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Confessions of an Extravert

THAYER A. GREENE

IN MY FOURTEEN years of attending Jungian gatherings I cannot remember ever hearing a lecture on extraversion. I cannot even remember reading about one. Perhaps it is my own predominant extraversion that gives me the courage, or the foolishness, to venture the subject—but it also gives me the (perhaps) illuminating perspective of a minority group member in the predominantly introverted Jungian professional community. Nothing I have to say should be taken as a failure to appreciate Jung's compensatory response to the one-sidedness of Western extraverted materialism. I endorse the introverted emphasis as a necessary compensation, especially for someone such as myself. What I have to present might rather be considered a compensation for a compensation; for if the extravert needs to develop a more differentiated introversion as the gateway to individuation, must it not be equally true that an introvert's compensatory development should lead him toward a more differentiated extraversion?

I have said it is rare to see the word extraversion in the title of a Jungian talk; I will not argue that it is rare to find the word archetype—to the rest of the world we may seem never to talk of anything else. But it does seem novel to associate the concepts of extraversion and archetype: we usually assume that contact with the archetypal powers is achieved through the inner world of dream and fantasy, image and imagination. Jungians are by no means of one voice in this regard, but it is my distinct impression that the world of outer persons, objects, and events we consider a less worthy path to the place of the gods than the royal road that leads inward.

To suggest that there could be a collective Jungian shadow may be a questionable generalization, yet I have listened to so many Jungian lectures that energetically explore other institutions' shadow problems, I cannot imagine we would deny ours, in theory at least, a shadow problem of its own. I remember a particularly vivid encounter in a class at the Zurich Institute during which I was upholding the value of some collective political strategies.

• THAYER A. GREENE became a Jungian analyst after nine years as a Congregational minister in Amherst, Mass. He is a board member and on the faculty of the C. G. Jung Training Center, New York.

I was powerfully confronted by the rest of the class members because I was not, in their eyes, giving adequate value to an individual standpoint; I came away bruised by the collective power of Jungian 'individuals,' and I pondered whether we might not have a special problem in the area of group action and group consciousness just because we tend to grant it little positive value.

Jung makes it plain that, while every person has both attitudes inherently available, one is predominant and related to ego consciousness, the other is unconscious and therefore less differentiated, more primitive, more potential than actualized. In Jung's dynamic understanding of psychic process, introversion and extraversion are opposite directions of energy flow. What is given energy is given value, so for the introvert the subject receives autonomous value, while the extravert

has a positive relation to the object. He affirms its importance to such an extent that his subjective attitude is constantly related to and oriented by the object. The object can never have enough value for him, so its importance must always be increased. [CW 6, par. 557]

The danger of such an attitude, as Jung points out, is that the extravert 'gets sucked into objects and completely loses himself in them.' [par. 565] But Jungians tend to be well aware of the sins and dangers of a one-sided extraversion; I shall not dwell on that side of the polarity. Of introversion's problems, Jung writes that "although the introverted consciousness is naturally aware of external conditions, it selects subjective determinants as the decisive ones." [par. 621] The introvert's natural suspicion of the relativity of all objective phenomena does not include a similar appraisal of his own subjectivity. Jung writes:

Just as the object and objective data do not remain permanently the same, being perishable and subject to chance, so too the subjective factor is subject to variations and individual hazards. For this reason its value is also merely relative. That is to say, the excessive development of the introverted standpoint does not lead to a better and sounder use of the subjective factor, but rather to an artificial subjectivizing of issues which can hardly escape the reproach "merely subjective." This is then counterbalanced by a desubjectivization which takes the form of an exaggerated extraverted attitude. [par. 622]

And he makes a suggestive comparison of the two attitudes:

The peculiar nature of the extravert constantly urges him to expend and propagate himself in every way, while the tendency of the introvert is to defend himself versus all demands from the outside, to conserve his energy by withdrawing it from objects; therefore, by consolidating his own position, the one achieves his end by multiplicity of relationships, the other by monopoly. [par. 559]

The contrast between multiplicity and monopoly, between variety and singularity, between polytheism and monotheism, if you will, is a theme to which I shall return in my discussion of the persona.

