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Introduction

“A book with living fire in it”: On the Interviews for *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*

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IN THE FALL OF 1962, Pantheon announced the publication of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* as Jung’s “interior autobiography”: “One of the world’s greatest explorers of the depths of man’s thoughts and actions has, in this volume, attempted to fathom his own unconscious being.”¹ *Memories* swiftly became a bestseller. Writing in *The Listener*, Gerhard Adler noted “Nowhere else has the man Jung revealed himself so openly or testified to his crises of decision and the existence of his inner law.”² For Kathleen Raine, “Jung’s life, even so fragmentarily revealed, invites comparison not with profane autobiography, but with the lives of Plotinus and Swedenborg, the lives of the saints and sages, interwoven with miracle.”³ In an article entitled “Dreams from the Plutonian Realms,” a reviewer in the *New York Herald Tribune* wrote, “Here is the man himself, a strange man, with the treasures he brought back from the strangest of odysseys.”⁴ In *The Sunday Telegraph*, J. B. Priestley suggested that anyone unacquainted with Jung’s work should start here before venturing into his collected works. The chapters on his childhood were “matched only by a few of the greatest novelists and poets.”⁵ In *The Sunday Times*, Cyril Connolly likened it to “Yeats’ Byzantium” in prose.⁶

¹ Pantheon, Fall Catalogue, 1962, p. 14.

² Gerhard Adler, “The Memoirs of C. G. Jung,” *The Listener*, July 18, 1963, p. 85.

³ Kathleen Raine, “A Sent Man,” *The Listener*, August 22, 1963, p. 284.

⁴ *New York Herald Tribune*, May 12, 1963.

⁵ J. B. Priestley, “Bold Self-Scrutiny of a Dreaming Giant,” *The Sunday Telegraph*, July 7, 1963.

⁶ Cyril Connolly, “Jung: Poetry and Wisdom,” *The Sunday Times*, July 7, 1963. For critical reviews, see Philip Rieff, “C. G. Jung’s Confession: Psychology as a Language of

Even a Freudian critic, Edward Glover, concluded that “this book of memoirs will continue to be read with fascination by future generations when some of his more formal works are respectfully interred in psychological libraries.”⁷

Since then, it has been regarded as the single most authoritative source of information concerning Jung’s life and work. Its reception did much to set the template for how he and his works have been viewed since, both pro and contra. With sales nearing a million in English alone, it has sold far more than any other work by Jung. In short, it is the work by which he has come to be known by the public at large, and if someone has read only one work by him, the chances are that it is *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Consequently, its impact has gone far beyond Jungian circles. As James Olney remarked, in this memoir, “Jung finally offers what he had been so reticent about in his theoretical writings: a comprehensive statement of his profound experience in and his achieved understanding of the human condition.”⁸ As such it provided the critical hinge between felt experience and Jung’s theories, in the making of a psychology. It has been a notable exemplar of a modern form of psychological biography and autobiography, narrating a life from dreams, visions, and inner experience.⁹

The work was the brainchild of the legendary publisher Kurt Wolff. It was compiled and edited by Aniela Jaffé on the basis of interviews she conducted with Jung, largely between 1957 and 1958, supplemented by Jung’s own memoir concerning the early years of his life, and some other biographical materials, with Kurt Wolff’s active involvement. However, behind the scenes of the published work, there lay an unsuspectedly complex tale of composition, editing, publication, and alleged censorship, as the parties involved came into conflict concerning how to shape and present what came to be regarded as Jung’s final testament.

In 1993, Jaffé’s original interviews with Jung were placed on open access in the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. These revealed that

Faith,” *Encounter*, 22 May 1964, pp. 45–50; Erich Fromm “C. G. Jung: Prophet of the Unconscious,” *Scientific American*, September 1, 1963, pp. 283–90 and Hans Eysenck, “Patriarch of the Psyche,” *The Spectator*, July 19, 1963, p. 86.

⁷ Edward Glover, “Illuminations from Within,” *The New York Times*, May 19, 1963, p. 26.

⁸ James Olney, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 90.

⁹ See Olney, *Metaphors of Self*.

much significant material had been completely omitted in the published version, and that much material had been heavily edited.¹⁰

Moreover, while the published version of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* was cast in the form of a chronological life narrative, the Protocols of the original interviews show Jung ranging across an array of subjects in an associative manner in a single interview, and indeed, actively discovering meaningful connections that he himself had hitherto not suspected, aided by Jaffé's sensitive questioning and Kurt Wolff's prompting. Thus the interviews present not only recollections of times past, but a critical chapter in Jung's evolving self-understanding and the elaboration of his work, and critically, a window into his own personal cosmology, as elaborated in his *Red Book* and *Black Books*, and only hinted at in his published writings.

This introduction narrates the events leading up to the commencement of the project. Editorial discussions which took place as it unfolded have been placed in the footnotes to the Interviews in a chronological sequence, and a short epilogue narrates what followed.

THE MYTH OF JUNG'S LIFE

In the prologue to *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung stated that he had now undertaken to tell the "myth" of his life.¹¹ His way to discerning this myth had its inception in his self-investigations more than forty years prior. It was from the autumn of 1913 onward, first in the *Black Books*, then in the *Red Book: Liber Novus*, that Jung started to reevaluate and reappraise his life. In 1950, he recalled that after completing *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido* in 1912, he was driven to ask himself,

[W]hat is the myth you are living? I found no answer to this question, and had to admit that I was not living with a myth, or even in a myth [. . .]. I did not know that I was living a myth, and even if I

¹⁰ One contemporaneous reviewer seems to have suspected some of this: "If rumour can be credited, certain relevant passages about his sexual and marital relations have been omitted at the request of the surviving family. This omission—or deletion—is unfortunate in the case of a man whose personal experiment in open erotic relationships influenced the marriage of more than one patient who came to him for advice. One would like to know his final judgement in maturity upon his efforts to maintain a continuing bipolar relationship between two psychologically contrasting types, a Griselda and an Iseult." (Lewis Mumford, "The Revolt of the Demons," *The New Yorker*, May 23, 1964).

¹¹ *ETG*, p. 10, *MDR*, p. 3.

had known it, I would not know what sort of myth was ordering my life without my knowledge. So [. . .] I took it upon myself to get to know “my” myth.¹²

The Black Books commence with Jung addressing his soul, after being absent from her for more than a decade. On November 12, 1913, he asked her, “Shall I tell you everything I have seen, experienced, and drunk in?”¹³ He then recounted to his soul the pivotal dreams in his adolescence that persuaded him to opt for a career in medical science, and how this led him to move into the contemporary world and away from the soul. Following this, he narrated his more recent dreams of the white dove with the twelve dead and the Austrian customs official with the twelfth-century knight that heralded a return to his soul. In *Liber Novus* he contrasted the spirit of the times and the spirit of the depths: the former characterized by use and value, and the latter which ruled the depths of everything contemporary and led to the things of the soul.¹⁴ As he saw it, having followed the spirit of the times for the previous decade, the time had come to heed the spirit of the depths. From the outset of his self-investigation, memories from his childhood surfaced, which he went over a number of times. His reconnection with his playing and building activities brought back to the surface his dream of the underground phallus.¹⁵ Thus a reappraisal of his childhood and youth was a key component of the first phase of Jung’s self-investigation.

As this process evolved over the following decade, it saw the emergence of a complex imaginal cosmology—in other terms, the myth of his life. While not biographies in any conventional sense, *The Black Books* and *Liber Novus* contain Jung’s spiritual testament, his mythography. *Liber Novus* could be considered a new form of *Bildungsroman*: in the language of Jung’s psychology, it presented the story of his process of individuation, and how he managed to find his orientation and recover a sense of meaning in his life.

Alongside his work in *The Black Books* and *Liber Novus*, Jung sought to translate insights from these works into a conceptual language aimed at a medical and scientific audience. In his published writings, metaphysical and theological questions tended to be bracketed out, as belonging

¹² *Symbols of Transformations* (1952), CE 22; CW 5, pp. xxiv–xxv.

¹³ C. G. Jung, *Black Book 2*, p. 149.

¹⁴ *LN*, pp. 119–23.

¹⁵ See below, pp. 39–40.

outside the purview of an emergent science of psychology. This did not mean that Jung considered them insignificant, or that such considerations were absent from his life. This wider penumbra came strongly to the fore once more in the Interviews.

