Preface

Once you have read this book, your relationship with the Bible may be changed forever. Not only will *Moonlight Shines in the Darkness* open your eyes to amazing aspects of the Gospel of John, which have escaped your notice until now, it will also introduce you to a radically new way of seeing biblical texts. Approaching biblical material psychosymbolically will allow you to transcend the sterility of the currently gridlocked debate about how to read the Bible. At one extreme, there is the conservative, fundamentalist view that the Bible, as the inspired Word of God, can only be understood to be true in the strictest sense: The Bible must be accepted as literally and historically inerrant. At the other extreme, there is the skepticism and increasingly secular deconstruction emerging from modern, and now postmodern, biblical scholarship. Psychosymbolic interpretation leads beyond the horns of this dilemma, working its way past both naïvely literal understandings and hypercritical explanations, and opening us up to powerfully transformative appropriations of the depths of meaning offered to us by the biblical texts.

During my childhood, the value of the Bible was neither assertively affirmed nor seriously challenged. Indeed, it was never really at issue, because outside of the Sunday school at the Episcopal church my family attended, the Bible was almost never discussed. I entered college in 1971, sharing the collective assumption that the Bible was, in ways I did not always understand, the living Word of God. Those were turbulent times in

American culture, and the Bible did not appear to be all that relevant to my sense of the liberating possibilities coming to light in the revolutionary new world that seemed to be dawning. As the Bible slipped further toward the margins of my life, it was supplanted first by the excitement of discovering exotic wisdom in Asian religious traditions, and then by an enduring attraction to the psychological theories developed by C. G. Jung. Ironically, it is Jungian psychology that has led me back to the Bible.

Moonlight Shines in the Darkness belongs to a stream of thoughts, reflections, and intuitions emerging from a confluence of Jung's analytical psychology, feminist critiques of patriarchy, and biblical studies. Analytical psychology provides a powerful method and a logical framework that allow me to push beyond the inherent limitations of Enlightenment rationality and critical explanations toward more holistic appropriations of the biblical texts. Listening to the persistent voices of women seeking to create a just and liberated society challenges me to look with new eyes in an effort to see into the worlds behind, below, and in front of the biblical texts. The Bible is the elephant in the room. Whether we like it or not, this often problematic collection of traditional texts remains, as William Blake and Northrop Frye both recognized, the "Great Code" at the core of Western civilization.

The fundamental assumption upon which this book rests is that the Bible is the *living* Word of God made manifest in a collection of profoundly symbolic literary texts. Psychosymbolic interpretation attempts to take seriously both components of this assertion. Indeed, it is only when we recognize and engage the symbolic dimensions of the texts that it becomes possible for the Word to fulfill its metaphoric function and carry us into a transcendent realm of living experience.

When we look at our world from a symbolic vantage point, we discover that amazing insights often lie hidden in plain

sight. Take what we know about Jesus Christ, for example. Everyone knows that the most ancient and essential Christian belief about Jesus is that he died, and on the third day was raised from the dead. What most of us fail to see, however, is that this pattern of resurrection on the third day calls forth unmistakable associations with the lunar cycle. Every month, the moon dies, remains dark, and is reborn on the third day. The fact that the single most important event in the Christian tradition conforms symbolically to the pattern of the most characteristic feature of the lunar cycle tells us that the masculine story of Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Father, has an implicit, but extremely important and fundamental, link with the symbolic world of the feminine. The reason most of us remain unaware of this feminine dimension may be that we no longer understand the language of symbols.

The language of symbols is the language of the soul. It is the language of literature. It is the language of the Bible. *Moonlight Shines in the Darkness* shows readers how to read and interpret this important language. The book makes a case for the value of psychosymbolic interpretation, and uses this Jungian methodology to investigate the christological symbolism in the Gospel of John. By demonstrating that significant feminine elements are pervasive in the Gospel's images of Christ, *Moonlight Shines in the Darkness* provides a correction to Jung's claim that Christ is an incomplete and one-sided symbol of the self. My hope is that the discovery of feminine elements in the symbolic images of Christ will bring to light new possibilities to facilitate the advance of individual and collective consciousness along the path toward wholeness.

Because no project of this scope comes to fruition through the exclusive efforts of a solitary author, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable encouragement, support, and suggestions provided by Greg Robbins, Sandy Dixon, Ed Everding,

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INTRODUCTION

Telling Stories

In the beginning was the Word … Jn 1:1

In the early pages of the monumental, four-volume *Masks of God* series, Joseph Campbell speaks of a "prodigiously influential mythology" centered on a "symbology of the bull and goddess, the dove, and the double ax." The bull-god of this mythology, a god identified with the horned moon, is a deity who "dies and is resurrected three days later." This means—as Campbell clearly realized—that the story of Christ's death and resurrection, when seen from a mythological perspective, is the story of a *lunar* deity. In other words, there is a sense in which the story of Jesus Christ is the story of a "moon god" (Campbell 1976b [orig. 1969]: 143).

