



RECENT BODY-CENTERED PUBLICATIONS BASED ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF C. G. JUNG

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ABSTRACT

This review presents nine body-centered Jungian-based publications addressing four important themes that are in the foreground of body symbolism: 1) the body in archetypal symbolism, 2) the body as intuitive sacred ground, 3) the body as repository for unarticulated feelings, and 4) illness as metaphorical source of insight motivating the individuation journey. Books are reviewed to succinctly expose their core ideas and relevant Jungian concepts are explained so that the reader who is unfamiliar with Jungian approaches can become more conversant in Jungian theory.

The body-centered Jungian books presented in this review were chosen from a list compiled by the helpful staff at the bookstore of the C.G. Jung Institute in Los Angeles.

From a Jungian somatic perspective, the dream is an important window into the body. It is widely used to access *body symbolism*, a term noting the process of translating into an image something physiological or pathological taking place in the body. Since the early body-centered classics of Jungian literature such as Marion Woodman's *Owl Was a Baker's Daughter* (1980), *Addiction to Perfection* (1982), *Pregnant Virgin* (1985), Albert Khreinheder's *Body and Soul* (1985), Eugene Gendlin's *Let Your Body Interpret Your Dreams* (1986), Arnold Mindell's *Working with the Dreaming Body* (1985) which lay the foundation to body symbolism, body-centered themes have matured. This review addresses four important themes that have come to the foreground: 1) the body in archetypal symbolism, 2) the body as intuitive sacred ground, 3) the body as repository for unarticulated feelings, and 4) illness as a metaphorical source of insight motivating the individuation journey.

THE BODY IN ARCHETYPAL SYMBOLISM

...I wished to see
the way in which our human effigy
suited the circle and found place in it—
and my own wings were far too weak for that.
—Dante

The Body: An Encyclopedia of Archetypal Symbolism, by George R. Elder, Boston & London: Shambhala, 1996

The Phallus: Sacred Symbol of Male Creative Power, by Alain Daniélou, Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1995

The Yoni: Sacred Symbol of Female Creative Power, by Rufus C. Camphausen, Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1996

The Body

An Encyclopedia of Archetypal Symbolism

In order to distinguish his work from Freud's *psychoanalysis*, C. G. Jung called his psychological theory *analytical psychology*. It might be more aptly described as *archetypal psychology* because the fundamental concept of analytical psychology is that of the *archetype*. In brief, an archetype can be defined as a universal pattern of perception, a kind of psychic mold evolving from and shaping personal and collective experience. Jung had observed the cohesion of human experience and from his observations postulated the existence of a *collective unconscious* which reflects the expression the mind's connectedness to other minds and to matter and, as such, falls outside of ego-consciousness. Archetypes, which are common to all human beings regardless of culture, religion, or historical time, are the expression of this collective unconscious. *Archetype* and *collective unconscious* are two inseparable core concepts of analytical psychology.

Because Jung had a broad knowledge of mythology, anthropology, religious systems, and ancient art, he noticed that the symbols and figures that appeared in his patients' dreams were identical to the symbols and figures that appeared and reappeared in the myths and religions of the world, regardless of place and time. The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism (ARAS) was founded in 1930 to gather archetypal symbolic images that illustrate the truth of Jung's observations. It was intended to support the topics under discussion by the Eranos Society, a gathering of historians of religion, art, and comparative mythology over which Jung presided. The ARAS collection has since grown to include over 13,000 archetypal images and the Jungian institutes in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago own collections

The Body: An Encyclopedia of Archetypal Symbolism was developed from the resources of the ARAS collection and is the product of years of research and thoughtful encounter by the curators and researchers of the archive. Throughout the history of humankind's search for meaning, sacred art has used the physical image of the human body to express the mystery behind the energy of life, to speak symbolically about spirit, and to assert the conjunction of human and divine essences. *The Body* presents 100 large-format color images of carvings, paintings, and sculptures that reveal the many psychological meanings of our physical self and feed our modern sensitivity with numinous images born of the collective soul. These visions of the body are not only symbols of the deepest contents of the human psyche, but also transcend the cultural and the theological through their timeless, transpersonal quality. The chosen works represent time periods that extend from prehistory, when humanity was first beginning to express itself in images, to the recent past, and they range in location from the caves of France to the temples of East Asia.

