue of their nationality. Despite the reality check of 9/11, the idea that America has given others reason to hate it or wish it harm remains incomprehensible to much of the population.

The stories and statues of Heracles illustrate the dichotomy found in the national psyche of the U.S. The son of a god, Heracles is unnaturally brave, strong and clever. He protects and preserves civilized society, exercising a combination of poise, stability and calm demeanor. A fourth-century statue shows him releasing his archer's arrow with rationality, self-control and supreme self-confidence.

Born of a human mother, he also displays irrational behavior and extreme violence. After strangling and skinning a lion with his own hands, he covered himself with the animal's hide and exchanged his bow for a club. Statues depicting this side of Heracles convey brawn, grimness and savagery. (Harris & Platzner, pp. 277-285)

Shortly after slaying the lion, Heracles accidentally shot the peaceful and intelligent centaur Chiron, his strong right arm going into action before his brain was engaged. The only superpower in the world, the U.S. has itself exhibited this kind of regressive transformation, particularly since World War II. Hubris led to the excesses of the Bush administration, epitomized by the country's enthusiastic plunge into a war of choice. (Ghattas, pp.194-195)

American self-delusion continues because each failure of the nation's ideals is viewed as an anomaly. This practice obscures the pattern of abandoned ideology. Thus the country maintains its unquestioned belief that it is an exception to history and an example to the world. (Wright, *What Is America?* pp. 8-17)

### The Collective Complex

Over time, frequently repeated experiences, stories and perspectives shared by a country take root in the collective psyche, and produce cultural complexes. (Singer, pp. 5-7) Made up of emotionally charged ideas and images that collect around an archetypal centre, complexes are autonomous and beyond conscious control. They function in an involuntary manner.

A cultural complex operates through sentiments and beliefs that are shared by most individuals of a particular society. (Singer & Kaplinsky, p. 5) It expresses—for the group—convictions and meanings and values with deep archetypal roots. Complexes influence the group's perception of reality, leading to predictable reactions. These automatic responses become ingrained behaviors. (Verena Kast, "The Association Experiment in Therapeutic Practice," pp. 5-7) Here is how some typical complex-manifestations show up in the U.S.

- Words like "gun control," "socialism," "abortion," "Islam" and "universal health care" provoke defensive positions and heated responses from the American public. Emotionally-intense reactivity and repetitive behaviors are the trademarks of complex-expressions.

- Slang based on stereotypes sometimes captures what is excluded from the country's belief system. The term "Hollywood ending" identifies the American rejection of failure, of losing; anyone can do or be anything if they never give up. The Hollywood ending creates a hero that is bigger than life.
- Racism circulates unfounded and negative information about President Obama, thriving in a country that, for the most part, turns a blind eye to its racial prejudice. The position of president usually carries some weight; showing disrespect for one's leader reflects poorly on one's nation, and on one's patriotism. Today, with a mixed-race president, bigotry usurps that collective code of conduct. Here a societal complex goes unchecked because it remains unconscious, despite its rampant behavior.
- By accumulating experiences that support their perspective, collective complexes create a repository of "historical" memories that affirm and reinforce their viewpoint. (Singer, pp. 5-7) The previous section on America's founding mythologem exposes some of these accounts.

Rooted in archetypal ideas about what matters, complexes defy reflection and understanding. Only a subtle self-awareness brings them to light where they can be examined, if courage allows. The lack of consciousness makes them hard to resist. As well, they foster a simplistic and fixed point of view, guarding against the discomfort caused by uncertainty or doubt or new perspectives. In these ways, complexes encourage self-righteous attitudes toward others. (Singer & Kaplinsky, pp. 7-8)

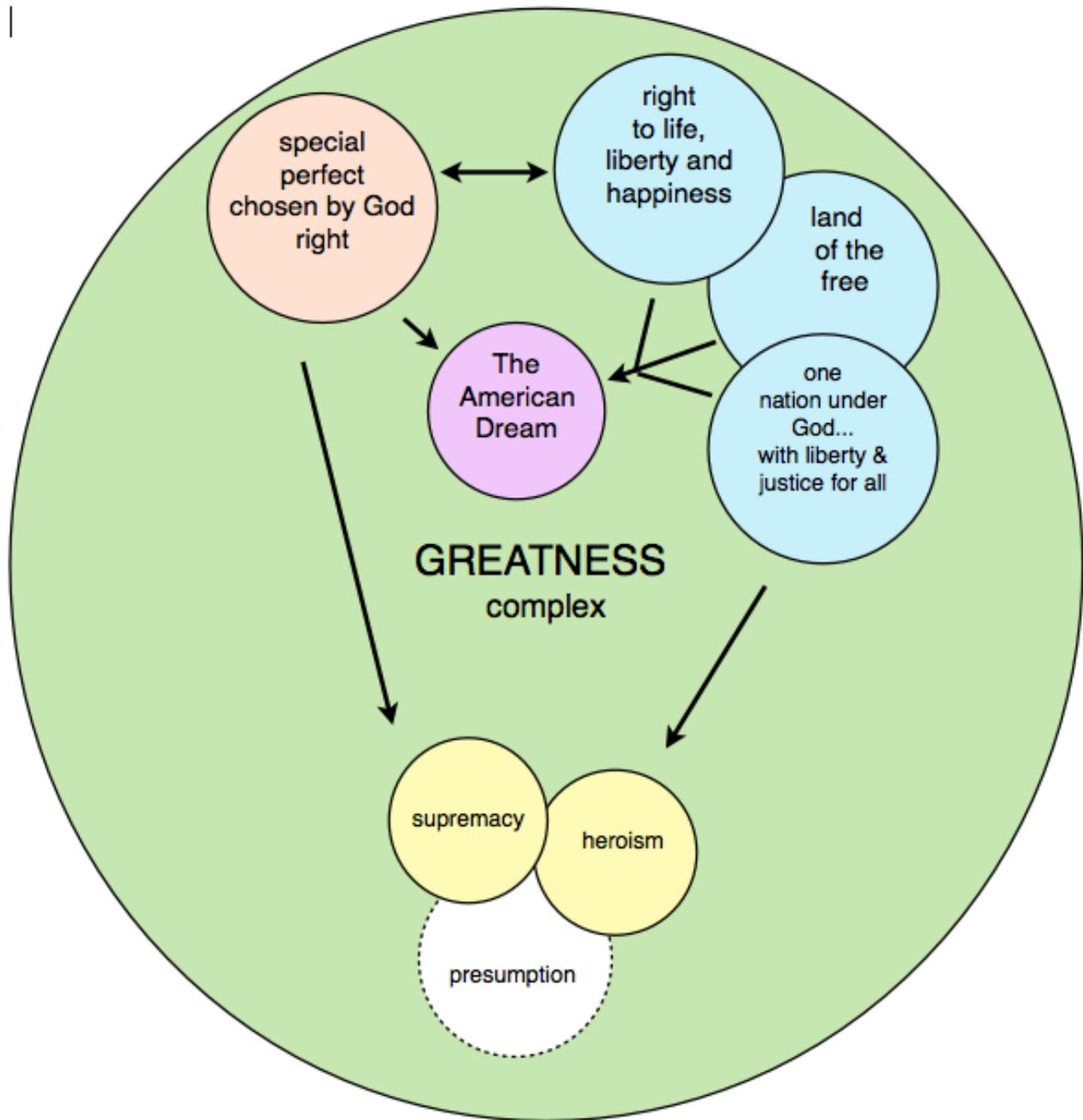
Every psyche, whether individual or collective, contains a number of complexes. They often cluster together, and "talk" among themselves, creating a complicated

network of support, protection and power. (Jung, CW2; Kast; C. A. Meier, *The Unconscious in Its Empirical Manifestations*, pp. 65-149) In an individual, complexes make up the anatomy of the psyche. In the case of a nation, they fashion the inner structure of the society and contribute to the social development of the culture.

It can be difficult to identify one complex as if it stands alone. However, on the next page I have diagrammed what I conceptualize as a major complex in the collective psyche of the U.S. While doing this necessitates simplifying the intricate workings of a complex and its system, I hope that it will help define a pattern.

I borrowed the name of the complex from Jung's comment quoted above: "greatness...expresses the most fundamental hopes, desires, ambitions, and convictions of the nation" (CW18:976). The word "greatness" captures one of the core ideas informing and shaping the mythologem, the self-concept, and the orientation of the American collective. The pink category at the top of the diagram summarizes, in point form, the accepted story out of which this complex developed: America is great because it is special, perfect and chosen by God, and therefore always right.

Over the years, this story gained authority through historical pieces of writing (represented by the blue circles). In 1776, the Declaration of Independence outlined the reasons that the thirteen American colonies were separating from Great Britain. Little of that paper remains in the conscious collective memory, but this does: "All men are created equal...with certain unalienable Rights...Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."



The Greatness complex formed around the foundational mythologem (pink circle), which later became formalized in the Declaration of Independence, the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and the national anthem (blue circles). The American Dream (purple circle) evolved out of these narratives. Both chronicles fuel the national quest for supremacy and heroism (yellow circles). These goals often rest on a collective presumption that America's viewpoint and values are superior to those of other countries (white circle).

Written in 1814, “The Star-Spangled Banner” officially became the national anthem in 1931. It provided a uniting identity for Americans: “...the land of the free, and the home of the brave.”

A minister penned the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag in 1892. President Eisenhower asked Congress to add the words “under God,” in response to the Communist threat of the 1950’s. “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

In addition to reinforcing the country’s mythologem, the documents strengthened the complex. Arrows in the diagram show that the official and founding stories support and inform each other, though they are given tribute through different customs. The formal commemoration involves ritualized flag displays, recitations, salutes and song, and a national holiday named “Independence Day.” Informal celebrations include fireworks on July 4th and November’s Thanksgiving dinners of turkey and cranberries. Until recently, annual school plays re-enacted the pilgrims’ survival of their first year in the new country.

America’s national narrative suggests that it was built from scratch, single-handedly, by white colonists always backed by God. The rights and freedoms and justice proclaimed in America’s history and rituals flesh out a picture implying equality and opportunity. As the arrows indicate, all of these accounts contribute to the American Dream (purple circle), which touts that anyone can overcome adversity and get ahead through perseverance and hard work. Many people have coveted the great promise held out by this dream.

Maintenance of the complex requires that the perception of greatness be proven over and over. The yellow fields show this aspect of the complex. In an effort to remain great, a constant striving for supremacy develops—in military might or in scientific achievement, such as the space race. Foreign aid, sanctions against corrupt leadership, and compassionate promises can look like selfless heroism, particularly to those inside America. Underneath the competitive supremacy and the beautiful heroism lie presumptions about the justness of America's efforts, indicated by the white circle.

Arrows pointing to the fields of supremacy and heroism originate in the country's narratives. The stories validate individual rights, convey a special relationship with God, and suggest entitlement to access the resources or interfere in the governance of other countries.

Composed of energy-fields that link to each other by virtue of triggering similar emotions and reactions, the contents of a complex accumulate over time, and affect each other. The story that a nation tells itself about itself shapes the complex, for it chronicles the past, rationalizes actions, and makes sense of events through its version of history. In turn, the complex reinforces the narrative. This mutual fortification strengthens the complex. When activated, the complex can overwhelm the ego, often with regrettable consequences.

The attack on the World Trade Towers in New York City threatened America's core experience of itself as great and indomitable. This released a flood of emotional energy, disturbing the nation's ability to judge the situation correctly. George W. Bush's war on terror plunged America into fear on the domestic level, and embroiled the country in unreasonable and unwinnable wars overseas. It was not a constructive or

even effective response to 9/11; it was a complexed response. Fall-out has been damaging: the dismantling of citizen-rights at home and the loss of reputation internationally.

