

## **Psychology is Useless; Or, It Should Be**

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### *Idle Reveries*

In December 1817, the poet John Keats wrote a letter to his brothers in which he coined the phrase "negative capability." He defined it as the ability "of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason." (1973, p.539)

I read these words and I wonder why this notion of negative capability draws me into its web. I am no poet, and yet the poets have been my preferred companions for more than the thirty years that I have been a psychologist. Have they been my teachers because as a psychologist I have been formed by the traditions of phenomenology and depth psychology, particularly the works of Freud and Jung? Is there within these traditions some measure of hospitality toward the artist in general and the poet in particular?

For phenomenology the reply to this question seems straightforward. As a phenomenologist I practice a kind of fidelity to experience. This fidelity or hospitality makes no initial judgment about whether an experience is true or false, right or wrong, more or less real or valuable than some other experience. Phenomenology is not about comparisons. It is about the appreciation of differences. Van Gogh's "Starry Night" is an experience of the cosmos which has as much validity as the vision of the heavens through a telescope does. That one is an image and the other a fact does not matter. The phenomenologist is a witness and not a critic of experiences (Romanyshyn, 2000 a), and for a phenomenologist what appears matters first before one asks what it might mean. Presence, for a phenomenologist, precedes meaning.

With depth psychology the reply to the question is, perhaps, more ambiguous. At times, depth psychology is tempted toward a reductive interpretation of a work of art, as Freud, for example, is in his essay "The Moses of Michelangelo" (1914/1955). And yet, I cannot forget that late in his life Freud was awarded the Goethe prize for literature, an award which he greatly valued. I know too that he deserved that award, because he did invent a whole new genre of writing. In Freud's hands, the case history reads more like a detective story than a factual medical history. Indeed, it is not even history in the sense that the historian practices this craft. In Freud's hands, the case history is a piece of fiction (Hillman, 1983) which, like Van Gogh's painting, for example, lies in order to tell the truth.

I am drawn to this notion of negative capability because it sits well with me as a phenomenologist and depth psychologist. For me the poet's capacity for negative capability is like the phenomenologist's epoche, and like the depth psychologist's openness to that domain of experience whose reality like that of a dream is neither true nor false. In addition, I am attracted to the poet because of what I sense is an idleness which is not only welcomed but also cultivated as a way of knowing and being which is unconcerned about fact or reason. For me, poet, phenomenologist, and depth psychologist are companions in idleness, an idleness so deeply embedded in the bone that each of them can let go of that irritability which spawns impatience in the face of mystery, doubt, and ambiguity. For poet, phenomenologist, and depth psychologist presence does precede meaning because of a patience which can linger in the moment and wait for the presence in the present to appear. Poet, phenomenologist, and depth psychologist are witnesses of epiphanies. Each, in his or her best moments, lives in surprise.

Tutored by Gaston Bachelard (1971), I have learned to call this idleness attendant upon epiphanies reverie, and through him I have learned to appreciate how reverie authors a solitude which allows one to contemplate the world "without counting the minutes"(p.173). The fruit of this capacity to idle away an hour or two while dreaming with one's eyes wide open is a "contact with possibilities which destiny has not been able to make use of"(p.112). Suspending for a moment the facts which we have about things and the ideas which we know of them, mysteries are born. Reverie, Bachelard notes, enlarges our lives "by letting us in on the secrets of the universe" (p.8).

In moments of reverie, I wonder about facts and reasons. What are they? Facts are about things, and things have what a colleague and friend once called "punchability." I can count facts and I can count on them. They yield themselves to measurement and observation. Water is H<sub>2</sub>O. That is a fact. Sunlight is a spectrum of colors. That is a fact. The earth moves. That too is a fact. And so is the fact that the sky is blue.

Once, however, not so long ago, I saw the golden dome of heaven above the earth. I saw it on a cloudy, rainy Sunday afternoon when I was idling away an hour or so looking at medieval paintings in the National Art Gallery in London. About that moment I wrote that the impatient critic in us would ask, "Was not the Medieval sky blue?" (2000a p.178). Alongside this self evident fact, what answer other than an affirmative one could be given? Alongside the heavy density of this fact, the golden firmament of heaven does not matter. It is only an artistic convention, a mere conceit, an amusing fiction.

