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LECTURE I

2 May 1934

Dr. Jung:

Ladies and Gentlemen: I made up my mind to give you a Seminar about *Zarathustra* as you wished, but the responsibility is on your heads. If you think that *Zarathustra* is easier than those visions, you are badly mistaken, it is a hell of a confusion and extraordinarily difficult.¹ I broke my head over certain problems; it will be very hard to elucidate this work from a psychological angle. However, we will try to do our best, but you must cooperate.

I think, concerning the technique, that it will be best to go through the chapters from the beginning, and I am afraid it will take us far more than one term to plough through the whole thing. It is considerably longer than the visions we have been working on but we can stop any time you wish; perhaps you will get sick of it in the long run but I would not know any other way of dealing with it. You know, these chapters of *Zarathustra* are sort of sermons in verse, but they have some analogy with the visions in as much as they are also evolutionary incidents. They form a string of experiences and events, manifestations of the unconscious, often a directly visionary character; and therefore it is probably recommendable to follow the same technique in the analysis which we have applied to the visions. There are certain chapters which consist of or start from visions, or are comments on visions or dreams Nietzsche had had, and other chapters are sermons spoken by Zarathustra.

Now Zarathustra is by no means a merely metaphorical or poetical figure invented by the author himself. He once wrote to his sister that Zarathustra had already appeared to him in a dream when he was a

¹ A previous seminar, devoted to the analysis of the painted visions of an American woman, Christiana Morgan, had concluded only the previous March 21, having begun October 30, 1930. The abridged notes of Mary Foote have been published as *Visions Seminars* (Zürich, 1976), in two volumes.

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boy.² Then I found an allusion to the peculiar fact that Nietzsche as a young man studied in Leipzig, where there is a funny kind of Persian sect, the so-called Mazdaznan sect, and their prophet is a man who calls himself El Ha-nisch. But that man is said to be a German from the blessed land of Saxony named Haenisch, a well-known Saxon name; as a matter of fact, the professor of Oriental languages here told me that when he was studying Persian in Leipzig, this man was in the same seminar.³ He is certainly not the originator of that Mazdaznan sect; it is of older origin. They took over certain Persian ideas from the *Zend-Avesta*, particularly the hygienic rules which they applied in a more or less mechanical way, accompanied by metaphysical teaching also taken from the *Zend-Avesta*, which, as you know, is a collection of the sacred books of the Zoroastrian belief. It has been assumed that Nietzsche became acquainted with certain members of that sect and thus got some notion about Zarathustra or the Zoroastrian traditions. Personally, however, I don't believe this; he would never have gotten a very high idea of Zarathustra through their representations. Nietzsche was a well-read man, in many ways very learned, so it is quite probable or even certain, that he must have made some special studies along the line of the *Zend-Avesta*, a great part of which was already translated in his days. There is now a good German translation, and an English one in the series of *The Sacred Books of the East*. It consists of books of very different periods, the earliest of which, the Yasna, includes the so-called *Gāthās*, sermons in verse.⁴ These are called the verse sermons of Zarathustra and are written in a special dialect of old Iranian; as they are very archaic, the oldest of all, it is assumed that they really go back to the time of Zarathustra. And these would form the model for the verse sermons of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*.

We must go a little into the history of that Zoroastrian belief because it plays a certain role in the symbolism of the book. Zarathustra is almost a legendary figure, yet there are certain notions about him which prove that he must have been a real person who lived in a remote age.

² Nietzsche's sister, Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche, wrote that "the figure of Zarathustra and a large number of the leading thoughts in this work had appeared much earlier in the dreams and writings of the author." *N/Works* (see List of Bibliographic Abbreviations), Introduction, p. 13. This is the Thomas Common translation that the seminar was reading throughout.

³ Emil Abegg of Zürich University, professor of Oriental Languages, best known for *Der Messiasglaube in Indien und Iran* (Berlin & Leipzig, 1920).

⁴ The *Gāthās*, or songs, are the first part of the Persian scriptures, the *Zend-Avesta*. See *Ancient Persia*, tr. A.V.M. Jackson et al. (New York, 1917), vol. VII in F. Max Müller, *The Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford, 1879-1926). 50 vols.

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It is not possible to place him exactly either geographically or chronologically, but he must have lived between the seventh and ninth centuries B.C. probably in north-western Persia. He taught chiefly at the court of a king or prince named Vishtaspa. (The Greek form of this name is *Hystaspes*, which you may remember was the name of the father of Darius I.) The story says that Zarathustra first became acquainted with the two ministers at the Court of Vishtaspa, and through them with the noble queen whom he converted, and then through her he converted the king. This is psychologically a very ordinary proceeding, it usually happens that way. One of the most successful propagandists of early Christianity in high circles was the Pope Damasus I, whose nickname was *matronarum auriscalpius*, meaning the one who tickles the ears of the noble ladies; he used to convert the nobility of Rome through the ladies of the noble families.⁵ So this is probably a historic detail in the life of Zarathustra. Then in contradistinction to certain other founders of religions, he married and lived to be quite old. He was killed by soldiers, while standing near his altar, on the occasion of the conquest of his city.

