



UNCONSCIOUSNESS  
CONSCIOUSNESS

### EXPLORING THE UNCONSCIOUSNESS

#### Through the Treasures of Imaginal Alchemy.

Exploring Consciousness is a noble and fitting concept. Considering, that is, a concept according to Buddhist principles, is a stable structure at the end of a process. Seeing we all agree on process instead of structure, it remains to be seen if we can move beyond the concept, into the process.

Therefore it is of some interest, that the 'structure' of exploring consciousness, as an action pattern, makes no mention of the equally vital process of exploring the unconscious.

Von Franz:

"In terms of Jung's concept, every archetype is in its essence an unknown psychic factor and therefore there is no possibility of translating its content into intellectual terms. The best we can do is circumscribe it on the basis of our own psychological experience and from comparative studies, bringing up into light, as it were, the whole net of associations in which the archetypal images are enmeshed." <sup>1</sup>

There are deep Hermetic resonances buried in these words of Von Franz. Firstly, "...the whole net of associations" describes the Hermetic methodology with great precision. This "net" is brought up into the light - which suggests that it exists where there is no light - i.e. in some subterranean, underground matrix, analogically associated with the unconscious.

C.G. Jung supplies us with this useful analogy:

"...we have then to describe and explain a building the upper story of which was erected in the nineteenth century, the ground floor dates from the sixteenth century, and a careful examination of the masonry discloses the fact that it was reconstructed from a dwelling-tower of the eleventh

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<sup>1</sup> Von Franz, Marie-Louise, *An Introduction to the Psychology of Fairy Tales*, Spring Publications, 1970, p.1.

century. In the cellar we discover Roman foundation walls, and under the cellar a filled-in cave, in the floor of which stone tools are found, and remnants of glacial fauna in the layers below. That would be a sort of picture of our own mental structures. We live in the upper storey, and are only dimly aware that our lower storey is somewhat old-fashioned. As to what lies beneath the superficial crust of the earth we remain quite unconscious..."<sup>2</sup>

This analogy, as James Henderson points out, is *vertical*. It brings to mind the Hermetic paradigm of 'As Above, So Below'. The 'Below' of this paradigm, the "...superficial crust of the earth.." the "...unconscious.." is in Classical Symbolism and Mythology, the Realm of Pluto. As the Realm of the Death, Hades, it is also the ancestral domain, a zone beautifully expressed in Traditional African Religion as the Home of the Ancestors.

The Hermetic equation Pluto=Unconsciousness, has been well documented, and is represented in some systems as a source of great wealth or treasure, more often than not, guarded by a Dragon, or some such similar Dweller on the Threshold. Therefore, Exploring Unconsciousness, is also a way of saying that we are delving deeply into our ancestral heritage. This act of delving, is also expressed as the technique of mining, for the dwarfs, so dear to the fairy tales of children, are miners and workers with fire, metal and precious stones. And mining of course, takes us straight to the great family of Alchemical Symbols, necessary tools in any exploration of the unconscious.

C.G. Jung:

"The primordial image or archetype is a figure, whether it be a daemon, man or process, that repeats itself in the course of history whenever creative fantasy is freely manifested. Essentially, therefore, it is a mythological figure. If we subject these images to a closer investigation, we discover them to be the formulated resultants of countless typical experiences of our ancestors."<sup>3</sup>

By analogy, there is an interesting natural phenomena that describes the above, symbolically, and that is *coral*. Coral, literally lives on top of the shells of its dead ancestors, its past '*selves*'.

These few words, in desperate need of amplification, can act as an invitation to attend a small workshop.

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## CONSCIOUSNESS

Gary Lachman, Consciousness Wars [[ONLINE HERE](#)]

The following is an excerpt from my new book, *The Secret Teachers of the Western World*. In it I look at the history of the western esoteric or 'inner' tradition through the lens of the work of two important thinkers, the German-Swiss philosopher Jean Gebser, and the contemporary neuroscientist and English scholar

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<sup>2</sup> C.G. Jung, in an essay entitled 'Mind and the Earth' quoted in James L. Henderson, *The Jungian Interpretation of History and Its Educational Implications*, in: Papadopoulos, Renos K and Saayman, G., *Jung in modern perspective*.. Jung, in an essay entitled 'Mind and the Earth'

<sup>3</sup> {Quoted in James L. Henderson, *The Jungian Interpretation of History and Its Educational Implications*, in: Papadopoulos, Renos K and Saayman, G., *Jung in Modern Perspective*, p. 249.]

