

MEDICINE WHEEL, MANDALA, AND JUNG

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“Ask the beasts and they will teach you, and the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth and it will teach you, and the fish of the sea will explain to you.” *Job 12: 7-9*

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written regarding the thinking, theory, and praxis that encompass Jung’s contribution to humanity. Unfortunately there has been very little written regarding Indigenous Native American thought, theory, or practice in the area of Native psychology that is not reductionist in nature. Much of what is written in this area is from a Western empirical framework that attempts to make sense of a worldview that is fundamentally different than the worldview of the Western mind-set.¹ A fundamental difference that may separate the two cosmologies is that Jung’s system is influenced largely by Hegelian dialectics,² while Native psychology does

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not reflect an antagonistic relationship between the conscious psyche and the unconscious/spirit world.

Dialectic consciousness predisposes the medical model to be one of antagonism where the doctor is to battle the illness and thus eradicate it. Native American cosmology is one in which the doctor forms a relationship with the whole life-world, including sickness, which is understood as a loss of harmony in the person, family, and tribe. It makes intuitive sense as to why these two profound systems of healing and relating to the psyche, spirit, and world are seen as being different, yet I believe there are sufficient similarities that eventually will allow both systems to evolve into a comprehensive therapeutic system that will enhance healing of psyche and body. This is all the more so when Jungian theory plays an integral part in the picture. In this paper I will illustrate some of the distinct differences between the two systems that lead to similar ends by re-visiting and analyzing some of Jung's major theoretical contributions from a Native perspective that is based on several decades of my clinical work with the Native psyche.

It is critical to note that there is no single essential Native perspective due to the fact that there are several hundred distinct tribal communities in North America. When I refer to Native psychology or epistemology I am speaking to ideas and insights that have been amalgamating for several decades. These ideas, constructs, and ways of being in the life-world have constellated in my psyche after working therapeutically with Native people from at least one hundred tribal groups. A sample of 100 out of 550 is a significant sample in most empirically driven research. In psychological research inferences often are made with much smaller samples, and such inferences often lead to policy statements as well as treatment regimens.

I became keenly aware early on in my clinical work with Native people that much of the psychotherapeutic approaches in use at the time were not being received very well, and at times the therapy was being rejected outright by the communities I was working with. As I attempted to use behavioral and cognitive therapies with my patients, they insisted on talking about their dreams. I realized that dreams had importance, and the dreams that I had in my life had a deep impact on me; but I was not aware of the "how-to of dreams" in a therapeutic context. What is profoundly interesting is the fact that by simply

listening to the dreams of my patients, they began to heal from serious symptoms that afflicted them.

Shortly after I decided to ask all my patients for dreams, I was asked to see an elder from the community. The visit to the elder proved to be my entry into the world of archetypes, complexes, spirits, and soul. This elder, without saying so, became my root teacher in this new world of soul (details of this teaching are found in my book *Buddha in Redface*).³ Unknown to me at the time, Tarrence, my “Buddha in Redface,” had asked to see me for two reasons: 1) to see if I was teachable; 2) to ensure that I was not using dreams as a way of hurting the psyche of the community as he was keenly aware of how the principle of evil (shadow) becomes constellated in the healing process and must be balanced during the therapeutic/healing ceremony that patients and I were involved in. During the first meeting with him, I literally almost lost consciousness and my ego wanted to have nothing to do with him. Later I realized that my ego was not developed sufficiently to understand the transmission being imparted by this holy man and for this reason reacted by trying to lose consciousness in the presence of overwhelming insight that I had no frame of reference or context for assimilating. Somehow I persisted and his teachings became the seeds of much of the work I do, write about, and teach.

The three years that I spent as his pupil (although at the time I had no idea I was his pupil) were very frustrating because he would talk about things that appeared completely irrational and made no sense to my ego. In retrospect I can categorize these three years as one long Koan that took me to the brink of soul and loss of soul. Once Tarrence left for the spirit world I realized that he was indeed a holy man and had been teaching me about soul and healing of soul in a manner that was painful and frightening and felt like it posed a risk to my soul. Tarrence did not refer to Jung, yet Jung’s work seems to refer to Tarrence (in spirit if not in letter) in a manner that is very intimate and knowing.

A critical difference in the way that Native people approach dreams and understanding psyche is the manner of approach. Jungian analysis understands manifestations of the psyche as emanating from the unconscious, and these manifestations mostly are seen as projections. The fact that they are seen as projections leads me to believe that these projections must exist within the psyche and therefore search for the

“hook” that the projection can hook onto. Most of the patients that I have seen do not look at psyche and spirit in the same manner. The belief system of many Native people is that we are part of a spiritually oriented cosmology that manifests phenomena in a spiritual manner and these need to be approached and understood in a way that is congruent to spiritual relationships in this plane of existence.

Thus, dreams, visions, and active imagination, from a Native perspective, are gifts from the spirit world and proper etiquette is required when relating to these energies that have an awareness and consciousness within themselves and do not require our ego to make them conscious. Because they are a gift from the “Mystery”⁴ it is proper to relate to them by giving an offering in order to maintain the relationship to the sacred. In Jungian psychology the approach to the unconscious has been termed by Jung and his followers as “a confrontation with the unconscious”.⁵ The notion of confrontation and antagonism with these powerful energies is foreign to most of the Native people I have worked with. Instead a relationship is sought with the “visitor from the spirit world” who has come to assist us in finding a relationship to the Sacred. For example, if a person is being afflicted by a psychological problem, the task is not to confront, get rid of, or have any type of adversarial relationship. Instead, the task is to get to know the spirit of the entity bringing the neurosis that in reality is motivating the person towards a closer relationship to the sacred. In the case of anxiety, which most people are eager to banish, the question would be what information—or even what gifts—the anxiety might be bringing and what is it asking of the individual. It could be alerting one to a danger; it could be forcing attention to some kind of creative or spiritual encounter that challenges the ego’s existing rigid view of its own needs. In Native way it might come in the form of an animal symbol in a dream—a muskrat, a badger, or bear, for example—in which case the dreamer would be called upon to explore the actual and symbolic characteristics of the muskrat, badger or bear.