America's greatness complex is closely tied to conquest, heroic actions and a perceived inside-line to God's will. It promotes assumptions of specialness, superiority and rightness among the population and the leaders. Released from history through sleight of hand that covers up unsightly truths and appeals to lofty notions, America is the country of the future. Separated from its past, America sees itself as the good guys and acts as if its era will never pass. It wants to be, and some Americans believe it is, the most perfect society in the world. (Wright, *What Is America?* pp. 95-132)

Underlying these actions and attitudes is a spirit of domination, supported by the nation's founding legend, which implies that the one who wins (or dominates) is the one who is right and honorable and aligned with God's purpose. This backdrop is an example of Jung's observation that "archetypes create myths, religions and philosophical ideas that influence and set their stamp on whole nations..." (CW18:547).

The archetypal base of dominance sports a bright side and harbors a dark side. Experiencing oneself as powerful and entitled creates a sense of assurance and confidence. The underbelly of domination is fear: what if someone does to us what we have done to others. Whether history is remembered or not, it flows in the riverbeds of the psyche.

Modern America has been built on a gold-rush mentality of "more tomorrow." The seduction of new frontiers and endless plenty produced a complex with a grasping, greedy quality to it. America's perceived power and prosperity has captivated other

societies (such as China), exhausting the earth and arousing appetites that can no longer be fed. (Wright, *What Is America?* pp. 1-7) As with all complexes, it is out of touch with reality. The complexed subject cannot see its actions, but the receiver of the complexed behavior can:

The love of possession is a disease with the white people. They take tithes from the poor and weak to support the rich who rule. They claim this mother of ours, the earth, for their own and fence their neighbors away; they deface her with their buildings and their refuse. That nation is like a spring freshet that overruns its banks and destroys all who are in its path (Sioux leader Sitting Bull qtd. in Wright, *What Is America?* p. 168).

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During the last half of the 20th century, and continuing today, two shadow-elements demand to be acknowledged and embraced. Both of these have to do with the feminine principle, which has been scorned throughout the history of the U.S.

One manifestation of this contempt is America's treatment of people. Within its borders, the U.S. government, and many of its people, abandon their own vulnerable citizens. The inhabitants of other countries are exploited for economic profit. A patriarchal culture, America has ignored the qualities of relatedness, receptivity, mutuality and whole-picture understanding. These are the very attributes now needed to mitigate the downward spiral of the country's internal morale and external reputation.

A story from the matrilineal tribe of Dagara in West Africa speaks to the inefficacy of patriarchy's segregating ways. This tribe recognizes that things cannot develop to their full potential without inclusion of both male and female persons, and the differing masculine and feminine energies that they bring.

Once, a Western company came to the community to start a project. They got all the men involved, and they ignored the women. Several years passed of pumping money into the project with no results. So they went back to the

men and asked them why nothing was working. One of the elders said, “What do you expect when you cut our tongue out from our mouth? What do you expect when you cut our heart out from our chest?” The people from the Western company didn’t understand, and the elders said, “Look, you cannot isolate a part of the community and still get things done. You have disconnected us from our tongue and our heart, and you still expect us to do this. Women must be a part of what happens.” So the company involved the women, and the projects began to succeed (Hilary Hart, *The Unknown She*, pp. 247-248).

The other shadow component is the nation’s attitude toward the earth—its fauna, flora, atmosphere and resources. Robert Frost sums up the kernel of America’s shallow relationship to the territory it inhabits: “The land was ours before we were the land’s” (qtd. in Stein, p. 1). The resonance of the Earthrise photo sent back to us by U.S. astronauts acts as a compensating, or correcting, energy to this dominance-mindset regarding the planet. “Earthrise” invites America to wake up to its own dependency on the source of life, and on the goodwill of the peoples and creatures with which it shares its planet-home.

### **Chapter Three: Society and the Individual Psyche**

Culture is built on a foundation of ideas and values, including morality and the place of the individual in the society. Parenting practices, educational systems, the media and legal structures promote and dispense these standards. Individuals manifest the societal principles through everyday interactions, attitudes and behaviors. The combination of all these ingredients—ideology, socialization and convention—result in a certain psychology. In the U.S., the personal ego is seen as an autonomous and free agent; Americans view themselves as independent individuals with the right to express themselves individually. (Jean M. Twenge & W. Keith Campbell, *The Narcissism Epidemic*, pp. 305-308)

The impact of culture on the individual psyche includes the social cohort into which a person is born. An Arab proverb says, “Men resemble the times more than they resemble their fathers” (Jean M. Twenge, *Generation Me*, p. 3). In other words, people display the attitudes and adhere to the values of the peer cohort, and the era, in which they grew up more than those of their parents.

For example, Twenge’s research shows that in the United States, people born prior to the baby-boomers stated that being honest, hardworking, industrious, loyal and caring about others was important. The Boomers grew up with those values. In adulthood, their focus turned to introspection and self-absorption; finding themselves and acquiring meaning in life became significant. Coming after the Boomers, Generation X is a small group with unclear identity; once known as slackers, many of them are now internet-millionaires. People born in the 1980’s and onward think of themselves first, and base their choices on what is most likely to make them happy.

They do not evidence much attachment to duty or group cohesion. Not necessarily spoiled or selfish, the Generation Me people take for granted their independence and specialness as individuals—things they were taught about themselves from birth.

(Twenge & Campbell, pp. 57-69)

### The Cultural Layer of the Psyche

Jung acknowledged cultural influences on the psyche and life of a person. Joseph Henderson later introduced the notion of a cultural *layer* of the unconscious in individuals. He placed this realm between the personal and archetypal levels of psychological experience. It is here that the social, aesthetic, philosophic and spiritual facets of the individual psyche are shaped by the surrounding environment. (Joseph L. Henderson, *Cultural Attitudes in Psychological Perspectives*; Jung, CW8:251; Tess Castleman, *Threads, Knots, Tapestries*)

My professional training as a social worker stressed the importance of a multicultural awareness. The focus of this instruction was on immigrants—on asking about and addressing the differences between their culture and ours. While social work emphasizes the impact of the clinician on the clinical work and client, no instructor mentioned the value of looking at one's own cultural background for increased understanding and ownership of who one is. Attention centred on the client's culture.

A dream sparked the investigation of my "U.S. psyche" in the context of my analysis. In the dream, "I experience repeated pressure inside my back at the level of the heart chakra. Then my back peels open and one of Obama's people from Kenya steps out. This happens over and over again...black men and women dressed in

colorful clothing step out of my back...” My analyst immediately recognized the cultural layer of the psyche. She said, “A Canadian would never dream that! This is an American dream.” Her discriminating observation led to an exploration of my experience of the collective shadow that includes the fear and slandering of black people.

My analyst was no expert on U.S. culture. Basically, she followed the dream image, suggested a reading or two, shared her perceptions of the U.S., and pointed out some U.S. attitudes that flabbergast Canadians and what that means about the Canadian psyche and the U.S. psyche. This process opened a door within me—a door through which I was able to more fully understand who I am, and why I am who I am.

The surfacing of my collective U.S. history remains a significant facet of my analysis. Someone bearing witness to what is so ingrained, so taken for granted, and never talked about or acknowledged as being part of me opened my eyes to the larger context in which my conception of the world and my place in it developed. As my analyst and I explored my cultural roots, my dreams responded with more images specific to U.S. history. The cultural layer of the psyche became alive for me, and I began to realize that, although my Canadian analysands live in Canada, talking about what is unique to a Canadian upbringing and worldview could be beneficial to them.

Naming and acknowledging the cultural facets of a person’s psyche is important in order to bring the whole person into analysis. Jung reminds us that the dream symbol “...brings us up against the wholeness of the symbol-producing individual...” rendering it “...necessary to make a special study of the individual and his or her cultural background” (CW18:574).

Even when the person remains in the culture where s/he was born and raised, the cultural layer of the psyche deserves attention. It is an area easily neglected in analysis, especially when analyst and analysand share the culture within which the analysis is occurring. Yet if the analyst thinks in terms of societal influences, s/he sees the unconscious conflict between culture and individual showing up in the analysand's history, in dream and fantasy material, in transference/countertransference reactions.

Gaining some objectivity about, and consciousness of, cultural complexes in a therapeutic setting is a long and arduous process. As with the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious, the work requires that the individual dis-identify from the contents that emerge from the cultural layer of the psyche. Doing so frees the libido bound up in societal assumptions and values, making it available for more conscious use. Nothing reveals the value and complexity of analyzing the cultural layer more powerfully than a candidate undergoing this dissection him/herself in training-analysis.

Every psyche nuances the culture according to its own structure. One factor in this nuancing involves where in the collective pecking order the person was born. Speaking of the early days of America, Ronald Wright says, "Seen from inside by free citizens, the young United States was indeed a thriving democracy in a land of plenty; seen from below by slaves, it was a cruel tyranny; and seen from outside by free Indians, it was a ruthlessly expanding empire" (What Is America? p. 13). In this thesis, I am writing about, and from the perspective of, the "free citizen," but Wright's observation serves to remind me that the dominant view must not be assumed when relating to another person.

An additional piece that impacts the cultural layer of an individual's psyche is the societal era into which s/he is born. Though perhaps not directly participating in collective events, the interconnecting web of psychic dynamics plays a part in who we become and how we think. For instance, Chelsea Sexton (mentioned again in the next chapter) was born five years after the Earthrise photo moved the world. Today she is a passionate promoter of the electric car. Her birth occurred during a period of intense public awareness that demanded environmental and social changes. She has an environmental complex, or an activist complex rooted in that period of U.S. history.

In the individual psyche, the cultural background filters archetypal experiences. This background is shaped over time by the experiences and actions of its collective members. Some of these experiences and actions are repeated over and over again, through ritual or through events that are understood in similar ways. After a long while, the vast number of repetitions produces an orientation in the collective psyche. As an illustration, the U.S. aims for expansion, partly because repeated incidents of the path opening before the settlers as they moved westward instilled such a drive in its people. The cultural background now supports heroic achievement: putting your mind to it, never giving up, unflagging determination. It filters out the all-too-human foibles of doubt, limitation, death, fear. Thus, the archetypal energies of strength, perseverance and success are allowed while those of loss, dependency and failure are not.

Lived out in group life, cultural complexes are assimilated by the individual psyche. (Singer, p. 5) The process is gradual—conditioning, biasing and shaping on an unconscious level.

The biblical story of Jonah shows the capacity of cultural background to sway a person's perception of a situation. In addition, the story shows that Jonah's psyche absorbed the principle of a collective complex. These societal influences set him up for great psychological conflict when God asked him to do something unconventional.

Jonah's country of birth shared some similarities in outlook with the U.S., which he swallowed as unconsciously as the whale swallowed him. His culture taught him that the Assyrians were evil and barbarous.

In 721 BCE, the Assyrians had attacked and defeated the northern half of Israel, and slaughtered thousands. Those who were not killed were taken into captivity. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria. For Jonah and his fellow Jews, the only good Ninevite was a dead one. They wanted nothing less than annihilation of the Ninevites and their nation.

Jonah was a good Jew. From the time he was a child, he was taught one thing: the Jewish people are the chosen ones of God. Because of their special place in God's eyes, anyone who was their enemy was also the enemy of God. That's why it was such a crazy thing when Jonah started to hear a voice telling him to go to Nineveh and warn the people to repent. They were the enemy.