Iain McGilchrist. My central idea is that the western esoteric tradition has been a victim of what we might call a “consciousness war,” which has been taking place over the last several centuries.

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Alexander Van Praag:

“A sense of lack of meaning in life has become common, the conflict between and within cultures has not diminished, and it is almost accepted that the average member of a modern country will suffer from any number of addictions, including alcoholism, addiction to trauma, techno-addiction, and fanaticism in one form or the other. The structure of modern urban life has resulted in the decay of the sense of community, and the rise of generations willing or even wishing to abrogate all responsibility and control in exchange for a general culture of entitlement. At the same time, the fundamental values that have held communities together have been eroded both by this sense of entitlement, and by a post-modern assault on the very concepts of true and false, of right and wrong.”<sup>4</sup>

Ananda Coomaraswamy:

"The contentment of innumerable people can be destroyed in a generation by the withering touch of our civilisation; the local market is flooded by a production in quantity with which the responsible maker of art cannot complete; the vocational structure of society, with all its guild organisation and standards of workmanship, is undermined; the artist is robbed of his art and forced to find himself a "job"; until finally the ancient society is industrialised and reduced to the level of such societies as ours in which business takes precedence of life. Can one wonder that Western nations are feared and hated by other people, not alone for obvious political or economic reasons, but even more profoundly and instinctively for spiritual reasons?"<sup>5</sup>

Rabbi Michael Lerner on November 15th, 2015:

“That new consciousness must include a powerful commitment to nonviolence and to genuine caring for the wellbeing of everyone on our planet. And it will require rejecting the ethos of global capitalism with its inevitable fostering of selfishness and materialism, and its powerful way of infusing in all of us a narrow utilitarian or instrumentalist way of seeing other human beings who increasingly are valued to the extent that they satisfy our needs or interests rather than as beings who are intrinsically deserving of love and respect, and its way of seeing the Earth and the universe solely as vehicles to fulfil our immediate needs rather than as the sacred reality that has given birth to life on this planet and as deserving a response of awe, wonder and radical amazement at the magnificence and mystery of all being. This new consciousness is not some utopian ideal – it is the survival necessity for human life on this planet.”<sup>6</sup> [\[ONLINE HERE\]](#)

Dennis F. Mahoney:

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<sup>4</sup> Alexander Van Praag. For East West Foundation, Eranos Foundation, 2006

<sup>5</sup> Ananda Coomaraswamy, *Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art*, 1943

<sup>6</sup> Rabbi Michael Lerner on November 15th, 2015.

“Common to the poetic works of Goethe and Novalis is the hope that humanity might succeed in the creation of a new, more humane world. “

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Robert Pirzig:

“. . . to tear down a factory or revolt against a government or to avoid repair of a motorcycle because it is a system is to attack effects rather than causes; and as long as the attack is upon effects only, no change is possible. The true system, the real system, is our present construction of systematic thought itself, rationality itself, and if a factory itself is torn down but the rationality which produced it is left standing, then that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns that produced that government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government. There's so much talk about the systems and so little understanding." <sup>7</sup>

In other words, to move away from only dealing with the effects, and not the causes. Perhaps we are only starting the word of shifting these great tectonic/archetypal plates on which our culture is predicated. And the problem is that there are massive forces insuring that the status quo of ignorance is not disturbed. Vested interests and all that. The study I am working on, in this context, is Saturn/The Dweller on The Threshold. In ancient Egypt – The Obstructor. After all, it is not evil per se we have to worry about, but Ignorance. . . and in practical terms, the efforts of the negative brigades to OBSTRUCT the good from manifesting. I came across this marvellous word in C.G. Jung, and had no idea as to what it meant.

“ the maieutic method ...” <sup>[1]</sup>

According to the dictionary, *maieutic* means “...helping to bring forth or evolve...” from the Gr. *maieutikos* from *maieusthai* – to act as a mid-wife, from *maia* – mid-wife daughter of one of the Titanesses. Now to me, Maia sounds very similar to Gaia.

