



# THE GNOSTIC SOCIETY LIBRARY

## C.G. JUNG AND THE RED BOOK

Lectures presented by Lance S. Owens, MD

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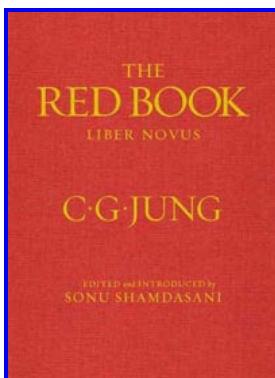
### Introduction to the Red Book Lectures

There are two sets of lectures presented below (in mp3 audio format), all recorded during the original presentations. The [first series of four lectures](#) was presented at Westminster College to the general public in January and February of 2010, shortly after the Red Book was published. It provides a useful introduction to Jung and his Red Book (*Liber Novus*).

The [second series of seven seminar evenings with a total of fourteen lectures](#) was presented at Westminster College from September 2011 to May 2012. The seminar group was composed mostly of psychologists in clinical practice. This is a much more in-depth consideration and reading of the Red Book, and reflects an additional two years of my own deepening study of the text.

Each of the lectures runs between about 70 and 90 minutes. It is my hope that you will find them useful. You are welcome to email question or comments to [Lance Owens MD](#).

[Jung and Aion: Time, Vision and a Wayfaring Man](#), a major article by Dr. Owens discussing themes in *Liber Novus* and their effect in Jung's later work, is now [available online in pdf format](#). The article was originally published in *Psychological Perspectives* (Journal of the C. G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles), Fall 2011.




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### *Recent Presentations by Dr. Lance Owens:*

**"C.G. Jung and the Tradition of Gnosis" - C. G. Jung Institute Zürich, February 4-6, 2013.**

As part of the C.G. Jung Institute winter curriculum, Dr. Owens will deliver a series of three evening lectures on "C.G. Jung and the Tradition of Gnosis"; February 4th, 5th and 6th. These presentations are open to the public and will be given in the Festsaal, C.G. Jung-Institut (Hornweg 28, CH-8700 Küsnacht), from 8 to 10

pm.

*These lectures are now also available online.*

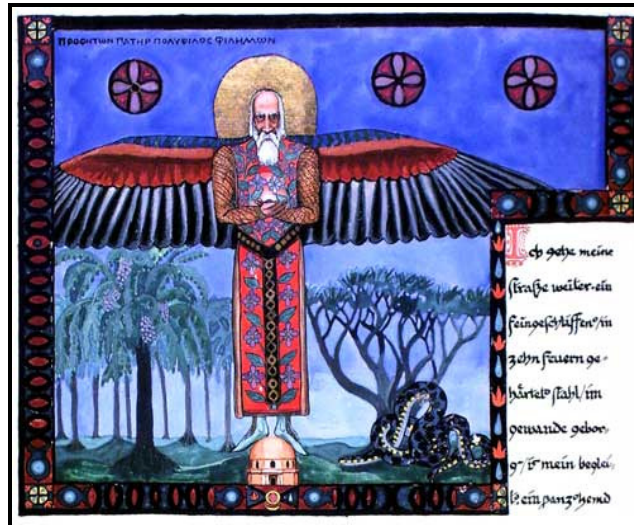
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## C. G. Jung and the Red Book:

### Imagination, Vision and Psychology

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*These lectures are now available online in mp3 audio - see below*



