

## *The Red Book* for Dionysus:

### A Literary and Transdisciplinary Interpretation

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Although not produced under artistic auspices, the distinctive qualities of Jung's *The Red Book*, invite a literary as well as multidisciplinary approach.<sup>i</sup> And yet the work is peculiarly dismembered if considered through the conventional criteria for literature, psychology, art or science. Not published by its writer and painter, *The Red Book* is unauthorized, unfinished and unclaimed by canons of literary genres or psychology's more rational aims. My chapter will suggest that *The Red Book* is Dionysian. It enacts the god in its raw tearing apart of disciplinary norms and artistic conventions.

*The Red Book* is fated to be re-membered by its home in the terrifyingly dismembering 21<sup>st</sup> century in which multinational, political and institutional norms are being torn up. On the other hand, Dionysus, god of comic *and* tragic drama, also provides a pathway to a remembering of knowing and being that promises a renewed consciousness in touch with instinctual life or *zoe*. Using James Hillman's analysis of Dionysus in Jung,<sup>ii</sup> I argue that *The Red Book* heralds a re-membered transdisciplinary future.<sup>iii</sup> Jung anticipates the twentyfirst century paradigm that reconciles a post-quantum vision of reality with its social potential for a world of co-evolving democratizing and personal fulfillment.

The Problem of Literature and *The Red Book*

*The Red Book*, with astonishing paintings and handwritten text looks like a work of literature of an earlier era, that of medieval illustrated manuscripts. In so doing, as Mathew Spano and John Beebe superbly demonstrate, it corresponds to artistic innovation at the time of its composition,<sup>iv</sup> v. The literary modernism of the period 1910 to 1940 fragmented traditional forms and genres, showed a predilection for myth, challenged established norms of rationality, and made a point of returning to the past in order to re-configure art for the new industrial and alienated *modern* age. In this sense, *The Red Book* is a lost work of literary modernism belonging to the artistic heritage of the early twentieth century.

And yet, its author, C. G. Jung was famously dissatisfied with its ultimate form. He neither finished nor published the work, writing in the posthumously published *Memories, Dreams Reflections*:<sup>vi</sup>

In the Red Book I tried an aesthetic elaboration of my fantasies, but never finished it. I became aware that I had not yet found the right language, that I still had to translate it into something else...<sup>vii</sup>

“Aesthetic elaboration,” does not work for Jung, the psychologist, and so *The Collected Works* are the result of this decision to change the style of his writing. I have written elsewhere of the important epistemological consequences of the literariness of *The Collected Works*,<sup>viii</sup> and here want to continue exploring the uncanny liminality of literature and Jungian psychology. After all, a psychology dedicated to a psyche defined by possessing inherently creative archetypes, has something to say to our contemporary sense that literature is imaginative, largely fictional writing.

On the other hand, *The Red Book* is itself a clue that defining literature this way is a localized, historical accident.<sup>ix</sup> For the medieval period, indeed from the start of written culture, “literature” was valued writing and its major genre, poetry, the vehicle for history, philosophy, stories, legends and the pre-modern science of alchemy. Not until the Romanticism of the eighteenth century cemented the split from the rationality of the Enlightenment by deliberately exploring fantasy, ecstatic poetry, the uncanny and seeking new literary canons of the imagination, did “literature” come to be associated entirely with the *fictional* imagination.

*The Red Book*, while offering aesthetic forms from an age far removed from current disciplinary divisions between literature and psychology was fated to be rejected by its author for not conforming to them. Yet it is worth looking closer at what is at stake in these disciplinary divisions as they continue to haunt the success of the work as a twentyfirst century publication. For example there is a crucial issue in how the category of literature as the fictional imaginal has come to be studied in universities.

Like psychology itself, “literary studies” was invented in the nineteenth century under the influence of the proliferation of disciplines sponsored by the dominance of empirical science. These new disciplines were the “Social Sciences,” meant to employ the objectivity of science to human and cultural matters. Objectivity means just what *The Red Book* laments. That Jung had found the human soul: “I had judged her and turned her into a scientific object.”<sup>x</sup>

Similar “objectivity” pervaded literary studies in the twentieth century with the determination of its “New Criticism,” that the text was an object, sufficient in itself to generate knowledge with no participation from either the personality of its author or its reader. Known as “the intentional fallacy” and “the affective fallacy,” a literary work was not to be understood by reference to its

author's *intentional* meaning, nor how it *affects* or makes the reader feel.<sup>xi</sup> Rather the “close reading” inaugurated by the new criticism and still in use today insisted upon the primary reality of literature as object.