Because the image of Christ as a dying and resurrecting moon god stands in stark contrast to the more familiar—and comfortably patriarchal—image of Christ as the conquering hero and Son of the Father, the full impact of this insight is easy to gloss over under the influence of our deeply ingrained cultural filters. Nonetheless, Campbell's blunt statement continued to reverberate in my mind with the ring of an overlooked but now obvious truth: the great moon gods of the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean mythologies were all sons (and lovers and husbands and ultimately victims) of the Great Mother. Tammuz, for example, stood in this relationship to Ishtar, as did Osiris to Isis, and Adonis to Aphrodite.

The lunar nature of the symbolism that stands at the very center of the Christian tradition thus suggested to me the possibility that there might be an important feminine aspect to the biblical imagery of Christ. For, as Esther Harding so succinctly puts it: "The symbol which above all others has stood throughout the ages for woman … in her difference from man, distinctly feminine in contrast to his masculinity, is the Moon" (Harding 1971:40). A haunting and unavoidable question inevitably followed: Are there additional feminine (and/or lunar) elements in the symbolism of the Christian myth? Surely, this question must be answered affirmatively. The continuing ability of the Christian scriptures to inspire and transform lives suggests that they still offer profound engagements with a living and powerful myth. For the Christ myth to remain alive in a culture moving into an era of post-patriarchal consciousness, the feminine elements in its symbolic core cannot be isolated aberrations or meaningless vestiges of archaic motifs. Instead, they must be meaningful—and related in significant ways to other aspects of the myth's literary manifestations.

The chapters that follow, therefore, tell the story of an effort to corroborate and substantiate the affirmative answer offered above to the question of the presence of feminine elements in the story of Jesus Christ. Because the Gospel of John has been such an influential support of Christian piety throughout the ages, and because Christ appears in the Gospel of John as the archetypal and glorious Son, this gospel can serve as a significant test case. If there are feminine elements in the christological symbolism of the Fourth Gospel, then it is highly probable that there is a significant feminine dimension to the Christian myth as a whole.

The critical story to be told in this study is an attempt to shine a light in the darkness in hopes of bringing into view important aspects of the Christian myth that have remained ob-

scure, hidden in the shadows cast by the brilliantly illuminated figure of Jesus. By entering into this interpretive story and encountering the shadow side of Jesus, we may find that our consciousness of the symbolic depth and meaning of the Johannine Jesus is enriched in significant and potentially transformative ways.

What we do as biblical critics and interpreters is tell stories about the texts before us. Often we are telling stories about stories because many of the biblical texts themselves contain stories. The irony is that the stories we tell typically reveal at least as much about *us* as "readers" as they do about the biblical texts and stories being interpreted (cf. Moore 1989:78, 83, 106). In this sense, then, our stories, our critical interpretations, are in fact quite "telling" stories. The study before you tells the story of one approach to interpretive storytelling—and of course, in the process of telling this story, much will be revealed about my own interpretive location as a critical storyteller.

Like every critical storyteller, however, I develop and tell interpretive stories about biblical texts in a particular way. The approach to biblical texts I use is derived from the work of C. G. Jung. In simple terms, it is an adaptation of the method Jung developed for use in the clinical analysis of dreams. Obviously, biblical texts are not dreams. They are, however, creative products of the psyche (see Neuwoehner 2004:235-39). The interpretive approach we are examining here, therefore, is a psychological one. Specifically, it is an approach based on Jung's understanding of the symbolic nature of the "language" of the unconscious depths of the psyche.

Psychosymbolic Storytelling

When Jung listened for the symbolic voice, he was most often working in a clinical setting, helping his patients analyze and integrate into consciousness material emerging in their

dreams, fantasies, neurotic symptoms, and experiences of synchronicity. Although Jung also directed his attention on occasion toward the task of interpreting texts, his analytical method was developed from and primarily intended for the clinical setting. Above all, Jung considered himself a doctor of souls.

Psychosymbolic interpretation, therefore, is an adaptation of Jung's method for use with non-clinical materials. When you turn your analytical attentions on a text, there is no living, breathing patient in the consulting room. Even the author of the text is inaccessible. This absence means that some of Jung's clinical techniques cannot be used to interpret texts. His most important analytical techniques, however, *can* be used outside the clinic.

