

Whaling with Giegerich, the Ahab of the Notion

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Just as fish could never seriously question the meaningfulness of being in water, so from the age of myth through to the end of the age of metaphysics . . . man could not possibly have . . . raised the question, "Is Life Worth Living?" . . . If in the 19th century the question of the meaning and worth of life . . . became possible . . . a radical change in man's being-in-the-world must have taken place. Man must have had stepped out of his previous absolute containment in life, so that he now was both enabled and forced to view life as if from outside, because only in this way could *the whole of life* become thematic in the first place. (Wolfgang Giegerich)

Whale or Guppy?

"Call me Ishmael." Casting about for the single sentence that most succinctly conveys the scope and grandeur of Wolfgang Giegerich's psychology project, I find that it is this sentence, from Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, that immediately comes to mind. In Melville's novel, the protagonist, Ishmael, eager for adventure, joins a whaling expedition sailing out of Nantucket in the mid-19th century. As the story unfolds, however, it soon becomes apparent that this is no ordinary expedition. Though chartered with limited commercial ends in mind, the ship's commander, Captain Ahab, has another agenda. Obsessed with hunting down that most dreaded of all whales, the insurmountable Moby Dick, Ahab relentlessly pursues the creature wherever the chase leads. By the novel's end, the chase has led, not to the killing of Moby Dick, but to the sinking of the Pequod, the drowning of her entire crew, and Captain Ahab's own death. Ishmael, alone, survives to tell the tale.

Now it is an irony of our time that we have learned so well to recognize the myth, themes, and meanings that are contained in this great narrative that the whale at its center has become for us the merest of guppies. While Jung, crossing the Atlantic with Freud and Ferenczi in the early years of the last century, could still speak of his quarry, the unconscious, as Melville had spoken of Moby Dick, Jungian analysis in our day lapses into self-parody when it refers, in the style of its founder, to spiritual quests and night sea journeys. Picture, if you will, an analyst peering wistfully at a little fish in a fishbowl, while holding a Jungian commentary on Melville's novel in his hands at the same time!

But parody and especially self-parody can be a trenchant dialectician. Reading Giegerich's challenging and well-reasoned paper "The End of Meaning

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and the Birth of Man: An Essay about the State Reached in the History of Consciousness and an Analysis of C. G. Jung's Psychology Project," one might easily be persuaded that the satirical picture that I have just drawn could fittingly be set above the sorry state it parodies as an image of how Jungian psychoanalysis less wistfully ought to be. Taking a page from Jung, Giegerich speaks in his article of the dissolution of man's absolute, "fish in water" containment in myth and symbol and of the transformation, sublation, or going under of these into that understanding or comprehension of them that is characteristic of a fully modern consciousness. Jung, of course, while having made this point himself, equivocated with regards to it. As Giegerich shows, there are many passages in Jung's writings in which he looks longingly back to the imbeddedness in the cosmos that the "in-ness of [mythic] meaning" had provided. Indeed, right on the heels of his recognizing that man has been born out of myth, Jung (1963) asks himself, "But then what is your myth? The myth in which you do live?" (p. 171). It was in this way that Jung, succumbing to his own nostalgia, bequeathed to his followers that fishbowl of an idea that the mythic mode of being-in-the-world could be credibly regained.

But Giegerich holds firm. In the 19th century the naive relation that humankind had had to the world was transversed by as an irrevocable break or rupture. As Jung well knew, mythic truth, the truth of religion and myth, symbol, and image, fell away, historical change having rendered these passé. This falling away, however, was actually an advance. In Giegerich's view, it was the soul's own doing. Born out of the symbols that had prefigured it, the reflecting consciousness that now epitomizes and defines man as man came into its own, not as consciousness of some object or content, power, or principality (that was already the situation during the time of myth), but as self-consciousness, psychology, subjectivity per se.

"Man," writes Giegerich of this decisive change in our mode of being-in-the-world, ". . . stepped out of his previous absolute containment in life, so that he now was both enabled and forced to view life as if from outside. . . . existence as such had become a *vis-à-vis*, as it were, which is the opposite of in-ness."

Giegerich's reference to Man's being "enabled and forced to view life as if from outside," along with his characterization of this as a "*vis-à-vis*" with the whole of existence, returns us to the image of the analyst and the fishbowl. In Giegerich's text this image appears more seriously and progressively figured as an allusion to the soul's recent transit from the Piscean age, with its emblem of fishes submerged in the in-ness of a Christian mythos, to the age of Aquarius, who, as water-bearer, is depicted as a man carrying a vessel or jug in which the waters of the previous Piscean era are contained. "Aquarius," avers Giegerich, "looks back down upon the waters from which he emerged and also down upon the fish in it as discarded, outgrown elements of his former *history*." And with this development, "the condition of the possibility of the sacred, the numinous, of mysteries of the symbolic life, of myth and religion—each taken according to its *highest determination*—has disappeared."

Moby Dick has indeed become a guppy! And the novel, too, for all its greatness, just another title on a class list. For while its aesthetic power may still arouse in its readers a sense of adventure, mystery, the sacred and numinous, it does so now only as the opposite of these, as entertainment. The meaningful sense of "in-ness" that Melville creates through his art, ends with the closing of the book's cov-

ers. The very fact that we hold the story in our hands indicates that we read it from the vantage point of the aforementioned “vis-à-vis,” which is also to say, as Aquarius. And this is to say nothing of the secondary literature. Heir though the novel undoubtedly is to the symbolic forms of the religion that had preceded it, these, having now been explicated to within an inch of their lives, have gone under yet again to what Jung (1921) in one of his less wistful moments called “the better expression” (p. 475), even as the field of literary studies generally, having taken the linguistic turn toward reflexivity and self-consciousness, has shifted from an appreciation of the actual texts of its literary cannon to critical theory per se.

