



SERVING THE DEAD

SEEING THRU ART
The Unconscious Psychic Life of Mankind

5





Role of the Artist (You are an artist)



The tension between the spirit of the depths and times was present in the lives of artist like Leonardo who were constantly getting in trouble with the Catholic Church for doing things like making John the Baptist the center of the image (not Jesus). This is a tension the artist knows well, resulting in a tidal pull of unconscious imagery in opposition to the conscious push or repression of the Church is a long-standing battle for artists, who have been subject to Church control both financially and, at times, on pain of death. I see/feel the repression of art as a primary WOUND.



Jung said that his inner artist resented him and wanted to be crowned with a laurel, and yours may too. As a professional artist I have become more aware of all the people whose artist are not expressed.

As a result of Church iconoclasm, art has been historically destroyed and censored (WWII fight over and desecration of art being the most prominent example), creating a counter-culture within art in which underlying truth was hidden in archetypal symbolism. Michealangelo, da Vinci, and almost all other famous artists from the Renaissance can be seen within this tradition, for example. While Jung hid his art in a different way, by not publishing or widely sharing it, he can likewise be seen in this lineage of artists.



Jung taught himself and others the image-based teaching of his soul in a private therapeutic setting, and he lectured on the topic of his art and Morgan's art, for example, in the *Visions Seminar*, in small groups of his closest followers. When he spoke of art from an art-historical perspective, in the *Cornwall Seminar*, for example he included pre-Christian artistic traditions, and then detailed the Church's repression of art and the

corresponding loss of the soul.



Since this loss was visible in the “art of the period” (Jung, 1923, p. 21), Jung spoke of this loss strictly in terms of art in the *Cornwall Seminar*, where he outlined the loss of past sexuality, femininity, creativity, and the body—topics that have become thematic in the initial illuminations of my own manuscript. Even in

the intimate group of his followers in the *Cornwall Seminar*, Jung never addressed *TRB* directly.

Though he indicated that it was the Church’s prohibition and manipulation of images that repressed the individuation of humanity, Jung can be seen to repress his own images, not showing or publishing them, despite the urging of his soul. This is the interiorization of

repression, a version of the colonized mind, in which we censor ourselves. This internalized judge and censor is something to be mindful of as you embark on your art-based practice, since

Jung said: “If anyone tells you that it [art] is morbid or neurotic and you listen to them—then you will lose your soul—for in that book [*TRB*] is your soul” (as cited by

Shamdasani, 2009, p. 77).



Hitler notoriously hated modern art (as did Jung) and judged it degenerate. The works that he destroyed and disparaged went on to be the cannon of art history, proving that art defies the value judgements of the time. ART's very purpose is to evolve or individuate (heal and educate which can be seen as two sides of the same coin) the times. The DEPTHS speak through art.

In working with judgement (both imposed by yourself and others) you are mediating perspectives of the spirit of the depths and times. Viewing mediates the world not so much above and below but within and without and between people, echoing the second part of Hermes' alchemical maxim: **"as within, so without, as the universe, so the soul"**

(1908/2002, p. 7). In this process, the visionary artist sees and sees through the soul through their body and a body of art to connect not only above and below but the worlds within and without through sight and insight. In an inversion of this process, art manifests an outward embodiment of an inner image or vision. This relationship of within and without in art, reverses the physiology of sight, in which a manifest object in the outer world is taken in via sight.



In this sense, a painting can be seen as the externalization of the artist's inner or soul vision, manifest outwardly and then taken back in through the eyesight of another as well as the artist themselves in a cycle of return. In this way, viewing is cyclical or ongoing, a process and product that can be imagined as a circular path of return. In viewing, knowledge is thus communicated or shared between people and times as well as between the inner and outer world as conscious and unconscious through the alchemical lens of the soul. Here, I will note that though all art tends to be alchemical, manifesting spirit (psychic energy) in matter, visionary art, as in *TRB* and this art process, is particularly alchemical since it is based on the soul's symbolic imagery which mediates opposites of the unconscious and conscious.

