

Introduction

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‘We are living in times of great disruption: political passions are aflame, internal upheavals have brought nations to the brink of chaos’ (C.G. Jung, 1946.)

The state of the world appeared catastrophic to Jung at the end of World War 2. His same words may apply to our current inflamed passions and chaotic responses to a global pandemic, environmental crisis, economic upheaval and profound divisions within and between nations. The 4th Analysis and Activism and 6th US Presidency Conference,” titled, **“The Reality of Fragmentation and the Yearning for Healing: Jungian perspectives on Democracy, Power, and Illusion in Contemporary Politics”** was established to consider the question of **our own “great disruption”**.

The C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, which has presented five previous conferences on politics and psyche, each of which has come before every US Presidential election cycle since 2000, established a collaboration with the ground-breaking series of Analysis and Activism Conferences initiated in 2014 to produce this conference. This effort was supported by the International Association of Analytical Psychology.

Twenty-six analytical psychologists and social-cultural scholars brought their psychological focus to current social/political energies and conflicts. The goal has been to engage and contribute to a revitalization of today’s suffering planet. The conference’s program organizers, Andrew Samuels, Emiljia Khieł, Stefano Carta, Tom Singer and Lynn Alicia Franco, as Jungian Psychoanalysts, shared an underlying belief that what happens in the consulting room is not apart from the social, economic and political suffering we live in. They undertook to produce a conference that would approach these social/politics issues with constant reflection upon the relationships between ‘the spirit

of the depths' and 'the spirit of the times', as well as attention to how the inner and outer realms and cultural forms interact with one another. Depth analysis and scholarly critique sit alongside activism and a passionate reaching out to others whose visions may differ but who also wish to examine the psychological and historical forces that have contributed to all of our suffering.

An original impetus in the idea of having an Analysis and Activism conference came from Andrew Samuels who envisioned "therapy thinking in politics" as a dialogue between psychologists and social scientist in concert with political activists. He understood political energy as needing to be "resacralized," by which he imagined that a politics, when not driven by power motives, could be infused with visionary idealism. Such political energy could focus on socio-political problems in a creative manner. The conference was established from this perspective--to respect and value our individual and collective unconscious social-political struggles with an intention to alter the present damaging course in politics that assaults our human dignity. The presenters seek to consider and inform a social well-being that sustains life's vitality for all.

The title of the conference emerged three years earlier in 2017 and disconcertedly continued to be pertinent in the fall of 2020: the fragmented world activated our communities' yearning for vision and reality that heals. A desire and need for regeneration urgently asked that creative, interdependent and equitable visions be spawned which would engage our political energies. While fears of regressive and destructive divisions have polarized our world, with courage and strength, we pick up the gauntlet in order to consciously contain our dread so we may face the future with a humble anticipation of going on living, hopefully with new perspectives that support our collective generativity rather than our decaying in despair. How will we do this?

We have learned as psychotherapists "to stay with the trouble" (a phrase borrowed from philosopher Donna Haraway) while we listen to the stories embedded with unspoken emotions of history and significance. We attune to the darkness staying attentive with needed patience for a glimmer of light to reveal a portal wherein patterns and images may have coalesced, offering a bridge that intersects our differences and divisions toward new perspectives and understandings. We search within the silence and the outrage of swirling collective energies for the archetypal cores that may better help us understand the embedded cultural complexes that are possessing us in so many ways and in so many different parts of the world. We seek to discover patterns of cultural shadows that are rooted in buried fragments of hate, violence, shame, loss, and anguish silently disavowed or dissociated. We may even recognize how undigested communications of intergenerational traumas become mythologized to carry partial truths which powerfully organize the rationales for our actions.

Many significant cultural complexes, both within an individual's psyche and in our collective behaviour which are evident in group norms, codes, and systemic structures and values are addressed in this conference—those found in gender designation, in the racialization of differences, and in the inequity of economics. Some of these themes are explored in how a system of enslavement continues through patterns of economic accumulation and the social privileging of skin colour. Some presenters will look at exceptionalism as a legacy of colonial attitudes and how governing hierarchy is associated with a righteous entitlement to dominate. Some will examine how governing systems and cultural forms manifest in socio-political oppression and inequality. Other papers will examine how new technology is becoming part of our psyche and our governing systems. The conference seeks to develop a

psychological approach to these socio-political problems with the goal of accessing our own imaginative political energy.

Lynn Alicia Franco (U.S.) has practiced psychotherapy/analysis more than forty years. As an analyst member of the C.G. Jung Institute of S.F. and The Psychotherapy Institute in Berkeley, she serves as faculty and supervisor. Her interest in systemic and unconscious group dynamics relate to the psychological integration of the socio-cultural context. Recent publications include, “An Immigrant’s Transit: From a Multicultural Complex to a Multicultural Mind,” *Cultural Complexes and the Soul of America, Myth, Psyche and Politics*, edited by Tom Singer, Routledge and “The Catalyzing Influence of Immigrants’ Cultural Complexes for Developing a Multicultural Perspective in Psychotherapy Training Institutes,” *Analysis and Activism 3, Political Passions Further Social and Political Contributions of Jungian Psychology*, Routledge.