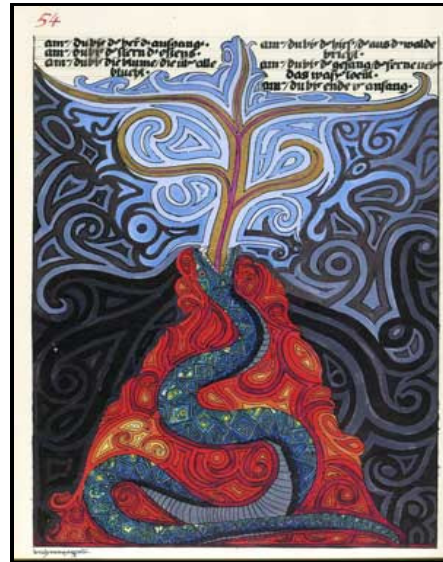
#### Four lectures by Lance S. Owens MD

In November of 1913 C. G. Jung embarked upon an extraordinary imaginative journey; in later life he called it his “confrontation with the unconscious”. An “enigmatic stream” of visions flooded upon him, and for the next decade he labored to accurately document these events in his private journals. As the work progressed, Jung felt a need to give the “revelations from his Soul” a more formal elaboration. With great artistic craft – employing antique illuminated calligraphic text and stunning artwork – he transcribed the record of his visions into a massive red leather-bound volume: This is the mysterious Red Book. Jung titled it *Liber Novus*, the “Book of the New”. Near the end of his life, Jung remarked about his work:

*The years ... when I pursued the inner images were the most important time of my life. Everything else is to be derived from this. It began at that time, and the later details hardly matter anymore. My entire life consisted in elaborating what had burst forth from the unconscious and flooded me like an enigmatic stream and threatened to break me. That*

*was the stuff and material for more than only one life....  
Everything later was merely the outer classification, the  
scientific elaboration, and the integration into life. But the  
numinous beginning, which contained everything, was then.*

For nearly a century the Red Book, *Liber Novus*, remained Jung's hidden treasure. Only a handful of Jung's most trusted students and colleagues were allowed to see it during his life; after his death in 1961, all requests for access to the volume were refused by his family. But now, after decades veiled in mystery, the Red Book has finally been released to the world in a magnificent facsimile edition. This singular visionary volume – a book that defies category or comparison – is the crux for any developed understanding of Jung's psychological work.



**In this series of four lectures, Dr. Lance Owens will discuss the genesis and content of the Red Book, and explain its central place in the life and work of C. G. Jung.**

**Join us for this amazing narrative of vision, imagination, science, and the birth of a new psychology....**

(These lectures were presented at Westminster College in the Gore Auditorium. [Download a pdf copy of this lecture information.](#)) For more information or comments, contact [Dr. Lance Owens](#)

### **C. G. Jung and the Red Book: Imagination, Vision and Psychology**

- Thursday, January 14, 2010  
**Lecture 1 -- *Anticipations: The Coming of the Red Book***

This is a brief 20 minute introduction to the publication of the Red Book.

[\[Listen online\]](#)

- Thursday, January 28, 2010  
**Lecture 2 -- *Imagination, Vision and Psychology***

[\[Listen online\]](#) [\[Download mp3 in](#)

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- Thursday, February 11, 2010  
**Lecture 3 --*The Prophet's Bride: C.G. Jung and the Red Book***

[\[Listen online\]](#) [\[Download mp3 in zip file\]](#)

- Thursday, February 25, 2010  
**Lecture 4 -- *Liber Novus and the Hermeneutics of Vision***

[\[Listen online\]](#) [\[Download mp3 in zip file\]](#)

(This lecture series has a prior companion series, [J.R.R. Tolkien: An Imaginative Life](#). You may find these lectures helpful in finding context and comparison for C. G. Jung's imaginative experience.)

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## **C. G. Jung and the Red Book:**

### **"The Numinous Beginning, which Contained Everything"**

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*These lectures are now available online in mp3 audio - see below*



**Fourteen Lectures by Lance S. Owens, MD**

## ***Archetypal Psychology Seminar September 2011 - May 2012***

**Westminster College**  
*Wednesday Evenings 6:30 – 10:00 PM*

### **Seminar Introduction and Overview:**

C. G. Jung has had a seminal influence over the last century on the elaboration of key psychological concepts and terminology; he remains a vital force in current therapeutic psychology. The empirical groundings of his work have however remained poorly understood even by practitioners who embrace his concept of the psyche and unconscious. Recent publication of Jung's long-sequestered "Red Book" and disclosure of other material from his early private journals now provide a new and critically important perspective on the formative sources of his psychology.

