

THE ABENG

A Journal of Transdisciplinary Criticism

Vol. 5 • No. 1 • 2022



THE ABENG

A Journal of Transdisciplinary Criticism

VOL. 5 • NO.1 • 2022

Editor

Vincent L. Wimbush

Associate Editors

C. Travis Webb | Lalruatkima

Editorial Board

James Bielo
Miami University
Ohio

Barbara Holdredge
University of California
Santa Barbara

William Deal
Case Western Reserve University

Rosamond C. Rodman
Perimeter College
Georgia State University

Charlotte Eubanks
Penn State University

S.Michael Saad
Council of Coptic Studies
Claremont Graduate University

Volney P. Gay
Vanderbilt University

Yvonne Sherwood
University of Kent (Canterbury)
United Kingdom

Grey Gundaker
College of William and Mary

Ronne Hartfield
The Art Institute of Chicago

James Sidbury
Rice University

Katrina Van Heest
Tweed Academic Editing

Daymon Smith
Utah Valley University

Jacqueline Hidalgo
Williams College

Leif Vaage
Emmanuel College
University of Toronto Canada

The Abeng Submission Guidelines

Article and essay submissions may address any pertinent problem, topic, practices or phenomena in any historical period, including the contemporary situation. They may focus on any social-cultural complex or domain, including, but also going beyond, “religion.” Any disciplinary or field or transdisciplinary discourse may characterize a submission, as long as it reflects critical engagement of the framing ISS agenda. Please acquaint yourself with our ongoing research agendas prior to submission.

Articles

Word count: 5,000 (approximately)
Abstract: 150 words

Review Essays / Comments / In the News

Word count: 1,000 to 2,000 (approximately)
Abstract: 50-75 words

File Format: Microsoft Word (Times New Roman, 12 point, Left Justified, Double-spaced)

Citations Format: Endnotes

Citations Style: Chicago Manual of Style (latest edition)

Materials must not have been submitted elsewhere.

For all other types of submissions (alternate media formats including audio and video, interviews, etc) please contact the editor.

Send submissions and inquiries to:
editor@signifyingscriptures.org

Editorial Mailing Address:
Institute for Signifying Scriptures
P.O. Box 2091
Decatur GA 30031



The *Abeng* (A-beng) refers to a kind of animal horn used in the African diaspora to facilitate communication within communities of maroons.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

“People Make the World Go ‘Round’; Or, How We Constitute Realities.....1

Book Review: Mary Anne Franks, *The Cult of the Constitution* (Stanford UP, 2019).....31

What is a “Constitution”? Which Constitution?: Brief Framing Remarks....39

What Work Does It Do? What Are Some Implications and Ramifications of Its Work(ings)?.....44

Scripturalizing Here and There.....47

 Continental Formation.....48

 On Scripturalization: The Cases of Guatemala and Mestizaje.....52

 1619 vs. 1776: Dueling Scriptures.....57

Special Essay.....61

 High Noon: Carl Jung, the Inner Divinity, and Armageddon.....62

Support ISS

Become a member: <http://www.signifyingscriptures.org/product/membership/>

Renew your membership: <http://www.signifyingscriptures.org/my-account/>

Donate: <http://www.signifyingscriptures.org/product/donation/>

Foreword

“*The earth belongs always to the living generation.*” Thomas Jefferson to James Madison. Paris September 6. 1789.

As has become customary, this issue of *The Abeng* contains a collection of earnest curiosities focused on a very difficult problem—perhaps, even, the most difficult problem. How, why, and for whom do constitutions work?

To label any one of the various complexities that shape our social universe as “the most” difficult problem may feel like hyperbole, but it is not. Constitutions are at the nexus of the secular and the sacred. They are both firmament and canopy. They are the scriptures out of which the contemporary world emerged, and to which the contemporary world returns to legitimize inherited structures of power. As international and domestic instability metastasizes across the globe, there is no more urgent project in the 21st century than understanding how we’ve constituted ourselves into this techno-futuristic muddle.

The content of the issue falls into three broad categories. Part One contains material from the ISS Annual Meeting, which includes Director Vincent Wimbush’s Opening Address, Susanne Scholz’s review of Mary Anne Franks, *The Cult of the Constitution*, Jacqueline Hidalgo’s framing remarks, “What is a ‘Constitution’? Which Constitution,” and Carol Dempsey’s “What Work Does It Do?”. Part Two, Scripturalizing Here and There, extends the conference theme to other objects of study: Katie Van Heest closely reads Benjamin West’s painting *The Death of General Wolfe* (1770), Néstor Medina explores mestizaje as a link in the racial hierarchy that enshrines “whiteness,” and Rosamond Rodman reflects on the controversies surrounding the 1619 Project. Part Three contains a special essay by Jim Siegel, “High Noon: Carl Jung, the Inner Divinity, and Armageddon,” in which he uses Jung to find meaning in this fraught contemporary moment, and imagine what might emerge from the fray.

Special thanks to Lalruatkima for shepherding the Fifth Volume of *The Abeng* to publication. He has, quite literally, done all the hard work.

C. Travis Webb
Associate Editor

“PEOPLE MAKE THE WORLD GO ‘ROUND’;

OR, HOW WE CONSTITUTE REALITIES

OPENING ADDRESS

INSTITUTE FOR SIGNIFYING SCRIPTURES

FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

Vincent L. Wimbush

“[MY] TEXT...IS NOTHING MORE THAN THE MEASURE
OF A SHADOW...
CALCULATING THE COURSE AND MOTION OF...OUR...
SYSTEM”

—T. JEFFERSON

(Letter to J. Melish, Dec 10, 1814, in re: *Notes on State of Virginia*)

“WE ARE STRIVING.../
TO COMPOSE A COUNTRY”

—Amanda Gorman

(Poem, Biden-Harris Inauguration, January 20, 2021)

CONSTITUTION/CONSTITUTE

: the basic principles and laws of a nation, state, or social group that determine the powers and duties of the government and guarantee certain rights to the people in it

b: a written instrument embodying the rules of a political or social organization

2a: the physical makeup of the individual especially with respect to the health, strength, and appearance of the body

//a hearty *constitution*

b: the structure, composition, physical makeup, or nature of something

//the *constitution* of society

3: the mode in which a state or society is organized, *especially:* the manner in which sovereign power is distributed

4: an established law or custom: ORDINANCE

5: the act of establishing, making, or setting up
//before the *constitution* of civil laws

transitive verb

1: MAKE UP, FORM, COMPOSE

//12 months *constitute* a year....

//high school dropouts who *constitute* a major problem in large city slums.— J. B. Conant

2: SET UP, ESTABLISH: such as

a: ENACT

//regulations as are constituted by the government

b: FOUND

//*constitute* a provisional government

c(1): to give due or lawful form to

//an agreement constituted by writing

- (2): to legally process
3: to appoint to an office, function, or dignity
//Legal authority *constitutes* all magistrates.

—Merriam-Webster Dictionary

But that's what makes the world go 'round
The ups and downs, the carousel
Changing peoples' heads around
Go underground, young man
People make the world go 'round

—“People Make the World Go ‘Round”

Thom Bell and Linda Creed

The final epigraph for this address is part of what may on first hearing or reading seem the simple-minded lyrics and too flatly-patterned rhythms of the now classic early 1970s rhythm and blues (Philly-style) soul song called “People Make the World Go ‘Round.” The song is understood by some observers and critics of Black popular music to have been a departure from the typically apolitical soothing romantic love tones and lyrics that characterized much music of that genre and era, especially music sung by and associated with the group, called Stylistics no less, that made the song famous. (The group seemed to represent the end of the run of the widely recognized if strange male falsetto voices.) The writers Thom Bell and Linda Creed appear in this song to have struck a rather different note from the usual—the song is not at all about romantic relationships and their dynamics, but about how “the world” is ordered and structured, how it is made to “go ‘round,” and how “peoples’ heads” are manipulated, made to “turn.” The focus is on social criticism, about the “ups and downs” and the circular patterned nature—like a “carousel” of the circus—of the larger

world, with its irrationalities and absurdities, all of which are presumed pretty much to be unquestioned by most people. All such absurdities obtain because the song asserts again and again it is “people,” with their attitudes, their orientations, their lack of questioning, their resignation, their desperation simply to survive, who “make the world go ‘round.’” The emphasis can be placed either on *people* as the source and focus of reality—that is, those who “make” or determine the shape of the world; or, on the fact that all things “go ‘round’”—that is, all things assume an odd, over-determined, repetitive pattern (mimesis, anyone?); or both.

We leave aside the exegetical/textualist fussiness (a running sub-theme of this address, consistent with ISS discussions and orientation) regarding what examples are included or left out, or the way the examples are registered. Let us go digging—into the work the song is made to do, into the psycho-political effects of the lyrics and the music’s carnival- or circus-carousel-like repetitive patterns. All such lead to some hard questions and serious implications, if not clear and final conclusions: the words betray a bit of cynicism and resignation about—even a hint of psychic detachment from, and psychic resistance to—the phenomenon and structure of arrangements that is the “world.” The words are written from a perspective of being somewhat involved, affected, implicated, to be sure, but also from that position of not quite belonging, not being fully invested in, not being altogether integrated into, the ongoing conditions and arrangements. The somewhat amusing, even eerie and high-pitched, male falsetto lone singing voice of the original recorded performance seems to represent a complex positionality—someone close enough to observe and comment on all things absurd, yet seemingly perched on the margins in physical and existential and psycho-social terms, the margins whence he can exit and re-enter (and re-exit...) “the world.”

At the point of what seems like the offering of a concluding word, the strange singing voice directly addresses a “young man.” Is the “young man” a 1970s-era gendered and racial/ethnic stand-in for the mixed urban-stressed and -cynical listeners? Might he have been thought of as representative of all stressed and anxious and paranoid urban-dwellers, notwithstanding the gender and racial-ethnic tilting

or winks and nods? Whatever the case imagined, this “young man” is directly and pointedly exhorted to “go underground.”

To what does the “underground” refer? To what place—physical or psychic—does it point? The call to the young man to turn to such a place seems to represent social critique, a call to get off the carousel, to get away from “reality,” the “world,” the system and set of odd quotidian social-cultural and political and economic practices, dynamics, and arrangements.

Curious it is that the practices and arrangements inveighed against are never specifically named as being endemic to any ethnic or racial or tribal group; and there is nothing that seems at first and on the surface of the song to limit the sentiments to one “race” (such having been made a reality through a history of a type of violence), or even a particular socio-economic group. Yet on subsequent closer re-hearing/re-reading, there seems to be something quite poignant about the words sung by a clearly Black male falsetto-voiced soloist who is part of an all-Black male normally hyper-sugary-romantic and apolitical rhythm-and-blues and urban soul group. Writers Bell and Creed, a (Black) male and (white) female team, in collaboration with the soloist who was part of the Stylistics as a group, compellingly conveyed the general (non-race-d or not overdetermined racial) sensibilities of a lightly politicized late twentieth century urban style. (The collective group performer was not, after all, Miles Davis! And the song was, after all, probably part of a few attempts to try to go beyond the exhaustion of the violent dramas and dynamics of the 1960s. The fatigue that had set in, it seems to me, is reflected in the farcical genre and rhythms of the song.)

At any rate, who goes—or from what place would one normally go, or be advised to go—“underground”? Alternative urban artists and their ardent fans and oppositional social and political and cultural leaders and their followers have been at times associated with the underground (or the storefront, located in the marginalized city centers). The term “underground” also suggests a long history of critique of and opposition to the dominant spin or arrangements that in the United States extends back into the era of the historic “underground railroad” of the period of enslavement of Black bodies in the nineteenth century. This

“railroad” referenced the networks of slaves, ex-slaves, and sympathetic antislavery whites through whose agencies and collusions slaves in the U.S. ran away or were “stolen away” from slave plantations, and by which some—as maroons—were secured passage in the woods and marshes so as to get to free spaces.¹

With the particular song focused on in this address one can hardly avoid being reminded of resonances aplenty in Black American/Black Atlantic literatures. Ralph Ellison’s “invisible man” and Richard Wright’s “man who lived underground” are among examples that come immediately to mind; But there is also Aimé Césaire, James Baldwin, Chinua Achebe, Edouard Glissant, Toni Morrison, Sylvia Wynter; now also Isabel Wilkerson, Saidiya Hartmann; and the more recent emergence of the school of “Afropessimism.” These are among the compelling literary and rhetorical influences on, resonances with, parallels for, and refractions of, some of the sensibilities that the soloist of the song being discussed here represents. The one whom the narrator-soloist calls the representative “young man” is in poignant if somewhat subtle and coded solidarity within the modern Black Atlantic imaginary.

Clearly related to the sensibilities that the soloist and “young man” represent is the matter of the politics of language use in terms of mimetic practices, and related claims regarding knowledge, history, and reality. What is at issue for the narrator-soloist if not alienation from and critique of the daily grinds, the “ups and down,” of the “carousel”? What is the point of referencing the nonsensical routines and activities and in exhorting the listener to escape from them all if

1. Re: U.S. underground railroad, I suggest following the literature on and analysis of the efforts of Harriet Tubman. I like very much what has been made of Tubman’s efforts in Celeste-Marie Bernier’s *Characters of Blood: Black Heroism in the Transatlantic Imagination* (Charlottesville VA: University of Virginia Press, 2012), chap 6.

A slightly different context but related concept of the underground extends even further back into the early modern worlds in Europe—especially France and England—in which Jacobins of all sorts, “the many-headed hydra” of radical social-political formations, resisted nationalist and denominational-confessional and political establishments. But this is at best a far stretch for historical influence, as if any be needed here; but I think some qualified parallelism or comparison should be countenanced for the sake of respecting the world-shaking dynamics that obtained. See Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013). And C. L. R. James’s provocative classic, *Mariners, Renegades & Castaways: The Story of Herman Melville and the World We Live In* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1978).

it is not criticism, refusal, and resistance? And does the soloist criticize from a position on the (resentful and cynical) margins or from below as he references “big men” and their cohorts as manipulators of the dominant routines and structures? Can there be any doubt that the song was intended to express solidarity with, even challenge listeners to turn to, the marginalized, those who are vulnerable and ex-centric? I am moved to raise again the issue of the necessary interrelations of knowing ex-centrics and ex-centrics’ knowing. This is the reason we are—or rather I am pushing us—to begin addressing/problematising our theme not with *THE* Constitution as though the phenomenon can be addressed by reference to an utterly confounding hyper-mediatised (“sacred”) document and the utterly confounding U.S./American situation (and with such the American Founding/Framing White Father figures). No. We should begin—as I hope I am modeling here with some clarity—in some other place, with some other representations/performances—with a song imaging a young man of some color being told (as the movie warned characters and the rest of us) to “get out!” to run away and go underground. This is where we begin our thinking/conversation about “constitution.”

The position on the margins or in the underground would seem to represent ultimately something short of the absolute negative situation: although the routine activities of the world are understood to be less than utopian and in need of reform, if not radical overturning, the situation actually appears paradoxically to represent opportunity, perhaps, even a type—an odd type—of advantage: the soloist calls the young man to go underground not merely for the sake of escaping the unfortunate carousel-like experiences of life, but also in order to save himself, to be elevated in (self-)knowledge and perspective and kept somewhat safe from the world’s corruption. The underground—normally assumed to be a place of darkness²—is assumed in this song to be that site that can provide refreshment, respite from stress, opportunity to get a

2. Cf. V. L. Wimbush, “Reading Darkness, Reading Scriptures,” in *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Textures* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000 [pbk: Wipf and Stock, 2012]), for perspective on the terms of my wrestling with the problem; also, Christopher Freeburg, *Melville and the Idea of Blackness: Race and Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015 [2012]), Introduction, chap One; and Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage, 1993).

clearer view of things, a more expansive and encompassing knowledge and perspective, a different knowing, a different grip on reality, and possibly, at times and for a time, if not ultimately so—no redemption need be argued for here—an environment that even if not stable, at least, not in a way that is paralyzing. Such psychic space, then, helps address the next needed steps to take.

This assumption or argument regarding the advantage—epistemic; psycho-social, psycho-political—afforded by marginal positionality may be thought to be counterintuitive: it is not easily understood, explained, or attained. The song does not address—and we should not expect it to address—this difficulty of marginality and its histories, how it came to be so and why it seems natural. Being underground is normally hardly thought to represent that which is standard, conventional, acceptable, and secure. It is counterintuitive to suppose that from such a position legitimate or empowering knowledge and perspective about reality emerges. The epistemic status of positionality, especially the positionality associated with the underground, cannot be taken for granted; it is to be fought for and asserted again and again. That seems to be part of the rhythmic structure and logic or conceit of the song, with its emphasis in substance and tones on going round and round.

The knowledge and perspective associated with the underground as the margins must necessarily be associated with that which had previously been denied, hidden, or held in secret. That is what motors the flight or retreat. The problem with the world is seen as having to do less with the routine activities per se, but with consciousness, perspective, and the agency that brings such things about. The song's call is to retreat not simply from the routine activities but from the attitude that accompanies them, the logic and spin on them. Which in turn causes heads to change or spin “around,” that is, to be rendered uncritical, undiscerning. Going underground is the call, then, to deeper insight and knowledge, regarding how “people make the world go ‘round,” regarding the ongoing human construction or fabrication of the world—its *constitution*, I dare say—with its attendant operations, dynamics, politics. Constitution, then, as shorthand for certain

operations and dynamics—no matter how and to what extent veiled—is at the same time an assumption about if not also radical arrogation of possession of compelling communication from and knowledge about the underground.

This arrogation has profound implications—for thinking about thinking—and strong ramifications—for social-political orientation and affiliation and practices. Included here, to be sure, is thinking about and discussion of, “constitution.” (Again, take note: not *The* [U.S.] Constitution (with the first letter capitalized)—but “constitution” (small “c” as first letter); More to be pursued on this matter, but first—back to the reflection on the song at issue here.

The song suggests among other things that an investigation into the history and dynamics of the language and knowledge claims and significations from/of the underground is important. The most important of the claims of the overground—dominant society—has to do with the naturalization of discourses, structures, operations, practices, hierarchies, associations, pathologies, and views. This is comparable to what we have been given in our circle (ISS) to calling “scripturalization”—with the tensive verbal play with “scriptures” as a phenomenon metonymic of formation, of constitution. The underground must—as the song goes—question the overground at every point and in every respect; it must assert the sur-reality or the constructed-ness of the overground (in the face of its bold claims and registrations of power, its violence). Such assertions by the underground also provides potential for alternate construction or—assuming the need to return to and engage the overground—a different orientation altogether. These two responses may be considered the same.

The song is poignant and powerful—worthy of our attention for social critical and larger theoretical and analytic purposes. It begs attention and consideration around issues having to do with constitution, viz., how things come into formation or shape and how such become naturalized, how and why things “go ‘round.” I have argued (*White Men’s Magic: Scripturalization as Slavery* [2012] and elsewhere) that “scripturalization” can and should serve as an apt handle—far beyond, but certainly including, the domain of religious texts—for that

meta-discursive regime of language/text use and knowledge claims that structure and define (significant domains and aspects of) modernity, or, to stay with the language game associated with the song played and discussed here, the implied overground, people making the world.³ It is this situation, of (made-up) “reality,” as Lacan and others signified it, that is taken for granted, no longer questioned. It is the realm of what P. Bourdieu terms *doxa*. It is also that phenomenon that R. Girard theorized as the interplay of “violence” and the “sacred.” In contrast, the *underground* as the margins is here the handle for the psycho-social situation and orientation and portal to the alternate language-world, the domain of secret knowledge or “hidden meaning,” including that which scripturalization tries to keep mostly veiled—the underlying deep truths or secrets about how things are structured—and tries to manage, in terms of a complex politics of control.

The song begs raising of the specific question—how did this or that arrangement/constitution come about? How does it work still? The song also provides springboard for advancement of analysis. It provides at least three major concepts around which we might consider deepening our thinking and criticism. I should like here to name and only cursorily consider such concepts as way to deepen and broaden our conceptual play with—and destabilization of the usual assumptions about orientation to--“constitution.”:

First, “Big men (sitting in their easy chair)”. Second, “Changing people’s heads around...” Third, “Go underground, young man.” Each phrase from the song represents not only a nodal point of theoretics—to think with—but also, even if in somewhat complex and overlapping respects, some historical-evolutionary relationships and even development. In connection with each nodal point, I should like in this presentation turned into essay to draw attention to one or two compelling examples to think with. But with such I’ll not be able to linger in the details that would be warranted in a full analysis. I shall here only drop these examples and then leave them for the hauntings—the provocation, the inspiration, perhaps, the

3. See my forthcoming collection of essays, *Black Flesh Matters* (Lexington Books, 2022), for development of the concept.

destabilization of assumptions about constitution (where and how to begin the thinking about such, how to advance the thinking about such, how to tie elements and phenomena together; and so forth, including the hauntings about such that I hope will follow readers as they have followed or haunted me).

1/First, regarding “Big Men sitting in their easy chair.”

The image, is it not, is simple but also powerful, very suggestive. We’re made to ask—how did things come to be the way they are? How is it that things “go ‘round”—and in the way they “go round”? It is the question if not about origins in overdetermined and strained disciplinary terms (Who? What? Where? When?) at least with respect to an identification of one of the motors—historical and ongoing—for the way things are constituted. This is a matter less about what single event got things going ‘round, than the identifiable historical and ongoing motor-ing for the dynamics—the shape of the world—we see and experience.