What Jonah faced was tantamount to an American claiming that s/he is commissioned by God to preach repentance and forgiveness to Osama bin Laden's team. That person would be publicly condemned, at best.

Eventually, Jonah went, but only after terrific hardship, and three terrifying days in the belly of a whale. He walked through the streets of Ninevah declaring God's wrath and the warning that only repentance would ward off a divinely-imposed catastrophe.

The city repented, causing a change of heart in God. But poor Jonah! He felt betrayed. His culture's we-are-a-chosen-people complex and his culture's they-are-the-enemy projection had inserted themselves into his psyche. Having absorbed the spirit of the complex, it now set him up to feel humiliated. He experienced a sudden loss of libido, and wanted to die.

Jung addresses the enormous impact that collective socialization has on a person. "The national character is imprinted on a man as a fate he has not chosen...Only the individual can alter or improve himself, provided he can outgrow his national prejudices in the course of his psychic development..." (CW10:921).

The many facets of an individual's childhood environment contribute to his or her complexes, which structure that particular psyche. Often the untangling of a personal complex involves sorting out the societal influences as well as the individual and family patterns. This work has to be done in order to weaken the effects of the cultural material on the personal complex.

### I'm Great but *Who Am I?*

America's history of always pushing westward, always coveting, and always being the new kid on the block has produced a rootless society. This, in turn, burdens individual Americans with the necessity of creating their own identities. The individual has to fashion a social self, a personal style, with little help from generational or historical foundations. A society marked by continuous change leaves its residents susceptible to media-images, which are in constant flux. Many people get stuck in the childhood state of magical thinking, depending on the power of another (God, therapist,

surgeon, pills, possessions) to bring about a complete metamorphosis in their feelings and/or circumstances. Persona may remain only skin-deep, based on a mentality of experimentation, instant gratification, disposability and luck. One result may be an arrest in psychological development that is often referred to as a “puer problem.”

The puer attitude identifies with the archetype of eternal youth. This archetypal energy bestows feelings of invincibility, desire for freedom and independence, and the courage to separate from one’s origins. In these ways, it serves the developmental tasks of adolescence. (Samuels, pp. 125-126)

Being a phase along the journey to maturity, adolescence is not meant to last forever. Failure to move beyond this stage may result in a pattern of inner refusal to commit oneself to the moment. Frequently, it encourages a fantasy that sometime in the future the “real” career or soulmate or lifestyle will come along and then the person can get into life. The current situation (job, relationship, way of living) is seen as temporary, and unworthy of personal investment. (Daryl Sharp, C. G. Jung Lexicon, pp. 109-110) Such is the puer stance toward life.

Naive idealism needs to give way to the hard work of discovering and expressing the singular human being that one is. This involves participation in the opportunities and responsibilities which life presents to the individual. Building a personality and identity of substance requires time, cultural stability and the support of some kind of collective. Without such underpinnings, persona-formation may not progress beyond outer appearance, composed of dress, an identifying role or status, and social skill.

The ability to self-create is a North American phenomenon. Countries of long history and collective roots provide a sense of mooring, or anchorage, in which

character can develop. A person is so-and-so's child, and that carries meaning, purpose and reputation in the local area. The child's persona is groomed and mentored; this often includes the career facet of the individual's personal and public image.

America is a very young country in terms of settlement and recorded history. Its media encourages the trying-on of various identities. The message is that endless "transformation" can happen, and happen quickly and by choice. This produces feelings of anxiety in people. One of the most commonly pondered questions is "Who am I?"

Who, in fact, is America? England acknowledges herself as proper and genteel, and the deliverer of pomp and ceremony. The identity of her people is molded through family and a long national history. Switzerland claims its introversion and avoids external warfare, engaging in "domestic quarrels called 'political life'" (Jung, CW10:455). Jung describes his country as resistant to change, self-reliant, and "Europe's centre of gravity" (CW10:920). Canada once embraced an international reputation as peacekeepers; many of her citizens still do, although the current government emphasizes the acquisition of military apparatus. Whereas the position of U.S. president draws global, national and personal projections like a lightning rod, Canada's prime minister is seen as neither god nor demon. He may be liked or disliked but, bottom line, he is a human being who will eventually be replaced in office.

All of these countries are "small," in either size or influence. But America has a large land mass and holds huge economic and military sway. It is defined by its "Heroic Ideal" (Jung, 10:976). Singer and Kaplinsky point out an "addiction to heroic

achievement” (p. 21). Whether on an individual or national scale, everything must be superior, public and successful.

An aspect of America’s greatness complex is the socialization of its citizens toward doing something outstanding. Sports statistics are examined ad nauseum, looking for some record to be broken. Many parents and schools pressure children to be brave, strong, efficient, smart, outgoing and always active. Concentration on a goal, tenacity of purpose and unflinching endurance earn admiration. Sometimes the independence and self-reliance of individualism replace, or become confused with, the distinction of individuality.

In typical American style, greatness is unrestricted. The upside of this is an enterprising spirit. People believe they *can* be and do whatever they want. The downside is a pervasive pressure to do something grand, to be someone noteworthy. Being human is not enough. A person has to be big, in some way, to matter. Depth and breadth of character counts less than presentation, talk or money in many circles within America today. Unable to live up to the godlike stature imposed by expectations of greatness, numerous Americans suffer profound insecurity and free-floating anxiety, as Twenge found in her research on the U.S. cohort called Generation Me.

Individuals become infected with the national shadow, with a variety of outcomes. Some people live out the undeveloped qualities of caring and nurturing, exhausting themselves through indiscriminate mothering of all in need. Others become afflicted with America’s inability to reflect on actions and consequences, or to admit deficiencies. Some develop a mighty inferiority complex.

## A Moses Complex

When God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, Moses did not feel up to the task, which involved speaking to Pharaoh on behalf of his people. Moses stuttered, and was slow of thought. He liked his quiet, introverted life in Midian, where he pastured his father-in-law's flocks. God's intrusion unsettled his lifestyle. Part of his reluctance came from his cultural heritage, too.

Born of Hebrew parents during the time that the Hebrew people were captive slaves of the Egyptians, Moses was set adrift on a river, in a boat of reeds prepared by his mother. Pharaoh had decreed that all Hebrew boy babies were to be killed. Ironically, the pharaoh's daughter found the baby, adopted him, and named him Moses.

The Egyptians viewed the pharaoh as the incarnation of the gods, or of the process that separates order from chaos. As such, he kept order by owning the land, making laws, collecting taxes and defending his territory. He was also seen as embodying the culture, bestowing on him the authority to perform rituals and build temples. (Jordan B. Peterson, *Maps of Meaning*, pp. 132-136)

Moses was a Hebrew, and the prosperity of his benefactor rested on the backs of his people. He grew up in the wealth of the pharaoh's palace, set apart from his tribe. He was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and became known as a young man powerful in words and in deeds. (Acts 7:22) His individual history and his cultural duality provided much material for a complex to form around an archetype of the orphan, the outcast, the one who doesn't fit. The Black Sheep. Add to this his personal act of murder—he fled Egypt after killing an Egyptian taskmaster he saw whipping a Hebrew slave—and his stuttering becomes understandable. (Exodus 2:11-15)

This is not unlike the personal complexes that can develop from the shadow accompanying a national complex of “greatness.” A woman I’ll call Gillian had this dream: “Patricia’s Aunt Shirl died. I was with her through her dying.” In outer life, Patricia is Gillian’s friend, and Patricia does have an Aunt Shirl, whom Gillian knows. Gillian’s associations disclosed that she has been told that she resembles Aunt Shirl in this way: both women attract bright, or positive, projections from others. Even Patricia, Gillian’s best friend, puts Gillian on a pedestal.

Gillian grew up in the Bible belt of the U.S. Her national culture told her that she could be anything she wanted to be. Her church told her that she must help save the world, but she must not speak in church, and must be careful about speaking up in general, because she was a woman. The church expected voluntary and genial service from its female members. Her generational legacy includes sexual abuse of girls and emotional abuse of women. Grandmothers and aunts on one side of the family suffered mental disorders; on the other side, the women silently filled public roles while men got the credit.

Cowed by the “greatness complex” of her culture, a thread of self-diminishment runs through Gillian’s life-story. She bought-in to the rubric of her culture: nothing is worth doing unless it is great...great in every way. It must be done publicly, garner considerable acclaim, make a big and obvious difference, and be the best of its kind. In Gillian’s psyche, a personal inferiority complex compensates the national superiority complex; it prevents her from accomplishing what is humanly possible for her. In addition, Gillian suffers from her own version of the greatness complex. That splinter-personality within her feeds off the adoration from others.

The dream shows that this autonomous and unconscious drive to gain the admiration of other people has expired: Aunt Shirl died, and Gillian witnessed the death. After years of analysis, Gillian is able to be present to, and conscious of, its demise. Psychologically, this means that Gillian has reached a place where she is in touch with her innate greatness. In the past, the projections of brilliance and specialness onto her by others served to reflect back to her the inner genius that she could not apprehend. Now that she has attained sufficient ego-strength to assimilate some shadow material (having to do with her particular creativity and giftedness) and to recognize the manifestations of her complexes, the projections no longer serve her, and they will begin falling away.

Gillian's dream about Patricia's Aunt Shirl dying followed an epiphany earlier in the day. In Gillian's words,

An understanding dropped into my mind and instantly my body registered it as a knowing. My chest opened, I felt the space inside me and around me expand. The insight was that it is not my feelings or perceptions that are wrong. It is not my verbalizing those feelings or perceptions that is wrong. What is wrong is expressing them while under the influence of a complex. The experience of this revelation is much more profound than words can capture.

Coming before the dream, Gillian's insight makes a subtle discrimination between the collective prerogative to speak one's "truth" (which can originate in a complex) and the moral responsibility inherent in speaking truly, and truthfully, out of oneself. Such acuity brings freedom. Gillian grasps the value of her unique take on things. Her comprehension delivers the kiss of death to the complex, as shown by the subsequent dream. This process releases Gillian to embrace her specialness in a

healthy way, and ground it in human life. It brings her greatness down to size, realizing it through embodiment.

The story of Moses has been a favorite of Gillian's. Symbolically, she identified with his speech impediment. She was familiar with the dilemma of having something to say but being so scared that her voice dried up.

Moses gained freedom from the oppressive life of his tribe through no act of his own; he was adopted into the royal family. He left Egypt in fear after murdering an Egyptian slave-driver and burying the man's body in the sand. Similar to Moses, freedom and fear are natural properties in the psyche of a person born and raised in the United States. Born into the great country of America—the land of the free—Gillian grew up with the “Stars and Stripes” sharing the church stage with the State flag, the Christian flag, and the minister, who taught the Christian doctrines of original sin and the punishments of hell.

As beliefs and traditions are established in a culture, they are inculcated into each individual, becoming part of his or her psychic structure. Social order and personality thereby join hands in an effort to create stability, both collectively and personally. Looked at psychologically, Moses' story and Gillian's experience operate on both the inner and outer levels, affecting the social order as well as the individual personality.

The pharaoh, or the voice of authority in the outer world, establishes, embodies and modifies the social organization of a nation. Confronting this ruler in an outward way—as Moses did—impacts the confronter's personality, effecting a shift in inner power. In setting his people free from the bondage of Egypt, Moses set himself free.

