

Chapter 12

The Freak

In search of Jung's second personality

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In this chapter I explore the *Freak*, a term I coined a few years ago, in 2015 to be precise, for an archetypal structure and its location in the Jungian model of the psyche. I am interested in and frame the Freak as the North Star and telos of the individuation process and as the subject's authentic identity. Within the context of the current anthology on the topic of the Other, the Freak, both in the technical sense I employ here and in its common usage, is an obvious and explicit instance of otherness.

I find this framing and coinage of the Self archetype, or second personality, as 'the Freak' to be both valuable and true. *Freak* is a term commonly used to denote a form of otherness and identity at odds with mainstream culture. A freak is an instance of otherness that is typically the target for vilification or, more rarely, idealisation, but in both instances as that which is not me. Unless of course, I understand myself to be a freak, in which case such identification is usually one of self-alienation. In my view it is this freakish dimension of the personality that is most in need of inclusion and integration into the subject's identity. Such potential for inclusion offers a significant opportunity for healing and individuation, if, by *healing*, I mean a remedy to self-alienation and a return to a more integrated, whole and authentic self-identity. Furthermore, building on Jung's aspirational notion of individuation as a more honest and complete form of self-realisation or expression, the Freak is an ideal de-idealised candidate for the trajectory of the individuation process, as I claim and elaborate on in this chapter, prior to the veil of self-illusion cast by inculturation into society.

Individuation as a process of authentic identification

My own engagement with Jungian studies is unusual, an outlier in the broader field – an application of Jungian theory outside of the academy or analysis, at least in the traditional sense. I am, if I may say so, albeit at the

risk of hubris, something of a freak myself within the field. My research and professional focus have been on the application of Jungian studies as a cultural and psychological education or 'psychoeducation'.¹ As a consequence of this educational focus, the orientation of my teaching has been less on pathology and more on individuation or the 'individuation project'. During my research and reflection on the nature of individuation, I have come to conclude that it is concerned with and centres on identity. Therefore, individuation, in my reading of Jungian theory and in my own teaching, is a search for an alternate identity.

To individuate, as Jung characterises it, is to constellate a new identity – in other words, an alternate identity to that of the provisional ego identity of the subject. This new identity is an intrapsychic other that Jung refers to as the 'Self' and regards as the ego's superior. The individuation process then, following Jung, appears to be a 'centring', a movement from a provisional identity closer to the margin or circumference towards the 'Self' that is at the centre of the subject's psyche.²

Struggling against that dangerous trend towards disintegration, there arises out of this same collective unconscious a counteraction, characterized by symbols which point unmistakably to a process of centering. This process creates nothing less than a new center of personality, which the symbols show from the first to be superordinate to the ego and which later proves its superiority empirically. The center cannot therefore be classed with the ego, but must be accorded a higher value. Nor can we continue to give it the name of 'ego', for which reason I have called it the Self ... I have called the process that leads to this experience the 'process of individuation'.

(Jung, 1966b, CW 16, para. 219)

This process of individuation – or let me here introduce an alternate phrasing to help convey my focus on individuation as a search for an identity, the process of *authentic identification* – is not simply a relationship of binaries. It has at a certain level of analysis and modelling a binary character: we speak of the relationship of the conscious and unconscious psyche, of the manifest to the latent and of the ego to the Self;³ however, in neither the classical Freudian model, nor the Jungian model of the psyche, is it simply a binary structure. Freud offers us a *psychic triptych*, with id, ego and super-ego ('*das Es*', '*das Ich*' and '*das Über-Ich*') (Freud, 1978, p. 19). Jung's model or cartography of the psyche, which is more complex and plural in character than Freud's, focuses on the archetypes or centres of the personality, the persona, ego, shadow, anima-animus and Self (Jung, 1921/1971, CW 6, pp. 165, 412, 425, 460). Other archetypes may be and sometimes are added into this mix, such as the puer-senex and mana, among others (Jung, 1956, CW 5, pp. 392, 127), but the aforementioned – persona, ego, shadow, anima-animus and

Self – are the primary and axial centres of the personality upon which Jungian theory and analysis tends to focus.