JUNG, JUNGIANs, SHAMANS, AND MEDICINE PEOPLE

It is important to note that Jung himself was very different from Jungians in a fundamental way. Donald Sandner makes a brilliant distinction between the different healing traditions as they are found all over the world.⁶ Sandner’s research has shown that there are at least

three distinct types of healing traditions that can be related to Jung and analysts:

1. The shaman enacts and transforms the symbolism in his own person through periods of ecstatic trance.
2. The medicine man draws upon a vast body of traditional symbolism, but he does not live it out. Medicine men/women are initiated by a body of healers, who are already practicing through a body of knowledge that is passed on from one generation to the next. A key difference between the shaman and medicine man/woman is that the shaman is initiated directly by the sacred so that being initiated by existing practitioners is not necessary.
3. The psychotherapist does not have ecstatic journeys, nor dancing, singing, or sandpainting. There is no given large body of symbolism for the psychotherapist to draw upon for the benefit of the patient.

Jung himself was initiated via the shamanic tradition. His journey through the desert and underworld, as described in his *Red Book*, are classic to shamanic initiations the world over.⁷ In *The Red Book*⁸ and in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*,⁹ Jung describes how his psyche was dismembered, much in the manner that shamans are dismembered, and came back from the underworld with his new song, as is the requirement of the newly initiated shaman who survives the ordeal. In Native American healing circles when a person is going through the type of neurosis or psychosis that is part of the call to becoming a shaman, the community understands this illness as “Indian sickness.” In order for the person to be restored to health, the person must sing their new song. Jung’s new song is his *Collected Works*, *The Red Book*, and other publications.

From the very start of the initiation process we see remarkable similarities between the shamanic call and Jung’s own process of acquiring and singing his song. A problem (as I see it) for Jung in his process is that he did not have a tribal tradition that would allow him to make complete sense of his initiation. Instead, he spent a large portion of his life trying to understand his vision via the rules of logical positivism as is reflected in his attempts to “scientize” his experience.

Jungians, on the other hand, (for the most part) take the song that Jung sang and try to make sense of it in their own lives and work by undergoing a training process that has been prescribed by their Jungian elders, thus removing themselves from the direct shamanic experience that Jung went through. The Sandner model illustrates that the modern analyst is more in line with the medicine man tradition rather than the shamanic one because the analytic process does not allow for the analyst to “live out the myth in the session,” i.e. the analyst does not take in the illness/neurosis of the patient and transform it from within the analyst. The Jungian analyst’s initiation requires that they go through their own analysis by someone who is initiated as well as through a long course of training where they draw from a vast body of Jungian symbolism, writings, and knowledge. As far as having a new song, the new analyst may have to write a dissertation that is based largely on the writing of the original shaman/medicine man, Jung himself. One of the main differences in the analyst/medicine man tradition is that these individuals do not necessarily have to go through the Indian sickness and their calling may emerge from ego/personal needs for more knowledge and possibly for power.¹⁰ Therefore, we have a parallel between Jungian analysts and the Navajo medicine man tradition, as Sander illustrates, and this parallel speaks to similarities that may exist between the two worlds.

However, despite similarities in the initiatory process of Jungian analysts and medicine men, there are profound differences in the fundamental, underlying archetype that drives the process. Jung comes from a patriarchal tradition where science rules the worldview, and Jung in his *Collected Works* makes no secret that he is first and foremost a man of science (in Jung’s *Red Book*, on the other hand, he rants and raves against rationalism and suggests that—at the time of writing *The Red Book* at least—he preferred the irrational to the rational). That said, Jung comes from a patriarchal Western tradition of healing where rationalism, empiricism, and the scientific method form the altar upon which all knowing is based. Native Healers, on the contrary, have a tradition that is rooted in a female mythology, and it is direct experience of the world, spirit, and psyche that the Native healer utilizes as part of the healing work they do within a specified traditional/tribal context.

The fact that Jung came from a masculine/scientific mythos sheds light on his intrigue with “primitive” peoples. By using Jung’s own concepts of anima and animus we can make some logical assumptions as to what was pulling Grandpa Jung to be with so-called primitives. Is it possible that Jung was projecting his collective Western anima onto the collective psyche of a more female, matrilineal group of people? Was he even trying in some way to heal the collective split in the Western psyche that occurred when patriarchy became supreme? Why else was he so driven to the Taos people, and why did he persist for so long in trying to find out the workings of the psyche of the Taos people?¹¹ Perhaps Jung was searching for balance within himself between patriarchal anima and matrilineal anima as well as for balance in the collective, which is part of the shaman’s task, i.e. the shaman learns his new song in the underworld during his initiatory process and then brings this new song, or medicine, back for the community.

One of the cornerstones of Jungian and Native healing is the process of transference (much has been written on this topic, so I will limit this discussion to fundamental parallel processes.). Having been the most prominent disciple of Freud, it stands to reason that Jung’s foundational notions about transference were influenced by Freudian ideas on transference. Native healers’ awareness of transference also has similarities to Freudian ideas, although these Native ideas on the topic emerged independent of Freud and have been acknowledged and taken into account in Native healing for hundreds of years.

Native healers are aware of the pitfalls and the issues that can cloud the therapeutic process by the mind wandering into places that are not part of the therapeutic ceremony. Perhaps the most common kind of transference that is found in both the Jungian/Freudian and Native healing ceremony is when sexual energy is transferred to and from the healer. Native healers who have learned the meaning of this type of transference know that this sexual energy emerges from the depths of our bodies, being part of earth, and that earth’s regenerative principle is manifested in this type of transference in an attempt to restore harmony between masculine and female energies. Native healers openly talk about masculine/feminine air, water, fire, and earth as integral energies that act as forces that bring the patients’ air, water, fire, and earth into balance. So in Native way we speak of male rain and female rain, male lightning and female lightning, etc. Native healers realize

that these energies can only be balanced if there is a complete union between masculine and feminine, much in the manner that Jung discusses in his ideas borrowed from the alchemical *Rosarium Philosophorum*.¹²



Figure 1: Medicine wheel.

MEDICINE WHEEL, TYPOLOGY, AND TRANSFERENCE

There are similarities between Jung's typology and Native thinking. A fundamental similarity is that both systems of being in the life-world have emerged with a medicine wheel or mandala as part of the understanding of the human psyche. In both systems we find that there are six distinct points within the personality, which correspond to the cardinal directions. Those cardinal points are the four directions—North, South, East, and West, as well as above and below. There is another level that Freudian thought did not address that I believe Jung completely understood, and this idea is also very well known in both Native shamanic and medicine traditions. The medicine wheel symbolizes what Jung refers to as “individuation” that in many Native tribes is experienced as the struggle for attaining wholeness, harmony, and psychic balance. The medicine wheel is a circle that is in movement.