Challenging the inner rule that establishes and enforces the organization of the personality—as Gillian did through her analytic process—alters the nature of her attitude and behaviors toward the outer world. In liberating herself from an enslaving complex, Gillian becomes an example of authenticity for others. Thus, an act of improvement in the interior world cannot necessarily be distinguished from the act in the exterior world; both the individual and the collective are affected. (Peterson, pp. 134-135)

Breaking out of a cultural complex within oneself renders a tiny bit of psychic energy no longer available to the complex of the larger group. When numerous individuals recognize their complicity in the societal unconsciousness that surrounds a complex, a critical mass tips the collective libido toward an adjustment in the national attitude. Sometimes a libido-analogue, like the image of Earth from space, constellates awareness of enormous scale, and introduces, or furthers, a transformative process.

Even then, “a problem cannot be solved collectively because the masses are not changed unless the individual changes” (Jung, CW9i:617). Thus, reform rests with the individual, whose psychological work is lonely and not given to greatness as defined by society.

## Chapter Four: Earthrise and a Culture in Flux

This chapter explores the fluid dynamics between the North American collective, its symbol of “Earthrise” and its individual members. A little-known story illustrates the psychological state into which the libido-analogue appeared. Here is the story.

Born of Poseidon and Gaia, the giant Antaeus gained his phenomenal strength from contact with the earth. He guarded the land of Libya, and anyone wishing to pass through the country had to first wrestle him. Antaeus won every match, until Heracles came along. Heracles noticed that each time he “threw” Antaeus, the giant regained strength as soon as he touched the earth. Heracles gripped Antaeus around the torso and lifted him off the ground. Rather than “throwing” Antaeus, as he usually did, Hercules maintained his hold on Antaeus until the giant’s life force had drained out.

(Clinton Ober et al, *Earthing*, p. 8)

Symbolically, the story shows what happens when the Herculean desire for advancement and possession overruns its human bounds: the tie to our source of life is severed. We then become phantoms of what we could be, of what we once were.

Most modern people in North America suffer a deep sense of alienation from the planet that supports us. In many ways, we have lost our instinctual relationship with the ground beneath our feet. Our ancestors obtained security by placing Earth in the very centre of their cosmos. Today we derive our sense of security from money, and we are filled with fear of poverty and scarcity. (Jung, *CW18:578-607*)

“Mother” and “home” being associated with Earth throughout time and humanity, the photograph of Earth floating in space activated the Child archetype within us. We were reminded of our need for care and protection. We were reminded that we belong

to something greater than ourselves. For a second, we experienced both our vulnerability and our connectedness. For a moment, we became students wanting to learn from and about our planet. Supremacy and individualism stepped out of the spotlight, however briefly.

Of interest is the date on which we earthlings got our first view of the earth from space: December 24, 1968—the 24th day of the 12th month in a year whose integers equal 24. Twelve is a number that stands for solar rationality. It is Apollo's number.

Twelve also constitutes a major ordering number in North America: the twelve disciples of Christ, twelve months in the year, twelve hours on the clock which, doubled, marks a day. The unit of a day (24 hours) includes the opposites of light and dark. The consistent consciousness of Apollo and the veiled feeling-awareness of the feminine ascend and descend in each day. (Marie-Louise von Franz, *Archetypal Patterns in Fairy Tales*, p. 67) Divisible by three as well as by four, twelve and 24 include both movement (the number three) and wholeness (the number four). (Marie-Louise von Franz, *On Divination and Synchronicity*)

Looking at the individual numbers involved in the date point toward change. 1968: one equals oneness, nine is a number of process; six speaks of relationship, and eight of union. (Edward Edinger, *The Mystery of the Coniunctio*; von Franz, *On Divination and Synchronicity*) Even the shape of the number 8 reflects two wholes joining together! Apollo 8's flight achieved a conjunctio of spirit and matter, of space and ground. The spaceship pierced the starry space and brought us down to Earth.

Back to numbers in the date: the sight of Earth from a distance startled the world on the 24th day of the month. The number two indicates that something is on the verge of consciousness; four is the number of wholeness.

Also significant is the name of the mission: Apollo 8. Apollo embodies the Logos principle. The U.S. prides itself on adhering to the Apollonian principle of rational consciousness. It places value on reason, directed thought, objectivity and abstract theories. The phallic shape of the spaceship conveys a spirit of masculine power, assertion and domination. Having become one-sided, this approach to life and to the world needs to be tempered with its opposite, the inclusive and communal nature of the feminine. The number eight is a doubling of the feminine number of four—a symbol of wholeness that involves the bringing together of opposites. Apollo 8: the Apollonian attitude and energy has to change and, in fact, invites its opposite.

In the name “Apollo 8,” the number eight emphasizes the process of coming to consciousness outlined by the Axiom of Maria: “One becomes Two, Two becomes Three, and out of the Third comes One as the Fourth” (Jung, CW13:187, n81).

“One” implies a lack of differentiation, which yet contains an inkling that there is something more in a situation than is understood. “Two” represents a dawning awareness of the opposites in the situation while “three” bears a state of tension between what is and what is not, or between the opposites that are becoming distinguishable from each other. “Four” materializes in the numinous aha! moment where apprehension of the whole occurs, introducing a new “one,” which is bigger than the previous consciousness.

In all, there were thirteen Apollo missions; the eighth one beamed back the photo that synthesized collective movements. Even the name given to the picture reflects the rising of Earth-awareness among people. The picture conveys the *unus mundus*: one world.

“Earthrise” transformed the world views of some individuals and groups through its unexpected photograph of our planet. There were people for whom Earth’s image constituted a direct revelation, the arrival of a living symbol in their lives. Others, born after 1968, absorbed a socialization that includes an awareness of the earth, and human impact on it. (Sitkin & Bowen, “History of Environmental Awareness in the Western World,” p. 2) At the level of society, changes in collective attitudes within the U.S. have surfaced over the decades in the form of social campaigns, works of art, and shared responses to events. The synchronicity between the name and the date of the mission, and its surprising transmission from moon-orbit, underscores the opportunity for a major shift in the collective psyche.

### The Movement of the Feminine

In primeval peoples, the ego complex was feeble. Both the individual and the group needed something to wake up the emotions in themselves before undertaking anything that required substantial effort. Often, such arousal occurred through an energy-generating ritual that involved the collective. The Wachandi men’s ritual, for instance, primed the individual as well as the group to tend to the fields. (Jung, CW8:83-85) Over the course of centuries, humanity has developed a degree of self-will that is infinitely greater than that of our early forebears. (Jung, CW8:87; 18:555) Today,

an urban gardener grows flowers or vegetables through the directed intention of his or her individual ego. This represents a great achievement on the part of humankind. Rescuing the ego from the primal state of twilight sleep has been accomplished alongside the creation of civilization. (Jung, CW8:135)

In my opinion, the rhythmic and repetitive physical activity that transformed primitive libido into culture in ancient days now appears as recurrent patterns across similar societies, such as those founded on European influence. We have to look beneath the surface of images and synchronicities in order to recognize the symbolism of themes that point toward cultural advancement in the making. The themes come in different forms, circling an archetypal content in its effort to gain enough libido to break into consciousness. This is currently happening with the archetype of the feminine in terms of its power and authority.

In 1997, two female icons died within days of each other. Most people remember where they were when they heard of Princess Diana's death; then Mother Theresa died on the eve of Diana's funeral. The long-standing fascination with these two women reflects the split feminine in our western culture: the princess and the saint, the whore and the virgin, the physical and the spiritual. Princess Diana and Mother Theresa carried our projections of the divided feminine that exist within our own selves. The proximity of the deaths of these women offered the collective North American psyche a powerful symbolism: the death of the split feminine *in potentia*. Some people were ready for this, and able to perceive it. For many, the deaths remained on the concrete level. Nevertheless, an opening occurred in the North American psyche. Works of art

emerged to assist in bringing the feared and devalued aspects of the feminine into collective and individual consciousness.

At the time of the deaths of the Princess and the Mother, Eve Ensler's production, "The Vagina Monologues," was gaining popularity. It brought women of all ages together in a celebration of the long-despised vulva. Two hours of stories told by and about the vulva facilitated a "coming-out" as women sat together in shared laughter and surprise. The play constituted a modern-day Inanna leaning back against an apple tree, exposing and praising her vulva. Inanna's act signaled a commencement from the state of a hesitant, fearful adolescent girl to that of an adult female delighting in her womanhood and wishing to test its powers.

In 2003, six years after the appearance of Ensler's show, Dan Brown's novel, *The da Vinci Code*, revived public interest in Mary Magdalene and in the legend of the holy grail. Something in the collective must have been ready for a more complete image of the feminine because, despite poor writing and weak character development, the book sold very well. Almost overnight, the perception of Mary Madgalene became more substantial and well-rounded. She took on flesh and blood. Since then, interest in Magdalene, the Black Madonna and various forms of the feminine has escalated.

Currently, the Broadway play "Wicked" draws sell-out crowds, and has done so since it began in 2003. The production explores the life of the Wicked Witch of the West from Baum's children's story, "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz." The two main characters are female. One buys-in to the patriarchal view of women as commodities; the other rebels in service to her own nature. One embraces the conventional ideals of innocence and bodily beauty as feminine; she follows a collective morality of giving and

pleasing. The other embodies the assertive and natural feminine, acting in accord with the deeper and invisible requirements of the moment and thereby gaining a reputation as unpredictable. By the end of the show, the rivalry between the two characters, and between their positions, finds truce in relationship. The message is clear: both sides of the archetype have a place and a function. The instinctually-acting feminine can do something that the approval-seeking feminine cannot, and vice versa.

As events like these circulate through our days and our communities, the unified feminine gains strength, coming into awareness through allegory and also through experience. The conscious orientation of the collective already tilts toward more relational dealings, storied reporting and communal values. “Occupy Wall Street” modeled a feminine way of organizing and leading: horizontal power, process-directed, consensus-based, speaking to systemic change. In 2012, yet another way of resistance utilized feminine power through a silent presence as legislators and politicians left their meetings. Forming a gauntlet through which the public servants had to walk, the quiet but visible demonstrators protested the radical right-wing’s attempts to gain legal authority over women’s reproductive choices.

The current political stances that jeopardize women’s hard-won rights in the U.S. frighten many people. Recognizing them for what they are normalizes the threat. Such regressive movement constitutes the death throes of patriarchy as the dominant structure of governance and organization in America. No ruling system dies easily.

In the physical process of dying, “terminal agitation” occurs. As vital organs shut down, biological and chemical balance is lost. The entire body reacts to the loss of equilibrium. This is an apt description for what we are witnessing south of the border.

More and more of the old ways cease to function, and the delicate balance of society breaks down. Restlessness and irrational behavior erupt. As the system destabilizes, morals, values and rights—in this case, women’s rights over their bodies—become open game.

Closely related to the burgeoning presence of the feminine principle in grass-roots activism in the U.S. is, of course, the modern feminist movement. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the First Wave of feminist campaign in North America addressed the issues of recognition of women as persons under the law, gaining the right to vote, as well as humane working conditions and educational rights for women and girls. From the ‘60’s through the ‘80s the movement was concerned with inequalities linked to gender: political and economic, legal and social. (Ann-Marie Imbornoni, “Women’s Rights Movement in the U.S.”) Most of the work accomplished by this Second Wave benefited white, middle-class, heterosexual women. Current feminist efforts, sometimes referred to as the Third Wave, attempt to correct for this lopsided emphasis. (Tom Head, “Third-wave Feminism”) They also continue to confront problems that the Second Wave fought to change, but which remain entrenched—for example, the sexual objectification of women by the media. (Jennifer Seibel Newson, “Miss Representation,” 2007)

The fight for women’s rights may be a concrete expression of what Jung calls a deep urge, constellated by the objective psyche, to recover to consciousness the neglected feminine pole of the central masculine-feminine polarity. (CW10:236-275) As an archetypal energy in the human psyche, the feminine principle shapes styles of relating and being in a culture.