In 1957, C. G. Jung stated that the imaginative and visionary events recorded in *The Red Book: Liber Novus* – which he began transcribing in 1914 – were the foundation to all his subsequent work:

My entire life consisted in elaborating what had burst forth from the unconscious and flooded me like an enigmatic stream.... Everything later was merely the outer classification, the scientific elaboration, and the integration into life. But the numinous beginning, which contained everything, was then.

*The Red Book: Liber Novus* provides the long-awaited primary evidence to the truth of those words. It now becomes apparent that *Liber Novus* is indeed the bedrock upon which any understanding of the life and work of C. G. Jung must be built. Its publication initiates a new era in Jungian studies.

In this series of seven evenings and fourteen lectures, we will examine Jung's psychology in light of his own experience of the inner world of imagination, vision and dream as revealed in the *Liber Novus*, "the numinous beginning, which contained everything." We will consider the Red Book in detail, and assess its influence on the development and evolution of a "Jungian psychology."

(Each session was on a Wednesday Evening, 6:30 – 10:00 PM. The seminar was held on the campus of Westminster College, Salt Lake City, Utah. CEU's were available to professional participants.)

### **Seminar Sessions:**

## I. C. G. Jung: The Puzzle of Story and History

(Wednesday, September 14, 2011)

C. G. Jung penned the following words in introduction to his biographical memoir:

My life is a story of the self-realization of the unconscious. ... I cannot experience myself as a scientific problem. What we are to our inward vision, and what man appears to be sub specie aeternitatis, can only be expressed by way of myth. Myth is more individual and expresses life more precisely than does science. Science works with concepts of averages which are far too general to do justice to the subjective variety of an individual life. Thus it is that I have now undertaken, in my eighty-third year, to tell my personal myth. I can only make direct statements, only "tell stories" Whether or not the stories are "true" is not the problem. The only question is whether what I tell is my fable, my truth.

Jung's life work cannot be understood without placing it within the context of both his history and his myth. But how do we define the boundaries and the intersections of story and history? Aren't stories fictions and histories facts? In this introductory session, we will consider the complex challenge of understanding an extraordinary man who discovered his own deepest truth veiled within a myth. This theme is a crucial issue in understanding the Red Book and how it echoes through all Jung's subsequent work.

We will discuss the sources and readings to be used over the term of the seminar. And then we will start telling stories: Jung's story up through about 1914, and the beginning of the mythic journey he recorded in the Red Book (or *Liber Novus*, the "New Book", as he titled it on the cover).

***This Seminar is now available online in mp3 audio format:***

[Play or Download Part 1](#) (82 minutes)

[Play or Download Part 2](#) (93 minutes)

*To listen online, just click the link. To download the file to your computer, right-click on the link and select "Save File".*

***Readings in preparation for the Seminar II in November:***

There are three things I hope you will read in preparation for

the next meeting.

The first is *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* -- read through to the end of Chapter 6, "Confrontation with the Unconscious". In chapter 6 Jung gives his own account of what happened to him, and how he came to write *Liber Novus*.

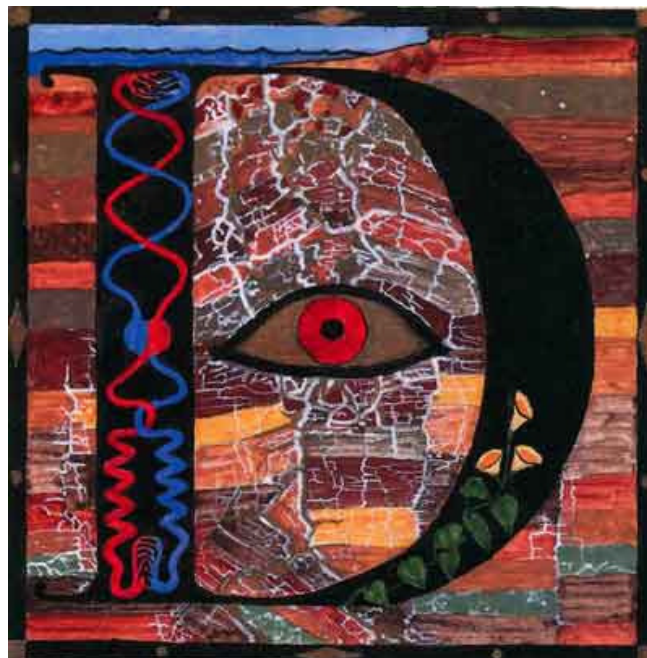
Next, read the Introductory essay by Dr. Sonu Shamdasani in the *Red Book: Liber Novus*, page 194 to 224. This introduction may seem a bit too academic for some readers, but it contains some amazing material, including quotations from documents never before available. Give close attention to the sections titled "My Most Difficult Experiment" and "Liber Novus", page 198 to 203.