We have considerable evidence that Jungian therapists and theorists are not spread equally across the introversion-extraversion continuum. Katherine Bradley's study of twenty-eight California analysts reveals seventy-five percent to be introverted intuitives, in contrast with fifteen percent of the general population in that category; and ten percent more of those analysts tested, while not intuitives, were also introverted in attitude. The *Journal of Analytical Psychology* survey [Vol. 17, No. 2] of all the Jungians in the world (378 at the time) reveals similar figures: of the 173 who responded, eighty-five percent were introverted and fifteen percent extraverted; and intuition was claimed as the primary function by more analysts than all the other three functions together. Recently at the C. G. Jung Training Center in New York I asked all the trainees to take both the Gray-Wheelwright and the Myers-Briggs tests. We discovered eighteen introverts and four extraverts—a proportion of eighty-two percent to eighteen percent.

The similarity of these figures hardly comes as a surprise, but it does underline the one-sidedness of consciousness, perception, and experience among Jungian therapists and those who write and interpret Jungian thought. Our collective psyche seems faithfully to reflect the master himself, who, by his own description, was introverted and powerfully intuitive.

The problem comes when in theory we claim to have an understanding of the psyche capable of universality and completeness, while in practice we collectively keep stumbling over our inferior attitude and functions. We may have a shadow problem of which we are only dimly aware, but which the world may see all too clearly. Our collective inferiority, if such surveys and tests are to be trusted, lies in extraverted sensation. Joseph Wheelwright, in a paper delivered at the San Francisco Jung Institute, says that, "among Jungians with their tremendously high incidence of intuitives, sensation types are undervalued." He observes that Freudians predominantly are extraverted sensation types whose collective inferior attitude and function would be introverted intuition. One cannot speak literally of a collective psyche as one might of an individual, yet such speculation may give some perspective on the antagonisms which have so frequently isolated the two schools. We know what a fertile seedbed were Jung's own ponderings on the differences between Freud, Adler, and himself.

I am frequently struck by the introvert's difficulty in appreciating the inherent value that is in the object world. He finds it hard to conceive, much less believe, that something central, numinous, and transformative can be experienced objectively. That an object can be the occasion for a subjective transformation is, of course, no problem; but for the value to be experienced and allowed to remain 'out there' can usually happen only when some aspect of the Self is activated. It is by its very nature a religious experience, a conversion of awareness and hence of value.

The dream of an extremely introverted woman illustrates this clearly:

I am on a tourist bus with a young boy of seven or eight next to me. We pull into an amusement park kind of place. The first thing on our left is the worship of the blessed Christ child. Inside the fenced area is a small child, supposedly the holy child, and all the tourists are hugging him rapturously. The boy next to me, being a devout Catholic, points this event out to me with joy. I sit, feeling a mixture of astonishment and disgust. I look beyond this fenced area at all the grubby scenery.

This woman looked upon tourists and amusement parks as grubby, disgusting, and alien; encountering the deep values of the Self in such a setting was truly an astonishment. Yet it brought joy to the young animus, who had the eyes to see it and point it out.

The dream of a very introverted and intuitive man makes a similar point:

It was night. I was walking along a street and came by a small newsstand. The newsstand owner was not well, so a bright youth was looking after the stand. I asked the boy who he was. He replied, "I am Rama Krishna." I bowed in reverence. He said, "You don't have to be embarrassed by bowing down to me." I thought to myself how strange it was for God to take the form of a newsboy.

The dreamer was a clergyman who had dabbled in Jung and Eastern religion. He would pursue anything of an abstract spiritual or psychological nature but had almost no energy available for practical life. Little wonder a sacred boy selling today's news bewildered him!