Jung likened the content of the collective unconscious to the organs of the body. He wrote that archetypes were, and still are, living forces in the psyche that demand to be taken seriously. When they are neglected, they behave “exactly like neglected or maltreated physical organs or organic functional systems” (p. xii). The beautiful images in this volume seek to honor these psychic “organs.” The volume begins with a chapter on the primordial body, as seen in the Venus of Laussel, and moves through the different aspects of the body: bone, skin, head and hair, eye, ear, hand and arm, respiratory and digestive system, heart and blood, sex organ, foot and leg. It ends with the transformed body, exploring such themes as the Shaman's Mask, the Gold Coffin “Body” of Tutankhamen, and the Resurrection of Christ. Within each chapter, themes are presented in four-page units, and each theme receives a full-page color work of art that captures the archetypal image, an essay that places the art in its cultural context, an archetypal commentary that positions the image in its worldwide pattern and explains its psychological meaning, and a brief bibliography. A thorough index makes manifest the complex web of connections that exists between the body and the archetypal psyche. The editor expresses gratitude for the contributions of many scholars and specialists in the fields of archeology, anthropology, art, and religious history that comprise the research backbone of the book, assuring readers that the text represents the best and latest information.

The stated intent of *The Body* is reflected in William Blake's words: “Man has no Body distinct from his Soul; for that called Body is a portion of Soul discerned by the five Senses....” This significant sourcebook of body wisdom presents a conscious reflection on the reunion of body and psyche in the belief that an image held in the mind brings healing to the body.

The Phallus

Sacred Symbol of Male Creative Power

The Phallus, and its companion book, *The Yoni*, are two other books featuring archetypal imagery and art that stood out for inclusion in this review. Both explore sexuality as expressed in the collective unconscious and take us into the heart of the masculine and feminine archetypes. They illustrate how sexuality, though embedded in the body, reaches far beyond the biological into the sacred.

Alain Daniélou, a distinguished contemporary orientalist is considered the foremost authority on the art and spirituality of India and the classical world. His book, *The Phallus*, celebrates the expression of masculine fertility and sexual desire in Eastern and Western religious traditions. Following an overview of the symbolism of creative forces, Daniélou surveys a wide range of art, myths, and customs to show how the phallus (a term that refers to the erect penis) is and has been an archetypal symbol of creative energy central in the worship of virtually every religion and culture in the world. Only in our Western world have taboos arisen that hamper the recognition of this most fundamental symbol that illustrates “the process by which the Supreme Being procreates the Universe.” This book delivers an important message in its argument that our impoverished imagination needs to reconnect with the sacred symbolic role of the phallus. Contempt, degradation and debasement of the phallus lead to a tragic outcome, for “the man who scorns the very symbol of the life principle abandons his kind to the powers of death” (p. 1).

The cult of the phallus as source of life and symbol of virility and power can be traced back to about 8000 B.C., in the Neolithic era. Before then, representations of the feminine goddess and her magical yoni were elevated to divine status. With the discovery of the link between childbearing and paternity, the archetypal symbolism of the phallus as representative of the world’s creator, divine eros, organ of bliss, giver of the semen which carries the essence of life, replaced the worship of the vulva. Phallic worship spread to all the civilizations of Mesopotamia, the Middle East, Egypt, India, as well as to Thrace, Italy, and the entire pre-Celtic world, including what is now Ireland.

The Phallus is immensely rich in a symbolic sexual imagery that places humanity in respectful interdependence with all life forms. It is the phallic gods of the archaic shamanistic religions, who, as “Lords of the Animals,” taught the interdependence of human, animal, and divine. As the text leads us through the history of phallic worship, we are repeatedly faced with the unfolding of a moral code that obeys the rule of natural law, teaches respect for nature, and transcends social convention. The representation of male fertility took such forms as the menhirs or standing stones of prehistoric Europe, the Mahalinga and Svayambhu of India, and the ancient Greek Omphalos. The phallic God developed

many faces as each culture created its own images of sexuality: the Greek Pan, Hermes, and Priapus, the Indian deity Shiva, and throughout Europe, representations of phallic men engaged in activities such as hunting, fighting, sorcery, or ball-games.