At each of the cardinal points there are spirit “grandfathers and grandmothers” that take the supplication/prayer of the person and take these prayers directly to the Great Mystery. By doing so the supplicant places him/herself at the center of the cardinal points that is known as the seventh sacred direction. At this point the supplicant is in harmony and balance with the spirit world as well as with the physical world. Natural law¹³ moves towards harmony and this movement of energy towards harmony moves to the center of the medicine wheel/mandala which the patient and healer are part of during the ceremony of analysis or traditional ritual. A main difference in Jung’s mandala and the Native medicine wheel is that the medicine wheel is not static and therefore in actuality it is a swastika. Jung’s typology can be seen through a graphic representation of a mandala as in Figure 2.

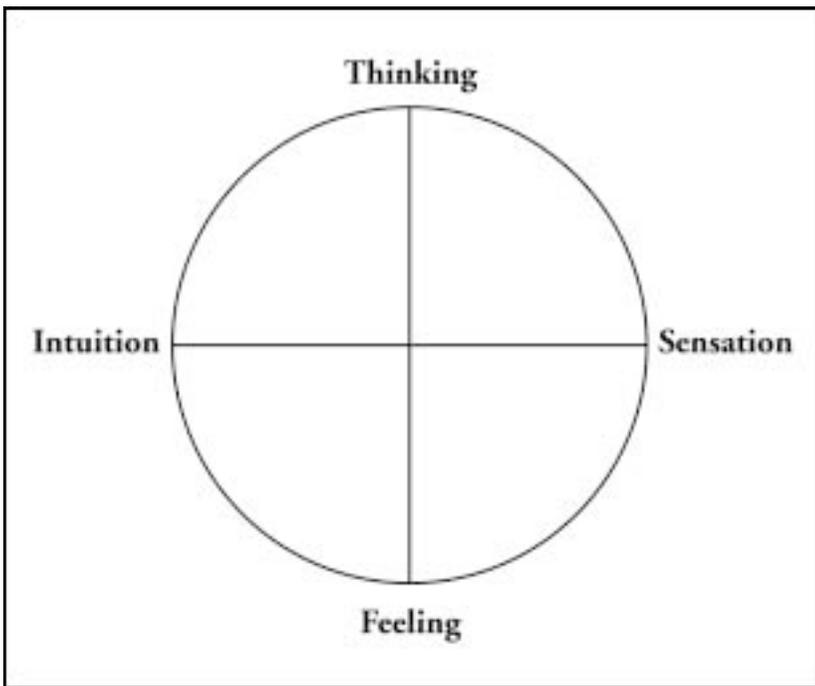


Figure 2: This figure illustrates a Mandala that is static. The types are fixed in opposition to one another, and this typology is part of Jung’s interpretation of how these parts of the psyche interact with one another as the person moves toward individuation.

Through their training, the healer/analyst either consciously or unconsciously provides the empty space for the transference of the energies mentioned earlier (male/female, air, earth, water, fire). Ideally, if the healer were in perfect balance with these energies, the transference would be instantly resolved by the energy in question being united with its opposite and balancing out. This ideal situation where all energies are balanced does not exist in real life and as a result, the energy that is attracted may be transferred from the analyst/patient to the healer. Most Native shaman/healers are aware of this type of transference and understand it as a direct transfer of the illness/sickness/spirit of the patient to them. The healer/shaman either transforms the illness within themselves or sends the energy to an external source. When this occurs Native healers have ceremonial cleansing ceremonies for themselves to balance out the energy that has been transferred to them. This cleansing usually entails giving the “sickness” back to the earth with the intent that the earth will transform this energy into healing energy for all beings. The duality of “sickness and healing” as being part of the same energetic process, is fully realized, and most Native healers know that all healing ceremonies carry a shadow potential which must be addressed and in order to restore balance within the energy that is being dealt with.

Jung understood the idea of the transfer of energy as a real event much in the same way that Native healers understand it. Although Jung struggled to be a Western scientist, he did have his slips which allow us to see his deeper understanding of the transference. An example of how Jung’s thinking on transference parallels those of Native healers can be seen in the following quote:

Many projections can ultimately be integrated back into the individual once he has recognized their subjective origin; others resist integration, and although they may be detached from their original objects, they thereupon transfer themselves to the doctor...In other words, the neurotic maladjustment of the patient is now transferred to him...It is inevitable that the doctor should be influenced to a certain extent and even that his nervous health should suffer.¹⁴

Most Native healers would completely agree with this interpretation of transference. Later on, Jung clarifies his ideas on transference by making stronger statements. For example, he says:

The doctor, by voluntarily and consciously taking over the psychic sufferings of the patient, exposes himself to the overpowering contents of the unconscious and hence also to their inductive action... Yet this lack of insight is an ill counselor, for the unconscious infection brings with it the therapeutic possibility—which should not be underestimated—of the illness being transferred to the doctor.¹⁵

The similarities in the understanding of transference between the Native view and Jung are truly remarkable. Jung utilizes Western concepts such as the word “unconscious”, which can easily be substituted by the word “spirit” in the Native understanding. If we do that, we then have an exact copy of understanding between the two worlds of the phenomenon of transference. Because these energies emerge out of natural law, it makes sense that both systems of healing would have a parallel understanding of the energies that underlie the kind of relationship that brings harmony and *coniunctio* to the healing process. Even though there is a difference in the mythological makeup of Western and Native American people, the same underlying principles of balance and harmony are operative in both. Regarding the psyche and natural law, Jung explains, “...if only because, together with life itself, it is the only natural factor capable of converting statistical organizations which are subject to natural law into higher or unnatural states, in opposition to the rule of entropy that runs throughout the inorganic realm”.¹⁶ In essence, as we move closer to the archetypes and the place where archetypes are born, we are moving to a place in which natural law pervades. The fact that natural law governs the birth of Jung’s archetypes as well as Native spirit gives us a place where both healing systems are exactly the same.¹⁷

“Ah my brother, you will never know the happiness of thinking nothing and doing nothing. This is the most delightful thing there is next to sleep. So we were before birth: and so shall be after death”.¹⁸ These were the words spoken to Jung by Taos Native, Ochwiay Bianco, when Jung visited Taos in 1925. On the surface it appears as if Ochwiay Bianco is content with not knowing and might perhaps become the object of stereotypes that are directed at Native People. In reality, he is deconstructing Jung’s typology without ever having heard of Jung’s typology. In essence, he is talking about a transcendent dimension where there is no thinking function as a dominant function and about

a totally different form of consciousness. In no way is the Taos person talking about remaining unconscious in the Jungian sense, and this is manifested in the tremendous amount of energy that is expended by Native people in ceremony with the sole purpose of becoming aware of awareness itself.