Here we see disciplinary division as a primary severing of being. For the new psychology, psyche or soul is the reality to be studied, with *The Red Book* itself showing the high cost of so-called scientific objectivity. For literary studies, the text is the primary reality. While new criticism is no longer the dominant literary theory in universities, being-as-textual remains its central concern. It is also fascinating to realize that these now parallel and split ways of knowing and being developed strikingly similar research strategies in the early twentieth century.

For, in comparing Jung's “active imagination,” a key ingredient in composing *The Red Book*, with new criticism's close reading, it is possible to see both working with the autonomy of the image. For Jung, the image is primarily psychic, but can manifest in words. For the new critics, the image is in the words of the literary text, but can inspire some psychic mobility. In effect, close reading combines Jung's active imagination and amplification as I have suggested elsewhere.<sup>xii</sup> What is in psychology, allowing the image to assume its own reality and being as in active imagination and then amplifying it by comparison to collective sources, becomes in literary studies, the autonomy of images in the literary work that point to other literary works in the new critical practice. With parallel strategies divided by disciplinary dismembering, it is time to look at the myth of such atomizing of being in knowing.

### Dionysus in Jung's Writings

Prior to the publication of *The Red Book*, James Hillman's essay, In "Dionysus in Jung's Writings," points out that C.G. Jung stresses "dismemberment" as his primary focus in the many myths of the god Dionysus. In Jung's treatment of the dismemberment of the divine being, Hillman sees a germ of psychic rejuvenation in the corporeal breaking apart of an aging god. He calls Christian modernity too Apollonian, too distancing, rational and dualistic. So in Hillman's view, an era dominated by one god defined by rationality and disembodiment, is to be followed by dismemberment, which will release and multiple stories of being in Hillman's preferred polytheistic approach to psyche. I here suggest that *The Red Book*, in its complex relations to literature and psychology, demonstrates that Jung's dismembering of Dionysus has possibilities unexplored by Hillman.

According to Hillman, Jung sees a two stage dismembering process: first comes a division into opposites, such as the very notion of Apollonian and Dionysian itself, the gods incarnated. This separation is celebrated in Jung's love of opposites and polarities. On the other hand, Jung the rebalancing psychologist of the modern western psyche has to go further to posit something more fragmented. Here we glimpse his animism in the form of bisexual, embodied, ecstatic Dionysus. In the second stage of Jung's Dionysian dismemberment, the god is scattered in pieces.

Dualistic opposites become multiplicity, with a wider dispersal of the divine in matter, which both Jung and Hillman call archetypal. To Jung, archetypes are inherited psychic potentials for certain sorts of images, patterns and meaning. They represent the possibility of diversity in psychic functioning; or as Hillman later puts it, a polytheistic psyche in which the goddesses and gods are multiple structures of consciousness in the world. Very importantly, Hillman insists that this second stage of Dionysian dismemberment changes the psyche profoundly. The Dionysian psychic process is an initiation into a new cosmos of fragments of the

body of the god.<sup>xiii</sup> Distance from divinity becomes interiority and animistic multiplicity within the domain of the god.

In particular, Hillman notes that *zoe*, the life force of the body in Eros is awakened by this process of divine dismemberment.<sup>xiv</sup> This new consciousness or *zoe* is an intimation of wholeness that does not erode differences. The new enlivening *zoe* is animistic in a particular way of awareness of its own *partial* consciousness, aware of itself as *parts*.

Rather the crucial experience would be the awareness of the parts *as parts* distinct from each other, dismembered, each with its own light, a state in which the body becomes conscious of itself as a composite of differences. The scintillae and fishes eyes of which Jung speaks ... may be experienced as embedded in physical expressions. The distribution of Dionysus through matter may be compared with the distribution of consciousness through members, organs, and zones.<sup>xv</sup>

Dionysian re-remembering is remembering a body-oriented consciousness in touch with *zoe* as endless instinctual life. This consciousness is multiple, animistic, connected to the divine in matter and nature, but how connected? What does it really mean to exist in the realm of a dismembered god; to have the task of re-remembering divine consciousness from within?