In the early 1920s, Jung had Cary de Angulo re-transcribe the text of *Liber Novus* from the calligraphic version. His discussions with her at this point indicate that he was attempting to find the right form in which to publish the work. On October 2, 1922, de Angulo noted his comments:

Meyrink you [Jung] said could throw his [material] into novel form and it was all right, but you could only command the scientific and philosophical method and that stuff you couldn't cast into that mould. I said you could use the Zarathustra form and you said that was true, but you were sick of that. [. . .] Then you said you had thought of making an autobiography out of it.¹⁶

In 1924, these deliberations gave rise to a striking literary experiment, in the form of a novella.¹⁷ This work consists in a letter exchange between “Jung” and a man eleven years his elder, by the name of A. E. The latter had consulted “Jung” between 1913 and August 2, 1914. Now, years later, he sent “Jung” a manuscript which he had since written describing his experiences, requesting that “Jung” publish it. From the content of the letters, it is clear that A. E. is none other than Jung himself, and the manuscript in question was evidently *Liber Novus*, for which this letter exchange would serve as an introduction to a pseudonymous publication. In his letters, A. E. recounted to “Jung” his apocalyptic train visions from the autumn of 1913, his early philosophical readings, and critical events in his childhood which he had not told him at the time of their first encounter, which he now saw to be connected with the material in his manuscript. He viewed these not as causal instigators, but as marking his first encounter with “the foreign guest.” Taken together, these formed critical constituents of his own “myth.” These experiences would later feature in the Interviews: Jung’s underground phallus dream, his encounter with the figure of a Jesuit, and the wooden manikin he had carved.¹⁸ A. E. saw these experiences as containing *in nuce* the conflict

¹⁶ LN, p. 65.

¹⁷ C. G. Jung, *The “Foreign Guest”: An Autobiographical Novella* by C. G. Jung, ed. Sonu Shamdasani, trans. Caitlin Stephens, Philemon Series (forthcoming).

¹⁸ See below, pp. 39, 41, and 45.

between animal impulses and morality, an issue which was prominent when he first went to consult “Jung.” This novella shows how Jung attempted to use events from his childhood and youth as a preface to a pseudonymous publication of *Liber Novus*, and how he saw these as being connected as chapters in the emergence of the myth of his life. As we shall see, this theme would come to feature prominently in the Interviews, as well as in Jung’s memoir, “From the Earliest Experiences of my Life.”

Aside from his intimate circle and close associates, Jung did not share details regarding his life or inner transformation with a wider public. The first presentation to a wider circle took place in 1925, in his seminars at the Psychological Club in Zurich. Jung began by noting,

No one seriously interested in analytical psychology can fail to have been struck with the astonishing width of the field embraced by it, and so I have thought it would be useful to all of us if, in the course of these lectures, we could obtain a view of that field. At the beginning, I would like to give you a brief sketch of the development of my own conceptions from the time I first became interested in problems of the unconscious.¹⁹

Here, his intellectual biography would serve as an introduction to the whole field of analytical psychology. He presented his intellectual development from his medical school days: his studies in philosophy, and explorations in psychical research. He followed this with his collaboration with Freud, and a detailed presentation of his self-experimentation, focusing on the initial period, between October and December 1913.

As opposed to the lyrical and evocative language of the second layer of *Liber Novus*, Jung here employed his psychological concepts; or, to be more precise, he attempted to show how he derived his psychological concepts from his reflections upon these encounters. As he tellingly noted, “I drew all of my empirical material from my patients, but the solution of the problem I drew from the inside, from my observations of the unconscious processes.”²⁰ The remainder of the seminar was taken up by group discussion of Rider Haggard’s *She* and Marie Hay’s *The Evil Vineyard*.

Though the “A. E.” manuscript was not published, it established the template whereby Jung presented and commented on some of his mandala

¹⁹ 1925, p. 3.

²⁰ 1925, p. 35.

paintings and dreams in his scholarly works, as belonging to anonymous patients.²¹ One example of this type occurs in his unpublished book on alchemy and individuation in 1937, which evidences Jung's continued meditation on the transpersonal aspects of his childhood experiences.²² This study was intended as the introduction to what was to be his major work on these subjects. Strikingly, he began this manuscript not with Wolfgang Pauli's dreams—as he eventually did in *Psychology and Alchemy* in 1944—but with an anonymized account of his major childhood dream of the underground phallus. He then elaborated an extended amplification of this dream, drawing out from it the following motifs: the “co-habitatio permanens” (the permanent pregnancy and divine incest), the eternal self-renewal of the God, the androgynous primordial being, and the conjunction of opposites. His discussion of these then formed the subject of the remainder of his manuscript.

Jung's study of this dream was connected with his research project on the subject of childhood dreams in the 1930s, which resulted in a seminar at the ETH Zurich. Among the questions asked were these: What is the earliest childhood dream you remember? Did you have this dream again in later life? Does the dream have a new meaning in terms of subsequent life developments? Have you had precognitive dreams, dreams of a cosmic character, dreams in relation to the death of others?²³

TOWARDS A BIOGRAPHY²⁴

Before considering initiatives towards a Jung biography in the 1950s, it is important to consider the status of the biographical in Jung's psychology. In his autobiography, Goethe had described his works as “fragments of one great confession.”²⁵ In *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) Nietzsche noted, “It has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy

²¹ See “Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*” (1929), CE 11; CW 13, mandalas A3, A6, and A10; “The Psychological Aspects of the Kore” (1941), CE 16; CW 9.1, “Case Z,” §§ 358–82; “Concerning Mandala Symbolism” (1950), CE 16; CW 9.1, figures 6, 28, 29, and 36.

²² JP.

²³ C. G. Jung, “Traumprobleme” (Martin Liebscher ed, Philemon Series, forthcoming); C. G. Jung, *Children's Dreams: Notes of the Seminar Given in 1936–1940*, ed. Lorenz Jung and Maria Meyer-Gross, trans. Ernst Falzeder with Tony Woolfson, Philemon Series (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

²⁴ The following sections draw in part on Sonu Shamdasani, *Jung Stripped Bare by His Biographers, Even* (London: Karnac, 2005), ch. 1.

²⁵ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Collected Works, Volume 4: From My Life: Poetry and Truth, Parts 1–3* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 214.

has hitherto been: a confession on the part of its author and a kind of involuntary and unconscious memoir.”²⁶ In psychology, the subjective conditioning of knowledge had been debated in terms of the “personal equation.” As William James observed in 1890, most psychologists made their own personal peculiarities into universal rules.²⁷ This issue lay at the heart of Jung’s *Psychological Types*. He argued that in psychology, conceptions “will always be a product of the subjective psychological constellation of the investigator.”²⁸ Correspondingly, it would not be possible to understand the genesis of the work of a psychologist without taking these subjective determinants into consideration. In 1929, Jung formulated it as follows: “philosophical criticism has helped me to see that every psychology—my own included—has the character of a subjective confession.”²⁹

At the same time, reformulating what constituted the “subjective” lay at the center of Jung’s work. In his view, the more deeply one went into one’s subjectivity, the more one encountered a wider terrain of collective determinants: in the language of *Liber Novus*, the powers of the depths, or, in the language of Jung’s psychology, the dominants or archetypes. To give due recognition to such factors would require something other than a conventional biography.

In the history of modern psychology, psychiatry and psychotherapy, a number of prominent figures wrote memoirs or autobiographies: Auguste Forel, Stanley Hall, Emil Kraepelin, and Wilhelm Wundt, for example. In psychoanalysis, Freud, Ernest Jones, and Wilhelm Stekel published autobiographical works. Commencing in the 1930s, the American psychologist Carl Murchison edited a series of volumes for which important psychologists such as Édouard Claparède, Pierre Janet, William McDougall, Jean Piaget, William Stern, J. B. Watson, and many others were persuaded to write autobiographical contributions.³⁰ Consequently, there

²⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. Marion Faber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 14.

²⁷ William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, vol. 2 (New York: Henry Holt, 1890), p. 64.

²⁸ *Psychological Types* (1921), CE 9; CW 6, § 9.

²⁹ “The Freud–Jung Opposition” (1929), CE 11; CW 4, § 774.