Then dig into *Liber Novus*! Even if you have already read some, start at the beginning (p. 229) and read through p. 245. Ask yourself if the account Jung gave in MDR is reasonably accurate. Ask yourself what he was doing. Was he seeing visions, hallucinating? And what is the "Spirit of the Times" and the "Spirit of the Depths"? "Spirit of the Times" and the "Spirit of the Depths" -- this is a key entry to *Liber Novus*. What is Jung experiencing under these words?

## II. Liber Primus of Liber Novus: Seeking Visions in the Desert (Wednesday, November 9, 2011)

In November of 1913 Jung went to the desert seeking a vision. There he sat for twenty-five nights, petitioning contact with his Soul. As he privately confessed in a letter thirty years later, "I wanted the proof of a living Spirit and I got it. Don't ask me at what price."

Jung  
found  
the



doorway to vision. Later in life he called it “Active Imagination.” What did he do, what happened to him? And what is mythopoetic imagination? Is it delusion, or the doorway to a lost dimension of reality? Is it ultimately subjective, or a reality collectively manifest in human experience? We will critically consider Jung’s experience and his own answers – answers that are the cornerstone to understanding his psychology.

The second part of this session is titled "Real Women: Jung in Love." In his Black Book journal from this period, Jung says to his Soul: “And I found you again only through the soul of the woman.” That woman was Toni Wolff, his consort and life companion, his “second wife.” We will conclude the evening pondering the essential power of love relationships upon Jung’s visionary world, and the relationship between inner and outer events in his imaginative journey. His relationship with Toni Wolff reverberates through three subsequent decades of Jung’s life and thoughts – but it has remained the least understood formative element in Jung’s history and psychological development. But before talking about Toni Wolff, we must start this section with the history of another important woman in Jung’s life in the years leading up to the Red Book: Sabina Spielrein. Her story was told in John Kerr’s book about Jung and Spielrein, *A Most Dangerous Method* -- now the subject of a major film.

***This Seminar is now available online in mp3 audio format:***

*To listen online, just click the link. To download the file to your computer, right-click on the link and select "Save File".*

[Play or Download Part 1](#) (83 minutes)

[Play or Download Part 2](#) (97 minutes)

***Readings in preparation for the Seminar III in December:***

We are now getting into the thick of *Liber Novus*. Again, closely consider Chapter 6 of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, "Confrontation with the Unconscious". There Jung tells about his threshold experience of meeting Salome and Elijah. This is perhaps a signal moment in Jung’s experience; with this encounter he crosses fully into the mythopoetic imagination.

Read about these events in *Liber Novus*, pp. 245-255. This is the concluding section of Liber Primus (the "first book") of *Liber Novus*. This experience will be reflected repeatedly in



Jung's later writings about Anima and Animus, Eros and Logos. Think about what Jung means when he says: "Great is he who is in love, since love is the present act of the great creator, the present moment of the becoming and lapsing of the world. Mighty is he who loves. But whoever distances himself from love, feels himself powerful." (p. 253)

And then, confront these words: "We need the life of eternity. We bear the future and the past in the depths. The future is old and the past is young. You serve the spirit of this time, and believe that you are able to escape the spirit of the depths. But the depths do not hesitate any longer and will force you into the mysteries of Christ. It belongs to this mystery that man is not redeemed through the hero, but becomes a Christ himself." What does he mean? What is he experiencing? What is this "mystery of Christ?" Is this exclusively a weird "Christian fantasy"? A religious proclamation?