**Maieutic:** adjective of or denoting the Socratic mode of enquiry, which aims to bring a person's latent ideas into clear consciousness. noun (**maieutics**) [treated as singular] the maieutic method. ORIGIN: C17: from Greek *maieutikos*, from *maieuesthai* 'act as a midwife', from *maia* 'midwife'.

And:

“Novalis’ whole works are based upon an idea of education: “We are on a *mission*: we are called upon to educate the earth.” It has to be made clear that everything is in a continual process. It is the same with humanity, which forever strives towards and tries to recreate a new Golden Age - a paradisaical Age of harmony between man and nature that was assumed to have existed in earlier times. This Age was recounted by Plato, Plotinus, . . .”

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Pirzig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*

<sup>[1]</sup> C.G. Jung, *Alchemical Studies*, CW 13, p. 243

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These words by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche have a powerful resonance:

" . . . we must do something about this world, so that the world can develop into a nonaggressive society where people can wake themselves up. Helping others is one of the biggest challenges. " . . . please try to work with people and be helpful to them. A fantastically large number of people need help. Please try and help them, for goodness sake, for heaven and earth. We have to do something. We've got to do something. As we read in the newspapers and see on television, the world is deteriorating, one thing after another, every hour, every minute, and nobody is helping very much. Your help doesn't have to be a big deal. To begin with, just work with your friends and work with yourself at the same time. It is about time that we became responsible for this world."



Max Ernst, *L'Ange du Foyer* (*The Fireside Angel*)

Dear Samten,

Thank you so much for what you have written below. there are times in life and this is one of them for me when I wonder whether it is all worthwhile, all the effort, the struggle, the interminable suffering in the world that seems so impervious to any fundamental change. But

Chogyam Rinpoche's words are really helpful. With much love, and a Happy New Year to you, Anne Baring.<sup>8</sup>

### metapsychological dimensions



Above: *The education of Orpheus*. Georges Callot. 1884. Oil on canvas

### CEREBRAL - CEREBRUM - CEREBELLUM

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Jeffrey Kripal:

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<sup>8</sup> January 02, 2014

“Consciousness isn’t what we thought it was. Consciousness is somehow fundamental to reality. It’s a painter; it’s the canvas; and it’s the paint, all at once.”<sup>9</sup>

“The idea that everything from spoons to stones are conscious is gaining academic credibility.”  
Olivia Goldhill January 27, 2018. [\[ONLINE HERE\]](#)

“The planet Earth is a living being since the whole Universe is endowed with consciousness”,  
says Velimir Abramovic:

“Some famous Greek philosophers, traditional sages and prophetic priests, used similar methods of attaining the state of inspiration. The paper describes ancient practices, underscores the interaction between this cross-cultural proclivity and the historically conditioned environment of a particular culture, and uses Greece as an example illustrating the antiquity of the aspiration for mind enhancement.” [\[ONLINE HERE\]](#)<sup>10</sup>

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Sigmund Freud:

"The unconscious is the true physical reality; in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs."<sup>11</sup>

Miller, p. 550:

“The rediscovery of the depth of theological beauty and the beauty of theological depth by way of polytheism would make us more susceptible to Symmachus' plea than was Ambrose: "The things of heaven and earth are such a wide realm that the organs of all being together only can provide comprehension." Comprehension of this sort may be necessary for the viable teaching of religions in our time (Hamilton), but only if we submit to the Gods and Goddesses who inform our vocation and our tradition.”

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<sup>9</sup> Jeffrey Kripal in a TEDxHouston talk. Available online: [\[HERE\]](#)

<sup>10</sup> Velimir Abramovic The planet Earth is a living being since the whole Universe is endowed with consciousness. In: *Enhancing the mind. Proceedings of the Bial Foundation 12th Symposium “Behind and Beyond the Brain”*, 2018. [\[ONLINE HERE\]](#)

<sup>11</sup> Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Standard edition, trans. J. Strachey [London, 1953], vol. 5, p. 613.



