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“Making the Unsayable Experiential” #2 (Zoom: Ukraine 05/21/22)

Greetings. We gather as analysts, as friends and students of Jung’s work in this cruciform moment of life and death, good and evil, fighting and praying, rescuing and being rescued, mourning and dying. We gather to support Ukraine, and particularly you analysts, financially, morally, affectionately. To say we admire your endurance and skills to stand with your land, your courage and simple kindness in many instances to those suffering.

Many of us feel disoriented by the invasion of your country. The family of my late husband, Barry Ulanov, comes from a small village near Kyiv, many of whom were killed in the 1930’s famine, in World War II, and under the Soviet Union. Our son, Alexander, worked in Kyiv and Donetsk from 2008-2015 and was present in the 2014 war, helping to evacuate families from Kyiv and to find employment for others. He works now to send aid and support. We think of your sister, brother, children, parents and grandparents, friends, communities for whom everything is lost overnight and who suffer the maximum of psychic terror.

I beg your pardon in advance for any offending presumption to speak to you in your suffering from a place here where electricity, plumbing, food, a bed and quiet exist and no constant terror looms.

I offer you three parallels between Jung’s Red and Black Books’ experience of finding his soul and the images from which he created Analytical Psychology in 1913-1932 during the outbreak of World War I, and your experience in 2022 of outbreak of war in Ukraine and behind it an existential threat of a World War III.

I Your Individuation Process

The first parallel concerns the individuation process which Jung formulated out of his experience of the unconscious and his search for his lost soul. He reminds us that consciousness is but a small part of the psyche whose greater part is the “unconscious *fact*, hard ... as granite, immovable, inaccessible, yet ready at any time to come crashing down on us.... The gigantic catastrophes that threaten us today are psychic epidemics. At any moment several millions of people may be smitten by a new madness” (Jung 1928/1953/1966, para 302).

The invasion of Ukraine is now a psychic epidemic falling on you, and behind you, threatening the wider world. Yet in the midst of fear and determination, we feel as well the psyche, your psyche, my psyche, meet with the force of our own individuation process as well. Jung writes, “when the psyche, as objective fact, hard as granite and heavy as lead, confronts a man [sic] as an inner experience and addresses him [sic] ... saying, ‘This is what will be and must be’” (ibid, para 303). Your own individuation process is happening to you right in the midst of the collective psychic epidemic of war all over your country and threatening countries at your borders. In this cruciform moment we feel both the personal and collective upheaval happening to us and to all around us. The spirit of the depths *is* at this moment the spirit of the times.

Yet we have from Jung whose work changed our lives and to whom we owe our professions, the training to work with psyche familiar to us and also the ‘you’ of psyche unknown to us. Despite being stripped by suffering of all energy, you may draw upon the reservoir of consciousness, to register the horrors of what is happening and the glints of gold miraculously there as well. We draw on the learning how to relate to the collective and not be buried in it. Like Jung searching

and finding his soul as his Red and Black Books tell us, your search for soul may find you and you too will know about what transcends psyche, as Philemon, a symbol of the Self, says, we each will pray to our one God as the bridge across death Jung 2009, p. 365).

This is an historical moment. Peace and war confront. President Zelensky of Ukraine broadcasts directly to President Putin of Russia who instigated the invasion: We are a peaceful nation. Stop your armies. If not, we will protect our land.

What to do? Ordinary life is invaded. Many citizens are soldiers, fighting day after night and night after day, ready to fire, ready to dodge, ready to push the enemy back away from your cities. Many citizens must leave, torn from all that is dear and familiar—comfort of home, sleeping at night-- leaving behind everything but the clothes on their backs. Many citizens who must stay suffer the sheer noise, the daily cacophony of bombs and sirens both.

Generated by your tough resilience, we may be witnessing dictatorship undergoing its own disintegration, democracy evolving into new forms.

We have something to offer as analysts. A supportive parallel instructs us. When Jung searched for his lost soul, she climbed out of a dark shaft in the earth. He looked down into that unconscious place and found at first nothing: it was a blank. Despite his professional success and fame, home and children, he was empty inside. You must feel that nothing, that blank with the world crashing down around you. Jung stoked his psyche by reading religious, esoteric and mythopoetic materials and discovered “something was living down there” (McGuire and Shamdasani 1925/1989/2012, p. 42). His unconscious then erupted with dramatic affects, bizarre imagery, strange fantasies. He feared he was losing his mind-- a

psychosis threatened. You must feel that too in the midst of chaos all around you or fearing it will catch you as you seek other safer lands for your children.