As a way of applying Jung's core techniques to a text, psychosymbolic interpretation is a three-stage process. The first stage of the process is to *read* the text; the second is to *amplify* the text's symbolic images; the third is to *interpret* the text. Reading the text is an exercise in literary criticism. Amplifying the images is an exercise in historical and comparative study. Interpreting the text involves using the psychological concepts of the Jungian model to describe what the symbolic meaning of the text might be. The complexities involved in each stage of a psychosymbolic analysis will be described in greater detail below, but first a few general observations about the process seem to be in order.

The fundamental question motivating a psychosymbolic analysis is: What is there about *this* text that gives it life for someone who reads or hears it in today's world? The psychosymbolic question is not "How did these elements get into the text at hand?" but rather, "Given the elements present in the text, how might we understand what is being said, suggested, or implied?" In other words, a psychosymbolic interpretation seeks

to bring to the fore the possibilities for meaning a text might offer to a contemporary reader.

Psychosymbolic interpretation acknowledges (in theory at least) the uniqueness of each individual's engagement with a text. Each reader brings a unique set of presuppositions and interests to an encounter with a text. Each also brings a *different* set of presuppositions and interests to each successive encounter. If we accept the suggestion that a meaningful "text" comes into existence only when an audience encounters a set of material signs or symbols—when a reader encounters the words on a page, for example—then not only will the text be different for each reader, but also different for the "same" reader each time it is engaged (cf. Moore 1989:121).

Like any reading, therefore, psychosymbolic interpretation offers only limited, even biased, readings. The bias of a psychosymbolic reading, however, is in some ways limited by the text-centered orientation of the analytical techniques employed. On the one hand, the psychosymbolic interpreter perceives as selectively as any other critic or reader. On the other hand, the objective signs and symbols that make up the physical text can always be seen alongside and behind these selective perceptions. The "words on the page" thus act both as a control of sorts and as an invitation to interpreters to engage in dialogue. Psychosymbolic interpretation is therefore both "intertextual" and "intersubjective"—caught up in the paradoxical encounter between a text that is not an independent text and a subject who cannot be objectified in any final sense (cf. Neuwoehner 2004:239-44).

When such an interpretation becomes psychological, it also becomes most explicitly one of a number of quasi-allegorical critical paraphrases available to readers of the text under consideration. A psychosymbolic interpretation, therefore, makes no claim to exclusive validity. Rather, it is but one voice among many. Some of these voices will be telling psychosymbolic sto-

ries, some will be telling other interpretive stories. It is hoped that this choir of multiple voices will blend in a complex contrapuntal texture.

To say that psychosymbolic interpretation is only one voice in a polyphonic choir of biblical critics is not, however, entirely accurate. It is true that the biblical studies guild is characterized today by a plethora of apparently competing methodological approaches. This fact, however, points to one of the more attractive features of psychosymbolic interpretation, namely that it offers a way to bring a number of these apparently exclusive critical approaches together in a relatively comprehensive and integrated interpretive paradigm. Taking a second look at the steps involved in carrying out a psychosymbolic analysis of a biblical text will allow us not only to identify the major methodological approaches that can be used, or adapted for use, within the psychosymbolic framework, but also to locate psychosymbolic interpretation in the biblical guild's current methodological discourse. As the methodological parameters of this multivocal analytical process are sketched out with greater precision, the four defining characteristics of psychosymbolic interpretation will become increasingly clear. Not only is psychosymbolic interpretation an integrative and psychological hermeneutic, it is also a reflexive and holistic one. Let us take a closer look, then, at what is involved in reading, amplifying, and interpreting a text in the course of a psychosymbolic analysis.

Reading the Text. When it comes to the Bible, nothing is as simple as it seems. Take the apparently simple act of reading, for example. As is so often the case when the Bible is involved, an apparently simple and straightforward process immediately encounters a difficulty, which makes the matter more complicated. A psychosymbolic interpretation of a biblical text begins with a close reading of that text. The problem that arises imme-

diately, however, when the text is a biblical one is: Which *text* are you reading?

Within the guild of biblical studies such a question would typically and traditionally be taken to be raising an issue in textual criticism. Critical thinkers at the leading edge of contemporary academic discourse, on the other hand, would see in the question a problem of an entirely different order. Working with theoretical frameworks developed by Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser, Norman Holland, Wayne Booth, and others, these reader-response critics insist that a text does not exist in isolation and independence from its reader, but comes into being in the act of reading (see the Bible and Culture Collective [hereafter BCC] 1995:24-38). Thus, the question of which text is being read becomes for them a problem of variant readers rather than variant manuscripts.