ABOVE: Marc Chagall (1887-1985), Time Is a River Without Banks (*Le Temps n'a Point de Rive*), The Museum of Modern Art, New York

#### ABSTRACT:

“Jung’s book *Aion* serves as point of departure for this paper. The transition of the aeons from Pisces to Aquarius reflects decisive changes in the relationship between man and image—the image which is at the center of what Jung calls psychization, the process of reflection whereby consciousness is enhanced. At the daybreak of history, man extracted the image from the divine waters. Then, the craftsman whom God warned should not make graven images, came to replicate the divine on earth. By means of image and reflection, dream and dreaming, man becomes human, in the sense not only of partaking in events, but able to relate to experience. In Aquarius, images have been rounded up, and man now holds the bucket. “God’s powers have passed into our hands,” says Jung, which forces man to consider the shadow of unreflective progress, such as the transient as-if personality and soullessness. The legend of the golem serves to illustrate the condition of man, who has become master of the images that may either create or destroy our future.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Erel Shalit, Will Fishes Fly in Aquarius—Or Will They Drown in the Bucket?, *The San Francisco Jung Institute Library Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (November 2004), pp.7-33



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Joseph Campbell:

“Mythologies and religions are great poems, and, when recognized as such, point infallibly through things and events to the ubiquity of a "presence" or "eternity" that is whole and entire in each. In this function all mythologies, all great poetries, and all mystic traditions are in accord: and where any such in-spiriting vision remains effective in a civilization, everything and every creature within its range is alive. The first condition, therefore, that any mythology must fulfill if it is to render life to modern lives is that of cleansing the doors of perception to the wonder, at once terrible and fascinating, of ourselves and of the universe.”<sup>13</sup>

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**poly-** from Greek *polus* 'much', *polloi* 'many'.

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Mircea Eliade:

“If, in the history of religions, the idea of the sacred is related to the idea of being and meaning, . . . the sacred is an element in the structure of human consciousness. . . . Man simply discovers himself in the world, that the structure of his consciousness is such that somewhere in his experience there is something absolutely real and meaningful, something that is a source of value for him. As far as I understand it, the structure of human consciousness is such that man cannot live without looking for being and meaning. If the sacred means being, the real, and the meaningful, as I hold it does, then the sacred is a part of the structure of human consciousness.”<sup>14</sup>

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“Jean Gebser Observed that all transitional ages bear a dangerous, Janus-faced character. Light and darkness, violence and catharsis, crisis and opportunity all mix and intermingle. In our own era of increasing political upheaval and ecological devastation, Gebser’s words are as prescient now as they were half a century ago. As our external future becomes increasingly denatured and decultured, the equilibrium we seek may lie less in material solutions, and more in the fundamental question of consciousness. When the extremes of cynicism and optimism fail us, a more discerning investigation of our Janus-faced times is called for. Critical challenges must be navigated as clandestine opportunities for the manifestation of a new consciousness. Only by engaging crisis as a creative death are we able to embrace the potential irruptions of the integral reality hidden in our fragmented world.”<sup>15</sup>

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Stanislav Grof, *Psychology of the Future: Lessons from Modern Consciousness Research*.

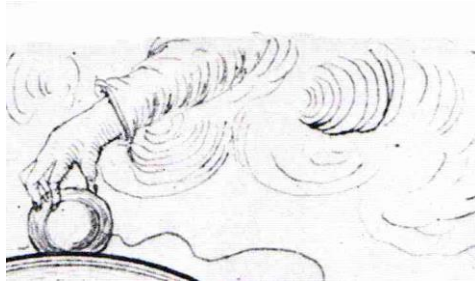
[[ONLINE HERE](#)]

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<sup>13</sup> Joseph Campbell, *Myths to Live By*, p. 257.

<sup>14</sup> Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred in the Secular World*, *Cultural Hermeneutics* 1, pp. 101-113.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.gebser.org/conference>



If you examine your own conscience, you will see things you do not like . . . we sail through life, from birth to death. Life itself is about us progressing and learning . . . from the first breath, right up to the last breath and beyond.



Gathering Nuts . .