As I am also led to think about the larger world in which Bell and Creed wrote the song and the Stylistics sang their song, using it as poignant gateway for theoretics and analytics, I cannot avoid thinking about the work of arrogation that made what we experience daily so natural. Consider with me as the necessary node of the starting point for understanding the nature of our shared world the beginnings of the European colonial settler society that has become the United States and what ideological assumptions and arrogations needed to be in place for us to become what we are. The “Big Men sitting in their easy chairs” of the song are the ideologists and managers of white rule in the “discovered” and colonized Americas, the place disingenuously called null/empty, ready to be dominated. There needed to be powerful ideological precedents and currents to pull off what was pulled off—that is, to make the argument that this land was null and void—at least in terms of white men’s evaluation—and further that it was the last hope and last stand and outpost for the civilized West. All such delusion was brought on through the play with and manipulation of some now well-recognized tropes, having to do with “translation,” with a much broader meaning. *Translatio imperii* often coupled

with *translatio studii*—this had to do with “transfer” of learning and power, from the old regime to the new and more powerful one. (One can easily even if also chillingly relate such tropes to the recent and ongoing roiling and angst over infra-national “transfer of power” that the U.S. faced in the aftermath of the 2020 election results. We in the U.S. should also think about what this may mean in terms of what was considered before 2020 to be normal infra-national transfer of power—what it means; how it’s normally done; what actually is being transferred/translated.) From Greece to Rome to the Renaissance to the Early Modern period (France; Spain; England being the most powerful players)—such concepts were used to think about and justify changes in regime. We simply must not avoid thinking seriously about how we in different polities have come to make assumptions about, and grow to accept, how things “go ‘round,” are transferred/translated, become naturalized/textualized/scripturalized/made part of a regime of scripturalization.⁴

A couple of early modern U.S./North American examples: Languaged most powerfully in regard to settler communities, in what was being constituted as the United States/America by the combination of engagement on the battlefields and through determined discursive battles and machinations. Note Irish philosopher-cleric Bishop George Berkeley (1685–1753), in his “Verses On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America” (1728), how he articulated what was becoming the dominant western political view of the future of the American colonies, especially what was to become the U.S., in poetics, and most poignantly, in a manner that provoked thinking and more discursive play for times to come:

Westward the course
Of empire takes its way;
The first four acts
Already past,
A fifth shall close
The drama with the day;

4. See helpful background discussion re: translation in Eric Cheyfitz, *Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from the Tempest to Tarzan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Time's noblest offspring is the last.⁵

This part of Berkeley's poem was ignored for a while, until the penultimate period of Euro-American Revolution/Independence. On the eve of revolution there arose the felt urgent need for ideologization of the moment: so many, including school boys—shall we say the boomers of the period, steeped in and adept in the currents and social media of the day?—entered the political discursive media fray. Among such types was a pair at point of graduation from the College of New Jersey. The two—Philip Freneau and Hugh Henry Breckenridge—provocatively summed up that generation's view regarding the coming into being of a nation. In response to the call for a graduation oration about the formation of the nation, the collaboration of sort of Freneau and Breckenridge resulted in the now famous complexly woven poem as narrative oration which expanded on the touchstones of the arrogation and assumptions that were somewhat premature in Berkeley's poem called "Rising Glory of America." I share with you here only the last few lines:

The seat of empire the abode of kings,
 The final stage where time shall introduce
 Renowned characters, and glorious works
 Of high invention and of wond'rous art,
 Which not the ravages of time shall waste
 Till he himself has run his long career
 Till all those glorious orbs of light on high
 The rolling wonders that surround the ball,
 Drop from their spheres extinguish'd and consum'd;
 When final ruin with their fiery car
 Rides o'er creation, and nature's works
 Are lost in chaos and the womb of night.⁶

No shrinking violets here regarding thinking about what lies ahead for

5. George Berkeley, "Verses by the Author on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Sciences in America," in *A Miscellany Containing Several Tracts on Several Subjects* (London: J. and R. Tonson and S. Draper, 1752), 186–87.

6. For background and perspective and sources, see Leonard Tennenhouse, *The Importance of Feeling English: American Literature and the British Diaspora, 1750-185* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 12–18; and *The Rising Glory of America: 1760-1820*, ed. Gordon S. Wood (rev. ed.; Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990).

the nation being constituted.

The truth about the larger situation and the longer-held sentiments (in terms of the whole of the European west) that help structure the mid/late 18th century boomers' arrogations is strikingly imaged by J-F. Lafitau (1681–1746), French-born Jesuit missionary and ethnologist (who worked in Canada), in the frontispiece to his *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times* (*Moeurs des Sauvages Amériquains, Comparées aux Moeurs des Premiers Temps*) (1724):



Fig 1: Frontispiece to J. F. Lafitau's *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times* (1724)⁷

⁷ <https://savage-america.tumblr.com/post/3691430388/the-1724-frontispiece-of-father-lafitau-moeurs>

I cannot linger here except to bid you take notice of his rendering of European- authorized “History” being composed in the writing up of the trinkets and objects—we have to do here with the French mind, so we should think here of fetishes—of the “savages” into a European-coherent world. Thus, constituting modern Europe.⁸

Another striking and provocative example can be seen in the frontispiece to *Rev. John Brown’s Self-Interpreting Bible* (1792), a popular publication on both sides of the Atlantic. There were at least 26 known U.S. editions.

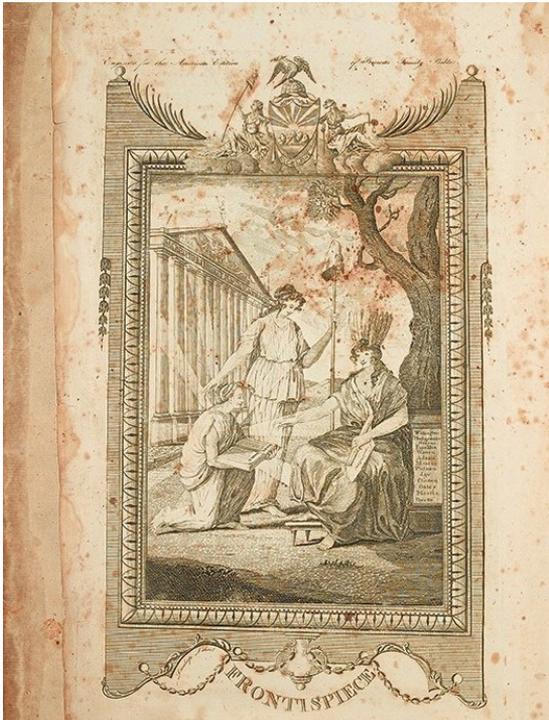


Fig. 2: Frontispiece to Rev. John Brown’s *Self-Interpreting Bible* (1792)⁹

The frontispiece of the first American edition of this Bible as

8. I refer you to the brilliant reading of this image, in M. de Certeau and James Hovde, “Writing vs. Time: History and Anthropology in the Works of Lafitau,” *Yale French Studies: Rethinking History*, Number 59 (1980): 37–64.

9. <https://hbu.edu/museums/dunham-bible-museum/tour-of-the-museum/bible-in-america/bibles-for-a-young-republic/browns-self-interpreting-bible/>

National Scripture pictured Columbia as a woman with an Indian headdress. In her left hand she holds the Constitution; with her right hand she receives the Bible from Peace, kneeling before her. The names of American patriots were written on a liberty tree behind her. “America became part of the biblical world.”¹⁰ So much to dwell on here—the license, the appropriation, the arrogation, the assumptions, the framing. It’s breathtaking.

Translatio studii et imperii, indeed. Perhaps, it is better or more truthfully said that what is imaged is “America” violently transferred/translated—from the English, who had already translated Renaissance versions of the biblical and Greek and Roman worlds. (Reflection on this situation should be enough of a warning sign that just getting to the facts in re: textual exegesis must here be always rendered suspicious!). I should think that wrestling with our normally uninterrogated notion of “crossover,” for example, in culture, especially in the entertainment world—think of music, dress, even speech—might as continuing metaphorization help us better understand what is at issue in translation: Who crosses over? And into what? Find/follow the (flow of the) power. That is the work of translation/transfer.

2/ “Changing People’s Heads Around”

But these windows onto the trope of transfer of power as having to do with domination that over time produced the big men smoking in easy chairs should not be taken simply as the first step in historical-evolutionary terms. The trope is here isolated only in terms of the conceptual—particularly, the conceptual-ideological conflict with England (and other European powers) as window on account of where the Stylistics were located. The firm ideologization that was required for the “translation” phenomenon here described in fact seemed to require the complementary or overlapping/simultaneous work of consolidation as classification/”statistics” as hierarchialization, as the ordering/managing society, what Foucault argued to be the onset of “governmentality.”¹¹ With this term he was referencing three

10. © The Dunham Bible Museum, Houston Baptist University, 2008.

11. M. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*, ed. Michael Senellart; trans. Graham Burchell (2007), 108–109ff.

issues—the “ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics” that facilitate exercise of power; the development of such ensemble toward the “pre-eminence” for advancement of government of “a series of knowledges” (*savoirs*); and result of the process by which the exercise of justice/“state of justice” became the state or became “governmentalized.” In sum, governmentality—with all apparatuses and instruments appertaining—came to be understood as quite necessary in order to discern and define difference, then order and manage, meaning hierarchalize, the difference, that which was encountered through the “first contacts” and ongoing contact with/engagement of peoples quickly subjugated and remained so.

Among the tricks, viz, apparatuses in this new situation—what we variously call “statistics”; catalogue/classification; ethnology/anthropology; sociology; and so forth. Two examples on which I’ll not linger, but with which I hope to provoke your thinking:

First, Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785). In its earliest version this work was a response to a request by French diplomat Monsieur François Barbé-Marbois for information about the state, viz., the status/statistics, that defined “Virginia.” *Notes* is argued to have been one of the most widely read publication of the times—on both sides of the Atlantic.

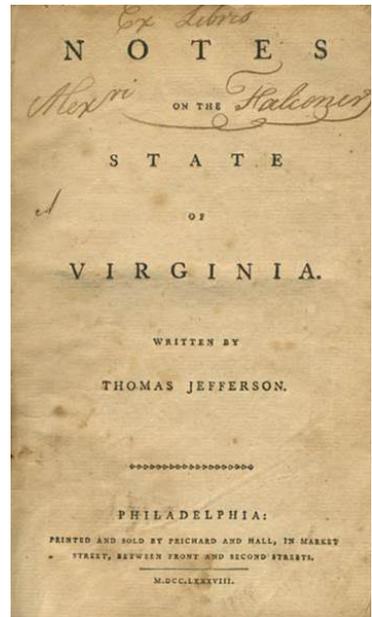


Fig. 3: Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785)¹²

Regarding genre”—with Foucault’s concept of governmentality in mind—Jefferson’s *Notes* fits perfectly—its time and our own. It is an

12. <https://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/jefferson/jefferson.html>

example of the new colonial-era discourses, the “science” of “statistics,” classification. Jefferson participates in the creation and advancement of such genre. It includes the “facts” as such needed to be understood and deployed. It is dripping with (heavily-ideologized) description—of the state of the state, the real meaning of the title of *Notes*. As such it was per this relatively new genre—it was (in terms that poignantly go far beyond and was as important as the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution) a type of performance constituting the nation. I bring to your attention here one page (as part of an answer (to Query VIII) among so many others that make clear what was registered and its effects. And take note of this page regarding description/classification of state population: note especially inclusion of Black peoples as particular problem/challenge that Jefferson’s tortured mind and rhetoric always reflected.

It will be proper to explain how the numbers for the year 1782 have been obtained; as it was not from a perfect census of the inhabitants. It will at the same time develop the proportion between the free inhabitants and slaves. The following return of taxable articles for that year was given in.

53,289	free males above 21 years of age.
211,698	slaves of all ages and sexes.
23,766	not distinguished in the returns, but said to be tytheable slaves
195,439	horses
609,734	cattle
5,126	wheels of riding carriages.
191	taverns

There were no returns from the 8 counties of Lincoln, Jefferson, Fayette, Monongalia, Yohogania, Ohio, Northampton, and York. To find the number of slaves which should have been returned instead of the 23,766 tytheables, we must mention that some observations on a former cen|sus had given reason to believe that the numbers

above and below 16 years of age were equal. The double of this number, therefore, to wit, 47,532 must be added to 211,698, which will give us 259,230 slaves of all ages and sexes. To find the number of free inhabitants, we must repeat the observation, that those above and below 16 are nearly equal. But as the number 53,289 omits the males below 16 and 21 we must supply them from conjecture. On a former experiment it had appeared that about one-third of our militia, that is, of the males between 16 and 50, were unmarried. Knowing how early marriage takes place here, we shall not be far wrong in supposing that the unmarried part of our militia are those between 16 and 21. If there be young men who do not marry till after 21, there are many who marry before that age.

But as the men above 50 were not included in the militia, we will suppose the unmarried, or those between 16 and 21, to be one-fourth of the whole number above 16, then we have the following calculation:¹³

53,289	free males above 21 years of age.
17,763	free males between 16 and 21.
71,052	free males under 16
142,104	free females of all ages.
284,208	free inhabitants of all ages
259,230	slaves of all ages.

Another even more dramatic—can it be more disturbing?—same-genre example: I turn your attention to the text of Médéric Louis Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry, (see Fig. 4) a figure also of the 18th century, who worked for France in order to help manage its colony, Saint-Domingue.

13. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/evans/N20681.0001.001/1:12?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>

anxiety? But pursuit of this matter is for this space and moment too much a digression.¹⁵

Of course, this is what the genre of statistics/ethnology in the service of governmentality looks like and effects.

It is worth noting that in roughly the same general period in which the French colonial Saint Domingue was being constituted through “science” and/or “classification” there occurs as response the revolution that result in what has become Haiti. In light of the politics of classification—what Jefferson had called (see epigraph) “calculations”—it is enough, perhaps, to indicate in passing what the 1805 Constitution of Haiti reflected about colonial-era classifications and calculations in the U.S. and in Saint Domingue. In its Article #14, the Haitian Constitution text declared that there would be henceforth only one category for all citizens—*noirs*.

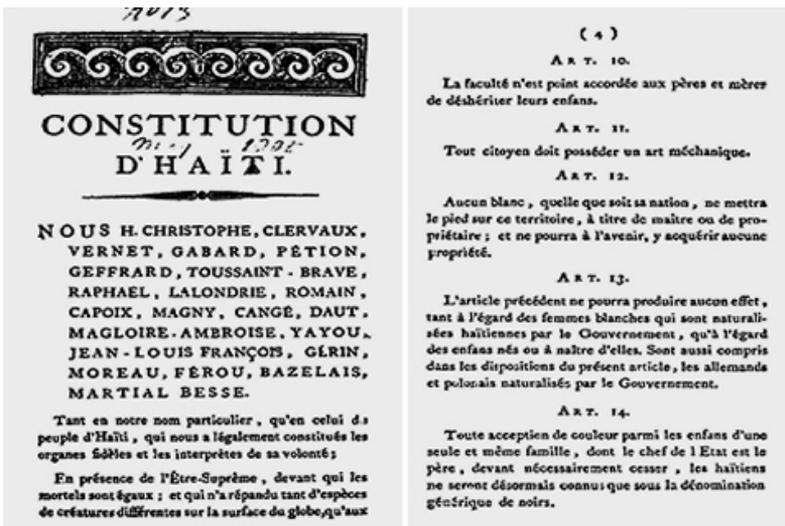


Fig.7: Art #14...*les Haïtiens ne seront désormais connus que sous la dénomination génériques de Noirs.*

["ALL HAITIANS SHALL HENCEFORTH BE KNOWN ONLY BY THE GENERIC NAME 'BLACK'"]¹⁶

15. But take note of: Libby Copeland, “America’s Brutal Racial History is Written All Over Our Genes” *New York Times* (Feb 16, 2021).

16. <https://naahpusa.org/event/diaspora-townhall-evolution-of-the-haitian-constitution/>

All would be called black. Of course, there ensued another bloody revolution, with the fateful perfidies of the *gens du couleur*, in reaction. Emperor Dessalines was killed and cut in pieces. And Haiti has never really recovered from this situation. Just as it was in the early nineteenth century so in our time and situation in the U.S., now in the wake of the twenty-first century siege of the U.S. capitol, these are chilling and sobering developments and matters worth pondering.

3/ “Go Underground, Young (Wo)Man!”

In response to a friend offering to write her life, a 19th century woman is reported to have responded that she was “*not ready to be writ up...*” These were the words attributed to Isabella Van Wagenen or Isabella Baumfree, who poignantly renamed herself Sojourner Truth.¹⁷ What was she channeling? Fearful of? The experiences on the part of the Black circum-Atlantic of having their bodies conscripted and, in efforts to justify such actions, later having them “writ up” or inscribed on as part of the *scripturalization* that is Euro-American translation, in which “Big men make the world go ‘round.”¹⁸

Charles H. Long’s twist on this phenomenon is simple and profound: “...my community...knew that it was a community *signified* by another community”.¹⁹ Celeste-Marie Bernier’s book *Characters of Blood: Black Heroism in the Transatlantic Imagination* (2012)²⁰ unknowingly draws out the provocative but spare argument

17. See Sojourner Truth, with Frances W. Titus, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth; a Bondswoman of Olden Time, Emancipated by the New York Legislature in the Early Part of the Present Century; with a History of Her Labors and Correspondence, Drawn from Her “Book of Life”* (1878), ed. Jeffrey C. Stewart (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

18. There were plenty of examples, not only of the type referenced in this address already, but plenty more, including the likes of: 18th c. Frenchman Abbé Demanet’s (*Nouvelle Histoire de l’Afrique française, 1767*) chilling description of black peoples as “soft wax” (*cirre molle*), henceforth to be molded; to 18th through 19th century thinkers, the likes of Hume; Kant; Jefferson; Hegel and various now infamous pronouncements based on little more than conjecture or prejudices wrapped in the discourse of pseudo-learning of the day regarding reasons such people are in the states in which they find themselves or why what happened to them happened—they’re “naturally inferior to the whites...no arts, no sciences”; [they have] “no feeling that rises above the trifling”; “...[their most striking] difference is fixed in nature...that immovable veil of black which covers all emotions of other races”; “...no historical interest of [their] own...[they are] removed from the light of self-conscious history....” See on Demanet and other sentiments and influencers, Christopher L. Miller, *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 47–49.

19. Charles H. Long, *Significations: Signs, Symbols, and Images in the Interpretation of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress 1999 [1986]), 2.

20. Bernier, *Characters of Blood* (Charlottesville VA: University of Virginia Press, 2012). Pages

in Long's *Significations* by focusing in some detail on several historical and historically mythicized characters that cohere around "the inextricable relationship between coded systems of signification and overt enactments of violence" (361). Sojourner Truth is among the characters so discussed. ("Hero" here seems unimaginative and weak category of description.)

Among the historical responses on the part of Black subaltern to the situations that have been discussed in historical scholarship the most persistent in various forms has been not so much the amorphous "resistance," but the imperative toward the gesture of *flight, running away/the runaway, escape*. This has included, argues Bernier, escape of the type in those transatlantic settings—Jamaica famously; and some few other places in the Caribbean and in South America and North America, where conditions—with their woodlands and forests, swamps and waterways—made the form of escape that has been quite literal, viz., maronage—feasible to think about and act on. In such situations alternate communities were established (cf Jamaica's Nanny of the Maroons)—if only on limited terms (203, 272).

But in most sites in the circum-Atlantic where slaves were made to toil, the option of flight or escape was never really viable. In most other sites flight/escape had to take other forms and be understood on other terms, such as on the plane of signifying (as theorized by Long and Gates, others). And here again Long was among several critics looking at this issue. He is found to be provocative and in good company with his focus on *opacity* regarding oppressed peoples, the "primitives."²¹ His hints or asides are significant, having to do with the layeredness/complexity of the experiences and orientation of the world, the meaning (of the term [opacity]) developed in some cases with the hidden, therefrom to association with being inscrutable, and connoting flight from meaning. This is a complex history that cannot be unpacked here. But suffice it to say that we are here confronted with development on the part of a marginalized/made ex-centric people part of whose

imbedded in text.

21. See *Significations*, chaps 3, 7, 10; but also in other less direct terms in his most recently published collection of essays *Ellipsis: The Collected Writings of Charles H. Long* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).

oppression entailed *being at first denied any history, representation, place or meaning to being flattened and signified/scripturalized to their using the flattening and signifying or taking up and developing (their own) scripturalizing practices*. The latter is descriptive and analytic shorthand for a phenomenon having to do with the deployment and politics of language and representations such that oppression comes to be associated with (that is, until deliberately turned on its head in “escape from” or critique of or opposition to) *over-meaning or fixed meaning* in the (ideological/discursive) service of empire.

I have in the past turned and continue to turn to artists and critics for ideas about how “escape” from the violence of signification/scripturalization as over-meaning is experienced/realized on/in relation to the bodies of the “primitives.” I shall need to beg off discussing such at this time. But I emphasize how critical are the contributions of such talented and insightful persons.²²

Back to Sojourner Truth; she provides application of heady arguments about a life representing fierce struggle for escape from meaning. According to Bernier, Truth (even the name points to the challenges of interpreting her and interpretation in general) constantly defied straightforward memorializations (Bernier 242); rejected fixed interpretations that traded in flat stereotypic Black female identities (235);

22. See Derek Walcott, *The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1992), especially his emphasis on how the breakup of stable meanings ensued from Africans’ enslavement and continuing destabilization and exploitation. This was experienced as becoming “shards,” with tradition understood as “cracked heirlooms,” as “shattered histories... shards of vocabulary,” “fragmented memory.”

Also, Joan Dayan (*Haiti, History and the Gods* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995]), with her theory about how the brutality of slavery and aftermath led to total breakdown, in Haiti especially, but throughout African diaspora, in tradition (-ing). In the story of Haiti, especially with the fascinating development of stories and lore around Dessalines, one can see how meaning and history were exploded, how history was reduced to “deposits...[to] [s]hreds of bodies come back, remembered in ritual, seeking vengeance...”

