C. G. Jung and the Journey of the West

[www.jayarama.us/archives/jung-radhadesa.docx](http://www.jayarama.us/archives/jung-radhadesa.docx)

Some years ago I discovered many astronomical facts till then unknown. Their novelty and their antagonism to some physical propositions commonly received by the schools did stir up against me many who professed the vulgar philosophy, as if, forsooth, I had with my own hand placed these things in the heavens to obscure and disturb nature and science. These opponents, more affectionate to their own opinion than to truth, tried to deny and disprove my discoveries, which they might have discerned with their own eyes; and they published vain discourses, interwoven with irrelevant passages, not rightly understood, of the sacred Scriptures.

**GALILEO GALILEI** *Authority of Scripture*

Our Western Pilgrim entered the University of California, Davis, in Electrical Engineering 1966. This led to a study of Quantum Mechanics etc. and the conclusion that Physics was taking altogether too slow of a look at the full potential of human development. Thus we began to study Biological Engineering and finally to graduate with a first place prize in Psychology in 1970.

This was the foreground of a common Western education and certainly included a glimpse of the ideas of Professor Carl Jung, but the background was the Vietnam War, Hippie culture and a meeting of East and West. Some of the main literary resources were:

* *Revolution for the Hell of It[[1]](#footnote-1)* and *Steal This Book[[2]](#footnote-2)* by Abbie Hoffman,
* *The Media is the Massage[[3]](#footnote-3)* by Marshall McLuhan; Quentin Fiore,
* *The Silent Language[[4]](#footnote-4)*etc by E. T. Hall,
* *The Politics of Experience[[5]](#footnote-5)* by R. D. Laing and
* *Improvisation for the theater: A handbook of teaching and directing techniques* by Viola Spolin[[6]](#footnote-6)
* *Analytical psychology, its theory and practice; the Tavistock lectures[[7]](#footnote-7)* by C. G. Jung.

Looking back it seems that Prof. Jung was one of the most fundamental thinkers of the time, providing concepts for many of the other listed above. In this ambience Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami was able to introduce the profound esoteric and exoteric culture of Bengali, Caitanya, Vaisnavism.

In *Dialectical Spiritualism[[8]](#footnote-8)*, Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, Prabhupada, offers commentaries on summaries of the ideas of many, many Western philosophers as presented by two of his students. The very last philosopher presented was Dr. C. G. Jung:

***Prof. Howard Wheeler:*** *That ends our session on Jung.*

***Srila Prabhupada:*** *So far, he seems the most sensible!*

This appreciation seems to have been mutual:

*“... if you go to other races, to India or China, for example, you discover that these people are conscious of things for which the psychoanalyst in our countries has to dig for months.”[[9]](#footnote-9)*

*“We Europeans are not the only people on the earth. We are just a peninsula of Asia, and on that continent there are old civilizations where people have trained their minds in introspective psychology for thousands of years, whereas we began with our psychology not even yesterday but only this morning. These people have an insight that is simply fabulous...”[[10]](#footnote-10)*

With his tantalizing contact with Jungian ideas in the 60’s and then profound penetration into the Oriental perspective nurtured by the Gaudiya Vaisnavism of ISKCON, our Western Pilgrim not surprisingly turned to Jung again in recent years. This led to the bibliographical journey of:

* Rereading *The Tavistock lectures,*
* *Memories, dreams, reflections****[[11]](#footnote-11)***(Biography of C. G. Jung),
* Review of Jungian Journals such as *Journal of Analytical Psychology, Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche* and *Spring.*

These revealed a very active community in both psycho-therapy and academic life that was harvesting Jung’s published and unpublished work, and pioneering new introspective investigation. Especially it led to Prof. Sonu Shamdasani who had been elected to translate and prepare for publication Jung’s famous *Redbook*.

Professor Shamdasani holds a post as professor at the **Centre for the History of Medicine, University College London** and apparently central in the formation of the **Philemon Foundation**.

Investigating Professor Shamdasani first we read his, *The psychology of Kundalini yoga: Notes of the seminar given in 1932 by C.G. Jung[[12]](#footnote-12)*. Professor Shamdasani’s excellent abilities as a rigorous and insightful scholar are intensely manifest. This we feel this is the principle wealth and inheritance of this Jungian tradition. Jung classified himself as an investigator, not as a creator of anything near a final product. In Professor Shamdasani we find the epistemological excellence of Jung: Human sympathy, efforts at honesty with regards towards personal weaknesses, rigorous scholarship, effort for direct experience of subtle-psychological reality.

In the Kundalini Lectures we immediately felt a resonance with many Gaudiya-vaisnava and Bhagavata, cosmological principles. Based upon great personal experience and work with patients Jung presents levels of the rising up of the Kundalini force. These remind us with great accuracy of the similar descriptions of *annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, jnanamaya and anandamaya* from the *Bhagavata[[13]](#footnote-13).* Prof. Shamdasani comments, “Thus in Jung's view the outcome of Western psychologies encounter with Eastern thought was by no means a small matter, for on this the very possibility of a psychology worthy of the name rested”[[14]](#footnote-14).

These similarities and comments were very stimulating for our efforts to build a useful bridge between East and West, but then, in 1932, Jung cautions that although we should never think that in any way he wishes to minimize the depth of Oriental Psychology, to try to introduce those ideas at that time would probably be not only useless but maybe even dangerous. With the Nazi introduction of the Vedic Swastika and the ideas of an Aryan race there seems to be validity to his concerns. However, in 2015 we might be ready to introduce Oriental psychology to many by media of Jungian perspectives.