Jung's Dionysian enactment is the notion of the symbol, not in its common English meaning as a motif standing for some known meaning but rather in his emphasis as an image expressing something not yet or possibly not ever fully known in the ego.<sup>xvi</sup> Jung saw symbols as expressing something unknown that wants to come into being. His symbols are dynamic and alive. They provide what Hillman's *zoe*, an experience of instinctual life, in their rejuvenating of consciousness.

A symbol really lives only when it is the best and highest expression for something divined but not yet known to the observer. It then compels his unconscious participation and has a life-giving and life-enhancing effect.<sup>xvii</sup>

A symbol's route to the unknown invokes the archetypal qualities of psyche; those capacities possess roots in the instinctual body, while also extending to the realm of spirit and rational knowing.

In this context, even academic disciplinary concepts such as those founding a psychology or theories of literature can be symbols when they do *not* forget their connection to the 'living mystery'.<sup>xviii</sup>

We have to break down life and events, which are self-contained processes, into meanings, images, concepts, well knowing that in doing so we are getting further away from the living mystery....<sup>xix</sup>

Dionysus is the mythical embodiment of such 'living mystery' (ibid.). It follows that if rational, *disciplined* knowing can break down life and events into parts that retain awareness of the living mystery, then that knowledge, written in symbols is Dionysian dismemberment. I am suggesting that in the many disciplines that make up the modern Western university we have dismembered an aging god of being, "him," the masculine divine of monotheism that found dualism, including

the dualism of body and psyche. Dismembered into our many disciplines, this god is our being in materialistic rubble.

However, Dionysus haunts us in the Jungian symbol, which he suggestively wrote about mainly in terms of words, which included the words of science.

Since every scientific theory contains a hypothesis... it is a symbol.<sup>xx</sup>

Where the words of a discipline can be imagined as Jungian symbols, they turn the dead meat of our divided disciplines into scraps of the enlivening body of Dionysus. If we can regard disciplines not so much as eternally divided but as *parts* that need to re-member their status as parts of one body of divine knowing and being, then we know *zoe*, renewed, instinctual consciousness, or, put another way, the vision of *The Red Book*.

### *The Red Book and Transdisciplinarity*

Before looking at *The Red Book* as Dionysian in its span of disciplines such as literature, art and psychology, I want to offer another perspective to academic research in the twentyfirst century, one that originates in quantum science and theology.

Inaugurated by quantum physicist, Basarab Nicolescu, transdisciplinarity means beyond disciplinary severing of being.<sup>xxi</sup> Transdisciplinarity rejects any possibility of a hyperdiscipline, one capable of subsuming all human knowing into a system of perfect knowledge, or ultimate truth. Rather, he emphasizes that reality, currently fragmented in many disciplines, *is itself multiple*. In this sense, a single god-like vision for total knowledge gives way to a polyvalent polytheism of knowing. Dionysus arrives.



By refusing a hyperdiscipline, Nicolescu does away with the traditional unified human subject of Western modernity. After the discoveries of quantum physics, he posits a new human subject for *all* research. No longer should research assume the primacy of the criteria of objectivity.

Nicolescu's radically 'open' unity means accepting that humans live on many levels of reality simultaneously. It will never be possible to rationally know all psycho-physical realities, not least because some are neither measurable nor stable. Knowledge therefore will always be in a state of dismemberment.

Nicolescu offers three axioms of transdisciplinary to replace those of traditional science that go back to Galileo.

Hitherto, many scientific disciplines adhered to the following axioms or fundamental assumptions:

- i) The universe is governed by mathematical laws.
- ii) These laws can be discovered by scientific experiment.
- iii) Such experiments, if valid, can be perfectly replicated.

Of course, as Nicolescu emphasizes, such an approach to knowledge entails turning the human subject into an object by removing feeling and values. Nicolescu's fundamental principles, or three axioms for knowing in transdisciplinarity, are as follows.