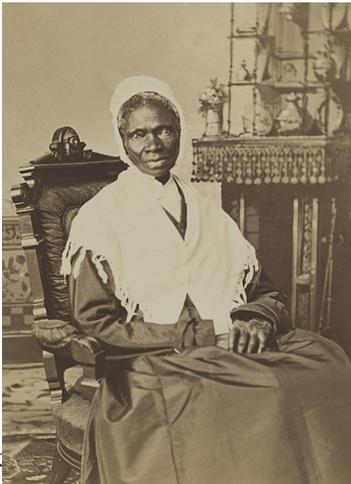
Susan Buck-Morss, a philosopher analyzing some of the same events, in *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), argued that trauma and disruption were seen there as sign of the gods being “radically distant.” This shared view led to an understanding of “decay,” “fungibility” “transiency” of meaning... (127). This was of course reflected in way in which *veves* were understood to function—that is, as scriptural messages and images to be received, experienced, then to be wiped away.

Martinican novelist, essayist/critic/poet Édouard Glissant, in his *Poétique de la Relation* (*Poetics of Relation* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990]), makes the argument most directly—*nous réclamons pour tous le droit à l'opacité...*: “We claim for all the right to be taken seriously in relations, to attain respect for opacity of the Other’s difference/layeredness, to resist attempts to assimilate or objectify it or classify according to a hierarchy in the tradition of the West. No, we assert right to be an unreadable & unintelligible presence... Perhaps, we need to end the very notion of classification. Do away with all reductions...Opacité...liberté” (190, 194).

rejected descriptions of her physique as “the real African type” (234); her name change speaks to her orientation—her rootless, “sojourning” toward “truth”(233). “I don’t read such small stuff as letters, I read men and nations” she is reported to have proclaimed. These proclamations and gestures reflected her view that writing was a second rate form of knowledge and communication. These gestures and views reflected her recognition of limitations and possible stranglehold over her legacies that literacy presented—over which she had little or no control. Issues over how she was perceived and identified often prompted her complex responses: her feigning southern speech/accent...(223); her trading on the metaphor of sojourning/traveling as way to emphasize her notion of the limitations of experience, representation (222); her preference for the visual as recorded testimony.

With the development of technology in photography—daguerreotype and traditions of *carte de visite*—she invited others to “read” her poses/images, but she made it difficult if not impossible to do so (221).

Notice two images²³—*carte de visite*—in particular:



read them as g back (try to things

23. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sojourner_Truth,_1870_\(cropped,_restored\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sojourner_Truth,_1870_(cropped,_restored).jpg); and <https://blog.history.in.gov/the-symbolic-rape-arrest-and-defense-of-sojourner-truth-in-indiana/>

out, not agreeing to play the female bourgeoisie game of representing meaning/identity....at least not in terms of flat straightforward meaning: “Truth’s enigmatic expressions, unreadable physical poses, and symbolic artifacts challenged and ultimately rejected superficial reimaginings of black female experiences as repeatedly manufactured within a white mainstream imagination” (221). Opacity, indeed. She escapes being (simply or easily) read: “I sell the Shadow to support the substance.”—this was the photo inscription and her theme governing her self-interpretation. Her refusal to be “writ up.” The Shadow? (The public “race”/racialized image, as one critic—Augusta Rohrbach—suggests.) Or a certain representation that she allowed that floats about but does not reveal her real self? In both images she shows her freedom from slavery, shows herself, in the one image with the bag carrying her “shadow” (so it will not be “dogging about here and there”); and in the other, as she sits at her own domestic table, with flowers, a book/*The Book*, knitting, etc., she belies her other role in public life. So who is she? Who can tell? She is illegible. She is free. In the multiple confounding meanings she escapes (over)meaning or being scripturalized.

Sojourner Truth is one powerful example of Black people generally not finding themselves in the “ideal speech situation” (viz., able to speak among equals: so Habermas). That is why she wove discourse/communication/performances that were necessarily “...replete with ellipsis and indirection...” (Lipsitz, Afterword, in Bernier 372). Her speech performances were inspired to produce “a politicized aesthetics [that was] organized indirection, fragmentation, ellipsis, masquerade, and disguise. Because they were denied the opportunities to articulate their ideas “openly [they] became masters of allusion, allegory, metaphor, and metonymy” (Bernier 369).

There is no need obviously to argue that all Black folk were oriented this way all the time. (We might ask Zora Neale about this matter.) I need argue only that this orientation—this refusal to mean or invest in (over) meaning by which the West functioned and enslaved—is a powerful and profound strain or orientation in the circum-Black Atlantic, with powerful ongoing resonances and ramifications. Thus, it must be honored through our critical questioning and analysis. As

part of the experience/gesture of going underground. It is provocation enough to continue my own escape from a particular site of an ongoing discursivity and disciplinary, viz., scriptural politics. And it may also be inspiration enough to translate/model for others what it may mean in this era to persistently “go underground” by refusing to be “writ up,” and to figure out how with more imagination and courage as Ms. Truth suggested to “sell the shadow to support the substance.” This was part of her ongoing effort to get listeners to reject the written as fixed, as constitutions of a self, a nation, a world.

One last example: In my view an outgrowth of Truth’s escape from meaning performance/gesture can be seen in the 2021 Inaugural Poem (“The Hill We Climb”),²⁴ of Amanda Gorman, another young person of another era summing up the sense of a generation: Her work reflects ongoing constituting practices/performance.



Fig.10: Amanda Gorman recites her inaugural poem, “The Hill We Climb,” during the 59th Presidential Inauguration ceremony in Washington, Jan. 20, 2021. President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris took the oath of office on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol. (DOD Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Carlos M. Vazquez II)²⁵

I ask you to take note of what her poem does with classifications/differences. She even makes of herself a pointed member of an overdetermined class (“skinny black girl”). She is representative of many such examples (so Douglass and Truth) in the history of Black peoples using language/images to make the radical arrogation regarding *ongoing construction* of the nation and her part in it. She also makes the point that people continue to make it “go ‘round,” and that

24. <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/20/politics/amanda-gorman-inaugural-poem-transcript/index.html>

25. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amanda_Gorman_2021.jpg

those people of her kind can and should be part of ongoing efforts to constitute the nation.

What is brought into focus through the attention placed on the Stylistics' odd song are many issues that should be allowed to haunt and vex us. Among these are four I highlight here and with which I shall end:

First, again, people make the world go round/constitute the world. Not texts/documents/offices in isolation from them. Do not begin consideration of constitution within the framework, within the textual frame. But in some other middle place... Beware the snarling/berating of the exegetes—"the text says... the text. The text!"

Second, the constituting work/play is ongoing—it never ends. There is no such thing as the constitution as a final act. The claims about such are disingenuous and represent a sort of violence—psycho-social-cultural, and beyond.

Third, the frame (ing) work (so "framers") is intended to occlude if not upend this ongoing work/play of constituting reality. We must, therefore, always be mindful of and be prepared to respond to framers/"fathers"²⁶—of all kinds—and their work. Again, beware the exegetes, the textualists!

Fourth, the underground: escape from framing, from meaning. We should take seriously the opportunities to go there. We must also be courageous in the face of it. It is opportunity to see things ex-centrally. To see how things are yet being constituted, to see how we constitute... To see what is being framed, who is being framed. How the framing represents the systemic—scriptural-ization. Being underground in the dark affords some clarity... it is epistemic enrichment or opportunity: it helps us see things ordinarily not seen. In the dark underground, for example, we may see more clearly the real (à la Lacan and Foucault; à la Fanon and T. Morrison!) the texts/framing, the dynamics/phenomena involved and what is really at issue. This is what Toni Morrison saw and named so clearly--what could be seen in the dark underground, that is, through black flesh—this was the real "text" that was being translated

26. Francois Furstenberg, *In the Name of the Father: Washington's Legacy, Slavery, and the Making of a Nation* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006).

or framed that has always constituted and continues constituting the West, especially the United States. I end this address to remind you what she wrote in her *Playing in the Dark*:

In what public discourse does the reference to black people not exist? It exists in every one of this nation's mightiest struggles. The presence of black people is not only a major referent in the framing of the U.S. Constitution, it is also in the battle over enfranchising unpropertied citizens, women, the illiterate. It is there in the construction of a free and public school system; the balancing of representation legislative bodies; jurisprudence and legal definitions of justice. It is there in theological discourse; the memoranda of banking houses; the concept of manifest destiny and the preeminent narrative that accompanies (if it does not precede) the initiation of every immigrant into the community of American citizens. The presence of black people is inherent, along with gender and family ties, in the earliest lesson every child is taught regarding his or her distinctiveness. Africanism [Black presence seen through white-ness] is inextricable from the definition of Americanness—from its origins on through its integrated and disintegrating twentieth [twenty-first]-century self.

Encoded or explicit, indirect or overt, the linguistic responses to an Africanist presence can complicate texts, sometimes contradicting them entirely. A writer's response to American Africanism often provides a subtext that either sabotages the surface text's expressed intentions or escapes them through a language that mystifies what it cannot bring itself to articulate but still attempts to register.²⁷

27. See Mary Anne Franks, *Cult of the Constitution* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2019), which was the common text for the 2021 ISS Meeting as Seminar. And now also see Noah Feldman, *The Broken Constitution: Lincoln, Slavery, and the Refounding of America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021).

POSTSCRIPT

MAY 2022
LEAKED U.S. SUPREME COURT DRAFT
OF MAJORITY ARGUMENTS
IN RE: MISSISSIPPI ABORTION RIGHTS CASE

“...the Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision...”

To: The Chief Justice
Justice Thomas
Justice Breyer
Justice Sotomayor
Justice Kagan
Justice Gorsuch
Justice Kavanaugh
Justice Barrett

From:
Justice Alito

Circulated: February 10, 2022 _____

Recirculated: _____

1st Draft

NOTICE: This opinion is subject to formal revision before publication in the preliminary print of the United States Reports. Readers are requested to notify the Reporter of Decisions, Supreme Court of the United States, Washington, D. C. 20543, of any typographical or other formal errors, in order that corrections may be made before the preliminary print goes to press.

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

No. 19–1392

THOMAS E. DOBBS, STATE HEALTH OFFICER OF
THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
ET AL., PETITIONERS v. JACKSON WOMEN'S
HEALTH ORGANIZATION, ET AL.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF
APPEALS FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

[February ____, 2022]

JUSTICE ALITO delivered the opinion of the Court.

Abortion presents a profound moral issue on which Americans hold sharply conflicting views. Some believe fervently that a human person comes into being at conception and that abortion ends an innocent life. Others feel just as strongly that any regulation of abortion invades a woman's right to control her own body and prevents women from achieving full equality. Still others in a third group think that abortion should be allowed under some but not all circumstances, and those within this group hold a variety of views about the particular restrictions that should be imposed.

For the first 185 years after the adoption of the Constitution, each State was permitted to address this issue in accordance with the views of its citizens. Then, in 1973, this Court decided *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U. S. 113. Even though the Constitution makes no mention of abortion, the Court held that it confers a broad right to obtain one. It did not claim that American law or the common law had ever recognized

Book Review: Mary Anne Franks, *The Cult of the Constitution* (Stanford UP, 2019)

Susanne Scholz, Ph.D.

Mary Ann Franks' bestselling book, *The Cult of the Constitution*, reads like a good ol' book on the Bible written by the legal version of the biblical scholar, Walter Brueggemann. Or said differently: Franks' legal argumentation resembles what liberal Bible scholars have said about biblical hermeneutics since the nineteenth century CE. Of course, this comparison means something to you only if you know something about biblical studies in the US context. My comparison is not interested in the specifics, as they are certainly very different. Franks addresses current approaches to the US Constitution; liberal Bible scholars speak about the Bible. Rather, my comparison sees similarity in the framing and the underlying assumptions between Franks' argument and biblical hermeneutics in liberal America.

There is much to like about Franks' book, and I do like it. Her discussions illuminate many issues that I, as a non-legal scholar and non-lawyer, have heard about but did not know the details of. For instance, Frank explains the problems of the ACLU legal position related to the First Amendment and why the ACLU sided with neo-Nazis and other white supremacist groups marching in Charlottesville, VA, in 2017. Franks uncovers the commonalities between the ACLU and the NRA, as each group's arguments are grounded either in the First Amendment or the Second Amendment. Franks summarizes the unexpected commonalities clearly and succinctly when she states:

What the NRA has done for the Second Amendment, the ACLU has done for the First: It promotes a simplistic orthodoxy built around the narrative of white male victimhood, the mythology of the free market, and populist and often patronizing clichés to ensure that the interests of white, male, often extremely wealthy men are protected above all.¹

1. Mary Anne Franks, *The Cult of the Constitution* (Stanford UP, 2019), 109.

Although the NRA and the ACLU come from almost opposite sides of the political spectrum, to Franks, both organizations share the same legal assumptions. In Chapter 2, entitled “The Cult of the Gun,” Franks describes how the NRA argues for its pro-gun position on the basis of the Second Amendment. In Chapter 3, entitled “The Cult of Free Speech,” Franks elaborates how the ACLU makes its case for neo-Nazis’ freedom of speech on the basis of the First Amendment. The similar framing of the legal arguments has widespread ramifications to Franks, because in her view the legal framework explains why a “barely literate, openly racist, pathologically dishonest sexual predator could be elected to the highest office in America in 2016” and why that election “was a grave indictment of the state of the constitutional culture in the United States.”² The election happened—and this is Frank’s punch line—because “[l]iberal constitutional fundamentalism helped pave the way for radical rightwing extremism and overt white male supremacy to take hold in the United States.”³ To Franks, both the white male liberal position of the ACLU and the white male rightwing position of the NRA adhere to what she classifies as a “fundamentalist” interpretation of the Constitution, enabling the election of Donald J. Trump to the presidency in 2016.

The book as a whole expands on this punch line. Like religious fundamentalists, constitutional fundamentalists exhibit a “cultlike devotion” to a text—the Constitution, besides being excessively devoted to a “charismatic leader.”⁴ She explains.

They idealize the founding fathers, read passages from the Constitution in isolation and out of context, believe themselves and their values to be constantly under attack, and rationalize extreme inequality as the product of natural competition. The cult of the Constitution allows Americans to downplay and disavow the role of white male supremacy in America’s past and present.⁵

In a nutshell, then, white male supremacy rules supreme in legal arguments in the contemporary United States. They are grounded in

2. *Ibid.*, 16.

3. *Ibid.*,

4. *Ibid.*, 7.

5. *Ibid.*, 7.

a fundamentalist hermeneutics causing contemporary socio-political and cultural woes, whether in the context of gun violence, neo-Nazis marching in the streets, police violence, or online harassment. The fundamentalist hermeneutics consists of two approaches. On the one hand, constitutional fundamentalists read the Constitution with an “‘originalist interpretive’ approach.”⁶ On the other hand, liberal legal minds prefer the “‘living constitutionalist’ interpretive approach.”⁷ Neither approach makes a big difference, according to Franks, because both “conservative and liberal constitutionalism have converged in many respects.”⁸ Franks illustrates the truth of her assessment with the legal debates on the Second Amendment argumentation of the NRA and the First Amendment argumentation of the ACLU. Both groups are on the same side because both of them have helped “transform free speech doctrine into a tool of the most privileged and powerful members of society,” namely “the interests of white men.”¹⁰ Both approaches foster a fundamentalist legal hermeneutics that advances the interests of the white male elite class.

This convergence between what Franks classifies as liberal and conservative fundamentalism is most prominent in the free speech debate related to the internet. Franks argues that “[t]hanks to the joint efforts of conservative and liberal advocates and lawmakers, companies like Google and Facebook are essentially immunized from liability for the activity they facilitate even as they are allowed to reap enormous profits from it.”¹¹ Although corporatized interests of money, profit, and power increasingly overrule nation states, Franks suggests that these dynamics ran into some obstacles during Obama’s presidency. Viewing his presidency as a great success story for breaking up corporate driven, white male supremacist domination, Franks also characterizes Hillary Clinton’s presidential run as a beginning of “breaking up ... the white male monopoly of power.”¹² Since Trump won the presidential election

6. *Ibid.*, 10.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*, 12.

9. *Ibid.*, 107.

10. *Ibid.*, 136.

11. *Ibid.*, 13.

12. *Ibid.*, 14.

against Clinton in 2016, Franks believes he stands as “the embodiment of the domination/victimization paradox of white male supremacy”¹³ and as an illustration for the move of “the conservative mainstream” toward “far-right extremism.”¹⁴ In other words, the situation looks grim to Franks who published her book in 2019, before the 2020 presidential election of Joseph R. Biden as the 46th president of the United States. We should not be surprised that in November 2019 she was “impressed” with some of Biden’s proposed plans regarding online harassment, a topic she discusses in the third chapter on internet free speech.¹⁵

Franks’ analysis of the legal debates on constitutional interpretation, gun violence, freedom of speech, and online sexual harassment culminates in a discussion of the shared hermeneutical framework. Franks argues that groups such as the NRA and the ACLU pursue only superficially different political agendas. At heart, they are part of the same “cult of the Constitution,” because they are constitutional fundamentalists sharing the same fundamentalist hermeneutics. In all three areas—the gun lobby of the NRA, the free speech lobby of the ACLU, and the convergence of both issues in the struggle over the “free” internet, the Constitution is always “selectively” and “self-servingly” read¹⁶ to accomplish what the Constitution was always meant to accomplish: “to subordinate” the “interests of women and racial minorities...to those of white, economically powerful men.”¹⁷ From the legal beginnings of the United States, “[w]hite men have used their unlimited speech privileges to threaten and to incite violence over any sign that the world is not perfectly shaped to their interests: the

13. *Ibid.*, 15.

14. *Ibid.*, 14.

15. *Ibid.*, 127-135, 189-193, 196-198. See also Samantha Cole, “Biden has a Plan to Tackle Online Harassment. What Does It Actually Say?” *Vice* (November 12, 2020). The article quotes Franks: “It is incredibly validating to see the incoming administration recognize how technology-facilitated abuse jeopardizes not only women’s physical safety, but also their rights to expression, privacy, education, professional achievement, and civic participation,” Franks said. “If the administration ensures that the people it enlists to carry out this ambitious plan have expertise in the intersection of civil rights, technology, and extremism, then there is very good reason to be optimistic that this plan could revolutionize women’s rights to expression, safety, and democratic participation.” Available here: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/epdnjp/biden-plan-to-end-violence-against-women-online-harassment-what-does-it-say?fbclid=IwAR21nvPX9ZnRv1-FF3meHFbjc0NC1Cg6yhuo5d4IUv5DQoYehoTmr5hecKw>

16. Franks, *The Cult*, 7, 18.

17. *Ibid.*, 49.

removal of Confederate statues, gun control, Starbucks cups, women's birth control, diversity training, black men kneeling, black men standing, a black man as president, a female candidate for president, a black woman giving witness."¹⁸ The problem of this scenario is simple; nobody else has space to join. Franks thus observes:

When white men's speech is given so much breathing room,
it leaves no air for anyone else.¹⁹

In light of the historical and systematic exclusion of everybody else not belonging to the white male elite class, Franks' proposal to solve the problem of the US constitutional dilemma surprises. Instead of abolishing the Constitution and the pervasive fundamentalist hermeneutics, she defends the Constitution. This defensive stance about the redeemability of the Constitution makes her position similar to the white liberal Bible scholar, Walter Brueggemann. Although Franks recognizes that some legal scholars view the Constitution as "fatally compromised"²⁰ due to its inherent male white supremacist assumptions, she asserts that the Constitution is not "fatally" flawed but "worth defending."²¹ Like a good ol' Bible scholar, she believes:

But the Constitution is worth defending. This is not because the document is divinely inspired, or because the founding fathers deserve our /uncritical veneration, or because a text written more than two hundred years ago by self-interested elites is the best possible authority on complex contemporary conflicts. Such fundamentalist beliefs are the enemy of equality, liberty, and ultimately the Constitution itself.

What makes the Constitution worth defending is precisely that it is neither divine, nor fixed, nor infallible. The greatest virtue of the Constitution is that it can be changed.²²

Franks defends the Constitution because the Constitution can

18. *Ibid.*, 157.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*, 200.

21. *Ibid.*, 201.

22. *Ibid.*, 201-202.

be changed by improving its meaning with a non-fundamentalist hermeneutics. Since we do not have to be fundamentalist, we do not have to read the Constitution like the founding fathers who were obviously flawed slaveholders.²³ Most importantly, our reading is better than theirs because we have the Fourteenth Amendment, “treat[ing] equality as a proposition to be demonstrated, not a reality to be assumed.”²⁴ Franks claims: “The command of equal protection is inherently anti-fundamentalist, as it necessitates the consideration of all rights and all people.”²⁵ Then she proclaims: “Because of the Fourteenth Amendment, one can only honor the Constitution by honoring equality.”²⁶

Said differently, Franks turns the Fourteenth Amendment into the hermeneutical key with which she reads the whole text. This move gives her a way out of past and present Constitutional fundamentalist readings. Since we have the Fourteenth Amendment, we can avoid what happened in the past when our “constitutional rights and resources have overwhelmingly been allocated to the interests of white men,” a legal situation that was neither “natural nor benevolent.”²⁷ Instead, as we center our Constitutional readings on the Fourteenth Amendment, Franks promises that we will be able to “focus on the groups who suffer the greatest deprivations of constitutional rights—devoting attention and resources to highlighting their experiences, advocating for their protection, and identifying hypocrisy and elitism in self-proclaimed civil libertarians.”²⁸ Hopeful as she is, Franks believes that a consistent focus on the Fourteenth Amendment will “reorient our constitutional orientation to those whose rights have been excluded, ignored, and subordinated.”²⁹ In due time, everybody will become free, as Lady Liberty has always promised. This classic liberal stance in the ultimate goodness of the established order makes Franks the legal version of the biblical scholar, Walter Brueggemann.