Then start *Liber Secundus*. Try to read through p. 288. This is a big assignment -- but do it. Jung's "Christmas story" is in the Egg at the end of this section -- the story of his confrontation with Izdubar, the God from the East (pp. 277-288). These visions came around Christmas of 1913. Read the text first, then ponder the images he painted of this story of Izdubar. These thirty-two pages in the manuscript of *Liber Novus* (folio page 39 to 71) are perhaps its most beautiful section.

### III. The Great Mystery: Individuation and Love

(Wednesday, December 14, 2011)

*Liber Primus* of *Liber Novus* concludes with what Jung called the *Mysterium*: his meeting with Elijah and Salome, culminating with his sacrificial transformation. Jung privately wrote of these experiences: "They are certainly not intended allegories; they have not been consciously contrived to depict experience in either veiled or even fantastic terms. Rather, they appeared as visions." This series of complex visions was the impetus to many subsequent comments about the Anima and Animus, Eros and Logos, and the mystery of their conjunction. This is the starting point for our evening's discussion.

In the second half of our evening, we discuss Dr. Jung, sexuality and the mystery of Love. In the darkest moments of his journey with *Liber Novus*, in the winter of 1914, C. G. Jung was sustained by the love of a woman. Her name was Toni Wolff. In love, inner and outer worlds touched. But the history of this love has remained in the shadows of history. We must tonight talk more about Jung, and sex, and his story

of Love.

***This Seminar is now available online in mp3 audio format:***

*To listen online, just click the link. To download the file to your computer, right-click on the link and select "Save File".*

[Play or Download Part 1 \(70 minutes\)](#)

[Play or Download Part 2 \(97 minutes\)](#)

#### **IV. Liber Secundus - Entering the Depths, Regenerating the God** (Wednesday, January 11, 2012)

The visions of Liber Secundus in *Liber Novus* begin on the days after Christmas 1913, the days after Jung experienced the Mysterium. At the beginning of Liber Secundus, we first meet the “Red One.” Who is this? The Devil? Satan? Joy? Is Joy the Devil? Is there a relationship here to Jung's “desiring”, *die Lust*?

And then comes the “Castle in the Forest.” Again, what is going on? An old scholar and a seductive young daughter? Who are the two figures, how is Jung understanding the events? Why is he forced to meet these imaginative figures? What issue in his own personal psyche is demanding attention?

Next he meets “The Anchorite”, the ancient Christian monk Ammonius, alone in the Syrian desert, studying the Word of God.

Mixed in all of these sections of Liber Novus, you will find Jung struggling with the dual human mystery of “desiring” and “thinking”, heart and head – and finally, archetypally, with eros and logos. We live in two worlds, we have dual perspectives, we are flesh and spirit, man and women, and we are seeking a wholeness and union, a mysterious conjunction. Logos and Eros.

As you read, remember the two layers in the text: (1) the original visionary event, and (2) the commentary written in perspective a year later. Note the very personal struggle Jung is engaging in the primary visions, and the more universal or archetypal themes he is refining in his subsequent commentary. I will try to give some perspective on these sections of Liber Secundus in the first hour of our next meeting.

In the second half of the evening, I will talk about Izdubar and the regeneration of God. This is physically and

thematically a central section of Liber Novus, and a key theme to all Jung's later work. Jung devotes 32 folio pages to this story – these folios are visually and textually perhaps the most beautiful sections of the Red Book. (In the facsimile, they run from folio 37 to 69 -- look at these pages carefully as you read the text). The translated text of the story of Izdubar is found from page 277 to 288.

***This Seminar is now available online in mp3 audio format:***

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[Play or Download Part 1](#) (82 minutes)

[Play or Download Part 2](#) (77 minutes)

## **V. Liber Secundus: In the Eye of Evil**

(Wednesday, February 8, 2012)

We have reached the core sections in the second book of Liber Novus - and this part of the book completely confounds most readers. Things become suddenly dark and chaotic. The images become increasingly dense with archetypal power. It is not easy going; it can be painful. It was hard going and painful for Jung: he here confronts the eye of evil, and the deepest mystery of human nature.