It is not without interest for the practical Anglo-Saxon that the word *reality* is derived from the Latin *res, thing*; whereas, with the more introverted German mind, the word *wirklichkeit* derives from *wirken, to affect*. What affects the mind, whether coming from within or without, is therefore the basis of reality for German psychology, not just the thing as such. Doesn't this contrast underline the bipolar nature of any archetype? Reality is experienced as duality: for every nominalist there is a realist, and vice versa; God's right hand is not complete without his left, nor male without female, yang without yin, senex without puer, and so on. There may be some opposites to which we, as Jungians, appear to have a one-sided response—perhaps those of inside and outside, subject and object, individual and group.

Jung's appreciation of the *I Ching* demonstrates that he saw the objective dimension of the archetype as well as the subjective. The *Book of Changes* is the concretized validation of his theory of synchronicity. Archetypal energy can be experienced as internal imagery and effect, but also as an external constellation of event, person, and object. I am reminded of the woman who came to Jung for help with a terrible fear that she was going to be attacked by birds. Jung worked with her for a year, helped her with a number of her personal problems, but was never able to remove her terror of imminent attack. Then one sunny day he invited her to stroll with him in the garden behind his house, and as they were standing and talking there the woman was suddenly, savagely attacked by several birds.

It should be mentioned that ritual, drama, and worship are founded on the assumption that archetypal energy is present and active in the objective event. The question is whether this energy is only attached by projection or whether it is inherent to the object or circumstance. We are all aware that much unconscious projection into the object world needs to be withdrawn, made conscious, for the sake of balance and growth; but can we reverse John Locke entirely and make the objective world exclusively a *tabula rasa* upon which we inscribe the unconscious, subjective meanings of an introverted psychology? When the extravert is rightly cautioned against projecting his unconscious subjectivity upon the object world and thereby losing contact with the numinous inward path to his own center, may he not in turn caution the introvert against introjecting his unconscious objectivity upon the subject? For thereby the introvert can miss the numinous *outward* path to his own center.

We come now to what I consider the key issue. For the majority of Jungians appreciation of extraversion hangs upon a thorough reconsideration and reevaluation of the persona.

Jung's material on the persona seems to carry a double message: he contends that the persona and the anima/animus have essentially equivalent functions relative to the ego, that they are both functional complexes of adaptation whose directions are different but whose value is similar—at least one would *expect* they might have equivalent value. But Jung sometimes writes of the persona in depreciatory, reductionistic terms. Faye Pye writes in *Harvest* (1965) that Jung's "evaluation of the persona seems to be almost wholly depreciatory, and this view has remained as the generally accepted one in analytical psychology." In many of his statements Jung's attitude strikes the extraverted reader as rigid, collective, unadapted—in fact, a caricature of differentiated relatedness to the object world. I am sure that Jung himself was more related than some of the writing he has left us, and I wonder to what extent his Swiss cultural origins and historical period have affected his treatment of the persona. Here are examples from *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*:

Fundamentally, the persona is nothing real . . . a compromise between individual and society as what a man should appear to be . . . in relation to the individuality of the person concerned, only a secondary reality, a product of compromise . . . a semblance, a two-dimensional reality. [CW7, par. 246]

As its name shows, it is only a mask for the collective psyche, a mask that *feigns individuality* and tries to make others believe that one is individual, whereas one is simply playing a part in which the collective psyche speaks. [par. 245]

This attitude toward the persona appears in the dream of a young introverted woman who is preoccupied with her personal appearance and who lacks self-esteem. She dreamt:

I am sitting on the floor of the bedroom of an apartment fifteen stories above Manhattan. Suddenly the outermost layer of my skin hardens into a clear plastic mask with sharp aquatic features of an extremely good-looking woman and drops away from my face. I exclaim, "I'm not me!" and start to cry. I feel as if I now have a vacant stare where there should be a face. There is a white screen in the darkened room. I now notice that projected on it is the face of a man in his fifties. His skin is drawn tightly over his cheekbones; he has a white, bristling crewcut, fierce eyes, and two fangs which protrude over his lower lip. His aspect is fierce and frightening. Although it is only two-dimensional, not three, this face projected upon the screen appears alive. I realize with shock and dismay that this projected face is my true face, which until now has been concealed by my exterior, attractive mask.