The feminist movement of the '60s dovetailed with the crusade for civil rights, already well underway in its efforts to codify the inclusive nature of the feminine principle. Entitlement of animals, women, children, immigrants and people of color to humane treatment continues to be championed. The influence of the feminine principle—having to do with the physical element of life—showed up in the environmental movement as well.

### The Environmental Movement

Awareness of Earth's ecology started before humans saw the planet from space. In 1962, a seminal piece titled "Silent Spring"—written by an American marine biologist named Rachel Carson—called attention to pollution of land and water through pesticides and chemical runoffs from industry. (Sitkin & Bowen, p. 1) In 1965, the European scientist James Lovelock began defining the idea of a self-regulating earth controlled by the community of living organisms that includes bacteria, fungi, plants and animals. This work became known as The Gaia Theory.

Early in the 1960's, the environment held a spot on the U.S. national agenda. Liberal intellectuals and elected officials argued that protecting the environment, and improving its quality, would secure the greatness that the United States had attained in its reputation with the rest of the world. By the mid-60's the environment had become a major topic of debate in the nation's capital. (Rome, pp. 550-554)

The image of "Earthise" was one of the things that moved these issues to the streets. Sixteen months after the televised photograph, in April, 1970, the first Earth Day took place, inspiring eco-theatre, speeches and discussions around the country.

About 1500 colleges held teach-ins, and demonstrations blossomed in front of government and corporate buildings. Approximately 20 million Americans joined together in expressions of concern about the state of the environment. (Rome, p. 550; Twenge & Campbell, p. 60) By the mid-70's, universities had created degree programmes in environmental studies, and Canada's Greenpeace was engaging in high-profile activities. (Sitkin & Bowen, p. 2)

More than forty years after the numinous experience of witnessing Earth poised in space, we do not seem to have come very far. However, in a recent web-posting, James Lovelock eloquently describes the revamping that the collective frame of reference has undergone:

A new understanding has come from going forth and looking back to see the Earth from space. The vision of that splendid white-flecked blue sphere stirred us all, no matter that by now it is almost a visual cliché. It opens the mind's eye, just as a voyage away from home enlarges the perspective of our love for those who remain there.

The first impact of those voyages was the sense of wonder given to the astronauts and to us as we shared their experience vicariously through television, but at the same time the earth was viewed from outside by the more objective gaze of scientific instruments. These devices were quite impervious to human emotion, yet they also sent back the information that let us see the earth as a strange and beautiful anomaly. (James Lovelock, Internet, February 20, 2012, Homepage)

Soon after the public encounter with the earth in 1968, the space program itself started collaborating with foreign space agencies. In 1971, the U.S. invited the Soviet Union to join them in working toward a docking between Apollo and Soyuz ships in space; Russia accepted. The two countries began exchanging scientific information, and completed the docking mission in 1975. Such collaboration introduced a novel way

to develop closer strategic political relationships, and marked the end of the superpower space race. (Wiens, p. 95)

Marcel Proust pointed out almost a century ago that “the true voyage of exploration is not so much in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes” (qtd. at Ted Talks, “Deep Ocean Mysteries and Wonders”). The most significant achievement of the Apollo missions turned out not to be that we landed on the moon, but that we—the human race—laid eyes on Earth. Gradually we began to perceive new ways of doing things.

### By the Hands of Individuals

Small though they be, changes have been made. These changes transpired through the minds and actions of individuals, from demonstrators to writers, from politicians to school teachers, from scientists to housewives. “Cultural values do not drop down like manna from heaven, but are created by the hands of individuals” (Jung, CW10:329).

Astronaut Edgar Mitchell, who was not part of the Apollo 8 flight, saw the 1968 image and heard the Christmas message on TV. Two years later, he himself walked on the moon. A religious experience awaited this physical scientist who had always directed his attention to the objective world “out there.” While hurtling through space in Apollo 14, he watched the earth float freely in the vastness of space and suddenly a profound sense of universal connectedness engulfed him. He encountered the mysterious, and it changed his direction in life. “I realized that the story of ourselves as told by science—our cosmology, our religion—was incomplete and likely flawed.” He

understood that “...we need a new story of who we are and what we are capable of becoming.” In 1973, he founded the Institute of Noetic Sciences, whose stated mission is to “advance the science of consciousness and human experience to serve individual and collective transformation.” (Mitchell, Internet)

A year later, Chelsea Sexton was born to parents who would have seen “Earthrise” as young people. Some degree of environmental awareness would have been part of her socialization—through her parents or in her schooling or general surroundings. Chelsea grew up and became a sales representative for the first electric car to be manufactured and sold in the U.S (in the 1990’s). Interviewed in the film “Who Killed the Electric Car?” (Sony Pictures, 2006), Sexton vowed to keep the memory of what-could-have-been alive. It is her passion that holds the story of the electric car in my awareness. Facts and statistics left me indifferent; her enthusiasm captured me, and sparked my interest in alternative cars. As noted by Jung, “a change of attitude never starts with a group but only with an individual” (CW18:1392).

The farmer of today can plow and seed and harvest his fields without having to first participate in a group ritual in order to generate the psychic energy needed for producing physical work. Lacking formalized collective ritual, the farmer’s challenge is to access a sense of the sacred, one of the purposes that rituals fulfill. Today we have to look for the subtle ways in which ritual visits us. One way in which I perceive it is in the patterns appearing in art, in social movements and in collective responses to environmental or human needs that require individual cooperation. Noticing these repetitive occurrences—though they are dissimilar in content—imbues my Canadian-

American (read “individualistic”) lifestyle with a sense of connection to, and participation in, something greater than myself.

Most of us play hidden parts in the drama of cultural change and evolution. We carry our recyclables out to our blue-bins. We compost our food scraps. We complain about gas prices, and car-pool when we can. Maybe this is the modern version of building up enough libido to effect collective change. Though small and often unconscious, these activities affect the cultural psyche, and its layer in our individual psyches.

Perhaps one day a civilization will build on the psychic work we as a people are doing today. Hopefully the raising of our consciousness will provide a footing on which a future humanity collaborates with the earth: making full use of what we take, and giving back in equal measure.

## **Chapter Five: The Significance of the Personal Symbol**

Catching our imagination, the blue and white and brown image of Earth against the blackness of space transformed the way many of us think of our planet-home. We began to see it as a home for life, a living being that we can both harm and help to heal. We began to recover what was left behind in our hurry to move ahead: the meaning of the term “Mother Earth.” Earth took on a presence in our consciousness similar to that which the gods and goddesses carried in the lives of our early ancestors.

We glimpsed the implications of Romans 8:19, which a group called The Fisherfolk put into lyric form and set to music in 1976: “All creation’s straining on tiptoe just to see the children of God come into their own” (Betty Pulkingham & Jeanne Harper, *Fresh Sounds*, pp. 147-148). Coming into our own as sentient beings means experiencing ourselves as part of the whole, and comprehending our place in that whole.

### Psychological Coming-of-Age

Psychological maturity involves developing one’s personality in the context of one’s life situation. People achieve varying degrees of ego strength and persona formation as they grow up physically, move away from home, and take on a job and commitments in the outer world. With some self-reflection and circumstantial hard knocks, many individuals progress into leaving home psychologically: examining the values and ways of being in life that they learned from Mom and Dad and then living according to what works best for themselves. As a result, a personal identity takes shape.

A further feature of psychological coming-of-age entails finding one's place in society. Some people appear to occupy their station in life by slotting themselves into a role unconsciously, performing a duty without questioning it. Jung's version of fulfilling one's public post requires consciousness. Some people achieve this earlier than others, some never do. Even individuals who undergo a lengthy analysis do not necessarily find "a new collective function" (Jung, CW18:1094). Perhaps the person's psyche does not demand this of him or her. In such a case, Jung advises that the individual "re-establish conformity with a group of his own choice" (CW18:1097).

Joseph Henderson calls the conscious discovery and embracement of one's collective assignment "cultural maturity" (p. 76). Jung describes it as "expiation for the guilt of individuation" (CW18:1094).

This level of psychological development typically gets short-shrift in textbooks. Many theories do not address it, demonstrating a blind spot to the value and possibility of emotional and spiritual growth throughout a person's lifetime. Developmental theorist Maslow and life-stage theorist Erickson do include a later-years' phase with its own task, calling it "actualization" and "generativity" respectively. Jane Goodall comes to mind as an example of what these men write about.

Goodall spent decades in the jungles of Tanzania, studying the family and social habits of chimpanzees. During this time, she married and had a child. In her forties, she established the Jane Goodall Institute, which organizes and supports her research. In her fifties, she created Roots and Shoots, a global youth program. Now in her seventies, she travels and speaks, advocating on behalf of chimpanzees and the

environment. (Goodall, Internet) What started as a childhood interest evolved into creative ecological contributions to society.

### Symbol and Personal Re-Orientaion

Jung speaks about the passage from the expansion of life, in early to mid-adulthood, to the intensification of life post-midlife. He identifies it as an “extraordinarily important transition from the biological to the cultural attitude,” requiring “the transformation of energy from the biological form into the cultural form” (CW8:113). He also points out that it is “the privilege and task of maturer people, who have passed the meridian of life, to create culture” (CW10:272).

This period of life is not well-mapped. It is a lonely journey, a very personal one that “...cannot be enforced by general rules and maxims...but is achieved by means of a symbol” (CW8:113). It is the symbol that contains the libido and magnetism necessary for shifting a person’s attention from biological and personal areas to the cultural sphere, putting him/her onto a different trajectory.

As this thesis goes to the bindery, Alan Ereira’s second documentary on the Kogi, “Aluna,” is being released. A new generation of these Colombian aboriginals, about whom I write in Chapter One, approached Ereira out of concern that humanity did not listen to their message in Ereira’s first documentary: the earth is a living process in which we participate, a being that we can damage and also help restore. According to them, they now understand that we, their “younger brothers,” do not learn through our ears but through our eyes. They invited Ereira to join them in making another movie, this time one of imagery rather than talk and explanations. (Ereira, “Aluna”)

The Kogi recognize that facts do not wake us up as a collective. Our hearts must be engaged. As the Apollo photo of Earth from space showed, the heart responds to pictures and stories and imagination.

What works on the societal level applies to individual conversion as well. In the next chapter, a vision launches an expansion of consciousness in relation to the analysand's "place" in her culture. A few years before entering analysis, Tara attended a weekend retreat in which she was to identify a mission statement for her life and her work. Based on her interests, natural abilities, and the themes in her own history, she developed this phrase of personal purpose: "to gather people together and illuminate life through story." It sat right with her. Yet, in the face of never-ending information about trauma and unrest throughout the world, she struggled to believe that her life's work mattered, or could make a difference. By the time she came into analysis, the notion of "illuminating life through story" had become reduced to mere words. The concept alone was not enough. She needed something that could capture her imagination and translate idea into action. Tara needed a symbol. As we will see, she got her image.

Moses was probably not in the "second-half of life" as we know it today; certainly that distinction did not exist in Old Testament times. However, his story illustrates Jung's idea of a symbol initiating a transition from an individual orientation to a collective one.