Thoughts about Gathering - the Medicine Cards: SQUIRREL? My acorns: a collection of .pdf's:  
**STORAGE - SQUIRREL Gathering**

Jamie Sams:

Squirrel teaches you to plan ahead for the winter when the trees are bare and the nuts have long since disappeared. Squirrel medicine can come in many forms, as this furry creature is very diverse in nature. The gathering power of Squirrel medicine is a great gift. It teaches you how to gather and store your energy for times of need. It teaches you to reserve something for future use, whether it is a judgement, an opinion, a savings account, candles, or extra food. To put it in a nutshell, Squirrel is the Boy Scout of the animal kingdom - always prepared. In today's world of changing times and fortunes, it is the wise person who prepares for the future. Our prophecies have all spoken of the end of the millennium and the changes to come. Squirrel is a friendly medicine to have, in light of possible future rainy days. Its message is to be prepared, but not to go nuts with it. Love yourself enough to gather the goods that will meet your needs in times of scarcity, even if that time never comes.

If Squirrel has scurried into your cards today, it may be that you are being told to honour your future by readying yourself for change. The message could be to lighten your load if you have gathered too many "things" that do not serve you. These "things" can include thoughts, worries, pressures, stresses, or gadgets that have been broken for years. In understanding the balance involved in gathering, you need to look at the idea of circulating the stock of what you have gathered. Call the nearest thrift store and give the gadgets to someone who can benefit from them. If something no longer "grows corn" for you, then it is time to

Let it go.

Squirrel has another lesson which can aid you if you observe what is obvious, and which can prepare you for anything. It has to do with the safe place in which to put your gatherings. This safe place is an untroubled heart and mind, and that which is gathered to put in this place is wisdom and caring. The energies gathered will set your mind and heart free, so that you will know that all will be taken care of in its own time. Apply this to your fears about the future and they will vanish." <sup>16</sup>

Pluto in Leo! Before sleeping visualizing Etruscan Valley – with a red laser beam scanning for buried treasure. Gold underground. A few days after re-visiting the Black Book. Mentioned to Graham Saayman the idea of Shakespeare's Deaths and Transitions essay – and the fraternal ZEUS [5] – NEPTUNE –[11] PLUTO [22] Axis Mundus. Zeus – Zenith – Pluto –Nadir. Dousing for water in Joan Marble's book.

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### THE COMMODIFICATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

“ . . . in the great social Exhibition, accessories are often accepted in lieu of the internal character.”

Charles Dickens, *Little Dorritt*, p. 191

From a recent issue of *TRICYCLE*:

In describing the "commodification of consciousness," analysts have shown how consumer capitalism commodifies every aspect of culture, including those that are alien to the marketplace, such as philosophy, art and religion.

David Loy, Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Bunkyo University in Japan, in an essay on "The Religion of the Market," has described market capitalism as "the most successful religion of all time, winning more converts more quickly than any previous belief system or value-system in human history." Consumerism, says Loy, is the true religion of developed capitalist countries, and "the discipline of economics is less a science than the theology of that religion, and its god, the Market, has become a vicious circle of ever-increasing production and consumption by pretending to offer a secular salvation. The Market is becoming the first truly world religion, binding all corners of the globe into a world-view and set of values whose religious role we overlook only because we insist on seeing them as 'secular.' <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Sams, Jamie and Carson, David. *Medicine Cards - The Discovery of Power Through the Ways of Animals*. Illustrated by Angela C. Werneke, Bear and Company, Sante Fe, New Mexico, 1980.

<sup>17</sup> *Visions of a New Earth*, ed. H. Coward & D. Maguire, Albany, N.Y., 1999, pp. 15 - 28. From: David Patt, The commodification of Buddhism in the American Marketplace, *TRICYCLE: The Buddhist Review*, vol. 10, no.4. 2001, pp. 45 ff.

Camille Paglia, *Cults and Cosmic Consciousness: Religious Vision in the American 1960s*, *Arion*, Third Series, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Winter, 2003), pp. 69 – 70

Charles Gregory Thatcher, *Creativity and the Unconscious*, MA Thesis, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Department of Art, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1978

Jacques Schnier, *Art Symbolism and the Unconscious*, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Special Issue on Symbolism and Creative Imagination (Sep., 1953), pp. 67-75

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## CEREBRAL - CEREBRUM - CEREBELLUM

Marie-Louise von Franz wrote:

