

DR. TIMOTHY DUKES

THE PSYCHE SPEAKS

(Hosting The Invisible or Violating The Sacred)

by Timothy P. Dukes

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

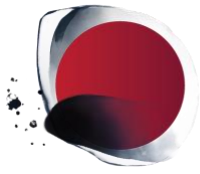
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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Stephen Aizenstat, Ph. D Winter 1988



The Symbol stirs our memory of that which came before this time when we were not yet separate.



When we speak of hosting the psyche, I keep imagining that we perceive ourselves as aware and sensitive beings with the intention of freeing the psyche so that it may speak. It is as though the psyche speaks to us from the shadows, from the fringe of consciousness, and reaches to us through the cracks. Hosting the psyche is sometimes described as honoring this invisible guest. Yet perhaps it is we who are the blind intruders.

I am reminded of a tale of a great teacher who was approached by a new student seeking his advice. The student explained to the master that for thirty years he had been committed to enlightenment. He had studied diligently all the yogas and meditations and memorized and understood many of the scriptures from numerous religions. The student now felt that the time had come for him to put into practice all that he had learned. He was now seeking the master's advice as to how he might best apply all his training and skill to help save the world. The master studied the student for an eternal moment and replied, "My advice to you is to be less concerned about how you can help to save the world and more concerned about how the world can be saved from you."

Perhaps we could focus less on how to host the psyche and more on how we can humble ourselves and free the psyche from our oppressive good will. In some way, hosting the psyche is like going to a primary culture and attempting to help them. Our mere presence so contaminates the environment that what we came to solve and to understand and to help was a "dis-ease" that we ourselves brought with us.

Allowing the psyche to speak assumes that we have some element of control over the psyche. I'm suggesting that through our physical and mental activity we cut ourselves off from the psyche and that our perception becomes distorted. We are the ones that are lost. Our sense of self becomes so solidified that we are no longer able to see, to hear, to feel in **the moment the place where the soul lives**.

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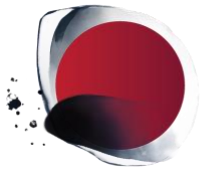


It is as though the movie of time slows down and our minds speed up to such an extent that we begin to see the movie only one frame at a time. Imagine, one frame at a time, just a picture...a frozen moment. It is with this image, this icon, that we hold onto all our past memories, our future fantasies. All the stuff of self is projected into this picture. It is only when we release our hold and surrender in some way that the film continues. We then see the movie, the story, or the myth. Perhaps we should then ask if we are telling the story or is the story telling us? Do we need to turn our attention inward and work to dismantle the ego self which perceives itself as separate from the psyche? Perhaps what is required is that we simply stop! Just stop doing! Stop becoming! Stop trying to understand and figure it out. Stop trying to learn — simply listen.

If there is any frontier left in the universe where life remains in its unadulterated state, perhaps it is in the unconscious. Some of us are pioneers entering this mysterious unknown. Have we learned anything from our pioneering days of the physical world? Can we look back on the "settlers" in America, the whalers in the Pacific and learn from our mistakes? Or is this just the next frontier for the ego to conquer? I wonder if we shouldn't stop our attempts to understand and to know this mysterious land.

We take a slice of the sacred and build four walls around it and worship it as our God. We act as though the Sacred, the Goddesses and Gods, the myths, the holy, the soul, are all differentiated entities that hold a form, maintain a body, even when we are not looking. When we are not there to witness, to perceive, to hear — **is it not entirely possible that they do not exist in form?** Is it not entirely possible that only because we are here to perceive that this is what gives them form? Is it not possible that how we are conditioned to perceive determines in what form we see the sacred? Hillman says, "A God forms our subjective vision so that we see the world according to its ideas" (Hillman, 1975, p.130). Could it be that we only know a God by the experience of being a God. When we return to

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a self, we return with only the memory of that oneness - which is totally distorted by the cosmology of that self which remembers. To say that what we call God has a form would be to say that the shape of wine is the shape of the bottle within which it is contained.

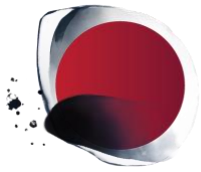
Is it possible that what we consider to be the landscape of the psyche is simply "the best" one of us could do to describe our perception of the indescribable? Jung certainly developed a complex language as did the Buddhists. Yet don't we have to remind ourselves that this is simply a more sophisticated finger pointing to the moon? It is not the moon!

I think it is possible that when we speak of hosting the psyche, many of us become so impressed with ourselves because we can understand such a complex finger. We sit around and look at it and puzzle over it and even worship it. However, we are simply wedding ourselves to a complex pointer. Meanwhile the moon, the psyche, the unconscious, whatever we separate ourselves from, lingers in the shadows and I think that it mocks us for our overindulgence with self. Jung says, "Dream the Dream onward" (Lockhart, 1982, p. 108). To fully know something, we must become it. If we become it, there is no separated self to describe it. There is no understanding...there is only being. We return with only our memory of having been it. Our memory is not it. Our thoughts about our memory are not it. **It cannot be understood; it can be remembered.**

Jung also said, "The symbol was the best possible expression of something not yet fully known" (Lockhart, 1982, p. 108). **I would say that the symbol reminds us of something we have fully known; it stirs our memory of that which came before this time when we were not yet separate.**

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