³⁰ *A History of Psychology in Autobiography*, vol. 1 (1930), ed. Carl Murchison [for Claparède, Janet, McDougall, Stern, i.a.]; vol. 3 (1936), ed. Murchison [for Watson, i.a.]; vol. 4 (1952), ed. Edwin G. Boring, Heinz Werner, Herbert S. Langfeld, and Robert M. Yerkes [for Piaget, i.a.] (Worcester, MA: Clark University Press, 1930–). Murchison did not approach Jung for this project, but he had asked Jung to contribute to his volume *Psychologies of 1930*. Jung had declined, recommending his assistant H. G. Baynes instead (Murchison to Jung, November 2, 1928, JP). Baynes did not contribute to the volume.

was significant interest in Jung's biography, both in the public at large and within Jung's circle.

Since the time that she prepared her edition of Jung's 1925 seminar, Cary Baynes had been contemplating a biography of Jung.³¹ Over the next few decades she was taken up with her translation of the *I Ching*, but when she met Jung after the war in 1946, she discussed the possibility with him but when. Jung's view was that "there might be something in it."³² Over the next few years, Jung's attention began increasingly to turn to his own past: on January 2, 1949 he wrote to Alwina von Keller, "I also find myself at this time in a retrospective phase and am occupied again fundamentally with myself for the first time for 25 years, in that I collected and put together my old dreams."³³

In 1951, Cary Baynes outlined a plan for a biographical study to Emma Jung involving a three-way collaboration:

Now with respect to the plan for getting C. G. to set down the curve of development of his ideas. Of course it is contained in his works, but it seems to me that one should take advantage of the degree of his consciousness to make it explicit instead of having to be dug out by the industrious and missed altogether by the majority, even of those who are able to profit most by knowing it. I think his pioneer work is such a treasure to the human race that there ought to be a clear indication in his own words as to how it came about that he was able to push consciousness to the highest point yet achieved by any individual with the chain unbroken, you might say, back to antiquity [. . .]. C. G. took on the crucifixion, I think it can be called that, of struggling through the integration process [. . .]. I am just concerned to have for the first time a record of the individuation process from the person who carried it further than anyone else. Now it seems to me that the Red Book would serve as the core of the record, and that therefore it would not be too much of a labor on C. G.'s part with you and me to do the spade work. I was thrilled to know, by the way that you thought well of this idea of mine. But I must say, when I ask myself if I really think I could fill the right function in this enterprise, my knees begin to tremble and all of the difficulties loom large on the horizon.

³¹ Jung to Jaffé, January 20, 1954, JP.

³² Cary Baynes to Emma Jung, May 15, 1951, JFA.

³³ JP. Jung wrote these down in the continuation of *Black Book* 7.

I know perfectly the goal I am after, but I have not yet thought out any sort of a working plan that I could submit to you and C. G.³⁴

As Cary Baynes had transcribed Jung's *Red Book* (and had urged Jung to publish it), she was ideally placed to undertake such a project. This was not intended as a conventional biography, but rather sought to present Jung's own account of his individuation process.

Meanwhile, there was interest in Jung on the part of documentary makers. In 1950, the filmmaker Jerome Hill proposed a documentary on him. Together with Erica Anderson, he did some filming of Jung in Küsnacht and Bollingen in 1951. Cary Baynes and Kurt Wolff saw the footage, and were impressed by how Jung came across. However, Jung was critical of it, and the project was eventually abandoned.³⁵ In a conversation on October 16, 1953 with Hill and his cousin, the anthropologist Maud Oakes (who collaborated on the project), Jung commented, "I am trying to see how you can visualize or exteriorize any of my ideas."³⁶

In 1952, Lucy Heyer, the ex-wife of Gustav Heyer, proposed a biography of Jung, which was to be published by Daniel Brody of Rhein Verlag, the publisher of the Eranos yearbooks. She had had analysis with Jung and Toni Wolff in the 1930s, and her brother Fritz Grote had been a school contemporary of Jung's in Basel. She intended to base her work on extended interviews with Jung, which would set it apart from all other works on him.³⁷ Initially, she had proposed to collaborate with Cary Baynes on the biography. On September 5, 1952, her daughter Ximena de Angulo wrote to Cary Baynes about this project after a conversation with Jung, indicating that Jung was of a view that he wouldn't proceed with Lucy Heyer's project unless she undertook it in collaboration with Cary Baynes:

³⁴ Cary Baynes to Emma Jung, May 15, 1951, JFA.

³⁵ Cary Baynes to Emma Jung, July 12, 1951, JFA.

³⁶ "Interview with C. G. Jung on October 16, 1953, in Küsnacht, near Zurich," p. 5, Jerome Hill Papers, Minnesota Historical Society. For Maud Oakes's work on Jung's Bollingen Stone, see her *The Stone Speaks: The Memoir of a Personal Transformation* (Wilmette, IL: Chiron Publications, 1987). Scripts and letters related to the film are in the Jerome Hill Papers. In 1991, some footage edited by Jonas Mekas was released as *Carl G. Jung by Jerome Hill, or Lapis Philosophorum* (available on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/LapisPhilosophorum> [accessed April 23, 2025]). In 1957 Hill's film on the French theologian and humanitarian Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) won an Oscar for the best documentary.

³⁷ On July 25, 1951, Lucy Heyer sent Jung a synopsis in five chapters (JP). On Lucy Heyer, see Yael N. B. Gsell, *Lucy Heyer-Grote (1891–1991): Ihr Leben im Wandel der Zeit* (Hamburg: Tredition, 2021).

He [Jung] very definitely wants you to undertake it. [. . .] C. G. said he didn't see why you should have such doubts and fears as to your competence, that you had done the 1925 Notes admirably, and he visualized this as a sort of amplification of that technique. He said that in itself the idea of a biography gave him a certain discomfort, that he certainly would never write an autobiography (as he also said in Bollingen two years ago, when I questioned him on your behalf) but that he realized that circumstances were making it necessary. I had the impression that he would very much like that it be done in a way that he could control, so no nonsense would issue, not by some nincompoop after his death. I asked him if the interview method you had thought of would not be very tiring for him, and he said, oh no, that wouldn't be so bad, that he could do it quite well.³⁸

In Jung's view, Cary Baynes was critical to this project, and he saw it as "an amplification" of the 1925 seminar. The factor which was overcoming his aversion to a biographical enterprise was the increasing realization that someone was bound to undertake one anyway.

On reading Lucy Heyer's outline, Cary Baynes saw much value in her project. However, it was clearly much more extraverted than her project based on Jung's interior journey as charted in *Liber Novus*. While Heyer intended to give much emphasis to Jung's forebears, Baynes considered Jung's work as marking a caesura in history, which provided a new illumination on all that had gone on before.³⁹ In addition to the differences in conception, it was not clear to her how they would collaborate on a practical level. Ximena de Angulo tried to persuade her mother to do so, indicating that in her view, Lucy Heyer was too much in awe of Jung, her feelings were hurt too easily, and she was insufficiently conversant with his ideas.⁴⁰ She added that he had indicated that he thought that Heyer did not know him well. As we shall see, in contrast to his collaboration with Jaffé, it appears that at no point did Jung make available to Heyer his *Black Books* or *Liber Novus*, either to use or to consult. On September 26, Ximena de Angulo wrote again to her mother:

I think there is a real danger of an outsider horning in, Jung seemed to imply that when he said to me that he saw the time had come to

³⁸ Ximena de Angulo to Cary Baynes, September 5, 1952, BP.

³⁹ Ximena de Angulo, personal communication to the editor.

⁴⁰ Ximena de Angulo to Cary Baynes, September 5, 1952, BP.

have a project of this sort undertaken. Reporters are constantly now trying to interview him, and it won't be long before some enterprising person saw the chance of a book being got out on him.⁴¹

Lucy Heyer had requested funding from the Bollingen Foundation, and Paul Mellon subsequently agreed to support the project out of his own funds.⁴² On October 7, 1952 Jung wrote to Cary Baynes on the matter:

I have insisted from the beginning that you should come in. You represent an entirely different point of view which is presumably rather important. At all events, I would like you to join in and collaborate with Mrs. Heyer, and you had better hurry up before I am getting altogether too senile!⁴³

Meanwhile, Lucy Heyer prepared an outline of her biography, which proposed a study of Jung's life coupled with a comprehensive contextual location of his work in Western intellectual history and its contemporary reception.⁴⁴ Cary Baynes withdrew from the project.⁴⁵

Jung gave Lucy Heyer a volume of Ernest Jones's Freud biography so that she might get a sense of what had been written about him, remarking to Cary Baynes, "I am curious to see how Lucie Heyer is going to proceed: I still don't see exactly how she is planning to catch the bird."⁴⁶ As the project proceeded, Jung had increasing reservations concerning Lucy Heyer and her appropriateness for the task. In addition, his qualms concerning the possibility of a biography had not receded. On April 4, 1954 he wrote to Baynes:

Concerning our dear Lucy Heyer I get more and more the feeling that you have left me holding the baby. She would like to see me at least once a week, so that I could produce a biography for her. I

⁴¹ Ximena de Angulo to Cary Baynes, September 26, 1952, BP.