"Then there is a book in which you will find a tremendous amount of valuable material. It is by R.B. Onians and entitled *The Origins of European Thought* about the body, the mind, the soul, the world, time and fate <sup>(18)</sup>. I urge anyone who intends to become an analyst to get that book. Under this funny title any amount of material has been collected on spittle, hair, sneezing, coughing, getting drunk by wetting your lungs, the diaphragm and all its mythological material. Onians is a classical scholar but he has brought in primitive and comparative religious material, and you can look up every part of the body, as well as the involuntary human actions, such as scratching your belly, and what they mean. The origins of European thought have a strange background! The book has an excellent index and you will find a lot that you will be able to use in dream interpretation." <sup>19</sup>

Though this book is called *Origins of European Thought*, the material presented is universal, and purely archetypal in content. On a deeper level, when Onians introduces Sanskrit terms, we could say that the more complex strata of his material reveals the origins of *Indo-European* thought. Unfortunately, much of the material is inaccessible to readers who do not have a working knowledge of classical Greek, as Onians leaves all the terminology under examination in Greek. Nevertheless, one can work around this obstacle, and still gain some valuable insights.

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In a note, Onians writes:

"Professor Cornford has drawn my attention to Hippol. *Ref Haer.* v, 17 (Peratae) likening God the Father to the *cerebrum* and the Son to the *cerebellum* which [...Greek...]."

Norman O. Brown:

"In the unconscious, cerebral is genital. The word *cerebralis* from the same root as Ceres, goddess of cereals, of growth and fertility; the same root as *cresco*, to grow, and *creo*, to

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<sup>18</sup> Cambridge, 1952.

<sup>19</sup> *An Introduction to the Psychology of Fairy Tales*, Marie-Louise von Franz, Spring Publications, 1975.

create. Onians, archaeologist of language, who uncovers lost worlds of meaning, buried meanings, has dug up a prehistoric image of the body, according to which the head and genitals intercommunicate via the spinal column: the gray matter of the brain, the spinal marrow, and the seminal fluid are all one identical substance, on tap in the genitals and stored in the head." <sup>20</sup>

R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought : About the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate*

Onians:

"The Stoic theory was the logical consequence of Alcmaeon of Crotona's locating the seed in the brain, that is, in the same organ in which the soul, psyche, was supposed to reside. " <sup>21</sup>

"How do Homeric notions of the main processes of consciousness differ from our own?..."

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Here, for example is a section on "horns" where [...] - represents a Greek word:

"The classical Greek practice of preserving and fastening up at the shrine the head of the ox sacrificed was explained ... by the belief that it contained the [...] (psyche), the life-power and the life-substance. This practice dated from Minoan times. The importance attached to the horns can now be explained. In Homer's time they were peculiarly honoured, being coated with gold before the animal was slain. In Minoan-Mycenaean times they had special sanctity, whence they have been called 'horns of consecration', actual horns or conventional representations of them. Their usual position is upon an altar or a shrine. They are 'the place of consecration'. The victim may in the sacrifice have been identified with the deity as in the [...] and in Babylonia. The horns of the altar had special sanctity amongst the Jews and have been recognised as originating, like the Minoan 'horns of consecration', in actual horns. With the Minoan we may reasonably relate not only the Homeric practice but also the survival at Delos of an altar consisting of horns. That cows, etc., on occasion use horns as weapons (as other animals use teeth and claws or hoofs) will not explain these facts. Why were the horns thus holy as if in them were concentrated the divine potency? Because, it can now be seen, they were a permanent concentration, an outcrop, of the life-substance in the head, of the seed that was also the strength, of the [...] in which was the psyche. What grows out of the head is almost inevitably believed to be an issuing of what is within the head. " <sup>22</sup>

It would be interesting to explore this material, for example, in relationship to the ox-sacrifices in African traditional religion. Horned deities, are of course, richly documented in the mythologies of the Mediterranean cultures, and a mass of Folklore material. Saturn, or Satan, is the archetype where the horned personification of evil, has come to rest, right down to the little red devil, *Hot Stuff*, of children's comic books. *Horns, in this light, do not get a good press. Horns are seen as demonic*, however one interprets the term. Wings, by contrast, are associated with angels, flight, and a route to heavenly realms. Though of course, there is a tradition of fallen angels, of bad angels, as well.