Of course, against even such wide-scale accomplished change, there are always hold-outs. And Jungian analysis, when it amplifies the guppies of the consulting room into bigger fish than they actually are, must certainly be considered one of these. Adapting a criticism of Giegerich’s, we may say with him that when allusions “to myths and symbols are presented as numinous presences, then they have necessarily become commodities, because they are now supposed to provide *particular* feeling-experiences or ideological views that, although they occur *within* the general state of a modern consciousness that has emerged from the in-ness, nevertheless are supposed to simulate the former sense of in-ness that has precisely been out-grown.”

Evidently, the Jungian whaling expedition, in contrast to Melville’s, is an essentially commercial enterprise. In its more new-age versions, we could even say that it is more like a whale-watching trip for tourists than a hunt or kill. For just as the modern eco-tourist experiences a joyous thrill when an endangered giant of the deeps surfaces nearby, so the analysand feels a similarly eco-soulful joy when the equally endangered, nay already extinct, motifs of myth and symbol can be shown to have surfaced in a dream.

Now, it goes without saying that we misread or misprision each other’s texts as we comment upon them. Knowing this, most critics are content when they can assert that their misreading is a strong one. My situation with respect to Giegerich’s views is different from this. In the forgoing discussion, I believe, I have presented his views truly, but weakly. I say weakly, here, because I know that the line from *Moby-Dick* that I began with did not come into my mind because the Great Whale is a guppy, but because Giegerich is an Ahab—the Ahab of the Notion!

The Better Formulation

A strong reading of Giegerich cannot rest content with the account he gives, further to Jung’s, of the death of symbols. Moving beyond this, as he has in his writings, it must also fathom how the form of the discourse following in their wake, the discourse of psychology, “formulates the thing sought, expected, or divined even better than the hitherto accepted symbol” (Jung, 1921, p. 474).

In Giegerich’s view, this better formulation is consciousness in its most thoroughly reflexive or self-conscious mode, “internal logical form,” absolute reflect- edness, thought per se. In contrast to the ordinary, diminutive sense of the term’s meaning, which we use to indicate the *fonction du réel* of a particular person, consciousness in the sense intended here does not belong to anyone. It is not in us in

the way that we consider our abilities and skills to be. It does not have a locus in the neurons of the brain. Nor is it a part of the personality, like the ego-complex and thinking function. On the contrary, we are in it even as we are in or a part of Man-at-Large.

Now, it is important to understand, with Giegerich, that our in-ness in consciousness is not the in-ness of pre-modern ages. Living beneath nature our forebears were compelled by the exigencies of their situation to mark the walls of their caves with the symbols through which their situation could be known to them from within. Our in-ness, by contrast, is more absolute than this. In the modern world, nature is beneath us, at our mercy now. No longer “red in tooth and claw,” its immediacy has been broken, reflected. And it is in these now—brokenness, reflectedness—that we have our in-ness.

Of course, the very word “in-ness” is redolent of its former modes. Picturing these, our conception of what it signifies is tethered to images of being surrounded by something external, like the flora and fauna of the natural world, the furnishings of the consulting room, and the rules that constitute the analytic frame. The in-ness of a truly modern consciousness, however, is more radical than this. If we were again to try to picture it, it would have to be as the turning inside-out of such external-surroundedness. But—and this is the rub as Giegerich (1998a) sees it—inside-out-ness on this scale cannot be “pictured” any longer. Though we do, in the case of this example, easily know what is here being conceived, our knowing this has not taken place in the sensory intuitional or “picturing” mode, but in the pushing off from these into thinking.

Modern consciousness, then, is an interiorizing consciousness. While not itself an existing being (“the soul,” writes Giegerich, “is nothing ontic”),¹ it is, nevertheless, that in which, through which, and as which all ontic beings and everything external are reflected into themselves. Said another way, from the immediacy of the sensate world (and of the impressions that have been drawn from that world and twisted a bit to provide the imaginal and symbolic nuancings by which that world was known from within) we have moved to a mode-of-being in which all that is is now absolutely interiorized, mediated from the outset, no longer merely apperceived, but thought. *That* is the better formulation.

Plato, of course, comes to mind in connection to this movement. His famous myth of the cave charts a journey from the sensible to the intelligible world. But let us draw a more contemporary comparison. The dynamic at play in the interiorizing movement we are describing may be likened to Freud’s rejection of the seduction theory. Just as Freud shifted his focus from positive facts to the more logically negative phenomena of imagination and fantasy, so consciousness comes home to itself—already long before Freud—by pushing off from the empirical, thing-character of all that it had at first perceived as being simply there in front of itself.

This is not to say that the things appearing in front of consciousness, be they persons, events, fantasies, emotions, images, issues and concerns, are not important psychic phenomena. Rather, it is to recognize that consciousness comes into its own as it lavishes itself upon these, infects itself with them, and interiorizes them into themselves as thought. As Giegerich (1998b) expresses this, in a passage in which he rejects the seduction theory in a much more thoroughgoing way than was possible for the still very positivistically-minded Freud, “Psychology begins where any

phenomenon (whether physical or mental, “real” or fantasy image) is interiorized absolute-negatively into itself, and I find myself in its internal infinity” (p. 31).