23. *Ibid.*, 202.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*, 203.

28. *Ibid.*, 204.

29. *Ibid.*

Two final comments: First, let us consider Franks' terminology, especially the two nouns of "cult" and "fundamentalism." She finds them absolutely negative, and I agree with her that fundamentalist people hold problematic, rigid, and dangerous views. In Franks' analysis, however, everybody turns into a fundamentalist and only her position, centering on the Fourteenth Amendment, offers a way out of the omnipresent fundamentalist legal US-American interpretation. Yet she never considers why there are so many fundamentalists in the United States or what is inherently "American" about fundamentalist legal discourse. A problem is that Franks' assessment reinforces a stereotypical way of talking about "religion." Her analysis disregards that every religion is a "cult," and the use of the noun "cult" is too simplistic and clichéd. The book turns the noun "cult" into a mantra and a one-dimensional polemical descriptor of what is wrong with US-American legal hermeneutics that Franks defines as fundamentalist. Thus, her explanations are often predictable, tedious, and tiring, disallowing complexity or nuance. Importantly, none of her examples consider international scenarios although they exist plentifully in today's world. For instance, how would she discuss the conflict between Twitter and the Indian authoritarian government of Modi,³⁰ a situation that cannot automatically be attributed to a white male elite in the United States?

Second, her solution to what she classifies as a fundamentalist hermeneutics that is applied to the US Constitution is also one-dimensional. Surprisingly, her classification stays within the framework of those whom she criticizes. After I read the Fourteenth Amendment, I wondered why she is so hopeful about this particular Amendment. Section 2 of the Fourteenth Amendment affirms the old problem of racial and gender exclusivity, stating: "Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, *excluding Indians* not taxed..." And then: "...the basic representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such *male* citizens shall bear to the whole number of *male* citizens twenty-

30. Shira Ovide, "Twitter vs. India," *New York Times* (February 11, 2021): <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/11/technology/twitter-vs-india.html?searchResultPosition=1>

one years of age in such State.”³¹ Where is the reprieve?

In conclusion, Franks examines only those legal arguments that pertain to gun laws or freedom of speech online and offline, as her book ignores other major Constitutional challenges, such as habeas-corpus rights of the still remaining detainees in Guantanamo Bay, data surveillance violations uncovered by Edward Snowden, the ongoing legal violations of Julian Assange (the founder of WikiLeaks in 2006), the pervasive problems of pornography and sex trafficking, or the international arms trade. Why does Franks limit her horizon to the US national legal realm? By uplifting the Fourteenth Amendment, she hopes to provide a hermeneutics that will eradicate the drift toward what she classifies as “fundamentalism,” certainly a laudable goal. Can this reinterpretation of the Constitution succeed even as it remains firmly established within the framework of the inherited legal tradition? After almost two years of the coronavirus pandemic, I must admit I truly hope so, although I have my doubts. As the so-called pandemic rages on after almost two years in the making, I am almost inclined to give her position a try. We got to stand somewhere, even if it is a liberal compromise, to work against what seems to be a quicksand move of—what Yanis Varoufakis classifies as—techno-feudalism.

31. Emphasis added. For the online text of Section 2 of the Fourteenth Amendment, see <https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/amendment-14/section-2/>.

What is a “Constitution”? Which Constitution?: Brief Framing Remarks

Jacqueline M. Hidalgo

My task at the ISS meeting in February 2021 was to behave as a moderator and framer for the first open discussion session. Here is the text of those brief opening remarks.

I appreciated Susanne Scholz’s summary of Franks and her comparison of Franks to Brueggemann, as a progressive interpreter or even an apologist for a scriptural tradition with histories of violence as well as liberative engagements. Both also suggest that if one chooses the right focus within the bounded textual canon, then one can redeem the rest, admittedly at times problematic, of the canon. So how is “constitution” akin to, a subset of, or related to “scripture”? As we consider the term “constitution” itself, as well as the guiding questions for this session: what is “it”? Whence is “it”? To what phenomena does the freighted shorthand refer? And to the specifics of this shared text, in what ways is Franks’ work itself not so much a meditation on the phenomenon but an instantiation of the phenomena?

When Vincent Wimbush invited me to offer some framing for our conversation, I thought it could not be hard to raise an example from January 6, 2021 or its aftermath for us to consider. In the myriad performances of constitutional devotion among the insurrectionists, the media portrayals, the arguments around impeachment and acquittal in recent weeks, there is much to examine that could draw our focus appropriately not to the words of the US Constitution itself, not to the problems of what it says or doesn’t say, but to the conflicting work that the very notion of Constitution has been made to do. To the extent that “constitution” is a subset of scriptures or an instantiation of it, we can query “constitution” not as a problem of verbal exegesis but as an issue of orientations and practices. Yet the term “constitution” cast in the light of Jan. 6, 2021 also begs an ironic set of questions: what has, in fact been constituted in and through this text and its devotions, and

what has been demolished?

Leaving behind the shadow of Jan. 6, 2021 for these opening remarks, I could have turned to Franks' book, to the questions that animate her argument, to the ways that she turns to the 14th Amendment and to her proposals for an anti-fundamentalist constitutionalism. Taking her as an instantiation of a phenomenon rather than a critic of it, what do her efforts at constitutional faith, placed in conversation with 1st and 2nd Amendment fundamentalists as she would call them, what do all of those practices tell us about the Constitution?

However, as I often feel compelled to do in the spaces I am in, I like to interrupt US exceptionalism, or really as I experience it, narcissism. I felt I should use my opening remarks as an opportunity to think about constitutional elsewheres and elsewhens. For fun last weekend, I perused the 202 constitutions housed on constituteproject.org, and I thought that site in and of itself could be a good fount for our conversation and consideration as well.

As I read Franks, I kept dwelling on that other constitution I know best, the 1949 Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica. For those of you who don't know, Costa Rica's last, brief civil war of 1948 ended in a new constitution, not the nation's first; there had been a few since the Spanish Constitution of Cádiz in 1812. But in partitioning out Costa Rica's national narrative of its own history, there is a first Costa Rican Republic that spans multiple constitutions in the 19th and early 20th centuries. But the second republic begins in 1949 with that last constitution.

Like other more modern constitutions, that document is considerably longer than the U.S. version, and both because of the legacy of U.S. imperialism as well as the ways that the U.S. constitution itself presents a prototype problem of "constitution" (both because of its timing relatively early within settler colonial revolutions in the Americas and because of U.S. hegemony in the American hemisphere), the 1949 constitution of the second republic cannot evade the shadow of the U.S. Constitution or the practices around it that Franks describes as well as represents. For instance, Title 1, Article 9 names the three distinct governmental powers as legislative, executive, and judicial.

Alternatively, fake news about Nicaraguan migrants flouting the Costa Rican constitution sparked nativist and xenophobic riots in 2018.¹

But when I think of Costa Rican constitutional devotion, I think of my visits to the national museum with my father, a museum with various exhibitions that elaborate the myths Costa Ricans like to tell themselves about their histories, from before European conquest to the present. Among those contemporary myths, of course, is a focus on the Costa Rican landscape itself as sacred. Thus, at the center of this museum is a butterfly garden.

It was only well into my adulthood when Sourena Parham, a distinctly anti-nationalist Iranian American, first visited Costa Rica with me that I came to see this butterfly garden as also a form of constitutional devotion. The site of the museum is no casual location; it sits across from the legislative assembly in a fortress that was built in 1917, and an observer can still see on its walls hundreds of bullet holes from 1948. It is now that I feel I should mention one of the parts of the Costa Rican constitution, Title I, Article 12 prohibits “The Army as a permanent institution” When my partner first entered the butterfly garden at the center of the former military installation turned national museum, he laughed at this particular signifying practice, at this performative representation of Title 1, Article 12 where a military center has been made over in the image of an idealized landscape.

It was only in his laughter that I was able to recognize this part of the museum as a piece of a broader phenomenon, as an official effort to make and remake a nation in a certain image. I never thought the Costa Rican constitution was particularly better than the U.S. Constitution, but I also never examined the forms of constitutional devotion with the same critical care I have been trained to employ in examining the U.S.A. While I certainly prefer the butterfly garden, that butterfly garden across from the Costa Rican legislative assembly, and the

1. Silvia Artavia, “Ola de noticias falsas antecedió agresiones xenófobas en San José,” *La Nación*, 18 August, 2018, <https://www.nacion.com/el-pais/politica/ola-de-noticias-falsas-antecedio-agresiones/KAC4GDBPIBG5XG5RQ4GACQGYA/story/>. For an English-language summary with fewer details about the “fake news” that preceded the riot, see Joshua Partlow, “They fled violence in Nicaragua by the thousands. What awaits them in Costa Rica?” *The Washington Post*, September 2, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the_americas/they-fled-violence-in-nicaragua-by-the-thousands-what-awaits-them-in-costa-rica/2018/09/01/51d3f7ee-a62c-11e8-ad6f-080770cdcdc2_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d25d321d35a5.

insurrection of those claiming devotion to the U.S. Constitution but carrying guns and storming the U.S. Capitol pose for me both clashing and parallel questions about what has been constituted in these claims of textual devotion.

I hope that this reflection might open up an array of questions to consider. U.S. insurrections on Jan 6 and the Costa Rican butterfly garden at the national museum are both examples of the dominant and empowered cultures within a particular geography enacting their constitutions. Many find Costa Rica's national museum butterfly garden and its sacralization of the landscape charming, but dominant cultural groups continue to violently dominate indigenous peoples, and the nation continues to perpetuate settler colonial genocide through inaction.² But, as Wimbush's opening address reminded us, what do we learn about these phenomena when we focus on the ways that minoritized communities have struggled with and around constitutions? Here I am thinking of the examples of Sojourner Truth and Amanda Gorman that Wimbush shared earlier, but also what of those traditions Robin Owens' work has pointed us toward, found for instance in the constitutional devotion of a Barbara Jordan?³ What of Eulalia Bernard or Shirley Campbell Barr's poetic significations on Costa Rican histories? What of indigenous communities and their ambivalent histories of constitutional engagements in both the USA and Costa Rica, of the ways that they turn to texts they do not trust in order to secure spaces for sovereignty? To what extent is it helpful to discuss these various constitutional engagements as related phenomena? What are the phenomena of Constitution and constituting that relates them? Or is the constitution a manifestation of another set of interlocking phenomena that both interrelate and distinguish Costa Rican and US devotions?

To return to the beginning, what is "it"? Whence? To what

2. For instance, last year, an Indigenous Bribri leader, Mainor Ortiz Delgado, was shot in the leg because of struggles to reclaim Bribri land. Nina Lakhani, "Costa Rica's indigenous leader shot amid tensions over land rights," *The Guardian*, 17 February, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/17/costa-rica-indigenous-leader-shot-land-rights>.

3. Owens' work on Sojourner Truth and Barbara Jordan's practices of scripturalization can be found in her dissertation but a revised and updated version is forthcoming from Georgetown University Press.

phenomena does constitution refer? And to reiterate Susanne Scholz's questions about fundamentalism and cult in Franks' text. Why does Franks discuss only those legal arguments about gun rights and free speech? What about habeas corpus or data privacy, etc.?

What Work Does It Do? What Are Some Implications and Ramifications of Its Work(ings)?

Carol J. Dempsey, OP

“What Work Does It Do?” and “What Are Some Implications and Ramifications of Its Work(ings)?” are two focus questions for Session III of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures annual meeting theme, “Constitution.” The “it” pertains to *The Cult of the Constitution* by Anne Franks, the United States Constitution document, and the “constitutions” being created now.

Franks’ book is multi-layered. First, it exposes the American text fetish. Texts like the Constitution and the interpretation of texts are often used to create, bolster, inform, and push power-driven agendas. The purpose is to gain, maintain, and assert power. Second, the book lays bare the reality of how people classify and categorize themselves or allow themselves to be classified or categorized in their quest for power and identity, i.e., they are liberal, conservative, or fundamentalist members of the NRA or the ACLU. Third, the book uncovers the struggle to gain power for the creation and sustenance of empire. Economics and money play a major role in creating, shaping, and maintaining the American empire and in upholding the power of this empire over other governments, people, and democracies. The new global empires are not countries but corporations. They are the current colonizers shaping the emerging age of techno-feudalism. Corporate money has the power to influence every aspect of life on the planet, and the corporate compliant attitude infiltrates our lives consciously and unconsciously. Fourth, the book underscores the struggle for identity, and it wrestles with the question of “authority.” Where does authority rest? In the United States’ Constitution? In our political, social, religious demigods? Or does authority rest in ourselves? Finally, the book brings to the fore Franks’ lack of careful and critical assessment of cultures and their ability to shape texts, interpret texts, and re-inscribe attitudes into the “constitutions” that people create.

In addition to a focus on *The Cult of the Constitution*, the “it” also pertains to the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions people create. What does the Constitution do? It allows people to create new constitutions and to approach those constitutions with the same mindset used to read and interpret the Constitution. What comes to mind is science in the era of the present global pandemic. Science is people’s new “constitution,” to be followed to the letter. Currently, science is the new “law of the land.” One medical expert’s reading and interpretation of data becomes authoritative, accepted unequivocally by the masses. Interpretations by other experts outside of the United States are excluded, censored, erased. Other kinds of knowledge, diverse perspectives, and different systems of medicine and its practice are suppressed. Money from private foundations—the Gates Foundation and other corporations, i.e., Verizon, Microsoft, Google, or Amazon that do not want a health care reform for the US population—is pumped into big pharmaceutical corporations that produce drug after drug for any ailment conceivable. The use of drugs breaks down the natural immune system and keeps people dependent on drugs, which in turn, keeps the market flowing as people become sicker and sicker. Reforming health care entails addressing the cost and use of drugs, a major source of profit for our post-capitalist society and economy. Science has become a new “religion,” adhered to legalistically and juridically, as people are indoctrinated, colonized, and co-opted into believing that governments and corporations have their best interest in mind.

Thus, the “it” is Franks’ book, the Constitution and its interpretations, and the constitutions that people create. The texts people generate and to which they give authority and credence, whether those texts are the Bible, a Constitution, or a medical research report, all have the potential to colonize, control, and ultimately, stifle one’s agency and ability to think broadly, deeply, critically, inclusively, and imaginatively. Being able to interrogate the world without facing sanction, denial, and other discriminatory repercussions is a hallmark of freedom and inner agency. Those unable to claim and exercise their freedom and agency, to stand in their own truth, indicates a need

for external certainty to quell one's own inner fears in the midst of corporations questing for power and gold. Such is the work that "it" does and the implications and ramifications of its work(ings).

Scripturalizing Here and There

ISS's collaborative project, "Scripturalizing Here and There" facilitates social-cultural analysis of scriptural social psychologies and politics. As an ongoing project, reports will be compiled and published on ISS platforms. For more information on the project and how you can submit your report, visit <http://www.signifyingscriptures.org/research/scripturalizing-here-and-there/>

In this third volume of project reporting submitted in 2021, the three essays below isolate, describe, and analyze a wide range of representations, practices and politics of the scriptural. Each analysis provides critical commentary as window onto human play with discourse and meaning.

Continental Formation

Katie Van Heest

At the fifth annual meeting of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures (2021), I pointed colleagues to a fascinating interactive initiative published by the *New York Times*, and one installment in particular. Art critic Jason Farago’s piece “The Myth of North America in One Painting” is one of several (mostly Farago-authored) dynamic essays in the Close Read digital series. It’s a virtual tour through carefully chosen elements of the painting *The Death of General Wolfe* (1770) by Benjamin West, which depicts the titular casualty during the Battle of Quebec about a decade earlier.¹



The Death of General Wolfe²

With armies warring behind, the dying British general reposes in the foreground, attended to by a cast of a dozen or so characters: a

1. Jason Farago, “The Myth of North America, in One Painting,” *New York Times*, November 25, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/25/arts/benjamin-west-general-wolfe.html>.
2. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Benjamin_West_005.jpg

physician, several officers, and an indigenous warrior, a settler relaying the news of the Marquis de Montcalm's defeat. The array recalls Lamentation artworks in which attendants like Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathea mourn and caress the crucified Jesus, preparing him for his burial and—not long after, the story goes—his ascension. Christ is being anointed; in a sense, so is the fallen general.

In the “briefest contact” between General Wolfe's boot and the Indian's hand alongside it,³ Farago flashes on “another creation story,” that of a continent composed through encounter and encroachment. Here is where I find the *New York Times's* interpretation so delicious from a signifying-on-scriptures perspective. West's oil work bends its own genre. So-called history paintings had been popular for centuries before the Seven Years' War, but they had been predominantly biblical, or mythological, in content. The great examples condense legendary scenes into single images, highly intricate and symbolic in their detail. They make story into history and, this instance suggests, history into story.

And it's an immeasurable chain of significations. Vaunted by artistic idiom and religious iconography, Wolfe transformed into a British national hero and icon. Representations of his death became a craze, of which West's was the most famous and mimicked instance.⁴ With *The Death of General Wolfe* its own phenomenon, “West himself created four copies” of the piece.⁵ Two hundred years after, Ashinabe⁶ Saulteaux First Nations artist Robert Houle created his own version, redrawing West's composition in sepia crayon, leaving only the focal

3. Often classified as a Mohawk warrior, potentially even a likeness of the famous leader Joseph Brant (thanks to Tamara Siuda for raising this). See Julia Sienkewicz, “Beyond the Mohawk Warrior: Reinterpreting Benjamin West's Evocations of American Indians” 19: *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* 9 (2019), doi: <https://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.515>; and on Brant portraiture, Elizabeth Hutchinson, “‘The Dress of His Nation’: Romney's Portrait of Joseph Brant,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 45, no. 2/3 (2011): 209–28; she calls the person in West's painting “the Native figure” (215). Noting that West “collected artifacts of Northern Woodlands peoples,” Vivien Green Fryd suggests he is meant, more broadly, to be Iroquois; see “Rereading the Indian in Benjamin West's ‘Death of General Wolfe,’” *American Art* 9, no. 1 (1995): 72–85, at 74. The figure is also sometimes considered Delaware/Lenape—for example, by the contemporary artist Robert Houle: Shirley Madill, *Robert Houle: Life and Work* (Toronto: Art Canada Institute, 2018).

4. Irén Annus, “The Deaths of General Wolfe,” *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 13, no. 1/2 (2007): 105–19.

5. Stephanie Pratt, *American Indians in British Art, 1700–1840* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 71; her chapter on West spans pp. 70–90.

6. Artist's preferred spelling; Madill, *Robert Houle*, 84–89 passim.

indigenous warrior with any color: red and blue in his regalia, painted in acrylics. On either side of the dulled tableau are large panels—one red and one blue to represent the ongoing British and French framing of history.⁷ All told, the canvas installation titled *Kanata* is twenty-four-foot wide and incalculable stories deep.

To get the big picture, we fathom, we gauge, we chart and map. Amid and just after the Seven Years' War, the practice of land surveying incidentally made great technical strides.⁸ The only official national geographer in US American history, Thomas Hutchins, got his professional start as a junior officer in the British Army during the French and Indian War. Extending the military's rectangular system of spatial management,⁹ he began venturing westward, mapping far beyond army posts and setting in place the square parceling system by which a young nation could sell off land and settle a continent. And immediately after the war, from 1764 to 1768, a consequential dividing line had been demarcated by two astronomer-surveyors, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon.¹⁰

All of this was accomplished by the rather ancient method of chaining.¹¹ Though technologically outmoded now, the process is familiar: metal chains with links of standardized length are laid between two corners of a plot to arrive at a measurement. Conversely, a new corner can be established by ranging: laying a chain of a determined distance from an already-established point. Acts of Congress in 1785 and 1796 enshrined chaining as the official method of apportioning land. "A chain of two perches" (thirty-three feet) was made so that it could serve as a national standard.¹² With the chaining come the errors. Errors that add up because they go

7. Michael Bell, "Making an Excursion," in *Kanata: Robert Houle's Histories*, ed. Madge Pon (Ottawa: Carleton University Art Gallery, 1993), 19, cited in Madill, *Robert Houle*, 34.

8. See the chapter "Commanding Space after the Seven Years' War" in S. Max Edelson, *The New Map of Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 65–102.

9. Lola Cazier, *Surveys and Surveyors of the Public Domain, 1785–1975* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1978), 19. https://www.ntc.blm.gov/krc/uploads/538/Sur_Sur_Pub_Dom.pdf.

10. Cazier, *Surveys and Surveyors*, 12.

11. The surveyor's metal chain was invented in the early seventeenth century (Gunter's chain) and replaced an older, less stable material: the knotted cord.

12. C. Albert White, *A History of the Rectangular Survey System* (1983; Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 1991), 217. <https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/histrect.pdf> (PDF version).

in the same direction are cumulative; errors that cancel each other out are considered compensatory. In land surveying, the errors are presumably all mistakes; in culture, cumulative and compensatory errors can be unintentional, but they can also be deliberate, or at least psychosocially revealing.

A work so prismatically distorting as *The Death of General Wolfe* may have in one sense begun as part of a realist turn. Given a genre of iconographic painting paradoxically called historical, the recent subject matter can be seen as a *compensatory* choice—bold, for certain. But we can't overlook the piece's inherent mythmaking aspirations: it took on an almost mimetic life of its own, snowballing and replicating its own mismeasurements. That we could classify as *cumulative* cultural sequence, exacerbating the tendentiousness of West's depiction. Later, Houle's *Kanata* exposes the accumulation; whether it becomes its own compensatory or cumulative step is worth pondering. It seems to trouble the nation-making and continent-mythologizing of the 1770 work, but it does also signify on *Wolfe's* significations.