It is written in Indian literature that space is the lingam and earth is its yoni. Lest we misunderstand sexuality as simply erotic, Daniélou unveils the archetypically driven religious impulse underlying sexuality in relationship. Thus, the phallus is worshipped in the sanctuary of the yoni, for it is only “surrounded by the yoni that God can manifest and the universe appear.” From this spiritual sexual understanding emerged the sacred reverence for openings in the earth which led to the prehistoric cave paintings and the many underground shrines, caverns, and grottos within which were practiced rituals that assured procreative fertility and prosperous harvests.

Illustrated throughout with photographs and line drawings of the finest examples of phallic art, *The Phallus* unveils with uninhibited celebration what has been hidden and covered, and in a carefully researched scholarly presentation, reveals the initiatory rites that brought men into communion with the creative forces of life.

The Yoni

Sacred Symbol of Female Creative Power

Upon receiving a copy of *The Yoni*, and noticing on the back cover a photograph of its author, face immersed in a white orchid, I felt a visceral surge of mistrust for this unknown man seemingly trespassing in my feminine domain. The biography accompanying this photo reveals that Rufus Camphausen has studied the religious and sociosexual mores of other cultures for more than 25 years. Skeptic at first, I was rewarded for my efforts at professional equanimity as the book's beautiful sculptures, drawings, and photographs progressively pulled me in and fascination took over. Although *The Yoni*, as seen through the eyes of Camphausen, does not offer as scholarly a view as its companion book *The Phallus*, it is nonetheless a valuable contribution for women and men looking to incorporate the archetypal feminine into their psychological and spiritual lives. The book is not for everyone; those uncomfortable with the female body may find the close-up images of yonis challenging. However, the book can be vital to anyone needing to confront their cultural or personal conditioning and find reverence for the goddess as she lives in our women's bodies.

As in *The Phallus*, the worship of creativity implicit in male and female genitals is shown to be the original starting point of most religions, cults, and sacred customs. It is not surprising, then, that in

modern psychological times, this ontological beginning is reflected in Freud's discovery that libido and psychosexual development are foundational to the development of personality. Archeological evidence shows that the worship of the yoni seen as embodiment of the Great Goddess dates back 30,000 years, by far preceding the worship of the phallus, whose ascendancy began 8,000 years ago. In the absence of any knowledge of the involvement of the phallus in conception and procreation, the magical power of the yoni, evidenced by its dilation to allow the birth of new life, took precedence.

Camphausen's words about "a world pillaged and overrun by male-dominated hordes attempting to rid humanity of all vestiges of women's power..." are familiar to women who worked to rehabilitate the practice of goddess worship through feminist art and spirituality in the 1970s and 1980s. Feminist artist Judy Chicago's painting entitled "The Cunt as Temple, Tomb, Cave or Flower," illustrates Camphausen's argument that the yoni as symbol of the feminine, and more importantly as symbol of Woman, has in our culture been discredited as shameful and dirty. In a chapter entitled "The Ten Thousand Yonis of Mother Earth," Camphausen opens our eyes to countless yoni-like natural shapes—craters, canyons, rocks, tombs, flowers, fruits, nuts, seeds, shells—stimulating our sensitivity to the ways earth surrounds us with the beauty of the feminine form.

Camphausen goes further in his efforts to rehabilitate the sacredness of the yoni. So that we not get seduced into thinking of the yoni in spiritual and symbolic terms only, a chapter called "The Yoni of Flesh and Blood" photographically illustrates and classifies the female genitals by type and temperament according to Japanese, Chinese, Indian, and Arabic cultures. *The Yoni* also introduces us to the world of Tantra, in which women and men are regarded as equal because both our sexual natures require intimate, consenting, noncoercive, nonpossessive, and mutually beneficial interdependence. Camphausen gives detailed accounts of many Tantric sacred rituals, practices, and Tibetan visualizations that, for political and religious reasons, were kept behind a veil of secrecy.