For a psychosymbolic interpreter, however, the problem is really much more mundane. When I embark on a psychosymbolic interpretation of a biblical text, I am really more interested in the Bible that is being read and heard everyday in the ordinary course of life than I am in trying to discover the so-called best reading culled from the extant ancient manuscripts. On the other hand, while the issue of my role as reader constructing a text through the act of reading is interesting and important from a theoretical standpoint—reminding me that my interpretation is both subjective and constructed—it is not a central issue from a practical point of view.

As a psychosymbolic interpreter in an English-speaking community, therefore, the question concerning which text I am reading refers, first of all, to my choice of an English translation. Since I am most interested, personally, in the Bible that continues to exert its influence on individuals and groups in the United States—which is still a predominantly Christian culture—the question specifically refers to my choice of a published English

translation of the Christian Bible. For *this* study, I will be using the New Revised Standard Version as my basic text, because this English translation seems to be widely accepted as legitimate both by "mainline" Protestant Christians and by "liberal" scholars within the academy.

Once this most basic textual question has been resolved, and an analytical starting point has been established for the psychosymbolic interpretation, the work of reading—or "listening to"—the text can get underway. This step in the interpretive process is essentially an exercise in literary exegesis. At this stage of the analysis, therefore, a variety of critical approaches may be used effectively. At one end of the spectrum of possibilities, there is the traditional, grammatical exegesis of the text (with reference to the Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek underlying the translation); at the other, there are the postmodern literary-critical readings. In fact, it is often best to bring several literary-critical methods into conversation with each other as a way of being sure we are seeing and hearing clearly. The basic question at this stage of the process is: What is the text before me saying? Or perhaps it is more accurate to phrase the question in postmodern terms: What *text* am I constructing in this act of reading?

In most if not all cases, the basic question concerning what a text says can be addressed quite effectively through a basic literary analysis of its narrative structure and dynamics. Focusing on the events, characters, and settings described by the text, we can develop a fundamental understanding of *what* the story being told is about (cf. Powell 1990:23). By paying close attention to point of view, narrative patterns, figures of speech, and rhetorical devices, we come to understand *how* the story is being told (cf. Powell 1990:23-34). The aim of this kind of dual analysis is to bring the story and discourse elements of the narrative into clear focus so that we will be able to identify the ones that seem to be

most important to the story. In a psychosymbolic analysis, it is these central elements or images of the narrative that provide the material for the amplification stage of the interpretive process.

The analytical techniques I have described here are essentially the same as the core techniques of narrative criticism. Although "narrative criticism" is a term most often used by biblical scholars, and typically in reference to gospel criticism, its methodological techniques are derived from "secular" literary theories, especially those developed by Gérard Genette and Seymour Chatman. In the 1980s, David Rhoads and Donald Michie, R. Alan Culpepper, Jack Kingsbury, and Robert Tannehill pioneered the use of this "secular" approach on narratives in the Christian Testament by producing a series of landmark studies: Rhoads and Michie on Mark, Culpepper on John, Kingsbury on Matthew, and Tannehill on Luke-Acts (see Powell 1990:6; and Moore 1989:43).

"Narrative criticism," Stephen Moore observes, "is a story-preoccupied gospel criticism"—which means "most of all" that it is "preoccupied with plot and character" (Moore 1989:14). Plot and character, however, are inseparable: "Characters are defined in and through the plot, by what they do and … say. The plot in turn comes into view as characters act and interact" (Moore 1989:15). Thus, in hopes of getting a solid grip on the text at hand, a narrative critic—like a good investigative reporter—will seek a clear understanding of the Who? What? When? Where? and Why? of the story by analyzing the interplay of forces and characters, events and settings present in the narrative.

To say that narrative criticism is preoccupied with story elements to the exclusion of all else, however, would be misleading. Narrative critics analyze not only the *content* of a narrative, but also its *rhetoric*—not only its *story*, but also its *discourse*

(Powell 1990:23; Moore 1989:43-45). A narrative's elements of discourse—including such things as simile, metaphor, symbolism, irony, repetition, comparison, inclusio, and intercalation (Powell 1990:23-34)—add shape and definition both to its plot developments and its characterizations. Thus, if we hope to develop a satisfying understanding of a narrative, we have to *read* its content and *listen* to its rhetoric.