In this example the persona does seem to conceal rather than reveal, to disguise the individual psyche rather than relate it to the larger community. The introvert who has inferior extraverted development often experiences a terrible split between society's apparent expectations and his or her inner truth or darkness. But do we not make a serious error in taking the introvert's experience of the persona as determinative of its theoretical value? Is it not just that element of the introvert's psychology that is most liable to be distorted?

A London analyst, David Holt, in his excellent diploma thesis for the Zurich Institute, *Persona and Actor*, evaluates Jung's view of the persona in these words:

More stress is placed on persona as a rigid and deceitful mask, identification with which inhibits the process of individuation, than as a function of relationship through which the individual can experience the differentiating process of education and social life.

For a truer understanding of the persona we might give the word itself some attention. It is a Latin word whose components are *per* and *sonare*, meaning *to sound through*. It is of course associated with the masks of the ancient Greek theater, as well as with the Roman version of the Trinity, *tres personae*, Greek theater, and also with our English words *person*, *personal*, *personality*, *una substantia*, and also with the Greek word for the actor's mask was *prosopon*. According to David Holt, the Greek word to mean *face* in the sense of *features*. In In Homer, it was used in the plural to mean *face* in the sense of *features*. In the fifth to fourth century B.C. it came to describe the actor's mask as the representative of the archetypal power conveyed by the actor. Holt comments, "There is no suggestion here of the mask as in any sense a pretense or a deception." The actor's mask was specifically designed to amplify the actor's character. The Greek amphitheater was so large that people in the back rows could not clearly discern the expressions of a normal human face on the stage, nor hear the actors' normal speaking voices; so the mask emphasized the character's features, while its hidden megaphone amplified the actor's voice. The mask was a practical invention, in part at least; its purpose was to reveal, not to conceal.

Another significant Greek word is *hypokrites*, meaning *he who answers, he who interprets*: it came to be the word for *actor*. And from it of course

we receive the English word *hypoecrite*, with its modern sense of conscious and deliberate deception. The decisive change in meaning apparently came with the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures in the Septuagint, where the word is used to mean concern with outward show at the expense of inner reality.

Jung's view of the persona seems to owe more to Judeo-Christian culture than to the Greek. David Holt writes:

Jung's use of the word *persona* is related to only one, and a very limited, aspect of acting. Most of his analogies are taken from the professions, not the stage. In the professions the actor in us all is required always to play the same role. Thus the essence of the actor, which is his ability to change roles, is denied. The professional man with his role has the same relation to the true actor as the dissociated personality has to the healthy ego.

When you think how much attention, in print and in practice, Jungians have given to the differentiation of the ego and anima/animus, it is curious how little importance they attach to the persona as an agent of education. In the halls of Zurich (and elsewhere) to move from Eve to Helen to Mary to Sophia in anima development is to be blessed and anointed with archetypal approval. But has anyone dared to suggest that the persona may need to pass through some similar process? May not the persona be just as significant an agent of individuation?

Negatively, the mask may imprison. But creatively it offers liberation and growth. In *Two Essays* Jung observes:

Masks, as we know, are actually used among primitives in totem ceremonies—for instance, as a means of enhancing or changing the personality. In this way the outstanding personality is apparently removed from the sphere of the collective psyche, and to the degree that he succeeds in identifying himself with his persona, he actually is removed. [par. 2371]

This suggests that the experience of a new persona can evoke a new stage in identity. Faye Pye observes that the persona appears developmentally prior to the ego, and that all major transitions, in the first half of life at least, involve a persona transformation followed by a subsequent ego adaptation. The transition from home to school to college to job to marriage is experienced first as a new role, only later assimilated as a part of one's ego identity. Erik Erikson seems to make this point in his discussion of the adolescent stage of ego development. And David Holt argues similarly from a different perspective:

To recognize the mask as mask is wisdom, but to deny the need for the mask is to deny the ritual basis of society, to kill that indefinable moment of trust in which the name and the thing are married, to lose the ability to define one's own ego.