The word *symbol* comes from the Greek *symbolon*. A symbolon is an object that is cut in two and is intended to serve as a sign of recognition between two people. In a sense, the erect phallus, as creative force, and the receptive yoni, as source of all, each possesses half of the symbolon's original oneness. From a Jungian perspective, out of these companion books which cast male and female sexual forces within the sacred context of their archetypal roots, emerges a multifaceted understanding of the *conjunctio*—Latin for union. For Jung, the *conjunctio* stands as the guiding archetype of inward resolution and outward relatedness and thus is necessary for spiritual and psychological wholeness. *The Yoni* and *The Phallus* illustrate the mysterious symbolic intertwining of active–passive, conscious–

unconscious, light–dark, and destructive–constructive forces that in the *conjunctio* seek to resolve the tension of their opposites in the search for wholeness.

THE BODY AS INTUITIVE SACRED GROUND

Our body untended becomes identical to a garden abandoned to nature.

— Paula M. Reeves

Women’s Intuition: Unlocking the Wisdom of the Body, by Paula M. Reeves, Berkeley: Conari Press, 1999

According to Paula Reeves, intuition is the gift given to any woman who consciously connects to the wisdom of her feminine body. It does not descend upon her intellectually, but rather *emerges* as a primary language of embodied wisdom. The principle of *emergence*, along with the concepts of archetype and collective unconscious, is another key to the understanding of Jung’s analytical psychology. Emergence is a term that describes how order and organization arise unexpectedly out of chaotic conditions. Intuition then, is “that sudden inexplicable insight that tells us we know something we had no idea we knew” (p. 3), a sharp perception that arises when “we leave the realm of logic and rationality and descend into the intuitive realm of matter” (p. 5). The author believes that many women suffer health problems because they mistrust their intuition in a misguided effort to avoid the stereotype of the woman who is more emotional than rational.

Reeves is a therapist with a long-standing Jungian orientation who has been a pioneer in the study of the biochemical relationship between the mind and body. She is the creator of a process called *Spontaneous Contemplative Movement* (SCM), which explores the spontaneous body movements that arise when attention is turned to observe the rhythm of breath. SCM offers a simple way of evoking our body-based intuition so that we can tap into the ongoing interactive relationship between consciousness and the unconscious and open ourselves to new orders of information evolving within the body’s perpetual reorganization. The author writes: “It quickly becomes apparent that the body is an instrument of truth,” an “artist of emotions,” which allows us to “discover that conscious matter is a medium through which the unconscious expresses itself” (p. 54). With a foreword by Marion Woodman, author of *Addiction to Perfection*, and an afterword by Belleruth Naparstek, author of *Your Sixth Sense: Unlocking the Power of Your Intuition*, this inspirational guidebook belies its title by inviting *both* women and men to the depths of their “beloved body” as “embodied intuition,” “sacred soil,” “dark humus,” and “dear animal.”

Reeves, who learned to trust her intuition at an early age, noticed that “if the client was physically ill, the dream inevitably held some prescription for healing” (p. xiii); she began to explore the relationship between an image or a thought and spontaneous body movements. She uses numerous real-life SCM therapy sessions and presents 13 well-devised exercises to help us find a map of the body, guide us through the tenuous beginnings of the soul’s relationship with matter, learn the language of soul talk, and catalyze our love for our bodies.

Body-centered therapists know that our bodies are constantly sending us signals, and that our task is to help our clients, who may have forgotten or never known how to read these signals, to remember or learn to hear and decipher the body’s messages. *Women’s Intuition* is a practical resource that is equally accessible to professional and public, useful to individuals, therapists, or clients wishing to recognize, trust, and interpret their body’s messages before they become symptoms of distress or illness. An exceptional blend of psychological and physiological knowledge, combining clinical and poetic language, this book can serve as a starting point for enhancing the body’s natural curative tendencies and appreciating the unique language of symptoms and the movements that lead to the healing wisdom within.

THE BODY AS REPOSITORY OF UNARTICULATED FEELINGS

Not all communications use language.