Psychology’s Neurosis

Late in his life, Jung (1975) wrote to Aniela Jaffe, “I have landed the great whale” (p. 17). Later still, in his memoirs, he railed against a class of “good, efficient, healthy-minded people” who reminded him of “optimistic tadpoles who bask in a puddle in the sun, in the shallowest of waters, crowding together and amiably wriggling their tails, totally unaware that the next morning the puddle will have dried up and left them stranded” (Jung, 1963, p. 14). In his critique of Jung’s whaling expedition, Giegerich convincingly shows that the tadpole mentality decried by Jung is precisely the mentality of the psychology that now flies under the banner of his name. Reluctant to be an Ahab, Jung clung to his healthy-mindedness. His powerful psychic experiences he left as empirical data, evidence for his theory of a perduring mythic world, when what would have been required was the interiorizing of the world-at-large, in the most public sense of its present reality, “absolute-negatively” into itself as the logic of the soul by means of them (Giegerich, 1998). But Jung’s psychology did “not break out into the open, into the realm where the invisible soul’s real battlefield is: the realm of thought, culture, science, economics, etc.” And the tadpoles in the backwater wonder why academics and other makers of the modern mind have so little interest in Jungian psychology!

With Jung against Jung, Giegerich’s critique tells the analyst of my caricature, the one who gazes so wistfully at the guppy in its bowl, that he must fish or cut bait. In a letter from which Giegerich quotes, Jung (1975) writes, “If the individual is not really changed, nothing is changed” (p. 462). With a keen sense of psychology’s larger quarry Giegerich disagrees, “Nothing is changed if *only* the individual is changed and *not also* and even predominately the logic of being-in-the-world at large.” In Giegerich’s view, the analyst in us who gazes into the fish-bowl, must overcome, not only his personal neuroses, but *psychology’s* neurosis. For what good is cure at the tadpole level if we are left stranded by the antiquated logic of that cure in the dried-up puddle that the historical present has long since left behind?

Giegerich’s (1998c) analysis of analytical psychology’s guppy-in-the-fish-bowl/tadpole-in-the-puddle mentality is to be found in his discussion of what he calls *psychology’s structural neurosis*. This neurosis, which operates on the logical level, the level of theory, is set up in terms of a split between consciousness (the analyst outside the fishbowl) and its contents (the little fish within the bowl). Focusing on unconscious *contents* (dream images, fantasies, emotions, synchronistic events), Jung sought to maintain his scientific identity as an empiricist while at the same time smuggling the down-sized, privatized symbols of bygone days into analytical psychology for the sake of what Giegerich calls his “counter-factual rescue project.” Working as a self-styled naturalist of the psyche, Jung gathered up images and amplifications which he then looked at as so many positive facts in front of consciousness. Immunized against them by this psychologically under-determined, arm’s-length approach, he remained the innocent observer of their merely psychic, not real, reality. But, as Giegerich (1998) writes,

It is not enough to teach the *unus mundus* and the *complexio oppositorum* and not enough to have and experience dream or visionary images thereof. That is not psychology at all, because it is still projected into positive “fact” or natural “event.” What good are images from the unconscious of the self and wholeness and of an *unus mundus*, if the systems of the unconscious and consciousness and of humans and the world are divided against each other by an unsurmountable barrier? Has wholeness become real if I dream an image of wholeness? Is a divorce or an estrangement between husband and wife healed by seeing a movie of a perfect marriage? (pp. 27–28)

Giegerich is right. It is not enough so show our patients the contents belonging to *their* unconscious so that they can go through life, or past it, quoting from their journal or dream diary. This is not to diminish the worth of journaling and keeping a dream diary. Rather, it is to say that the patients themselves must come forward to be what is only written there. But the Kantian barrier that Jung believed was erected across the mental world extends, because of his belief, through Jungian analysis as well, dissociating it from itself (Giegerich, 1987). Our patients are only taught *about* the whole man, or invited to idealize him, not challenged to *be* him themselves by everywhere facing the whole (Giegerich, 1998a, pp. 72–74). *That*, our theory tells them, would be to succumb to inflation.

Entering the Vessel

Real whaling takes place in the all-permeating, all-encompassing interiority of a truly modern consciousness. Its Moby or Mercurius Dick is whatever real situation we happen to be in, providing that we enter that situation as Ahab did, uncompromisingly and without reserve, interiorizing it into itself thereby. Writing about this process in alchemical terms, Giegerich contends that “the artifex himself enters the vessel” such that the separation between the vessel and what it contains is overcome. “The prima materia,” he continues,

pulls the very vessel into the process of decomposition and vaporization that it originally was thought to have to *contain* at all cost. The vessel gives in. The distinction between *me* and “*my* process,” “*my* development,” “*my* personal problems” is cancelled. The dissociation between psychology as a field and “people’s psychologies” to be studied in this field is removed. Psychology sublates itself as “immediate psychology” (as the study of “people’s psychologies”) and thereby settles in its *arché*. (Giegerich, 1998a, p. 212)

We are reminded yet again by this passage of my satirical caricature of the Jungian fishbowl mentality. And we may be reminded as well of Ahab going down to his death strapped to the back of Moby Dick by the lines of his own harpoons. Consulting Jungian commentaries to Melville’s novel, the analyst by the fishbowl learns that Ahab was an inflated individual, a madman who was identi-

fied with the archetypal Self. Staying on his side of the fishbowl, this analyst resolves not to let anything like that happen to *his* process, *his* development, or to that of his patients. More strongly interpreted, however, Melville's Ahab is not a person, nor even the representation of some facet of Everyman's archetypally cathected personal psyche; rather, he is Man or Mind-at-Large. Strapped to the Great Whale, it is this Ahab that goes under into that end or death of meaning that is simultaneously the birth of man's consciousness anew. Imaged here is the making good, in the sense of fulfilment, of Giegerich's claim that change is not real "if *only* the individual is changed and *not also* and even predominately the logic of being-in-the-world at large."