When World War I broke out Jung saw a space between his material and the eruption in the world. The collision of personal and collective pushed apart a space and Jung discerned patterns of the human psyche. He was not falling into madness but seeing what was true for all of us: look for the patterns; meditate on them as native to our human community, and see your own process too.

What is this war doing to each of you living there—bodies from the war lying in streets of wrecked towns, uncovering a mass grave in a huge trench behind a gas station, fearing ones we love who are fighting will be made dead, wondering if we have the stuff to go on, to survive. You can register two processes going on simultaneously—the psychic epidemic with collective patterns, and the individuation process where you learn from the heart as well as book, from madness as well as reason, from soul aliveness despite loss of meaning, admitting into awareness everything you had scorned as evil that now soaks the world with blood.

Though exhausted and numbed, your personal process persists and you can offer dialogue with it even if it is with despair that like an unsayable trauma renders you mute. But if the shocking episode is experienced, taken within, even the trauma that escapes words gets worked on to become an inner psychic event, no longer an outer happening that defines us ever after. We make the unsayable experiential and that births images that convey meaning.

Such eruption of originary material faces us with two questions. A silent transformation begins. We create and find created a living symbol that keeps within its secret aliveness a truth that cannot be explained, but only lived. Jung

repeats in *The Red Book* “our life is the truth we seek.... We create truth by living it” (Jung 2009, p. 299).

The two questions that appear make sense of the mad thing you are doing, like driving into dangerous war territory a lorry full of groceries, blankets, water bottles, even toys for those trapped and destitute. The two questions are: What are we willing to die for? What are we willing to live for? The personal and collective coincide and something happens. Jung calls it the transcendent function. You suddenly get a new attitude, a new insight, a new release, a living symbol and it gets you.

II Personal and Collective

A second parallel between Jung in 1913 and you in 2022 may be drawn from the experience you share of erupting ordinary material. Jung was just beginning to discern the living reality of the collective unconscious. The personification of Elijah whom Jung experienced as “real” tells Jung he is not his thoughts, that thoughts arrive, Jung does not invent them, thus breaking up Jung’s identification of his “I” with his thinking and opening him to the objectivity of psychic reality (Jung 2009, p. 249; Jung 1963, p. 183).

Further, Jung sees the inextricable connection between what individuals do (or fail to do) and what happens (or fails to happen) within their nation. Community and individual life interpenetrate. Hence, even what we suffer and do not resolve contributes to communal and national life; that tells us that our suffering though real, does not break us. That gives us hope when we feel so helpless against bombs and bullets and scarcities of every kind. Who knows? What you suffer may help us work through the suffering that afflicts us. The spirit,

whether of the times or the depths, is something we all live in together. The water of your tears may irrigate an arid place in me toward life.

There are many examples now in Ukraine of this interpenetration of personal and collective. Ordinary elderly women interviewed on CNN express a determined will to fight with guns to protect their land, and their right to train how to shoot. A man interviewed on radio identifies himself as the coach of an amateur football team, the “Wolfies”. He only adds later that as a medical doctor he is busy now delivering bandages, syringes, surgical gloves, medicines necessary in combat. When fighting is over, he says, he will return to his coaching the “Wolfies”. The persistence of Ukraine is assumed. I laughed out loud hearing his loving his football players over his medical dedication in the midst of war, his confidence to return to them. I felt awe of this seriously funny moment of life occurring in the midst of destructiveness. Another interviewee, an artist, chooses to stay in her southern port city under attack, saying we cannot all flee, some must stay. She is busy digitalizing her art into the Cloud so it will not be lost, but there for Ukraine in the future.

The major parallel to do with the personal and collective in Jung’s 1913 fantasies and now in our 2022 experience concerns their difference. It shows in two ways: how the collective presents itself, and how we deal with it. The collective unconscious appears to Jung in the image of hordes of dead crowding into his fantasies and into his children’s sleep. He feels forced to respond and writes three nights in a row “The Seven Sermons to the Dead.” Jung feels compelled to answer the lament of the dead but not to become their spokesman, not to identify with them but remain his own finite self. The dead cannot rest in dying because they failed to find aliveness in living. They suffer from un-lived life.

They neglected their individuation. Finally, Jung offers them his work of creating Analytical Psychology in response to their unanswered questions--how to be a person? Tell us about God (Jung 2009, pp. 346-354; Jung 1963, pp. 190-192).