—Joyce McDougall

When the Body Speaks: The Archetypes in the Body, by Mara Sidoli, London: Routledge, 2000

Mara Sidoli, a child and adult analyst with the London Society of Analytical Psychology, uses her considerable infant observation experience to demonstrate how archetypal imagery encountered in early life can permanently affect psychosomatic functioning. Sidoli discusses Jung’s theory of the self as the central archetype and relates it to Michael Fordham’s concepts of the “primary self.” Jung viewed the self as the totality of the psyche, combining conscious with unconscious and containing both ego and instinctual archetypal drives. Fordham, who sought to apply Jung’s theory to early life, developed the concept of the primary self as a germinal state, a blueprint from which the child’s ego and bodily growth undergo a process of “deintegration–reintegration.”

With Jung and Fordham as her foundation, Sidoli presents a theory of affect regulation that is in alignment with Allan Schore's theory and the latest developments in affective neuroscience. Drawing from her years of clinical infant observation, she shows how psychosomatic disturbances originate in the early stages of life through unregulated affect. Using ample clinical material, Sidoli demonstrates how "psychosomatic disturbances are derived from early life stages when the infant's distress messages are not met at an emotional level, and therefore take the route of somatization" (p. 3). She views maternal care not only as essential for healthy psychic development but also as critical to the ability to self-soothe and self-regulate later in life. She finds that the tenacity of the defenses that arise in a child (such as splitting and denial) is in direct relation to the intensity of the unregulated, untransformed affect in need of containment.

Sidoli addresses the individual who has suffered early trauma without "the benefit of the maternal container who could make sense of the child's suffering by putting the situation into symbolic form, using thoughts and words" (p. 117). According to Jung, bodily experiences relating to instinctual discharges constitute the most deeply unconscious psychic elements. In a chapter titled "The Psychosoma and the Archetypal Field," Sidoli uses an excerpt from Daniel Stern's *Diary of a Baby* to illustrate how the overwhelming urgency of an infant's affect storms is entirely archetypal and needs modulation to move from a disjointed to a peaceful state. She shows how, at times of deintegration, maternal misattunement and emotional deprivation fail to bring meaning to the infant's world. In agreement with Joyce McDougall's writings in *Theaters of the Body*, Sidoli believes that without the symbolic form of thoughts and words provided by a secure maternal container, the overwhelming unnamed traumatic experiences become lodged in the body and its organs, expressing as psychosomatic symptoms. It appears that psychosomatic patients lack fantasies, showing that the link between the instinctual pole of experience and its mental representation was broken or never established. Thus the "proto-images" of the bodily elements have remained "buried or encapsulated in the unconscious bodily pole of the archetype" (p. 108). An attuned mother begins the work of differentiation by naming the experience of reality and separating it from the experience of the archetypal realm.

Sidoli's clinical approach with adult patients is to reach beyond the symptom to the infant self in order to bring the child into a related dyad in which the therapist humanizes the archetypal experience "so that the patient [can] develop a symbolic attitude, thus conquering psychic distress disguised as physical illness" (p. 118). Like a mother, the therapist seeks to name what has previously been nameless in order to translate the message of the body thereby allowing the patient to make sense of a symptom by finding its hidden meaning. Sidoli warns that in such work, the attractive power of the archetype is similar to the gravitational force of the universe. A therapist working in this arena must be prepared for the powerful

countertransferential pulls of the extreme all-or-none quality present when an archetype is at work. The energetic, affective attraction of the archetypes require knowledge, caution, and respect. In the wake of the current explosion of research in neuroaffective development, this book is a welcome, accessible voice that is both technically important and eminently readable.

ILLNESS AS METAPHORICAL SOURCE OF INSIGHT

...what ancient and obdurate oaks are uprooted in us by the act of sickness...

— Virginia Woolf

The Alchemy of Illness, by Kat Duff, New York: Bell Tower, 1993

The Jewel in the Wound, by Rose-Emily Rothenberg, Wilmette: Chiron Publications, 2001

Attacked by Poison Ivy, by Ann Belford Ulanov, York Beach: Nicolas-Hays, 2001

Mothering, Breast Cancer and Selfhood, by Lynette Walker, Victoria: Trafford, 2002

These four books present autobiographical narratives written by courageous and wise women who have engaged the shadow of their own illness with transformative self-examination. They each find hopeful insight within the suffering, the solitude, and the mortality which their body symptoms bring them to face. Kat Duff, Rose-Emily Rothenberg, Ann Belford Ulanov, and Lynette Walker unravel the enmeshment of intrapsychic, interpersonal, and archetypal worlds by weaving a tapestry that honors the complex challenge of illness as a stage in the individuation journey, showing how our body symptoms and physical illness can help us to discover our personal mythology. They speak to us, therapists who are ourselves susceptible to illness, as well as to our patients, by offering mirrors for serious self-reflection and an invitation to embrace and own the shadow at work in our bodies.