⁴² Paul Mellon to Lucy Heyer, April 14, 1953, BA.

⁴³ BP (original in English).

⁴⁴ Reproduced in Shamdasani, *Jung Stripped Bare*, pp. 15–17.

⁴⁵ Olga Froebe-Kapteyn to Jack Barrett, January 6, 1953, BA. For Lucy Heyer's ms., see LH (Basel University Library). On her ms., see Florent Serina's (somewhat uncharitably titled) "Lucy Heyer-Grote, Hapless Hagiographer of C. G. Jung, with a Hitherto Unpublished Memory of Jung's Infancy," *Jung Journal: Culture & Psyche* 15, no. 1 (2021): 83–102.

⁴⁶ March 28, 1954, BA (original in English).

have tried to produce some flies for her to catch, but I don't know whether she got anywhere with that game. I must say I never would have thought of helping somebody as far away as Lucy Heyer to write my biography. You just muscled her in, and I, thinking she might alleviate your task, said yes, and you just faded out. I'm quite unable to continue this funny kind of playing at a biography. You could just as well ask me to help that foolish American Radio-Company to produce myself in the form of a film.⁴⁷ I don't go to church on Sundays with a prayer-book under my arm, nor do I wear a white coat, nor do I build hospitals, nor do I sit at the organ. So I'm not fodder for the average sentimental needs of the general public. And that will be so with my biography. There is just nothing very interesting in it.⁴⁸

The interviews do not appear to have proceeded to Jung's liking. On September 9, 1954 he wrote to Cary Baynes that "in all the interviews I have had with [Heyer] so far, I found nothing from which I could conclude that she would be capable of producing something that would look like an intelligent biography. I must say, I am for a biography, an utterly uninteresting case, so I don't wonder that she doesn't get anywhere."⁴⁹ In response to her request for further funding from the Bollingen Foundation, Jack Barrett wrote to ask Jung if he thought this advisable.⁵⁰ Jung's reply indicates a less than enthusiastic response to the work she had done:

Up to the present, I haven't seen a line of what she has written about my biography. A while ago, I told her it would be nice to see once something of all the interviews I had given her. But up to now I have seen nothing. I am not sure at all whether she has worked out something or not. I always wondered what she was going to do about her interviews, but I couldn't say that I have got any idea of it. You will understand that under these circumstances I have grown progressively less keen to entertain the dear old lady and I have

⁴⁷ Notwithstanding this comment, Jung subsequently consented to several filmed interviews: an interview with Stephen Black in July 1955, a portion of which was broadcast on BBC TV's *Panorama*; in August 1957, a lengthy interview with Richard Evans; and in October 1959, an interview with John Freeman for his BBC *Face to Face* program.

⁴⁸ BP (original in English).

⁴⁹ BP (original in English).

⁵⁰ November 16, 1954, BA.

regretted the loss of time rather precious to me. Thus, if I may express my view of the situation, I shouldn't weep many tears if somebody would lead the sad lady kindly away. I must say with my limited imagination I cannot conceive how she could possibly construct a biography of myself, but not being a literary man I would hardly know how to go about in writing a biography.⁵¹

On this basis, Mellon decided to provide a "modest sum" to see Heyer to the end of 1955, to enable her to get into shape the material she had collected. A few months later, however, Jung had decided to terminate the project. Heyer had sent Jung a manuscript, and he replied on February 2, 1955,

My decision in no way indicates a negative judgement on your intelligence or your ability, but springs entirely alone from my understanding, that in my case the abyss between my damned obligations and duty is really terrible. This would make me completely discouraged, if I entrusted myself with such a task.⁵²

In an undated letter to Daniel Brody which appears to be an explanation for the termination of the project, Jung wrote,

I have gained the impression from what I have read that my life does not at all contain the matter from which one could make a biography worth reading. I feared this from the beginning and for that reason also never could imagine, how one would be capable of externalising a plausible image of a life [Lebensbild] from a long chain of banalities and inconspicuous things.⁵³

Heyer wrote to her ex-husband Gustav Heyer that after her initial shock, she was grateful that Jung had terminated the project, given her struggle with the writing.⁵⁴ From her papers, it appears that she had completed chapters on Jung's childhood and youth, an account of his complex psychology, and notes on his ancestry. The materials she sent

⁵¹ November 24, 1954, *BA* (original in English).

⁵² JP.

⁵³ JP.

⁵⁴ Gsell, *Lucy Heyer-Grote*, p. 167.

Jung were evidently drawn from these. From the contents, it is clear that Jung had spoken to her about a number of the dreams and episodes from his childhood that he would later narrate to Jaffé.⁵⁵ In retrospect, these sessions could be regarded as a rehearsal or dry run for *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Now, instead of the anonymized presentations that Jung had tried in his “A. E.” manuscript and in his published works, the material would be clearly acknowledged as his own. Reading Heyer’s chapters on Jung’s childhood and youth, one may surmise that Jung found disturbing the manner in which she combined narration of episodes he had told her with her own interpretations.

During this period, Jung continued to receive a number of inquiries regarding an autobiography or biography of him. Jung’s replies indicate a strong resistance to both possibilities. In 1953, Henri Flournoy, the son of Jung’s mentor, the Swiss psychologist, Théodore Flournoy, relayed to Jung the question of a Dr. Junod as to whether he had written an autobiography, or intended to do one.⁵⁶ Jung replied, “I have always mistrusted an autobiography because one can never tell the truth. In so far as one is truthful, or believes one is truthful, it is an illusion, or of bad taste.”⁵⁷

Jung was no less sanguine concerning the possibility of a biography of his life. In a reply to John Thorburn in 1952, who had suggested that Jung should commission one, he wrote,

[I]f I where you I shouldn’t bother about my biography. I don’t want to write one, because quite apart from the lack of motive I wouldn’t know how to set about it. Much less can I see how anybody else could disentangle this monstrous Gordian knot of fatality, denseness, and aspirations and what-not! Anybody who would try such an adventure ought to analyze me far beyond my own head if he wants to make a real job of it.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ LH.

⁵⁶ Henri Flournoy to Jung, February 8, 1953, JP. In a similar vein, on January 13, 1948 Jung wrote to Antonios Savides, “An autobiography is the one thing I am never going to write. Such things are never quite true and they cannot be made true. I’ve seen enough autobiographies in my lifetime and the essential things were lacking in every one of them.” *Letters*, vol. 1, p. 489.

⁵⁷ Jung to Henri Flournoy, February 12, 1953. *Letters*, vol. 2, p. 106 (original in French, translation modified). In a dedicatory note to a collection of his offprints for Jürg Fierz, Jung simply wrote, “I myself have a distaste for autobiography.” December 21, 1945 (*Letters*, vol. 1, p. 404).

⁵⁸ Jung to John Thorburn, February 6, 1952, *Letters* 1, pp. 38–39 (original in English).