And this, to me, is the ponderous assignment that ISS undertakes: to notice how culture chains, with its cumulative and compensatory lurching this way and that, and to wonder how that shapes and misshapes us as social beings who have our own chaining, signifying tendencies. Jason Farago calls West's indigenous warrior "a most dramatic witness"; I read too that Robert Houle recalls his grandfather saying *Jiishin gegoo wiiseg maa akiing, Nishnaabe waabdaan* ("If history is going to happen, our people will witness it").¹³ Though we may not ourselves be those most dramatic witnesses, our best work honors them and their reckoning of the terrain.

13. Bell, "Making an Excursion," in *Kanata: Robert Houle's Histories*, ed. Madge Pon (Ottawa: Carleton University Art Gallery, 1993), 19, cited in Madill, *Robert Houle*, 34.

On Scripturalization: The Cases of Guatemala and Mestizaje

Néstor Medina

There are two instances that I wish to mention. One is from my birth country of Guatemala and the other is from Latina/o/x communities.

The first one corresponds with how the militarized regime, that took over the country in 1982 as a result of a coup d'état, effectively became inscribed in the general population as the hand of God in action. The people interpreted God at work through the actions of Efraín Ríos Montt. Allow me to elaborate.

In March 1982, Guatemala woke up to the shock of a military coup which government lasted barely seventeen months. During that short time, General Efraín Ríos Montt rose to prominence as the head of state that was divinely chosen to bring peace to Guatemala. A couple of things contributed. On one hand, was his new conversion to the newly arrived Misión El Verbo, an Evangelical/ Pentecostal group of churches headquartered in California. For those who shared the same “Evangelical/Pentecostal” outlook, his assumption to power was understood as God finally giving a final push to the evangelistic efforts in the country. For many of these people, how he had arrived to power was either inconsequential or a necessary evil echoing some of the narratives in the Old Testament. As I heard it preached, “it is God who puts and takes away heads of government.” On the other hand, was foreign support. His strong commitment (read “calling”) for the eradication of communism from the country made him look like a champion of “Democracy,” both to the local oligarchies and Evangelicals, and to foreign nations and interests.

The USA has meddled with Guatemalan affairs for decades and supported dictatorial regimes. It is no surprise that Ronald Reagan, President of the USA at the time, admired Ríos Montt’s “resolve” and excused away his long sheet of human rights violations.¹ And

1. Stephen Kinzer, “Efraín Ríos Montt, Guatemalan Dictator Convicted of Genocide, Dies at 91,” *The New York Times*, 2 April 2018, D. 11, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/01/obituaries/efrain-rios-montt-guatemala-dead.html> (accessed July 29, 2021).

Evangelical preacher Pat Robertson invited him to the 700-club show and lauded him as the saviour of the Guatemalan people.² Luis Palau and Jerry Falwell saw him as someone upon whom the hand of God rested.³ Called “Ayatollah Rios Montt,” “Dios Montt,” or understood as someone with a Messiah Complex,⁴ Rios Montt became the embodiment of the “word of God.” His tenure as president was thus scripturalized. The unique social and political conditions of national civil war contributed both to support his claim that God revealed to him “his” plan for the nation, as well as the belief that when the military troops went out to stamp out “communism” they were carrying out God’s word.

This instance cannot be easily dismissed as pointing to a basic intermixing of politics and religion. The ways in which his behaviour was interpreted as “divine will” or as that which came from a “higher power”, is what created the conditions for many—even international overseers—to suspend condemnation as masses of Indigenous peoples were being killed. I remember how every Sunday evening he would deliver his “presidential speech”, and how these included a mixture of “traditional family values” along with praises of military advances against “communist” forces, and how God had revealed the places where those pockets of insurrectionists were hiding.

Whether he had the good intention to reform the country, or whether he in fact believed that God was involved in the process, after his overthrow by another military coup, Guatemala became aware of how the revelations and struggles against communism operated as a pretext for a more insidious reality and agenda of genocide against the Indigenous peoples of Guatemala. In these and other ways, the regime of Rios Montt was scripturalized in Guatemala.

The second example I want to mention is a little bit older. While in Canada the story and emergence of the Métis is a well-documented

2. . Virginia Garrard-Burnett, *Terror in the Land of the Holy Spirit: Guatemala Under General Efraín Ríos Montt 1982–1983*, Religion and Global Politics (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011).

3. . Deann Alford, “The Truth is Somewhere: Legacy of Guatemala’s Evangelical Dictator Remains Unsettled,” *Christianity Today* 50, no. 9 (1 September 2006): 21, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2006/september/5.21.html> (accessed July 29, 2021).

4. . Anthony Armendariz, “The Regime of Religious Dictator, José Efraín Ríos Montt, 1983–1983: A Phenomenon of Expediency,” *UCLA Historical Journal* 7 (1986): 29–59.

fact, and in the USA intermixture or miscegenation was prohibited, the story of how intermixture took place in Latin America (Central and South America and the Spanish speaking Caribbean) is a good example of scripturalization of (European) whiteness.

During my long years studying *mestizaje*, I have learned that most people begin to talk about *mestizaje* either at its inception when the first mixed children of the Spanish (Portuguese) and Indigenous peoples were born, at the beginning of the 16th century, or after when *mestizaje* had gained currency as part of the ethos of colonial societies, around the end of the 18th century. The gap between these two dates and subsequent developments post-independence at the end of the first quarter of the 19th century does not always make it into conversations on *mestizaje*.

As mixed children began to emerge, they were rejected by the Catholic religious institutions, and by their parental groups (Indigenous and European). The dynamics of this rejection is really telling of how whiteness begins to be scripturalized for each of these groups. Mixed children were rejected by the Catholic establishment because they were considered to have been conceived out of wedlock. The Spanish rejected them because they were “contaminated” with Indigenous blood. And many Indigenous peoples rejected them because they were the embodied reminder of the conquest, raping of Indigenous women, and despoliation of their customs, cultural and religious practices, and freedom. Already at its inception, we can see that *mestizos/as* occupied a liminal space. In great part, this happened because a hierarchization of groups was undergoing.

This hierarchization was becoming heavily racialized and whiteness was beginning to be valued or presented as more valuable within the structures of this emerging colonial structuring of the population. As the Indigenous and the Europeans mixed with blacks (both *ladinos* and slaves), *Mulattos* were added to the hierarchy of European, *mestizos/as*, *mulattoes*, Indigenous, and African descendant. Legislation was created whereby groups of more than three blacks or *mestizos* were prohibited to meet in public spaces; and *mestizos*, *mulattoes* and blacks were prohibited from entering the “*reducciones*” (reserves) where the

Indigenous were supposed to live and be indoctrinated. An entire legal apparatus emerged whereby clear boundaries were created between those who could aspire to specific professions: university professor, teacher, lawyer, physician, notary, soldier, etc. The colonial structures privileged white Europeans with the highest and most dignified positions such as public servant and priests. All others were distributed according to their racialized stock. As a result, many sought to climb the social ladder by intermixing further with whites in order to enjoy the privileges reserved for whites.

But as people mixed further (European white, Mulatto, Mestizo/a, Indigenous, and African), a new stock of mixed children emerged, which provoked the creation of new language to speak about these mixtures. As these mixed children further mixed with other people, an entire range of “castas” emerged, up to 120, which measured up to the 32 percentile of people’s blood content relative to their ancestral lines (European white, Indigenous, or African). A careful examination of the castes’ labels used reveals that zoology was an important referential frame. Castes ensured the social stratification of groups. They operated as mechanisms of population control along with the legislative apparatus. And most importantly for me, they corresponded with the colonial value system that upheld European whiteness as the group to aspire to become.

The possibility of becoming white is crucial here. Whiteness was not viewed as a fixed reality. One could become white. 1) Many a times, those who *passed* as white were able to enjoy the benefits that came with it, but at the cost of cutting all ties with their other ancestral line (African or Indigenous). 2) The caste system made it possible for becoming white. The more one mixed with European whites the whiter one became, until one was able to finally eradicate any residual Indigenous or black blood. 3) One could become white washed because of wealth. And 4) one could follow the legislative mechanisms in place and appeal to the crown and the church to exempt them from the stain of African blood.⁵

5. Ann Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness: Pardos, Mulattos, and the Quest for Social Mobility in the Spanish Indies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015).

As I have stated elsewhere, mestizaje is a mechanism for whitening the population. Looking at it from the perspective of scripturalization, I can also say that it operates around colonial ideas of the desirability of whiteness. Many mestizos/as and mulattos/as opted for imitation even at the risk of denying their own identity. Noticing how Spanish were always taught to come out of church sanctioned marriages, and how Europeans were the ones who could aspire to being official servants and priests, it seems that there was also an operative “moral” code at work in the way these groups were organized hierarchically, which helped inscribe whiteness at the level of being divinely endorsed and mestizaje as the surest way to get Latin America there.

1619 vs. 1776: Dueling Scriptures

Rosamond Rodman

Who, What, When, Where?

Conceived by journalist and professor Nikole Hannah-Jones, “The 1619 Project” is a long-form, multi-authored, journalistic initiative published by The New York Times Magazine on the 400th anniversary of the first Africans in servitude who were brought to Jamestown, Virginia (August 20, 1619).



Figure 1: "1776 Commission Takes Historic and Scholarly Step to Restore Understanding of the Greatness of the American Founding."¹

The issue aimed “to reframe the country’s history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of our national narrative.”² Copies of the newspaper

1. <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/1776-commission-takes-historic-scholarly-step-restore-understanding-greatness-american-founding/>

2. The 1619 Project, *The New York Times Magazine*, August 14, 2019.

quickly sold out, and many embraced the edition with great enthusiasm. Podcasts and curricula inspired by the project soon emerged. For having spearheaded the issue, Hannah-Jones was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for Commentary. A book project is soon to be published.

Genealogy/evolution Whence?

Not all reactions were so warm. Then-President Trump decried “The 1619 Project” as a “twisted web of lies” spread by radicals that “America is a wicked and racist nation.” He established, by executive order, an advisory committee charged with developing a counter report and corresponding “pro-American curriculum that celebrates the truth about our nation’s great history.”³ Republicans aligned with Trump jumped on the bandwagon. Arkansas senator Tom Cotton introduced the Saving American History Act of 2020⁴ that would defund school districts that used the New York Times’ “1619 Project;” federal agencies were instructed to provide grants and initiatives in a way that prioritized those supporting “the American Founding.” Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona urging him to refrain from advocating for the use of “The 1619 Project” in curricula, writing that school “programs should emphasize the shared civic virtues that bring us together, not push radical agendas that tear us apart.”⁵

The 18-member 1776 Commission produced “The 1776 Report” less than a month after convening and two days before the end of Trump’s term. Widely criticized, the American Historical Association issued a statement calling it “a simplistic interpretation that relies on falsehoods, inaccuracies, omissions, and misleading statements.” (The statement was signed by 47 other academic guild societies).⁶ Many

3. Juan Perez Jr. and Nicole Gaudiano, “Trump blasts 1619 Project,” *Politico* 9/17/2020

4. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/4292/text>

5. CNN, “McConnell Letter to the Education Department,” Fri. April 30, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/30/politics/mitch-mcconnell-miguel-cardona-letter/index.html>

6. AHA Condemns Report of Advisory Commission Jan. 2021. <https://www.historians.org/news-and-advocacy/aha-advocacy/aha-statement-condemning-report-of-advisory-1776-commission-january-2021>.

noted that the commission did not include any professional historians of the U.S.

But more than a few professional historians of the U.S. were critical of the “The 1619 Project” too. A handful of distinguished and chaired historians wrote to The New York Times accusing “The 1619 Project” of “displacement of historical understanding by ideology” and disputing several “facts.” Especially problematic for them was the claim that one major reason American colonists sought their independence from Britain in order to protect the investments in human slavery. Other facts were also disputed. The signatories called for retractions and corrections and demanded that The New York Times Magazine “reveal fully the process whereby the historical materials were...assembled, checked, and authenticated.” The editor wrote a detailed response defending the issue and declining to make corrections or retractions.⁷

The historians were not the only professionals to object. Other professors for other reasons contested claims and statements made in the piece, even as they expressed their solidarity with and commitment to the aims of the project. The World Socialist Web Site published interviews with scholars in an effort to extend their criticism that the project ignored very real economic, class, and political circumstances and resulted in a dangerous cynicism. Still others registered that whatever the disagreements were, they were less about any clear “facts” and more about ways of reading and framing them, something that historians routinely debate.⁸

Analysis: Performance, power, consequences

Assuming that scriptures are the processes by which authority coheres and is wielded, the modes of production and protection of authorized language, then the publication of and reactions to “The 1619 Project,” bears notice. One set of reactions, from politicians

7. The original letter signed by five historians and the response by editor Jake Silverstein are here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/20/magazine/we-respond-to-the-historians-who-critiqued-the-1619-project.html>

8. Alex Lichtenstein, “1619 and All That,” *American Historical Review*; Adam Sewer, “The Fight Over the 1619 Project is Not About the Facts,” *The Atlantic*, Dec. 23, 2019).

who regarded the magazine and its curricular spin-offs as potentially weakening patriotic orientation, can be characterized as defensive gestures of recrudescence and solidifying 1776 cipher. A moat against the encroaching challenge of 1619, 1776 signified patriotism and unity over-against divisive and radical reconstructions. It hardly mattered that the 1776 Commission lacked academic bona fides; indeed, that was a seeming point of pride. The “American founding” of 1776 was sui generis and as such unifying. The other set of reactions, the flurry around the matter of “respect for the basic facts” and, apparently, those who command them, focused upon the nature and production of the facts or knowledge.⁹ Exemplary of this concern was the complaint about the “closed process,” an unusual demand from academics who routinely cloak tenure, publication, and evaluation in just such terms.

A binocular view of both sets of reactions brings rather immediately to mind Michel Foucault’s lesson that knowledge and power cannot be separated. The facts, what will and will not count as truth, come about in tandem with the relations and hierarchies of power. “The 1619 Project” may be regarded as exemplary of the politics of truth (itself a nutshell definition of scriptures). The study of the phenomena of scriptures requires focus on the arrogations (often to be found in the first person-plural language of us and our) that all parties make about moments of founding and origins, whether regarding the original sin of 1619 or the promised perfection of 1776; and about claims of and grounds for establishing facts/knowledge and the correct determination of such. In doing so, one catches a glimpse of scripturalizing and the self-making it illuminates by subjects both “crafted and crafting” within “forms that are already more or less in operation and underway.” The permissible and impermissible, seemingly opposite, both lie within a delimited scope of reference.

9. Sean Wilentz, “A Matter of Facts,” *The Atlantic*, Jan 22, 2020.

Special Essay

High Noon: Carl Jung, the Inner Divinity, and Armageddon

Jim Siegel

ABSTRACT: Properly understood, the work of the medical psychologist Carl Jung (1875–1961) provides an original way to understand human existence that is based on empirical evidence—the symbols generated naturally and spontaneously by the psyche that appear nightly in dreams and are memorialized in myth, religious literature, and alchemical writings. Jung’s psychological orientation offers the possibility of connecting with a deity that is alive in one’s life as one pursues the growth process called individuation that has an innate goal of wholeness of personality. In his view, the evolution of the God-image in the West—from the Great Goddess to polytheism to Yahweh to Jesus Christ and the Trinity results from the projection of the inner divinity—a higher power that is possibly an agent or scintilla of the Creator. Given that Christianity is likely dying and God is dead for many in our materialistic society, Individuation is arguably the next stage of the Judeo-Christian tradition (and Jung’s ideas have many parallels with Eastern traditions, suggesting the possibility of a global world-view). His psychological explanations of the Book of Job and the Book of Revelation indicate that civilization has entered a critical period—beyond the clear-cut threat of global warming—that will result in some sort of Armageddon, the precondition for a

resurrection.

"I'm not a prophet, but I have a perception, in broad outlines, of what I expect to happen. It's obvious to any thoughtful person that Western society is hurtling toward some terrible catastrophe. That's obvious. That means we're going to be exposed to massive suffering, something along the order of what went on 2,000 years ago with the disintegration of the Roman Empire—when the established social structures broke down and chaos intervened. Something like that's going to happen. And, in such a case, there will be reversions to more primitive modes of behavior, there will be a regressive movement backward. There will be a regression to tribalisms of all kinds, I'm sure, to primitive structures, more localized structures. There will be a regression to concrete and fundamentalist religions of various kinds. And I hope that the collective suffering on such a vast scale will force reflective individuals—what Toynbee calls the 'creative minority'—to look around desperately for some kind of understanding of what's happening to them.... They might pick up *Answer to Job* and read Jung really attentively and realize that what's being experienced collectively on such a vast scale is a 'Job experience' of humanity. That's what's in store for us, because we've lost our previous religious moorings. And the only way to a new religious connection, I think, is through the 'Dark Valley.'

Jung's *Answer to Job* spells it all out. It tells us what the 'Job experience' means. And when humanity on a sizeable collective scale has had the Job experience, if they can locate *Answer to Job* at that point and study it diligently, it will give them their bearings. They will know the meaning of what they are experiencing—and that will make the suffering bearable. Because they'll realize that there's a purpose in it, and that the purpose is the 'transformation of God,' the emergence of a new God-image and the possibility... of a genuine unification of both the individual and the world."¹

1. Edinger and Jaffe, "Edward F. Edinger in Conversation with Lawrence W. Jaffe," *An American Jungian: In Honor of Edward F. Edinger* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 2009), 73–75. Edward F. Edinger (1922–1998) was the most prominent American Jungian analyst and author from

Wildly misunderstood, the psychologist Carl Jung's work needs to be plumbed if the divine as a patent and potent guiding force is to be reestablished. Jungian thought is more than a psychological approach; it's a different way to understand human existence. Jung has produced a new world-view, a fitter system of belief with deep roots in the past. Christianity has dominated in the West for fifteen hundred years but its influence is on the wane, a trend that is probably irreversible. Jung provides a psychological explanation for the major events in Jesus Christ's life and points the way forward. Edward F. Edinger, one of Jung's most astute explicators, expresses Jung's epic and epochal achievement this way: "He has penetrated to the root source of all religion and culture and thus has discovered the basis for a new organic syncretism of human knowledge and experience. The new viewpoint thus achieved is so comprehensive and all-embracing that, once grasped, it cannot fail to have revolutionary consequences for man's view of himself and the world."² As Jung's opus has not yet been grasped, this essay attempts to render a chunk of it more transparent.

Note: The material in this essay does not directly discuss issues of racial and ethnic identity, including Black Lives Matter, which is deservedly front and center on America's agenda. The atrocities perpetrated by white Americans against African Americans and Native Americans over hundreds of years have to be fully identified, comprehended, and atoned for with financial reparations along with, I believe, a joint apology by the three branches of our government as a proxy for those who were guilty in the past; those who are guilty in the present, including many of the well-intentioned; and those who will continue to transgress. Our country's dark shadow has to be brought fully to light before it can dissipate, an approach based on a Jungian principle. The collective unconscious that he identified has a racial

the 1950s to the time of his death, and deserves to be recognized as one of the very finest thinkers America has produced. Edinger was an MD, like Jung himself, which makes his broad scholarship all the more remarkable. Jung's foremost exegete concerning the relationship between psychology and religion, he extended and deepened, as well as explained and clarified, this and other material. His twenty-five or so cogent and clear-eyed books, many of them published lecture series, reveal an impressive knowledge of psychology, philosophy, myth and religion, and all forms of literature. What sets him apart from other interdisciplinary scholars is his keen comprehension of the psyche. He calls for the new subdisciplines of archetypal history and archetypal sociology.

2. Edward F. Edinger, *Ego and Archetype: Individuation and the Religious Function of the Psyche* (New York: Penguin, 1973), xiii.

stratum but predicates that what everyone everywhere has in common far exceeds all apparent differences. Civilization is inexorably headed, if global warming does not decimate us, to a realization in the long-term that one is first and foremost an individual *and* a citizen of the world. This seeming inevitability is how the affliction of nationalism will be transcended. Differences of all kinds will *eventually* be relished as our commonality is celebrated. I'm aware that innumerable financially insecure people around the world do not have the opportunity to zero in on individuation. Acceptance of Jung's finding that the inherent goal and purpose of our lives is attaining wholeness of personality, not maximizing one's financial net worth, could result in a renovation of capitalism that's far more equitable to the less fortunate.

1

Jung's ideas are based primarily on an interpretation of the symbols found in myths, dreams, religious writings, and alchemical literature. These symbols spring spontaneously from the unconscious—the ego does not influence them. Products of nature, they are on a par with rocks and trees as empirical objects. Symbols convey meaning by definition; this is one way nature communicates with us. Specifically, symbols reveal information about the psyche—that is their purpose. In so doing, they address the meaning of human existence, illuminating the human condition and prospect. As interpreted by Jung along with Edinger in particular, the symbols reveal an ongoing divine drama in the West, taking place over millennia, reflecting the *evolution* of the god-image from goddesses to polytheism to the monotheism of the Jewish people to the monotheism available to everyone in the form of Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity, with or without the reforms by Protestantism. After two thousand years, we're reaching the next stage of this astonishing and all-important unfolding. In my opinion, Jung and Edinger state their case with an internal coherence and an explanatory power that are difficult to brush aside. Besides being logical, I find Jung's conclusions are elegant, powerful, resonant, and uplifting—they strike a chord. Since "truth" is such a contested concept, one could focus

on the measure of their “utility” and “validity” for one’s life. Another quality they carry for me is “numinosity,” which long characterized biblical writings.