That persona differentiation does lead to ego differentiation and to relatedness, extremely introverted people often have difficulty accepting: they project upon a social or interpersonal encounter their own rigid, undeveloped

experience of persona. For example, an introverted woman with a fear of crowded places (her extraverted adaptation had been damaged by a critical mother) had the following dream:

I am in a room with other woman friends having cocktails. Two are ready to go down to dinner: I say I have had only one drink, but they say they are tight and want to eat. Then my mother comes in and messes up the room. I look over the banisters into the dining room, see a black tie formal dress crowd and say loudly, "Oh shiti!" and go upstairs to the bedroom. I pull the green curtains of a clothes rack apart and look at the clothes. I am unhappy in the crazy selection available.

The dream pictures the patient's tendency to experience herself as unprepared for relating to society, upon which she projects a constricting formality and uniformity.

Jung contrasts the multiplicity of the extravert with the introvert's monopoly. One of extraversion's creative values is certainly its capacity to explore variety in transactions with the outer world; as the special value of introversion is intensity, so extraversion offers extensity. During my years as a Jungian I have always been slightly embarrassed that I was not 'deep' in quite the same profound, numinous way as some of my introverted colleagues; on occasion they have seemed almost to intimate that my unfortunate extraversion barred me from access into certain sacred mysteries or layers of experience. I don't mean to doubt them—I suspect there is truth in what they say—but I have finally arrived at the proper rejoinder: I suggest (with modesty of course) that some people are 'deep' and some people are 'broad' and who is to say which is more valuable...?

The very multiplicity of personae can be liberating: it provides many faces, revealing the multiple character of the Self. James Hillman, in *Spring* (1971), contends that the monotheism of western religion has crept into Jungian psychology and driven out our sense of how multiple, how polytheistic, is the nature of the psyche even—perhaps especially—in its most individuated state. David Holt argues that "the actor is by definition he who changes his role. It is the actor's role to have no fixed role." The man who cultivates the persona, the actor, may be the only free man in a society of fixed roles and persona identifications.

Some thoughts now about the persona and the shadow—two of the psyche's structural elements that are often portrayed as being in basic, total opposition to each other. In my opinion, such a view is wrong on two counts: first, it fails to recognize that the anima/animus, not the shadow, is the compensatory pole to the persona; second, it neglects the fact that integration of shadow elements into the persona is a crucial point in psychological development. When one's self-presentation to the world is free enough to reveal rather than conceal the shadow, one's persona is serving a very different, new, and important function. A young woman, raised to be proper and good, began to experience shadow energies in her analysis; she had the following dream:

I go to the bathroom. I am sitting on the toilet having a bowel movement. After I finish, three young black men appear. They proceed to take the toilet paper and smear the fecal matter all over my body. I sit there rather stoically, accepting the process as something necessary that they and I must share in. I try to keep calm and collected. After they are done I get up and wash my hands, but nothing else, and walk out of the room. I am not quite sure of my emotional response to the incident, but I accept it as a necessary ordeal.

Wearing fecal matter upon the skin strongly suggests that shadow elements (in her case, aggression, self-assertiveness, autonomy) must be revealed outwardly in her adaptation as she leaves the private, intimate space of the bathroom and goes out into the world.

I find it instructive that the most frequent images of the persona that occur in my patients' unconscious material seldom have to do with a mask that conceals. Most often the persona is portrayed with images of face, of skin, of body, of clothes. The skin, in the most elemental way, mediates between inside and outside: it sweats, it shivers, it burns in response to an ever-changing environment; and we are all familiar with the symbolic character of many skin disturbances, which psychosomatically indicate an unconscious conflict of adaptation.