Your time now in Ukraine, like Jung's time then, presents collective unconscious through image, but your image, I suggest, is different. For Jung it was the hordes of the dead with their questions. Your image, I suggest, is Erasure. The collective unconscious in its psychic epidemic form confronts us in the image of erasure. February 24 2022, Putin, president of Russia, justifies invading Ukraine by declaring you are not an independent country and never have been and never will be; you belong to Russia; you do not have a culture of your own; you are but a part of Russia's culture. Like the schoolyard bully who sees something he wants and just takes it because he can, he declares to the world that Ukraine is ours and there are twenty years of papers by Putin to legitimize his attempted theft.

Erasure is the refusal to see the otherness of the other. We rub out their independent existence. The attack of erasure on Ukraine brings to mind with acuity and confession too, erasures of all kinds going on in our world. Examples are legion: wars of white supremacy over people of color; of conquerors over indigenous people, of coercing autocratic dictatorships over every citizen's right to vote in their leaders. We learn from the schoolyard the most powerful response is all the children surrounding the bully whose power complex disintegrates. Your fighting aims to circle the enemy that circles you, to proclaim we protect our land, we exist from deep roots growing our boundaries on the outside and our culture on the inside.

A crucial difference between the personal and collective unconscious is how we deal with each. We can, with work, integrate into our identity significant parts

of our personal unconscious and assimilate a surface layer of our society's shadow. We cannot integrate the collective unconscious as part of our identity. It is too big, too vast. Its forces are impersonal, not personal, massive, not particular.

Mania results if we are invaded and identify with unconscious collective archetypal symbols. It is as if we plug into high electric voltage that we cannot turn off, that can explode. If we repress its force, it is like living with a hand grenade within. President Putin gives me the impression of having crossed the line, as if his complex of power mania has, in addition, a hole at the bottom of it. Through that lesion pure, undiluted, unadulterated archetypal energy fuels his presumed identity as *the* one, with *the* mission to construct a Russian empire with extended boundaries and sovereignty as if he the czar. That ambition flirts in his repeated threats, if not obeyed, to use chemical or nuclear weapons.

In the Red and Black Books Jung shows not to fall into a state of identity with the fantasies of the collective unconscious, but to *relate* to them. We personify them, engage in dialogue with them, argue with them, say we do not understand, develop our ego point of view and receive their unfolding of purpose and meaning.

We are trained as analysts to communicate with this voice of the collective unconscious, not to become it, nor possessed by it. The original material is in each of us with its patterns of communication. It is natural. What turns it pathological is when we identify with unconscious collective fantasy and it replaces reality. Then we reside in it, possessed; it does not reside in us. Then it rules us and we use its force to rule others.

Jung's relates to the primordial fantasies of the collective unconscious by writing them down in detail, drawing out their images, and translating them into concepts of his structure of the psyche.

Relating to collective unconscious forces instead of identifying with them, is the crucial differentiating line between being in touch with the taproot of the psyche portrayed in the primordial images, and pathologically replacing reality with the images. The turmoil of war stirs up tremendous affect and riotous images of cruelty, blood, wreckage of beauty, of evil itself, and sparks of unimaginable goodness of one person to another, of one synchronicity that saved your life that day from total immersion in chaos.

In the devastation of your beautiful country, to relate to the psychic epidemic that has crashed on you, you may develop a ritual of gratitude, a veneration of the god you lost. The scent of your baby's skin, the softness of your lover's mouth may be vital images of life in the midst of death around you, images that secure you on this side of the line between aliveness and deadness. Things you discarded from religion come unbidden to your lips, styles of philosophic thinking, alchemical images of *nigredo* and *purtrifactio*, wisps of poetry, spontaneous praying to a hidden but oddly near god just happen to you. You have the capacity of human creative symbol-making that confers the power of aliveness even in the evil of destructiveness (1928/1953 paras 292, 490).

Along with this comes the dumbing of all your faculties because your body needs sleep, food, strength. Your body may repeat rituals from childhood, sense connection to transcendent source the soul points to beyond the psyche as well as within it. One example is in hospital in southeastern city of Ukraine, without power, electricity, medical equipment, in wreckage. People crowd into darkness of

the basement to secure safety against the bombing. The obstetrician took her birthing patient there and used flashlights to help her with the delivery. The whole basement people, she said, listened, silent, waiting in the dark, for the infant's cry at birth. When the cry came, everyone broke into cheers. The miracle in the midst of evil.