Naturally occurring symbols reveal the structure, dynamics, and condition of the psyche, which Jung defines as consciousness and the unconscious together with the body as their foundation. The body is included in the definition of the psyche because (1) the psyche would be suspended in space without it, (2) emotions are body-based but also register psychically, and (3) the same is true of our primal, instinctive drives. The psyche is encoded in the brain, at least for the most part, but it can be discussed self-referentially. Symbols are facts that have to be interpreted but, epistemologically, that’s true of everything. Every dream interpretation is a hypothesis, an attempt to read an unfamiliar text, whose merit is proved by its value for the life of the individual dreamer and sometimes for the collective at large. The methodology of science in its full panoply need not apply to every aspect of human life. To impose that stricture as the sole criterion for rigorous scrutiny eliminates from serious consideration most of what’s signal and salient about being human. The significance of the inner life and the inner world, as it is experienced every waking moment, and during dreams each night, has been denigrated by the one-sided tyranny of scientific materialism. Jung stresses the “reality of the psyche”³ and its existential importance. He believed there are psychic laws as well as physical laws. Though symbols can not be measured, he believed they transmit data that is essential and convincing.

Considering the richness and proximity of dreams, the historical ubiquity of symbol systems, and the extent and magnitude of what symbols can ostensibly reveal, it is remarkable they are still substantially disregarded. The assumption that dreams are merely a mild form of insanity, a prank of the mind, or the day’s mental detritus is outlandish. The proponents of those opinions don’t have experience with dream analysis, are not qualified to perform that undertaking, and don’t have the intellectual apparatus necessary to interpret

3. Carl G. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, vol. 14 of *Carl G. Jung The Collected Works (CW)*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, ed. H. Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, Wm. McGuire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953–1979), par. 630.

myths and the mythological elements found in religious writings, including scripture. Mythologists in academia are knowledgeable but don't interpret dreams as part of their work and tend not to have a psychological perspective. Myths are in effect the archetypal dreams of a people. To dismiss the importance of symbols seems contrary to the spirit of intellectual inquiry: the scientific enterprise has seen untold numbers of investigators laboring over hundreds of years to achieve an understanding of the physical world that remains partial and still contains puzzlements. The ego—the sense of being an “I”—surveils the inner and outer worlds but is the center of consciousness; it's an inner phenomenon without which we would not be human. The inner world and its relation to the outer world deserve far more scrutiny than they have received.

Jung accepted Freud's concept of a personal unconscious that includes contents repressed by the ego because they are too painful or distressing to retain in consciousness. Jung called clusters of such unconscious contents “complexes” and described their characteristics. He constructed his notion of a collective unconscious after realizing that the dreams and visions he analyzed—his own and those of his patients—along with the myths he studied cross-culturally contained similar or identical motifs but arose spontaneously without outside influence. The motifs may be portrayed with images that differ from culture to culture but their meaning is similar. Jung also recognized that the Hebrew Bible and New Testament are brimming with mythological motifs and that alchemical literature represents the naïve projection onto matter of psychic contents. Derided as a mystic, Jung's reply is that the unconscious produces psychic contents that are mysterious; he just tries to understand what they mean. Data from the collective unconscious is objective, providing an Archimedean point from which to understand the psyche. The personal unconscious contains contents (including memories) that have passed through consciousness but the realm of the collective unconscious is fully transpersonal; it represents a psychological legacy distilled from millions of years of evolution, including our animal background. The existence of the collective unconscious tells us that, at bottom, what we all have in common far

exceeds our differences. Jung illustrates this point with an analogy: our physiognomies have ethnic and even familial differences but everyone has two eyes, a nose, and a mouth that function identically.

Jung hypothesized that the collective unconscious contains “archetypes,” which are most easily understood as spiritual instincts at work in the psyche. He’s using the word “spiritual” in this context as a counterpoint to the physiological. An extensive spiritual dimension exists within us that’s not accounted for by Darwin and Wallace. Though irrepresentable in and of themselves, the archetypes inform *patterns* of behavior, ideation, and imagery associated with our spiritual (psychological) growth and development. Dreams issuing from the unconscious compensate the condition of consciousness, providing the knowledge needed to bring about balanced growth toward equilibrium and wholeness. The psyche is not an epiphenomenon of the brain—the steam rising from a bowl of spaghetti (in Jung’s sardonic phrase). The activity appearing on brain scans can’t register the meaning or specificity of ideas or images or differentiate among the emotions that may be displayed. The purview of brain science is limited and yet it’s clear that nearly all of the ills of the world are due to what goes on in peoples’ heads. Scans and medicines are immensely valuable but they can’t address in a comprehensible way the psychic side of the mind/body equation, especially if the mind is defined, as it should be, to include the unconscious, which is as important as consciousness.

2

From his interpretation of symbols, Jung identified the existence of an overarching multi-phased psychological growth process he called individuation, the innate goal of which is *wholeness of personality*. There is a psychological growth process as well as a physical one. Each of us is well aware, upon looking back, that we’ve grown psychologically, but Jung is the only one who, because the symbols represent the psyche commenting on itself, has documented the existence of the individuation process and its principal elements. The archetypes inform the individuation process, providing a blueprint that’s been difficult to

detect and easy to stray from. Negotiating the individuation process is the inherent and apparent purpose of one's life. Since one often grows most after being thrown off-balance, an awareness that suffering can be ameliorative—it's working on one as one works on it—makes it more tolerable. Suffering is often like a refining process, burning off the excrescences that have attached to one's personality. Life's vicissitudes create consciousness and teach lessons. Undergoing and overcoming—suggesting the pattern of a wave—typifies the oscillation of our lives.

One of the most important requirements of individuation is recognition of the shadow, which consists of the dark side of ourselves we're unable to accept: the repressed elements in the personal unconscious that form complexes *and* the collective or archetypal shadow composed of aggressive instincts, concupiscent desires, and negative emotions that accrued during evolution in the collective unconscious. Possessing archetypal cores, the complexes rob consciousness of disposable psychic energy and can become powerful enough to overwhelm and destabilize the ego through psychic inundations. Unless the shadow is recognized and consciously tamed or restrained, it is projected onto others, causing all manner of collective mayhem, including the persecution of scapegoats. Jung wrote about the need to disidentify from shadow contents arising from the unconscious in order to moderate and, eventually, to defuse them. Part of the baggage carried from the personal and collective past, the complexes need not intrude unduly on present-day living. Recognizing the shadow as it's portrayed in dreams yields information that can result in its neutralization or dispersal. Though one might say of a regretted action, "The devil made me do it," the ego has to take responsibility though the source of the transgression is probably the shadow. (Positive qualities can also be repressed due to environmental influence. Until recently, this was true of the intellectual capability of women.)

Another important developmental milestone of the individuation process is the integration of the anima in a man or the animus in a woman—the *contrasexual* aspect of the individual located in the unconscious. Jung identified them through his study of symbols and his treatment of patients but there's also considerable other evidence

for it. For example, the gender of an individual is determined by a majority of male or female genes, as the case may be, but the minority of genes associated with the other gender doesn't disappear. Jung was also influenced by the existence of the masculine and feminine *principles* identified by Taoists thousands of years ago. Yin (masculine) and yang (feminine) energies are complementary, existing on a spectrum, rather than always in strict opposition. Masculine energies are described as active, hard, penetrating, logical, assertive, initiating, and dominant, whereas feminine energies are receptive, soft, giving, tender, nourishing, relational, sensitive, emotional, and empathetic. Jung speaks of masculine and feminine "principles" rather than outright gender assignments. In a patriarchal society, feminine values are undervalued and sometimes falsely considered negative. Though "masculine" characteristics *tend* to hold sway in men and "feminine" characteristics *tend* to hold sway in women, *both sets of qualities exist as potentials in everyone in varying rather than fixed degrees*. Those not yet available to one's ego should be accessed to expand one's psychological repertoire and to better fulfill one's potential. We need a Men's Humanization Movement to spark the embrace by men of their unrealized feminine dimension. *The psyche is androgynous!* This discovery contributes importantly to the hope for gender parity and an understanding of the LGBTQ+ phenomenon. (Neo-Jungians tend to believe everyone has an anima *and* an animus.)

Recognizing one's shadow—one's liabilities—and engaging one's contrasexual inner partner result in increased vitality, higher quality relationships of all kinds, and more objective judgment, allowing for greater progress toward self-realization. Drawing on the collective wisdom of our species, contents from the collective unconscious reaching consciousness invigorate this process. Pursuing individuation is not a selfish venture, as is sometimes thought by critics. It's a vital and necessary quest, partially depicted in hero and heroine myths, both of which apply to men *and* women. Attaining wholeness requires fathoming the unconscious to access all of oneself. Unlike Christianity, Jung's emphasis is on completion rather than perfection—gradually efflorescing into wholeness and thus tasting the sweetness of one's

ripeness. Because our lives have purpose and nature speaks to us through dreams, the inner voice, and synchronistic events (meaningful coincidences), nature can no longer be accused of indifference. Though biological evolution is supposed to be random, spiritual evolution has a teleological bent. Biological evolution can perhaps now be seen as a prelude for developing a being with consciousness and a ground plan for attaining wholeness. The Darwin-Wallace theory of evolution is compatible with the idea of a Creator, though it's said not to require one. Jung's discoveries about the psyche counter the narrative, post-modern and otherwise, that the human animal is insignificant. They also contradict other post-modern postures such as we lack a basic foundation, thinking in terms of opposites is fallacious, declarations of universal principles are remiss, and teleology is absent in nature.

Jung similarly identified the existence of what he called "*the God within*."⁴ It's the center of the psyche, the inner controller that orchestrates the individuation process. The inner divinity, as I prefer to call it, is a sum of powerful psychic energy whose pursuits are purposive. In the psyche and outer world all is energy at bottom: just as outer world objects are shaped energy, so are the symbols of the inner world. The inner divinity's numinous presence can be felt *experientially* as deriving from a transpersonal source beyond the known workings of consciousness. Such transmissions issue from the unconscious, most commonly in the form of dreams or utterances from the inner voice. In our ignorance of what's happening beyond consciousness, we tend to sabotage the inner divinity's efforts rather than to collaborate with it. *The identification of this second center represents an inner Copernican revolution*: the ego is the center of consciousness, not the center of the psyche. The very difficulty of cracking the code regulating dreams—although it's only been attempted systematically by a tiny number of qualified investigators—suggests the possibility that some kind of uttermost intelligence beyond our own is at work within. Confusingly, Jung uses the term "Self" to designate the center *and* totality of the psyche. This is different from the small "s" self used in everyday parlance as the sense of being an "I" and having agency—the ego

4. Carl G. Jung, "Psychology and Religion," *CW* 11, par. 101.

in psychological terms. The Self as totality refers to an individual's entire being. As the governing psychic force in guiding the individual toward wholeness, the Self for Jung is the archetype of archetypes. Jung borrowed the term "Self" from Hinduism, which had identified the selfsame phenomenon.

The collective individuation process occurring over the course of millennia involving everyone has seemingly been laying the groundwork for the possibility of a single global community marked by diversity but promoting wholeness within individuals and unity among them. The finding of an innate goal dubbed wholeness of personality by Jung is also a game changer and a life changer because the amassing of money and material goods, beyond a reasonable level of security and comfort, must take a back seat. Erich Fromm, building on Baruch Spinoza, saw greed as a form of insanity because it doesn't correspond to any human need. When widespread, however, the greedy receive positive reinforcement for a trait that should be condemned. Make a lot of money when deploying your talents and interests but do so in the name and for the sake of everyone, treating all fairly and justly at all times, and share your abundance munificently as a voluntary obligation. Do so because the receiving is in the giving and luck is the main ingredient of success. After one's material needs are met, psychic income takes precedence. Obey the law but be true to yourself and your Self as a matter of integrity, which may require dashing others' expectations and breaking antiquated rules. Progressing in individuation while accessing the collective unconscious produces an enhanced sense of solidarity with everyone. It also results in a stronger connection with the natural world from which we issue. The delineation of a new system of economic allocation combined with an associated new ethic—both true to Jungian thought—is beyond the scope of this essay.

3

For Jung, the inner divinity in the West has been *projected* in the form of successive God-images: the Great Goddess during the early matriarchal period (the outlines of which are hazy) and then in various

guises (polytheism, Yahweh, and Jesus Christ (either alone or as part of the Catholic Trinity)). *The evolution of the God-image goes hand in hand with stages in the evolution of consciousness*: Goddesses ruled when the unconscious matrix was dominant in our early history; ego energy was weak and discontinuous. The polytheistic gods of the Greek and Roman pantheons were masculine and feminine in roughly equal quantity, and then masculine gods—Yahweh and Jesus Christ—prevailed as the dominion of consciousness continued to expand and the ego became stronger and eventually ascendant over the feminine unconscious. The evolution of the God-image is the spine of history in the West. *The inner divinity, in and of itself a compendium of opposites that have to be reconciled, is actually masculine and feminine and everything in between*, a stunning revelation of first-rate importance after millennia of patriarchy. Empirical evidence for the existence of an inner divinity doesn't prove the existence of a distant Creator, but it does narrow the leap of faith necessary to believe in one. However, it's the inner divinity—perhaps the agent or scintilla of a Creator—that has to be reckoned with. “God” is not dead and we haven't been abandoned! Christ referred to the Kingdom of Heaven within, mystics everywhere have long communed with an inner divinity, and even Pope Francis said in 2015, “God is present in every one of you, in each one of us.”⁵ As long represented by scientific materialism, the Western ego has become overweening, self-mythologizing, focused on the outer world, neglectful of the spirit, overdeveloped and perhaps petrified. “God” is and has been concealed in the psyche, a canny hiding place. The post-modern perspective, which also emphasizes the inherent meaninglessness of life, may only be an interregnum.

The explanatory power of Jung's ideas is so remarkable that they're capable of birthing a new stage of the Judeo-Christian tradition. In the years to come, the one-sided influence of science and technology can be redressed by a resurgence of the importance of the humanities and social sciences based on Jung's interdisciplinary study of psychology, which has ramifications for almost every academic discipline. Besides esteem for the scientific perspective, respect should be accorded the

5. New York Times, 9/25/15, p. A23.

inner world and the mythopoetic sensibility. Self-reflection should be a prized and honored activity. Jung's thinking is also consistent with the perennial philosophies of the East; Sufism, a sect of Islam; and Jewish Kabbalah. *The possibility of a single integrated belief system has loomed into view.* As the eminent philosopher Thomas Nagel has proposed in *Mind and Cosmos*, the neo-Darwinian conception of evolution is almost surely inadequate. I've come across a little known theory of evolution developed by Jan Christiaan Smuts one hundred years ago that I believe suits Jung's and Darwin's thinking to a T. In making sense of the pivot from Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible to the god-man Jesus Christ in the New Testament, Jung is trying to explain the equivalent of the "fossil record" for the previously undetected phenomenon of spiritual evolution.

Charges of psychologism were leveled against Jung, especially by clerics. He observed, "Anyone who dares to establish a connection between the psyche and the idea of God is immediately accused of 'psychologism' or suspected of morbid 'mysticism.'"⁶ Here's his defense of the charge:

Yet when I point out that the soul possesses by nature a religious function, and when I stipulate that it is the prime task of all education (of adults) to convey the archetype of the God-image, or its emanations and effects, to the conscious mind, then it is precisely the theologian who seizes me by the arm and accuses me of 'psychologism.' But were it not a fact of experience that supreme values reside in the soul... psychology would not interest me in the least, for the soul would then be nothing but a miserable vapour. I know, however, from hundredfold experience that it is nothing of the sort, but on the contrary contains the equivalents of everything that has been formulated in dogma and a good deal more, which is just what enables it to be an eye destined to behold the light.... I have been accused of 'deifying the soul.' Not I but God himself has deified it! I did not attribute a religious function to the soul. I merely produced the facts

6. Carl G. Jung, "On 'The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation,'" *CW11*, par. 771.

that prove that the soul is *naturaliter religiosa*, i.e., possesses a religious function.... For it is obvious that far too many people are incapable of establishing a connection between the sacred figures and their own psyche: they cannot see to what extent the equivalent figures are lying dormant in their own unconscious.⁷

He also admonishes, “It is as if we did not know, or else continually forgot, that everything of which we are conscious is an image, and that image *is* psyche. The same people who think God is depreciated if he is understood as something moved in the psyche, as well as the moving force of the psyche—i.e., as an autonomous complex—can be so plagued by uncontrollable affects and neurotic states that their wills and their whole philosophy of life fail them miserably.”⁸

Jung’s speculations about why God (assuming there was a Creator) created a being with consciousness are fascinating and inspiring. While in a game park in Kenya, he separated himself from his party and saw “gigantic herds of animals: gazelle, antelope, gnu, zebra, warthog, and so on. Grazing, heads nodding, the herds moved forward like small rivers. There was scarcely any sound save the melancholy cry of a bird of prey.”⁹ He ruminated, “There the cosmic meaning of consciousness became overwhelmingly clear to me.... Man, I, in an invisible act of creation put the stamp of perfection on the world by giving it objective existence.... Now I knew what [a myth of our own] was, and knew even more: that man is indispensable for the completion of creation; that, in fact, he himself is the second creator of the world, who alone has given to the world its objective existence—without which, unheard, unseen, silently eating, giving birth, dying, heads nodding through hundreds of million of years, it would have gone on in the profoundest night of non-being down to its unknown end. Human consciousness created objective existence and meaning, and man found his indispensable place in the great process of being.”¹⁰ For Jung, “The

7. Carl G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW12, par. 14.

8. Carl G. Jung, “Commentary on ‘The Secret of the Golden Flower,’” CW13, par. 75.

9. Carl G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, ed. A. Jaffé (New York: Vintage, 1989), 255.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 255–56.

importance of consciousness is so great that one cannot help suspecting the element of *meaning* to be concealed somewhere within all the monstrous, apparently senseless biological turmoil, and that the road to its manifestation was ultimately found on the level of warm-hearted vertebrates possessed of a differentiated brain—found as if by chance, unintended and unforeseen, and yet somehow sensed, felt and groped for out of some dark urge.”¹¹

4

In the Book of Job, the Creator-god Yahweh engages for the first time an individual who is not serving as a representative of the Jewish people. For Jung, this marks the pivot from collective to individual psychology. Job encounters God on his own, unsupported by a nation or creed. Job is a man who is upright and blameless, who fears God, and eschews evil. Yahweh and Satan, resident in heaven, wager as to whether Job can be turned away from God. Numerous calamities are then visited on Job: he loses his material possessions, his children die, and he is beset with physical ills. He maintains his faith in God, saying the Lord giveth and taketh away, but feels his ill treatment is unjustified. Comforters arrive who counsel that Job should stop questioning what is beyond his understanding, and that he should accept that God is just. Job continues to question his fate while insisting on his righteousness, thus maintaining his integrity. Finally God appears to him in a whirlwind, asserting His grandeur and the lowness of humans. Famously, God draws attention to the fact that it is He who has made Behemoth, a fearful beast, and Leviathan, a sea monster. Job is finally silenced and accepts his situation whereupon his fortune is not only restored but doubled, and he goes on to father ten children. Though fictional, the story of Job presumably reflects a grappling by its author with the paradoxes and conundrums under discussion, especially the source of evil. Jung’s view is that “God” spoke to the Hebrew patriarchs and prophets through what they experienced as the inner voice, dreams and visions, and synchronistic events (such

11. Ibid., p. 339.

as the burning bush). “God” contacts us in the same ways but we’re no longer attentive. The story of Job is a psychological drama.

Job’s integrity—his refusal to accept responsibility for events he knows he didn’t cause—spurs Yahweh to erupt, “This is I, the creator of all the ungovernable, ruthless forces of Nature, which are not subject to any ethical laws. I, too, am an amoral force of Nature, a purely phenomenal personality that cannot see its own back.”¹² Jung emphasizes in the Book of Job that “*The creator sees himself through the eyes of man’s consciousness...*”¹³ and that He doesn’t like what He sees. A mythological figure, Yahweh is a projection of the Self, a representation of the then prevailing God-image. Behemoth and Leviathan, the two beasts, are aspects of Yahweh and of our primordial psyche. Yahweh discovers in the Job episode His inability to relate—his deficient Eros—and has been forced to acknowledge the darkness of his shadow. For these reasons, Jung expects something will take shape in the background as a compensation for Job’s suffering. This would be consistent with the compensatory function of the unconscious, an idea most extensively developed by Jung that, as explained by Edinger, is “the profound psychological law that when the ego becomes too one-sided, weighted too much in one direction, the unconscious psyche then constellates the contrary in the unconscious to balance the one-sidedness. So here that process of compensation is occurring within the God-image, the Yahweh figure himself.”¹⁴ He continues, “What that means is that injustice, especially if it is consciously perceived, constellates its correction in the other—in the unconscious or in the outer world. In other words, *injustice consciously perceived and borne constellates justice.*”¹⁵ This is consistent with the view that dreams compensate the conscious viewpoint, and the more basic observation that there is no psychic energy or physical energy without a tension of opposites.

Yahweh is not a paragon of virtue. In the myth of the Garden of

12. Carl G. Jung, “Answer to Job,” CW11, par. 605.

13. Carl G. Jung *Letters*, vol. 2, trans. R.F. C. Hull, ed. G. Adler and A. Jaffé (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 436.

14. Edward F. Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image: An Elucidation of Jung’s Answer to Job* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1994), 47.

15. *Ibid.*

Eden He pointed out the tree to Adam and Eve but forbade them to eat from it. In relating to His people throughout the Hebrew Bible, Yahweh displays a personality that is sometimes amoral, obtuse, wrathful, irritable, unjust, vengeful, jealous, mistrustful, moody, immoderate, destructive, unreasonable, and requiring praise and propitiation. In the Book of Job, he is touchy and gullible when accepting Satan's gambit and suspicious in doubting the faithful Job. Yahweh sometimes leads inappropriately with his emotions, failing to consult His knowledge (his supposed omniscience). As in a child, good and evil are not well differentiated in Yahweh. He thrashes around while trying to get his way, yet always requires heaps of praise. Since his actions are sometimes mutually contradictory, Yahweh is not well developed or fully conscious of Himself, appropriate in a chieftain during more or less barbaric times, but now surpassed by the likes of Job due to the continuing evolution of human consciousness. What accounts for Yahweh's unruly, juvenile, immature behavior? According to Jung, He lacks the benefits of relationships and the experience of defeats, which are spurs, along with an awareness of frailty, to the self-reflection and humility required for an enhanced *self*-knowledge and a more integrated personality.