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<sup>20</sup> Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body*

<sup>21</sup> *The Origins of European Thought : About the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate* by [R. B. Onians](#)

<sup>22</sup> Onians, pp.236-237

Continuing along this line of thought, we notice that horns feature in a few of the animals that identify the signs of the Zodiac. We have the horns of **Aries the Ram**, **Taurus the Bull**, **Capricorn the Goat**, to mention three. Another family of horned myths revolves around the Stag and related species. This is a very rich area for exploration, ranging all the way from the Paleolithic cave paintings, through the myth of Diana and the Stag, to contemporary shamanism. Another level to this symbolism, not so obvious on the surface, is the fact that a double spiral is embedded in the horns of the above-mentioned three signs of the zodiac, evidenced by the sign for Aries, which consists of a double spiral:

Then we have *theriomorphic* beings, such as the satyrs, the centaurs and the Minotaur, to mention a few of this species.

Arthur Bernard Cook, in his monumental work *Zeus*, has presented a wealth of material on ritual horned altars, as well as Sir Arthur Evans in his article on the "Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult" (1901)

As Onians shows, the horns cannot be separate from the symbolism of the Head. They grow out of the skull. Aries, is traditionally the ruler of the head. Horns have another symbolic aspect that may not be apparent on the surface. They usually take the form of two spirals. These two spirals, one moving clock-wise and the other anti-clock-wise, also have a very ancient lineage. They can be found at the entrance to Newgrange in Ireland, and rock-cut temples on Malta, amongst countless other examples. A double-spiral also appears, in the sign of Cancer. Could it be that these double-spirals, do not refer to the head, per se, in a reductionalistic sense, but to the brain, to the mind itself? And by association to the left and the right hemispheres of the brain.

Allan Combs and Stanley Krippner, *Jung and the Evolution of Consciousness, Psychological Perspectives*, 33, pp.60-76; 1996.

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Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary: the divided brain and the making of the Western world* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010)

Rupert Read:

"His fascinating discussion in Chapter 7, "Imitation and the evolution of culture", for example, displays the possible biological routes through which neurology may respond to culture. These are the routes whereby the very structure of the brain may be substantially responsive to and moulded by – not merely foundational for – the fabric of any given culture. That discussion crucially feeds into the story he then tells of the development of Western culture as a kind of battle of the hemispheres.

Whether what McGilchrist is telling us is a set of fascinating scientific truths about the brain, or a metaphorical history of the present that uncovers the reasons why the human race has reached its current condition of ecological, etc. crisis (and why we are likely to be in denial about this in just the way we are), or both, what I found in reading his book is that there are gems on virtually every page, and that – whether or not it is 'just' a metaphor – the way of thinking and of seeing that McGilchrist here offers is

itself compelling, rich and fertile. No one who is seriously interested in the focal subject matter of this journal can afford to ignore his book. At least not, as the saying goes, anyone with half a brain.”<sup>23</sup>

McGilchrist not only lays out a startling, novel account of the importance of the right hemisphere of the brain; he turns this into a gripping and dizzying account of the trajectory of the whole of human (but especially of western) civilisation, and offers in the course of this the most powerful argument penned by any living author of the importance of the arts and humanities. An argument – helpfully, by a scientist – for how and why the arts and the humanities offer an entire different and essential way of visioning (and reclaiming) our world, and for how and why science alone cannot do this but endlessly risks being part of an imperial take-over of the world by the scientific world-picture that naturally emerges from the left hemisphere of the brain once it is off the leash.

*“The Master and his Emissary, is a ground-breaking book, not only because it gathers and interprets a comprehensive body of recent research on the brain (revealing a profound difference in the way the two hemispheres experience the world). Not only because it establishes a new, much bigger and unified frame of reference for understanding its findings within the scientific and the medical sectors. Not only because it correlates these findings with the thought and belief of artists and philosophers throughout the history of Western culture. Not only because it warns that, despite its inferior grasp of reality, the effects of left hemisphere dominance are increasingly taking precedence and thereby causing disastrous consequences; and not only because it implies that our global crisis is a spiritual crisis. But, also, and perhaps more importantly, because this is the first time that a book of such monumental scientific scope, unfolds, through an effusion of ‘primary’ evidence, the incomparable magnitude of the human potential to apprehend and be creatively expressive of its ultimate reality – a living, undivided conscious whole; thus corroborating, perhaps unintentionally, the bedrock premise of so many great esoteric traditions.”*

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<sup>23</sup> Rupert Read in *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, March 2011.