Native psychology differs in its understanding of psyche, at least as it relates to Jung's typology as described in his classic text on this topic. Where Jung has Intuition opposite of Sensation on the horizontal axis, it would make more sense from the Native perspective to have intuition/sensation on the same point of the horizontal axis. This would leave the right side of the horizontal axis empty if this were a static model. The Native understanding of the psyche as not separate from the rest of cosmology allows for sensation and intuition to be the same as part of earth's awareness, i.e. psyche. Therefore, by having these functions rotating around the center or the 7th Sacred direction it is possible for earth awareness to become aware of itself in the human

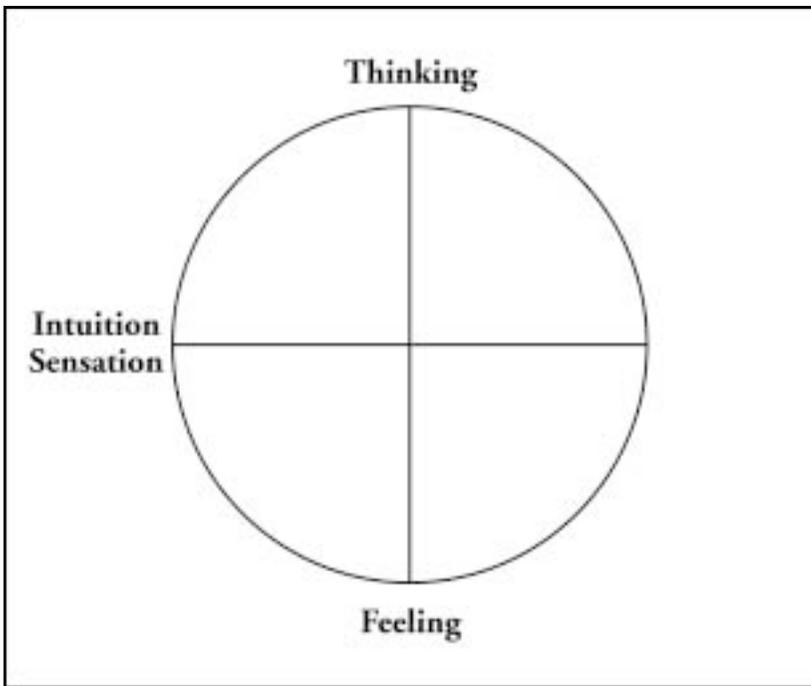


Figure 3: Earth's Awareness.

psyche as the source of all forms that give all meaning to our lives. It is in this dynamic relationship of earth and matter where earth's intuition becomes known to the individual as the knower of awareness that becomes aware of consciousness.

It is interesting that the Sanskrit origin of the word Swastika means "that which is associated with well-being." Because energy seeks to balance itself, it moves in the direction of an open space—it's more mercurial and directionless, but in order to make the point I use a vector image here.

Intuition, understood from a Native cosmology, is that instant awareness that emerges out of earth contact, i.e. the sensation function to the Jungian theoretician. Jung came close to the Native understanding of intuition as grounded in earth contact when he said in his Zarathustra seminars: "You probably noticed that peculiar expression, the four square body. The body is of course very much the earth, and it speaketh of the meaning of the earth means that inasmuch as the

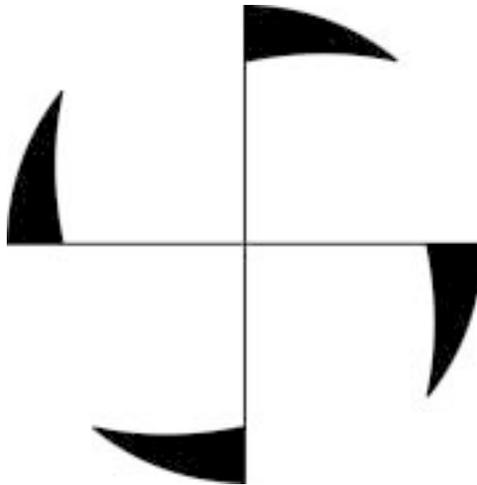


Figure 4: This figure illustrates a Medicine Wheel that is in movement. The types are not static and are in constant movement around the center. Earth awareness develops as intuition/sensation rotate together around the center or the Seventh Sacred Direction in an act of the ongoing dream dreaming itself and in so doing creation of awareness that becomes aware of consciousness develops.

body has produced consciousness, it produces the meaning of the earth... This shows that if one remains persistent in the hidden, unspoken purpose, then the very nature of the earth, the hidden lines in the earth will lead you".¹⁹ Earth intuition can be understood through the medicine wheel teaching of the seventh sacred direction (the center of the six cardinal points). The center is where the spatiotemporal reality becomes united with the transcendental and becomes the *axis mundi* within our realm of existence. Within the center it is possible to be at one with the earth's knowing, which is manifested as intuition in the human psyche. Most Native healers that deal with this type of understanding would have said what Jung said in the above statement in precisely the same manner, if not the same words. The fact that the earth (which is what our human body is comprised of) produces consciousness illustrates to me that sensation, or contact with the earth, becomes knowing or awareness of the earth herself. Therefore, all that we know is "earth awareness" and is experienced when the human psyche is at the seventh direction. This "earth awareness" must be brought into balance by the ego through a balancing of typology as taught by Jung. Typology from the Native understanding leaves an open space on the horizontal plane where "intuition" is placed in Jung's schema. (See Figure 3) Once the individual has become aware/conscious of earth via the thinking and feeling function, the opportunity arises for a more transcendent understanding. The person could be content to sit at the center of the cardinal points and be at the seventh sacred direction, which by all explanations could be an ideal form of balance and harmony within the personality. (See Figure 1) However, typology from a Native perspective takes balance and harmony to another level through a purposeful disruption of the achieved balance. While it is believed that one can sit at the seventh sacred direction at the moment of death, once all the functions and awareness are in balance, this balance and nirvana state unfortunately is not allowed while in the earth body because the earth continues to evolve towards higher consciousness. This notion of the evolution of earth awareness—of psyche—is very consistent with Jung's theory of individuation. Underlying this we again find that there is natural law (Jung's unconscious, via the archetype of the Self) driving the process.