While Descartes' questionable discovery was, "I think, therefore I am," on occasion when I have watched a nursing infant I have wondered whether a more accurate statement of our creaturely existence wouldn't be, "I drink, therefore I am"—such, at least, takes the body seriously. And I wonder whether a caricatured Jungian version might not be, "I psychologize archetypally, therefore I am." Certainly a common criticism leveled at Jungian psychology is that it fails to take the body seriously enough. The Freudian concern with bodily stages of development reflects a clear awareness of how central bodily experience is in mediating between inside and outside. A revised appreciation of the persona might well provide a bridge of communication between our largely introverted Jungian theory and the more extraverted standpoint of the many Freudian-based approaches. This expanded appreciation, however, would require us to establish more firmly the relation between persona and bodily experience.

For my 'confessions' to be something more than an extravert's plea in the wilderness, I must suggest ways to encourage persona differentiation and development. Briefly, several therapeutic modalities come to mind from which we as Jungians might learn:

First, gestalt therapy, when rooted in Jungian understanding of psychic process, can be fruitful. The extraverted enactment of dream or fantasy contents adds a three-dimensional character to the experience that active imagination does not always provide; it is particularly helpful with introverted people, exactly because it goes against their natural preference.

Second, the many sensory awareness methods have much to teach us about returning our consciousness into our bodies. The body can often provide a

mediating bridge of relationship that words and concepts obscure or deny. Sometimes in group therapy an introverted or withdrawn person can best make contact with another by mutual touching and body-exploration with the eyes closed, then with the eyes open, and only then employing words to express the experience of relationship.

Third, psycho-drama (as developed by the Moreno Institute) has proved helpful to some who had not been able to reach beyond their inner images to the affective levels of interpersonal relatedness, especially in regard to their own personal histories.

Finally, group therapy provides an ongoing laboratory of both intra- and interpersonal encounter where the individual can bring his inner world of experience into immediate intimate expression and contact with the 'other.'

While preparing this paper I wondered what insight might be retrieved from the mythological layers of the past. To what extent can the issues of introversion-extraversion be amplified by consulting the gods? What models do they offer for the problems I have discussed? I suspect that someone with a more thorough background than I in archetypal material could have found more ample precedent, but my search led to at least two figures in Greek mythology:

The first is Narcissus, who was condemned by the gods to fall in love with his own image reflected in the pool of a fountain. "He conceived so lively a passion for this phantom that nothing could tear him away from it, and he died there of langour." [*La Rousse Encyclopedia*] Narcissus suffered this fate because he had spurned the nymph Echo. Hera had deprived the nymph, of the gift of speech because Echo had distracted her with singing and chattering while Zeus was amorously pursuing other nymphs; and Echo was unable to declare her love to Narcissus, able only to repeat the last syllable of his words. Doesn't this image capture many of the problems of one-sided introversion?—the tendency to be drawn always to the subjective aspect, for one's energy to remain fascinated, frozen, upon the images one finds in the pool of the unconscious. One cannot tear oneself away, cannot give value and energy to what is 'out there' in the object world. Frequently combined with this is a damaged feeling and relatedness potential, as though it had no voice and could not reveal its true nature or plead its case. The capacity for chatter and singing, for spontaneous movement *toward* the object has somehow been blighted, and one can only echo an energy that comes from the object.

The second mythological figure is Proteus, a prophetic sea-divinity whose duty it was to guard Poseidon's herd of seals. At noon each day he emerged from the sea onto the shore while his herd sported with themselves. Proteus could see into the future and speak the truth, the divine wisdom, but he never spoke oracularly unless he was forced: it was necessary first to catch hold of him while he snoozed on the shore. When he realized he was caught he would change shape at will in order to escape from his captor, appearing as lion, dragon, panther, water, fire, tree, endless different forms in succession. The

important thing was not to be intimidated by these multiple metamorphoses but to maintain one's hold upon him. Finally he would admit defeat, resume his usual form of an old man, and speak the truth that the one who held him had made such efforts to hear. Do not some introverts feel that just such heroic efforts are required to penetrate the many roles of an extravert and to wrest from him (or her) some measure of central truth?

The many faces, the multiple personae of the extraverted attitude, may seem to be only disguise and evasion. But they are in fact part of the peculiar wisdom and richness that a creative extraversion can offer to each of us.



Baltasar Le Mercier, 1626