- i) The ontological axiom: *There are, in Nature and in our knowledge of Nature, different levels of Reality and, correspondingly, different levels of perception.*

- ii) The logical axiom: *The passage from one level of Reality to another is insured by the logic of the included middle.*
- iii) The complexity axiom: *The Structure of the totality of levels of Reality or perception is a complex structure: every level is what it is because all levels exist at the same time.*<sup>xvii</sup>

This approach to knowledge amounts to a paradigm shift from competing disciplines with separate perspectives to one regarding universe as multidimensional. Reality is now complex. So are human beings. No one sense organ or academic discipline is capable of understanding all the other levels of reality. Whatever any particular knowledge claims, it will be incomplete or open. The single god of our historic privileging of rational objectivity is in pieces. “He” cannot be put together to make a perfect being. Here and now is Dionysus re-membered in disciplines now knowing themselves as parts of a whole that cannot be stitched together to exclude an “other.”

The axioms of transdisciplinary imply a *unus mundus*, records Nicolescu.<sup>xxiii</sup> Knowledge in this cosmodernity is both unified and also multiple because of the new logic of transdisciplinarity. Instead of the dualistic traditional science model of subject versus object, we now have a subject, object and hidden third, the invisible, connected quantum realm. This realm and the growing understanding of quantum complexity infer radical interconnectedness, a “oneness” that cannot be rationally plotted. Hence the *unus mundus* of transdisciplinarity is Dionysian in disciplines as parts as *parts*. Threaded into one by the hidden, non-rational third, they also rightly enact the multiple levels of reality in the cosmos. As Nicolescu puts it: “[r]eality is simultaneously a single and a multiple One.”<sup>xxiv</sup>

Such a transdisciplinary reality can only be enacted by a new logic of the included middle to extend the binary of subject/object into subject, included-middle-that-is-both-subject-and-object, object. Revisioned in this new logic is language which in transdisciplinary is considered in a ternary hermeneutics, not a binary one.<sup>xxv</sup> Language becomes a quantum phenomenon, the material enactment of the hidden third as the included middle. Put another way, *what Jung calls the symbol is what Nicolescu calls the symbol*: that word-image that opens into unconscious so unknown, non-rational reality.

Symbols in Jung and transdisciplinarity are dynamic, *living* scraps of the body of dispersed Dionysus to be re-membered in the soul (Jung), to be the included middle that invokes the hidden third of quantum reality (Nicolescu). For both, symbols are ultra precise but never, never fully definable in rational terms; they are never absolute truth. Nicolescu here in his wonderful *From Modernity to Cosmodernity*, could be quoting Jung.

A literal understanding of a symbol, turns it into a dead, static concept, without any function or value... The indefinite number of aspects of a symbol does not mean at all that the symbol is imprecise, vague or ambiguous. On the contrary, a precise definition implies an inaccuracy of meaning, a *mutilation* of the symbol. Accuracy is present, though, the invariance hidden behind the indefinite multitude aspects of the symbol... The symbol and the logic of the included third are intimately linked.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Or, one could say that symbols enact the included middle between the disciplines of literature and psychology. It is time to return to *The Red Book* as a Dionysian and transdisciplinary work.

### *The Red Book and Dionysian Transdisciplinarity*

...I had judged [my soul] and turned her into a scientific object.<sup>xxvii</sup>

*The Red Book* begins with the problem addressed by Dionysian transdisciplinarity, that in privileging experimental material science, the subject/object paradigm has turned the humanity of human being into objects. Written in the first person, *The Red Book* is a quest by “I” for both the reality of his soul and for a relationship to her. What he discovers is that “the wealth of the soul exists in images,” or in those psychic manifestations arriving via active imagination, the transdisciplinary included middle that is both “I” and not “I.”<sup>xxviii</sup>

Almost immediately, “I” suffers a terrifying sense of dismemberment in losing the sense of interior and exterior. Travelling to hell in these visions is to exist as hell in a loss of bodily and psychic boundaries.<sup>xxix</sup> Like Dionysus, he is both murdered and murderer. The god both suffered dismemberment and enacts it on those who do not respect him as Pentheus, torn apart by Dionysian maenads discovers. Indeed, the most infamous episode in *The Red Book*, when “I” is told to eat part of the liver of a dead child, resembles dismembered child Dionysus as much as it parodies Christian Eucharist.