Yet, because biblical critics usually focus on episodes or pericopes rather than entire books—and sometimes work with texts that are not typically thought to be narratives—the literary techniques of narrative criticism must often be modified slightly when they are used in biblical interpretation. With its concern for plot and character, story elements and discourse elements, content and rhetoric, narrative criticism (technically speaking) offers a way to analyze the structure and dynamics of literary works in their entirety. Fortunately, its analytical questions can be effectively used in the exegesis of individual pericopes (Powell 1990:103-5). When working with smaller subunits of a larger narrative, some elements of the plot, or character development, or patterns of association will not be visible within the chosen pericope. From a psychosymbolic perspective this means that consideration of these "extrinsic" elements will become part of the amplification stage of the analysis. When we are dealing with a text that does not seem to tell a story—a Pauline epistle, for example—asking narrative questions, examining the "narrative" patterns, rhetorical devices, and stylistic techniques used by the voice in the text, identifying and defining the metaphors and figurative dimensions of its language, can help us hear the accents and modulations that mark the important images in the text.

The discussion thus far might leave the impression that a narrative approach is only being used by critics dealing with texts from the Christian Testament. This, however, is not the

case. Although Hebrew Bible scholars do not use the term narrative criticism, there are nonetheless a number of them doing narratological interpretations. Robert Alter's approach can serve here as an indication of the kind of work being done in this area. In 1981, Alter published his highly influential study, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. Attempting to chart a "third path" midway between a radically abstract formalism and even more radical "virtuoso exercises" of non-repeatable interpretation that seek to undermine "the very notion that the text might have any stable meanings" (Alter 1981:178), Alter gives his attention to "words, actions, dialogue, and narration" (Alter 1981:179). He explores the use of literary conventions; analyzes the relationship between narration and dialogue; and studies patterns of repetition, techniques of characterization, and the artistry of redactional composition. His main interest is in "how [a biblical narrative] works in itself and how it interacts with the surrounding narrative material" (Alter 1981:3). In comparison to the methods of narrative criticism outlined above, Alter's critical gaze is focused more on the discourse elements of his narrative than on the story elements, but his approach is undeniably and explicitly narratological.

Since *reading the text* is fundamentally a literary critical task, it is important to keep in mind that the traditional questions of text, source, and redaction criticism are not taken up at this stage of the psychosymbolic process. The historical inquiries pursued by these critical methods will be of interest when it comes time to amplify the images read in the text. Moreover, it should also be noted that the more "historically oriented" speculations that may emerge from narrative criticism—suggestions about a text's real author, for example, or the author's intent, or the original audience—are not of immediate interest in a psychosymbolic analysis. Instead, psychosymbolic interpretation is interested in the text rather than the author, and aims at facilitat-

ing readings by readers in today's world rather than trying to get inside the mind of a hypothetical historical reader.

This might suggest that reader-oriented criticisms would be useful in the psychosymbolic process. Such is not the case, however. While there is no doubt that analyzing reader responses generates useful insights concerning the ways in which readers engage in the act of reading, and it may certainly provide the data from which theoretical models of reading are constructed—models that in fact may help explain how psychosymbolic readings are carried out—the psychosymbolic approach is not in pursuit of answers to this "how" question. The psychosymbolic question is not: *How* is meaning constructed through the reading process? but rather: *What* meanings may be constructed during a reader's encounters with a biblical text?

Amplifying the Images. The aim of the first stage of psychosymbolic interpretation, thus, can be said to be the construction of a "critical" text out of the "original" text. The construction of this "new" text makes use of materials brought forward by the literary critical reading carried out in the preliminary stage of the interpretive process. Characterizations, plot dynamics, symbolic images, and metaphors are often particularly valuable during this construction project. Once it is in place, the new text will serve as a foundation for the interpretive constructions produced by the remaining stages of the psychosymbolic analysis.

The first interpretive construction to take shape on the foundation laid down by the reading process is an amplified text. The construction process at this stage involves using various techniques of association to amplify the key images of the critically constructed text. This second stage is, therefore, a process of constructing a more elaborate text—but it is a construction resting securely on the foundation set in place by the preliminary stage of critical, constructive reading.

Amplification, then, is a process of construction through association. During the amplification process, each of the key images of the critical text becomes the focus for a series of investigations that may include philological, historical, sociological, anthropological, and comparative studies. The goal of the process is to identify and explore the depths of meaning associated with the various images.

It is at this stage that the biblical guild's traditional methods of historical-critical inquiry can be useful. Word studies, for example, can help us explore, survey, and map the fields of meaning and symbolic resonance that constellate around the narrative's key elements of story and rhetoric. This kind of philological exploration can be particularly useful when we are working with names, because the name of a character or a place often has a semantic significance that extends far beyond its basic naming function.