This is the darkest section of Liber Novus, and perhaps also the most important for understanding his conception of the Shadow, of Evil, and of the opposites encountered within the divine image. I believe one cannot understand Jung's psychology, and his affirmation of the reality of evil, without deeply experiencing these sections of Liber Novus.

***This Seminar is now available online in mp3 audio format:***

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[Play or Download Part 1](#) (71minutes)

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## **VI. The Hermeneutics of Hell**

(Wednesday, April 11, 2012)

By request, our seminar has been extended another month --

allowing us time to go to Hell with Jung, and consider the Hermeneutics of Hell.

In the last meeting, we talked about a key section in *Liber Novus: Jung's descent into Hell*. This is a crucial event, and it needs more comment. How does one interpret Hell? What was this Hell Jung visited?

We will start with a look at the tradition of Hell in the Western visionary literature, focusing on Dante, William Blake, Emanuel Swedenborg. Then we will attempt to locate Jung in the context of the tradition he declared as his own: a tradition of vision. I suggest that there is not only a "Tradition of Vision" in Western culture, but that the tradition is defined and conjoined in its "Hermeneutics of Vision." *Liber Novus* is a primary "Hermeneutics of Vision". And at center of the new book, we find visions of Hell.

But what the Hell does this have to do with Jungian psychology? I here offer my perspective on that question.

My lecture extensively references a very important address give by Dr. Sonu Shamdasani at the Library of Congress on June 19, 2010, coincident with the opening of the Red Book Exhibit at the LOC. I recommend it to you: [Dr. Shamdasani's presentation](#) is available as a [Library of Congress webcast](#).

The second part of the seminar starts with a brief group discussion, followed by my further ad lib comments on the Hermeneutics of Vision.

***This Seminar is now available online in mp3 audio format:***

*To listen online, just click the link. To download the file to your computer, right-click on the link and select "Save File".*

[Play or Download Part 1](#) (80 minutes)

[Play or Download Part 2](#) (47 minutes)

## **VII. Jung and Aion: Jung's Vision of the Coming Age** (Wednesday, May 9, 2012)

Jung twice painted images of his master and teacher, Philemon – a ghostly guru with the great blue wings of a kingfisher. Over the image painted in *Liber Novus*, Jung scribed this appellation: "Father of the Prophets, dearest friend Philemon." On the great mural image of Philemon in the upper bedroom of his Tower sanctuary at Bollingen, painted several years later, Jung repeated the appellation in different form: "Philemon, the Prophets Forefather".

Philemon plays a central role in the last section of *Liber Novus*, titled "Scrutinies." Who, or what, is Philemon? And what is a Prophet? What did Jung mean with such words?

The Red Book ends with Philemon speaking the summary revelation to *Liber Novus*, the "Seven Sermons to the Dead." This is the only section of *Liber Novus* that Jung published and privately circulated during his lifetime. He said of the Sermons: "These conversations with the dead formed a kind of prelude to what I had to communicate to the world about the unconscious: a kind of pattern of order and interpretation of its general contents."

In the second part of the evening will describe Jung and the vision of a New Aion.

In 1944 Jung suffered a nearly fatal pulmonary embolism and heart attack. For three weeks he floated between life and death. During these weeks he had several transformative visions:

"It is impossible to convey the beauty and intensity of emotion during those visions. They were the most tremendous things I have ever experienced. I would never have imagined that any such experience was possible. It was not a product of imagination. The visions and experiences were utterly real; there was nothing subjective about them; they all had a quality of absolute objectivity."

The visions refocused his work, and turned him again to a central theme in *Liber Novus* that had not yet been adequately conveyed within his writings. In this last seminar session, we will examine Jung's late life work, his final statement. One central concern during this period was communicating his perception that the Christian age was reaching its end time. A new God image was constellating in the psyche of modern humanity. But this is a difficult process, and a period of great disorder and conflict.