In 1954, Jung gave an interview to Cleonie Carroll Wadsworth, in which he commented on his suitability as the subject for a biography:

Someone wants to write my biography but it is foolish. I am a simple Bourgeois. I seldom travel—I sit here and write or walk down my garden—my life has not been dramatic. Now old Schweitzer is dramatic—playing the organ, working in a long white coat among the palm trees or going with the bible under his arm to preach—or healing people. No one knows what I am doing and it is not paintable and you cannot take a picture of it.⁵⁹

Meanwhile, after the collapse of Lucy Heyer's project, the search for a suitable biographer continued. On May 5, 1956, Cary Baynes explained to Jung that she had never been interested in writing about the extraverted side of Jung's life, and had never considered that Lucy Heyer could have written about the introverted side, adding, "I don't think anyone but you can as a matter of fact."⁶⁰ She proposed another candidate in the form of Eugen Böhler, given his cultural background and understanding of Jung's work. Böhler was a professor of economics at the ETH Zurich, and he had applied Jung's work in the economic sphere.⁶¹ Regarding the introverted side, she thought that Böhler could possibly get enough information from Jung to cover this.⁶²

IMPROVISING JUNG'S MEMORIES

Kurt Wolff was one of the legends of European publishing. Among the authors he published were Kafka, Meyrink, Pasternak, Grass, Frisch, Musil, Trakl, Broch, Valéry, Walser, Buber, Rolland, Tagore, Benjamin, and Jaspers. He was described in *The New York Times* as "a tall courtly man who exudes old world charm" and "one of the most distinguished book publishers of the 20th Century."⁶³ He worked closely with his wife, Helen, who was actively involved in the Jung project. Kurt Wolff Verlag was

⁵⁹ Interview with Cleonie Carroll Wadsworth, March 1, 1954, CLM (original in English). The would-be biographer referred to is evidently Lucy Heyer.

⁶⁰ Cary Baynes to Jung, May 5, 1956, JP.

⁶¹ See Gerhard Wehr, ed., *C. G. Jung und Eugen Böhler: Eine Begegnung in Briefen* (Zurich: Hochschulverlag, 1996).

⁶² Cary Baynes to Jung, May 5, 1956, BP.

⁶³ *The New York Times*, September 3, 1961, p. 8, and October 23, 1963, p. 41.

known as the “Expressionist” publishing house.⁶⁴ He was in effect one of the architects of European modernist literature. After emigrating to the USA, Helen and Kurt Wolff founded Pantheon Books in 1942, which did much to introduce modern European literature in the English-speaking world. Pantheon Books was the publisher of the Bollingen Series, of which Jung’s *Collected Works* was subseries XX. The Bollingen Series was vital for the financial survival of Pantheon Books.⁶⁵

Wolff’s ethos is captured in the following statement:

Either you publish books you think people ought to read, or books you think people want to read. Publishers in the second category, publishers, that is to say, who slavishly cater to the public’s tastes, do not count in our scheme of things[; . . .] for publishing activity of this kind you need neither enthusiasm nor taste.⁶⁶

Kurt Wolff had been an enthusiast for Jung’s work for a long time. He considered Jung to be a “great thinker and a visionary.”⁶⁷ They first met in the 1920s. He recalled hearing Jung at Count Keyserling’s School of Wisdom in Darmstadt and meeting him in Munich in the early twenties.⁶⁸ The first present that Kurt Wolff gave his future wife Helen Mosel had been a copy of Jung and Wilhelm’s *The Secret of the Golden Flower*.⁶⁹ Although a decade younger than Jung, Wolff shared with him a deep background in European humanist culture. This cultural affinity formed the basis of their relationship. Their collaboration would in turn help make Jung’s work accessible to an Anglo-American audience far removed from this.

⁶⁴ On Kurt Wolff, see Barbara Weidle, ed., *Kurt Wolff: Ein Literat und Gentleman* (Bonn: Weidle Verlag, 2007); Alexander Wolff, *Endpapers: A Family Story of Books, War, Escape, and Home* (New York: Grove Atlantic, 2020). On Helen Wolff, who played a far more prominent role than has been realized, see Marion Detjen, “‘At my death, burn or throw away unread!’ Zum Hintergrund des Hintergrunds,” in Helen Wolff, *Hintergrund für Liebe* (Bonn: Weidle Verlag, 2020), pp. 119–215.

⁶⁵ Helen Wolff, cited in A. Wolff, *Endpapers*, p. 191.

⁶⁶ Kurt Wolff, “On Publishing in General and the Question, How Do an Author and Publisher Come Together?,” in Michael Ermarth, ed., *Kurt Wolff: A Portrait in Essays and Letters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 9.

⁶⁷ Kurt Wolff to Aniela Jaffé, October 8, 1958, BL. (Unless otherwise noted, Kurt Wolff’s letters are in German).

⁶⁸ On the School of Wisdom, Kurt Wolff recalled “with gratitude some truly valuable lectures by men such as Max Scheler, Richard Wilhelm, and C. G. Jung” (“Rabindranath Tagore,” in Ermarth, *Kurt Wolff*, p. 122); Kurt Wolff to Jaffé, November 1, 1957, BL. For Jung’s recollections of Keyserling, see below, pp. 123–28.

⁶⁹ Helen Wolff to Jung, November 12, 1958, BL.

For years, Kurt Wolff had unsuccessfully tried to get Jung to write an autobiography. In the early fifties, they met at the Eranos conferences in Ascona.⁷⁰ In 1956, the theme was “Man and the Creative.” At that meeting, Wolff took another tack, and suggested that his friend Jolande Jacobi, herself a Viennese émigré, undertake a biography of Jung in the form of interviews. The model for this was Eckermann’s *Conversations with Goethe*. Jacobi declined, and proposed Aniela Jaffé for the task, because, as Jung’s secretary, it would be easier for her to ask questions concerning his life in free hours.⁷¹

This arrangement was to work out well. After the collapse of Lucy Heyer’s project the preceding year, Kurt Wolff’s renewed approach was well timed. Jung had in effect already come round to the inevitability of a biography being written, and considered that it would be better if he had a hand in shaping it. To Richard Hull, the translator of Jung’s *Collected Works*, Wolff described how

for several years he had tried to persuade Jung to write [an autobiography], how Jung had always refused, and how finally he (Kurt) hit on the happy idea of an “Eckerfrau” to whom Jung could dictate at random, the Eckerfrau being Aniela Jaffé.⁷²

Aniela Jaffé was born in Berlin in 1903.⁷³ She initially studied medicine, though her interests shifted to psychology. She went to the Uni-

⁷⁰ On July 17, 1953, Wolff sent Jung a clipping of a case concerning synchronicity from *The New York Times Magazine* and wrote, “happily thinking back to the pleasant hours spent with you at Round Table at Olga’s in ’51 and ’52.” (JP). This was a reference to the Eranos conferences. Elsewhere, he recalled that “I was never able to convince C. G. Jung that *Das grüne Gesicht* [*The Green Face*] was a bad novel—Jung thought very highly of it.” Wolff, “On Publishing in General,” p. 13.

⁷¹ Jaffé, draft foreword to MDR, Rascher Verlag archives, Zentralbibliothek, Zurich, p. 1.

⁷² Richard Hull, “A Record of Events Preceding the Publication of Jung’s Autobiography, as Seen by R.F.C. Hull,” July 27, 1960, BA. In an undated note of “subjects mentioned in correspondence with Jaffé,” Kurt Wolff referred to the project as the “Jung–Eckermann book” (BL). The Eckermann/Goethe analogy was not lost on Jung: see below, n. 127.) On July 21, 1958 Wolff wrote to Kyrill Shabert, “You have asked me why I am so excited, you even said obsessed, by this manuscript. You know that I have tried for years, unsuccessfully, to persuade Jung to write his autobiography, that I had just about given up hope, when, all of a sudden in late fall 1956, he changed his mind.” (BL).

⁷³ Information on Aniela Jaffé is drawn from her interview with Gene Nameche (CLM, Jung Biographical Archive), from her essay “From Jung’s Last Years” in her *From the Life and Work of C. G. Jung*, trans. R.F.C. Hull and Murray Stein (Einsiedeln: Daimon Verlag, 1989), and from Elena Fischli’s “Historical Commentary” to Jaffé’s *Reflections on the Life*

versity of Hamburg to study with the prominent child psychologist William Stern (1871–1938). In 1929 she married Jean Dreyfus (1904–1985). Dreyfus was Swiss, and it was through her marriage that she acquired a Swiss passport. She wrote her doctoral dissertation on “The Social Behaviour of Children in Kindergarten,” under Stern. However, due to the advent of the Nazi regime and the expulsion of Jewish academics, including Stern, she was unable to have a doctoral viva and so to graduate. On refusing to give a Nazi salute, she was expelled from the university. On Stern’s recommendation, she emigrated to Switzerland and went to Zurich, working at the Balgrist Clinic and the Burghölzli asylum. She also worked as a freelance secretary for Professors Gideon and von Tschärner. In 1937 she separated from her husband. During this period, she attended one of Jung’s seminars on children’s dreams at the ETH. She then began an analysis with Jung’s student Liliane Frey-Rohn (1901–1991), who in turn sent her to work with Jung. Her analysis with him commenced in 1937. In 1939 she presented a case study in Jung’s “Children’s Dreams” seminars.⁷⁴ In 1947, she became the secretary of the newly founded Jung Institute in Zurich (a part-time position). During this period, she would undertake tasks for Jung, such as writing letters, doing research in libraries and commenting on manuscripts. In 1950 Jung included her essay on E.T.A. Hoffman in a collection of his writings.⁷⁵

In 1955 Jaffé became Jung’s secretary. Her schedule with him began with dealing with correspondence from ten to twelve o’clock. She later recalled, “I must confess that the approach of the old magician never lost its excitement in all those years. With my inner ear I still hear it to this day.”⁷⁶ In an interview with Gene Nameche, she recalled that after Jung’s wife’s death,

I answered many letters for him, he did not feel at all like doing that work. I read my tentative answers to him—sometimes he corrected a word or a sentence, sometimes it was all right. After a certain time

and *Dreams of C. G. Jung* (Einsiedeln: Daimon Verlag, 2023; hereafter: *Reflections*). See also *Remembering Jung #11: A Conversation about C. G. Jung and His Work with Aniela Jaffé* (DVD), C. G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles.