Each of these archetypes in the universal subject or complexes in the individual subject (Jung, 1966a, CW 7, pp. 84, 116, 187, 196) constitute, at least in my own view, a distinct identity. The psyche then has this plural character with a multiplicity of potential identities with which the subject may identify, adopt or constellate (Samuels, 1989). As such, the search for authentic, or at least alternate, identification to the default provisional identity has multiple options and potential coordinates. Each of these identities has an important functional role in the totality of the subject's psychological economy. The universality of this archetypal structure speaks to its evolutionary character and value.

Psychological identity or subjective identification then is not typically static within the framework of these structural archetypes or centres of the personality. The subject will move between and adopt these alternate identities, or elements of them, within the dynamics of their social interactions and environmental demands.⁴ Psychological maturation or analysis will also facilitate a gradual movement, and arguably a progression, of the subject's identity from one of these centres or archetypes to another. A hypothetical subject or analysand may arrive at analysis heavily identified with her persona, for example, and, during the analysis, on becoming aware of elements of her shadow, the coordinates and character of her identity may shift. I suggest that such a shift in identification is central to the project of Jungian analysis to the degree it retains fidelity to the ethical imperative of individuation.⁵

This individuation process then follows a *telos* that entails a subjective reorientation of identity. Such reorientation involves a realisation that I, the subject, am not exclusively or even essentially who I have come to believe myself to be. Such acknowledgement creates the possibility of opening to and ultimately creating a fusion of hermeneutic horizons⁶ with other alternate intrapsychic and interpersonal perspectives. It is a loosening of single-minded fidelity to entrenched perspectives and prejudices.

The symbolisation of the Self archetype or the second personality as the 'Freak'

I return now to the earlier framing of the individuation process as being the opening of a discourse between the ego and the Self archetype (Jung, 1966a, CW 7, pp. 173–87). Bearing in mind that the Self archetype holds within its ambit the totality of the psyche, hence being simultaneously single and multiple,⁷ I have found it useful in my own work to adopt the term the *Freak* as a useful alternate symbolisation and signification for the 'Self archetype'. I do not intend by the adoption of this technical neologism to replace the original and existing terminology, which is essential for keeping in mind

Jung's theory and psychological cartography. This alternate signification, and the psychic modelling I have developed based on and in tandem with this idea, should be seen and regarded as arising from and resting on the existing classical Jungian framework. I would be surprised if this alternate signifying strategy gains much traction in a field that tends towards theoretical conservatism, classicism and, somewhat counterintuitively, normativism. Nevertheless, the idea has remained valuable to me and in my teaching since its coining in 2015, and so the publication of this idea and model in this chapter at this time seems appropriate.

The inspiration for this alternate formulation of Jung's second personality (Jung, 1961/1989, pp. 88–89)⁸ or the Self archetype came to me, in part at least, from a remark made by Johann Mynhardt, a student of mine at the time and son of the South African actor and raconteur Patrick Mynhardt, during a lecture I gave in Cape Town, South Africa, in 2015. The remark referred to the subject's personality 'pre-wound'; by this term *wound* I understood Mynhardt to be referring to the *primal wound*. The idea of the primal wound is best articulated in psychoanalytic theory by Freud's depiction of the subject's castration at the hands of the primal father (Freud, 1909, vol. IX, pp. 215–17; vol. X, pp. 5–149). This remark and idea led me to meditate on the nature or essence of the personality in this pre-wounded or pre-fallen state – in other words, the idea of an immaculate or archetypal identity that exists within the totality of the subject's psyche.

In my reflections on the idea, I have come to believe that this personality is 'immaculate'. It exists in the Platonic realm of ideas or in the Kantian *noumenal*, outside of space and time. In a certain sense it is the archetype of the personality. Archetype, not in the sense of a universal, but rather in the sense of the unmanifest, immaculate and ideational rather than empirical. It is the possibility of the subject's existence, juxtaposed against the actuality of their existence. This idea is prefigured by Fordham's 'original' or 'primary self':

I take [the primary self] to represent a state in which there is no past and no future, though it is present like a point which has position but no magnitude. It had no desires, no memory, no images but out of it by transformation all of these can deintegrate. There is no consciousness and no unconsciousness – it is a pregnant absence.