The Alchemy of Illness

In her poetic account of the nature of illness, Kat Duff sheds a gentle and insightful light on the familiar (to those who are ill) experience of being ill with chronic fatigue and immune dysfunction syndrome (CFIDS). Duff spent 2 years in bed, during which time she pursued "the meaning and purposes of illness." Bringing together insights from psychology, religion, anthropology, shamanism, and philosophy, she delves into many cultures to track the universality of illness and its curious contradictions, such as the sense of freedom that emerges in its midst.

Her own healing, achieved through "tedious, tenuous and life-giving labor," is a model of hope for those with CFIDS who have endlessly struggled to understand why the person they have become no longer "works" in the world out there. Duff knows the false hope of those afflicted with fibromyalgia who pray that "perhaps it was just for one time and it won't happen again." She writes of "trying to get as much done as possible" on days when the illness is in remission, fully aware that a payment will be due for overdoing. She also writes of refusing to admit what is happening, and as "it" progresses, of finally just allowing "it" to have its way and sinking into the void of chronic illness. Duff points out that there is some comfort in illness. Chronic illness allows us to stop, be quiet, and reflect on life, our inner self, and the beauty of nature, which we may not have bothered to do, had we been able to keep going at breakneck pace.

Duff's illness has a turning point that comes to her in a dream. In this dream, a guide takes her to see a film about a young girl who is sold for prostitution. The dream is painful, but the guide insists that she watch the film a second time. The dream goes further the second time as it shows the young prostitute appearing on stage and gathering small objects—broken bottles, gum wrappers, snail shells—which she places on an altar. It is then that Duff realizes that "even the ugly, degraded affairs of our lives can be made into offerings, turned into something so holy as to be fit to feed the gods" (p. 140). She awoke from this dream a different person, able to understand and acknowledge that things "are what they are, in their totality." She had found the gift of acceptance and equanimity.

Under Duff's pen, the mystery of human pain takes on a numinous quality. In a chapter entitled "The Dark Heart of Healing," she tells the story of the Nahuatl peoples who believe that we "have to create a deified heart by finding a firm and enduring center within ourselves from which to lead our lives, so that our hearts will shine through our faces, and our features will become reliable reflections of ourselves" (p. 136). This operation is painful, which is why, the author tells us, "the heart is always represented as wounded, and why the drops of blood issuing from it are so significant."

"Illness is a familiar yet foreign landscape," she writes, "It remains a wilderness . . . despite its continuing presence in our lives" (p. xiii). This book gives anyone with a chronic illness permission to be ill without having to constantly feel obliged to make excuses to those who do not understand. It is a beautiful book to read if you are yourself unwell, or if you want to understand someone close to you who is.

The Jewel in the Wound

The Jewel in the Wound, honored as a finalist in the Health/Medicine/Nutrition category of the 2002 Independent Publisher Book Awards, is the account of the author's unremitting search to understand her disfiguring scars caused by an autonomous keloidal skin disorder which began in childhood. True to Jungian tradition, the author, an analyst herself, uses dreams, active imagination, and art in her search to access the archetypal dimensions of her symptoms and explore how her body expresses the needs of her psyche. The poignancy of Rothenberg's suffering leads to the revelation of her desire for connection to a mother who died when she was 6 days old. She notices that new keloids inevitably follow new beginnings; rites of passage, such as college, marriage, and childbirth, carry for her the unconscious imprint of the terrible loss that accompanied her own beginning. She comes to understand that she lives within the archetype of the orphan, the expression of her fate as a motherless child.