And the moving earth? Of that fact Bachelard says that "Even if reason, after long work, comes to prove that the earth turns, it is no less true that such a declaration is *oneirically absurd*." The words in italic are Bachelard's way of saying that the

dream opens the same space as that of reverie, and that for the poet in his or her reveries the earth does not move. "One does not dream," he adds, "with taught ideas" (pp.187-188).

Facts and things, ideas and reason--these are not the material out of which the golden dome of heaven, or the waters of baptism imbued with the holy spirit, or the rainbow as a sign of God's covenant are made. No! It is closer to the truth of our existence to say with the poet that "We are such stuff/As dreams are made on," (Shakespeare, 1974), flimsy stuff, wispy, diaphanous, and fragile, subtle shapes, "like soap bubbles," the poet Antonio Machado says, "almost without weight" (1979, p.1). This is the clime that Keats is exploring with his notion of negative capability, that subtle realm of reality which is neither fact nor idea.

### ***The Poet***

In [\*The Poetics of Reverie\*](#), Bachelard (1971) confesses that he is not the same man when he is reading a book of philosophy as he is when he reading the poets. I would imagine that the same would be said about reading a book of science. Facts and concepts require a way of knowing and being which is different from the realm of experience opened by the poet. The philosopher and the scientist not only know the world in a different way than does the poet. They live in different worlds. Facts require an empirical sensibility, and to gather them one must have a keen observing eye which best takes the world's measure the more distant it can be from it (Romanyshyn, 1989). Concepts, on the other hand, require a rational sensibility, a respect for meaning and some dedication to the idea that the mind can order the world's chaos. But between matter and mind, between matters of fact and ideas of reason, there is a whole other universe where the poet dwells, a domain of reality that yields its secrets to an aesthetic sensibility.

The psychologist, I would claim, dwells there. Or, at least he or she should, if psychology is worthy of its name, the speech of the soul. The psychologist should dwell there, even as failed poet, if psychology is a discipline which responds to the autonomy of Soul and does not discard it into that abyss between matter and mind. Forgotten in the abyss, Soul is either reduced to physiological facts rooted in the biology of the flesh, or confined in concepts which chart, for example, its rise and decline in developmental theories and theories of psychopathology. But at best, such theories are only and forever ideational maps for a territory where maps are finally useless.

In the domain of Soul, it is more appropriate that the psychologist be a failed poet than a good scientist. As a discipline of Soul, it is more proper that psychology be closer to the arts than to the sciences or philosophy. Even from within the abyss, it

seems more fitting that the language of psychology echo the aesthetic voice of Soul, the voice of dream and fantasy, mood and feeling, image and vision, symptom and symbol, than attempt the precision of science and its empirical speech, or the clarity of philosophy and its rational tones. When we shout too loudly into the emptiness of the abyss, we hear only our own voice. It seems more suitable that psychology follow the path of the soul and *its* ways of knowing and being, even though these ways are subtle and elusive rather than rigid and fixed, rhetorical and persuasive rather than empirical and proven, metaphorical and figural rather than methodical and literal.

In his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1965), Carl Jung describes his own struggle to honor the autonomy of Soul and its artist's voice. Even he who insisted on the "objectivity" of the psyche refused to hear its aesthetic claims. In the chapter entitled "Confrontations with the Unconscious," Jung says that when he was writing down his fantasies which seemed overwhelming and strange and quite odd, he asked himself, "What am I really doing? Certainly this has nothing to do with science. But then what is it?" He then heard a voice which said, "It is art."

Jung goes on to report that the voice which responded to his questions was that of a woman, indeed very much like that of a former patient, a "talented psychopath who had a strong transference to me." "She had become a living figure within my mind," he adds, and, as he continues, he says that he was "greatly intrigued by the fact that a woman should interfere with me from within." He realizes that "she must be the 'soul'" and explains his experience in terms of the notion of the anima. Continuing, he confesses that were he to take his fantasies as art, he would have "felt no moral obligation toward them." Without such an obligation, "The anima might then have easily seduced me into believing that I was a misunderstood artist, and that my so-called artistic nature gave me the right to neglect reality." In a very clear statement of his position toward these fantasies which the anima claims are art, Jung describes the technique which he used "for stripping them of their power" (pp.185-187).