One possibility of the open space in Native typology (the open space in the intuition side of Jung's typology) could be understood as

the archetype of the Self. In the Jungian view,

... the Self is a quantity that is superordinate to the conscious ego. [See Figure 3] It embraces not only the conscious but also the unconscious psyche, and is therefore, so to speak, a personality which we also are... But it transcends our powers of imagination to form a clear picture of what we are as a self, for in this operation the part would have to comprehend the whole. There is little hope of our ever being able to reach even approximate consciousness of the self.²⁰

Therefore it seems that the empty space in the typology construct indicates to both the Native and to Jung that there is a part of the personality that remains part of the Mystery, yet is driven by natural law to continue its quest towards awareness/consciousness. If the person has integrated many of the complexes, including parts of the shadow, ego, and portions of archetypes which would create chaos in the individual if left undifferentiated, then the ego complex can actually sit at the seventh sacred direction and be aware of the journey that is required by the opening of the quadrant of the Self/Mystery archetype. This describes what Jungians refer to as “Ego-Self dialogue.”

Fundamental differences between the Western and Native worlds can be seen in the manifestation of ritual or ceremony. The ritual of Jungian analysis takes place in an office container and has its roots in the alchemical hermetic vessel. This vessel is left up to the imagination of the analyst and the analysand within the transference for the most part and much of the actual work is done via dreams (similar to Native healing) and active imagination.

In Native therapy, active imagination also is part of the healing/analysis. However, instead of the container being a hermetic vessel (mandala) in the form of the analyst’s consulting room, the container becomes a ceremonial earth place in the form of the medicine wheel—literally or intrapsychically—and thus comprises the ceremonial sacred space. Healing and awareness are made possible through an attempt at dissolution of ego in a very real and excruciating process. Once the ego complex is relegated to a position minimally available or subordinate to the Self, then it is possible to allow the unconscious to emerge with contents that need to be integrated into the personality in order for

individuation to occur. In Native ceremony, the six directions²¹ are constantly acknowledged through prayer and communication with spirit beings so as to allow for an integration of the different aspects and meanings from the cardinal points to be integrated into the personality. The “therapy ceremony” in the Native context is in movement usually in a clockwise direction, while the analytic ceremony is moving psychologically but not physically. The resultant image in the Native movement of the medicine wheel then becomes a swastika which we see depicted in much of the older Native arts such as Navajo weavings, Pueblo pottery, etc. (See Figure 4)

There are instances in which the medicine wheel can turn counter-clockwise in Native traditional ceremony. For this to happen a special individual is needed: namely a “contrary,” “trickster,” “clown,” “heyoka,” etc. These figures, generally referenced as “the contrary” have a relationship with earth awareness that allows them to move freely in and out of shadow without contaminating the healing that is taking place in the ceremony. In this manner the contrary removes most of the transference from the shaman/healer/therapist and takes this transference of the shadow upon him/herself. The contrary/trickster is known in the community, and when they emerge everyone has an understanding that other worldliness has been transcended even beyond what the shaman proper has been involved in. As far as I know, Jungian psychology is aware of the trickster and much has been written about this figure, but the trickster does not come into intentional play in the analytic process. From what I’ve observed in many analysts and their patients is that the analytic process is a very serious and somber process, perhaps with roots going back to the blank slate of the psychoanalytic therapies. However, the seriousness of the healing ceremony must be balanced, and it takes someone who is willing to intentionally move into the shadow in order to bring about balance. One method that the analyst may utilize to allow the process to move within the shadow is to allow him/herself to become irrational through the use of irrational statements that are confusing and make no sense to the ego. For example, I have suggested to patients who may be stuck in a thinking function and need to move towards feeling to utilize Coyote’s howl. This is a literal intervention where I ask the patient to howl and is an irrational request that provokes feelings and makes no sense to the thinking function. In this manner the patient can experience feeling

in a safe environment that moves them into their inferior function, which is where shadow has a tendency to hide.

Dynamically, movement of the Swastika is critical in order to avoid shadow/evil/witchcraft elements from intruding into the process. If the process is static, it opens up to malevolent forces, which can bring an end to the healing/individuation ceremony or introduce an aspect of sorcery into the process. In my experience and from what I hear from others, sometimes the analytic process becomes stuck, complacent, or shies away from difficult encounters. This notion of movement should be revisited by analytical psychology as the ceremony hopefully continues to evolve out of the static and into a more dynamic process that depicts movement. I believe that it is the static quality of analysis that leads Jung to admonish practitioners in a most harsh manner in the *Red Book* and makes a strong case that we must not follow others, including Jung or the analyst, but find our own path, much in the manner that he did. Jung was keenly aware of the pitfalls of standing still and becoming an easy target for shadow elements to creep into the process. If the hermetic vessel is sealed and not in movement, this makes for a situation that can only end in chaos and perhaps become destructive.

DREAM MEDICINE AND CONTACT WITH ENTITIES/ACTIVE IMAGINATION

Most Native American traditional healing as well as Jungian therapies have as their cornerstone a pathway into the spirit world—the unconscious or black world as it is represented in many Native Emergence myths. This pathway into the unconscious is accessible by natural law in the form of dreams. Based upon my experience, a key difference between the Native view and Jungian work is that in scientifically-based Jungian work the dream is considered as an energy that lives in the psyche, whereas in Native cosmology the psyche is merely a part of the dream. Dreams for Native people are alive, and possess consciousness/awareness; the dream knows the dreamer.

Because the dream is a live entity, the relationship to dreams and to dreaming is different in Native work than in Jungian analysis. In Jungian analysis the patient records dreams and brings them into the session, and the dreams are amplified in a prescribed manner with good efficacy. In Native traditional work it is imperative that the dreamer

have an active relationship to the dream world and demonstrates this through the exchange of gifts with the dream. For instance, I let my patients know that it is correct etiquette to give a gift to a spiritual entity when that entity has been made known to you in a dream. Therefore, when a patient has dreams it is imperative that they give an actual offering to the dream in order for the relationship to be reciprocal. A gift that the patient should make to the dream is acknowledgement and an offering of tobacco, food, water (the actual object is not as important as the intent).

An offering that is made by most Native people is an offering of Tobacco. Tobacco is a plant that has been given to human beings in order to be able to commune with the sacred and with entities that do not manifest themselves physically. All of the thoughts and prayers are given to the Tobacco and when the Tobacco is placed on the earth or smoked ceremonially, the prayers and thoughts are transmitted directly to the entity or the Great Mystery. The offering can also be food, water, minerals, or anything of value that has the intent of being an offering. The important factor here is the intent from the heart/mind of the individual.