Historical studies and social-scientific analyses provide additional means for uncovering important nuances of plot and characterization. Knowing something of the *Zeitgeist* and cultural milieu surrounding the text, understanding some of the political and social forces at play in its environment, examining some of the historical developments and traditions associated with its story can suggest significant connotations of meaning that would not otherwise be available to a naïve reader.

It can also be useful to examine the ways in which the text being studied may be linked to other biblical texts and to extrabiblical texts. Tracing lines of intra- and inter-textuality enlarges the text's images by bringing into view new facets of association and allusion in the semantic constellations that surround them. At the same time, this type of literary amplification also enriches our ability to understand the surplus of meaning these symbolic expressions open up.

It should be clear, based on what I have said so far, that comparative studies form the heart of the amplification process. A comparative approach is both appropriate and necessary because the unconscious depths of the psyche do not appear to be bound by either space or time. The recognition of this unbound quality of the unconscious is not only an expression of Jung's insistence that the unconscious is truly unknown; it is also a logical extension of Jung's acausal connecting principle and Neumann's theory of unitary reality (which, as an ontological postulate, is a philosophical elaboration of the principle of synchronicity).

In theory, therefore, the comparative net used in the amplification process may be cast into any region of the world and any era of human history. The intuitive and imaginative range of the process is limited only by Jung's "rule" for comparative associations in amplification. In fact, it is the application of this rule that differentiates Jung's method of amplification from the psychoanalytic method of free association. The rule itself is really quite simple: each successive association must be linked more or less directly to the original image. Free association, on the other hand, is a theoretically infinite series of associations in which an association gives rise to another association, which may give rise to another association, and so on and on in a process that carries you further and further away from your point of origin in an ever-receding meander. The associative constellation produced by amplification, however, is more like a star burst with a set of rays emanating from a center point.

The limited amount of control exercised on the practice of amplification by this rule of "centered association" leaves the process relatively unbounded. In theory at least, I can still allow my comparative and associative intuition to range across all of human history without violating the rule. In practice, however, it is usually more productive and satisfying to keep the compar-

ative process within the bounds of a history-of-religions approach, for the most part, and focus my investigations on historical, cultural, and literary locations that are relatively close to those of the text under analysis. Even with this self-imposed limitation, however, the amplification process is not a search for historical influences, nor is it an attempt to trace paths of cultural diffusion, nor is it a quest for literary sources. Instead, it is an exercise aimed at bringing out and specifying as fully as possible the range of symbolic expressions that are available to the reader engaging the images of the text here and now. By amplifying the central and important images identified in the process of reading, which constructed the textual foundation of the analysis, I construct a new text that brings into view significantly more of the semantic potential, of the surplus of meaning, available in the "possible world" that lies "in front of" the text (cf. Ricoeur 1976, esp. 53-57, 87, 89-95). If I can see the images clearly enough, if I can hear their voices distinctly enough, perhaps I will be able to understand what the story is saying and what it means.

Because the amplified text provides an expanded view of the text's symbolic materials and their patterns of association, we find ourselves at the threshold of the second of Paul Ricoeur's dialectics of interpretation. Reading and amplifying have moved our interpretive efforts from a naïve, pre-critical understanding of the text into highly nuanced analytical explanations of the text in terms of its key components. The process of amplification has, in fact, taken us a step or two beyond the usual limits of critical insight into a more intuitive realm where the move from explanation to comprehension and appropriation becomes possible. It is at this point that our encounter with the text has the potential to become a life-transforming event (cf. Ricoeur 1976:71-95).

Interpreting the Text. What we cannot lose sight of, however, is the fact that the relationship between explanation and comprehension is, indeed, a dialectic. The intuitive possibilities and revelations made available through the amplification process must remain in conversation with the analytical foundations upon which they are built. In other words, the dialectic of the second, post-critical naïveté requires that the event of appropriation give way, once again, to explanation. The task of the interpretation phase of a psychosymbolic analysis is, therefore, to develop a psychologically meaningful explanation of the symbolic expressions given voice in the images of the amplified text. Since there are a number of distinct psychological theories that could serve to govern one's decisions concerning what is psychologically meaningful, I must reiterate that psychosymbolic interpretation is grounded in Jungian psychology. Thus, it can be said that this final stage of the interpretive process amounts to an exercise in "translation" through which yet another text is constructed, this one written in the language of analytical psychology.