(Fordham, 1985, p. 33)

The relationship of this primary, archetypal or immaculate self to the empirical self is analogous in the Jungian conceptual framework to the relationship of the archetype to the complex. In comparing this to existing Jungian theory, besides Fordham's 'primary self', I would say the closest idea to my idea of the Freak is the idea of Jung's 'second personality'. I like Mark Saban's elaboration on this, which is closer to my own model than the Self archetype as elaborated by Jung. Jung's model seems more like a characterisation of

the totality of the psyche than a second personality. That said, I think the lines blur in distinguishing the second personality and the Self archetype, in part due to Jung's failure to elaborate this second personality directly and explicitly in his later psychological writing. Rather, Jung might be seen as being inspired by the idea of the second personality in the development of many of his key ideas, including his characterisation of the unconscious, individuation and confrontation of opposites, among others (Saban, 2019).

A distinction I want to highlight, among others I will deal with in turn, between my idea of the Freak and the Self archetype, is that I see the Freak as constituting a definite and distinct point within the model of the psyche, rather than being characterisable as the psyche in toto. This distinction is significant in that I don't conceive of the Freak as the archetype of psychic wholeness, in line with Jung's characterisation of the Self archetype, 'as an empirical concept, the self designates the whole range of psychic phenomena in man. It expresses the unity of the personality as a whole' (Jung, 1921/1971, CW 6, p. 460). Rather, and in contrast, the Freak, a single member or coordinate within the whole psyche, needs to necessarily work in tandem with other elements of the psyche. In this sense, the Freak is closer to Jung's idea of the second personality (Jung, 1961/1989; Saban, 2019) and Fordham's original or primary self.

Who or what is the Freak?

The Freak, or more precisely the *Real Freak*, as opposed to the *False Freak*,⁹ is the subject's personality as it exists in *potentia*, prior to the subject being born. It is the identity of the subject *a priori* to its existence in the world. In other words, it is a non-empirical and conceptual abstraction of the subject's identity that we can infer from the subject's empirical identity. At least this is how we are obliged to view it from a conscious phenomenological perspective. The Freak shares this empirically idiosyncratic character with the foundational idea of the unconscious in psychoanalysis. The existence of these phenomena – the Freak and the 'psychoanalytic unconscious' – although conceptually *a priori* to empirical consciousness, are only arrived at *a posteriori*. This obvious similarity between the Freak and the psychoanalytic unconscious acknowledged, the issue of precedence and primacy is a deeper one with respect to the Freak. Although in the model I present here it appears primary, this primacy is best and most accurately viewed as a modelling and pedagogical technique. Whether ontologically its existence precedes or is independent of the empirical ego is a more complex question. Possibly an alternate space-time perspective might see the Real Freak as having empirical and substantive existence, but that is beyond the scope of my theory and this chapter. Another way of putting this would be to say the Freak is an idea or an archetype rather than *a-thing-in-the-world*. The Freak is the archetype of the subject.

The Freak exists beyond the phenomenological experience of space and time. It is the a priori possibility of the subject's personality prior to her entry into the coordinates and developmental influences of her empirical life. The Freak has not been subjected to the alchemical process of being alive and of living in this world, conditioned by Freud's reality principle, at least not the 'Real Freak'. The 'False Freak', which I will come to in due course, has indeed lived in the world and been conditioned by it. The Freak then is the subject's idiosyncratic and individual personality. It is what is most individual, personal and authentic about the subject. Because the Freak is not of this world, it is a 'Freak'; it is uneducated, uncivilised, uncultured and unmodernised. The Freak could not exist in the world without the ego. As Freud tells us, the ego is conditioned by the reality principle (Freud, 1914–16/1975, vol. XIV, pp. 117–40), which, as George Bernard Shaw puts it, is 'able to choose the line of greatest advantage' (1903, p. 134).

The Freak is intrinsically and essentially idiosyncratic, existing, as it were, prior to and beyond the conditioning coordinates and milieu of the normative. This is an important and defining characteristic of the concept, as signified by the name I have adopted – the Freak. This speaks in tandem with and echoes Jung's idea of individuation as an antidote to totalitarianism. The Freaks in society would, I believe, be less amenable and influenced by prevailing collective ideology.

This relationship of the Freak – or, more broadly in psychoanalysis, the unconscious – and the ego is a cornerstone of Jungian theory and thinking. It is a relationship of interdependence, wherein, although challenging, each requires and benefits from the other. To put this another way, Freaks mediated and guided by ego consciousness are the 'geniuses' we so admire, and Freaks unmediated by ego consciousness are effectively insane and typically casualties of a social structure they cannot navigate – navigating the world being the province of the ego-persona axis.