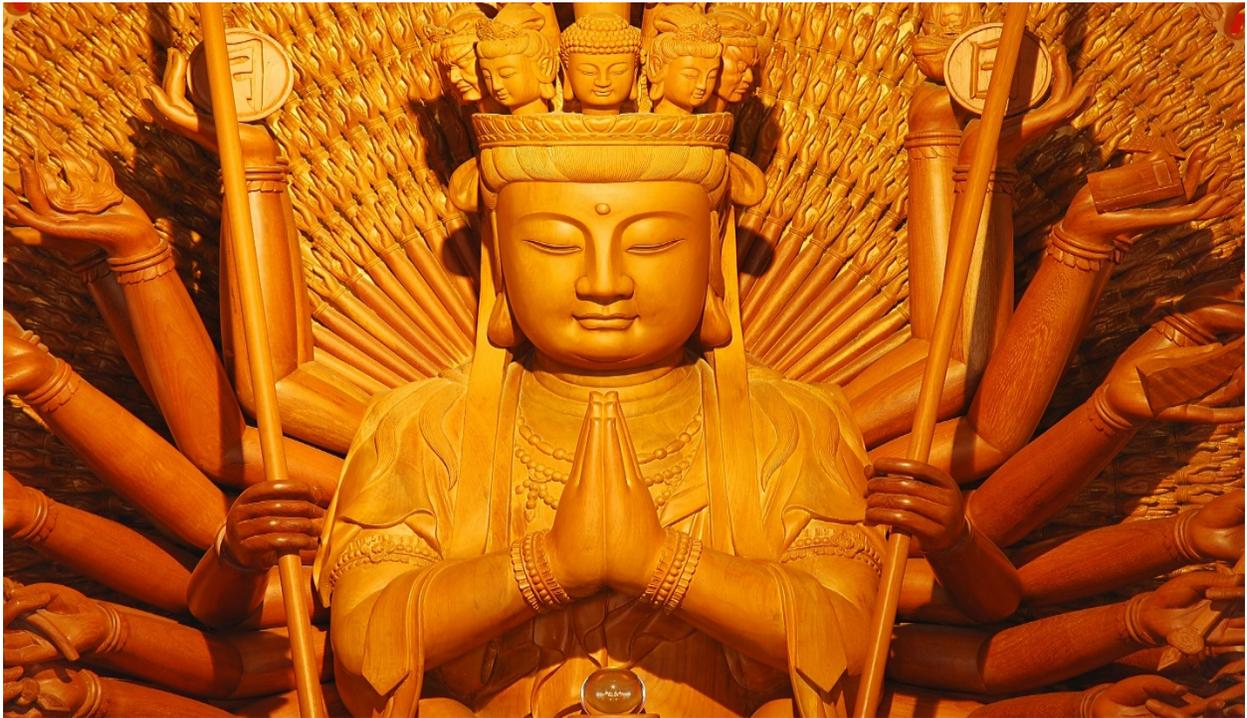


The soul's alchemical mediation of within and without can be seen in a paper that Jung wrote in 1928 entitled "On the unconsciousness" in which Shamdasani (2009) said that Jung, "noted that all of us stood between two worlds: the world of external perception and the world of perception of the unconscious" (p. 57). These two worlds can be seen as a principle duality or tension of opposites by viewing and, hence, in this art process, demonstrating the soul's capacity for sight and insight as a reconciling function of symbolic viewing. According to Shamdasani, Jung "wrote that [the polymath] Friedrich Schiller had claimed that the approximation of these two worlds [within and without] was through art," but in contrast, Jung asserted: **"I am of the opinion that the union of rational and irrational truth is to be found not so much in art as in the symbol per se"** (p. 57).



Jung described the essence of the symbol, which **“contains both the rational and the irrational”** (p. 57) as the heart of the transcendent

function. In this art process, like *TRB*, the mediating or transcendent function of the soul is held in visionary art as art based on the symbol.