In these passages Jung hears the artist soul as a seductive feminine voice which in its appeal threatens to take him away from what is real. This voice is not the voice of science. It is an emotional voice and, by implication, not a reasonable one. Feeling no moral obligation to this voice, he is nevertheless intrigued by this power of the woman to interfere with him. Jung's response is to strip her of her powers.

I would, however, be remiss in my own obligations to this material were I to neglect the very positive value of Jung's technique of engaging the unconscious. Jung is describing here a form of active imagination, and what is essential about this technique is that it takes the figures of the unconscious seriously, as autonomous realities, while also acknowledging the necessity of the individual's conscious point of view, less the person be overwhelmed by these figures of Soul. It is not the procedure,

therefore, which is in question. Rather, it is the issue which gives rise to it, the issue of psychology as an art.

The events which Jung is describing took place in 1913. When I read these passages I marvel at the disjunction between them and the spirit of Jung's work. I know that he does not intend to say that that domain of experience which negative capability opens is a reality that makes no moral claim upon us. One has only to read in [Memories, Dreams, Reflections](#) of his encounters with Philemon to appreciate the moral obligation which Jung felt in relation to this figure. Philemon is an autonomous reality of Soul, an imaginal presence, a distinct ontological being who does not belong to the realms of either fact or reason, a being who belongs to the same tribe, for example, as Hamlet or the other dramatic personae of Shakespeare (Romanyshyn, 2000b). Indeed, there really is no way to avoid the moral claims which the soul of art makes upon us. The claims of art do seduce us. The poet does inspire. The musician does transport us to another level of being. The painter does show us another and different way to see. Each opens that space of negative capability which parts the veil of conventional wisdom, and in those moments we are stirred in the depths of Soul before touched at the surface of mind. And that possibility is dangerous to and subversive of the established order. If psychologists who practice out of the depths of Soul also belong to this tribe, then they too are dangerous. Or they should be.

Quite near the end of his life, Jung returned to this earlier confrontation with the artist soul, and in a poignant way admits how much he had sacrificed for the sake of making his work acceptable. In a letter which he wrote in October, 1954, to Aniela Jaffe, he thanks her for an essay she had sent to him on Hermann Broch's novel, [Der Tod des Vergil \(The Death of Vergil\)](#). Then he says that he has wondered "about my reluctance which on all sorts of pretexts has hitherto held me back from letting this *Tod des Vergil* approach me too closely."

The span of time between the events described in 1913 and 1954 is forty-one years, a major portion of one's lifetime, and still Jung is reluctant to let the artist get too close. In the very next sentence we learn why. "I was *jealous* of Broch," he writes, "because he has succeeded in doing what I had forbid myself on pain of death."

Here is a man nearing the end of his life, seventy-nine years of age, who confesses that he has heard, and perhaps has always heard, "a voice whispering to me that I could make it [his psychological work] 'aesthetic,'" and who refused because he feared that "I would have produced nothing but a heap of shards which could never have been turned into a pot." In words that echo painful realization, he adds that "In spite of this ever present realization the artist homunculus in me has nourished all sorts of resentments and has obviously taken it very badly that I didn't press the poet's wreath on his head." And then, in a telling P.S., written as it were as an afterthought, as

something which comes after one is done with thinking and reasoning, the resentment gives way to the sadness as Jung asks, "Anyway why did it have to be the death of the poet?" (1975, p.189).

Why, indeed? Why did the poet have to die? Not Vergil, but the poet in Jung, the voice of his own psyche which asked so early on that he acknowledge the negative capabilities of Soul, that attitude which welcomes mystery, doubt, uncertainty without any impatient hurrying after fact or reason. Was it the image of a heap of shards as his only legacy which warned him away? Was it some fear of losing his way if he allowed himself to listen too closely to the cunning, seductive voice of the wily feminine? Did Jung lash himself to the mast of science, like some modern day Odysseus in order to resist this siren song? I do not know. I only know that no matter how often I read this passage, I never become so accustomed to it that I am not moved by the lament which Jung expresses for the death of the poet that he was and was called to be in crafting a psychology in service to Soul and its aesthetic values.