The *Gāthās* are probably authentic documents which date from Zarathustra's time and it is quite possible that they were his own doing. Practically nothing can be concluded from them as to historical detail, but that ancient teaching was remarkably intelligent for those days, and it was characterized by one particular feature which was, one could say, the clue for the fact that Nietzsche chose that figure. In fact, Nietzsche himself says that he chose Zarathustra because he was the inventor of the contrast of good and evil; his teaching was the cosmic struggle between the powers of light and darkness, and he it was who perpetuated this eternal conflict. And in the course of time Zarathustra had to come back again in order to mend that invention, in order to reconcile the good and evil which he separated in that remote age for the first time.⁶ It is true that one would not be able to indicate any thinker earlier than Zarathustra who stressed the contrast between good and evil as a main principle. The whole Zoroastrian religion is based upon this conflict.

The dogmatic teaching is that in the beginning there was one all-wise and all-powerful god called Mazda (which means simply the wise

⁵ St. Damasus I was Pope from 366 to 386.

⁶ Nietzsche said "Zarathustra was the first to see in the struggle between good and evil the essential wheel in the working of things . . . Zarathustra created the most portentous error, morality. Consequently he should also be the first to perceive that error" (Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche's Introduction, *N/Works*, p. 26).

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one, something like Laotze) with the attribute of Ahura. *Ahura* is the Iranian version of the Sanskrit word *Asura*, which is the name of the spiritual god in the oldest parts of the *Rigveda*. You know the *Rigveda* is a collection of poems or hymns, part of the sacred literature of the Hindus, which goes back to an extremely remote age, perhaps to the time of the primitive Aryan invaders of India. One of the oldest parts contains the so-called frog songs of the priests and they are supposed to date back to five thousand B.C. though I don't know whether that estimate is correct.⁷ In those old frog songs, as I have told you, the priests in their rain charms identified themselves with the frogs; when there was a drought the priests sang the frog songs as if it had rained. They imitated the frogs as they sing after the rain, because they feel well then in their ponds, but when there is no water there is nothing to sing about—as primitives also, in order to produce rain, imitate the fall of rain-drops, or they sprinkle blood or milk, or they whistle, imitating the sound of the wind that brings clouds. This Asura is the highest god and he is different from the concept of the deva. (*Deva* or *devs*, the plural, is the root word from which, for instance, *Zeus* is derived, and *Deus*, and *Ziu*, and from that our word *Tuesday*.)⁸ The devs are the shining gods of the day, of the clear blue sky, of things visible in the daylight, while Asura is a god within, a god of chiefly spiritual and moral character. Now in the later development—in the later parts of the *Rigveda*—Asura disintegrated into a multitude of asuras, and they are demons of a definitely evil nature. And you find the same thing happening with the devs in Persia. The Zoroastrians had that concept of Asura, the highest god, that very ancient idea of the *Rigveda*, and they chose the name in the Persian form, *Ahura*, as an attribute for Mazda, so their god was called Ahura Mazda.

Ahura Mazda, the greatest god, the wise man, is generally supposed to be Zarathustra's creation, and he came to that formulation probably through inner experiences of which his story tells. These experiences are called in the old literature, "Meetings and Questionings"; that is, he met Ahura Mazda, or his spoken word called *Vohu Manō*, meaning the good attitude. The German word for *Vohu Manō* would be: *die gute Gesinnung*, the good attitude, a good intention, a good word, the right word. We could easily translate it, with no particular philosophical dif-

⁷ The *Rigveda* (Song in Praise of Holy Knowledge) is the oldest and most important of Hindu scriptures, having to do with the Asuras, or high gods, collectively. It is variously dated from 2000 to 1200 B.C.

⁸ Besides the Sanskrit similarity, there are the Germanic *Tiwas*, Latin *Deus*, Avestan *Daeva*, all meaning sky, heaven, god.

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ficulty, by the Christian concept of the *Logos*; the spoken word represents God in the incarnated form, the *Logos* as incarnated in Christ would be the exact counterpart of *Vohu Manō*. One finds the same concept in Islam in the mystical Sufi sect, where Allah, because he is unnameable, ineffable, and therefore formless, appears in tangible form in Chidr, the green one, who is called “the first angel of Allah,” “the Word,” “the Face of Allah.” “The Angel of the Face” is a similar conception in the Old Testament, a sort of tangible representation of an absolutely intangible and indefinable deity.⁹ So Ahura Mazda, or Vohu Manō, became experiences to Zarathustra, the so-called Meetings and Questionings. He had, I think, seven Meetings with the good spirit of the god Ahura Mazda. (There is also a bad spirit of which we shall talk presently.) He received the revelation, he was taught the truth by that spirit. I mention that now because it is a parallel to Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*.