Living quietly in Midian as a family man, Moses one day saw a blazing bush while pasturing his flock. Curious as to why it was not burned up, he went to look at it. The symbol confounded and fascinated Moses. Having caught his attention, the Self

now invited him—his ego, or conscious self—to engage in a dialogue. Moses heard his name called, and answered: “Here am I.” Told to remove his sandals, he did so. Then followed a speech on the mistreatment of God’s people, and a call to free them—a complicated and difficult task. Moses responded, “Who am I that I should do this?” God promised to be with Moses, who then said, “Let’s say I do what you have told me to do and the Egyptian ruler says such-and-such to me. What do I say then?” A long conversation followed, in which the Self produced more symbols demonstrating the gravitas accompanying the call. Eventually, Moses told God that he felt incapable of carrying out the charge because of his speech impediment. God lost patience and became angry, but Moses’ ego-request was granted: his brother Aaron would be the mouthpiece through which God’s messages were delivered to Pharaoh. (Exodus 3:1-4:17)

This story gives a beautiful illustration of how the ego-Self axis can work. Both parties—the ego, or the centre of conscious experience, and the Self, a guiding centre in the psyche—engaged in the process of coming to a common understanding. The ego named its limitations, which is sometimes necessary given the objective nature of the Self. Ego-ability may be lacking, but ego-willingness can make dialogue possible. Moses and God came to an agreement, and a partnership toward increasing the collective consciousness was struck. Throughout the rest of Moses’ life, symbols appeared that transformed a situation and moved the children of Israel forward in their individuation as a collective, and Moses as an individual. Moses displayed a religious attitude. Centuries later, his story provides us with a provocative and rich narrative of a symbolic life.

## Individual Culture

Psychological coming-of-age begins in youth, when instinctual energies, the need for competence and the demands of character development drive the person into the world. Life expands to accommodate the claims of work, family and personal growth. Then there comes a physical age and a psychological stage when continued expansion is not the right principle. Jung points out that as one moves deeper into midlife, “simplification, limitation and intensification” (CW8:113) impose themselves on the person, requiring a transition from quantity of activity to quality of activity. This entails what feels like a reversal, or loss, of all that a person has striven to master, and is not valued in western cultures. No wonder later-life stages have not been studied or written about much. How can simplification and limitation be pitched as something one needs to master for healthy development?

Jung, however, calls this process the achievement of “individual culture” (CW8:113) and says that a symbol can help an individual realize it. Whatever age a person is, the numinosity of the personal symbol carries the potential to lure his or her attention away from what went before, away from what matters currently, and introduce a compelling new vision. The life experience and intensification that comes with age can receive and hold the symbol, allowing its fullness to unfold, while also linking its glorious potential to the past. Perhaps this is what Jung meant by “individual culture.” Personal goals and emotions are harnessed for a greater good that utilizes history rather than ignoring it.

Cultural maturity, as Joseph Henderson labels this psychological development, allows a person to maintain a vision beyond the reality of the immediate point in time,

fueling hope and incentive. A characteristic of such maturity is the awareness that this vision has an impressive past as well as a future. The Apollo 8 astronauts reading the story of creation upon exiting the dark backside of the moon embodies this dynamic in a simple form. Embedded in the psyches of most North Americans, and coming from the heavens to Earth, the ancient narrative brought our origins into our present memory while we witnessed the possible future.

Edgar Mitchell was 41 years old when his dream of being part of a space mission came true; he was a crew member of Apollo 14. Seeing the Apollo 8 image on television stirred him, but seeing the earth with his own eyes on his return trip from the moon awakened him to the need for a collective paradigm shift. His personal symbol led him in a new direction, and to his next mission: exploring inner space through the study and research of consciousness.

Mitchell's work exemplifies mature vision on the part of an individual. His Institute of Noetic Sciences combines the rigor and discernment of science with the revelations of direct inner experience in an effort to improve the quality of life on Earth. Basically, his work bridges objective science and early wisdom traditions.

A relatively new visionary voice makes a similar connection between past and future in the book *The Once and Future World: Nature as It Was, As It Is, As It Could Be* by J. B. MacKinnon. The author points out that every generation takes Nature as they know it as "normal," then measures the degradation of the natural world against that baseline. The next generation considers that prior (degraded) version of Nature to be "normal," and so it goes. Thus cumulative ignorance shapes the collective view of Nature in any given era.

MacKinnon's activism takes the form of raising awareness about the long history of Nature. He recognizes that environmental policies are only as strong as the public culture that supports them. The book makes a case for using the natural world of the distant past as a guide to restore Nature in the future.

While latitude of vision is a characteristic of cultural maturity, a well-differentiated feeling function complements and, in fact, refines the visionary scope. It assists the process of bringing the vision into reality in an effective way. Awareness of what is right and wholesome and timely for oneself, what appeals to one, what moves one or is personally important—knowing these things helps define one's particular role in relation to the vision. Here the quality of activity comes into play. The merit of a deed "...depends on the measure and the time, and if it is done rightly within the limits of the personality" (von Franz, *On Divination and Synchronicity*, p. 84).

Moses had both the audacity and the wisdom to take a stand that whittled an archetypal task down to human size. Basically he said "I can receive your instructions and act on them, but I cannot verbalize them. For that I need the help of another person." It is the feeling function that helps one recognize the right action for oneself.

The same function also assists in discerning the right moment for action, as well as the right personal deed in relation to that moment. As von Franz points out, ethical actions depend on timing (*On Divination and Synchronicity*, p. 84).

The combination of a vision that reaches both back and forward and a finely-honed feeling function enables an individual to be tireless in his or her efforts toward societal improvement. The work may be channelled through art, ideas, religious symbols, or social or psychological avenues. (Henderson) What brings staying-power

is the personal commitment made possible by the feeling function, and the archetypal call to the greater good.

An Old Testament story tells of a cultural call on a woman's life and her use of right timing and right action. Esther found herself in a king's harem because she was young, beautiful and a virgin—and because the king had “fired” the queen after she exercised sovereignty over her own beauty and refused to be paraded before other men at her husband's whim. The king was looking for a new queen, so attractive unmarried women were rounded up. After submitting to fifteen months of grooming by the harem staff, Esther was sent to bed with the king. Smitten with her, and ignorant of her Jewish ancestry, he declared her the new queen.

After a time, Esther's uncle, who worked for the king and kept a protective eye on Esther, informed her of an inner-court plot to slaughter all the Jews in the kingdom. He asked Esther to approach the king on behalf of her people. She refused, reminding him that anyone approaching the king without being summoned by him could be put to death.

Mordecai drew on his authority as a father-figure and his wisdom as an elder, and told Esther: “Who knows. Perhaps it is for this moment in time that God has placed you in this position as queen. You are the only one with a chance of saving our people.” The prospect put Esther in a terrifying predicament.

However, she knew the truth of her uncle's words. Despite her trepidation, and the very real danger she faced, Esther made diligent and devoted preparations for approaching the king. One of the things she did was to fast for three days; during this time she must have wrestled with what mattered most to her in this situation. At the end

of the three-day fast, she had a three-fold plan. First, if the king extended his sceptre to her as she sought audience with him—thus nullifying the death sentence—she would reveal her lineage to him. Second, if he did not renounce her after knowing that she was a Jewess, she would carefully prepare a setting of food and relaxation in which she could make a plea for the lives of her people. If her petition gained success, she would expose the king's man who plotted the genocide.

The rest is history. Not only was the edict to kill all the Israelites revoked and the culprit punished, but Esther drafted decrees protecting the Jews, with full support from the king. (Book of Esther)

Combined with a discriminating feeling function and breadth and depth of vision, a personal message or image can provide the direction and impetus for bringing to fruition an individual's cultural assignment. Both Esther and Moses knew full well the chronicles of their forebears. They knew the struggles, the stories, the beliefs and the ancestral identity as God's special children. Personal knowledge and appreciation of this past sustained them in their arduous and dangerous endeavors toward a more favorable future for their people. Neither of them felt up to the task, yet both realized they might have a part to play in their era. Having placed themselves in the bigger picture, endurance, risk, and single-minded effort became possible. In this way, Moses and Esther each changed the course of their cohort's history. The story of their lives reaches down through the ages to us, reminding us that being part of a collective bestows responsibility, and asks of us the maturity to respond in an individual way.

## Chapter Six: Tara's Symbol

Fifty-three years old when she came into analysis because of a nagging discontent, Tara enjoyed her work as a leadership coach. Her practice was booming. With grown children recently launched, her 28-year marriage evidenced new vitality through social entertaining, shared reading and spontaneous dates to the movies or hiking in the mountains. She spoke of positive relationships with her parents, siblings, friends and children. Why then did her life feel stagnant?

This state of affairs—professional success, renewed marital enjoyment and smooth life-stage adjustment—resulted in excess libido. Tara embraced the familiarity and predictability of the life she had created and saw it as reward for the hard work of childrearing and professional development. Her discontent surprised her. From a psychological perspective, psychic energy was now available for something beyond her current lifestyle and outlook. Qualities and capabilities lying dormant within her began to stir.

Tara's personal situation mirrored that of the U.S. public two decades after World War II ended. The country had settled into a mindset typified by the values and priorities of what became known as "The Establishment." After a time, dissatisfaction began to brew under the surface. Then came the libido-analogue of "Earthrise."

In Tara's case, the psychic energy left over after meeting the demands of life produced a personal symbol that united her life experience with her society's need. This transformed her understanding of her life-stage purpose. As a result, her view of her duties expanded beyond those involving her family, both extended and nuclear, to

the betterment of her culture. Such recognition facilitated an acceptance and budding valuation of her life experience, her expertise and her interests.

Tara grew up in the United States, in a church-going Protestant family. For the first forty years of her life, the church met her social needs, provided the principles around which she structured her life, and articulated the stories that fed her soul. A crisis of faith took her away from the church. Married to a minister, Tara's marriage went through a rough patch; compatible religious beliefs had been a cornerstone of the relationship. Tara herself felt bereft: none of the things she turned to for solace or purpose touched the void she felt inside.

Two years into analysis, Tara went away on a two-week solitary retreat. On the first night, she dreamt that she sat among the congregation of a Catholic church. Parishioners went onto a dim stage to receive eucharist. She was denied participation because she was not Catholic.

The next day, curious about what occurred for the parishioners on the darkened stage, she revisited the dream-setting while awake. Though naive, and unaware of Jung's technique of active imagination, Tara must have re-entered her dream with an appropriate attitude, for she survived a shocking encounter. A vision came to her, in snippets, over a period of ten days. The vision brought her personal history together with her cultural task.

Below, Tara's words describe what happened when she initiated contact with her dream-image. The pieces of the vision are presented in the sequence and form that they came to Tara. Headings name the psychological activity occurring in that portion (or two) of the vision.

### *Lowering of Consciousness*

I go with the other parishioners onto the dark stage of the church, to partake of the eucharist. As I step onto the stage, I enter deep darkness. I can't see anything, so I stand still. Gradually, an image emerges out of the darkness. An enormous brown and black serpent encircles a white island that rises up quite noticeably from the center of the snake-circle. I see myself lying face-down on top of the island, naked, spread-eagled as if I'm trying to maintain purchase on the rounded island.

The "island" turns out to be a human skull covered tightly with oiled skin. A large red gem gleams with an inner light from the center of the skull's forehead. The snake moves constantly, very very slowly. It doesn't seem menacing but rather like it's doing what it's supposed to do: circle the skull. I can't see the head or tail of the serpent, just its large body undulating in a continuous sinuous coil.

The three of us—the snake, the skull and me—are afloat in a great emptiness. The serpent moves in mesmerizing undulations around the skull, its dark skin glistening. The blackness in which the snake and the skull and I float seems bottomless, uncontained, as if it stretches forever in all directions. Silent. The air doesn't move. It's a very scary place.

Tara does not bring herself out of active imagination. Rather, the image fades and she finds herself back in the external world. Her conscious self has been overpowered by what she saw, and her ego has no control in this realm—which she will discover again and again as the days unfold.