⁷⁴ See Jung, , *Children’s Dreams*, pp. 279–90.

⁷⁵ Aniela Jaffé, “Bilder und Symbole aus E.T.A. Hoffmans Märchen ‘Der goldne Topf’” (Images and symbols from E.T.A. Hoffman’s fairy-tale, “The Golden Pot”), in C. G. Jung, *Gestaltungen des Unbewussten* (Formations of the unconscious) Psychologische Abhandlungen 7 (Zurich: Rascher Verlag, 1950).

⁷⁶ Jaffé, “From Jung’s Last Years,” p. 139.

he began to be interested again in what he got from the world and I stopped writing in his name.⁷⁷

This working arrangement shows the level of trust that Jung showed in Jaffé, allowing her to write in his name, and mediate his relation to the world. At the same time, she continued her own researches, publishing her book on death dreams and ghosts in 1959.⁷⁸

Aware of what had happened with Lucy Heyer's project, and possibly having read Heyer's manuscripts, Jaffé wrote a portrait of Jung in *Du* in 1955 in which she noted,

The greatness of this life does not lie outside. Personal details: studies, career, professional positions, honors, travels and encounters are only pointers, outward markers, between and behind which the fullness of human experience plays out, and the great arc of the soul's development spans.

The discrepancy between the relative inconspicuousness of this researcher's life and the inner density and fullness could overwhelm every biographer; for it befits only the man himself who bears such a life, who has given it form and also been shaped by it to report, reveal or draw a veil over his experiences. To allow the contemporary world and the night world to have a share in his innermost.

Yet for the observer who seeks to understand this life its polarities will also be significant: they correspond to the differentiation between the personal world of consciousness and the impersonal one of the not-I, of the limited world of consciousness and the vast world of the psyche or the unconscious.⁷⁹

This clearly articulates her sense that what was significant in Jung's life was his spiritual development, and the challenge this posed to biographers. What was required was a biography that gave due prominence to the unconscious nightworld. As she saw it, it was ultimately only Jung himself who could write this.

The discussions with Kurt Wolff evidently continued to reverberate in Jung's mind. Immediately after the Eranos conference in 1956, Jung

⁷⁷ Aniela Jaffé, interview with Gene Nameche, p. 11, CLM, Jung Biographical Archive.

⁷⁸ Aniela Jaffé, *Death Dreams and Ghosts* (Einsiedeln: Daimon Verlag 1999 [1959]).

⁷⁹ Aniela Jaffé, "Carl Gustav Jung," *Du: Schweizerische Monatsschrift*, April 1955, p. 22.

was visited by his friend the psychiatrist E. A. Bennet. Bennet noted Jung saying on August 30,

At breakfast C. G. spoke of the difficulties implicit in the idea of anyone writing his biography; he said it would require a full understanding of his thought, and no one understood it completely. Freud's life, he said, could be easily described because his thought was simply laid out. But with him it was more complex, for unless the development of his thought were central to his biography it would be no more than a series of incidents, like writing the biography of Kant without knowing his work.⁸⁰

As illustration, Jung described how his 1913 dream of slaying Siegfried was a turning point in his life.⁸¹ On his return to England, Bennet followed up the possibility of undertaking a biography himself. On September 5 he wrote to Jung, recalling their discussion of Dr. Howard Philp's suggestion that Philp write a biography of him. Ruth Bailey had then suggested to Bennet that Bennet should write one, as Philp had now recently suggested as well. He added that it would be helpful if he could collaborate with a member of Jung's family, such as his daughter Marianne Niehus. On October 10 Jung replied to Bennet,

As you know, I am a somewhat complicated phenomenon, which hardly can be covered by one biographer only [. . .]. Therefore I should like to make you a similar proposition, namely that you proceed along your line as a medical man like Philp has done on his part as a theologian. Being a doctor you would inquire into the anamnesis of your patient and you would ask the questions and I would answer as a patient would answer. Thus you would move along the lines of your habitual thinking and would be enabled to produce a picture of my personality understandable at least to more or less medical people. Philp certainly would produce a picture of my religious aspect, equally satisfactory. Since it is undeniable that one of several aspects is medical, another theological, a biography written by specialists in their field has the best chance of being accurate, although not comprehensive in as much as the specific

⁸⁰ E. A. Bennet, *Meetings with Jung: Conversations Recorded During the Years 1946–1961* (Zurich: Daimon Verlag, 1982), August 30, 1956 (p. 61).

⁸¹ LN, pp. 160–61.

psychological synthesis would demand somebody equally at home in primitive psychology, mythology, history, parapsychology and science—and even in the field of artistic experience.⁸²

For Jung, the solution to the perspectival limitations stemming from the personal equation of the biographer lay in having multiple biographies undertaken, from different disciplinary standpoints.

Unaware of these parallel developments, Kurt Wolff wrote to Jaffé on October 24,

From Dr. Jolande Jacobi I learned that she told you about a Jung book which I had discussed with her in August in Ascona. I now learn from Dr. Jacobi that Professor Jung, as yourself, responded favourably to the idea, and I am very happy about it. When you have thought the matter over and discussed the whole project in more detail with Dr. Jung, please let me have an outline and a tentative list of contents. I suppose Dr. Jacobi has told you that I feel it would be most desirable to present the material in a very direct way, Eckermann-like, or rather, giving Jung's memories of people, places, and events in his own words in the first person singular "as told to Aniela Jaffé."⁸³

A work presented in the first person would clearly be regarded as more authoritative than a biography written in the third person. Kurt Wolff was asking Jaffé to continue "writing in Jung's name."

Jaffé proceeded to discuss the project with Jung. On November 9 she replied to Wolff, indicating that Jung was not in principle disinclined, but suggested taking the whole thing as an experiment. The main issue was the question of time, as Jung was easily tired. Jung suggested that he would prefer that these conversations take place at Bollingen. Evidently

⁸² Jung to Bennet, October 10, 1956, JP (original in English); Philp had also been considering a biographical work on Jung. After modifications, the outcome of Bennet's project was his *C. G. Jung* (Wilmette, IL: Chiron Publications, 2006 [1961]); the outcome of Philp's was his *Jung and the Problem of Evil* (London: Rockliff, 1958). Jung's replies to Philp's questions were also reproduced in CW 18 under the title "Jung and Religious Belief" (CE 25). In a later diary entry Bennet recorded a conversation with Mrs. Niehus, to whom he had shown his introduction: "She said my approach was quite different from Mrs. Jaffé's and pressed me to continue. She said mine was more masculine, and the fact that another biography was in preparation should not prevent me from going on with it." Bennet, *Meetings with Jung*, March 24, 1959 (p. 111).

