

Hauke, Christopher & Hockley, Luke (Eds.). *Jung & Film II: The Return: Further Post-Jungian Takes on the Moving Image*. London and New York: Routledge, 2011. Pp. xviii + 344. Pbk. \$34.95

Jonathan Lear (2009) has written that no matter what orientation one has as an analyst, the final cause of all analytic work can be thought of as increased freedom for our analysands and ourselves. He acknowledges that ‘freedom’ is not a fixed idea, but an open-ended signifier that points to various possibilities—freedom to reflect; freedom from oppressive psychic processes; freedom to mourn, thus opening a future with new possibilities; and freedom to be and to let others be<sup>1</sup>. As a practicing analyst, when I approach a book or any other cultural text such as a film, I am hoping to find myself engaged in a stimulating dialogue with the text which enhances the possibilities for more freedom: I want the writing to open up psychic space for playful thinking, passionate exchange, a surprising new perspective. I want to find myself haunted by something enigmatic and uncanny that stirs up the complacent layers of dust that have settled on my soul. I am looking for texts that will help me with the ethical and existential questions that emerge every day in my analytic encounters with the other. *Jung & Film II: The Return: Further Post-Jungian Takes on the Moving Image* is a book that responds to this desire – but in its great diversity, sometimes in an uneven way.

This book is a ‘sequel’ to Hauke & Alister’s *Jung & Film: Post-Jungian Takes on the Moving Image* (2000). It consists of an introduction by the editors plus 20 independently written chapters. The five chapters in Part I—written by clinicians, film makers and academics—engage films through the lens of psychological themes including grief, loss, individuation, and psyche’s relationship to world. In Part II, film theorists pursue new ways of imagining the ‘nascent discipline’ (p.2) of Jungian film studies. Here we encounter nine chapters ranging from the feminine gaze through cinephilia to discourse theory and the role of the individual in society. Part III is dedicated to six chapters specifically applying the concepts of ‘archetype’ and ‘psychological types’ to individual movies, directors, and other topics within film studies. There is a glossary of ‘Jungian’ terms to orient ‘the newly initiated’ (p.2) to definitions of alchemy, archetype,

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion of Lear’s concept of freedom see a review of his article by Robin Brooks in the JAP, 56: 566–568.

individuation, and syzygy, to name but a few. Other concepts (e.g. semiosis, sign, gaze) from film and cultural studies are not included in the glossary. The reader must re-orient to these cross-disciplinary terms in each chapter, depending on the author's particular understanding of the idea. The introduction of the book identifies 'the archetypal perspective' as 'the unique tool of Jungian cultural and psychological analysis' (p.2). However, the words 'Jungian' and 'archetypal' have both become floating signifiers and do not point to any singular meaning whether in analytic or academic work. As a clinician, I would have felt more welcomed into the world of Jungian film studies, if the introduction had provided a substantive discussion regarding the relationship between film as a material, cultural product and the *ethos* guiding the field of what might be considered a specifically 'Jungian' reading of these texts. Also, contextualizing 'Jungian film studies' within the history of film studies would have been helpful in approaching the multiplicity and complexity of ideas reflected in the book<sup>2</sup>.

One of the great strengths of this book is the love of film that emerges in the writing of each author. Every chapter merits a discussion of its own, though that is impossible to provide within the constraints of this review. Whether I felt resonant with or disturbed by the views of the various writers, whether the chapter was a critique of a particular film, or used films to illustrate theoretical ideas, I found myself impacted by the passionate engagement of each author with their text. Time and again, I wanted to *watch* the film in question and engage in my own lively dialogue with it. Laplanche explains that all cultural texts including novels and films are an interpellation to the reader/viewer<sup>3</sup>. As soon as I engage with the text, I am responding to the call of an enigmatic message—the *something more* beyond words and images that reverberates through the text. This excess haunts me in a particular way that can never be fully signified or understood. Thus enigmatic messages provoke a process of unending translation—translations that involve affective, imaginative and cognitive dimensions. If a reader/viewer can stay open to the uncanny enigma of the text—rather than translating it through old patterns and expectations—there is a potential for psychic transformation. Reading *Jung & Film II*, it quickly became clear to me which authors wrote in a manner that opened up space for reflections and ideas that kept alive 'the goad of the enigma', and which wrote with a tone of authoritative certainty and foundational reductionism that

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<sup>2</sup> Greg Singh's book *Film after Jung: Post-Jungian Approaches to Film Theory* provides a very illuminating orientation to the history of film studies.

