

*Kaarle Nordenstreng:*

We meet Jung at his house in Küsnacht, Zurich, on a February afternoon. After I spend a few minutes in a waiting room decorated with Oriental objects, Professor Jung enters and smiles good-naturedly. The elderly 85-year-old man with superb posture immediately makes a strong impression on the guest. Alongside him, the 180cm-tall novice in psychology feels tangibly aware of his own smallness. However, I seem to read in his humorous eyes the skeptical idea that more or less everyone is a dilettante in psychology, when my host emphatically states: “The greatest disappointment of my life has been that people do not understand what I have wanted to say.” We agree to talk in English. Jung says he has had little contact with Finns. I mention that I remember at least one Finnish scientist who has been with him. “Well, then you’re a second Finn,” he says laconically, leading the guest into the study, where we sit opposite each other in deep armchairs by the window.

Jung pulls out his pipe, fills the bowl with tobacco, lights it, and calmly draws the first few puffs of smoke into his solid being. A slightly clumsy hand then places the burning match into a metal ashtray on the table beside him. When I see that the corners of a couple of newspapers are right next to the ashtray, I hurry over to blow out the flame as it flares up along the length of the wooden matchstick. But then the firm, commanding voice says: “Don’t! Let things burn, don’t be too hasty. Don’t think that something *might* happen. Look at things from a distance. This was a test for you.” Overwhelmed, I try to say that I guess the professor has noticed that my most differentiated function is *Empfinden* [sensation]. In response, I receive a relaxed and cheeky wink from the calm wrinkled face. The extinguished pipe must be lit again. This time, as the new match flares up in the ashtray, I don’t over-react again. I just say: “Now I have the opportunity of correcting this mistake.” He says: “It’s not a mistake. It’s a gesture. It’s just what your prejudice is.”

Professor Jung is interested in the teaching of psychology in Finnish universities. While I tell him about that, I also mention the various books of his that I have read. Only one of them has been translated into Finnish [*Gegenwart and Zukunft* (Present and Future), translated into English as *The Undiscovered Self*]. I have brought along German and Finnish copies of this book. I take out

the Finnish copy and present it to him: “Well, I have it with me. Here you go.”

CJ: What’s this? Aha! *Psykologi*. Let me see. *Nyky-hetki ja tule-vai-suus*. Is that for . . . ?

KN: *Gegenwart und Zukunft*.

CJ: Yah. Aha! *Nykyhetki*. Do you pronounce it like this? Read it to me.

KN: *Nykyhetki ja tulevaisuus* [Present and Future].

CJ: I never saw this. It won’t help me in any way.

Of course those who don’t know our language cannot get the substance, but he pronounced the Finnish words surprisingly well. Who knows whether the collective unconscious played a part in the matter... Jung’s clever little book applies his doctrines to today’s world. We talk briefly about why he decided to write it:

CJ: Well, I couldn’t help it, you know. I had to do with people who needed to know it. I’m a doctor. I’m an alienist. I am a soul doctor, and my long experience has not escaped some of the convictions that underpin my doctrine. This book is the result of countless conversations, with both highly educated and very simple people who are simply suffering from the circumstances of the time. And so what I have to say to them, I can equally well say to the whole world, because everybody is a member of our time and of our society. Well, no matter where you are, you hear the same questions. You will hear the same questions, because the actual world situation is a reality everywhere. I have talked to Hindus and Buddhists in China and India, and in the great auditoriums of America I have exchanged opinions. Everywhere they say, we have the same dilemmas.

Jung bases his collective doctrine on a physiologically inherited brain structure. Pointing his finger at my forehead, he asks: “Do you think that your brain is functioning entirely differently from any other brain in the world? That’s nonsense. The same processes we find in a Negro brain are also in us.”

We see the extraordinary expressiveness of this elderly man, who turns 86 in July. There is a prophetic toughness in his being which has been formed by decades of scientific struggle.

Otherwise, he is youthful, almost boyish. When he gets excited, he uses his hands to emphasize his words, and the range of expressions on his face grows wider than usual. Beneath the bright white bushy eyebrows, his small green eyes regard you meaningfully and intelligently. The sun, sinking behind Lake Zurich, penetrates through the window in reddish rays, deepening the thousands of wrinkles in his face, yellowing his snow-white hair, and projecting a bold shadow onto the big bookcase along the back wall. There are a lot of books in there. He has read them all, and many others. He has written 30 works himself, yet he does not believe that knowledge alone is enough. He wants to be close to life—not confined to a study, but always looking for a correct way of life, and never failing to fulfill its demands in his own case. As I converse with C. G. Jung, the age difference of 66 years shrinks into negligibility. Just being in his presence, one deeply feels the closeness of wisdom. We continue our discussion.

CJ: Yah, yah, the future. I see the young generation is already better than the older generation. The younger generation has experienced something of the world. The older generation hasn't digested yet. They simply couldn't deal with it. What have they done with the last world war? In Germany nobody has digested it but a very few. And of course all the other people haven't digested it either. They are quite satisfied: "Thank God, we are no Germans!" That is how they react. And the Germans say, "Oh, *we* haven't done it. *They* have done it, these people, these National Socialists whom we got rid of"—happily enough, you know.