In the light of this a question arises: can the distinction between our two scenarios be cancelled? Can Jungian psychology let itself be drawn into its own fishbowl? Can it crew upon the Pequod and go under into a new consciousness? Can it let its Guppy Dick become a Moby Dick after all?

In his many English papers, Giegerich has done just that. He has gazed at analytical psychology's fishbowl situation intently, long and hard, until finally the vessel of Jungian thought has become "interiorized absolute-negatively into itself"—Kantian barrier and all—such that he has found himself in its internal infinity, in the very heart of its notion (Giegerich, 1998b, p. 31).

Now it is important to understand that while Giegerich considers Jungian psychology to be set up in terms of a thoroughly neurotic structure, he has not rejected it in a simplistic, undialectical manner on this account. Rather, he has followed his harpoon into it in the knowledge that "even the neurotic condition as a distinct form of untruth has from the outset, unbeknownst to itself, its place in truth." Explaining this further, he adds,

We should not try to "get out of our neuroses"—because this attempt is the very neurosis, is the attempt to escape from Truth. We should take our neurosis seriously with all its contradictions and carry it to its own conclusion, where it would sublimate itself. The neurosis "has everything it needs" to become Truth "within itself." Indeed, it already *is* one's own truth, but in the form of its rejection, in the form of dodging it. Truth is inescapable. (Giegerich, 1998a, p. 274)

The Un-ness of Consciousness

The inescapable truth of Jung's analytical psychology is the *un*-ness of consciousness. In contrast to the concept of the unconscious, which is so easily externalized against itself in terms of the positive contents it is held to contain, the phrase "un-ness of consciousness" better formulates what Jung (1938/1940) had in mind in the many statements in which he emphasizes psychology's lack of an Archimedean point of perspective outside itself from which it might view itself objectively (p. 49). Jung's insight here—into what I have called the *un*-ness and Giegerich the negativity of consciousness—is the basic insight upon which a truly *psychological* psychology is based. And herein lies Jung's singular importance. As Giegerich (1998a) has stressed, while "many people are in touch with the soul (or

at least with *their* soul), without being destined to be psychologists," Jung alone among his contemporaries, ". . . was in touch, *not* just with the soul or psyche, but with the Notion of soul!" (p. 41).

But then there is the above-mentioned problem of the structural neurosis in the set-up of his analytical psychology. Though Jung never rejected the foundational insight about psychology's lack of an Archimedean point, he dodged the full implications of its truth inasmuch as he adapted an empirically focused methodology that was incompatible with it. Just as Keats contrasted what he called "negative capability" with the "irritable reaching after fact & reason" that forecloses it, so Jung's authentic Notion of soul was undermined by an irritable reaching after myth and symbol. Evidently Jung did not realize that the notion of soul was already, in itself, the better formulation than the symbolic material he assembled to prove it.

Real Whaling

In an earlier section we discussed how "from the immediacy of the sensate world, we have moved into a mode-of-being in which all that *is* is now absolutely interiorized, mediated from the outset, no longer merely apperceived, but thought." Bringing this statement to bear upon our theme of what constitutes real whaling in our day, let us understand that in all the various moments of its truth, whaling now enacts itself in the same absolutely interiorized manner. The setting out to sea, the hunt for the quarry, the kill and the going under: all of these are mediated from the outset now, determinations of the Notion that holds them beneath itself. Actual 19th-century whaling, Melville's literary whaling, and even the Jungian fishbowl kind have been decomposed and vaporized now—at least in Giegerich's oeuvre. No longer contents of the sensory system, the imagination, or of the personal individuation process, they have gone under, in the manner of Ahab, Ishmael, and the crew of the Pequod, into the *form* of thought itself.

Jung (1975) said that consciousness is so constituted that when something is truly dealt with somewhere by somebody it is dealt with everywhere for all (p. 595). That the sublation I have just mentioned has indeed taken place may be readily understood from a brief examination of some of the flotsam and jetsam that Giegerich's account of psychology's Notion retains beneath itself. In his 1998 English book *The Soul's Logical Life*, Giegerich takes his readers into what he means by psychology's absolute-negative interiorization of itself into its own Notion. Casting off from nautical images that are still in a form that can be imagined, he moves into deeper waters still by negativizing these images into a more allegorical form in which they can no longer be imagined, but must be thought. In this way, through the decompensation and vaporization of the very images and symbols that Jung, ironically enough, had cited as empirical evidence for his hypothesis of a collective unconscious, Giegerich draws us into that all-encompassing ocean that Jung's insight into psychology's lack of an Archimedean point opens:

There is no outside anchorage where psychology could make fast. . . . Psychology has only its own inside. Psychology is only as its unconditional self-abandonment to its own internal bottomless sea. Ships float on the ocean that is all around them; psychology

has to be a ship, too, and allow itself to be carried by what it *knows* not to be a solid ground to stand on, but an unstable element, “weak as water.” The difference to literal sea vessels is that the ship called psychology has the ocean it floats on *inside* itself as the inner infinity and negativity of its own Notion. This is how “crazy” things are in psychology. (Giegerich, 1998a, p. 95)