The developmental role and location of the Freak in the personality

The diagram in Figure 12.1 illustrates the following:

- I. The distinction between and location of the Real and False Freak(s).
- II. The Real Freak is necessarily mediated for the subject through the False Freak.
- III. The ego is always necessarily in discourse with the False Freak.
- IV. The Real Freak exists in the realm of the noumenal, and its existence and character can only be inferred, never known directly.
- V. The Real Freak is a conceptualisation of an idealised or immaculate spirit or archetype of the individual's identity prior to it being ensouled in the body and in the world.
- VI. The False Freak comes into existence at the location of the Primary (or Primal) Wound.

MODEL AND LOCATION OF THE FREAK IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S PSYCHIC STRUCTURE

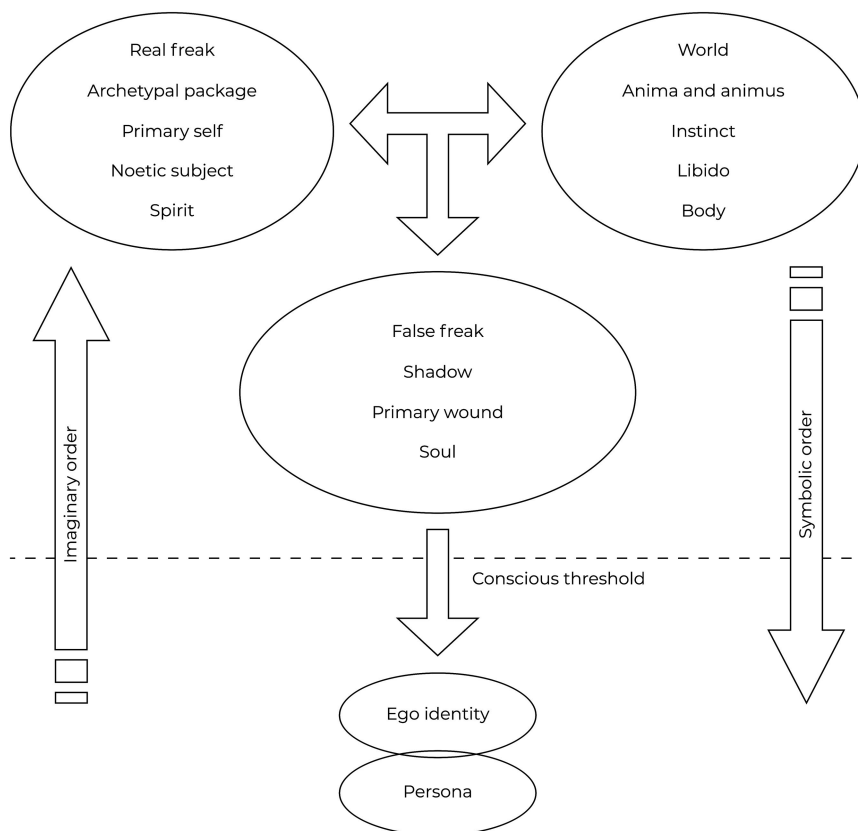


Figure 12.1 Model and location of the Freak in the individual's psychic structure (© Centre of Applied Jungian Studies, 2015).

The Real Freak is an abstraction, an idea of the immaculate identity of the subject. Although possibly an imperfect characterisation, the Real Freak is, in effect, the archetype of the individual subject. Practically, this stands as a type of transcendent North Star towards which individuation aims – always beyond herself – or around which it circumambulates, depending on one's perspective of individuation.

The *False Freak* or Jungian *shadow* is what emerges when the Real Freak enters the empirical world. The Real Freak exists only in the realm of the archetypal or Kantian noumenal. As such, it must, of necessity, suffer a type of distortion that the particular always displays when seen through the lens of the universal. To this distortion of the archetypal by the empirical is added the inevitable fall and developmental wounding of the subject, so well documented in psychoanalytic literature. This incarnation of the archetypal

Real Freak into the empirical world, with its intrinsic limitations and the developmental suffering of the subject, gives rise to the False Freak. In the spirit of integrative thinking, I could compare the Real and False Freaks, in esoteric terms, to the guardians of the upper and lower thresholds, respectively (Steiner, 1973). There is also a conceptual comparison between the Real Freak and the Lacanian noetic subject (Fink, 1996).