Had Jung pressed the poet's wreath upon his head, would the keen and many valuable insights of his work have become so widely known? Would it have had the same pervasive and enduring effect on our culture and our ways of knowing and being? Perhaps not. On the other hand, what has been the price of Jung's refusal to get too close to the poet of the Soul? Has psychology missed something essential to its nature? Has it degenerated into an inferior science, even into a new creed and dogma with all sorts of pseudo-certainties, dubious facts, and largely irrelevant ideas about the nature of Soul? Has it become mired in the therapy room as a mode of treatment and missed the chance to be a spokesperson for the autonomous reality of Soul, its imaginal landscapes and aesthetic values?

### ***The Imaginal World and Aesthetic Sensibility***

In this essay I have been exploring a difference between three ways of knowing and being. Keats' notion of negative capability is the abyss at whose edge the poet dwells, and where the psychologist as failed poet belongs. On one side of this abyss is the scientist with his or her facts and measurements. On the other, the philosopher with his or her reasons and ideas.

Poet, philosopher, scientist! This alignment is neither a hierarchy nor a value judgment. I speak of them as types, as different styles of presence, different attunements to the world, and different ways of saying what the world asks of us. They are different sensibilities, and it is this issue of sensibility, of how each type senses the world before he or she makes sense of it, which inspires this essay. The facts which negative capability eschews are generated by an empirical sensibility, and the reasons by a rational one. At the abyss, therefore, the poet, and the psychologist as

failed poet, are concerned neither with facts nor reasons. At the abyss, poet, and psychologist as failed poet, are witnesses with an aesthetic sensibility for the moment. For the moment, and not for anything beyond it. For the sense of the moment, for sensing it, and not yet for making sense of it. For the moment in its presence and not yet for any explanation of it.

Of the many poets who have been my companion on this journey to hear the voice of Soul, three present themselves at this moment as spokespersons of an aesthetic sensibility. In four simple lines, E. E. Cummings tells us that in the abyss of negative capability it is feeling which is our guide.

since feeling is first  
who pays any attention  
to the syntax of things  
will never wholly kiss you (1978, p.35)

When I read these lines, I can not help but recall Freud's syntax of the kiss. Discussing the aim of the sexual instinct, he describes a kiss as contact "between the mucous membrane of the lips of the two people concerned" (1905/1953, p.150). As a fact that is correct. But whoever kisses with such an attitude will, indeed, never wholly kiss you.

The soul of words lies nestled in their etymologies, and Cummings captures something of the soul of an aesthetic sensibility. Aesthetic means to sense or to feel, and ironically today we are perhaps most familiar with its sense via its absence. An-aesthetic is without sense or feeling. It is the state of numbness which prepares one for surgery, the condition of oblivion too which marks our an-aesthetic culture where violence has become so much the norm that we need increasing doses of it masked as entertainment in order to be jerked into some semblance of feeling.

The second poet is John Keats. In "Ode to a Nightingale" he hears the song of the bird and it throws him into melancholic despair. Can he, poor poet, even hope to come close to that song? Here in this vale of soul making which is the world, Keats knows only,

The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;  
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin and dies  
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs,  
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Despite his melancholy, he continues to listen. In spite of his sorrow, he obeys the call of the bird, and in doing so he realizes that the key difference between his poem and the song of the bird is that the latter is immortal:

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!  
No hungry generations tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn  
(1973, p.346-348)

Of the two, the bird is the eternal singer. In the ambiance of his song, the poet who sings with a human voice must recognize the failed reach of his words, their temporary and transitory nature.

In the attitude of negative capability, Keats senses and feels the song of the bird so deeply that it impregnates him with the sense of his mortality. He listens to the beauty of its song, obeys its call and hears the whisper of death. At its deepest level, the sense of the aesthetic is about listening, and to listen is related to the word to obey. At the abyss, the poet's aesthetic sensibility is a way of listening to the call of the world and obeying and responding to it even in the face of death. At the abyss, a word whose own etymology relates it to grief and suffering, the poet's aesthetic sensibility makes him or her a witness who listens to the world's depths, to those depths where what has been forgotten, marginalized, or otherwise neglected, makes its appeal for his or her voice (Romanyshyn, 2000c). With a voice fragile, weak, haunted by the knowledge of death, transitory and for the moment, the poet speaks what he or she has heard. The poet responds, and even in the face of death continues the unfinished and ongoing work of creation. The poet responds because an aesthetic sensibility is responseable, able to respond because it has listened and obeyed. Being a witness is in this sense an ethical act, perhaps the first ethical act, perhaps the highest.