The name Zarathustra in Persian is written *Zarathushtra*; *ushtra* is typically Persian and it means camel. There is a family story about him and all the names in his family have to do with mares and stallions, horses and cattle, camels, etc., showing that they are quite native and that he belonged to a sort of cattle people. Also his idea of a perfect reward in heaven was exceedingly archaic. He himself hoped that after a life full of merit he would be rewarded in the land of the hereafter by the good gift of one stallion and twelve mares, as well as by the possession of a perfectly youthful and beautiful body. One finds very similar ideas in Islam still. The Greek version of the name Zarathustra is *Zoroaster*. But the Greeks knew practically nothing of his teaching; to them he was a great sorcerer and astrologer; anything that went under Zoroaster’s name was magic and black arts.

Now, besides the manifestation of god in the spoken word or in the good intention of the Vohu Manō, there is the corresponding dark manifestation, the evil spirit, Angrō Mainyush. (He was later called *Ahriman*, and Ahura Mazda was called *Ormazd*.) These two spirits, Vohu Manō and Angrō Mainyush, were together in the original Ahura Mazda, showing that in the beginning there was no separation of good and evil. But after a while they began to quarrel with each other, and a fight ensued, and then the creation of the world became necessary. So Ahura Mazda created the world, but he was so upset by it that for six

⁹ Chidr, in Sufi literature, is the first angel of Allah, “the face of Allah.” In the *Old Testament*, after Jacob wrestled with the angel, he said, “. . . for I have seen God face to face” (Genesis 32:30).

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thousand years he did not know what to do, and then Angrō Mainyush broke into his creation and spoiled the whole show. And since then there is hell to pay, because all the light got lost in that darkness, and the hosts of devils he brought into this world are now to be combatted. For he had one great success right in the beginning: he succeeded in converting the devs to his convictions and so they became devils (*devils* comes from *devs* of course), just as *Ahura* became *ahuras*, many devils. So the original beautiful gods of the day, the gods of the visible things, beauty and harmony, became evil and nocturnal demons and formed the main body of evil forces, just as the old Germanic gods became storm devils and all sorts of evil spirits when they were dethroned by Christianity. So there was a perpetual fight between Vohu Manō and the hosts of evil led by Angrō Mainyush.

What Ahura Mazda is doing in the end is not quite visible or understandable; he is of course supposed to be on the side of the good—he is with his good spirit, but whether he is with his bad spirit too is not clear. It is the same awkward situation that we have in Christianity, where we are also not quite sure what the relationship is between God and the devil. Is it a co-dominion with God?—or what is it? That Christian awkwardness is an old inheritance from Persia—I could tell you several other things which would substantiate that idea—and therefore the theologians don't like Zarathustra and criticize him. But he is really the founder of the Christian dogma; all the oblique and contrary things in the Christian dogma can be found in the Persian religion as well. The only thing the theologians can say about it is that Christianity is a much higher religion. They point out with great satisfaction that the Persian religion is only a religion of rewards, that people are good only in order to be rewarded in heaven, and the founder himself expected a stallion and twelve mares—"and you see how low that is!" But I don't agree with that entirely; that little difference was in the time of Homer and Greek mythology—not to speak of the Germanic traditions—when the slaughtering of children and eating of human flesh still took place. Those were highly primitive times, so no wonder that Zarathustra had somewhat concretized expectations. Otherwise his teaching was remarkably wise and advanced. He was the main opponent of magic, for example; he tried to uproot magic wherever he met it, and the temples and the priests also had to go by the board. They had no real priests in the beginning, it was like the beginning of Christianity. But soon the same process appeared as it did later on in Christianity—the influx of primitive magic and primitive heathenish ideas—and the beautiful monotheism of Ahura Mazda was split up

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into a multitude of gods, like the splitting up of God into the Trinity and then into the many saints and so on. Ahura Mazda had qualities naturally: he was the truth, he was wisdom, he was justice, etc., and those qualities became personified as the so-called *amesha spentas* which are immortal spirits. One was truth, another justice, and so on—abstract qualities like the so-called attributes of God in the Christian dogma. These *amesha spentas* became gods too, and the whole spiritual attitude of the early Zoroastrian teaching changed and became a tremendously specialized ritualism.

The original teaching of Zarathustra, however, was characterized by a real spiritual piety. It was the *Gesinnung*, the moral attitude, that counted, more than the external works. His teaching was that as you commit sin outside in reality, so you can commit sin inside as a sin of conscience, and it is the same thing, just as bad. And think of the eighth or ninth century B.C. which was the *niveau* of such religious teaching! It is an amazingly high level, and this extraordinary moral discrimination points to a most unusual genius.