Now this is real sailing! But is it also real as whaling? When interiorized still further into itself, does the internal bottomless sea, which is at the same time the ship that carries the ocean upon which it floats inside itself, evaporate into the misty contours of Moby Dick? To answer this question, let us briefly consider a description of the Great Whale from the pages of Melville’s novel. Sounding very much like Giegerich critiquing a psychology that remains on the level of positive images, empiricism, and the picturing mode, Ahab declares,

All visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event—in the living act, the undoubted deed—there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask! How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the whale is that wall, shoved near me. Sometimes I think there’s naught beyond. (Melville, 1983, p. 115)

As the “wall, shoved near” through which Ahab must strike, Moby Dick is whatever “living act,” “undoubted deed,” or real situation we are in so long as we strike through its sensory form as visual object and its imaginal form as pasteboard mask with a harpooner’s intent.

A faltering harpooner, Jung, according to Giegerich, contented himself with a simple negation of the world as given to perception. Through this he recognized the soul in the form of its first negativity, the psyche as image. Restricting himself to this, however, his psychology became the prisoner of the pasteboard masks which he could not strike through. As he put this in the “Late Thoughts” section of his memoirs, “We are hopelessly cooped up in an exclusively psychic world” (Jung, 1963, p. 352). Making a virtue out of the necessity he mistook this to be, Jung studied the psyche’s images in an empirical manner, making many important and impressive observations. But these images, for all their importance and impressiveness, were not yet the Great Whale. Scaled-down to fishbowl dimension by his empirical-mindedness, they were still on our side of the Kantian barrier. To get to the whale, that barrier must be breached or interiorized into itself by means of a second negation. Giegerich’s (1998a) term for this is “dialectical intrusion” (p. 254). By *thinking* the images all at once, rather than merely observing or imagining them, we pass beyond their sensuous immediacy, strike through the wall, and enter the unbounded realm of thought. As Giegerich explains, in a passage into which I have inserted references to Moby Dick and the infinite sea,

as long as the [infinite bottomless sea] appears only as an infinite expanse all around you to which you are exposed, you still see it

somehow from the outside! Paradoxically, you are not really in it yet, despite having (seemingly) ventured into it and being surrounded by it on all sides. [Sea] as vastness, as contourless wall of Otherness, is still an abstraction. It is the simple (undialectical) negation of the positive, domesticated sphere. It is not yet the *negative, determinate nought* (Hegel) of the [land-locked] realm (negation of the negation). You have positively left the realm of positivity and positively (physically or imaginally) entered [the infinite sea], but you still behold it from the *standpoint* of positivity that you brought along with you into the alleged [bottomless sea]. Once you are really in the [infinite sea] it also shows itself to you as [Moby Dick]. [Moby Dick] is nothing else but the further determination of the notion of [internal bottomless sea], the revelation of its inner image or mystery.² (Giegerich, 1998a, p. 215)

The Brain of the Whale

Another passage from Melville's novel is pertinent in relation to Giegerich's account of psychological whaling. Impressed by the sight of two whale heads laying side by side, Ishmael ponders the difference between their sensory apparatus and man's. The gist of his reflections is that while most animals, including man, have two eyes that are "so planted as imperceptibly to blend their visual power, so as to produce one picture and not two to the brain," the eyes of whales are diametrically opposed, on opposite sides of their enormous heads, with the result that they "must see one distinct picture on this side, and another distinct picture on that side; while all between must be found darkness and nothingness" (Melville, 1983, p. 216). This is a handicap for whales generally, and Ishmael believes that it explains the "queer frights" they are subject to when they are beset by several boats at once (p. 217). Now these biological reflections, however suspect they may be, are only intended to introduce us to the extraordinary, post-mythical mind of the mythical Moby Dick. Leading into this, Ishmael reminds us of how limited is human visual perception. Though man "can take in an indiscriminating sweep of things at one glance, it is quite impossible for him, attentively, and completely, to examine any two things—however large or however small—at one and the same instant of time; never mind if they lie side by side and touch each other" (pp. 216–217). To focus on the one is to lose the focus on the other. Empirical perception (and imagination, too) switches back and forth, again and again, unable to comprehend the whole in this piecemeal, pasteboard mask form (to recall here what Ahab had said earlier). But Ishmael asks,

How is it, then, with the whale [Moby Dick]? True, both his eyes, in themselves must simultaneously act; but is his brain so much more comprehensive, combining, and subtle than man's, that he can at the same moment of time attentively examine two distinct prospects, one on one side of him, and the other in an exactly opposite direction? If he can, then is it as marvellous a thing in him, as if a man were able simultaneously to go through the demonstrations of two distinct problems in Euclid. Nor, strictly

investigated, is there any incongruity in this comparison. (Melville, 1983, p. 217)

Moby Dick, so described, prefigures what Giegerich calls internal logical form, modern consciousness, dialectic, thought. The brain of the Great Whale, the Notion of soul, is already the *coincidentia oppositorum* of the differences that its eyes see. Hunting this whale as intently as Ahab did (in our every engagement in life), consciousness eventually takes on the features of its quarry. No longer resigned to being hopelessly cooped up in pasteboard masks, it thinkingly holds all of these in its mind at once (or constitutes itself as mind by means of this holding) until “the unity of [their] unity *and* difference” (Giegerich, 1998a, p. 120) forges itself into a harpoon point (the negative or anti-type of an Archimedean point!) and breaks through the Kantian barrier across the mental world into speculative thought and true psychology.

