

Carl Jung and Arnold Toynbee: The Social Meaning of Inner Work

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Questions for Discussion

I hope these questions generate discussion about how the book *Carl Jung and Arnold Toynbee* manifests in your personal life and in the society around us. Most valuable would be these questions prompting an evaluation of what transpires in the inside of us and the outside of our time. There can be no doubt that we are living through a dangerous and significant era. Whether this book inspires thoughts and feelings within yourself—or within a small Jungian group you may be part of—it would be in the spirit of Toynbee for “strenuous intellectual communion and intimate personal intercourse” to follow.

Preface

1. Why did Jung come to the question of the relation of images to the material world only at the end of his life?
2. How is it that inner dream images *can* appear in the outer world? Why is this important?
3. Can you give an example of synchronicity and explain how an image has appeared in matter in your experience? How does the synchronicity develop the inner image?
4. Can you give an example of a physical symptom of an illness having a symbolic significance?
5. How can Eros be symbolic? This forms a cornerstone of the emotional, interpersonal aspect of analytic work. What is that? How has the body become symbolic?
6. Can you anticipate? What will the relation between inner images and historical events be? Why should we care?
7. Why is the shape that receives the analysand’s flower in front of the *altar*?
8. What do you know about Jung’s book *Aion*? Why would we consider it in this book about history?
9. Why is this book concerned with Arnold J. Toynbee?

1. Toynbee's Life and Times

1. How would Toynbee's parents have shaped his outlook on life?
2. Why do you think Toynbee described his London vision in the third person?
3. Why does Toynbee's biographer call his writing of *A Study of History* "his assignment from destiny"? What is your assignment from destiny?
4. What is the feminine mind? Why is it so important for Jungian psychology? And for Toynbee? What can the feminine mind "do" that the masculine mind cannot?
5. How is Toynbee's writing of *A Study of History* one of his responses to World War I?
6. Why is Toynbee's "broad sweep" view of history so important?
7. What does Toynbee's biographer mean that Toynbee's work "expanded the range of historical consciousness beyond *anything* conceived by historians before him"? How did Toynbee's work expand the range of historical consciousness? Why is this important? This is, in general, one of the most important overall points of view to remember from Toynbee's work. Explain.

2. Jung's Life and Times

1. Why was the relationship with Freud crucial to Jung? Why did they *have to* go their separate ways?
2. How is it possible Jung's visions could anticipate World War I? What concept of his explains this link?
3. Explain: "I was to investigate the link between the two levels of experience."
4. What might "the spirit of the times" and the "spirit of the depths" look like today? Is there as great a gap between the two as there was in Jung's day?
5. Is "Siegfried" still alive today? In collective consciousness? In your personal life? How?
6. How might each of us be going through a "setting" and "rising" of the sun, metaphorically speaking?
7. Can you locate the "place" where "divinity enters into" your own life?
8. Is there a work that fate has placed on your shoulders?

3. Toynbee and the Individual

1. What challenges are we facing today as a society? As individuals? What have the responses been on a social and individual level?
2. What form does your creativity take?
3. Can you see in your *for intérieur* the issue that you are faced with? What is its relation to the society in which we live?
4. How has Jung added to Toynbee's understanding of the *for intérieur*?
4. Have you had to withdraw at any point in your life?
5. Were you able to return?
6. How has this changed your life?
7. Do you see your psychological work as an ordeal which forms the foundation of your contribution to society? Explain.
8. Are there historical patterns that you have already been aware of? Have they had an impact on you? How?
9. What does Toynbee, in his historical analysis, offer Jungian psychology?