Now this was the model for Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*. It had nothing to do with the Mazdaznan sect. I think it is rather, as he says, that that figure was an experience of old standing; it was the early experience of the old wise man. You know, we often speak of that figure as a personification of the inherited wisdom of the ages, the truth that has become instinctive through experience, one could say, having been lived millions of times, a sort of wisdom of nature that is born in us and to which we owe the coordination of our whole biological as well as psychological system—that old experience which is still visible in our dreams and in our instincts. This is the mental or spiritual aspect of a perfectly natural fact, namely, the teleology of a living system. So Nietzsche chose a most dignified and worthy model for his old wise man, because to him it was that same kind of experience.

You know, Nietzsche in the first part of his life was a great and very intuitive intellectual, chiefly rebellious and critical of traditional values, and you still find that in *Zarathustra*. There was then little of what one would call positive in him; he could criticize with remarkable readiness, but he was not yet synthetic or constructive, and he could not produce values. Then suddenly, like an extraordinary revelation, all which his former writings omitted came upon him. He was born in 1844, and he began to write *Zarathustra* in 1883, so he was then thirty-nine years old. The way in which he wrote it is most remarkable. He himself made a verse about it. He said: "Da wurde eins zu zwei und Zarathustra ging an mir vorbei," which means: "Then one became two

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and Zarathustra passed by me,”¹⁰ meaning that Zarathustra then became manifest as a second personality in himself. That would show that he had himself a pretty clear notion that he was not identical with Zarathustra. But how could he help assuming such an identity in those days when there was no psychology? Nobody would then have dared to take the idea of a personification seriously, or even of an independent autonomous spiritual agency. Eighteen eighty-three was the time of the blooming of materialistic philosophy. So he had to identify with Zarathustra in spite of the fact that he felt, as this verse proves, a definite difference between himself and the old wise man.¹¹ Then his idea that Zarathustra had to come back to mend the faults of his former invention, is psychologically most characteristic; it shows that he had an absolutely historical feeling about it. He obviously felt quite clearly that the experience of that figure was archetypal. It brought something of the breath of centuries with it, and it filled him with a peculiar sense of destiny: he felt that he was called to mend a damage done in the remote past of mankind.

Of course such a feeling is most uplifting to an individual; no wonder then that *Zarathustra* was the Dionysian experience *par excellence*. In the latter part, that Dionysian *ekstasis* comes in. *Zarathustra* really led him up to a full realization of the mysteries of the cult of Dionysos: he had already ideas about it, but *Zarathustra* was the experience which made the whole thing real. In one of his letters to his sister he gives a most impressive description of the *ekstasis* in which he wrote *Zarathus-*

¹⁰ The wistful little poem that Nietzsche wrote some time between 1882 and 1884 deserves citation in full:

Sils-Maria

I sat there waiting, waiting—not for anything.
Beyond good and evil, enjoying soon the light,
Soon the shade, now only play, now
The lake, now the noon, wholly time without end.
Then suddenly, friend, one became two—
And Zarathustra passed by me.

Nietzsche loved the Swiss Alpine town Sils-Maria, where he wrote Part II of *Zarathustra*. Jung will return to those last two lines repeatedly as expressive of Nietzsche's moment of objectifying, for his creative purposes, what had been an internal unity.

¹¹ Zarathustra as Nietzsche's second personality reminds one of what Jung says about his own recognition of having both a Personality 1 and a Personality 2 (see *MDR*, pp. 44-45/55). Nietzsche often contrasted his own materialistic, scientific outlook with German idealism. Jung picks out 1883 because it was in that year that the composition of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* began.

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tra.¹² There are four parts in the book, and each of the first three parts was written within ten days, which is rather remarkable. The first was written on the Riviera, the second in the Sils Maria in the Engadine, and the third again on the Riviera; the fourth was written in different places and took longer. He says about his way of writing that it simply poured out of him, it was an almost autonomous production; with unfailing certainty the words presented themselves, and the whole description gives us the impression of the quite extraordinary condition in which he must have been, a condition of possession where he himself practically no longer existed. It was as if he were possessed by a creative genius that took his brain and produced this work out of absolute necessity and in a most inevitable way.

We will now begin the first chapter, the introductory discourse of the Superman, the last man:

When Zarathustra was thirty years old, he left his home, and went into the mountains. There he enjoyed his spirit and his solitude, and for ten years did not weary of it. But at last his heart changed,—and rising one morning with the rosy dawn, he went before the sun, and spake thus unto it:

Thou great star! What would be thy happiness if thou hadst not those for whom thou shinest!

For ten years hast thou climbed hither unto my cave: thou wouldst have wearied of thy light and of the journey, had it not been for me, mine eagle, and my serpent.

But we awaited thee every morning, took from thee thine overflow, and blessed thee for it.

Lo! I am weary of my wisdom, like the bee that hath gathered too much honey; I need hands outstretched to take it.

I would fain bestow and distribute, until the wise have once more become joyous in their folly, and the poor happy in their riches.