Jung found a check on evil in his struggle to find his place as a human being located between the gods and the demons, between our finite being and the seeming infinite of the unconscious "I fight for freedom and life of man" Jung says (1913-1932 v. 6, p. 216). This does not deify the human: "Not the man, but man's primordial kernel" (ibid v.6, p. 273). We cannot integrate evil and destructiveness. We can, I suggest, use the check of the blessings of our finite lives and the symbols that radiate its life force as a source of steadiness (Ulanov 2007, pp. 135-139).

Jung offers this insight: when we are growing good and evil go together in a mysterious way. When we stop growing, they fall apart into hostile rivalry (1913-1932 v. 6, p. 219; Jung 2008, pp. 217-218). Do they reconcile? I don't know, says Jung; it happens in the dark behind your back that they go together, not merging, not annulling one another, existing distinctly in that irrepresentable psychoid layer of psyche.

Recognizing this mysterious going together of evil and good makes a space for our anger at this war and at the egregious crimes against civilians that exceed the rules of war. Here we find the place of hate that grips us toward someone trying to erase our very existence. I find the place of hate means holding in consciousness that destructive force (Ulanov 2017, pp. 83-84; Ulanov 2008/2014, pp. 171-175). That takes brute strength, not to act out in sadism against the

enemy, becoming ourselves the monster to fight the monster attacking us. Nor to act out against ourselves for being so exhausted, afraid. Nor do we repress the terrific energy of hate.

We cannot assimilate hate; it partakes of archetypal force of destructiveness which is such as it is, not reducible to social construction as its origin, though that contributes to its venom. We hold it in awareness and relate to it and do not identify with it, nor ignore our limits. Hate has a place in us but does not define us. We find rituals—to bury the dead, to give thanks for our lives, to devise war strategies, to force periods of time-out in order to resume fighting later. Hate, I suggest is the first protest—from the gut, from the bowels, from the back of our throat screaming in rage—the first protest against erasure, asserting agency, subjectness, saying I, we, do exist.

The act of holding hate in consciousness begins something that may transform it and make ways to relate to it. Like underground water we may irrigate the spirit around us for everyone to recognize and uniquely shape the life force that comes through them, so it will not be lost to the world. Evil is the kidnapping of that life and deporting people to nowhere.

III. A Note from the Feminine

A third parallel from Jung's Red and Black Books in 1913 and World War I and today 2022 in the war against Ukraine is a voice of the feminine in Jung's personification of Salome. She first appears in *The Red Book* as murderous, crazy, blind "because she didn't see the meaning of things" (Jung 1961/1963, p 182). She last appears as a sane, sighted woman who wants to give her love to Jung. He recoils, "you would stifle my freedom" (Jung 2009, p. 324; Jung 1913-1932/2020 v. 4, p. 242; v. 5, pp. 248, 251). He says, No. You live your life fully and I will so live

mine. His inferior feeling and relation to the feminine did develop, however. He committed to Love itself. First he put life, then love as love of psyche and devotion to do whatever was asked of him, pay the costs, serve psychic reality. (Jung 2009, p. 356).

It is dangerous to note the feminine as source, given how much harm has been done to women and the feminine in men by the concept—its misuse, and discrimination against it still. Feminism does a massive recalling of its truth in new forms, but we still have much to do.

The Black books bring new originary material. Salome, in particular, brings a resource to the heroism and abject suffering going on now in Ukraine. The soul chides Jung: stop holding the feminine in contempt; stop thinking women are a burden you have to give to; see they are offering to give you something (ibid v. 7, p. 207).

Salome gains her sight when she, and when Jung, recognize she is part of his soul. Imagine! (ibid v. 7, pp. 191-192; Jung 2009, p. 24 and n. 211). She stands against Jung repeatedly insisting she explain herself by insisting he see her different departure point. We need this particular feminine stand to secure the realness of Ukraine's national identity with its own soul.

The soul has three parts in the Red and Black Books: serpent (the earthly essence of the human (Jung 2009, p. 247); Salome, and a part called soul. This threesome makes up the entirety of soul in these texts. Without the Salome part, in distinction from the other two parts, the whole soul is not real in daily life nor in the world as *anima mundi*.

Salome is the *materia* of soul, the matter where “the light shows itself only as matter” (Jung 1913-1932/2020 v. 6, p. 282). Without her, we lose sense of

what matters. Loss of home, infliction of rape, torture, murder, deportation, aim to destroy the realness of Ukraine. The fight exhausts and numbs all participants. Who has time to grieve when we must plot our escape route? How to reassure our children when the bombs keep falling? We need the tough realness of the feminine to stay steady with the matter that exists right now.