True Psychology

Commenting on the resistance that Christian truth was met with in his day, St. Paul said, “To Jews a stumbling block and to Greeks foolishness” (1 Cor.1:23–24). Doubtless, Giegerich’s thought provokes resistances of a similar kind. I am thinking in particular here of his references to Truth with a capital T. Adapting Paul’s statement in relation to this we can say, “To traditional Jungians, a stumbling block, to the postmodern thinker, foolishness.”

The difficulty that traditionally-minded Jungians have with the notion of Truth is a function of their acceptance of the restraints that Kant’s epistemology places upon knowledge (Giegerich, 1987, 1998c). Ever mindful of Kant’s opinions in this regard, Jung, as we have already discussed, always stated that the truths of which he spoke were merely psychic truths. His references to God, for instance, were always presented in his considered thought as nothing more than observations concerning the God-*image* in the psyche. He did not see that his psychological modesty here amounted to what his critic Martin Buber (1952) called an eclipse of God. Nor did he see that it also entailed, as Giegerich (1998c) for reasons similar to Buber’s has recently shown, a betrayal of his own Truth.

As for the objections of postmodern thinkers, I am sure that Giegerich’s references to Truth conjure up for them the spectres of logocentrism, phallogentrism, and of a colonizing spirit that has little respect for difference and alterity. It will be difficult for such thinkers to believe that he does not simply write in ignorance of their perspectives. This, however, is not the case (cf. Giegerich, 1998a, pp. 241–246).

A stronger reading of Giegerich’s reintroduction of the question of Truth into contemporary discourse can look back to Freud for perspective. As originally conceived by Freud, analytic therapy was an attempt to heal through the discovery of truth. At an early point in his analytic career, Freud installed truth as his analytic goal because he had become dissatisfied with hypnosis, a technique that was altogether too freighted with truth’s opposite, suggestion (Bienvenu, 2003). Now the important thing for our discussion is to realize that truth in psychoanalysis has gone through a number of redefinitions of what its conditions and criteria are. In the earliest days of the movement, when Freud was working on the cases that he

published with Breuer in *Studies in Hysteria*, the truth about neurosis was sought in the form of traumatic events from an earlier period of life, the memories of which had been repressed. Working in a rather forensic manner, Freud sought to retrieve the repressed scenes of his patients' childhoods. Finding sexual abuse at the back of their symptoms, he developed his theory of seduction. All this was before 1897. After that date, Freud radically revised his notion of how truth was constituted. The hidden truth of the repressed he now sought in the form of unconscious fantasies that were indicative, not of the untoward actions of some adult pervert who had abused the patient during childhood (except, of course, when this had been the case), but of the disturbing effect of the child's own bodily processes and instinctual drives. With this change in the way in which truth was sought (the shift from hypnosis to free association) and of the kind of truth that was expected (the shift from sexual trauma to drive fantasies), came a change as well in how analysis interpretatively formulated what it had discovered. Authoritative, courtroom-style interpretations that claimed to bring the repressed traumas of the patient's childhood fully into view gave way to more modestly conceived interpretive constructions regarding the vicissitudes of the patient's psychosexual development that had replayed themselves in the transference. And these constructions, Freud now allowed, only needed to produce as sense of conviction in the patient to be accepted as valid. But as Jean-Pierre Bienvenu (2003) comments, this shift that Freud was compelled to make because of the repressed object's failure to fully appear was also "disappointing . . . for Freud who had such a demanding scientific ethic, and . . . who always feared the return of hypnotic suggestion on the analytic scene." Indeed, as Bienvenu continues: "Freud knew that his new proposal would be like a Trojan horse: it could be the door through which subjectivity would re-enter the therapeutic sphere and put psychoanalysis in danger of being transformed into just another therapy using suggestion" (p. 411).

As it has turned out, of course, Freud's (1938) "Constructions in Analysis" paper has proven to have been just such a Trojan horse, although, as Bienvenu has shown, not with the deleterious consequences that had so worried Freud. Putting it rather ironically, we could say that the form in which truth is sought in psychoanalysis today is leaven, and rightly so, with the very subjectivity and suggestibility that the still very positivistic Freud had hoped to banish. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say, not the very same subjectivity and suggestibility, but, rather, the more sophisticated successors of these: feminism, poststructuralism, constructivism, the narrative approach, and what Bienvenu calls creative intersubjectivity.

But is the word "truth" not anathema for precisely those psychoanalytic approaches that are now informed by these perspectives? Certainly in the capitalized sense it is. But how else but with a capital refer to *real* truth, Giegerich might declare, with the problem of Jung's equivocations about God and the God-image in mind. Without a sense of Truth in the highest determination of its meaning, are not the ordinary truths of life quite indistinguishable from lies ("All truths are lies," said Nietzsche)? Is it really enough to assert that our feelings are true—just like that—in their positivity, simply because we have felt them? Are our images true just because we have imagined them or they have presented themselves to us? "Try the spirits," admonished John, "to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1).³

Returning to Freud, it is in relation to his anxiety about subjectivity and suggestion reentering the psychoanalytical scene that Giegerich's emphasis on Truth proves its worth. Summarizing Freud's concerns about this, Bienvenu (2003), as we have already noted, likened his "Constructions in Analysis" paper to a Trojan Horse. This image, we might say, is the Freudian correlative to the Jungian fish-bowl. It is an image of the structural neurosis from which traditional Freudian psychoanalysis suffers. While ascribing to a strict scientific ethos, Freud had to settle for a patient's being convinced by an interpretive construction to suffice as a definition of truth. But as we have already learned from Giegerich, even a neurosis has everything it needs within itself to become Truth. Freud, having rejected the seduction theory, could have known that he might have to do so again and again in other respects. Had he thought this through, he could have realized that psychology must reject all external foundations, even that of the empirical person in his or her positivity, if it is to truly be psychology at all (Giegerich 1987–1988). And with this absolutely interiorizing move, the neurotically conflictual difference between his Troy of objective psychology and the Trojan horse of subjectivity and suggestion would have been cancelled. Once psychology has entered the infinite bottomless sea in that ship that carries the ocean that it floats upon inside itself, there is no need to fear a Trojan horse, for the Trojan horse is nothing other than a different pictorial representation of the same thing.