The turning point in Rothenberg's healing struggle appears when she discovers, and becomes fascinated by, scarification rituals. This discovery gives her a hint of something larger than her personal pain, and in the hope of redeeming her suffering, she embarks on a journey to Africa to study scarification rites. In Africa, she interviews several shamans who help unveil the symbolic and spiritual meaning behind scarification. Performed in initiation ceremonies that celebrate transformation, rebirth, and the continuity of life, scarification wounding is not only a healing technique, but more importantly, it is a way to impress new consciousness upon the psyche. The pain and permanence of the initiatory marks imposed upon the skin opens the recipient to personal transformation and tells the community of that person's psychic status. Rothenberg learns that physical scars become the witness of our growth and carry within them, as remembrances of our psychological woundings, the source of continued healing and enlightenment.

The power of Rothenberg's journey is that it spans a lifetime and leads from the darkness of suffering to the grace of consciousness. In her journey, she comes to believe that to integrate the deeper layers of the psyche, the intensity of the forces that create the symptom must be matched by the intensity of the exploration in the body. It is only after she has understood their metaphysical, spiritual, and symbolic meaning that the scars become flowers in her eyes and that she fully grasps the privilege of their presence.

Attacked by Poison Ivy

There is more meaning to *Attacked by Poison Ivy* than meets the eye. Jungian analyst Ann Ulanov's latest book springs from a question asked by an analysand curious about the author's repetitive bouts of poison ivy. "Himself an analyst," she writes, "he wondered if I had ever asked myself what my attacks of poison

ivy meant. His question struck me like a wooden mallet on my forehead. I was stunned”(p. 4). The startling realization that the question of the psychological and spiritual meaning of this annual, excruciating physical suffering had never risen to her consciousness, even after years of personal analysis, begins this insightful account of the author's decade-long journey to uncover the origin and meaning of 50 years of suffering from chronic poison ivy allergy.

The author's premise is straightforward: The psyche often uses the body—in her case, through repetitive poison ivy outbreaks—to communicate dissociated emotional experiences that transcend ego awareness. Standing on the shoulders of such luminaries as Jung, Winnicott, and Bion, Ulanov pieces together a poignant narrative of familial and personal neglect. Her growing awareness of kinship with poison ivy as a plant that "blooms in neglect, that is never cared for except to exterminate it," renders bare her process of discovering and integrating the dissociated, "unmirrored" experiences of her life. Ulanov offers herself as an example of how healing can occur when that which is negated and denied is finally acknowledged, named, and integrated into our conscious history. For her, the “unthinkable thought,” a term coined by Bion, is the chronic, deep sadness that permeated her family life as a child. Her healing was a process of rescuing into thought and feeling "what I did not know I had known, but what had known me....what was entombed in repetitive suffering”—and, she adds, “the body is right in the center of it” (p. 11). She brings into consciousness the body's ability to absorb unspoken content from its living environment, how the body takes in what the conscious mind is unable to manage, contains and metabolizes it, and offers it back in a tolerable way so that it can be integrated into conscious knowing.

Ulanov begins her journey by tying together two events: the worst attack of poison ivy she ever suffered at age 10 and a serious attack of poison ivy at age 50. These two events were the primary signals from her body that something being denied needed to be acknowledged and expressed. *Attacked by Poison Ivy* is a call to enter into conversation with the deeper parts of ourselves, "the mute parts, the left-out parts,"—those parts which, like poison ivy, are untended and rejected. Ulanov illustrates how, as an adult, she visited upon herself the same benign neglect that she experienced as a child. She admits that even though aware of poison ivy's drastic effects on her body, she did not always take the necessary precautions to avoid encountering it.

The lesson of poison ivy is far reaching. The skin represents the body's containment and protection; thus, disorders of the skin can point to our inability to contain or understand the holding/containment we have received. Ulanov weaves into her narrative an understanding of bathing as a ritual of purity that returned

her to the warm, bath-like fluid containment of the mother's womb. She integrates the Indian chakra system with various ancient traditions about snakes and the meaning of the shedding of skin.

Importantly, Ulanov emphasizes the significance of *being witnessed* in developing the ability to witness oneself. She relates how Barry, her late husband, brought a sense of “realness” to her suffering when she saw him powerfully moved by her pain. It was Barry’s ability to witness her physical pain that opened her ability to explore the underlying emotional pain manifesting in the weeping skin created by the poison ivy. Becoming witness to her own and her family's pain, she realized that her Self could then witness *her*. Ulanov has since had only one major attack of poison ivy which happened shortly after the death of her husband. She attributes the attack to her grief over losing the containment and nurture which their relationship provided. Minor outbreaks continue to come only when she is wrestling with expressing the sadness of her unmet dependency needs.