Before going further into the vision, the opening scene needs to be examined. Tara enters active imagination by joining the people in going onto the stage to take part in the eucharist. She is not Catholic, and is therefore not qualified to participate in the ritual. By choosing to ignore the church's guidelines, she does not show a pious attitude toward the church and its authority. Her curiosity is profane—totally a curiosity of the ego. She is not interested in what the dream has to do with her; she just wants to know what goes on on that stage. Furthermore, she is unaware that symbolically the

dimness of the stage points to deep layers of the unconscious. In these ways, her naivety seems perilous.

Tara's inquisitiveness and lightly-made choice impresses me as a modern-day version of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. God told them both that the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was off-limits; all else was theirs to pluck and enjoy. Curiosity insinuated itself through the question "Why not? Why is *this* forbidden?" Lured by the unknown, Tara reaches out to take of what religion (the collective representative of God) declares forbidden (participating in eucharist when outside the Catholic church).

In short order, the vision establishes the gravity of its intention. Believing she will receive eucharist as she enters the stage, Tara finds instead a serpent circling a skull with a gleaming gem, and herself stretched across the skull like a human sacrifice. The images suggest the elements of the communion rite. The round white skull resembles the communion plate holding the consecrated bread; the round gem throws out a soft light much like wine in the chalice does. The human body splayed across the death-skull calls to mind Christ's sacrifice, which the eucharist commemorates.

According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, Jewish tradition holds that the final burial place of Adam was Golgotha. Some pieces of Christian art depict the cross of Christ resting on a human skull. Prior to the Fall of Man, Adam was considered to be a perfect human being; he lost that status when he yielded to his desire to eat what God had forbidden (Genesis 3:6,22). Christ, who was also a perfect human being and did not succumb to Satan's temptations, is understood in Scripture as a second Adam (Romans 5:14-15; I Corinthians 15:47). The story of Jesus' death occurring atop Adam's skull

delivers a message of redemption, of recovering and repairing, or reconstructing, what went before.

A psychological understanding of this vision scene invests the suffering of the ego, represented by the splayed image of Tara, with meaning. The scenario foreshadows the struggle that is to come, and its possible outcome. If Tara's personal ego surrenders its supreme position, it will find a new reference point. This will release the mistakes, faulty attitudes and unconscious choices that have gone before, allowing them to transform into patterns pointing toward fulfillment. Such a sacrifice on the part of the ego can make possible a sense of consequence and substance in the midst of earthly life, no matter how mundane.

In the vision, Tara lies on top of a skull. Surrounded by unfeeling and therefore objective images, the subjectivity of the ego is being dismantled. Here we have intimations of ancient initiation rites. Tara has been removed from the collective. Isolated, she quickly becomes disoriented. Her nakedness signifies a stripping away of persona, roles and identity. Alone, she is thrust into unknowing. Her task, as we shall see, is to find her transcendental centre, and relate to it. Previously—in childhood—the challenge was for her ego to break away from this archetypal matrix, gradually acquiring “islands” of consciousness that eventually merged into a sense of personal experience and existence. (Jung, CW17:102-103)

The vision seeks to abolish the separation between Tara's conscious mind and the unconscious realm, where the source of life is rooted. Its symbolism recalls Christianity's mythos around alienation and the serpent's role in that estrangement. However, here the snake's supporting and circumambulating position suggests a

redemptive function. The total scenario shows an attempt to “bring about a reunion of the rational individual with the native soil of [her] inherited, instinctive make-up” (Jung, CW12:174).

### *Assertion of the Ego*

The next piece of the vision breaks into Tara’s consciousness the following day, as she takes a walk. She is not expecting it. However, she enters the scene, willing to indulge it. What she sees is this:

I’m crouched on the skull, and I know about the gem that glows with an inner light. I try to reach it, for I know that if I touch the red stone, I will be healed. My questions will be answered. I will know the purpose of my life. Always, my fingertips are still inches away from the ruby when I start to slide because of the oil on the skin. My heart leaps into my throat at the thought that I could tumble into the deep dark.

The wonder-working stone points to the Self, and fascinates the ego; Tara wants to touch it and access its mana. The oil that poses danger in this scenario suggests the undifferentiated state of the unconscious that threatens ego-death when subsumed by it. (Jean Chevalier & Alain Gheerbrandt, *Dictionary of Symbols*, pp. 714-715) Also associated with more positive aspects, oil provokes images of light, warmth, protection and lubrication. It fuels fire, linking it to sacrifice. In Christian traditions, marking a person with oil summons the attention of the gods, aimed at granting healing, protection or authority. Depending on the attitude of the ego, oil imperils through its slippery quality, or it safeguards through invoking the sacred. At this point, Tara’s ego is in danger due to its own dogged determination.

Jung recounts a personal vision in which he removed a red crystal and witnessed a corpse floating in water, a scarab, a rising sun—the promise of a new day which instead culminated in the “intolerable outpouring of blood” (*Memories, Dreams,*

Reflections, p. 179) through World War I. Six days later, he had a dream that led him to recognize both a collective and personal desire to impose one's will, to have one's way. (p. 180) Tara displays this hubris of ego-will for three days, until she terrorizes herself into a more appropriate stance.

The vision erupts into my day, unbidden, for three days in a row. Every day I try to reach the stone; it always terrifies me that I'll start slipping. On the third day, I ask the vision to stop coming to me. For the next three days, it leaves me alone.

The ego's need to know its purpose in life, to know the answers to its questions, puts it at risk. The scene reveals the ego's belief that it can accomplish anything through determination and diligent effort (part of a cultural [U.S.] complex in Tara's psyche). Fortunately, the ego recognizes a risk beyond its capacity. It overrides its modus operandi, and pleads for a break from the spectacle of its own arrogance.

### *The Relativized Ego*

Then, after three days, the image enters my mind as I'm cooking supper. I'm sitting on top of the skull, my back to the gem, my legs stretched out in front of me, my arms and hands bracing me from behind, supporting and stabilizing my position. I'm alert, yet at ease. Trusting. I've found my central gravity and no longer have to work to balance on top of the skull. I accept that I can't reach the gem without falling off. I will wait for the gem to become accessible to me in some other way. For three days in a row, this scene breaks into my consciousness.

A new ego-attitude has dawned. Tara's ego is ready to wait, acknowledging that it cannot force itself upon the gem. If the ego is to know what is hidden from it, such revelations must emerge in their own way and time.

### *Regression*

Today something different is happening. Now I'm on the back of the serpent that once circled the skull. I am naked and astraddle the serpent's neck. It descends, diving straight down, its long, thick body stretched out behind me. Every day, I feel the sensation of descent, and I trust the serpent. Every day,

when the image comes, I know that we're deeper than we were the day before. The air feels cold and thick.

The ego's trust of the serpent is quite remarkable, given that snakes effect primal and intense reactions in most humans. Jung refers to it as a "fear animal" (CW5:530). In the Christian creation story, the snake's suggestion of disobedience associates it with Satan and evil. God declares enmity between human and serpent, sentencing one to the prospect of being bitten and the other to that of being trampled.

In the vision, human and reptile have come together. A primitive understanding exists between the two. An enantiodromia has occurred. The coiled serpent is now straight; the controlling ego rides as a passenger.

The repetition of things in clusters of three in this vision strikes me as significant. The repetitive quality mimics the primitive rituals of the Wachundi and the Kogi. Like those rituals, the vision seems to be trying to impress on Tara's mind the importance of something that slips away unless experienced over and over and over again. As for the number three, it signals movement. In fairytales, the hero/ine often has to repeat specified behaviors three times, or three days in a row, before the enchantment is broken or the reward granted. Thus three times, or three recurrences, seems to refer to having an effect after a long period of perseverance.

Here, the unconscious appears to circumambulate itself, following its own timing and nature. The first three days work the ego into a strong enough state of fear that it lets go of its need to know, and asks for reprieve. The vision stops for three days; when it reappears, the ego displays a different attitude—one of patience and trust. The serpent, with Tara on its back, has been descending for three days. In the next part of the vision, a change in ego-attitude takes place.

### *Ego-submission*

On the fourth day, when the image appears in my mind, I wrap my arms around the serpent's neck and say, "Ok, let's go all the way." The serpent picks up speed and the black air becomes frigid. The coldness is joined by a dense sensation, as if the air hasn't been disturbed in centuries.

The first scene of the vision reveals Tara's masculine-oriented ego. Full of determination and knowing what it wanted, it acted. Tara's ego now has a more feminine quality to it—one of pondering, waiting until she understands what needs to be done. She abandons her idealism, realizing there are higher things than her ego's inclination and that to these she must bow. She entrusts herself to the process, hands herself over to the unknown.

This is quite a different dynamic than that depicted by the mythological hero who slays the treasure-guarding dragon, the mother-energy that threatens to keep him out of life. Tara transfers the allegiance of her will from control to surrender, and enters into kinship with her primordial life force. Her serpent-dragon *takes* her to the treasure.

### *Encountering the Treasure*

After plummeting for a long time, I become aware of a very faint glow. We keep plunging downward. The soft light grows bigger and stronger. As we draw closer, I see an ancient wooden chest sitting on a circular island of white shells. When we reach the island, the serpent slides its neck onto the shells and I step off. I go to the chest, touch its very old lid. Its wood meets my hand with the polished smoothness brought by long exposure to time and water. I open the lid. Light radiates from a very old book lying open, filling the chest. The pages are brown, brittle, chipped and ripped. I climb into the chest and sit down in the middle of the book. I'm quite small and easily sit cross-legged on the space where the pages fall open from the binding.

Taken deeper into the subterranean layers of the psyche, Tara again finds herself on an island. The first one—a skull—once housed the multifaceted life of a human being. This second island is made up of the empty husks of sea creatures now

deceased. Here we find the redemption motif of the second Adam. Christ's crucifixion atop Adam's skull shows a correction of the past. Christ rectified Adam's failings.

Instinctual creatures once inhabited the shells that now make up the island. They can be seen as representing what was left out of Tara's conscious life due to socialization in a culture that devalues and ignores human instincts. Symbolically, Tara's feet touch her instinctual ground, restoring a vital connection.

In the vision, the skull is replaced by seashells. A symbol of libido, shells bring to mind the generational component of life. Each generation rests on the knowledge and legacy of its ancestors; each new life rises out of the death of the previous generation. (Chevalier & Gheerbrandt, pp. 871-872; J. E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, p. 294; Jung, CW8:98-99) Tara's ego-death on top of the skull opened the way for communion with the Self, which makes possible the recovery of what was lost or harmed through her past decisions and actions—or even those of her ancestors or culture.

Tara, wanting to release the light, opens the chest. Coming from a transformed place, ego-initiative is rewarded. The chest holds something old and still alive: wisdom. Found in the depths, this sagacious knowledge belongs to the collective; it comes from the pooled experience of humanity, and is the treasure of it.

With her new attitude, Tara rightly claims the discovery. Reconnected with the heritage gifted to her by those who lived before, Tara seats herself on—consciously allows herself to be supported by—the timeless narratives of her forebears. The diminutive status of her ego-figure shows the appropriateness of her current attitude.

### *Progression and Containment*

Tara has found something of great value. Both privilege and responsibility accompany her act of taking the treasure into her keeping. She makes another journey, this time with the treasure in her possession.

The great serpent coils itself under the island of shells and bears it upward. We emerge in the center of the church stage, where I originally met the skull suspended in a black void. The serpent and the shell-island disappear. The chest with its luminous book replaces the skull, bringing a soft and christening light. I turn into a mermaid lounging across the open book.