Describing the end-product of psychosymbolic interpretation as a new text constructed through translation seems to condemn the method by implying it is an "unscientific" and "biased" reversion to allegory; that is, by implying it is a reversion to a method of explanation that relies on a series of apparently arbitrary associations that equate key terms from the text with terms from the interpreter's own analytical vocabulary. This charge is true only to the extent that the psychological language used to explain the amplified text is held out as the last word or ultimate meaning of the text. If, however, we recognize that the psychological interpretation is but another mode of symbolic expression, its language will remain open and resist reductions to simple allegorical equations.

Nonetheless, describing the final stage of the process as an act of translation is, in fact, an attempt at critical self-reflection. It is an open admission that psychosymbolic interpretation is unable to fulfill the ideal of pure objectivity held up since the Enlightenment as the standard for critical Western scholarship. The fact is, however, that no method of critical interpretation is able to live up to that ideal. In the end, *all* interpretations and *all* interpreters are biased—some are simply more self-conscious and aware of their biases than others.

Thus, by recognizing that the psychological element of the psychosymbolic process is in a sense an act of translation, I place this method on the same footing as many of the other approaches now current in biblical criticism, especially those that can be loosely classified as ideological criticisms. In this category, one can place not only the social, class, and political approaches based in Marxist theory, but also the various forms of feminist, womanist, and liberationist criticisms. Psychoanalytic approaches fall into this same category as well. What these approaches share is not their conclusions, but rather the process of re-constructing texts using the languages of their respective theoretical or ideological foundations. An interpreter working with any of these critical paradigms ends up "translating" the base text into a new text. In fact, it is fair to say that all interpreters are, in the end, constructing new texts from old—that is, in one way or another we are all telling "stories" about "stories."

Psychosymbolic storytelling, then, culminates in the "translation" of the amplified text into a psychological text. The basic vocabulary of this new text's Jungian language describes the structure and dynamics of the psyche in terms of a two-dimensional matrix. One dimension of this matrix is marked at its poles by consciousness and the unconscious. The other dimension differentiates between the individual and collective qualities of psychic phenomena. These two dimensions produce

a model of the psyche that has four realms: collective consciousness, individual (or ego) consciousness, the individual (or personal) unconscious, and the collective unconscious. Jung elaborated the basic four-realm topography of his structural model by postulating three core constructs, namely complex, type, and archetype. The dynamic aspects of the model find a convenient summary in Jung's concept of the "transcendent function."

Each of Jung's three core structural constructs captures in summary form a wealth of empirical data that Jung collected in his studies of both conscious behavior and the various manifestations in consciousness of unconscious behavior. Each also describes a characteristic *pattern* of behavior observed by Jung. A complex, for example, is a pattern of associated images, behaviors, and symptoms constellated around a problematic issue in one's personality development. The materials and energies constellated in a complex seem to emerge into consciousness (or reemerge in the case of repressed materials) mostly from the personal unconscious, but Jung also speaks of the ego as a complex and insists that every complex can ultimately be traced to an archetypal core.

Archetypes, in turn, are the typical patterns taken on by the transpersonal materials and energies emerging into consciousness from the depths of the objective or collective unconscious. As these archetypal patterns emerge from the depths, they "pick up" and "clothe themselves in" (so to speak) images from the personal unconscious and even the collective or cultural dimension of consciousness. Thus, archetypes mostly constellate materials from one realm of the psyche (i.e., the collective unconscious) but, like complexes, are also associated with phenomena from other realms.

The Jungian theory of psychological types, on the other hand, is primarily focused on consciousness. The theory is formulated in terms of the *attitude* and *functions* of consciousness.

Since Jung differentiates between rational functions of judgment and non-rational functions of perception, his typology is in fact a three-dimensional model. The attitude dimension is defined in terms of *extraversion* and *introversion*, which indicate a tendency to orient yourself habitually either toward the world outside or toward the inner world. The rational, judging functions of consciousness are the *thinking* and *feeling* functions. Feeling, for Jung, is *not* synonymous with emotion. Rather, it is an evaluative function that determines the worth or value of something. The non-rational, perceiving functions are called *sensation* and *intuition*. "Sensation," Jung says, "establishes what is actually present, thinking enables us to recognize its meaning, feeling tells us its value, and intuition points to possibilities as to whence it came and whither it is going in a given situation" (*Collected Works* [hereafter *CW*} 6:958).

Of the various structural components of Jung's psychological model, the archetypes and the theory of typology are the ones with the most immediate significance for the process of psychosymbolic interpretation. The value of archetypes in this context lies primarily in the fact that a number of archetypal patterns have already been identified and described by Jungian researchers. The trickster, the hero, the shadow, the wise old man, the great mother, and the mandala are among the most widely known of these archetypal patterns. Thus, because there is a partial "lexicon" of archetypes, a familiarity with its contents provides not only a number of useful categories to help us make sense of the images and symbolic patterns we find in an amplified text, but also a psychological vocabulary for discussing them.