Significantly, *The Red Book*, begins and ends by stressing the reality of symbols. “I” meets Elijah and blind Salome with the prophet insisting on their reality *as* symbols.<sup>xxx</sup> Later when “I” attests to partially merging with symbols and being changed by them, he might be articulating Nicolescu’s emphasis on symbols as the language that invokes the hidden third, the quantum realm that connects everything in ways that cannot be rationally formulated. It is exciting to think of the characters in *The Red Book* as precise and radically incomplete forms of knowing. If “I” is undergoing a trial where he must make a transition from split apart unviable dualism into a ternary form of Dionysian re-membering, what might *The Red Book* do for the reader?

Where Jung mentions science as also a symbolic, he anticipates Nicolescu suggesting that theories articulated in symbols are *permanent*, not because they are never modified, but rather because their symbolic nature renders them participant in reality and permanently open to extension without closure.<sup>xxxi</sup> Here *The Red Book* is of its time and also for all time as long as we use it as a living structure of knowing. It is *parts as parts* because symbols are scraps of a never to be rationally assembled whole: they are Dionysus. In reading *The Red Book* today, we are invited to enter the body of re-membering Dionysus.

Nicolescu is also helpful on the consequences of symbols functioning as the included middle for language as a whole. In a book published in 2014 and frighteningly relevant to the politics of 2017, he offers what *The Red Book* embodies, that symbols restore Dionysian *zoe* to language. Where understanding of reality is too fragmented, such as into wholly separate disciplines or society too fractured, language loses life and meaning. Symbols, on the other hand, by invoking multiple levels of reality and forming the included middle between disciplines, gradually restores meaning.

Classical logic based on the separation between the different levels of Reality, inevitably implies the gradual *entropy* of language...The symbol brings about a gradual decrease in the entropy of language, an increase in *order*, in information, and in comprehension.<sup>xxxii</sup>

*The Red Book*, of course, bears witness to the decay of language in the suffering of desert hermit, Ammonius. On the one hand, entropy is mobilized throughout *The Red Book* in the return of the dead. On the other hand, the dead have something to say to “I” while poor Ammonius appears to be the focus for the decline of writing to support the soul, for the loss of symbols. After exchanges between “I” and Ammonius, there is a lament for a now impossible language that would protect from dismemberment by single, unambiguous meanings; a language that would reject the symbolic.

You cry out for the word which has one meaning and no other... The word becomes your God...The word is protective magic against the daimons of unending, which tear at your soul and want to scatter you to the winds.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

To refuse the symbol is to suffer dismemberment because the single meaning is dead, has forced out the sacred in sacrificing the “other” to its rational completeness. Hence non-symbolic language rends being and has no means of re-membering. Fortunately, the daimons of unending, here unending *interpretation*, are also the *zoe* of re-membering. Instead of a monotheistic single meaning “word” versus daimons becoming demons (because tearing down meaning), symbols are parts as parts, of a multiple, rejuvenating embodied divine.

In *The Red Book*, re-membering via symbols offers “supreme meaning,” a notion usefully unpacked by Nicolescu.<sup>xxxiv</sup> He proposes three levels of meaning: the first is horizontal meaning looking at one level of reality, what most disciplines do. Here, psychology tries to formulate a

discrete “psyche” and literary studies, the object-reality that is the text. A second level of meaning brings the symbol into being as the included middle between disciplines because it deals vertically with different levels of reality.

Ultimately, Nicolescu offers “meaning of meaning”:

... [I]nterconnections involving all of Reality: the Subject, the Object and the Hidden Third.<sup>xxxv</sup>

If *The Red Book* indicates that the “supreme meaning,” is the godhead, then it brings us back also to Dionysian transdisciplinarity in the role of the sacred. Here the sacred is indigenous to transdisciplinarity because it is the marker of the irreducibly real.<sup>xxxvi</sup> We return to the core of the word “sacred” in sacrifice. Quantum physics, transdisciplinarity and *The Red Book* teach that delusions of certainty, single meanings and disciplinary hierarchy must be sacrificed lest they result in utter destruction. The story of Pentheus is instructive. He refused to worship Dionysus and was torn apart by the feminine form of the despised god in his maenads. The sacred is irreducible, real, and tasted in the symbol language that is re-membering Dionysus.