There is no perennial philosophy here, no eternal wisdom in the poem. There is no way to cheat death here, no heroic action to take, no program to establish. There is no illusion that what we say and speak will conquer death's kingdom. Not even Orpheus, eponymous poet, could do that. There is only the act of witnessing the moment and being responsive to it. But for the moment that's enough (Romanyshyn, 1999).

The third poet, Rilke, knows this territory of the temporary, and how the aesthetic sensibility of the witness is the proper response to the world and its fleeting moments, to the world which looks for "rescue through something in us, the most fleeting of all" (1939, p.77). In reverie over Orpheus, Rilke asks again and again what monument we are to leave to him. "Set up no stone to his memory," he says. "Just let the rose bloom

each year for his sake" (1962, p.25). This is the other face of negative capability's capacity not to hurry after some fact or reason in order to still into permanence the world's passing moments. It is the ability to love the moment in its passing, to love the rose, we might say, which in its blooming is already beginning to fade. Considering the starry night sky, Rilke wonders about the constellations. "See the sky," he says. "Is there no constellation/called 'Rider' ?" He allows himself to hope for a moment that the otherness of creation, these nameless and alien stars, can be brought into the ken of human language, made fixed and certain by our ideas of them. But in the end he forgoes that hope because he knows that "Even the starry union is deceptive." What we would secure in permanence forever slips away, like water in the palm of one's hand. And yet, like Keats, like the poet at the abyss, like the witness, Rilke immediately adds "But let us now be glad a while/to believe the figure. That's enough" (1962, p.37).

The poet at the abyss, and the psychologist as failed poet who should be there with the poet, is witness to subtle realms. Not fixed in fact, these subtle realms are as elusive as dreams. Not imprisoned in concepts, they are as fragile as dust. Henry Corbin, the great Islamic scholar of Sufi mysticism, and a thinker who deeply influenced Jung's work, has termed this subtle world the "mundus imaginalis" (1969, xvi). This imaginal world is an intermediate world, a hinge or pivot between the intellectual and the sensible worlds, a world which is neither that of fact nor reason, a world "where the spiritual takes body and the body becomes spiritual" (p. 4), a world whose organ of knowledge is the heart. Of course, this is not the physiological organ, the heart as a pump, the factual heart which is the only heart we know and in which we believe. On the contrary, it is the heart which is the locus of an active imagination, "the *place* of theophanic visions, the scene on which visionary events and symbolic histories *appear* in their true reality" (Corbin, p. 4, his italics).

But the Sufi mystics of long ago are far from our ken, as far as the alchemists of ancient days are, those magicians of matter who in states of reverie before the fire practiced their own kind of negative capability and witnessed the subtle shapes and textures of the natural world, like the salamander roasting in the flames, or the green lion devouring the golden sun. Jung more than anyone has done much to rescue this lost art of visionary gnosis (1967, 1968). But even he more often than not abandoned that state of negative capability and forced the mystery of this other world of subtle bodies into that familiar conceptual scheme where these visions are projections of an interior, subjective psyche onto matter.

In his best moments, however, when Jung escapes the Cartesian heritage which dominates so much of depth psychology, he acknowledged that "there was no 'either-or' for that age, but there did exist an intermediate realm between mind and matter, a psychic realm of subtle bodies" (1968, p.278). In a telling footnote to this notion of

subtle bodies, Jung identifies them with the *Anima*, which is "a subtle perceptible smoke."

The work from which these passages are taken, *Psychology and Alchemy*, was originally published in 1944. Subtle bodies belong to the landscape of Soul, to the *Anima*, that same realm from which he was addressed in 1913 with the claim that what he was doing was art. It would seem that alchemy was a bridge between that event of refusal in 1913 and the words of lament about the death of the poet in 1954. It appears that through his studies of the arts of alchemy, Jung was able to acknowledge that psychology practices the arts of the Soul whose reality is a matter of smoke and mirrors (Romanyshyn, 1982, Corbin, 1998).<sup>1</sup>