During these last years of life, Jung said: "The world today hangs by a thin thread, and that thread is the psyche of man." In this final session, we will turn full attention to those prophetic words

***This Seminar is now available online in mp3 audio format:***

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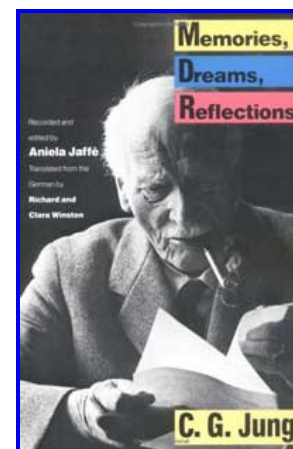
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[Play or Download Part 2 \(81 minutes\)](#)

## Seminar Reading List

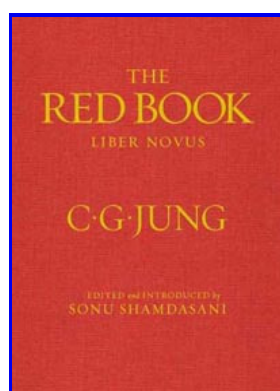
### Required:

C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, ed. Aniela Jaffe (revised edition, Pantheon, 1993)



This is the one book everyone in the group must read again during our seminar – even if you have read it many times before. While critics once questioned its accuracy, during the last several years many primary documents have become available that support its general veracity. In our sessions, we will discuss MDR’s editorial shortcomings and greatly amplify some of the material within it. It is the key book anyone interested in Jung should know well.

[Buy the Book at Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



C.G. Jung, *The Red Book: Liber Novus*, ed. Sonu Shamdasani, tr. John Peck, Mark Kyburz, and Sonu Shamdasani (WW Norton & Co, 2009)

Everyone participating in this seminar should own a copy of the *The Red Book: Liber Novus*. (It is now available at Amazon.com for around \$100 – and is well worth the price. It is a

beautiful book.) As we progress through the seminar, specific reading assignments relevant to the current session will be indicated.

[Buy the Book at Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

### Suggested:

Barbara Hannah, *Jung: His Life and Work*, (New York: G. Putnam’s Sons, 1976)

Seminar participants should become familiar with the general biography of Jung. The problem is that there are really no adequate biographies of C. G. Jung – none of the published biographies had any access to the Red Book and the other early primary documents that are so crucially important to understanding Jung. Publication of the Red Book and other associated material has disclosed the great inadequacy of nearly all the past biographies of Jung. (See Shamdasani’s review of the biographies, below, for details about this point.)

But Barbara Hannah was close to Jung for over thirty years, and her first-hand account of his life – though limited in context and focus – may be the most useful biography available. (This book is currently out of print, but available “used” at a very reasonable price through Amazon.com.)

We will discuss some of the other biographical works that might be of interest, along with their various limitations.

[Buy the Book at Amazon.com](#)

Sonu Shamdasani, *Jung Stripped Bare: By His Biographers, Even* (Karnac Books, 2005)

Sonu Shamdasani, the editor of the Red Book and the foremost historian of Jung, reviews all of the biographical treatments of Jung. Read this before reading and believing any of the many biographies. It is short (140 pages), well informed and very accurate in its assessments. After reading this, you will be prepared to critically consider the various Jung biographies.

[Buy the Book at Amazon.com](#)

Lance S. Owens, “The Hermeneutics of Vision: C. G. Jung and Liber Novus”, *The Gnostic: A Journal of Gnosticism, Western Esotericism and Spirituality*, Issue 3 (July 2010)

Lance S. Owens, “Jung and Aion: Time, Vision, and a Wayfaring Man”, *Psychological Perspectives* 54:3 (C. G. Institute of Los Angeles, Fall 2011)

### **Other Optional Resources:**

*Audio Lectures on the Red Book*

Stephan A. Hoeller, The Red Book Lectures ([available online from BC Recordings](#), bcrecordings.net)

If you want a detailed chapter by chapter guide to a reading of the Red Book, Dr. Hoeller has provide an excellent resource in these thirteen lectures.

### *C. G. Jung on Film*

Two interviews with Dr. Jung were filmed late in his life. These are extremely important documentary records, and everyone in the seminar should meet Jung on film by watching the interviews.