What began with Freud as a search for truth remains so now with Giegerich. All that has changed, and this is everything, is the degree to which the negativity of the soul has been grasped. Freud began in positivism. Decisively pushing off from this with his rejection of the seduction theory, he was unable to go all the way. Jung, as we saw, went further. With his recognition of psychology's lack of an Archimedean point he overcame Freudian positivism, but then relapsed into empiricism and external perception again himself. It is only with Giegerich that psychology goes all the way, or as he would put it, comes home to itself.

Strictly defined, we can now understand, with Giegerich, that Truth is that consciousness or knowing that stands upon nothing firmer than its own inner standing—the self-relation of its own subjectivity and suggestibility! Unconvinced by even the most carefully conceived construction (constructions being merely an assemblage of clinical observations and positive facts), the soul insists instead on internal logical form, the theological circle even, of its self-relation. In this most rigorous sense, Truth can only be as the soul's speaking on its own authority, out of the depths of its own Notion. Psychology, as we have already heard from Giegerich (1998a), "has only its own inside" (p. 95).

What is true for psychology as a discourse and discipline is true for us each as well. We know the truth of a particular situation only as our exposed essence throws its innermost mystery into relief. For truth, in Giegerich's (1998a, p. 221) view, is ever and again generated anew as we stake ourselves wholeheartedly in relation to our life and times. And this cannot be done with the equivocation—*psychic* truth.

Jung's Queequeg as Giegerich's Inner Infinity

We learned earlier that while ordinary whales are subject to "queer frights" when beset by boats coming upon them from all sides, Moby Dick remains

indomitable, his brain being able to *think* the different pictures entering his brain in the sublated form of the “unity of [their] unity *and* difference.” A psychology that has entered the internal bottomless sea of its negatively so completely that it becomes not only the ship that carries the sea inside itself but Moby Dick as well, thinks with the same brain. Referring to this as the “‘tautological’ presupposition of myth interpretation,” Giegerich (1998a) states that psychology, if it would hunt its greater quarry, must “read myths [and] other fantasy images in such a way that with every essential detail in a given myth it is the selfsame *Notion of soul*, and the Notion of soul alone, that displays *itself* with its different determinations, with the different ‘moments’ of its internal logic” (p. 121). Read in this way, Melville’s *Moby-Dick* is the novel of the Notion, its characters—Ishmael, Ahab, and Moby Dick—but “different determinations” or “moments” of psychology’s internal logic, self-relation, and absolute negativity.

But—and this is my question to Giegerich—what about Queequeg?! Surely he, and his conceptual counterparts in Jungian theory, the archetype and collective unconscious, are also moments in the internal logic of psychology’s interiorization of itself into its own Notion.

One of the most compelling characters in Melville’s novel is the “primitive shadow figure” (as the commentaries call him), Queequeg. Ishmael first meets this savage harpooner in the inn where he is staying in Nantucket before his voyage begins. As beds are few, he must share one with another patron. Retiring alone to his room for the night, Ishmael awakens in horror to find that the fearsome savage, tattooed with symbols from head to foot, is laying next to him. We may think in relation to this scene of Jung’s (1935) statement, “In any situation of panic whether external or internal, the archetypes intervene and allow a man to react in an instinctively adapted way, just as if he had always known the situation: He reacts in the way mankind has always reacted” (p. 161). Surely there is a strong analogy between these lines of Jung’s and the encounter Melville describes. Ishmael has never gone whaling before. He is a complete novice. In the face of the challenge that he has confronted himself with (and ours as well whatever that may be), “the one has become two,” to borrow an expression from Nietzsche.

Now, chief among the qualities that Ishmael’s savage Other brings is the enormous thrusting force of the harpooner. Again we may think of Jung. In a passage where he rejects the trauma theory (even as Freud had abandoned the seduction theory), Jung (1914) writes, “The psyche does not merely *react*, it gives its own specific answer to the influences at work upon it, and at least half the resulting formulation is entirely due to the psyche and the determinations inherent within it” (p. 287). Jung here is as much to Melville’s as to Giegerich’s point. Hurling itself like the harpoon of Queequeg, the psyche gives its own specific answer to the influences at work upon it, even as we, through our “living act[s],” “undoubted deed[s],” and soul-making efforts, interiorize the externality of the situation we are in into itself, which is also say, into the images that, as its first negation, are the dawning of its Truth.