Though it's hard to wrap one's head around the notion that the creature passed the Creator in terms of moral development, Jung insists, "The naïve assumption that the creator of the world is a [fully] conscious being must be regarded as a disastrous prejudice which later gave rise to the most incredible dislocations of logic. For example, the nonsensical doctrine of the *privatio boni* would never have been necessary had one not had to assume in advance that it is impossible for the consciousness of a good God to produce evil deeds."¹⁶ The doctrine of *privatio boni*, originated by Origen (184–253 CE), fully developed by Augustine (354–430 CE) and later adopted by the Catholic Church, states that evil is insubstantial, only the absence of good rather than an equal and opposite force or principle. This doctrine belies the fact that evil is everywhere in our lives and on the world stage, from deaths due to a pandemic to ungodly acts by actual or would-be autocrats to "acts of God" in which weather conditions become destructive to "man's

16. Jung, "Answer to Job," *CW*11, par. 600n.

inhumanity to man” in its limitless variations. Evil exists as a capacity within each of us that one must acknowledge, understand, and guard against. Derived from our bestial past, negative emotions (as we call them), such as hate and anger, can be tamed. Monitoring one’s stream of consciousness helps in the identification of psychic concerns that still need to be addressed. The idea is to be aware of one’s evil proclivities and to cut evil actions off at the pass. One is not fully developed to the extent one’s shadow is not seen and the contrasexual element(s) are not developed. To be whole, i.e., complete—aware of the entirety of one’s positives and negatives while fulfilling one’s potential—is the goal. Achieving perfection—whatever that even means—is outside the realm of human possibility. Pursuing individuation in the manner suggested by Jung is arguably the way prescribed for us by nature.

The nearest psychological analogy to Yahweh for Jung is the collective unconscious, the psychic foundation of our behavior, which he describes, using a term originated by Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) as a *complexio oppositorum*—a compendium of opposites. Good and evil are two of the most important ones. Jung says of Yahweh, “He is everything in its totality; therefore, among other things, he is total justice, and also its total opposite. At least this is the way he must be conceived if one is to form a unified picture of his character.”¹⁷ Yahweh resembles a youth whose actions and reactions, being spontaneous, are not organized and disciplined, not subject to the intervention of a developed consciousness. That Yahweh’s behavior is mindful of the collective unconscious also suggests that’s the location of the inner divinity. If Origen was right that an infinite being is unable to understand itself in isolation, then relation to a finite creature is needed for self-comprehension. The collective unconscious initially includes a compendium of the opposites but also the collective wisdom of the ages pertaining to the perplexities of life and the life line of individuation. An important note: If there’s an inner divinity influencing one’s thought processes and behavior, an anthropomorphic conception of God seems like a given, bona fide, “endorsed” feature of our cognitive apparatus. The creation myth found in Genesis says we are made in

17. Ibid., par. 574.

God's image and, since all myths are psychological projections, the source of that representation is the unconscious of which the Self as center (the inner divinity) is a part. The image of an anthropomorphic God is an analogy; the images in myth and dreams work by analogy.

Edinger, explaining Jung, posits the idea of a Creator “based on the empirical data of depth psychology. We have data that give us reason to think there is a transpersonal center of purpose and latent intentionality—what we call the Self, which is the creator of the ego as well. It takes something of a leap, I grant, from that bit of data to establish a Creator of the world; however, we also have data indicating that manifestations of the psyche transcend time and space, and engage inorganic, material processes in the phenomena of synchronicity. On that basis it is logical to infer, at least, that the God-image that lies behind the creation of the ego may also lie behind the creation of the world.”¹⁸ One doesn't have to accept the existence of a Creator to put stock in an inner divinity and the individuation process. Because the inner divinity is one's totality as well as one's center, the individuation process is the pathway enabling the human being *and* the inner divinity (whatever its relationship to the Creator) to jointly pursue wholeness. Our interests are aligned with those of “God” in what amounts to a symbiotic relationship. Since the Creator is manifestly responsible for the creation of evil as well as good—one pair of myriad opposites—the doctrine of original sin as propagated by Christianity is no longer valid. As a *felix culpa*—a necessary error—it served the purpose of promoting morality in lawless times, especially by instilling guilt and shame. (By the way, I put the word God in quotes to designate when I'm referring to the inner divinity—“the God within” in Jung's nomenclature. Though I got that practice from him, he and/or his translator usually fail to do it.)

5

Edinger says, “As a consequence of being shown what the Job

18. Edward F. Edinger, *The New God-Image: A Study of Jung's Key Letters Concerning the Evolution of the Western God-Image* (Wilmette: Chiron Publications, 1996), 64.

mirror showed Him, Yahweh was obliged to undergo a process of Self-transformation, which is at the same time an incarnation and a humanization.”¹⁹ He’s seen His immoral nature and Job has seen it too. Jung explores the intermediate stages of the differentiation and transformation of the God-image in commentary from a psychological perspective on the puzzling visions of Ezekiel and Daniel and Enoch. When Ezekiel is addressed as the Son of Man, “This means that Ezekiel’s vision, which shows God in the form of a man, indicates that Yahweh has already undergone human incarnation in the pleroma, i.e., in the unconscious.”²⁰ In Daniel’s vision, “here again we have the God-image manifesting in a vision to man and appearing first of all as an old man [the Ancient of Days] and then as someone designated as the Son of Man who represents a rejuvenation of the antiquated God-image of the Ancient of Days.”²¹ In each of the two visions, there are four animals with one of a different, unidentified nature. The animals represent the primordial beast aspect of Yahweh that has to be tamed and transformed. In Enoch’s vision, the sides representing three of the divine presences are busy praising God and one side is busy warding off the Satans that threaten to attack him. Satan has now been excluded from the God-image and there’s an attempt to keep him separate. Paraphrasing Edinger, (1) a rejuvenation or rebirth is in the process of taking place; (2) God wants to become man in the sense that the eternal, immutable, archetypal, and universal wants to incarnate, be humanized, to have existence in time and space; (3) the amoral wants to become exclusively good, which requires a separation of the opposites wide enough for moral differentiation, and an identification with the good; and, (4) the unconscious wants to become consciously responsible, which requires an ego to be its vessel of realization.²² This procedure also occurs in each of us as part of the individuation process.

Edinger writes, “The ‘Son of man’ figure was emerging in the Jewish psyche for two or three centuries in advance of the time

19. Ibid. p. 70.

20. Edward F. Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness: Jung’s Myth for Modern Man* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984), 74.

21. Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, p. 84.

22. Ibid., p. 88–9.

of Christ. This same figure was connected as well with the terms ‘Messiah,’ ‘anointed king’ and ‘Christ.’ Those three words mean exactly the same thing.... The basic idea is that the Son of man is coming as the anointed one, sent by God to bring salvation to mankind and to function as a mediator between God and humanity, which is in danger of losing its connection to the divine.”²³ The life of Christ “is a symbolic image of two separate, superimposed events. In one, the Son of God descends to earth to incarnate as man. In the second, the human being engages the archetype of the God-image and finds himself caught up and embodying it. Speaking psychologically, in the first place the Self enters the ego and in the second place the ego becomes conscious of and related to the Self, which is precisely the event that happened in the collective psyche 2,000 years ago.”²⁴ More specifically, “the term ‘Son of man’ is parallel to the ego as a center, and the term ‘Son of God’ is parallel to the Self as a center of the individuating personality.”²⁵ In the Biblical material, “the Son of God is equated symbolically with the son of man. They are synonymous—and both terms refer to Christ. This has to be psychologically significant. The term ‘Son of God’ symbolizes God’s transformation and is equivalent to ‘Son of man,’ symbolizing man’s—the ego’s—transformation. Psychologically I see this to mean that the transformation of the Self is brought about by the transformation of the ego.”²⁶ Stated otherwise, “And the psychological point is that the actualized Self is the son—the result—of the devoted efforts of the ego to bring it into conscious existence.”²⁷ Paradoxically, “And at the same time it’s the superordinate authority and Lord *over* the ego.”²⁸

In his book *The Christian Archetype*, Edinger builds on Jung’s more scattered statements by analyzing psychologically the major events of Christ’s life, which have “crystallized out of the collective psyche to

23. Edward F. Edinger, *The Psyche in Antiquity, Book Two: Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (Toronto: Inner City Press, 1999), 9.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

26. Edward F. Edinger, *The Sacred Psyche: A Psychological Approach to the Psalms* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 2004), 46.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 113–14.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

serve the function of ‘amulet against the archetypal powers.’”²⁹ Having mythological significance, they have been “chosen by the objective psyche itself, the *consensus omnium*,”³⁰ as being of utmost importance to everyone, whether one subscribes to Christianity or not. He summarizes Christ’s life as follows:

God’s pre-existent only begotten Son.... is born in humble surroundings accompanied by numinous events and survives grave initial dangers. When he reaches adulthood he submits to baptism by John the Baptist and witnesses the descent of the Holy Ghost signifying his vocation. He survives temptation by the Devil and fulfills his ministry which proclaims a benevolent, loving God and announces the coming of the ‘Kingdom of Heaven.’ After agonizing uncertainty, he accepts his destined fate and allows himself to be arrested, tried, flagellated, mocked and crucified. After three days in the tomb, according to many witnesses, he is resurrected. For forty days he walks and talks with his disciples and then ascends to heaven. Ten days later, at Pentecost, the Holy Ghost descends, the promised Paraclete.³¹

Most of those motifs appear in other hero myths. Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976) led an influential movement in the last century to demythologize the New Testament in favor of interpreting the text according to the tenets of existential philosophy. Bultmann was a theologian and a biblical scholar, not a psychologist.

As it happens, “Christ repeatedly identified himself with the ‘Son of Man,’ and on that evidence alone becomes a symbol of the Self.”³² For Jung, “It was this archetype of the Self in the soul of every man that responded to the Christian message, with the result that the concrete

29. Edward F. Edinger, *The Christian Archetype: A Jungian Commentary on the Life of Christ* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1987), 16.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. Edward F. Edinger, *The Bible and the Psyche: Individuation Symbolism in the Old Testament* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1986), 157.

Rabbi Jesus was rapidly assimilated by the constellated archetype.”³³ Further, “Had there not been an affinity—magnet—between the figure of the Redeemer and certain contents of the unconscious, the human mind would never have been able to perceive the light shining in Christ and seize upon it so passionately.”³⁴ Contemporaries of Jesus who encountered his numinous presence, as well as hordes of people over time, projected especially their inner divinity, the Self as center of which they knew nothing, on the Son of God, a putatively perfect being. Thus, the archetypal idea of Christ “is a reflection of the individual’s wholeness, i.e., of the Self, which is present in him as an unconscious image.”³⁵ Jung writes, “When I speak of [Jesus] as a human being, I mean its few traces we can gather from the gospels. It is not enough for the reconstruction of an empirical character. Moreover even if we could reconstruct an individual personality, it would not fulfil the role of redeemer and God-man who is identical with the ‘all-knowing’ Self. Since the individual human being is characterized by a selection of tendencies and qualities, it is a specification and not a wholeness, i.e., it cannot be individual without incompleteness and restriction, whereas the Christ of the doctrine is perfect, complete, whole and therefore not individual at all, but a collective mythologem, viz. an archetype. He is far more divine than human and far more universal than individual.”³⁶

During his forty days in the desert, Jesus likely mapped out his new gospel in tandem with the inner divinity speaking through the inner voice. This is an example of a felicitous collaboration between the individuating ego and the Self as center. Jesus tamed the primordial shadow aspect of his Self during the Temptation, which followed on the heels of his Baptism. Jung writes, “it was the power-intoxicated devil of the prevailing Caesarian psychology that led him into dire temptation in the wilderness. This devil was the objective psyche [the collective unconscious] that held all the peoples of the Roman Empire under its sway, and that is why it promised Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth, as if it were trying to make a Caesar of him. Obeying

33. Jung, “A Psychological Approach to the Trinity,” *CW*11, par. 231.

34. Jung, *Aion*, *CW*9ii, par. 283.

35. Jung, “Psychology and Religion,” *CW*11, par. 230.

36. Jung (Adler and Jaffé, eds.), *Letters*, vol. 2, pp. 164-5.

the inner call of his vocation, Jesus voluntarily exposed himself to the assaults of the imperialistic madness that filled everyone, conqueror and conquered alike.... Far from suppressing himself or allowing himself to be suppressed by this psychic onslaught, he let it act on him consciously, and assimilated it. Thus was world-conquering Caesarism transformed into spiritual kingship, and the Roman Empire into the universal kingdom of God that was not of this world.”³⁷ Edinger adds, “The Holy Spirit that blessed Christ turns diabolical and becomes the tempter. This image expresses the ego’s temptation to identify with the transpersonal energy and use it for the purposes of personal power.”³⁸ Each of us should try to resist temptation in the name of wholeness by disidentifying from the unhealthy impulses emanating from the unconscious.

Jung and his adherents interpret the Crucifixion and ensuing events psychologically. Jung speaks of how the god-man was “up against an unpredictable and lawless God who would need a most drastic sacrifice to appease His wrath, viz. the slaughter of His own son. Curiously enough, as on the one hand his self-sacrifice means admission of the Father’s amoral nature, he taught on the other hand a new image of God, namely that of a Loving Father in whom there is no darkness.... As a consequence the sacrifice was a self-destruction of the amoral God, incarnated in a mortal body. Thus the sacrifice takes on the aspect of a highly moral deed, of a self-punishment, as it were.”³⁹ Edinger elaborates, “To the extent that Christ is represented as the son of God, as Deity, then *his self-sacrifice is a self-destruction of the amoral God, who demands such human sacrifices*. To that extent, then, he is evidence of God’s goodness. His role was to sacrifice himself in that fashion.”⁴⁰ Further, “By offering himself as an object upon which the divine wrath can vent itself, Christ proclaims a benevolent God of love and brings redemption to man from the wrathful God. Like a heroic soldier who throws himself on a live grenade and thereby rescues his company at the cost of his own life, so Christ allows himself to be

37. Jung, “The Development of Personality,” *CW17*, par. 309.

38. Edinger, *The Christian Archetype*, p. 53.

39. Jung (G. Adler, ed.), *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 313.

40. Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, p. 95.

blasted by the wrath of god in order to redeem his fellow men. This sacrificial act not only redeems man but also transforms Yahweh. With his explosive rage spent by the innocent victim's voluntary acceptance of it, Yahweh is transformed into a God of love through the example of a loving man."⁴¹ God had to suffer as the originator of evil and did so through the death of his Son.

Marie-Louise von Franz, who worked closely with Jung, describes how the Crucifixion is enacted in our lives. Importantly for individuation, "affects and emotions which belong to the body-soul should not be repressed and 'overcome' (as some Christian teachings advise). One should confront them in oneself and search for the deeper meanings behind their exterior expressions of desiring and willing to act. Usually this confrontation does not end without a struggle, for it is in the nature of affects to seduce us into impulsive actions or to hold us tenaciously in the circumstances placed before us in the outer world. To concentrate instead on the deeper meaning of such impulses requires a conscious decision, a turning back or confrontation with one's own emotions."⁴² Crucially, "This, in the last analysis, is the meaning of the cross in Christianity, or of the crucifixion: complete endurance of the conflict between violent emotions and their spiritual meaning. This spiritual meaning, however, reveals itself only when one confronts the conflict without reservation. Then there occurs (one cannot make it happen) a transformation that leads to the union of the opposites...."⁴³ The strong emotions emanate from the Self that is both the center and the totality of one's personality. As the center, it's the God within who orchestrates the individuation process in what should be a mutually rewarding collaboration. Jesus should be imitated as an exemplar of individuation: he lived his destined life fully and with total integrity. One's destiny may include painful times requiring heroism.

H. Margaret Harding, who studied under Jung, explains, "The symbol of the Cross has the power to heal just because it marks the meeting point of opposites. When two lines, two contrary attitudes, two opposing truths, two ways of behavior, are directly opposed

41. Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, pp. 93–4.

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

to each other and have been tearing the psyche apart, come at last into direct opposition, there, at the crossing point, there comes into existence, as by a miracle, one spot which is still, one place which is transformed from the highest tension and distress into peace and relief from conflict.”⁴⁴ She emphasizes, “But the Cross is not merely a static symbol, significant as that may be. For it holds the further meaning of finding the center, and it is the age-old sign of the meeting of opposites, as, for example, opposite ways meet at the crossroads. So the way of the Cross, which to the Puritan meant the propitiatory and sacrificial death of Christ, has meant to man throughout the ages the way to the central point.... So the way of the Cross leads into the experience of the point beyond time and space, into a region beyond the conflict of the opposites.”⁴⁵ It leads to a relationship with the inner divinity as well as inner peace. Harding adds, “For the death on the Cross and the descent into hell, followed by the resurrection on the third day, are the steps in the archetypal hero myth of the night sea journey, or the descent into Hades to recover the herb of immortality. If the adventure is successful, it bestows renewal and rebirth on the hero, and in addition the treasure is made available to all the tribe.... Just as Christ by his *athlon* accomplished the hero task and himself received eternal life in a resurrection body, and, in addition, could give freely of the treasure to those who came after him.”⁴⁶ During the descent into the Valley of Death, the existing ego structure must die in order for the initiate to win the treasure hard to attain.

6

Now we're prepared to approach, from a psychological viewpoint, the Book of Revelation, which concludes the New Testament. Jung writes, “One could hardly imagine a more suitable personality for the John of the Apocalypse than the author of the Epistles of John. It was he who declared that God is light and that ‘in him is no darkness at

44. M. Esther Harding, *Journey into Self* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), 134.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

all.”⁴⁷ To preach a gospel of love, John “had to shut out all negative feelings, and, thanks to a helpful lack of self-reflection, he was able to forget them. But though they disappeared from the conscious level they continued to rankle beneath the surface, and in the course of time spun an elaborate web of resentments and vengeful thoughts which then burst upon consciousness in the form of a revelation. From this there grew a terrifying picture that blatantly contradicts all ideas of Christian humility, tolerance, love of your neighbour and your enemies, and makes nonsense of a loving father in heaven and rescuer of mankind. A veritable orgy of hatred, wrath, vindictiveness, and blind destructive fury that revels in fantastic images of terror breaks out and with blood and fire overwhelms a world which Christ had just endeavoured to restore to the original state of innocence and loving communion with God.”⁴⁸ John is Jung’s candidate for the authorship of the Book of Revelation but for sure “The ‘revelation’ was experienced by an early Christian who, as a leading light of the community, presumably had to lead an exemplary life and demonstrate to his flock the Christian virtues of true faith, humility, patience, devotion, selfless love, and denial of all worldly desires. In the long run this can become too much, even for the most righteous. Irritability, bad moods, and outbursts of affect are the classic symptoms of chronic virtuousness.”⁴⁹

Edinger wrote a book called *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, published in 1999, providing a chapter by chapter exegesis of the Book of Revelation. The new subtitle of the softcover, published in 2002 after 9/11, was *Divine Vengeance, Terrorism, and the End of the World*. In explaining his title, he states, “First of all, an archetype is a *pattern*: a primordial psychic ordering of images that has a collective or generalized quality; it can be understood, therefore, to derive from the collective transpersonal objective psyche—rather than from the personal psyche.... The other aspect to which we do not pay quite as much attention... is that the archetype is a *dynamic agency*: It is a living organism, a psychic organism that inhabits the collective psyche.”⁵⁰

47. Jung, “Answer to Job,” *CW*11, par. 698

48. *Ibid.*, par. 708.

49. *Ibid.*, par. 729.

50. Edward F. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse: Divine Vengeance, Terrorism, and the*

For Jung, “They are spontaneous phenomena which are not subject to our will, and we are therefore justified in ascribing to them a certain autonomy. They are to be regarded not only as objects but as subjects with laws of their own.... in other words, we have to admit that they possess spontaneity and purposiveness, or a kind of consciousness and free will.”⁵¹ The term “apocalypse” means “revelation” in general but, specifically, Edinger tells us, “it refers to ‘the uncovering of what has been hidden’... Yet according to the general usage, the term ‘apocalypse’ has taken on the larger meaning of the ‘coming of the deity to assert sovereignty’—or the coming of a Messiah to judge, to reward or punish humanity.”⁵² The Book of Revelation “is the Western psyche’s classic example of the archetype of the end of the world. Other terms for this same archetype would be ‘cosmic catastrophe’ and ‘last judgment.’ You see then how the extreme and destructive imagery associated with this image of the coming of the Self indicates that the ego in our current aeon experiences this event as a disaster.”⁵³ The inner divinity, newly identified, is at last progressing into consciousness as a second center supraordinate to an ego that thinks God is dead.

The turning point came, states Edinger, when in “About 1500 A.D. the God-image fell out of heaven into the human psyche. In other words, it was withdrawn from metaphysical projection and became available for direct conscious experience. The event had a two-fold effect. On the one hand, it greatly increased the energy available to the individual ego, promoting investigation of previously forbidden areas; on the other hand, it had the delayed effect of alienating the ego from its transpersonal connection, from its sense of having divine guidance. This, then, led to the collective experience of being orphaned in a meaningless universe. This double effect—increased energy and power for the ego, linked to a lost relation to God—creates a psychological state of either inflation or despair.”⁵⁴ The God-image dropped out of heaven in the sense that the chief locus of interest became the earth as

End of the World (Chicago: Open Court, 2002), 1-2.