In shamanic work the dream may be amplified in similar fashion as it is in Jungian work. However, the shaman, unlike an analyst, is expected to also have a direct path into the dream world and to possess information about the patient's dream that may have eluded the dreamer in the amplification process. (I have worked with shamans who can actually tell the dreamer his or her dream without having the dreamer tell the dream. This takes the process far beyond anything that Jung or his disciples have done and speaks to the fact that the dream is not simply a projection but an integral part of the natural world that is accessible to anyone who has that relationship with the world). Therefore, the shaman is expected to interpret the dream, if the patient cannot do so themselves. As mentioned earlier, this takes the transference to another level of expectation and will require some sort of balance as part of the protective mechanism for the shaman. The patient is usually required to help in this protective process by bringing an offering of an arrowhead, bullet, or some other similar symbolic object of war that will thwart shadow intrusions in the healing ceremony. As far as I know, the Jungian analyst only requires payment in order to conduct the session and, if the patient were to bring the analyst a

bullet, I'm not certain what the analyst would do with the offering!

Healing in both traditions (Jungian and Native) requires that direct contact be made with complexes and entities. One difference, however, is that Native healing approaches do incorporate "natural or spirit entities" within nature by name. These may be lightning, wind, a dog, an eagle, or any other representation of nature. These representations are considered to be spirit guides, "spokes-entities," between the natural world and the human dimension of the natural world. There is very little difference in the manner that Jung approached entities (complexes) and the way Native healers approach them.

Jung believed that these complexes are dynamic and impact inner and outer reality.²² For example, when working with Native patients it is important that the ailment is identified as an entity (instead of telling the patient they are alcoholic, it is better understood if the patient is told that the spirit of alcohol is visiting and possessing them) and not simply a medical diagnosis.²³ It is my view that Jung also saw these as entities that he described as complexes only to meet the scientific rigor that he was imposing on himself in his publications. *The Red Book* tells a completely different story as to how Jung approached his own psyche and the entities that he encountered there. Often these entities require direct contact to mediate and transform their energy and he personally lived this aspect of his relationship with the spirit world in his own life. In order to maintain his scientist stance he developed the method of active imagination so that his followers could have a formula in which they could both explore these complexes and at the same time be protected. In other words, he basically made the offering of the arrowhead on behalf of his followers. Jung's personal offering in this regard is dramatically depicted in the recording of his personal journey in his *Red Book*. With the publication of *The Red Book*, Jung's extraordinary journey was transformed symbolically into an arrowhead on behalf of his followers.

Active imagination is done in session and interpretation/amplification may or may not be necessary to explore the meaning of the complexes that are activated. In this context the equivalence of the arrow head protector is represented in the analytic container—a defined container (the consulting room), with definite boundaries (appointed hour when the process begins and is ended), and the analyst as a

monitor of when the process is going well and when it needs to be guided, modified or ended.

In Native healing, what Jungians would call active imagination begins instantly as soon as the presenting problem is made known. As part of the diagnostic process the healer/shaman tracks as closely to the source as possible the entity²⁴ that is bringing the symptom. Through prayer, chant, and ritual, the sickness or in Native thought, the entity, is brought into awareness and introductions are made between the entities' father, mother, grandparents, etc. and the lineage of the patient. Awareness of this lineage gives the entities a very real presence in the life-world of the patient, and this idea of providing a space where the patient can develop a relationship with and come into presence with the entity at issue is very similar to the manner in which Jung approached the psyche. One can imagine Jung asking a dream symbol of wind what message it brings.

As mentioned before, the difference between Native and analytic healing is in the manner of relationship with and etiquette between the patient and the diagnosed entity. (The diagnosis could be a violation between the spirit of an animal or some other dimension of the natural world and an individual, disrespect in dealing with a person or place, or disrespect between people.) In Native healing a bargain is made with the entity early on so as to give the patient breathing room to deal with the situation. The deal I refer to is in the form of an offering which is made by the patient to the entity in lieu of the entity causing more suffering to the patient. If more suffering is required of the patient by the entity, then the patient's offering becomes a plea to the entity for insight into the situation involving suffering.²⁵ It is also important to note that diagnosis or naming of the entity creating the problem is different between the Native and analytic approaches. In Native cosmology it is the entity (not the patient) that is named diagnostically in a naming ceremony. The patient is consciously not given a diagnosis, or name (depression, anxiety, addiction, etc.), because in Native tradition it is recognized that giving the patient a diagnostic name creates a *living* diagnosis in the patient that predisposes the patient to act in the manner prescribed by their new diagnostic name.²⁶ In most Native traditions "thought" is considered a form of mental power and can create its own reality. To talk about something, particularly to name it, is to empower it.

In many tribes people have what has become known as a “Christian” name and a spiritual name. Native people do not use their spiritual name except in ceremonial situations or when it becomes necessary to identify themselves to spiritual beings. This tradition speaks to the fact that Native people realize that we live in a natural world that has a spiritual world as a parallel to the physical plane of existence. Spiritual names are therefore used to let spirits know who they are relating to and in this manner establishing a relationship between human psyche and spirit. Because of this particular belief system, the diagnosis by a healer can have profound impact on the person being named. In Native healing, “diagnosis” is seldom given without a prescription for the psychological and spiritual repair called for. In the case of Native diagnosis, the diagnosis is of the illness, not of the person.

In my work it has become necessary to undo or redo the diagnostic manner in which we approach clinical work. Instead of diagnosing patients with the usual nosology, I shift the metaphor of the diagnosis to one that resonates with the Native life-world. In addition to changing the metaphor, I also make the process more fluid versus static in order to give the patient the space they need in their healing process. For example, if the patient is presenting with symptoms that can be defined by a depression paradigm, I tell the patient that s/he is having a visit by the spirit of sadness. By calling it a visit and naming the energy the patient can then make a relation with the energy versus wanting to get rid of “the depression” as is customary in Western therapies. In essence, this method transforms what could ordinarily be seen as part of the patient’s pathology into one in which the spirit entity of sadness is trying to teach him what he may need to know as part of his “individuation” journey.

Once the entity/diagnosis is named in this manner it opens the door for a more creative form of active imagination. The patient can then present the entity with an offering (a physical versus imaginary offering) and can begin a dialogue with the spirit of sadness. It never fails that the spirit of sadness or other entity visiting will respond either directly or shortly after in dreams or through synchronistic events. I have worked with patients who have been suffering symptoms for many years and seen many therapists to no avail. When presented with this new approach, which is more in keeping with their cosmological reality

of the universe, the patient is helped twice. I say twice because the patient is dealing directly with the entity, not simply a projection, and he is also regaining a sense of identity that is part of his ancestral makeup. The sense of identity is something that has been systematically removed from many Native people via the colonizing process that at times involved genocidal tactics by the colonizer.