<sup>3</sup> An interpellation is an anonymous 'hail' or a summons; when I respond to this summons, I have recognized myself in relationship to the call thus establishing a new identity (or *mis*-identity).

that left me feeling closed off. Therefore, some chapters felt more enlivening and some more deadening.

For me, one of the most engaging chapters in the book is ‘Love, loss, imagination and the “other” in Soderbergh’s *Solaris*’ by Andre Zanardo (pp.49-65). Eschewing both jargon and foundational concepts, Zanardo traces the inability of Kris, the film’s male protagonist, to consciously suffer and mourn the death of his wife, who committed suicide on Earth. Kris is called to a space station orbiting the planet Solaris where one’s deep desires and memories are revealed through ‘visitations’. Here Kris enters an imaginal realm where his wife appears to him, giving him the opportunity to create a new love relationship—unlike their earthly relationship, which was based on dynamics of power and control. In this liminal space, Kris remains unable to use his imaginative capacities to open himself to her as a separate ‘centre of being’ and to be ‘undone’ by her. Remaining locked in the imaginary thrall of his narcissistic delusions of control over self, other, and world, Kris tragically misses his opportunity to be transformed through his encounter with the enigma of his wife’s otherness. Zanardo explains that through this film ‘the viewer can explore deep questions of reality and the construction of themselves in and through their most intimate relationships and desires’ (p.64), themes which he carefully explores throughout his essay. I hope that readers of this review will be encouraged to turn to the book themselves to discover which texts move them to reflect on the profound human dilemmas, provoke uncanny enigmas, or bring a playful new perspective to their clinical work.

Perhaps many of us would agree that in our current world, moving images, such as film and video, are far more than entertainment—they are a primary source of acquiring our ethical attitudes and values. This lends gravitas to the importance of their study<sup>4</sup>. However, Levinas, who makes the radical claim that ethics is *first* philosophy, has written *against* art and the image in ‘Reality and Its Shadow’ (1948/1987)<sup>5</sup>. He criticizes replacing ‘reality’ with *representations* of reality, because the act of engaging with image seduces the viewer into a false sense of mastery over the other through the power of light and vision and perspective. He sees image and art as idolatry when compared to an encounter with *the ineffable mystery of an actual other, who defies all forms of representation*. Levinas emphasizes the critical need for an art criticism that

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<sup>4</sup> For an expanded discussion of this idea, see *Film and Ethics: Foreclosed Encounters*.

<sup>5</sup> The concept of ‘shadow’ in this essay refers to forms of representation (such as a statue or painting) and shouldn’t be confused with the Jungian concept of ‘the shadow’ as disavowed aspects of psyche.

keeps us ‘mindful of art’s frivolity’ (Severson, 2010). Although his critique of art and the image may seem severe, Levinas’ perspective is an important reminder to films lovers and film writers that it is an *ethical* imperative to reflect on representations—whether in words or images—of the Other. These filmic representations shape our discourses regarding cultural values, normative identity categories, gender, the alien other, and so on. There are several writers throughout the book who use Jung’s phenomenologically rich concept of ‘shadow’ to engage with the alterity of the actual other as well as the alien other within each of us. However, I wish the book had included a more sustained ethical interrogation of film as a *medium* of representation, including chapters that would have more specifically addressed the looming ethical issues of our times, as expressed in film<sup>6</sup>.

As this new discipline unfolds, I hope that a uniquely ‘Jungian’ perspective will keep a light grasp on the authority of names, resist the urge to reification, and thereby continue to enliven the very important dialogue between film studies and analytic practice! This volume is an enriching and important undertaking, and provides a deep read that is most rewarding.

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<sup>6</sup> Papers, e.g., similar to Angela Connolly’s ‘Psychoanalytic theory in times of terror,’ which uses horror movies to interrogate the ethical dilemma of projecting our horror onto the Other during times of crisis; or Ladson Hinton’s ‘The Abyss of Heaven,’ which examines the deep uncertainties about the very possibility of meaning and the plight of western culture in Bertolucci’s *The Sheltering Sky*.

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