We must first try to construct the psychological situation. As I said, I am going to handle these chapters or experiences like the visions. Here the story of Zarathustra begins. The man who speaks or writes is Nietzsche; it is as if he were the historian of Zarathustra, describing what he had been doing. Zarathustra is obviously objectified here, the writer does not seem to be identical with him. Now, he is said to be

¹² This too is in her Introduction to *N/Works*, p. 16. *Zarathustra* was begun in 1883 and finished in 1885.

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thirty years old when he left his home. To what fact do those thirty years refer? As far as I know, there is no definite chronology in Zarathustra's life except the age when he died, seventy-seven years.

Mr. Allemann: It refers to the age of Christ.

Dr. Jung: Yes, the legendary age of Christ when he began his teaching career; that at once creates an identity between Zarathustra and the Christ. This is an identity which is commonly granted historically: namely, it is in the Zoroastrian teaching that every thousand years—which simply means an indefinite world period, about half of a month of the great platonic year—a Saoshyant appears (that is a reaper, a savior), who teaches people a new revelation, a new truth, or renews old truths, a mediator between god and man. This is most definitely an idea which went over into the Christian teaching where it took on a somewhat different form: in Christianity the idea of the *enantiodromia* came in.¹³ After the teaching of Christ has had its effect, then Satan is given a chance, as you learn from the Book of Revelation, “for two times and a half time”—also an indefinite period in which he is allowed to enjoy himself apparently, working all sorts of evil.¹⁴ This is one of the origins of the legend of the Antichrist, which is proved to have already existed in the first century. In practically the same circumstances under which Christ was born, his dark brother, the Antichrist, would be born, and he would work very much the same miracles but in order to seduce mankind. He would be a sort of negative Saoshyant, appearing when the positive reign of Christ was coming to an end. According to the Persian reckoning, the reign of the Antichrist would begin after a month of the great platonic year, about A.D. 1100 or 1200.¹⁵ As a matter of fact at about that time there was a great commotion in the Christian world, because they supposed that the end of the world was coming in the year 1000—according to that old idea that after a thousand years a new revelation would take place, or something would happen to the world. But apparently nothing happened. It is true, however, that in those times the power of the church reached its apex and the

¹³ Jung took this word from Heraclitus, the Greek “dark philosopher” of the 6th century B.C. It means, roughly, “running counter to.” Jung used it to designate the tendency of any state to beget its opposite. As early as 1921, Jung cited the “self-identification of the sick Nietzsche with Christ, and his deification and subsequent hatred of Wagner” as instances of *enantiodromia* (CW 6, pars. 708-9).

¹⁴ See Revelation 12:14 and Daniel 12:7. In Revelation, some commentators identify Nero as the Beast and the Antichrist, Satan's Messiah.

¹⁵ Jung notes elsewhere that the Platonic year has been variously reckoned: for instance, 36,000 years in the time of Origen and 24,120 years by Tycho Brahe (CW 9 ii, par. 136n).

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worldly powers were practically subdued. Then soon after, they began to rise again and the church was on its decline; and that continued, its worst blow being at about the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the schism within the church occurred: Protestantism.

Now this idea of the Saoshyant of course also entered the mind of Nietzsche: his Zarathustra is a Saoshyant who comes after the thousand years are once more fulfilled—of course not quite, but *à peu près*. It was only 1883, unfortunately, but the heavenly powers are sometimes irregular—perhaps the clock doesn't work regularly in heaven, one doesn't know exactly—so the Saoshyant came a bit earlier, a reincarnation in the form of Zarathustra. And he enters upon his career very much in the way of the former Saoshyants, Christ or the Antichrist. One knows of course from the writings of Nietzsche—even if one only knows the titles of his works—that he had the idea of an Antichrist very much in mind. He makes of course a great story about his anti-Christianity, and takes himself as being an Antichrist incarnate—by no means as a merely destructive devilish brother of Christ, however, but as a new Saoshyant. He will destroy the former values sure enough, but for something better and more ideal, for a morality much higher than the Christian morality. He feels himself therefore as a positive Saoshyant, in spite of the fact that he accepts the title of “immoralist” and “Antichrist.” In India also there is the idea of the savior or reaper that appears every thousand years, in the series of the incarnated bodhisattvas; for instance, the bodhisattva of the past world, Buddha Amitabha, and Buddha Sakya Muni of the real actual world, and Buddha Maitraya of the coming worlds; and there are many others because there have been many other worlds. Buddha Amitabha is one of the most important ones. Particularly worshipped in Japan, he is the Buddha of clarity, of truth; and Maitraya, who is still to come, is the Buddha of perfect love.¹⁶ It is the same idea of periodicity. And this is based upon such experiences as Nietzsche's of the archetypal figure of the wise old man: that is, an exceedingly historical figure which brings with it the flavor of past centuries, a feeling of the actual presence of remote times, as if time were at a complete standstill, and 5000 B.C. were just in the next room to A.D. 2000. I am quite certain, from what Nietzsche says about Zarathustra, that he experienced him as an identity within himself that had existed many thousands of years be-

¹⁶ The Buddha, Amitabha, is “the protector of our present world period” (CW 11, par. 912). Shakya Muni is the historical Buddha. Maitraya is the Bodhisattva who will be born 5,000 years after the death of Gautama.

