



# Newsletter

The C. G. Jung Society of Montreal

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## Musings From Your Editor

There are no oracles to foretell what the future has in store for us in the coming year, both globally and locally. At large it looks like storm clouds are amassing. What is certain is that the Montreal “branch” of the Jungian enterprise is eager to present another year of scintillating speakers.

In the coming months, Zoom technology continues to enable us to invite guests from Berlin, Jerusalem, San Francisco, upstate New York and Washington, D.C.!

Locally we have scheduled only one in-person event, in November.

Stefano Carpani came to our attention during the Covid years when he hosted a series of interviews with Jungian analysts, “*Breakfast at Küsnacht*,” via YouTube. The series was made into a book by the same name.

Subsequently he created and hosted several other virtual series: Lockdown Therapy and War as Reset, as well as Psychosocial Wednesdays.

Carpani is a Jungian psychoanalyst and sociologist (member and lecturer of the C. G. Jung Institute, Zürich, and University of Cambridge, respectively). He curates *Jungianism: Initiatives for Contemporary Analytical Psychology and neo-Jungian Studies*, the book series titled *Re-covered Classics in Analytical Psychology and JUNGIANEUM/Yearbook*. He lives and practices in Berlin.

The growing interface between psychology and sociology—psyche vis-à-vis culture—can be traced back to James Hillman’s work in the 1990’s when he turned his attention from the couch to the city (polis) and beyond. *Anima Mundi*

Tom Singer’s focus on the cultural complex over the past two decades has deepened and widened the scope of the analytic opus. Singer touched on this theme when he spoke to us last January about Cultural Complexes of Our Times: The Russian/Ukraine War.

On September 28, Stefano Carpani will bring us his perspective on the works of German sociologist Ulrich Beck. (1944-2015) Wikipedia reports that Beck was “one of the most cited social scientists in the world during his lifetime.”

Carpani will be talking about his latest book, *Absolute Freedom: Individuation and Individualization in*

*Second-Late-Modern Societies*. By Zoom, of course.

Given the depth and breadth of the comprehensive twin anthologies Carpani edited last year, both published by Routledge, we can expect an erudite exploration of new frontiers of understanding human behaviour, both personal and collective.

It might be worth noting that one of Carpani’s recent podcasts was entitled “The End of Certainties.”

And so one event leads to another.

Ann Ulanov’s presentation this October 19, by Zoom, will be most topical. The question she poses is certainly provocative: Uncertainty: Is It A Gift? It is a profound existential question.

This is surely as much a “crucible moment” as was her December 2023 talk to the group called With Ukrainian Analysts.

At that time, in the throes of the Russian war on Ukraine, Ulanov addressed, with great passion and eloquence, the subject of “Speaking to the Unspeakable: Reflections on Jung’s Work and on *The Red Book* and *The Black Books*.”

Our society hosted a four-week reading seminar on her works in April 2021 and a talk that month that Ann called “Two Points of View.”

Ulanov is a Jungian analyst practicing in New York City and Emerita Professor of Psychology and Religion, Union Theological Seminary and the author of many books. A veteran of the Jungian universe, she continues to be productive and relevant.

While she will address the perils of our times—cultural foundations upended and polarizations abounding—Ulanov will also emphasize psyche’s inherent response to uncertainty with creative gestures.

While some veteran Jungians are still alive and well, sadly some have passed. Last April, it was a very dear old friend of our society. Malcolm Spicer was a professor of Religion and Theology at Concordia University when I decided to return to the campus, forty years ago, in the early 1980’s.

Malcolm was very quirky. He would trace fine doodles on the chalkboard and on essay papers, seemingly indifferent to many very bored students.

What was remarkable about his classes were the first-hand accounts of his experiences in Zürich, where he and his wife, Huguette, had been analyzed by the



renowned Marie-Louise von Franz and Barbara Hannah, decades earlier! I was mesmerized by Malcolm's stories and his proximity to the *mana* world of that time.

Years later I heard that the Spicers had hosted von Franz on a visit to Montreal to speak to our society, perhaps with Malcolm's influence. This formidable woman regaled their children with tall tales around their kitchen table!