One form of the sacred in *The Red Book* is the feminine soul in Salome, as well as numerous female characters and the serpent. Nicolescu suggested that the ancient alchemical image of the tail eating-fertilizing serpent or *ouroboros* is a vision conveyed by the quantum domain that fosters transdisciplinarity.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The universe appears to create itself and be self-organizing, just as the *ouroboros* entails. *The Red Book*’s serpent reminds “I” of the dreadful plight of those like Pentheus “who did not live [their] animal.”<sup>xxxviii</sup>

One who does live his animal in *The Red Book* and fares badly when encountering disembodied modernity is Izdubar. This man-god is horrified to hear of objectified science from “I”. Just a

whiff of mainstream science with its predilection for abolishing the sacred and symbols is enough to send him into terminal decline. And yet “I” finds a solution in relocating Izdubar to his imagination. Instead of the well-worn argument that religion is fantasy dealing a death blow to religion, it actually keeps Izdubar alive until he can be reborn, like a serpent, from an egg.

Clearly Izdubar, whom we are told is another name for Gilgamesh, heralds the birth of Jung’s archetypal theory. Divine consciousness is innate to the human psyche in archetypes and will renew being because such fantasy of the sacred is, as Nicolescu would put it, indicative of the irreducibly real. In *The Red Book*, “I” instructs Izdubar on two kinds of truth.

“Out truth is that which comes to us from the knowledge of outer things. The truth of your priests is that which comes to you from inner things.”<sup>xxxix</sup>

Not only is this an overt exposition of transdisciplinarity’s levels of reality, it also enacts what Nicolescu calls the dialogue of science and Tradition.<sup>xi</sup> Whereas mainstream science developed out of Christian dualism that posited God as entirely non-material, so producing a model of truth that could be abstracted from matter and ultimately offered knowledge as subject versus object, “Tradition” is Nicolescu’s term for knowledge that is tacit, embodied, intuitive, shamanistic, handed down for centuries, possessing qualities that are both culturally specific and universal and amounting to the spiritual evolution of humankind.<sup>xii</sup>

“Tradition”’s core motif of “*unity in diversity* and of *diversity through unity* – applies to Tradition itself,” and as Nicolescu shows, applies to the vision of the cosmos unfolding in quantum research.<sup>xlii</sup> While the modern science that works through objectivity and complete rationality may claim to have abolished Tradition as viable knowing, to have eliminated the



sacred, in fact that rejected serpent is really an ouroboros returning as science discovers the quantum domain.

On the one hand, modern objective science grew out of a religion in Christian dualism. Now religion in the form of a Dionysian vision of a dispersed, yet irreducible sacred returns as science discovers levels of reality that cannot be condensed into one, or into oneness. “Tradition” actually speaks coherently and urgently to objective science it suggests transdisciplinarity, because its forms of knowing in intuition, imagination, and embodiment are necessary to appreciate the multiple levels of reality. Izdubar is real, just not an object. Fantasy is real, just not an object that can be treated objectively.

Izdubar is a mythic being from six thousand years ago. Fascinatingly, tablets containing his stories were discovered by the West rather close in time to the discovery of quantum particles. “He” returns in *The Red Book* to remind as re-minding, to rejuvenate as a Dionysian symbol of a new consciousness. “I” learns that he can save his dying god; he can save this incarnation of Tradition for modernity because he is real, just not on the level of reality that existing mainstream science addresses. Just as transdisciplinarity has the project of uniting science and Tradition as a unity in diversity and a diversity in unity, so too does *The Red Book* provide a process of connecting to ancient wisdom that is not dead so long as we can offer a model of reality that gives him a home.