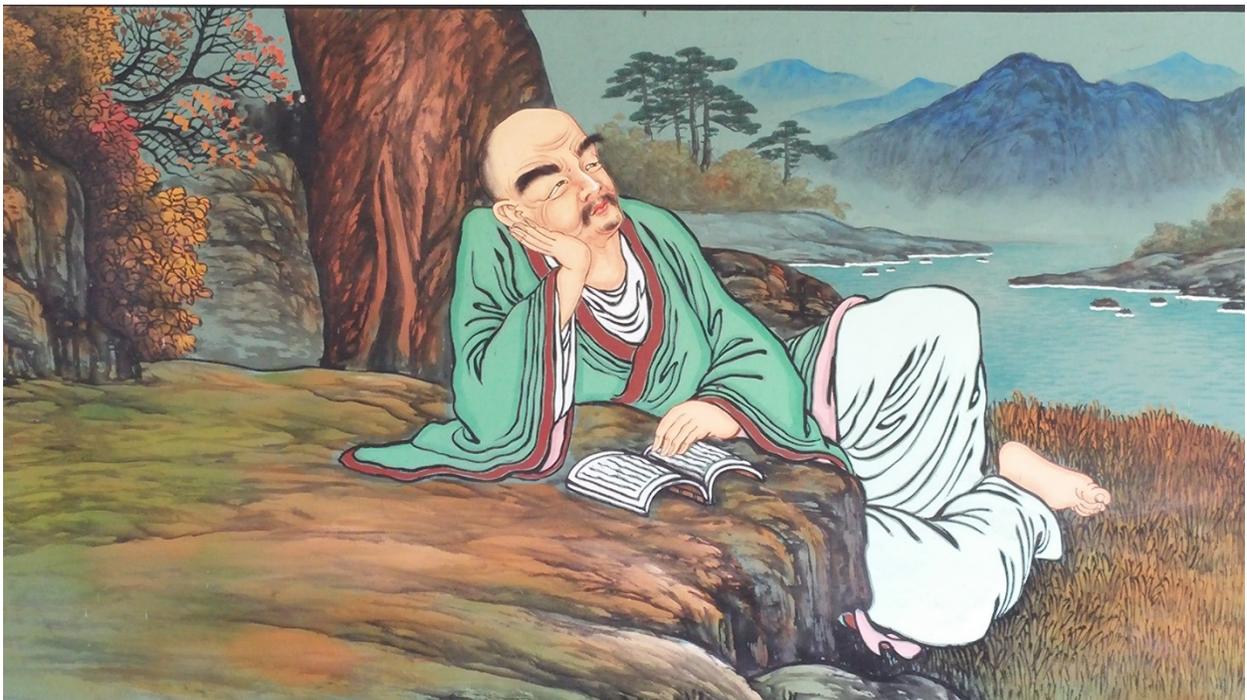




Dream Catchers

Visions and dreams as the source of imaginal knowing as gnosis. Catch them in a journal. For more information, go to the Illuminated Example section or watch:

<https://www.voiceamerica.com/episode/90898/intuitive-journaling-tap-the-wisdom-of-your-higher-self> or watch my video in the video library





Gnosis

Meaning “having knowledge,” from gnōsis for knowledge, Gnosticism is a direct knowing derived from the inner reflection of the soul, and it can be seen as the way that Jung learned in his art-based methodology. Jung recognized that: **“Gnosticism was stamped out completely and its remnants are so badly mangled that special study is needed to get any insight, at all into its inner meaning,”** and his work can be seen as a return to and popularization of Gnosticism. Yet, this was not the traditional Gnosticism of ancient religious texts in which matter is evil, but the resurrection of matter as spiritual. For, as Jung said: “Nature is not matter only. She is also spirit.” In his Cornwall Seminar Jung referenced a number of gnostic saying attributed to Christ, including: **“Split a piece of wood, and I am there. Lit up the stone, and you will find me.”**





Explore getting to know your body through a body of art and vice versa. How can you feel into your body as you paint. Also, watch your body mechanics while you paint...or draw.