Very much alive and thriving, Stephen and Shelley Snow have been long-time friends of the Montreal Jung Society. In October 2019, Stephen, a retired professor of drama therapy and formerly chair of the Creative Therapies Department at Concordia University, dramatized local author Margaret Piton's play about Jung's *Red Book*. Shelley, a psychotherapist and professional musician, created the musical score. This "review" was augmented by a panel of six speakers with substantial links to our Jung community: the Snows, Yvon Rivière, Robert Landy, Guylaine Vaillancourt, and Janis Timm-Bottos. Landy led an experiential workshop the next day on *The Hero's Journey*.

On Friday, October 25, Stephen Snow will be presenting his autobiographical theatre piece entitled "Healing the Poisoned Tree Inside of Me." Original music for the piece was created and will be performed by Shelley Snow. This is an in-depth exploration of Snow's experience as a thoughtful, conscientious and troubled American whose roots go back generations to the nation's Founding Fathers. This performance will take place at the Cedar Park United Church, 204 Lakeview Ave., Pointe-Claire, Quebec.

The play will be followed by a group process, exploring the shadowy roots of racism in our lives. The event will be co-sponsored by the Montreal Jung Society. For Info please go to: <https://cedarparkunited.org/events>.

Please renew your membership for the year so we can continue to invigorate (y)our community here and at large.

<https://www.jungsocietyofmontreal.ca/membership.html>

—Murray Shugar

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***Mind of State: Conversations on the Psychological Conflicts Stirring U.S. Politics & Society***

Edited by Betty Teng, Jonathan Kopp, & Thomas Singer  
Asheville, N.C.: Chiron Publications. (2023) 579 pps.  
Abridged version of Valerie Broege's review appearing in *The Vanier Review* (April, 2024).

This volume is based on a series of thirty podcasts (2019-2021) in which the relationships between psychology and politics in contemporary American society were explored. Although each episode featured an expert guest, two or three others took part in

unscripted dialogue with this individual. In assessing the interviews singly and as a whole in order to discover recurrent themes, the editors chose to organize the podcasts under five different headings: (1) acknowledging death, trauma, loss; (2) why truth matters; (3) anxieties of race and dominance; (4) democracy at risk; (5) the importance of myth in politics. Each chapter in the book begins with a brief professional resumé of the main speaker, situating the content of the interview within the context of later history up to 2023, and pointing out links with other relevant chapters for easy reference.

Jungian analyst Thomas Singer's discussion of cultural complexes and the soul of America undergirds all five of the thematic sections. Singer has identified several complexes that he perceives to be most determinative of U.S. cultural attitudes, history, and politics. These complexes, according to Singer, constitute an "inner sociology," operating in individuals as well as the collective, filtering things on the basis of memory, feelings, thoughts, and images. Complexes act autonomously, are repetitive, self-validating, and often quite simplistic and black and white. Singer posits that the oldest and the most powerful and destructive cultural complex present in U.S. society is racism. Closely connected to racism are gender and ethnicity, words that can symbolize "the other." Other complexes include the American relationship to money, commerce, and consumer goods; the natural environment; the human community, including family life, social life, and the life cycle from conception to death; the spiritual realm; speed, height, youth, progress, and celebrity; the world beyond U.S. borders; thinking itself.

Regarding death, trauma, loss, psychologist Pauline Boss, the foremost expert on ambiguous loss, avers that the U.S. is a particularly mastery-oriented culture, in which, if we work hard enough, we can solve anything. In this context, witness President Joe Biden's frequent contention that if Americans work together in harmony, there is nothing they cannot do. However, Boss sees the U.S. as a death-denying nation founded on unresolved grief and loss, stemming from the travails of slavery, the displacement and killing of native Americans, the tragic 800,000 deaths of the Civil War, and the separation of immigrants from family members overseas. Boss feels that it is imperative that Americans acknowledge these old losses and do some reconciliation work around them.

The next part of the book, entitled "Why Truth Matters," revolves around the cultural complex of speech, truth, and falsehood. The speakers delve into the roots of a decline of faith in truth, facts, and reality in recent years and how this threatens democracy. Minister and lawyer Scotty McLennan emphasizes the importance of exposing oneself to both sides of the news spectrum in an effort to ascertain truth, but he thinks that a lot of people are instead seeking only to



reaffirm their own tribe, identity, and belief systems. Gone are the days of Walter Cronkite and three-channel TV. We have moved from centralized to decentralized dissemination of information, in which people can isolate themselves in their own echo chamber silos.