⁸³ Wolff to Jaffé, October 24 1956, BL (original in English).

encouraged by her response, Wolff told Jaffé that it would take a few months for the project to take shape.⁸⁴ He subsequently informed Herbert Read that in the last analysis it was Jaffé who persuaded Jung to undertake the task.⁸⁵ For Jaffé, the project was supremely important. She informed Alwina von Keller that she regarded her role as the “catalyzer” in it as the most fundamental in her life.⁸⁶

Meanwhile, Gerald Sykes (1904–1984), an author and literary critic who had written a favorable review of Jung’s *Psychology and Alchemy* in *The New York Times* and had met him in Ascona in 1955, wrote to Jung that on December 4, 1956 William McGuire had informed him that Kurt Wolff “has had an idea that I should go to Zurich, spend as much time as possible with you, and write a sort of Eckermann about you.”⁸⁷ Jaffé was quick to reply on Jung’s behalf on December 11:

Dr. Jung said that at the present moment two biographies are in the making and a third one will start in springtime. So, he said, that for the moment he has enough to do providing the different biographers with his memories and thoughts. He is convinced that you would understand this difficulty and that he cannot make up his mind to begin a fourth one. That would be too much for him.⁸⁸

A few days earlier, on December 7, Bennet had written to Jung developing plans for his biography: “You kindly replied last month and made the valuable suggestion that I might address a few questions to you.”⁸⁹ He then appended four questions, mainly about Jung’s childhood. A few days later, Jung replied that it would take him too long to give written answers, so invited him to stay for ten to fourteen days over the winter holidays. He reflected,

⁸⁴ Wolff to Jaffé, November 13, 1956, BL.

⁸⁵ October 27, 1959, BA.

⁸⁶ Jaffé to Alwina von Keller, August 25, 1959, JP (filed with Jung’s correspondence to von Keller). Unless otherwise stated, Jaffé’s letters are in German.

⁸⁷ Gerald Sykes to Jung, December 7, 1956, JP. It is not clear whether Sykes was directly in touch with Kurt Wolff at all, or whether this just came through William McGuire, based on what he may have heard. To Gene Nameche, Sykes recalled that Kurt Wolff “wanted me to go to Zurich and do a book based on conversations with [Jung]”: interview with Gene Nameche, p. 6, CLM, Jung Biographical Archive. On Sykes, see below, p. 295.

⁸⁸ JP. The “two biographies” underway evidently refers to Bennet’s and Philp’s projects, and the third is Jaffé and Kurt Wolff’s.

⁸⁹ Bennet to Jung, December 7, 1956, JP.

The whole thing is a ticklish task and it seems to be rather difficult because the average reader would hardly be capable of understanding what it is all about. I have been exposed to so many misunderstandings that I am rather scared to tell the truth about my biography, as I see it. I should therefore prefer, you should first try to find your way through the jungle of memories.⁹⁰

Bennet stayed with Jung in early January, and his notes of his discussions with Jung record a number of reminiscences.

At that time, Jung already had exclusive contracts with Routledge and Kegan Paul, the Bollingen Foundation, and Rascher Verlag. For another publisher to manage publish Jung's "autobiography" would be quite a coup, though clearly a challenge that Kurt Wolff was up for. In an article entitled "On Luring Away Authors, or How Authors and Publishers Part Company," Wolff wrote,

Every country in the world has strict laws about white-slave traffic. Authors, on the other hand, are an unprotected species and must look after themselves. They can be bought and sold, like girls for the white-slave trade—except that in the case of authors it is not illegal.⁹¹

As Wolff saw it, the work was not intended for Jungians, but for general readers. As he later remarked to Cary Baynes, he hoped that it would be a book which would "lead the outsider inside the work."⁹² Due to the involvement of another publisher, the book did not go down the same editorial channels as the rest of Jung's work.

On January 7, 1957 Kurt Wolff inquired as to how Jaffé was getting on with the project, and asked whether she had started taking notes. From the outset, he was an active editor, suggesting the approach she should take, as well as some of the questions she should ask, as if he saw her as his proxy. This would later lead to considerable tensions. He gave indications of some of the topics he would like to see covered:

It has come to mind that I have given you very few hints about the many subjects which in my opinion should be included. It would be wonderful, for instance, if you could get Jung to talk a little bit

⁹⁰ Jung to Bennet, December 10, 1956, JP (original in English).

⁹¹ Ermarth, *Kurt Wolff*, p. 21.

⁹² Wolff to Cary Baynes, September 18, 1959, BP.

about his feelings towards animals, about the characteristics of various nationalities (the British, the Germans, etc.), how he feels about the primitive people he has come to know, some pages about his reactions to children, to the sexes, and then of course to single personalities such as Charcot, Freud, etc., etc.⁹³

As a model, he directed her to Paul Claudel's recently published *Improvised Memories* (1954).⁹⁴ This work was based on a lengthy series of radio interviews with Claudel, in which Jean Amrouche questioned him on his life.

Jaffé was concerned by the relation of her project to Bennet's undertaking. On January 11 she wrote to Kurt Wolff that "Professor Jung takes the view that Bennet's and my work would not overlap, not only because we are two very different personalities and characters but ultimately because my perspective will be a different one from Bennet's."⁹⁵ She thanked Kurt Wolff for his suggestions, but had a different perspective:

One can hardly ask him such "normal" questions as his view on different nationalities. But his relationship with animals will play a role—like when a pair of snakes took up residence on the shore near his tower for whom he regularly put out a saucer of milk, as well as a dog in whose eyes he saw his deceased father, or a bird who sat on his spade when he was digging up potatoes and in whom he greeted the "ghost" of a beloved friend who had passed on. This is his "manner." The proximity of the dead in general, I'd like to say: the proximity of the beyond, as well as a quite extraordinary connection with nature. My guiding principle would be: Jung and nature—inner and outer. Inner nature includes dreams and everything that belongs to that. Outer nature is the earth.⁹⁶

From the outset, and following the perspective she had presented in her *Du* article, Jaffé had a clear conception of the type of work she was intending, which was at significant variance to what Kurt Wolff had in mind: this was to be no conventional biography, but, to use the language of Jung's 1958 memoir, it was to be a study of Jung's "personality

⁹³ Wolff to Jaffé, January 7, 1957, BL (original in English).

⁹⁴ Paul Claudel, *Mémoires improvisés* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954).

⁹⁵ Jaffé to Wolff, January 11, 1957, BL.

⁹⁶ Jaffé to Wolff, January 11, 1957, BL. On the episodes mentioned, see below, pp. 246–47.

no. 2.” As he had had already confided striking episodes to her, the first task would be to get him to relay these again.

She added that Jung had given her permission to use his 1925 seminar, in which he discussed some of these episodes. Furthermore, there was a “very thick book” with fantasies from which Jung had developed his theories, and she asked whether this would be of interest to Wolff. As for questions regarding Freud and Charcot, these could be left to Bennet (as she didn’t find this aspect interesting).⁹⁷ She continued,

Quite a while ago he once told me how, as a young boy, he had made himself manikins, sort of homunculi, and of how he had experienced a type of identification with a stone, heralding the alchemist to come, and things like this [. . .]. Concerning the unfolding of the story, Jung prefers me to keep to “inner material,” so to dreams and fantasies.⁹⁸

As to procedure, Jaffé wrote that she had been tempted to put questions to Jung when she went over the post with him, but had refrained from doing so, as she saw how easily he tired. Jung had indicated that he would prefer to deal with her questions while in Bollingen.⁹⁹

On January 16 Wolff replied, indicating that he didn’t think that Bennet’s project would clash. He gave a strong indication to what he was looking for: “Let us by all means avoid for ourselves the word and idea of a ‘biography.’ After all, the whole idea of the book is that it should not be a biography, but as nearly as possible an autobiography.”¹⁰⁰ He was glad that she had started looking at Claudel’s book, and added, “This, by the way, would be the ideal title for our book, indicating exactly what I have in mind.”¹⁰¹ In contrast to the Claudel book, he recommended that

⁹⁷ When Bennet’s book appeared, before her own, Jaffé found to her great consternation that Jung had also told Bennet a number of the dreams and key episodes that he had confided to her. Kurt Wolff wrote to Cary Baynes, “Aniela has fits about the book and I well understand why: Jung told Bennet not all but quite a lot of the stuff he dictated Aniela for the autobiography—many of his dreams for instance, among them the Basler Münster dream—and now his book comes out before the autobiography will be published in Spring. Aniela feels cheated by the Master.” Kurt Wolff to Cary Baynes, July 20, 1961, BP.

⁹⁸ Jaffé to Wolff, January 11, 1957, BL.

⁹⁹ Jaffé to Wolff, January 11, 1957, BL.

¹⁰⁰ Wolff to Jaffé, January 16, 1957, BL.