The empirical subject or ego can only enter direct dialogue with the False Freak or shadow, and this is the psychoanalytic discourse proper. This discourse, notwithstanding the signifier I have adopted of 'False Freak', is, as is well known in Jungian practice, fertile. It is the classical gateway to individuation. In this sense then the False Freak is not so much false as provisional; it acts as a symbolisation of the Real Freak in the world. Having acknowledged this idiosyncratic and arguably problematic signifier of 'false', for now, at least, I choose to continue its adoption. I find the contrast between 'real' and 'false' useful in alerting the subject to the fact that the Real Freak must remain forever behind the veil of the actual, and any identity arrived at in the individuation process should be regarded as not only provisional but also suspect.

The Freak in myth, film and psyche

Mythologically, the exemplar of the Freak can be seen in the defining myth for Western culture, the myth of Christ and the 'Mystery of Golgotha' (Steiner, 2006). We can view the person Jesus of Nazareth and the Christ as distinct psychic centres and, even, identities.¹⁰ The Christ was Jesus of Nazareth's Freak. We can view Jesus's life and ministry as a gradual movement toward and incarnation of his Freak. The 'Mystery of Golgotha', the crucifixion and then resurrection of and incarnation of the Christ, is the moment of the incarnation of Christ (the Freak) into the body of Jesus and into this world. The crucifixion metaphor is also not without value in characterising the sacrifice of the subject's ego identity on the cross of individuation and in service to the Self.

In film, my one of my favourite examples of the Freak is from *Being There*, the 1970 classic starring Peter Sellers in his final role as the inimitable 'Chauncy Gardiner'.¹¹ Chauncy or Chance embodies the holy fool and navigates the world in a state of grace. He makes a profound impact on those he encounters, ultimately influencing national policy at the highest level. He does this through sharing observations about gardening that are treated as allegories by the businessmen and politicians he encounters on his journey. His miraculous status is confirmed in the final scene of the film where he literally walks on water, a rather obvious allusion to his Christ-like status.

Being There is such an illustrative example of the Freak because this is so obviously and unambiguously what Chance is. The film has an overtly mythological character where chance, guided by the screenplay writer Jerzy

Kosiński's hand, stands in for the normal ego function and allows Chance to function in the world in an egoless state of grace. Chance's world is seen and mediated as though it were a TV show, to the extent that when encountering an unpleasant scene, he attempts to change the channel. His grip on the reality of the world is tenuous at best. Despite these challenges to normal existence and function, Chance embodies the charisma of innocence and zen-like simplicity where the garden is his reference for the cosmos. He exists in an immaculate and uncompromised form. These characteristics make him fascinating and persuasive to the people he encounters throughout the story, who have been castrated and corrupted by the world, and this allows him to introduce a redemptive motif into their lives and, by extension, into the world.

One of the archetypal motifs in dreams and dream analysis is of free flight, in which the dream subject can defy the laws of gravity and fly as though she were a bird or possessed some supernatural power of flight.¹² It is, I claim, the Freak that is flying in the subject's dream. In the dream space the subject's Freak exists in the *unus mundus* (Jung, 1963/1970, CW 14, p. 537), where there is no barrier to the realisation of her desires. Whereas, as we all know only too well, in the empirical space-time world of the daytime, gratification is obstructed, delayed and necessarily mediated, and any impulse from the Freak must be negotiated by the ego.

The Freak as other

A 'freak' signifies a marginalised and rejected personality.¹³ Freaks exists in tension with, and arguably compensate, the normative centre. The freak has a set of values, motivation, qualities or circumstances that, viewed from the outside, make her appear alien, frightening and often repulsive. In adopting this term, I am attempting to radically challenge the prevailing normative ethos of the subject's ego identity and orient the subject towards an alternate self and unconscious centre of identity in a fashion facilitating and preparing the subject for radical change. The Freak is precisely that which the subject cannot conceive of being or only imagines she might be in her nightmares and or morbid fantasies. The freak and the Freak, as I employ the terms here, constitute a type of apophatic centre of identity that allows individuation to be oriented towards an ever-moving reference point.