Moving on with the Philemon library next we came to *Jung and the making of modern psychology: The dream of a science[[15]](#footnote-15)*. This is vast, profound, practical reading. Again we are amazed at the depth of research and breadth of knowledge manifest by Professor Shamdasani. We, and others whom we know who have taken up the reading of the volume, found it slow, systematic, fulfilling reading.

Professor Shamdasani looks at the development of modern Psychology from the ambience of Jung’s entrance into the field on up to his departure from this world and even to the modern times. We are treated to educations in Kant, William James and so many others. Who can know history completely from the years of 1865 to 1965? However, we are satisfied to be educated in it in detail from the perspective of our discipline, Psychology. To take hold of the elephant’s tail means to eventually have a practical understanding of his nose, ears, legs and stomach. So, to look at the history of Western Psychology from Jung’s point of view is to have an excellent review of all of Western Psychology and a great deal of the history of Western philosophy.

As an example of the marvelous nature of the content of the book, citing from *Memories Dreams and Reflections*, Prof. Shamdasani writes about Jung’s encounter with the Hopi Indians in USA:

I asked him (Mountain Lake) why he thought the whites were all mad?

He replied: “They say that they think with their heads.”

“Why of course. Where do you think?”, I asked him with surprise.

“We think here”, he said, indicating his heart. I fell into a long meditation. For the first time in my life, so it seemed to me, someone had drawn for me a picture of the real white man.[[16]](#footnote-16)

From the Western side this brings our pilgrim’s literary journey to the East up to date. On the Oriental side we have read from the Bhaktivedana Book Trust[[17]](#footnote-17) library:

* *Light of the Bhagavata*
* *Nectar of Instruction*
* *Nectar of Devotion*
* *Srimad Bhagavatam*
* *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*

and the corresponding academic works of Prof. David Haberman, Prof. Viola Spolin, Constantin Stanislavskii, Dhanurdhara Swami and other scholars.

From the broad Oriental perspective, repeated readings of the Chinese classic, *Journey to the West*, certainly has been important in our own ‘myth-making’ as the preferred way of knowing amongst the Jungian and Gaudiya vaisnava schools.

Has this pilgrimage generated practical dialog with others?

Yes:

* Graduate Division of University of Monterrey, Mexico,
* Newest Jungian Psychology Branch in Argentina at Cordoba,
* Center for Mental Health in Buenos Aires,
* Hours of dialog with Nobel Laureate Candidate, Humberto Maturana, Santiago, Chile and National Poet, Raul Zurit,
* Co-operative writing project with Eduardo Gastemelundi, President Analytical Psychology Association of Peru and former President of Peruvian Psychiatric Association.
* Repeated public presentations on *Science, Psyche and Spirituality: The Encounter of Carl Jung with the Classical World of Indian Mysticism* at Universities and prestigious cultural venues in South and North America.

Within ISKCON the only person so far who has resonated deeply with the ecstasy of this effort has been H. H. Bhakti-vijana Maharaja. We contacted Maharaja only in passing at the ILS meetings in Mayapura in 2014. Maharaja commented enthusiastically, “Yes, Jung is essential for our preaching!”

At this point this pilgrim feels so, and this paper is just to present the work we have done so far and get feedback from our peers, students and teachers.

We see that there is so much we could write regarding Jungian cosmology with its Archetypes etc. and Bhagavata cosmology in the Sankhya of Kapila and others, but we want to get to know the Jungian community better to focus on the most salient topics.Our principal public vehicle for all of this work is **NIOS** (North American Institute for Oriental and Classical Studies) with which we are also publishing and convening symposia in Indology. To wit we have just returned from India where with intense effort we had a successful book release for *Bharata–Samskrti - Presentations At A Three-Day International Seminar on Importance of Early Indian Culture in Making a Better World.* Honorable Justice Mukundakam Sharma (Former Justice Supreme Court of India and at present Chancellor **Lal Bahudar Sastri Rastriya Sanskrit Vidyapitha**, Delhi) released the volume which includes contributions from Gaudiya Vaisnava scholars, two former Governors of West Bengal, Vice-Chancellors and others.

Thank you,

**Hanumatpresaka Swami**

[www.jayarama.us](http://www.jayarama.us)

**(Professor Huber Hutchin Robinson)**

**NIOS** 2129 Stratford Rd.; Murfreesboro, Tennessee; USA

**IECOO** (Instituto de Estudios Clasicos Orientales y Occidentales) Ricardo Palma University, Lima, Peru

1. New York : Dial Press, 1968. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. New York : Four Walls Eight Windows, ©1996 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. New York, Random House 1967 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Garden City, N.Y. : Doubleday, ©1959 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Garden City, N.Y. : Doubleday, ©1959 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Evanston, Ill. : Northwestern University Press, ©1963 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. New York, Pantheon Books [1968] [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Downloadable at, http://krishna.org/dialectic-spiritualism-a-vedic-view-of-western-philosophy-pdf-download/ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Jung, C. G.; *Analytical Psychology, Its Theory & Practice*; Vintage Books, 1970, page 48 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid, pg.74 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. New York : Pantheon Books, ©1963. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, ©1996 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Krsna, The Supreme Personality of Godhead*, Chapter 87, “Within the body there are five different departments of existence, known as *anna-maya, prāṇa-maya, mano-maya, vijñāna-maya* and, at last, *ānanda-maya.”Srimad Bhagavatam 10.87.17,*  Purport. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Kundaini Yoga* cited previously, Kindle E-book Format, Loc. 574 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Cambridge, UK ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Jung and the Making of Modern Psychology*, Kindle E-Book Format, Loc. 4562 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. [www.vedabase.com](http://www.vedabase.com) [↑](#footnote-ref-17)