I have provided both of these online (YouTube versions). They are [posted here](#).

*Jung on Film – The Richard Evans Interviews* (1957)

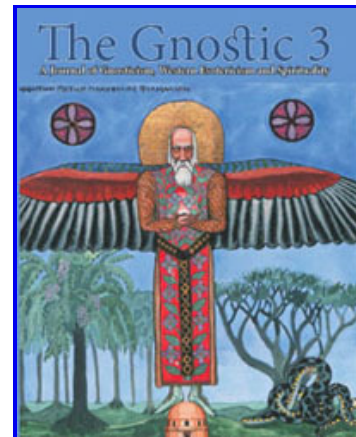
*C. G. Jung: Face to Face – The John Freeman Interview* (1959)

### Now available in print:

#### *The Hermeneutics of Vision: C. G. Jung and the Red Book*

by Lance S. Owens

Based in part on these lectures, in July 2010 Dr. Owens published a major essay on C. G. Jung's visionary experience and the events that led to creation of the *Red Book*, "[The Hermeneutics of Vision: C. G. Jung and the Red Book](#)". This monograph-length piece is featured in *The Gnostic 3*, the third issue of a new annual journal examining "Gnosticism in all its forms". (The cover of this issue is dedicated to C. G. Jung's guide, Philemon, as painted by Jung in his *Red Book*.)



[Buy at Amazon.com](#)

### Now available online:

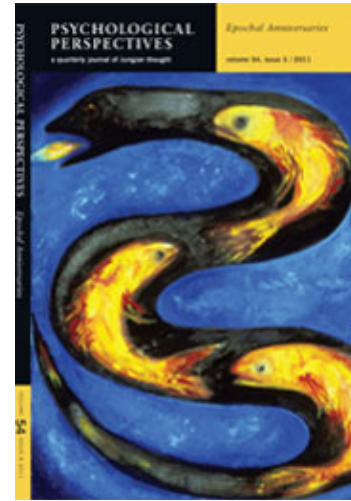


## *Jung and Aion: Time, Vision and a Wayfaring Man*

by Lance S. Owens

This detailed article, [now available online in pdf format](#), develops material not discussed in the above lectures or in my "Hermeneutics of Vision" essay. It is the continuation and development of themes introduced by these previous efforts. (This material will be included in our [Archetypal Psychology seminar](#), offered in Salt Lake City September 2011 to April 2012).

*Jung and Aion: Time, Vision and a Wayfaring Man* is featured in the "Epochal Anniversaries" issue of *Psychological Perspectives* (Journal of the C.G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles, Vol.54:3, Fall 2011) commemorating the 50th anniversary of Jung's death and the 60th anniversary of the publication of his book *Aion*. The journal can be ordered through the [C.G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles bookstore](#).



### *Article Abstract:*

C. G. Jung stated in 1957 that the visionary experiences recorded in *The Red Book: Liber Novus* were the foundation of his life work: "My entire life consisted in elaborating what had burst forth from the unconscious and flooded me like an enigmatic stream ... the numinous beginning, which contained everything, was then." *Liber Novus* is now historically placed in a hermeneutic relationship with Jung's subsequent writings.

Jung composed the first page of *Liber Novus* in 1915. On this introductory folio leaf he graphically intertwined a prophecy of the future and the coming of a new aeon: an epochal turning-point in human consciousness. Though this revelation was foundational to his subsequent life work, Jung did not initially feel free to publicly disclose its keynote.

After several extraordinary near-death visions in 1944, Jung realized it was his duty to finally and openly communicate the central revelation recorded in *Liber Novus*. The first manuscript

page of Liber Novus penned by Jung in 1915—deeply considered, dense with verbal and pictorial imagery formed in response to the Spirit of the Depths—and the complexly crafted commentary in Aion, composed three decades later, are fundamentally wed. They both declare the dawning of a new aeon. While each work might be studied as an independent text, one can only comprehend Jung and his struggle with Liber Novus in their conjunction.

(*Psychological Perspectives*, Vol. 54:3, Fall 2011, p252.)

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