In this book, we learn that body language is more than pre-symbolic as some believe. Ulanov is adamant; the body is not “pre-” anything. It is eloquently itself and body-symbolism is better than words in that it is broad enough to capture the spirit as well as the physical facts.

Mothering, Breast Cancer and Selfhood

Mothering, Breast Cancer and Selfhood is a three-part memoir illuminating the author’s introspective process of coming to terms with breast cancer, a mastectomy, and her gradual understanding of the long-term components underlying her illness. Her detailed personal psychological reconstruction speaks to all those who are searching for meaning in illness and adversity.

Part I documents Walker’s first attempt to make sense of breast cancer by looking at the nature of her thoughts, dreams, and fantasies as she faced her diagnosis and the prospect of treatment. The author recounts how, amid her terror, anger, and sadness, journaling, active imagination, poetry, ceramic, and drawing made a positive difference. Part II examines the questions she asked herself: What was going on in her life in the months prior to the diagnosis that might have predisposed her to breast cancer? How was she living her life? Were there warning signs? She explores how she inadvertently participated in the disease process by way of compulsive attention to others and inadequate consideration of herself. She concludes that breast cancer is the metaphor for her self-defeating patterns of mothering, run madly out of control. Part III offers an intimate look into the influences active in her childhood that led to her cancer. It exposes the generational impact of women who have been, in one way or another, motherless. It

reconstructs the author's childhood steeped in her parents' Jungian milieu, remembers her relationship with an overpowering but vulnerable mother who, although overbearing, still was missing.

What does it take to illuminate the disease of the soul? In her attempt to make sense of her cancer, Walker follows the metaphor to its source, which she finds to be in the nature of mothering and being mothered. Does the compulsion to "mother" the world and neglect oneself arise from excess or from deficiency? What are the implications of selflessness? How does selflessness arise? Through her own illness, Walker comes to recognize the life urge to differentiate from the biological mother and connect with the great, life-affirming Mother spirit.

CONCLUSION

These inspirational books call us to further the exploration of the ways in which archetypal psychology can contribute to the field of somatic psychology. They demonstrate that deepening our understanding of Jungian analytical psychology has the potential to greatly enrich body-centered work. The history of archetypal imagery is rich in metaphors for what endures in humanity beyond the short-lived cycle of our individual lives. Myths, passed down through the generations, keep the archetypal templates alive and exemplify the creation of consciousness within the overarching interplay of spirit and nature. Calling our attention to ancestral wisdom and to the juxtaposition of instinctual desires and spiritual strivings, the body symbolism found in dreams, art, and myths contains encoded instructions for how to mediate the union of body and soul. Jung's genius for the assimilation of unconscious content into consciousness is found in his ability to host the imaginal and in his use of active imagination for the amplification of symbolic material. This is an approach which naturally supports the body's unfolding evolution. Considering Jung's work in the light of the current developments in affective neuroscience, we see that the focus of his analytical psychology encourages right brain, non-linear creative functions.

As body-centered psychotherapists, the core of our healing work lies in hosting psyche and soma together so that they may, in concert, find a unified emergent organization. Jungian theory is anchored in the field of complex systems, guided by the principles of emergence and synchronicity which describe key processes of self-organization and self-regulation. Elucidating the puzzling ways by which order emerges out of chaos, or light out of shadow, Jungian theory can help us attune to larger gestalts which puncture the closed-system equilibrium of rigidly held neurological patterns as they work in tandem with defended belief systems. As body-psychotherapists, we support emergent somatic change when we hold in attention seemingly unrelated impulses while they build new, more complex neurological connections. The

relational quality of our sustained presence with the bodily self elicits a new order of organization that works implicitly to dismantle closed-system impasses.

There is much to explore in these directions, and I am curious to know our somatic community's thoughts on the connections between the somatic and the archetypal. Those so inspired are invited to send us their experiences and intuitions on the subject.