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fore him, that always had been. When that figure appears, he simply emerges from a background which is always there; he is called out through the need of the time, the emergencies of the actual epoch. That Zarathustra is said to be thirty years old, then, discloses a certain analogy with Christ.

Then we have here a hint as to the place where he lived, “he left the lake of his home.” Why should such a little thing be mentioned? It is a most insignificant detail, but if you apply the rules of dream interpretation to this symbol, it is psychologically quite charming. What would be the lake of one’s home, and where is one going when one leaves this lake?

Miss Hannah: Could not the lake of his home be the personal unconscious which he is leaving for the collective unconscious?¹⁷

Dr. Jung: Quite so. The lake is limited and confined in contradistinction to the sea which is supposed to be unlimited. The sea, therefore, is always a symbol of the collective unconscious which has no boundary anywhere, while the lake is like being locked into *terra firma* which always symbolizes consciousness. It would be that amount of unconsciousness which is locked in by consciousness, a perfectly controllable piece of unconsciousness. So the lake of one’s home is the personal familiar unconscious, that part which links one up with father and mother and brothers and aunts, ancestral conditions, and so on; it is a nice, well-known place with its history that forms the beginning of one’s life. Then Zarathustra went up into the mountains. What about that?

Mrs. Crowley: For contemplation.

Dr. Jung: Yes, but you can contemplate near a lake very well. In Tibet the ordinary requirements for a sage are a hill on one side and on the other a lake, *inter collem et aquam*.

Dr. Bahadurji: He wants to be on a higher level, beyond general humanity.

Dr. Jung: Yes, that is of course an analogy to the *rishis*, the legendary sages who lived on the heights of the Himalaya mountains in Tibet;¹⁸ those fellows also lived in a desolate, rather dreary place between the water, preferably a lake or a river, and the mountain side, high up above the ordinary people. That feeling played a great role in

¹⁷ Where for Freud, unconscious contents are mainly repressions, as early as 1912 Jung wrote of the “supra individual universality” which he was later to call the collective, as distinct from the individual, unconscious (CW 5, par. 258).

¹⁸ *Rishis*: the wise men, gurus, commentators, who continue to be incarnated as teachers.

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Nietzsche's case. When he was up at Sils Maria which is nearly six thousand feet above sea level, he used to speak of being six thousand feet above good and evil—above ordinary humanity, that is. Therefore, he felt so particularly well in the Engadine—it is a very high floor. So it means here that he leaves the controlled ordinary home conditions, the familiar psychology, and lifts himself up to a particularly high level where he enlarges his horizon, as sages go into such places for the sake of enlarging their consciousness and their horizon, to detach themselves from the chaos of events in order to see more clearly. Therefore the saying of Laotze: The one who detaches and sees from afar sees clearly.¹⁹ And there he possessed his spirit in solitude and for ten years did not weary of it. Here is another detail, ten years.

Mr. Allemann: Thirty plus ten makes about the age of Nietzsche when he wrote.

Dr. Jung: Yes, he was thirty when he left and forty when he had accomplished the accumulation of wisdom. Then there is a detail in the history of his life which you would not know, that for the first ten years he had no pupils and was worried about it—and even then he had only one, a young cousin of his. Only very much later did he succeed in converting people to his wisdom. These ten years might easily have to do with that fact, though I am not sure. But there is also the psychological fact that it just makes up the age at which he began to write *Zarathustra*, the moment when he left his mountains.²⁰ It describes here how he is coming to give his message to mankind, his heart having at last changed. And then comes the invocation to the sun. Now how would you understand his invocation? It is the first event, the first experience or adventure. This is not so simple as our visions; there we have a certain code, but here it is uncharted waters.

Mrs. Fierz: If to be high on the mountain would be higher than common human consciousness, the sun would be the symbol of a more than human consciousness, which he has looked at for so many years and to which he now speaks. That is, he would be in a way more than humanly conscious, and greeting the sun would be feeling or realizing it.

¹⁹ *I Ching* (probably 4th century B.C.) teaches that to achieve the Tao it is necessary to detach oneself from the tension of opposites (*enantiodromia*) to gain the distance from conflict and desire. See CW 6, pars. 358-70, and *The Way and Its Power*, ed. and tr. Arthur Waley (New York, 1958), p. 141 and *passim*.

²⁰ Nietzsche's sister cites a note of his: "Zarathustra, born on Lake Urmi, left his home in his thirtieth year, went into the province of Aria, and, during ten years of solitude in the mountains, composed the Zend-Avesta" (N/Works, p. 14).

