

CARL JUNG'S RED BOOK

Frank R. Morris

Let the drums roll and the obedient stand in formation with bowed heads: the secret book of the Swiss Master was released on October 7, 2009. It will circulate through the world and bring new converts to Jungian psychology.

The book continues the mental ramblings of Carl Jung clearly viewed already in *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*. I, for one, feel no thrill nor will I waste money reading it any more than a glance at a bookstore.

Why? Am I not open, do I not welcome information from the famous Jung? Not really. How many years do I have to be open, how many volumes of the man do I need to read, how many hypnotized patients who have formerly been lost in his jargon do I need to spend time with as I de-mythologized their magical thinking?

Jung and I go way back. Let's see ... all the way to 1957 - 52 years ago. I went to two different graduate schools that had segments of both faculty and students who were in awe - stunned voiceless awe - of the man and his writings. I investigated. I studied. I listened. I tried to make sense of it. I saw what Jungian thought did to his worshipful adherents: they became mystics with heads in clouds avoiding ugly human reality. They were worthless as therapists because their clients became brainwashed dreamers who floated through the world. The whole scene sickened me.

Understand, I studied Jungian material with the thought that so many converts could not all be stupid. I studied. I asked questions. I studied all the more. For ten years I kept *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* at the head of my bed and would dip into it before sleep took over. I forced myself into Jungian dreams, one of which I told to a Jungian analyst at a conference. The dream was about my returning to the Fourth Dynasty in Ancient China. The analyst removed his Homberg hat and said: "One must stand in absolute awe at such a fabulous dream."

For the remainder of the conference, the analyst looked at me as if I had entered the Sanctum Sanctorum and had joined the Holy Band of Believers.

Personally speaking, I felt no bells go off; no angels descended and gave me the holy kiss on my forehead. I thought to myself: "Maybe the dream came about because I had been studying ancient China the day before."

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No psychological freedom ever emerged in my soul as a result of my many years of studying Carl Jung. Zilch. Zip. Zero. What I did notice in my therapy practice was that Jungian advocates consistently had regressive four year old tendencies. They liked wu wu. While I won't universally classify them as hysterics, there was the latent hysterical tendency that flowed around the edges. When they fell over into the magical abyss, their eyes reminded me of a slot machine's whirling. They did not gain the flow of quarters, but, by god, they had wish, deep wish, everlasting wish.

The assumption inherent in the hoopla of the Red Book is that a Master, from a half century plus ago, came up with the Holy Grail of Human Psychology. "Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!" My analysis is that Jung made graphics of understandable developmental stages that have long been figured out by Freudians and academic psychologists. Understanding the developmental material makes matters logical and solvable; making developmental material graphic and magical leaves believers denying this world and believing in the Grand Blue Yonder.

Bluntly, that psychology gets people nowhere. They live in their heads. They feel superior to mere mortals who use their five senses to experience this world, mere mortals who seek to make sense of their lives, mere mortals who dwell in the land of everyday tragedy and everyday vitality.

Buy the book if you will. It provides a new journey into Alice's Wonderland.

And I assure you that this will become a textbook in conservative religious seminaries and colleges. "Lions and tigers and bears: Oh my!"

As for me, there will be no purchase of a Homberg hat.