4. Jung and the Individual

1. What are *your* main inner figures? Do any of them resemble Elijah or Salome?
2. Why could Jung only meet Elijah and Salome after he killed Siegfried?
3. How do you feel about the statement: "And what wouldn't you give for a single look into the infinite unfolding of what is to come? Are these not worth a sin for you?" What was Jung's "sin"? How do you assess that? What did it allow him to do (if, in your opinion, anything)? Have you ever been in such a position?
4. Why did Jung's being pressed by the snake heal Salome's sight? What did the unseeing and the seeing Salome look like in Jung's life?
5. If you have the hardback edition of *The Red Book*, look at the image of Salome (reverse side of page v, column 2) and notice, very faintly, the butterfly over her head. What does that symbolize? How is that sharply ironic?

6. How can we understand that Jung's face was turned into the countenance of Aion through the coils of the snake? What did that mean for him? What does that mean for us?
7. What does the presence of Elijah signify?

5. The Cross and the Crescent

1. Can you give examples and or images of the cold-blooded aspect of the Self in your own life? How did you respond?
2. Can you think of an example where your dream image appeared in the life of someone else (like in the example of the dreamer, another person drew a picture of the images of the dream without even knowing the dreamer)? What did that mean to you? How did you respond?
3. Have you experienced dream symbols that expressed outer events that are now appearing in societal ordeals, or perhaps even ones that you feel might appear in such ordeals in the future? How did you respond?

6. Toynbee on History

1. Why did both Toynbee and Jung feel mythological thinking is important?
2. Why do you think both Toynbee and Jung *both* took Goethe's *Faust* and the Book of Job seriously?
3. Jung's critique of Toynbee's understanding of *Faust* and the Book of Job has to do with the *privatio boni*. Are you familiar with it? Why does Jung make so much of the *privatio boni*? How does that apply to Jung's critique of Toynbee at this point?
4. If you've been on an analytic journey, how has life changed as a result of the "withdrawal" and the "return"?
5. What is the sense and nonsense of medicating psychological suffering? Can you think of examples of both in the people around you?
6. Can you recall an example of where your voice was silenced? How did you respond, outwardly and inwardly?
7. Do you agree with Toynbee's analysis of social schism? If so, to which part of the social schism do you belong?

8. Can you observe any of the pairs of schism in the soul within yourself or within the people around you?
9. Do you feel (American) society is in a time of troubles? Why or why not? Give examples to support your position.
10. Should we think of our lives in terms of protecting society or of protecting individuals, i.e., of being a protector/savior *of* society or a protector/savior *from* society? Or, put differently: how important do you feel Toynbee's discussion of transfiguration is to the state of (American) society today?
11. What in Toynbee's point of view does Jung add to the savior *from* society?
12. What has Toynbee added to Jungian psychology in this chapter?

7. Jung on History

1. Why is the book called *Aion*? How does this relate to Jung's vision as described in *The Red Book*? What did that vision mean for Jung personally and for us, now, today?
2. Where do we see evidence of the two phases of Western history, as Jung described them, in daily life?
3. How do we interiorize the two phases of history? Why should we bother?
4. Why does Jung talk about extraction? In what other genre of Jung's work is extraction discussed at length?
5. Why is the distinction between a "Pisces" consciousness and an "Aquarian" one so important?
6. Are you contained or a container?
7. How are "recovering Catholics" forced to "contain" the Mass and how does that look in their daily life?
8. What does Jung add to Toynbee's discussion of the Church?
9. What does the dream Edinger cites tell us?
10. What does Max Zeller's dream tell us?

8. *Aion* Dreams: the Second Fish

1. What is the general meaning of the “fish out of water” theme expressed in the dreams in this chapter?
2. What does it mean to put the fish back in water, albeit in a different container?
3. Have you had any fish dreams, of fish being in a container or out of a container—resembling the dreams presented?
4. What might such a dream be telling you?
5. Does the discussion between Toynbee and Jung help you elucidate the meaning of your dream?

http://www.jgsparks.net/books/Jung_Toynebee_guide.pdf

<http://www.innercitybooks.net/book.php?id=145>

<http://innercitybooks.blogspot.com/2018/01/review-carl-jung-and-arnold-toynbee.html>

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