¹⁰¹ The first contracts for the work, dated October 25, 1957 describe it as a work “tentatively titled ‘Carl Gustav Jung’s Improvised Memories’” (BL).

the Jung book, I think could be improved by reducing the part of the interviewer in favor of more talk by the interviewee. Your idea to give substantial space to Jung's relation to nature seems to be excellent, and I think it would be excellent to use material from early seminars. Maybe, you could transcribe the seminar texts into something more direct. What I am aiming at for the whole book is as much direct speech by Jung as possible.

I strongly feel, of course that the book should not be confined to the one subject nature, but should have reminiscences from Jung's childhood, his adolescent years, etc., etc.,—as much as you can get out of him.

When I mentioned names like Charcot and Freud and Jung's experiences with them, I did not, of course, have in mind Jung's position with regard to Freud as a scholar (a subject that has been treated at sufficient length in other publications), but informal observations of Freud as husband, father, friend—in other words, as a personality—and this goes for the other famous people too.

To give another example: When I had the pleasure of spending with my wife an hour with Jung in Küsnacht in late January of 1954, we talked about Bachofen and Burckhardt, and in an extremely lively way Jung told how he remembers these two great figures as students from his student days in Basel; how Bachofen, the wealthy patrician, arrived at the University in his coach, impeccably dressed, and how Burckhardt, carrying a large heavy portfolio with the photographs to be shown students, entered the university in his shabby old jacket, etc., etc. And he went out telling how in those years the memory of the time Nietzsche spent at Basel University was still alive with many people.

And finally it would be wonderful if you could bring Jung to tell you in a relaxed hour a little about his family background, his growing up in the family, how he felt about his parents and brothers and sisters, how and when he outgrew the family ties.

And all this should go into the manuscript in *direkte Rede*, Jung speaking in the first person. I could imagine that a half-hour here and there, in Küsnacht or Bollingen, just the time Jung takes out of serious work for a cup of tea or walk in the garden, would give you an opportunity to assemble such material gradually. Perhaps in the beginning you will even forget about how to group and organize the material and will just take down whatever you can, keeping in

mind that you should try to get material of as much variety as possible.¹⁰²

On January 20 Jaffé replied, thanking Wolff for his very important suggestions. She related to him that the previous Friday, completely unexpectedly, Jung had said that he wanted to tell her his earliest childhood memories, which she immediately took down stenographically. These memories were precious and moving. She added,

If one only knew what lay in seeds which later blossomed, these small experiences become terribly important. They then contain an almost mysterious profundity. Jung did not tell me these broader associations; he assumes that I understand them; something he explicitly emphasized.¹⁰³

She wasn't sure that she grasped all these connections, so wondered if it would be possible for her "to appear in this autobiography as a 'speaker', so to speak, explaining the colourful events on stage in everyday garb and in a low voice."¹⁰⁴ She added that Jung had told her that he wanted to speak to her often, not systematically, but of whatever occurred to him. She thanked Wolff for his suggestions, which were very helpful, and was glad that he wasn't expecting something systematic—ordering the material was a secondary question, which could be left till later. Clearly, Jung felt comfortable narrating such intimate memories to Jaffé, to whom he did not need to spell out all the connections to his later life and work.

Wolff was happy to receive this news, which seemed to present an ideal solution:

What could be nicer than Jung's spontaneous willingness to speak to you of his early childhood memories—here we have "improvised memories." At other times he will perhaps tell you about his years at the Gymnasium, or his student years, whatever; and in the meantime perhaps other topics as well. You are completely right to leave your notes in their original form for now—other than that, "editing" should be avoided as far as possible; arranging and collating material etc., are a matter for later on.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Wolff to Jaffé, January 16, 1957, BL (original in English).

¹⁰³ Jaffé to Wolff, January 20, 1957, BL.

¹⁰⁴ Jaffé to Wolff, January 11, 1957, BL.

¹⁰⁵ Wolff to Jaffé, January 26, 1957, BL.

Like Lucy Heyer, Jaffé undertook a series of regular interviews with Jung, which she noted in shorthand. She then typed out her notes, and sent copies regularly to Kurt Wolff.¹⁰⁶ To Helen Wolff, Jaffé described her approach:

Actually I have only spoken and asked questions very little. Jung spoke from the heart. Sometimes we were both silent for a long time, until something new emerged within him.—In any case it was important to Jung that he himself came out “purer,” even at the cost of completeness or form.¹⁰⁷

In retrospect, she noted that she had “sometimes asked questions and made remarks and on rare occasions there were others present who did the same.”¹⁰⁸ As she had not mastered shorthand, “whenever possible [. . .] I did write up and edit my notes later the same day, adding any additional recollections of what Jung had said, and rendered everything into a readable style while endeavouring to maintain Jung’s direct and free style of expression.”¹⁰⁹ To William McGuire, she later recalled that Jung “spoke and followed a sort of Freudian line of associations. When I came home, I took a cup of tea, went immediately to the typewriter: copied my notes and filled them out with what was still in my ears.”¹¹⁰

Following the first session on January 18 (with a brief addendum the following day), Jung continued his narration of his childhood experiences on January 25. The project was then interrupted, as Jaffé became seriously ill and was hospitalized.¹¹¹ It recommenced at the end of March. On March 21 Kurt Wolff wrote to her, glad to hear that she had recovered after a month in hospital. He responded positively to her suggestion “to include in our book such material as you have put down in the past about remarks Jung made, stories he told, etc.” He added, “In putting questions to Dr. Jung, I am sure you will have in mind the desirability of rounding out the various phases of his life with experiences, with meetings with personalities who became important to him, etc.”¹¹²

In her introduction to *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jaffé wrote,

¹⁰⁶ Jaffé to the editor, January 1991.

¹⁰⁷ Jaffé to Helen Wolff, October 14, 1958, BL.

¹⁰⁸ *Reflections*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ *Reflections*, p. 9.

¹¹⁰ Jaffé to William McGuire, November 26, 1981, Jung Collection, LC.

¹¹¹ On February 2 and 20, Jung wrote to her with concern and advice regarding illness and recovery (JP).

¹¹² Wolff to Jaffé, March 21, 1957, BL.

It had been proposed that the book be written not as a “biography” but in the form of an “autobiography,” with Jung himself as the narrator. This plan determined the form of the book, and my first task consisted solely in asking questions and noting down Jung’s replies.¹¹³

From March 30 onward Jaffé continued her “biography hours” with Jung on a regular basis.¹¹⁴ Writing to Kurt Wolff in 1958, she characterized these hours as follows: “Conversation with him [. . .] was like a storm wind, no, like a hurricane that swept over me. I knew that it was not Jung who was speaking here, but his creative daimon, and that there was nothing else to do but submit to it.”¹¹⁵ On receiving the installments of her notes, Wolff marked them up extensively (though it does not appear that his edits were conveyed back to her). From April, she started arranging the material thematically and chronologically into chapters. The first drafts of these took seven months to prepare.¹¹⁶ Meanwhile Wolff, together with Wolfgang Sauerlander, had independently started to compile material from her notes into chapters.¹¹⁷

At the beginning of January 1958 Wolff showed the manuscript of the Interviews to Cary Baynes, who described her impressions to Jung:

I went into the Wolffs’ without an Ahnung that I was going to read a book with living fire in it. I was conscious as I read, that I was in a sort of passionate participation with your crucifixion, it was mine too, and everything was involved in the way you handled it. Then the outside world melted away and I was THERE, that is, in a state of being wholly new to me; I knew for the first time, but what I knew I absolutely cannot report. This I cannot understand. Do you think I got into the region beyond Maya? I did not think that anything like this would be permitted to me. It marks a climax in my life [. . .]. Irrespective of its effects on me, this is a profoundly moving book, and it is so right the way it is written, that the contents are

¹¹³ *MDR*, p. 7.

¹¹⁴ Jaffé to Wolff, January 10, 1958, BL.

¹¹⁵ Jaffé to Wolff, October 19, 1958, BL.

¹¹⁶ Jaffé to Wolff, November 13, 1959, BL.

¹¹⁷ Wolff and Sauerlander’s compiled chapters can be found in folders B–G of the protocols of the Interviews (Jung Collection, LC). Sauerlander (1911–1976) was a fellow German émigré, who became a production manager at Pantheon. He later worked for the Bollingen Foundation, edited and translated the collected works of Bertolt Brecht and co-edited the German edition of the Freud–Jung letters.

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