Jung winks again with a sharp nod of his head and sucks at his pipe. In his latest book Jung stressed that we should not overestimate the importance of a mentally stable and well-informed population. The over-valuation of mere knowledge that is typical of our time has grown at the expense of deeper values. "I'm well known by some slogans," he laughs, "but it's different with deeper knowing. For instance, the technical terms complex, introversion, extraversion—even the tram conductor in Zurich knows them. These things go into the public, even if every professor says that it's all nonsense."

Then Professor Jung lets out a typically unembarrassed, hiccupping laugh. Meanwhile, I have to wind up my tape recorder [which I must do every 10-15 minutes]. Pointing to the gadget, Jung says,

with a familiar grimace on his face:

CJ: You are their servants, not their masters. I'm not a machine. I don't respect machines.

KN: But machines are everywhere today

CJ: Yes, yes. They can be everywhere. Fleas and lice are everywhere. And in any case you have to translate my speech into Finnish. So why don't you have a gadget that translates? It's too stupid, you see: Cannot even translate. Moreover, when I speak to that, my voice is no longer genuine. My true personality doesn't come through because it is imitating a machine. I'm no more myself. It's dead! If anybody takes me when I'm talking like this, that's life, because I'm not subservient to a machine. I'm myself and I talk to a human being, and I'm not pressed into the form of a machine. When I'm pressed into the service of a machine, then I'm just part of a machine, and then I'm unreal.

Although there is a bit of an exaggeration in these Voltaire-like words, there is a lot to be reckoned with for today's people who pride themselves on their hi-fi technique. Strangely enough, after replacing the tape in my recorder, I twist the dial to the wrong position [Play instead of Record], with the result that for the next 15 minutes, not a single word goes onto the tape. I raise the issue of the opposition between East and West in today's world.

CJ [roughly]: Yes, there's East and West, and there's an iron curtain in between. That's all. But we should think that the same setting exists in each of us. Conscious and unconscious, with an iron curtain in between. The great problem is thus revertible to the individual, who unfortunately just does not seem to understand that there is more to him than a narrow area of consciousness, even though half a century ago it was scientifically proven that the *Ich*, the conscious self, is nothing more than a *part* of the human soul. People also try to despise religion these days, but it is just as ridiculous to deny that it belongs to a person as it is to say that I have no stomach. Reason is not enough for man, even if he claims so. Something irrational is needed. As human beings, we must have a relationship with a higher power. You cannot escape religion. Not even in space, although they are already aiming for Venus. Space travel in itself reflects man's natural interest in the outside world, but leaving aside self-observation, I think it is foolish to travel to the moon or Mars to start looking in the

mirror and examining oneself, when one could do so in one's own bed.

We change the subject. We discuss school education, the superficiality typical of our time, and the problem of duality, the form and content of words: Jung notes: "Well, they talk words, words which are empty, because there are no deeds behind it." The symbol function, man's superior feature, has thus got superficialized and has seriously turned against himself.

We bring up individuality, which Jung has been particularly emphasizing lately.

CJ: That is simply because if the *individual* doesn't do it, *nobody* is doing it. If *I'm* not doing it, nobody is doing it. And therefore, as people, we do it as individuals. If anything does come into reality, it only can come into reality through the individual, and not through a crowd. If you are many, you always look at the next man and ask, "Is *he* going to do it?" Naturally, he's going to do it; then I haven't to do it. Crowds are nowadays popular, because you are safe in a mass. That's the cheapest. You are safe in numbers, and particularly safe that you have to do nothing because *they* will do it. But [in] this time, you know, *everybody* is asked, and therefore I insist upon the individual. But if I, as a doctor, tell something to my patient—what he *ought* to do—I say: "You are perfectly free to ask me, 'Do you do it in your own case?'" And if I cannot answer it, or if I tell you a lie, it won't work, you know. Then everything I speak is hollow. It's only full and it has substance when *I* am doing what I ought to do—[what] *I ought to do*. And if I don't take my individuality as a serious proposition, I simply won't do what it [my own individuality] ought to do.

The Prophet has spoken. I take a couple of photos. He signs his last book for me [the original German edition of *The Undiscovered Self*]. As a memento of my visit, I give him a small Finnish Thomas' cross carved out of wood, which immediately impresses him. Then we say goodbye.

KN: I hope that your ideas will expand more and more.

CJ: So do I. Goodbye. And good luck to you.

KN: The same to you.

As I walk down the garden path to the gate at the sidewalk, I look back at the house and read the Latin words carved high over the front door: *Vocatus Atque Non Vocatus Deus Aderit*. “Whether you call him or not, God is always there.” Behind these words we find a man who has been able to see far deeper than his contemporaries. As I step outside the front gate, I am startled to notice the roar of cars going by on the Seestrasse. [Brief snippet of traffic noise.] Paradoxical indeed.

CJ with echo: “I don’t respect machines.”

My impressions melt into a whole over which echo the words addressed to the individual:

CJ: But this time, *everybody* is asked. Therefore I insist upon the individual.