Salome makes things real. Her nature is matter that exists in its own right, fact, realness of your ongoing personal being and the being of your country. The realness persists under the rubble.

The importance of seeing this is underlined by the soul part of soul saying she can be lured to evil as the shiny bridge to the ultimate when she fails to believe enough in Jung (Jung 1913-1932/2020 v. 6, p. 286). Jung sees he falls into destructiveness when he fails to believe in the primordial kernel, the tiny seed in his human self, standing between the gods and demons. The salvific moment is to trust this adamantine tiny grain of sand that goes on existing in us, relating to the whole of reality, the divine and the dreadful.

We are a space where heaven and hell meet, and the feminine meets what, I suggest, is disordered masculine in Putin's power mania. Real fantasies, real existing images, meet real external events. Disordered masculine happens when we forget that both are real, real image and real events, not to be merged, not one to be subsumed by the other, but each in its true place. Madness and psychic epidemic break out when archetypal fantasy replaces external reality. That mad replacement by fantasy over reality is my impression of Putin being in the grip of unadulterated, archetypal energy as his 'mission' tries to replace existing countries with the image of himself ruling a Russian empire.

Jung tangles with Salome when he repeatedly questions her, what is your mystery, your meaning? And we may ask in the midst of war, what is the meaning of this mayhem, this havoc of everything we hold dear? Is there any abiding truth?

Salome answers, I have no mystery or meaning. I am matter, indeed, the wonder of matter which is the counterpole to God (Jung 1913-1932/2020 v. 5, p. 269). But explain, says Jung, falling again into identification of thinking with consciousness (ibid v.6, p. 287). Reading that, I thought of the “cosmic meaning” of consciousness for Jung. When in Africa gazing at the Athi plain of Nairobi and at the “gigantic herds of animals [that] moved forward like slow rivers,” Jung suddenly grasps they exist *because* he sees them. He finds his myth! “Man is the second creator of the world, who alone has given to the world its objective existence ... without which it would have gone on in the profoundest night of non-being to its unknown end” (Jung 1961/1963, pp. 255-256).

You who are fighting in Ukraine must often feel that “the profoundest night of non-being” has descended on you. Yet you are conscious of it; its “cosmic meaning” is present in you. Remember the text tells us that Salome is “the being of nonbeing” accompanying you in the darkness as fact, isness, sensation, the matter from which all that matters gets born (Jung 1913-1932/2020 v. 7, p. 192).

Salome brings something before consciousness that we live rather than know about. This is “Light that is no knowledge, but—fact” (ibid v. 7, p. 216). She personifies a resource even in the midst of war. She as a note of the feminine is before images and words. She is matter from which we learn to live what matters. The soul calls Salome her “sister” without whom there would be no meaning and on whom soul depends: Salome “is making the unsayable experiential” (ibid v.7, p. 191).

That is your feminine resource in the darkness of unspeakable suffering going on now in Ukraine. This helps us in war where no explanation will be adequate. She does not “see” as does Jung with his consciousness; she is and says let events happen so that all parts have a share in life (ibid v. 7, p. 195). Salome loves pure eternal pleasure and pure matter itself. From this is birthed eternal images that the soul loves, images from which meaning is bestowed and our creative symbol-making capacity is born and evokes meaningfulness in living.

Might we say Salome is beingness where we momentarily renounce development and understanding to allow grief for loss, to allow rage against suffering, to allow hope for all citizens to fight against erasure, to allow intuition right now is the time to escape or right now is the time to stand fast.

From this feminine matter you may feel now in your body what matters, bear it in your mind, and believe in your heart a sense of what loves you and holds your soul in being, even in the madness of war.

May I close with speaking our admiration for you holding Ukraine’s front lines, you analyzing in the midst of noise of war, you delivering groceries, you trying to find places of safety, you trying to arrange a life now each day for your children, you letting the certainty permeate you that you fight against erasure for the realness of Ukraine. We honor you. We stand with you. We keep you in mind and heart.

May I credit Catherine Cox whose generative idea originated this effort to raise monies for you, to thank her and the numerous volunteers of the excellent team

who worked tirelessly to create this occasion to gather with you and to send the monies to you.

Thank you. God keep you.

Ann Belford Ulanov

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