Harvard ethics professor emerita Nancy Rosenblum discusses Trump's promulgation of the dangerous mindset of conspiracism, which simply makes a bare assertion, e.g., the 2020 election was rigged, dispensing with evidence and argument, and validated only by repetition and affirmation. Trump constantly presents himself as an aggrieved victim and the opposition as an enemy constantly after him. Many people have followed him in this belief. For Rosenblum, anti-governmentalism and anti-elitism are deeply rooted American traits that drive the discontented.

Not surprisingly, there are two chapters under the heading of "Why Truth Matters" that focus on Donald Trump. In "Trump on the Couch" psychoanalyst Justin Frank makes many trenchant observations about Trump that help us understand better the dangers he poses. Trump attacks one's ability to think because the listener is either fact-checking or aghast at something he says, which eventually becomes exhausting. He is a psychopath who is incessant and relentless in his verbal bombardment. Listening to him makes people extremely anxious. Frank links Trump's pathological lying to his being lied to as a child by his parents. He lies for power and in order to survive. An important approach to dealing with his lies is to regard them in terms of projection. So, for example, when Trump talks about "fake news," he's actually talking about himself promulgating "fake news." Journalists and the press represent reality to him, which he can't stand. He is not interested in pursuing the truth. Because he cannot escape the limitations of reality, he's against regulations and the fact that he can't just do whatever he wants to.

Piggybacking on Frank's commentary on Trump's lying, psychoanalyst Michael Tansey, in "Delusions & Lies: The Mind of Trump," shines light on Trump's delusional falsehoods; his rigidly held beliefs reflect a psychotic detachment from reality, despite irrefutable evidence to the contrary. Tansey asserts that truth and facts are no longer functioning in the way that we need them to in order to confirm our sense of reality. Trump's assault on the news with his multitude of "fake news" accusations—facts that conflict with his reality—is largely responsible for this state of affairs. Trump does not empathize with other people. I concur with Tansey that given Trump's mentality, he may very well think that if he is going down—since he is all that there is at the end of the day, and everything out there is simply ornaments or impediments to him—there is nothing to prevent him from taking the world down with him.

The last part of the book deals with the importance of myth in politics. In "When Myth Becomes History"

Jungian analyst Jules Cashford argues that it becomes very dangerous when myth becomes history, when Trump's grandiose vision of himself as a God-like king who always wins, becomes conflated with reality, abetted by his supporters who think he can do no wrong. The final chapter of the book is Thomas Singer's interview on the symbolic power of Trump's wall.

In conclusion, I hope that what I have said in this review of *Mind of State* has sufficiently sparked your interest in reading the whole book, since it offers such a wealth of different perspectives on, and insights into, the critical juncture at which we find ourselves today—the survival or death of democracy in the U.S.

—Valerie Broege

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***Absolute Freedom:  
Individuation and Individualization in Second-  
Late-Modern Societies***

Stefano Carpani  
Routledge; (2024) 170 pps

Stefano Carpani seems to be in the vanguard of a thriving new generation of Jungian analysts. After a dramatic début in 2020 with his "Breakfast at Küsnacht" YouTube series and its subsequent book publication, Carpani then produced a series of successful podcasts and in 2023-24 he edited a double anthology of Contemporary Classics in Analytical Psychology (Routledge) that he subtitled *The New Ancestors*.

Which leads to this review of his latest book, *Absolute Freedom: Individuation and Individualization in Second-Late-Modern Societies*; it was released by Routledge just this summer.

Carpani's intention is to bridge the gap between sociology and psychoanalysis. His attempt to "merge" the two fields stems from his knowledge of sociology in general and particularly his understanding of the works of German sociologist, Ulrich Beck. One of Beck's major contributions to 21<sup>st</sup> century sociology is the notion of "Individualization"—and the Risk Society that ensues.

Briefly put, Industrial societies were succeeded by modern societies that overturned many traditional values. After the collapse of the Soviet Empire in 1989—arguably the end of the Cold War and the emergence of Globalism—a new era unleashed unheralded freedoms.

Another second-late-modern disruption, fired by the digital revolution, brought on a new paradigm—utopian to many, a fraught experience for others. Fluidity is one way that both Beck and Carpani propose to adapt to the rapidly changing *zeitgeist*.