Familiarity with Jung's theory of psychological types provides both tools of discourse equal in value to those gained from a knowledge of archetypes, and analytical tools of even greater value. Working with the basic categories of attitude and func-

tion type, we can deepen our understanding of both the characterizations and the dynamics of interaction present in the narrative under investigation. Recognizing one character as an extraverted thinking type and another as an introverted feeling type, for example, could help explain either a situation of significant conflict, tension, and misunderstanding between the two as a clash of opposite types, or a tight bond between them as a representation of the compensatory interaction of opposites within the psyche.

The compensatory relation of the unconscious and consciousness is a fundamental aspect of the Jungian understanding of psycho-dynamics. The psyche, according to the findings of Jung's researches, is a system whose innate tendency is to attempt to correct any imbalances that may develop in its functioning. In order for the psyche's self-regulating mechanisms to operate, consciousness and the unconscious must be able to interact. Practically speaking, this means that consciousness must be able to gain access to unconscious material. The meeting of conscious and unconscious contents in a complementary or compensatory relationship is described, through an analogy with mathematics, as the transcendent function. As Jung explains,

> There is nothing mysterious or metaphysical about the term "transcendent function." It means a psychological function comparable in its way to a mathematical function of the same name, which is a function of real and imaginary numbers. The psychological "transcendent function" arises from the union of conscious and unconscious contents (*CW* 8: 131).

The transcendent function is what allows one "to bring conscious and unconscious together and so arrive at a new attitude" (*CW* 8: 146). It describes a process in which unconscious material is given form (or formulated) in a symbolic image whose meaning is meant to be understood by ego-consciousness.

The key issue in the transcendent function is "how the ego and the unconscious are to come to terms" (*CW* 8: 181). Edward Edinger describes the effect of the continuing operation of the transcendent function as the development of a conscious "ego-self axis" which allows both ego (the center of consciousness) and self (the center of the psyche as a whole) to maintain their respective positions in an interaction in which each is valued equally (Edinger 1973; cf. Jung, *CW* 8: 172-193). The transcendent function is thus the mechanism of personal transformation and psychological growth. "Consciousness is continually widened through the confrontation with previously unconscious contents," Jung declares, "or—to be more accurate—[it] could be widened if it took the trouble to integrate them" (*CW* 8: 193).

Psychosymbolic interpretation, then, is a way to facilitate the process of transformation made possible by the transcendent function. The reader's conscious and unconscious are brought into contact through reading and amplifying the text. Conscious understanding is encouraged by advancing psychological interpretations.

Working with biblical texts has a special value in this type of transformative process because of the special character of the material they make available. Depending on one's belief system, biblical texts are either the creations of artistic imagination or the results of inspired revelation. From a psychological perspective this means they are either products of intuition and thinking functioning together as imagination, or revelations emerging from the combined functions of intuition and feeling. In either case, the intuitive function is at work in significant ways bringing material from the unconscious into view for the work of conscious integration. If you see biblical texts as revelations, it means that through the judging function of feeling you are placing the highest possible value on the material brought to consciousness by the intuitive function. If the biblical texts are im-

aginative creations, they are still providing unconscious material for assimilation into consciousness. In a sense, then, biblical texts can fuel the transcendent function in powerful ways, especially when they are subjected to the "refining" processes of psychosymbolic interpretation.

In addition to its potential for facilitating personal transformation through "transcendent" encounters with archetypally symbolic texts, psychosymbolic interpretation of biblical texts also has potentially significant implications for our understanding of the psyche. During the interpretation process, the symbolic language of the amplified biblical text is "translated" into the language of analytical psychology. This act of translation, however, is not simply a process of confirming Jungian theory. In any translation process there is always the possibility of confronting untranslatable terms. The process of psychosymbolic interpretation, therefore, must remain open to the possibility that the data uncovered in the engagement with the biblical text may demand a reconsideration or modification of the psychological theories brought into the encounter.

Thus, the act of translating the language of the amplified text into psychological language not only constructs a new "psychological" text, but also brings the Bible into a constructive dialogue with psychological theory. As we have seen, the conversation between the two has enormous potential for transformation. First of all, it can transform our understanding of the Bible—by constructing amplified, symbolic texts for us to appropriate. Moreover, the conversation has the potential to transform our understanding of the structure and dynamics of the psyche—by constructing an enlarged psychological "meta-text." Finally, the psychosymbolic conversation can transform our lives—by constructing an "expanded self."