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Dr. Jung: You would understand this symbol of the sun as an objectivation of his own superhuman consciousness, which he has acquired through his life on that high level? Yes, the sun surely is the symbol of the center of consciousness, it is the principle of consciousness because it is light. When you understand a thing, you say: "I see"—and in order to see you need light. The essence of understanding, of cognition, has always been symbolized by the all-seeing of the sun, the wisdom or omniscience of the sun that moves over the earth and sees everything in its light. So it would be quite possible that he speaks here to his personified consciousness. This is a somewhat unusual performance, but if you try to put yourself into the mood of a man who is always alone, as Nietzsche was, you realize that your own consciousness then begins to stare into your own face. You are always your own speaker and your own listener; you are always looking into your own light, into your own eyes. And then you can well personify consciousness as your daily partner, the daily occurrence; you can even curse your consciousness as your only fellow being.

Now, Nietzsche in those years after 1879, when he had given up his academic occupation in Basel, was restlessly wandering about, living in little hotels and pensions, sometimes on the French or Italian Riviera, and in the summer in the Engadine, supported by certain wealthy friends because he had no means of his own.²¹ And always alone, he could not stand people. He was desirous of having friends, always seeking a friend, but when such a poor fellow turned up, he was never good enough and Nietzsche got impatient right away. I know people who knew Nietzsche personally, because he lived in my own town, Basel, so I heard many details of this kind. For instance, in one of his lectures he was talking about Greece and Graecia Magna in most enthusiastic terms, and after the lecture a young man who had not understood something he had said—for those ordinary students were of course not quite able to follow Nietzsche's tremendous mind—went up to the professor to ask him about it. But before he could put in his very humble request, Nietzsche said: "Ah now, you are the man! That blue sky of Hellas! We are going together!" And the young man thought: "How can I go with this famous professor and how have I the money to do it?"—and he receded further and further, Nietzsche going at him and talking of the eternal smile of the skies of Hellas and

²¹ Nietzsche began to teach at the University of Basel in 1869 at the age of 24 and retired, from ill health, in 1879. In his subsequent wanderings he returned to Basel from time to time. He did have a pension from the university.

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God knows what, till the young man backed up against the wall. Then suddenly Nietzsche realized that the fellow was frightened by his enthusiasm, and he turned away abruptly and never spoke to him again. That is the way he dealt with friends, he was absolutely unable to adapt to people, and when they did not understand him right on the moment, he had no patience whatever. He was also exceedingly impatient with himself. He was terribly, recklessly impulsive. He liked to be invited to certain social gatherings, but if there was a piano, he played madly; he went at it till his finger nails bled. That is no exaggeration, it is a fact. On his other side, he was quite funny. In Basel it appealed to his fantasy to appear in society as an elegant Englishman. In those days Englishmen were considered the summit of everything marvelous, and they then used to wear grey gloves and grey top hats; so Nietzsche went about in a grey redingote, a grey top hat, and grey gloves, and thought he looked like an Englishman. And with that moustache! We must know about these contrasts in order to understand the language of *Zarathustra*.

We may suppose, then, that this sun he is talking to is really the great light that he received and talked to every day, which is of course the great clarity of his lonely consciousness. And on account of this fact, that the sun is his consciousness, he can say to it: "What would you do without me? I still exist even over against such a consciousness." For when you are all alone with yourself, such a consciousness becomes so overwhelming a fact that finally you forget who you are out of sheer consciousness. Therefore, people who are pathologically conscious of themselves annihilate their own existence, they try not to be; they are always standing in their own light, because they are overwhelmed in their own consciousness. So he is here more than satisfied, he even gets sick of being only conscious and says: "What would you be if I were not with you, I with my animals, my eagle and my serpent?" Now what does that mean? What is he putting opposite the sun of consciousness?

Mrs. Bailward: The instincts.

Dr. Jung: Yes, animals mean instincts, but what would the eagle be?—and the serpent?

Mrs. Schlegel: The eagle would be intuition, and the serpent would be the chthonic powers.

Dr. Jung: What do you mean by the chthonic powers?

Mr. Allemann: The nature spirit, chthonic wisdom.

Dr. Jung: One could say spirit, but we must know what chthonic means. Read Keyserling's new book, *La Révolution Mondiale*, where he

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speaks of the *révolte des forces telluriques*.²² That is chthonic. But what is it psychologically?