Carpani traces the roots of modern sociology up until Beck (1844-2015). Among many sources, from Emile Durkheim to Hannah Arendt, he devotes special attention to the Frankfurt School and its Critical



Theories in response to the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe in the 1920's and 30's. Sound familiar?

Carpani's critique of their ideas, which sought to overturn traditional values by revolutionary and psychological means, using mostly Marxist and Freudian principles, focuses mostly on their failure to include neo-Freudians like Jung.

He warns against such ideological frameworks, leaning away from dogma toward a more pluralistic approach. In the last two decades, there has been, in Jungian psychoanalytic circles at least, an inclination toward the political side, as seen in the works of James Hillman, Andrew Samuels, Thomas Singer and others. *Anima Mundi*, If you will.

This book offers a wealth of influences: sociology, relational psychology, feminist theory, research, philosophy, and especially psychosocial studies.

To describe "the narratives of Self-development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," the author presents principles of a transdisciplinary and pluralistic relational psychosocial model which insist that "Psychic and social processes ... (are) always implicated in each other." (p. 41)

Carpani highlights the merits of what Beck termed "individualization—the fulfillment of the capacities of an individual in second-late-modern society to become *homo optionis*." (p. 51) Such citizens are capable of choice, responsibility, self-reflection and action.

Since a one-sided focus on the social domain fails to address the inner world of psyche, it lacks soul. Carpani presents a comprehensive view of how Jung's psychological notion of individuation complements Beck's more external, material and social perspective.

Among many Jungian references, Carpani cites the British analyst Mark Saban, who notes that the "alleged problem of Jung's prioritization of individual development over collective life" (p. 109) has been misconstrued. While he was experiencing what would become his *Red Book*, Jung did proclaim that the inner life was of far greater importance. He is well known for having focused on the Spirit of the Depths rather than the Spirit of the Times!

Saban suggests that Jung changed his position over time. Carpani even claims that Jung was a pioneer in psychosocial studies!

He delves into Jung's "contraries:" inner/outer; rational/irrational; sociology/psychoanalysis; and social/individual.

The author notes that meditation is a critical medium for insight. By this he means dreams, which he also calls the *tertium*. Thus a transcendent function might resolve unconscious conflicts of opposites.

From self-knowledge and such numinous depths—what he calls *Gewissen* (Conscience)—an ethical dimension might emerge, leading to self-responsibility and action!

In using terms such as *Vox dei* (an inner voice) and *Gewissen* and its consequential ethical decisiveness, he is clearly advocating for an inscape to balance his social analysis, his *kulturkritik*.

Finally he presents three concepts that define Absolute Freedom: Integrity, Eros, and *Psychagogia*. (Inner guidance)

Carpani presents a formula that would "merge" both sociology and psychoanalysis. This would not be a fusion or a synthesis. He calls it the 'I+I' hypothesis.

Essentially it is freedom after freedom.

This resembles the paradox, oft-cited by Jungians: both-and!

The book ends with a twenty-page case study, with 21 detailed dreams that show Carpani doing the clinical work. Carla is a frustrated, desperately lonely and emotionally stuck young professional woman living in Berlin. Originally from Colombia via Spain, she works in the theatre and at a café. According to Beck and the standards of a second-late-modern society, she would be considered to be "individualized."

Despite Laura's professional and social choices to succeed, a great anomie led her to engage in a five-year analysis with the author. Hence the social/psychological proposal: 'I+I.' Freedom after freedom.

An issue that seems to fall outside the frame of the proposed (I+I) hypothesis is the very idea that the globe has been "overtaken" by the individualized, risk society. Has there not been, due to great resistance to change or an enantiodromic reversal—a reactionary backlash?

The Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Paris Olympics were a spectacular celebration of the diverse spectrum of humanity, its equality and *fraternité* on bold display. Was this moment proof of a new paradigm of progressive, non-traditional values that Carpani, Beck & Co. have been proposing?

Invoking the century-old critique of a dangerous tide of authoritarian regimes and perhaps hinting at its current echoes, Carpani takes an activist stance, but more than that. He proposes the inner world as a counterweight. He urges the necessary work to engage with one's own relations to inner authority as well.

Might the title of the book itself be a deliberate and immodest provocation or a rhetorical trick? Absolute Freedom? The very notion sounds daring.

—Murray Shugar