51. Jung, “Psychology and Religion,” *CW*11, par. 557.

52. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, 2-3.

53. Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, 100.

54. Edward F. Edinger, “Individual and Society,” in *An American Jungian*, ed. Elder and Cordic, 190-1

a realm to be explored and exploited through science and technology. Apart from becoming rationalistic, materialistic, and hubristic to an extreme, we have lost our connection to the environment out of which we were born and that remains our source of nourishment. We prefer to exploit and poison Father Sky and Mother Earth, thereby threatening to commit parricide, matricide, and suicide in one fell swoop. Armaments, especially nuclear bombs and chemical warfare, obviously constitute another threat. No nation wants war but all are armed to the teeth. The images in the Book of Apocalypse represent a psychological statement but our waywardness has in fact delivered us to the brink of catastrophe. The Apocalypse envisioned in Revelation reflects an inner condition of conflict that has produced the outer conditions that plague us and threaten our viability.

Based on Jung's pioneering work, Edinger spells out in his book the symbolic meaning of the events, images, and figures of Revelation, including John on the prison island of Patmos; the early Son of man vision with the seven stars and seven golden lamp-stands; the seven gifts to the seven churches by the apocalyptic Christ; the images of the door, the thief and the key; the image of the rapture; the lion, bull, flying eagle and a fourth creature with a human face; the four horsemen of the Apocalypse; bombardments with the archetype of seven and later the archetype of three; the smoke and locusts rising from the abyss; the war in heaven when Michael and his angels fight the dragon and its angels; the assignment of the number 666 to one of the two beasts; the eternal torture by fire; harvesting and giant imagery; the seven bowls of plagues; the great prostitute who made the population of the world drunk with the wine of her adultery; the imagery of the Last Judgment; the mandala image of the holy city of New Jerusalem; and the apocatastasis—the restitution of all things, a new heaven and earth, a new creation. Edinger criticizes the literal view of the Rapture believed by Evangelicals expecting to be transported to heaven at the time of the Second Coming: “A more negative interpretation is justified, however, for those who joyfully expect literal rescue from the coming tribulation on the basis of their elect status. Such a state of mind is dehumanizing inflation that seeks permanent relief from egohood and materiality....

These people, therefore, have abandoned allegiance to the human enterprise and abdicated commitment to the historical process.”⁵⁵ For Edinger, the Rapture “refers to the capacity to bear or endure great hardship and distress, provided one understands the circumstances to be meaningful, provided one sees the events one is suffering to be part of a larger purposeful pattern with a goal. That gives the sufferer a certain viewpoint ‘above’ the difficult circumstances, so to speak, and outside the immediate concrete events. It does not put one in heavenly bliss, to be sure, but it does make the events bearable.”⁵⁶ Pointing out that doubt and certainty is a pair of opposites, Jung maintains many people cling with absolute conviction to belief systems that are intellectual untenable and refractory to common sense because opening the door to skepticism would leave them bereft of soothing beliefs.

Jung and thus Edinger pay particular importance to the vision in chapter 12 involving the Sun-Moon Woman, the most important image in Revelation from a psychological point of view. A great sign appears in heaven: a pregnant woman robed in the sun, wearing a crown of twelve stars, who is standing on the moon. With a huge red dragon standing by to devour her child, she gives birth to a son “who was to rule all the nations with an iron scepter, and the child was taken straight up to God and his throne, while the woman escaped into the desert....” (Rev. 12:5–6). Jung emphasizes, “we must dwell for a moment on the figure of the mother. She is ‘a woman clothed with the sun.’ Note the simple statement ‘a woman’—an ordinary woman, not a goddess and not an eternal virgin immaculately conceived. No special precautions exempting her from complete womanhood are noticeable, except the cosmic and naturalistic attributes which mark her as an *anima mundi* [world soul] and peer of the primordial cosmic man, or Anthropos.”⁵⁷ The woman clothed with the sun “is the feminine Anthropos, the counterpart of the masculine principle. The pagan Leto motif is eminently suited to illustrate this, for in Greek mythology matriarchal and patriarchal elements are about equally mixed. The stars above, the moon below, in the middle the sun.... this symbolism

55. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, 39.

56. *Ibid.*, 40.

57. Jung, “Answer to Job,” *CW11*, par. 711.

reveals the whole mystery of the 'woman': she contains in her darkness the sun of 'masculine' consciousness, which rises as a child out of the nocturnal sea of the unconscious, and as an old man sinks into it again. She adds the dark to the light, symbolizes the hierogamy of opposites, and reconciles nature with spirit."⁵⁸ Thus, "The son who is born of these heavenly nuptials is perforce a *complexio oppositorum*, a uniting symbol, a totality of life. John's unconscious, certainly not without reason, borrowed from Greek mythology in order to describe this strange eschatological experience, for it was not on any account to be confused with the birth of the Christ-child which had occurred long before under quite different circumstances."⁵⁹

Edinger explains Jung is proposing "the idea that the next incarnation of the Self is symbolized by the birth of this child, and that as it appears in the individuation process, it will be born out of the ordinary human being and not the special purified one represented by the Virgin Mary. He points out that the child is born out of the union of opposites. Since the woman is clothed in the sun and has the moon at her feet, she personifies the *coniunctio* of Sol and Luna,"⁶⁰ the masculine and the feminine, which are images found in alchemy. In Revelation, avers Jung,

The man-child is 'caught up' to God, who is manifestly his father, and the mother is hidden in the wilderness. This would seem to mean that the child-figure will remain latent for an indefinite time and that its activity is reserved for the future. The story of Hagar may be a prefiguration of this. The similarity between this story and the birth of Christ obviously means no more than that the birth of the man-child is an analogous event.... This strange replication or duplication of the characteristic events in Christ's life gave rise to the conjecture that a second Messiah is to be expected at the end of the world. What is meant here cannot be the return of Christ himself, for we are told that he would come 'in the clouds of heaven,' but not be *born* a second

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., par. 712.

60. Edward F. Edinger, *The Aion Lectures: Explaining the Self in C.G. Jung's Aion* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1996), 89.

time, and certainly not from a sun-moon conjunction.... The fact that John uses the myth of Leto and Apollo in describing the birth may be an indication that the vision, in contrast to the Christian condition, is a product of the unconscious.⁶¹

Edinger opines, “The man-child who is caught up to God is an image of the Self which is to be realized through the efforts of the ordinary person at the end of the Christian aeon. The image is a prefiguration of the discovery of the individuation process, which is why Jung paid so much attention to it.”⁶² The inner child is born of the masculine-feminine conjunction, a reconciliation of the opposites. One result of a successful individuation is to rediscover one’s inner child, through whom one will feel joyful, free from conflict, and attuned to nature. Mythical elements, including those found in biblical literature, reflect an inner drama.

In connection with manifestations of the apocalypse archetype in individuals, Edinger helpfully emphasizes the need for Jungian psychologists to recognize its imagery as “the emergence of the Self into conscious realization.”⁶³ He identifies four aspects of the archetype that apply to individual expressions as well as to apocalyptic literature: Revelation, Judgment, Destruction or Punishment, and a New World: “1) ‘Revelation’ has the psychological correlate of a shattering new insight accompanied by the flow of transpersonal images into consciousness. 2) ‘Judgment’ is experienced in the form of an abrupt awareness of the shadow, which at times can be so overpowering that it can threaten complete demoralization. When someone is confronted with his dark and dubious nature that he has known only abstractly and intellectually, but then it suddenly comes into focus as living concrete reality—that is a big shock. 3) The theme of ‘Destruction or Punishment’ is manifested as the individual’s anxiety in the midst of this transformation ordeal. 4) Finally, the coming of a ‘New World’ corresponds to the emergence of mandala and quaternity images within the psyche—as there begins to appear the possibility of a conscious

61. Jung, “Answer to Job,” *CW11*, par. 713.

62. Edinger, *The Aion Lectures*, 89.

63. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, p. 7.

relation to the Self and its wholeness.”⁶⁴ The last part of that statement is a little misleading: The Self is the center and the totality of one’s personality but the wholeness exists in potentia. To achieve actualized wholeness for oneself and the Self, one has to continue throughout life to reckon with one’s shadow and the anima/animus. Understanding one’s dreams is an important procedure for facilitating those tasks. The Self as center and totality is sometimes called the Greater Personality. The latter wants to incarnate, i.e., become manifest, and can’t become whole, i.e., fully realized in both meanings of the word, without the cooperation of the ego. If all the unconscious contents were to become conscious, the personality of which the ego is center and that which the inner divinity is center would be identical. The god-man’s statement “Ye are gods” would then be fully true.

Edinger’s comments on the text proper of Revelation conclude with material from chapter 21. After seeing the holy city of the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, John hears “a loud voice call from the throne, ‘Look, here God lives among human beings. He will make his home among them; they will be his people, and he will be their God, God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness or pain. The world of the past has gone.’” (Rev. 21:1–4) This is followed by “Then the One sitting on the throne spoke. ‘Look, I am making the whole of creation new.’” (Rev. 21:5) Edinger observes, “In addition to the clearly stated theme of incarnation here—‘God-with-them’—there is in the passage the very important notion of *apocatastasis*, generally translated ‘restoration’ and referring to the restitution of all things, a new heaven and earth, a new creation.”⁶⁵ For Edinger, “The idea is that originally the world was perfect, whole, complete. But Adam sinned, we are told—psychologically, ego-consciousness entered into the created world—spoiling the original state of wholeness. At the appointed time, however, that original state of wholeness is going to be restored... .”⁶⁶ In the third century, Origen was a proponent of *apocatastasis*, even claiming that the devil will be redeemed, which is akin to the

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid., 170.

66. Ibid.

recognition of the shadow. Branded a heretic by the Church, Origen “had a sense of ultimate wholeness, beyond the split of the Christian aeon.”⁶⁷ Edinger summarizes as follows: “Psychologically, we can understand *apocatasis* as the ego’s restored relation to the Self after a long period of estrangement. The whole process of ego development—from infancy to maturity—involves an elaborate estrangement from the original complete relation to the Self which, nevertheless, had one rather sizeable defect: it was unconscious.”⁶⁸ A relation to the Self on a conscious level is what’s needed to avoid the playing out of an actual contemporary apocalypse (global warming aside).

Z

How does the coming of the inner divinity cause us to replicate the Job experience and bring about an actual Armageddon—an Apocalypse—as part of the individuation process? In a lengthy, rather magnificent passage, Jung describes the source of humankind’s past, present, and—God help us—future difficulties:

The Book of Job shows us God at work both as creator and destroyer. Who is this God? An idea that has forced itself upon mankind in all parts of the earth and in all ages and always in similar form: an otherworldly power who has us at his mercy, which begets and kills—an image of all the necessities and inevitablenesses of life.... The primitive power which Job’s Hymn of creation vindicates, absolute and inexorable, unjust and superhuman, is a genuine and authentic attribute of the natural power of instinct and fate which ‘leads us into life,’ which makes all the world become guilty before God’ (Romans 3:19) and against which all struggle is in vain. Nothing remains for mankind but to work in harmony with this will. To work in harmony with the libido [psychic energy] does not mean letting oneself drift with it, for the psychic forces have no uniform direction, but are often directly opposed to each

67. *Ibid.*, 171.

68. *Ibid.*

other. A mere letting go of oneself leads in the shortest space of time to the most hopeless confusion. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to feel the ground-current and to know the true direction; at any rate, collisions, conflicts, and mistakes are scarcely avoidable.⁶⁹

Jung returns to the issue of the Crucifixion: “This symbol is the *cross* as interpreted of old, viz. as the tree of life or simply as the tree to which Christ is inescapably affixed. This particular feature points to the compensatory significance of the tree: the tree symbolizes that entity from which Christ had been separated and with which he ought to be connected again to make his life or his being complete. In other words, the *Crucifixus* is the symbol uniting the absolute moral opposites. Christ represents the light; the tree, the darkness...”⁷⁰ Christ was masculine (with a glimmering of androgyny) and the tree is feminine. Jung continues,

Christ is so much identical with the cross that both terms have become almost interchangeable in ecclesiastical language (f.i. ‘redeemed through Christ or through the cross’ etc.). The tree brings back all that has been lost through Christ’s extreme spiritualization, namely the elements of nature. Through its branches and leaves the tree gathers the powers of light and air, and through its roots those of the earth and the water.... This mythical complex seems to represent a further development of the old drama, existence becoming real through reflection in consciousness. But now it is the problem of dealing with the results of conscious discrimination, Job’s tragedy. The first attempt is moral appreciation and decision for the Good. Although this decision is indispensable, it is not too good in the long run.... Then the one-sided emphasis on the Good becomes doubtful, but there is apparently no possibility of reconciling Good and Evil. That is where we are now.⁷¹

69. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, CW5, par. 89.

70. Jung (Adler and Jaffé, eds.), *Letters*, vol. 2, 166.

71. *Ibid.*, 166–67.

Jung writes, “Now a new synthesis must begin. But how can absolute evil be connected and identified with absolute good? It seems to be impossible. When Christ withstood Satan’s temptation, that was the fatal moment when the shadow was cut off. Yet it had to be cut off in order to enable man to become morally conscious.”⁷² Why? The evil repressed into the unconscious during the long heyday of Christianity was an inevitable development because the opposites had to be fully separated and differentiated before they could eventually be reconciled. Further, the one-sided emphasis on the good represented an advance in morality and an antidote to the barbarism and hedonism of ancient Rome. Additionally, the feminine principle that was dominant in civilization’s early period, when our species was living mostly instinctually out of the unconscious matrix (as well as close to the earth during the cultivation of agriculture), was increasingly repressed as the ego, the center of consciousness, became lordly and a dissociation occurred between consciousness and the unconscious, a sure sign of mental illness. Says Edinger, “When the Self comes, it necessarily brings the ‘opposites,’ since they are its essential content. As long as the Self is unconscious, however, these opposites lie side by side peacefully—the ‘lion lies down with the lamb’—because there is no consciousness of their distinction or separateness (the condition of early childhood). But once this essential content touches the area of consciousness, the opposites split apart, and the individual ego is confronted with ‘conflict.’ Then, there arises the crucial question whether or not the ego is able to contain the conflict of opposites as a psychological problem to be met with consciousness.”⁷³ The coming of the Self “brings with it not only ‘spiritual’ but also ‘animal’ transpersonal energies.”⁷⁴ For Jung, “All opposites are of God, therefore man must bend to this burden; and in so doing he finds that God in his ‘oppositeness’ has taken possession of him, incarnated himself in him. He becomes a vessel filled with divine conflict.”⁷⁵

Revelation is, as Edinger states, “a massive image of the activation

72. *Ibid.*, 166.

73. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, 174–75.

74. *Ibid.*, 108.

75. Jung, “Answer to Job,” *CW11*, par. 659.

of the collective unconscious, the coming of the Self and its conscious realization.”⁷⁶ He continues, “If we put it in calm, objective, clinical terms, what this imagery is picturing is the process of the relativization of the ego.... That is the event that occurs when the ego has a decisive encounter with the Self. That experience, almost regularly, is accompanied by terror and the sense of catastrophic destruction, because the ego is centered in itself, you see, and the prospect of being judged and relativized is an absolute disaster when one encounters it decisively.”⁷⁷ Psychologically speaking, “the ‘Apocalypse’ means the momentous event of the coming of the Self into conscious realization.... it is a momentous event—literally world-shattering.... the shattering of the world as it has been, followed by its reconstitution.”⁷⁸ John in his vision is anticipating the ego’s loss of control before its salubrious rapprochement with the inner divinity, albeit in a subordinate position. Noting that the word “apocalypse” has come to mean catastrophe, Edinger continues, “And I think that is the correct and appropriate way of seeing it in all collective manifestations of the archetype, because collective manifestations of the archetype are by definition *unconscious* manifestations of the archetype acted out concretely.”⁷⁹ Astonishingly, “Mankind is now caught up in the process of divine transformation. God has fallen into man and man has become a participant in the divine drama. This fact remained on the symbolic, projected level as long as the process was confined to one man (Christ) who was worshipped as divine. But now, with the psychological understanding of this imagery, the experience becomes available potentially to all individuals.”⁸⁰

Edinger explains, “What usually happens is that the individual is not able to contain this ‘warring’ within one’s own self, and the conflict of opposites spills out into the outer world by way of projection. And it is then that the constellated opposites live themselves out not in the vessel of the individual psyche, but in the vessel of society as a whole. This is precisely what is happening today. The God-image is living out

76. Edinger, *The Transformation of the God-Image*, 100.

77. *Ibid.*

78. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, 5.

79. *Ibid.*, 12.

80. Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 75.

its oppositeness in the bitter factional disputes breaking out all over the world....”⁸¹ He makes the point, however, “that if we understand the image of the ‘Apocalypse’—when we see it in its manifestation, both inner and outer—we do not have to be overcome by it or possessed by it. It is awesome, to be sure, but it is humanized by being understood.”⁸² And he emphasizes, “‘Apocalypse’ imagery for the *individual* signifies disaster only if the ego is alienated and antagonistic toward the realities that the Self is bringing into consciousness... But if the ego is open and co-operates with the ‘coming of the Self,’ the very same imagery can signify, as Jung puts it, “a broadening out of man to the whole man.”⁸³”⁸⁴ Each of us undergoes individuation, making progress without knowing formally of the process, but conscious awareness of its elements fosters greater growth while making sense of our lives.

Edinger speaks again of “the *meaning* of the vast collective upheaval of which we are now in the beginning stages; namely, that it is the coming of the Self into collective awareness, the ‘incarnation of the God-image’ with all its paradoxical ambiguity, a God who unites within himself both good and evil,”⁸⁵ the advent of the next stage in the evolution of the God-image. Unfortunately, “Yet, there is no doubt from the *psychological* data that the Apocalypse is now living itself out in the collective psyche in an unconscious and, therefore, destructive way. The evidence is everywhere. The Self is coming, and the phenomena that ought to be *experienced consciously and integrated by the individual in the course of the individuation process* are occurring unconsciously and collectively in society as a whole.”⁸⁶ The task is to integrate God’s dark side, which is our own archetypal shadow. The coming of the Self is desirable because, as Jung points out, “Without the integration of evil there is no totality....”⁸⁷ Unless the evil aspect of the Self is integrated into conscious awareness, our goose is cooked. From a psychological point of view, global warming has been caused by the

81. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, 175.

82. *Ibid.*, 13–14.

83. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, CW14, par. 209.

84. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, 182.

85. *Ibid.*, 172.

86. *Ibid.*

87. Jung, “A Psychological Approach to the Trinity,” CW11, par. 232.

base instinct of greed getting out of control, together with a rupture of our relationship with Mother Nature. For Edinger, “The “coming of the Self” is imminent and the process of collective ‘individuation’ is living itself out in human history. One way or another, the world is going to be made a single whole entity. But it will be unified either in mutual mass destruction or by means of mutual human consciousness.”⁸⁸

Edinger believes the Apocalypse “has already started. It is manifesting itself in international relations; in the breakdown of the social structures of Western civilization; in political, ethnic, and religious groupings; as well as in the psyches of individuals.”⁸⁹ There were two World Wars the twentieth century involving white, Christian nations (except for Japan) thought to be in the vanguard of civilization. Since then, the West and now the East are becoming further alienated from what it should mean to be human, with the result that we now live in a global society—a positive development—that is crazy-making and even insane as it tries with difficulty to knit together. Apart from global warming, we are confronted with the shortcomings of capitalism, an economic system that has arguably outlived its usefulness. Like socialism, it totally ignores the psyche and the inner goal of wholeness of personality. Unless racism, world-wide income inequality, and immigration issues are addressed in a fair and just manner, the United States and other countries will at some point explode with widespread rioting. America’s citizenry is already divided into two camps and insurrection is in the air. Morality and integrity have gone missing—anything goes—among many politicians and their constituents. Many of us escape much of the time into virtual reality, a pastime with as many ills as benefits. Materialism crows the loudest and rules our roost. Warped and warping ideas hold sway. Life is meaningless according to most intellectuals. Regressive thinking has reappeared. Civilization is devolving.

We have reached high noon, a period marked by the ego’s height of arrogance and resultant self-blinding. New ideas are needed to launch a new epoch and, fortunately, Jungian thought is in the on-

88. Edinger, *Archetype of the Apocalypse*, 174.

89. *Ibid.*, 5.

deck circle. *The coming into consciousness of the inner divinity is probably the long intimated and anticipated Second Coming of the Messiah*, a stage in the personal and collective individuation processes. Towards the end of his autobiography *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, written late in life, Jung muses, “The world into which we are born is brutal and cruel, and at the same time of divine beauty. Which element we think outweighs the other, whether meaninglessness or meaning, is a matter of temperament. If meaninglessness were absolutely preponderant, the meaningfulness of life would vanish to an increasing degree with every step of our development. But that is—or seems to me—not the case. Probably, as in all metaphysical questions, both are true: Life is—or has—meaning and meaninglessness. I cherish the anxious hope that meaning will preponderate and win the battle.”⁹⁰ The future of life on earth hangs in the balance.

Jim Siegel is a former investment banker (Kuhn, Loeb & Co.), arts executive (The Joffrey Ballet), and health administrator (Cancer Research Institute). He has taught a course in values at Fordham Business School (“The Bottom Bottom Line”) and was a visiting research associate at Union Theological Seminary. The author of *Comeuppance*, a philosophical meditation published by the Philosophical Library, he is completing a book called *The Inner Divinity: A New World-View Based on Carl Jung’s Wildly Misunderstood Thought*. Jim’s writing has appeared in the Jungian journal *Spring*. Jim can be reached at jimsiegel77@yahoo.com. He wishes to thank Vincent Wimbush for the privilege of having this essay published in The Abeng.

90. Jung (Jaffé, ed.), *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 358–59