The story of Izdubar and “I” is one of transformation, picaresque adventures and the forming of a relationship. “I” is learning about the multiplicity of levels of reality. He is similarly implicated in most of the scenes in which he finds himself. Potential lover of the maiden in the forest, sole survivor of the lowly man who enjoys cinema and dies alone, he is conveyed, perhaps none too

soon, to the madhouse. There a small fat professor pronounces “I” mad and he has a conversation with an inmate who claims to be Nietzsche and Christ.<sup>xliii</sup>

“I” decides that he must accept what is “low,” the depths in himself, and that acceptance may itself be a seed from which grows a tree to conjoin above and below.<sup>xliiv</sup> There seems to be an urgency to extend being beyond one rational level. In a sense, the whole of *The Red Book* is an exposition of the suffering engendered by trying to live on one level of reality when it is, in fact, multiple, as transdisciplinarity shows.

This is not to make a mistake by Jung’s conjuring of moral depths for Nicolescu’s multiple levels of being. It is not an error to see these as different perspectives for the same topic of multiple levels of being. Rather, *The Red Book* is exploring more fully than transdisciplinarity yet has achieved, the Dionysian ethical conflicts of a dispersed, differentiated reality. Put another way, where *The Red Book* focuses on the individual undergoing a dismembering and re-membering Dionysian rite, Nicolescu sees the social implications of transdisciplinarity as requiring a new global culture that is transreligious and transrational.<sup>xliv</sup> How that culture might *feel*, what the transition to it might entail on a psychological level, is the drama of *The Red Book*.

To a person and a society wedded to one rational reality and building psychological being in a sense of subject/object, the dismembering of such a severing from the “other” indeed could feel like hell. It *is* hell as the underworld, the denied realm of Izdubar, the madhouse, the world also of sentimental novels, those whose poverty denies them the reason that sees through cinematic illusion, wily Salome, enigmatic Elijah, the fat cook et al. “I” discovers that while hell hurts, it *is* survivable. That which is banished from polite rational European society of twentieth century

rational science is hellish because so firmly repressed, socially, morally, psychologically and by an epistemology lacking connection that condemns it to unbearable loneliness.

No wonder so many of the inhabitants of *The Red Book's* underworld reach out to “I” for meaningful connection that would transform hell for them – shut in this reality alone – to one of connectivity to other realities, truths, ways of being. What is needed, of course, are symbols: images that make room for the other. The Jungian symbol does not have to be a word image, but words make highly communicable symbols. They pull up the underworld.

With words you pull up the underworld... In words the emptiness and the fullness flow together.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Only symbols and not mathematical language, says Nicolescu, can express the simplicity of the interaction of all levels of reality.<sup>xlvii</sup> This bestows an ethical imperative of radical connection in human affairs. “Togetherness” is what reality itself demands of us because it is how the universe is.<sup>xlviii</sup> *The Red Book* teaches this ethics by showing that all the permutations of humanity, fantasy, nature and the gods have a role in the making of the being of “I.” A Dionysian rending of illusions of a single rational reality is met with a radical re-membering of transdisciplinarity’s multiple levels.

Transdisciplinarity means “beyond” disciplines not in the sense of dismissing them but removing their intrinsic claims to a single knowable reality and epistemology. Transrational and transreligious are terms doing the same job for their domains that also have the habit of claiming single, supreme validity. Just as religions represent diversity in their unity (common themes) and unity in their diversity (indigenous variety), so too do various post-rational psychologies,

liberally supplied in *The Red Book*. Notably emphasizing the ethical dimension of post-rationality is the feminine.

Salome and Elijah occur as a pair, related. Moreover Salome's repeated erotic designs on "I" cement what Jung was later to conceptualize as Eros knowing as rightful, even *necessary* companion to more rational and spiritually inclined Logos. It is also worth remembering (and remembering) the fat cook from "the realm of the mothers," whose simple religious faith impresses "I."<sup>xlix</sup> Eros knowing and the feminine are not confined to the sexual in *The Red Book*. It is a major mode of Dionysian re-remembering via the symbol.

*The Red Book* is not a deliberate or planned work of Dionysus or of transdisciplinarity. Such is its unique potency in its spontaneity. It is a work of the symbol, of discovering what Nicolescu calls the precision and permanent validity of the symbol so long as it remains open to what Jung would call the numinous, and transdisciplinarity, the sacred or hidden third. The old god of singleness as singleness is dead, and his death is loud in the lamentations of the dead in *The Red Book*.