We can now bring these reflections to bear upon our account of Giegerichian whaling. In the startling initial encounter between Ishmael and Queequeg, the radical change of man’s being-in-the-world that Giegerich associates with the 19th century is dramatically portrayed. Noticing this change himself, Emerson said

that young men of this period were “born with knives in their brains.” Evidently, these knives, capable of what Giegerich (1993, 1994) has called killings of the second order (i.e., the soul-generating, truth-revealing negativization of anything positive, even images and symbols, into themselves) are the sublated form or “better formulation” of the tattooed man’s harpoon. In our novel, however, the two, Ishmael and Queequeg, lie in bed together, side by side. Without disputing Giegerich’s claim that the 19th century brought an irrevocable rupture, we may also argue, with this pair in mind, that this rupture was part of a dialectical action culminating in its own sublation. Twined together the pre-19th-century Queequeg and the post-19th-century Ishmael, appearing in Melville’s novel in “unity of [their] unity *and* difference,” are but different determinations of one thought, different moments of the Notion’s internal logic.

With this tautegorical insight, hurled by me here with a harpooner’s strength, I find that I am now going with Giegerich against Giegerich—at least insofar as his reading of Jung in this volume is concerned. In “The End of Meaning and the Birth of Man,” Giegerich sketches the passing away of mythic and symbolic meaning. He insists that history has rendered these passé. His account is a compelling one. Along with this, however, he identifies Jung positively with himself in a unpsychological, J = J manner through a series of quoted sentences that emphasize Jung’s nostalgia, his wistful looking back to the time of myth. Lapsing into pictorial thinking, the picture Giegerich paints is one of Jung in his psycho-Disneyland resisting the soul’s objective negation of itself as myth and symbol. He does not see in Jung’s *psychological* take on myth the negation of the negation.⁴ When read in the light of this possibility, however, Jung’s statement—“No, evidently we no longer have any myth. . . . But what then is your myth?”—can be understood, not as an equivocation on Jung’s part, but, rather, as Jung’s own dialectical contribution to the soul’s logical life. For to “no longer have any myth” is to be really out there, without external foundations, in the infinite bottomless sea. And didn’t we learn from Giegerich that it is only then, when there is no Archimedean point outside psychology to appeal to, that *Moby Dick* appears at all? Strictly considered, Jung’s *Moby Dick* is not some guppy of an antiquated symbol or myth, but *sublated* symbol, *sublated* myth: analytical psychology.

Let us *think* the figure of Queequeg a little further. In Melville’s novel, an account is given of Queequeg’s origins and of how he came to work as a harpooner on commercial whale ships. Born on a tropical island, the son of a king and queen, Queequeg became possessed by a “wild desire of visit Christendom” (Melville, 1983, p. 50). One day, when a whaling ship visited his island, he crept aboard, threw himself down upon the deck and grabbed onto a ring-bolt that he found there. Nothing, no threat, could compel him to loosen his grip. At last the ship’s captain, moved by his “desperate dauntlessness” (p. 50), allowed him to become a member of the crew.

Contrary to Giegerich (and summoning up all the “dialectical impertinence” I can muster), I would argue that Jung’s Queequeg—the archetype—is just as unnostalgic and future-oriented as is Melville’s. Covered with symbolic images from earlier times, even as the savage harpooner is covered with tattoos, Jung’s archetype is our thrusting with everything we’ve ever been at the present moment. It is a “back to the future” dynamic. Negativized into itself, against even its own his-

torical contents and archaic origins, the archetype-concept richly conveys the “intentionality towards the Other” of the soul-making urge (cf. Giegerich, 1998a, p. 204).

If I differ with Giegerich in his reading of Jung’s emphasis upon myth as having been regressive, I rejoin him again in stating that it is no longer Christendom that Queequeg wants to visit, but that absolute-negative interiorization of this into itself, the Notion of soul (cf. Giegerich, 1998a, p. 76).

At the close of *Moby-Dick*, the Pequod has been destroyed, the crew drowned, and Captain Ahab has been absolute-negatively interiorized into the drink as well. Clinging to Queequeg’s empty coffin, its surfaces bevelled with symbols resembling those that had been stained into Queequeg’s skin, Ishmael alone survives. In this essay, I have briefly reflected upon a number of scenes from Melville’s novel that, while having a strong resemblance to certain ideas of Jung’s, may also be comprehended as sublated moments of the Notion which analytical psychology has pushed off into under Giegerich’s command. The relentless intentionality of Ahab, the epiphany of the Great Whale, the kill as moment of truth, Ishmael’s Other, Queequeg, and the absolute-negative interiorization of each of these tautegorically into one another as sublated moments of the Notion—something of all this I have tried to convey. But it is this last scene (inclusive, of course, of all the rest) that I associate most strongly with Giegerich’s paper. Floating on Queequeg’s coffin, psychology in its new, post-mythical status emerges: “Man for himself” (Erich Fromm, cited by Giegerich).

Jung (1944) said that “the patient must be alone if he is to find out what it is that supports him when he can no longer support himself” (p. 28). After whaling with Giegerich, the Ahab of the Notion, we can say the same for our discipline. Psychology, too, must be alone with itself if it is to discover the bottomless interiority of its own Notion, which is its only true support.

Notes

- 1) Giegerich (1998a) writes: “The soul, or, as JUNG termed it, ‘psychological reality,’ is nothing ontic and therefore cannot be approached it ontological terms and from ontological presuppositions. The soul is *logical life*. It is not, or it is negativity. . . . psychology has to move from ontology to logic, from that which is to what can only be *thought*, and therefore also from the imagination to logic” (p. 116).
- 2) Modified in terms of a substitution of “internal bottomless sea” for “wilderness” and “whale” or “Moby Dick” for “Artemis.”
- 3) In this connection let us give the negativizing action of contemporary psychoanalysis its due by characterizing its “working in the transference” stance as a trying of the spirits *post mortem dei*.
- 4) For a very different evaluation of Jung, see Giegerich 1984 and 1987–1988.

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