We do not have to return, however, to the mystic or the alchemist to recover the true arts of the Soul. Closer to home are the hysterics who crossed the threshold into Freud's and Jung's consulting rooms. Their symptoms were mysteries which yielded their secrets neither to fact nor reason. Shipwrecked survivors of the Cartesian dream of reason, bastard daughters of Descartes' dualism of matter and mind, they rose up out of the abyss pregnant with the visions and the passions of Soul (Romanyshyn, 1989). Their bodies were alchemical vessels where the work of symptom and dream were dissolving the facts of medicine and the reasons of philosophy. These hysterics were silenced poets, their symptoms the unfinished artistry of the Soul, which demanded from Freud and Jung a kind of negative capability

Mystic, alchemist, and hysteric, are guides who return psychology to the poet, because poet, mystic, alchemist, and hysteric all dwell in one way or another within that same epistemological space of negative capability, that imaginal world of Soul where the "heart has its reasons which reason itself does not know" (Pascal, 1995, p.158). In his introduction to Corbin's book on Sufi mysticism, Harold Bloom, Shakespeare scholar and literary critic, writes that the imaginal world, which is opened to ordinary perception in moments of reverie when one can be in negative capability, is "generous enough to embrace . . . the aesthetic" (1969, p.xix). Is psychology humble enough to acknowledge the aesthetic claims of Soul? "It is art," the voice of Soul said to Jung. Is psychology able to respond to this claim, to recognize that its facts and reasons are works of art, neither more true nor false than a Mozart symphony, or a Rilke poem, or a Shakespeare play? Can it accept that its findings and theories are stories, allusions to that elusive invisible presence which always haunts the visible, a presence which the artist captures for a moment which is, however, enough? In the land of Soul does the psychologist have the heart to be the failed poet companion of the mystic and the poet, the suffering hysteric and the hoary alchemist?

***Psychology is Useless***

Now it is time for confession. The title of my essay is a rhetorical device, a piece of hyperbole, designed to capture the attention of the reader, to seduce the reader into the act of reading. Is it true that psychology is useless? Yes! I stand by the claim, but now with this addendum. In another letter written in April 1819, John Keats says, "Call the world if you Please 'The Vale of Soul Making.'" "Then," he adds, "you will find out the use of the world" (1973, p.549). The psychologist is not useful in the same way that a heart surgeon with his or her skill is useful. Nor is the psychologist useful in the same way that a politician might be. On the contrary, the psychologist is as useless as a dream, as practical as a fantasy, as helpful as a moment of reverie. And yet, in this practice of uselessness, the psychologist discovers the use of the world, *its* purpose and true value. The soul of the world makes its aesthetic claim upon us, and we are called into its service, called to shape its sounds into music, its colors into painting, its rhythms into poems, and through our own sufferings to hear its anguished cries.

The psychologist as witness is one who stands by. The psychologist as witness is one who knows that "They also serve who only stand and wait" (Romanyshyn, 2000 c). These words were spoken by the poet John Milton in his blindness as he dictated to his daughters *Paradise Lost*. The useless psychologist, with the poet and the alchemist, with the mystic and the hysteric, is in his or her best moments when he or she gives up the temptations to be usefully insightful, or brightly meaningful, or even diagnostically helpful, a guide for the blind on the journey home. He or she knows only that we have lost our way. Look at Van Gogh's "Starry Night," for example, and you will know that too. Or read a poem out loud, feeling the cadence of the poet's words, and you will know. Or drop into useless reverie for a moment and when the Soul of the world touches you, you will know and sense the call to come home.

### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> In his book [\*The Voyage and the Messenger\*](#) (1998), Henry Corbin ties the experience of subtle bodies to a visionary knowledge whose essence belongs to a science of mirrors, a "mystical catoptrics" (1998, p.134). In *Psychological Life: From Science to Metaphor* (1982), I explored the nature of Soul via a phenomenology of the mirror experience. At that time I had no knowledge of the Sufi mystic tradition. I offer this acknowledgement as an example of a key point in this essay. As an autonomous reality, Soul is deeper than mind, wiser than it, with its own logic of the heart. We are led into our work. It chooses us!

I also wish to add that this notion of being chosen by one's work is the foundation for my approach to research at Pacifica Graduate Institute. Research as re-search is a vocation, a return to what has already claimed you. And the task of doing research with soul is a working out of the transference between researcher and topic. From that innocent and naive exploration of the mirror experience in 1982 to this essay, I have

been drawn into landscapes of experience where my companions have been alchemists and mystics, poets and quantum physicists, hysterics and dreamers, angels and aliens.

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