The dead lament because they did not live their animal as *The Red Book* so eloquently reveals.<sup>1</sup> Dionysus is living your animal, dismembering and remembering in order to find *zoe*, an embodied consciousness rejuvenated by symbols into tasting instinctual life. Remembering parts as parts, disciplines as addressing parts of a reality with multiple levels, *The Red Book* is a literary and psychological revelation for the twentyfirst century.

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<sup>i</sup> Jung, C. G. *The Red Book: Liber Novus*, ed. Sonu Shamdasani, translated. Mark Kyburz, John Peck, and Sonu Shamdasani, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2009). Page numbers refer to the “Reader’s Edition” 2009.

<sup>ii</sup> Hillman, J. (1972) ‘Dionysus in Jung’s Writings,’ *Spring: A Journal of Archetype and Culture*, 1972, in *Mythic Figures: Uniform Edition of the Writings of James Hillman, volume 6.1* (Putnam, Connecticut: Spring Publications Inc., 2007), pp. 15-30.

<sup>iii</sup> Nicolescu, B. *From Modernity to Cosmodernity: Science, Culture, and Spirituality* (New York: SUNY, 2014).

<sup>iv</sup> Spano, M. V. (2010) *Modern(-ist) Man in Search of a Soul: Jung’s Red Book as Modernist Visionary Literature,*” *cgjungpage*: [http://www.cgjungpage.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=934&Itemid=1](http://www.cgjungpage.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=934&Itemid=1), accessed 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

<sup>v</sup> Beebe, J. (2010) “*The Red Book* as a Work of Conscience; Notes from a seminar given for the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Jungian Conference, C.G. Jung Club of Orange County, April 10<sup>th</sup> 2010,” *Quadrant*, XXXX:2, Summer 2010, pp. 41-58.

<sup>vi</sup> Jung, C. G. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Recorded and Edited by Aniela Jaffe, (London: Fontana, 1963).

<sup>vii</sup> *Memories, Dreams Reflections*, p. 213.

<sup>viii</sup> Rowland, S. *Jung as a Writer* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>ix</sup> See Eagleton, T. *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Great Britain: Blackwell, 1983).

<sup>x</sup> *The Red Book*, p. 128.

<sup>xi</sup> Wimsatt, W. K. and M. C. Beardsley, *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry*, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1954), p. 21.

<sup>xii</sup> Rowland, S. *Remembering Dionysus* (New York and London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 89-109.

<sup>xiii</sup> Hillman, J. “Dionysus in Jung’s Writings,” p. 26.

<sup>xiv</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>xv</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>xvi</sup> For Jung’s extensive treatment of the symbol see, Jung, C. G. *Dictionary of Analytical Psychology*, (London and New York: Ark paperbacks, 1987), pp. 144-51.

<sup>xvii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>xviii</sup> Jung, C. G. *The Spirit in Man, Art and Literature* (London: Routledge, 1966).

<sup>xix</sup> Jung 1966, p. 78.

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- <sup>xx</sup> Jung, 1987, p. 146.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Nicolescu, 2014.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Nicolescu, 2005, p. 6.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Nicolescu, 2014, pp. 208-9.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Ibid., p. 209.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Ibid., pp. 118-9.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Ibid., p. 31.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Jung, 2009, *The Red Book*, p. 128.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Ibid., p. 130.
- <sup>xxix</sup> Ibid., p. 153.
- <sup>xxx</sup> Ibid., p. 187.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Nicolescu 2014, p. 34.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Ibid., p. 31 italics in original.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Jung, 2009, p. 250.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Nicolescu, 2014, p. 201.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Ibid., p. 106.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Ibid., pp. 109-10.
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Jung, 2009, p. 341.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Ibid., p. 280.
- <sup>xl</sup> Nicolescu, 2014, pp. 21-4.
- <sup>xli</sup> Ibid., pp. 19-24.
- <sup>xlii</sup> Ibid., p. 20.
- <sup>xliii</sup> Jung, 2009, p. 349.
- <sup>xliv</sup> Ibid., p. 356.
- <sup>xlv</sup> Nicolescu, 2014, pp. 213-15.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> Jung, 2009, pp. 351-2.

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<sup>xlvii</sup> Nicolescu 2014, p. 211.

<sup>xlviii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>xlix</sup> Jung, 2009, p. 363.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 341.

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