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Psychology And Alchemy (Collected Works Of C.G. Jung Vol.12)



Synopsis

A study of the analogies between alchemy, Christian dogma, and psychological symbolism. Revised translation, with new bibliography and index.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jung explored alchemy as if it were a mystery novel--relishing every clue, interpreting (nominally) each symbol as it arose. His conclusion that it paralleled his psychological observations & model satisfied his incredible yearning to know that he wasn't crazy or a voice crying in the wilderness--yeah, verily, the alchemists pursued the same goal though in a slightly different way--vindicating Jung's quest for individuation=personal salvation. Thus, Jung's love for alchemy. It's unfortunate that even so-called scientists have ego's so wounded that they disavow their roots: chemists tend to downplay alchemy as astronomers downplay astrology--denigrating their roots. This shows an appalling lack of courage--something Jung had no lack of. Just think of what courage it must have taken for Jung to write about alchemy as having psychological truth embedded in its very heart. Yet he wrote 2 books worth on it CW12 & CW13. I'm in awe of his courage, let alone of his genius. Try reading some alchemy works yourself--if you think Jung is hard to read, think twice. Alchemical works are far more difficult. It took Jung's supreme effort to decipher them. So, if this work seems obtuse to you (& it is), consider how obtuse it was to Jung. Some of the best (& most profound) quotes in this work (from the hardback version) are:p. 3 Even the most unqualified layman thinks he knows all about psychology as the psyche were something that enjoyed the most

universal understanding. But anyone who really knows the human psyche will agree with me when I say that it is one of the darkest & most mysterious regions of our experience.p. 117 paragraph 152. Only a fool is interested in other people's guilt, since he cannot alter it. The wise man learns only from his own guilt.

In his "Prefatory Note to the English Edition," Jung wrote, "In this present study of alchemy I have taken a particular example of symbol-formation, extending in all over some seventeen centuries, and have subjected it to intensive examination, linking it at the same time with an actual series of dreams recorded by a modern European not under my direct supervision and having no knowledge of what the symbols appearing in the dreams might mean. It is by such intensive comparisons as this ... that the hypothesis of the collective unconscious ... may be scientifically established."Here are some representative quotations from the book:"The Western attitude, with its emphasis on the object, tends to fix the ideal---Christ---in its outward aspect and thus to rob it of its mysterious relation to the inner man. It is this prejudice ... which impels the Protestant interpreters of the Bible to interpret ... the Kingdom of God) as 'among you' instead of 'within you.'" (Pg. 8)"Accordingly when I say as a psychologist that God is an archetype, I mean by that the 'type' in the psyche... Nothing positive or negative has thereby been asserted about the possible existence of God, any more than the archetype of the 'hero' posits the actual existence of a hero." (Pg. 8)"Has it not yet been observed that all religious statements contain logical contradictions and assertions that are impossible in principle, that this is in fact the very essence of religious assertion?" (Pg. 15)"We do not yet possess a general theory of dreams that would enable us to use a deductive method with impunity, any more than we possess a general theory of consciousness from which we can draw deductive conclusions." (Pg.

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