



C.G. JUNG LETTERS

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translations from the German by R. F. C. HULL

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to be indicated in your situation. You are not only informed enough but also intelligent enough to go on for a long stretch on the assumption that I'm buried and that there is no analyst for you under the changing moon except the one that is in your own heart. As you will understand, this does not mean at all that you analyse and interpret your dreams according to the rules of the thumb, but that you do what we call in the German language the "Auseinandersetzung mit dem Unbewussten,"¹ which is a dialectical procedure you carry through with yourself with the aid of active imagination. This is the best means I know to reduce an inordinate production of the unconscious. It doesn't seem right that a man like yourself is still dependent upon analysts. It is also not good for you, because it produces again and again a most unwholesome dissociation of your opposites, namely pride and humility. It will be good for your humility if you can accept the gifts of the unconscious guide that dwells in yourself, and it is good for your pride to humiliate itself to such an extent that you can accept what you receive. I don't intend to behave as if I were a corpse already. I'm therefore quite willing to help in your attempt in this direction, but I refuse in your own interest to plague myself with your material which is only helpful when you acquire its understanding by your own effort. Pride is a wonderful thing when you know how to fulfil its expectations. Did you never ask yourself who my analyst is? Yet, when it comes to the last issue, we must be able to stand alone *vis à vis* the unconscious for better or worse.

Yours sincerely, C. G. JUNG

¹ This term is usually translated in CW as "coming to terms with the unconscious."

To Mr. O.

[ORIGINAL IN ENGLISH]

Dear Mr. O.,

30 April 1947

Having studied your dream-material and having had a personal impression of your actual state of mind I have come to the conclusion that there is something wrong in the whole handling of your case, in spite of the fact that everything seems to be correct. The fact is that you have an uncannily extensive material one can hardly hope to cope with, at least I couldn't muster the amount of energy that would be required to deal with your dreams properly. In order to keep up with them one would need at least 3 hours a week. As you know, the principle of my technique does not consist only in analysis and interpretation of such materials as are produced by the unconscious, but also in their synthesis by active imagination. Of the latter I have seen nothing yet. But this is precisely the "technique" which seems

To Mr. O.

[ORIGINAL IN ENGLISH]

My dear Mr. O.

2 May 1947

I'm somewhat astonished that you haven't learned yet to apply what I call "active imagination," as this is the indispensable second part of any analysis that is really meant to go to the roots. I wish you would carefully study what I have written about it in *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten*.¹ It is true, not much has been published about this subject. Most is contained

¹ "The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious," CW 7.

MAY 1947

in my Seminars. It is too difficult a subject to deal with before a merely intellectual public.

The dream² you write about is suggestive in that respect: it is a *massa informis*³ which is meant to be shaped. It shouldn't go down the sink as it is always expected to do, it must remain on the surface, because it is the *prima materia*⁴ of whatever you are going to do about it. The point is that you start with any image, for instance just with that yellow mass in your dream. Contemplate it and carefully observe how the picture begins to unfold or to change. Don't try to make it into something, just do nothing but observe what its spontaneous changes are. Any mental picture you contemplate in this way will sooner or later change through a spontaneous association that causes a slight alteration of the picture. You must carefully avoid impatient jumping from one subject to another. Hold fast to the one image you have chosen and wait until it changes by itself. Note all these changes and eventually step into the picture yourself, and if it is a speaking figure at all then say what you have to say to that figure and listen to what he or she has to say.

Thus you can not only analyse your unconscious but you also give your unconscious a chance to analyse yourself, and therewith you gradually create the unity of conscious and unconscious without which there is no individuation at all. If you apply this method, then I can come in as an occasional adviser, but if you don't apply it, then my existence is of no use for you.

Yours sincerely, C. G. JUNG

² A mass of yellow substance grew under the hand of the dreamer. He tried to wash it down the kitchen sink but the drain was blocked and the mass didn't go down.

³ Alchemical term for the original chaos containing the divine seeds of life.

⁴ The term *prima materia* is often used synonymously with that of the *massa informis* (or *massa confusa*). Cf. *Psychology and Alchemy*, Index.

To Erna Asbeck

Dear Frau Asbeck,

7 May 1947

Precognitive dreams can be recognized and verified as such only when the precognized event has actually happened. Otherwise the greatest uncertainty prevails. Also, such dreams are relatively rare.

□ Wuppertal, Germany.

ASBECK / MR. O.

It is therefore not worth looking at the dreams for their future significance. One usually gets it wrong.

Yours truly, C. G. JUNG

To Mr. O.

[ORIGINAL IN ENGLISH]

My dear O.,

7 May 1947

Your material is, as I feared, much too rich! It needs a tremendous amount of mental work to reduce it.

Your first vision where your Beatrice appears contains a point where I can show you how you can come in. Beatrice, as an anima figure, is most certainly a personification; that means, a personal being created in this shape by the unconscious. You can safely assume that this is the shape your anima has chosen in order to demonstrate to you how she looks. Such a huge Beatrice is surely an unexpected sight. Instead of reacting to this rather amazing sight, you are satisfied with continuing your vision. But the natural thing would be that you make use of the opportunity and start some dialogue with your anima. Anybody who feels natural about such things would follow his surprise and put a question or two to her: why she appears as Beatrice? why she is so big? why you are so small? why she nurses your wife and not yourself? Etc. You also might ask her—since she is the “messenger of the grail”—what that funny thing is with that orange? what the magic ring means? what is the matter with all those animals? Treat her as a person, if you like as a patient or a goddess, but above all treat her as something that does exist. Moreover, in this vision you get right under the influence of your anima, and that's the reason why she begins to feed your wife, because your wife becomes underfed when you fall for your anima. Therefore you must talk to this person in order to see what she is about and to learn what her thoughts and character are. If you yourself step into your fantasy, then that overabundance of material will soon come to more reasonable proportions. But since you are giving free rein to your intuitions you are just swamped by it. Keep your head and your own personality over against the overwhelming multitude of images and aspects. You can do that, as I tell you, by stepping into the picture with your ordinary human reactions and emotions. It is a very good method to treat the anima as if she were a patient whose secret you ought to get at.

Yours sincerely, C. G. JUNG