The cultural and physical genocide endured by the Native people of Turtle Island²⁷ has been well documented in historical textbooks. More recently, researchers, therapists, and traditional healers in most Native communities are uncovering spiritual, psychological, and soul wounding effects. Evidence indicates that trauma suffered by ancestors is passed on to descendants unless the trauma is healed at some point in ongoing trans-generational process. This inheritance of trauma has been called historical trauma, and there is abundant literature on the subject.²⁸ Jung was aware of the importance of ancestral inheritance on many levels although he did not develop this idea fully in his writings.²⁹

JUNG, JOB, ABRAXAS, QUETZALCOATL, AND TETZCATLIPOCA

Gnostic cosmology had a profound influence on Jung and on his psychology. Although Jung may not have been a literal follower of any of the ancient Gnostic teachers, he, like the ancient Gnostics, believed in transformation and individuation that is not based on faith but on natural inner experience of the soul which is the source of Gnosis.³⁰ The colorful threads of Gnostic belief are woven throughout the writing and thinking of Jung, and these ideas led him closer to an understanding of Native cosmology, dreams, the relationship to the Sacred as well as a comprehensive understanding of the Native psyche as a whole. Jung's identification with Gnosticism is made apparent by the one sacred object that he kept on his person; the ring with the image of Abraxas—the transcendent image in Gnosticism.

A full treatment of Jung and his Gnostic roots cannot be given in this discussion simply because of space limitations and plenty has been written elsewhere on the topic. What has not been touched upon (to my knowledge) is how Jung's deep knowing of cosmology a la Gnosticism is related to Native cosmology, especially as it pertains to the Aztec and Mayan idea of the way in which the Gods functioned paralleled those of human beings. The reason that the Aztec and Mayan

understanding is of consequence is that their ideas can be traced via the manuscripts that survived, as well as first-hand accounts by the early Spanish scholar priests.³¹

Abraxas is an image that represents a union of heaven and earth. It is a dynamic that unites all opposites. Typically it is represented by a



Figure 5: Abraxas Image.

figure with a rooster's head, a man's torso, and serpent legs.

In Mayan/Aztec symbology the fact that the rooster and serpent are united in such a manner can be also clearly seen in the image of Quetzalcoatl (the only difference is that the upper part of the image in one tradition is a Rooster and in the other it is a Quetzal bird). Although roosters are limited in their flying abilities, they are still winged creatures, and it is important to note that they are masculine, while the Quetzal can fly and in the Mayan myths we can assume that they were either male or female.³² Abraxas is called "the activity of the whole" in the Fourth Sermon of the *Septem Sermones*. According to Hoeller "Abraxas exists for the perpetuating or enhancement of life, by which we must understand the life of the psyche, although physical life may not be excluded."³³

Quetzalcoatl is the primordial God of creation who with his opposite Tezcatlipoca created the universe. In one of the accounts of creation, Quetzalcoatl went into the underworld where he gathered the bones of the dead. He then sprinkled his blood on the bones and in this manner the bones came to life and became humans for the new era. The parallel idea between Abraxas and Quetzalcoatl is that the mother or giver of all forms and archetypes must have a common origin in the birthplace of archetypes.

Therefore, within this divine image we have a divinity that is complete, and Jung must have appreciated this. That is because he felt strongly that in Christianity the dark side of the God image was absent so that God left humanity with an incomplete divinity, and for this reason the Christian myth was not complete as a trinity. The dark side or shadow of the God system is there not only to make the Godhead whole; it is also there as a balance and literal mirror for God.

In the Native American myth, Tetzcatlipoca tricks Quetzalcoatl by getting him drunk and showing him a mirror that actually reflected Tetzcatlipoca's cruel face instead of the face of Quetzalcoatl (Tetzcatlipoca translated from the Nahuatl/Aztec language is "smoking mirror"). Believing he was seeing his own cruel face, Quetzalcoatl threw himself into a funeral pyre and his heart ascended into heaven and became Venus, the morning and evening star. In this myth we find the God being manipulated into having insight about the nature of life/psyche by seeing his shadow and in order to become whole a sacrifice is required by a one-sided God. Jung's insights into God's shadow are

well known. In his *Answer to Job* Jung delineates how God's shadow, Satan, holds a mirror in the face of God through his tempting/tricking God into tormenting Job. As in the Meso-American Native myth, God also was able to see his own cruel face in the smoking mirror and because of that he decided to also sacrifice Himself in order to transform and attain unity within the Godhead.

It is important to note these two parallel mythologies to gain insight into the deeper essence of the energy that gives birth to Jung's notion of archetypes. Jung understood that these came from a deep place that cannot be named, although he struggled to make the connection with matter and psyche in much of what he described.³⁴ Jung's Gnostic spirit led him into the world of Alchemy where he pursued the connection between spirit and matter. I believe that Jung knew that this connection to matter did not go far enough in understanding the psyche. It is clear from reading his First Sermon to the Dead that Jung understood that the birth of archetypes and psyche came from a place that did not adhere to the essentialism of matter. If the psyche is purely matter, it would be more predictable; Jung understood, especially in his work with dreams, that the psyche is unpredictable. It does not operate on the basis of universal "laws." Where does Jung's notion of psyche originate?

Jung gives us his answer in the first few lines of the First Sermon to the Dead:

Hear Ye: I begin with nothing. Nothing is the same as fullness. In the endless state fullness is the same as emptiness. The Nothing is both empty and full...that which is endless and eternal has no qualities, because it has all qualities...The Nothing, or fullness, is called by us the Pleroma. In it thinking and being cease, because the eternal is without qualities.³⁵

Jung is not being nihilistic in his understanding of the Nothing (Nothing). Instead, he realizes that all emerges out of emptiness in the sense that there is no essentiality to what we perceive as reality.

In the Native American view of cosmology there is at least one documented parallel to the First Sermon to the Dead as illustrated by the idea of Changing Woman in the Dine' (Navajo) cosmological system. Changing Woman parallels closely what Jung calls Pleroma in that she also has no qualities because she has all qualities.^{36,37} Interesting to note

that in the Native myth the story is carried by a female image, although no image of Changing Woman exists because it would be impossible to have an image that represents all qualities while at the same time³⁸ having no essential form. In addition, I need to mention here that the female-oriented Native psyche chooses a female idea for the ego to make sense of the myth, while most of Western cosmology remains masculine; especially within the Judeo/Christian tradition.