In my role teaching Jungian studies as a school of psychoeducation, I have become aware of a certain reactionary normative and conservatist ideology in many of my students.¹⁴ More specifically and relevantly, I have noted that this reactionist ideology is projected onto the aspirations of individuation, consciousness and the Self archetype. Individuation, seen through this ideological lens, is then framed as a movement to ever greater heights of normative realisation. To the extent the subject falls prey to this ideological orientation, she has failed to grasp the essence of individuation.

Naturally, the Jungian myth of C.G. Jung as, himself, somewhat of an icon of the normative adds to the unhelpful perception. The idea then of naming and regarding the second personality as a Freak is an attempt, in part, to rehabilitate this reactionary stance that is, at least as I understand it, antithetical to what individuation is or may be as an aspirational ethic. And to liberate the individuating subject from the tyranny of normativity.

A final thought by way of conclusion. Names change their cultural meaning and value over time. It would not have been appropriate for Jung to have adopted such a naming protocol, or its historical equivalent, in the development of analytical psychology. Neither would a naming protocol, such as I am suggesting here, work outside of the existing Jungian model and lexicon. It is only as seen in tandem, contrast and, possibly, complementarity, with the prevailing naming and conceptual framework that this name for the second personality becomes meaningful and has, or at least so I am arguing, some virtue.

Notes

- 1 This specific term *psychoeducation* was first used in reference to the work I am involved in at the Centre for Applied Jungian Studies by Professor Andrew Samuels, at the first public presentation of this paper in 2017 at the International Association of Jungian Studies conference 'The Spectre of the Other in Jungian Studies' in Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2 Or, somewhat paradoxically, it might be thought of as both the centre and the whole.
- 3 'Two souls, alas, dwell in my breast', from Goethe's *Faust*, was the inspiration for Mark Saban's *'Two Souls Alas': Jung's Two Personalities and the Making of Analytical Psychology* (2019).
- 4 I am indebted to and my thinking has been influenced by the work of Carol Rovane and personal communications from her while a visiting lecturer in the philosophy department at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2012.
- 5 In this respect I am persuaded by and share the belief expressed by Mark Saban in his Jungian and post-Jungian Clinical Concepts lecture given in 2020 that individuation is the central tenant of Jungian theory and analysis, which underpins and synthesises the body of Jung's work.
- 6 '*Horizontverschmelzung*', in Hans-Georg Gadamer (2013).
- 7 The psychoanalytic model of the plurality of the psyche or soul finds precedent in Plato's views of the soul in *Phaedo* and *The Republic*.
- 8 The idea of the two personalities is extensively explored in *'Two Souls Alas': Jung's Two Personalities and the Making of Analytical Psychology*, by Mark Saban (2019).
- 9 I elaborate this distinction in the next section. Throughout this paper I use the terms *Freak* and *Real Freak* interchangeably. Whenever I am referring to the *False Freak*, I will denote it accordingly.
- 10 'Martha answered, "Yes, Lord. I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God. You are the one who was coming to the world"' (John 11:27).
- 11 Actually 'Chance ... the gardener', but heard and adapted by those he encounters on his journey to 'Chauncy Gardiner'.

- 12 In my own dream life and mythology this occurs as though the air were like water, and I am able to take giant leaps and tread the water-air for extended periods of time and cover great distances in this fashion.
- 13 See Merriam-Webster, s.v. 'Freak', <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/freak>, where the definition ranges from 'a sudden and odd or seemingly pointless idea or turn of the mind', to 'a seemingly capricious action or event', to 'a whimsical quality', to 'one that is markedly unusual or abnormal', whether animal or person with a 'physical oddity ... sexual deviate ...' or 'who uses an illicit drug', to a hippie or 'ardent enthusiast', a person obsessed, to 'an atypical postage stamp ... or unique event in the manufacturing process...'
- 14 A remark along these lines was made several years ago on the International Association of Jungian Studies listserv by the Australian Jungian scholar and author David Tacey, specifically with reference to his encounters with 'Jungians' on his visit to South Africa. He found them be politically conservative. I am South African and prior to moving in 2020 to online education, much of my teaching was in South Africa, so one might speculate that my observation and analysis is somewhat localised. Nevertheless, my impression is that this type of reactionary ideology is, although not ubiquitous in the Jungian world – as the current anthology speaks to – certainly present.

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