Miss Hannah: If the eagle is intuition, I suppose it is a sensation.²³

Dr. Jung: That is true; it can also be taken in a very general way as an air being. So the eagle would be the spirit and the serpent would be the body, because the serpent is the age-old representative of the lower worlds, of the belly with its contents and the intestines, for instance. It is the peristaltic movement, it is the personification of the sympathetic system, as it were. Therefore, it is always the personification of whatever comes from the body, sexuality and every vital physical function; also all the facts of reality, that things cost money or that your room is overheated, that your bed is hard, that your clothes are expensive, that you have not received a certain fee: all these things are chthonic. And our relations to all sorts of people who annoy us or whom we enjoy is chthonic, everything that is on the surface of this earth and so banal that one hardly dares to speak of it. On the other hand, the eagle soars high, it is near the sun. It is a son of the sun—marvelous. The bird of light, it is the very high thought, the great enthusiasm. For instance, when Ganymede, the messenger of Zeus, is lifted up by the eagle to Olympian heights, it is the genius and enthusiasm of youth that seize him and carry him up to the heights of the gods. So one could say it was a spiritual, uplifting power. You know, the eagle is said to come down and carry away sheep or even little children; we have such awful tales in Switzerland. That is what the spirit can do—spiritual excitement, spiritual enthusiasm; suddenly, after having hovered over a crowd for a while, the spirit picks somebody out and lifts him on high. And the serpent would be *la force terrestre*. Now what does it mean that, when confronted by his consciousness, of which he is wearying, these two symbolic animals appear at his side? You remember they are often with him in the book.

Mr. Nuthall-Smith: He is not aware of being controlled by the chthonic and spiritual forces; he is unconscious of their existence in himself.

²² Count Hermann Alexander Keyserling (1880-1934) was a world traveler and essayist. His *La Revolution Mondiale et la Responsabilité de l'Esprit* was published in Paris in 1934. In his review Jung made fun of Keyserling's proposal to establish cultural monasteries, but still found this a good book (CW 10, pars. 935-45). See both volumes of *Letters* for Jung's correspondence with Keyserling.

²³ For Jung, intuition is that psychic function through which one has a sense, mediated through the unconscious, of possibilities. Sensation is its opposite. See below, 10 Oct. 1934, n. 3, on the four basic functions.

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Dr. Jung: Well, they would here be sort of helpful powers. You see, they always play a very helpful role and later on we shall come across a passage where the eagle and the serpent are intertwined, meaning a reconciliation of opposites. When you are accompanied by an animal in a dream, what does it mean? That happens very frequently.

Mr. Allemann: It means that your instincts are with you.

Dr. Jung: Yes, and that is by no means always the case, you know; very often we go against the instincts or are in an oblique position toward them. So when the text says that Zarathustra is with his serpent and his eagle, it means, as in dreams, that he is going parallel with his instincts; he is right, looked at from a spiritual as well as a chthonic point of view. In this case, he is right in what he is actually doing, telling his consciousness that he is getting tired of it; he ought to detach from too much consciousness. You see, that would be the condition of a man who has lived in and through consciousness only, without paying attention to his instincts. Or we would say he was thinking consciously only, living by his conscious wits, without realizing the existence of an unconscious, here represented by an eagle and a serpent. So he is on the side of the unconscious when he can say to his consciousness: I think we had now better part. Then he will follow his unconscious. And if somebody gets sick of his consciousness and chooses another way, what kind of symbolism inevitably follows? What is the next move?

Dr. Reichstein: The moon.

Mr. Nuthall-Smith: The going down.

Dr. Jung: Yes, the going down, the setting, when you say goodbye to the sun, naturally the sun sets or you set or both set; it is a going down into the dark night. The moon is all right, you see. So the work of Zarathustra begins with the idea of his setting like the sun, *der Untergang Zarathustras*. Then he necessarily comes down into what?

Mr. Allemann: Into the world of ordinary humanity, of collectivity.

Dr. Jung: Well, it is quite certain that when he leaves the sun of consciousness, he will come to some form of the unconscious. The question is now, of course, will the unconscious then be projected, or will it be in *forma pura*? If in its pure form it will not be projected, he will then enter the unconscious. That would be the night sea journey.²⁴ So as you say, it is the descent into the ordinary world in which unconscious-

²⁴ St. John of the Cross (1542-1592) working on the theme from the *Book of Jonah* of the hero who is swallowed by a sea monster and who, after passing what St. John called the dark night of the soul, is reborn on shore. See CW 9 ii, par. 123.

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ness is the ruling factor, for consciousness in the ordinary world plays a very small part; it is chiefly instinctive. But we would not be able to say whether he would descend into the pure or the projected unconscious if it were not for the passage we have read as to his intention. He is going to human beings, to mankind. And there, the text says, he is going to teach the wise ones among men, and the poor ones. “Until the wise have once more become joyous in their folly, and the poor happy in their riches.” So what would he teach?

Mrs. Crowley: The opposites.

Dr. Jung: Exactly. He is going to produce the *enantiodromia*, he is going to supply mankind with what is lacking, with that which they hate or fear or despise, with that which the wise ones have lost, their folly, and the poor their riches. In other words he is going to supply the compensation. Now I think we had better take that symbolism on the subjective level, and then it would mean that when Zarathustra, sick of his consciousness, comes down to the lower levels of general mankind, he will be the wise one that is compensated for his wisdom by folly. So we see that in this great light of the mountain he grew very wise and lost his folly—and very poor and lost all his riches.