Playing an essential role in bringing Tara to consciousness, the animal-symbol of the unconscious turns out to be a shrewd and helpful creature. Fundamentally associated with the life of the instincts, the serpent demonstrates impeccable timing and archaic intelligence. The primal creature knows what Tara's ego does not know. Her ego elicits this invaluable assistance by choosing to trust an intelligence beyond and outside that of its own.

Tara's new form of being communicates her connection with the unconscious: she appears as a mermaid. She embodies the descent and survival of an initiate into the individuation process.

People coming up for communion bring votive candles, which they set along the edges of the open chest. Each person genuflects before the candles, as if acknowledging a primal feminine presence—or knowing—within themselves, then exits the stage.

Ensclosed in the containers of the church and chest, and reclining on words of illumination, Tara witnesses the baptism-in-light of other people. Individuals bring their own small flames of light and go away bathed in an experience of the divine.

The vision-figures function on several levels: they may represent parts of Tara's psyche, they may signify members of the collective, they may symbolize ancestors.

Tara's receptive and reverent attitude enables the conversion of consciousness.

Through her ego's connection with the bedrock of humanness, this healing experience and enlargement of consciousness becomes available to the parts of her psyche, to persons within her circle of influence, and to the legacy left by those who have gone before.

### *Into the World*

After a time of this, the mermaid-me turns back into me, a naked flesh-and-blood woman. The votive candles disappear. I step out of the chest and see a rope dangling from one of its handles. I grasp the rope and the chest sprouts wheels on the bottom. I pull the chest, with its ancient treasure, off the stage, up the center aisle, through the foyer and out of the church building. Once outside, the chest begins to grow and keeps growing. I'm dwarfed by it. Still I pull it, further and further into the world.

Returned to herself, though without persona or inappropriate defenses, Tara completes the initiation process and steps back onto the ground of human existence. The chest acquires a rope-handle and wheels, humanizing the experience so that she can take it out of the sacred containment and into the world of the collective. As she does so, the treasure grows and develops, taking a position of prominence.

The lysis of the vision indicates Tara's cultural assignment: to move the archaic stories out of the status quo, come into communion with the images, make them available to others, and allow community to form around new meaning. She has been set apart from the individualism of America, reborn as a heroine and tribe member returning with precious discoveries for her people. Her personal past, both as an individual and as a member of her culture, prepared her for, and also calls her to, this task.

Tara may work alone, but she will not be alone in her efforts; she joins a host of other storytellers and group-gatherers. She is not the first, and will not be the last to do this work. She is, however, the only Tara. As she observed one day, “This has been done before...but not by me.”

On a personal level, the descent to the island of shells signals a coming home to the natural mind of the instincts. This is necessary for Tara’s story-work to access the non-rational wisdom that illuminates human struggles. At the cultural level, story-work is part of the process in forging a new myth that serves the *zeitgeist*—the spirit of the times. Without a myth that nourishes the souls of its people, the collective loses its way, and even falls apart. Every culture needs a story that connects it to the numinous world of the archetypes. This is true of individuals as well. Tara has found her myth.

For her, now comes the supremely difficult return to the tribe and the realm of common life after having undergone an initiation and transformation. Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* summarizes Tara’s current challenge in poetic language: “Whether rescued from without, driven from within, or gently carried along by the guiding divinities...[she] has yet to confront society with [her] ego-shattering, life-redeeming elixir, and take the return blow of reasonable queries, hard resentment, and good people at a loss to comprehend” (p. 186). To involve oneself socially with the calling sensed at the time, and to risk the yea or nay of the collective to which that vocation is offered, demonstrates a person’s cultural maturity. It also requires cultural maturity.

Tara’s return to the source of psychic life resembles, in the interior world, the beholding of planet Earth from deep space in the external world. Both extend an

invitation to reconnect with the origins and wellsprings of life, which remind us who we are.

“Earthrise” offered North Americans an opportunity to create a new paradigm out of which decisions can be made and life can be conducted. The image inspired Joseph Campbell to wonder aloud if it might be the symbol for the mythology of the future. Upon viewing the earth from his own spaceship, Edgar Mitchell recognized his personal myth and his cultural work. The collective transition to a different paradigm that includes the qualities of the feminine principle needs help from many places. It needed Carl Jung’s recognition that it is time for a new myth. It needed the insight of Joseph Campbell, the research of Edgar Mitchell. Now it needs Tara to tell stories in ways that bring new light and fresh understanding to old narratives.

## **Conclusion: Symbol, Culture and the Individual**

The libido-analogue, or collective symbol, of seeing our planet suspended alone in space introduced the subject of this thesis: the dynamic interplay between symbol, culture and individual that produces change in the collective psyche. Whether appearing from the outside or the inside, whether coming to a group or an individual, the transformer of psychic energy is the symbol. Manifesting in dreams, stories, rituals and images, symbols have accompanied humanity throughout the ages, and will continue to do so.

### Hypothesis and Thesis

In the introduction, my hypothesis stated that North American cultures are in transition from a patriarchal view of the world that imposes its power through force toward a philosophy of relatedness informed by inclusion and equality. I also posited that the photograph transmitted from Apollo 8 had something to do with this passage, a thread I follow in summarizing the chapters of this thesis in the paragraphs below.

Chapter One, "The Role of the Collective Symbol," explored the libido-analogue as an agent of change on a societal level; it transforms psychic energy into cultural phenomena. The collective symbol creates history by virtue of its resonance with the collective milieu in which it appears. Seeing Earth from space inducted North Americans, and particularly people in the U.S., into a consideration of Earth as a living being. This has promoted a gradual shifting from a muscular, aggressive style of leadership toward a preference for a more fluid and consensual approach in leadership.

Symbols shape the psyches and lives of nations, and the individuals that live in them. The history and founding narrative of a country provide symbols by which the society understands itself. My exploration of the U.S. national psyche in the second chapter showed how the country's mythologem configured the more evident features of the collective ego, persona, shadow and complex. The televised "Earthrise" photo reminded the population that their nation is part of a bigger world and that everyone's welfare depends on that of our shared planet. Practices of the Kogi of Colombia make plain the contrast between the U.S. attitude of domination and an aboriginal conception of the earth as sacred and requiring a harmonious relationship with humanity.

From there, my thesis moved to "Society and the Individual Psyche." The cultural layer of the individual psyche reflects, in various ways, the influence of the person's experiences within his or her society, and deserves attention in the analytic process. This part of a person's psyche includes the effects of the era in which s/he was born. The collective awakening inspired by the sight of Earth, free-floating and solitary, happened shortly before Chelsea Sexton was born in the U.S. Her vocation of promoting the use of alternative-energy cars exhibited a sociological effect of the Apollo 8 event. Other stories—those of Jonah, Moses and Gillian—amplified the varying ways in which cultural persuasions appear in the psyches and lives of individuals.

A prime mover in cultural change, the collective symbol depends on humans to realize its transforming energy through comprehension and endeavor. Chapter Four, "Earthrise and a Culture in Flux," described this dynamic. The evolving awareness and activities in the U.S., following the view of Earth from space, reveal an intertwining of the personal and the political. Civilization builds on what has gone before, and strengthens

or alters the foundation for what will follow. But never is it created without the participation of individuals.

Chapter Five highlighted the significance of the personal symbol. Bearing in mind that collective health and harmony depends on the attitudes and behaviors of its individuals, the personal symbol carries great import in the development of a society. Symbolic images and experiences move people along on their path of development. Society needs each of us to progress from biological maturity to cultural maturity. While “Earthrise” raised the awareness of the masses to human and environmental concerns, the libido-analogue can do its work only if individual people take their own symbols seriously.

Tara’s case, which made up the last chapter, provided one example of how this might be done. Rather than dismiss her dream, she approached it with curiosity and gave it opportunity to reveal more about itself to her. The ensuing vision demonstrated the ordeal that the re-orientation from personal aspirations to societal advancement entails. Her personal ego lost its central position in her psyche, and assumed a secondary, but crucial, place in relation to the greater purposes of the Self and of culture. Like the libido-analogue on the collective level, Tara’s individual symbol imparts a context that can enable her to endure the chaos and angst accompanying any transformation laboring toward delivery.

The writing of this thesis leaves me encouraged that America’s emphasis on and over-valuation of the masculine way of doing things is in the process of being altered. Energies of the feminine principle are manifesting more and more, often in quiet ways. This is very slow, but it is happening.

While doing my last edit, I read Ghattas' recent book. Written by a sceptic who has been on the receiving end of U.S. foreign policy and intervention, it reveals a reflective side to politicians whom the author came to know while working as a journalist in Washington, D.C. The book depicts a president and a secretary of state blazing a trail to "smart power" (p. 334). This kind of leadership seeks to establish relationships with the heads of other nations, pursues dialogue and negotiation, and expects all countries to pull their own weight and keep their promises.

The balance of power never shifts easily or tidily and collective change rarely happens quickly. However, change is afoot, primarily because the realities of the twenty-first century require a different kind of power. "Earthrise" remains in the North American psyche, part of the background that shapes our conception of domestic and global issues today.

### Questions and Remarks

My introduction posed four questions. First, how does culture affect the individual, and vice versa? Individual and collective are intertwined and often inseparable. The human psyche being social by nature, we create culture. In turn, images that emerge out of the unconscious of an individual always come in a form given by some cultural system. Over the ages, humans have developed complex societies involving social interchange, education, expression and organization. In turn, the development and differentiation of human consciousness has evolved through contact with civilization.

Second, what role does the symbol play in the mutual exchange between individual and society? Early in the thesis, I likened the function of the symbol to the process of photosynthesis in plants. Psychological photosynthesis takes the potency of the symbol, which is rooted in the ancestral or collective layer of the psyche, and converts it into nourishment for modern people and times. A symbol carries the potential for such conversion, depending on the psychological attitude and abilities of the person or people to whom it comes.

Third, what happens on an individual level when a symbol catches the imagination of a nation? Collective symbols stimulate culturally-mature individuals to action. It awakens some individuals, and simply fascinates or puzzles others. When resonating with a collective readiness, the libido-analogue sweeps people into its energy through books, performances, legal and educational changes, and political movements, as seen in Chapter Four. In the process, chaos and conflict often ensue on the societal level, and sometimes personally as well.

Fourth, what are the cultural implications of the personal symbol? An essential element in cultural change is the individual. Therefore, the personal is also cultural. Jung lived this truth. His psychological theory is the product of relating to his personal symbols and bringing them into human and collective life through thought and deed. Dream images and numinous experiences that come to individuals can sometimes contribute to the evolving myth that serves the advancement of civilization. In working with dreams, whether our own or those of our analysands, we would be wise to ask what the symbol may be saying to the collective as well as to the individual.

## Closing Thoughts

One of Jung's profound and challenging statements is that the most important thing a person can do to benefit the world is his or her individual psychological work. (CW8:111) Perhaps what Jung was getting at is the importance of doing what we do out of an inner place of stillness and love and kindness and self-harmony. Doing our "individual work" untangles some of our complexes, cleansing our motivations, responses and intentions. This allows clean actions and right timing.

Since collective change begins with the individual, the individuation work of individual men and women is critical. It boils down to this: the number of, and degree to which, its members are psychologically developed determines the condition, or state, of a society.

The non-indigenous populace of North America is becoming aware, like never before, that all of us are citizens of the world. Our country is the earth. For a moment in time, the emotional energy that manifests itself in numinous phenomena appeared—in the form of "Earthrise"—humanizing the physical matter on which we stand and move and live. We got a sip of the vast meaning that "Mother Earth" once carried for people, and the taste lingers enough to keep us crawling toward a fundamental shift in attitude and action. May we each do our part.

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