Western cosmology being logo-centric provides us with the notion that creation took place out of the word of God. If we understand Changing Woman, it is not possible to have creation while talking is going on because talking has a direct connection to thinking. Instead, in Native cosmology, coming into being takes place in the empty spaces that occur in between words/thoughts. Again, that Jung understood this can be seen in his First Sermon to the Dead and this is clearly understood by the Changing Woman myth of how the universe is in constant creation and is not a static process in which matter is static. Therefore, psyche is in a constant creative process where the birth of archetypes, dreams, and reality are in constant flux as in the image of the moving medicine wheel-swastika/mandala.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

It is important to note that the ideas contained in this paper deal only with a circumscribed psyche as understood by Jung and Native People. There are many permutations that need to be visited as in how anima and animus interact with typology in both systems of understanding. The work must continue as insights continue to emerge as psyche becomes more aware of itself.

There are striking similarities and differences in theory, practice, and understanding of the psyche in both Native and Jungian worlds. At the level of natural law, where archetypes and all forms of thought are born, all is similar in that all is empty and all worlds are possible. A plausible metaphor is that of the number zero as understood by Western and Mayan cosmology. In Western understanding zero is "nothing" while in Mayan cosmology it is infinite possibilities.³⁹

I believe that much of the differences between the two systems in understanding the psyche may very well be a product of language, which has a huge influence in our being and understanding/conceptualizing of the life-world. Most European

languages must have nouns in order to convey meaning, and this leads to objectifying the world and thus the world is viewed as static. This type of languaging also has a way of separating the individual from their world a la the Cartesian paradigm. Jung was trapped by this language system and even though I truly believe he had direct experience of the numinous, he did not have a method of conveying that to those outside himself because of language barriers.

Most Native American languages are based on verbs as the main way of conveying meaning. Verbing has a way of making the world dynamic and conveys movement; the life-world is not frozen in any point of space-time. As we know from quantum physics, the universe is not static but is rather in constant movement, and star systems move in patterns that convey the image of what we know as swastikas. Our psyches are an integral part of the universe, and therefore it makes sense that all that underlies psyche can be depicted through the image of the medicine wheel. Therefore the differences in understanding of the psyche can be bridged by taking our understanding beyond language constraints and allowing our psyches to move within the cosmic dance that is the dream dreaming itself in every moment as it emerges out of an empty luminescent awareness of the dream.

NOTES

1. Eduardo Duran, *Healing the Soul Wound: Counseling American Indians and Other Native Peoples* (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 2006).

2. Violet Staub De Laszlo, *The Basic Writings of C.G. Jung* (New York: The Modern Library Press, 1993), p. 558.

3. Eduardo Duran, *Buddha in Redface* (Lincoln, NE: IUniverse Press, 2000).

4. This term might be understood as "The Source" of all life. Vine Deloria, Jr. uses the term "the Great Mysterious." There are many terms that are used by different Native cultures. The important factor is to avoid the term "God" which invokes Western concepts of deity and which are based in patriarchal duality and power dynamics. In Jungian terms it can be seen as an allusion to the Self.

5. Murray Stein, *Jung's Map of the Soul* (Chicago: Open Court, 1998), p. 58, p. 189.
6. Donald Sandner, *Navajo Symbols of Healing* (Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1991).
7. Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (Princeton: Bollingen Press, 2004).
8. Carl Jung, *The Red Book*, ed. Sonu Shamdasani. trans. Mark Kyburz, John Peck, and Sonu Shamdasani (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009).
9. Carl Jung, *Memories, Dream, Reflections* (London: Oxford City Press, 2010).
10. Adolf Guggenbuhl-Craig, *Power in the Helping Professions* (Zurich: Spring Publications, 2009).
11. Vine Deloria Jr., *C.G. Jung and the Sioux Traditions* (New Orleans: Spring Journal Books, 2009).
12. De Laszio, *Basic Writings*, p. 558.
13. "Natural law" refers to "laws" that derive from Nature and not from the mind of Man.
14. De Laszio, *Basic Writings*, p. 498-499.
15. De Laszio, *Basic Writings*, pp. 504-505.
16. De Laszio, *Basic Writings*, p. 180.
17. Deloria, *C.G. Jung*, p. 57.
18. De Laszio, *Basic Writings*, p. 325.
19. Carl Jung, *Nietzsche's Zarathustra* (Princeton: Bollingen Press, 1988), p. 356.
20. De Laszio, *Basic Writings*, p. 187.
21. The four cardinal directions—East, South, West and North, plus Above and Below.
22. De Laszio, *Basic Writings*, pp. xvi-xvii.
23. Duran, *Buddha*, p. 79-80.
24. "An "entity" can be viewed in many ways. It can be the sickness itself (e.g. what Western practitioners would call depression, for example. An entity could also be the intervening dynamic that violated or felt violated, such as a lightning strike, an animal killed for non-acceptable reasons, it can be spirit beings in myriad forms such as wind, animals (eagle, bear, salmon, hawk, snake., rocks, etc.), and it could be spirits of the ancestors which are called upon to communicate and

give guidance to the patient or in some cases being called because the patient has violated their spirit in some way and amends must be made.

25. Duran, *Buddha*, pp. 60-78.

26. *Ibid.*, p., 31.

27. Native people refer to what is known as the Western Hemisphere as Turtle Island.

28. Duran, *Buddha*, p. 15.

29. Stein, *Jung's Map*, p. 47.

30. Stephan Hoeller, *The Gnostic Jung and the Seven Sermons to the Dead* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1982), p. 21.

31. Miguel Leon-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), pp. vi-xxx.

32. The fact that Roosters are male is important in light of Jung's vision of psyche emerging out of a masculine Western mythology, which influenced the way he approached the life-world. The manner of approach to the life-world in most Native American communities was matrilineal. It is easy to make assumptions as to how these different ways of being in the world allowed for a different course of differentiation of consciousness and psyche. Also, it makes sense that Jung was fascinated by Tribal/Primitive People who came from a female earth- connected psychology as I have tried to make the case for in parts of this paper.

33. Hoeller, *Gnostic Jung*, 98.

34. Deloria, *C.G. Jung*, 185.

35. Jung, *Red Book*, Section 3.

36. In *The Main Stalk A Synthesis of Navajo Philosophy*, John R. Farella observes that "...[she has] constancy of contact...with the earth-surface dwellers [humans]. For the Navajo, she is shim'ˆ. In fact, she is the essential shim'ˆ. She is the nurturer, the giver, the provider. One feels primarily warmth, trust, and safety in her presence, and the earth-surface dweller is always in her presence." John R. Farella. *The Main Stalk: A Synthesis of Navajo Philosophy* (Tucson & London: University of Arizona Press, 1996), p. 63.

37. Farella, *The Main Stalk*.

38. There are descriptions of Changing Woman's role in Navajo cosmology, but no descriptions of her as an individual being.

39. A. Blume, "Maya Concepts of Zero," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 155 (March 2011): 84.

