

1. Judaism survived the AD70 holocaust in two forms, viz. Christianity and Rabbinism--with Jewish gnosticism [as well as pagan gnosticism] surviving captive within Christianity. Naturally, Christianity's primordial temptations have been to slide into Rabbinism [the temptation of the pastor-counselor as pastor] and into Gnosticism [the temptation of the pastor-counselor as counselor]. As theologian, the pastor-counselor is to be self-critical in relation to these tendencies to, respectively, scribism [not a true Judaism, but a degenerate bookreligion, bibliolatry] and psychologism [in the pseudo-scientific form, Freudianism; or in the pseudo-religious form, Jungianism].

2. Of the above-mentioned heretical tendencies, this thinksheet addresses Jungianism as a now rising and subtly seductive counter-faith. I do not speak of Jung's influence as a therapeutic, which I believe has value and often refer students and counselees to and am responsible [they say] for some of the fully accredited practioners of. Rather I speak of Jung's influence as a gnosis, an interioristic way of viewing and living in the world and of interpreting the human condition and civilization with it contents and its contents and its discontents. As a biblical scholar I am particularly incensed at Jungianizing interpretations of scripture [or any other interiorizing interpretation, e.g. under Hindu or Buddhist influence; but the Jungian form is the one most virulent among pastors as counselors and expositors].

3. So what's gnosis? From archeology [chiefly Nag Hammadi] and related disciplines we've been finding out much more than we ever knew before....It's been Robt. Grant's chief field of research--who describes it as "a constellation of religious elements" no category [religion, theology, philosophy, mysticism] fits: superiority of psyche over nature-matter, with consequent disinterest in history (cp. Jung's insensitivity to Hitler); deus in psyche (my phrase for the gnostic notion of the "spark of the divine" in the body-imprisoned psyche; the numinous call to the psyche to ascend out of world-matter-history through myth into the higher, transcendent realm (understood as a return journey). I'll not plot the contact points of this curve with Jung's Christianized gnosis or gnosticized Christianity [which it's both, as he moves in both directions], but it's becoming clearer that both are in the ambience of a single salvific system whose deliverance dynamic is, to use Pali, buddahood ["enlightenment"]: salvation by insight is the heart of gnosis as religion, in contrast to biblical religion, which is salvation by action through grace-faith. [For an exposition of the similarities/differences between salvation by Jung and salvation by Jesus, see David Cox, JUNG AND ST. PAUL: A STUDY OF THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND ITS RELATION TO THE CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUATION (Association/59), esp. 337ff.]

4. Theologically, Christianity is a delicate balance between its Jewish soil and its pagan (chiefly gnostic and stoic) air [=the ambience or surround of the non-Jewish, goy, gentile world, beginning with Hellenisticism]. The reason the balance is delicate is that Christianity is ambivalent about both. It is, as A.K. Barnett has recently shown (THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AND JUDAISM [Fortress/77]), both pro- and anti- both Judaism and Gnosticism. The Gospels express this balance, e.g., in the balancing truths that "whoever is not with us" is against us" and "whoever is not against us is with us." As Jung was not a practicing [i.e., communal-worshipping] Christian, he's against us; as he was not overtly anti-Christian, he's with us--but with us in a way that coopts our Christian images (with their central myth he admits is necessary to Christian communal worship) for his gnostic-interior purposes, all the while proclaiming modesty as staying within "science"--but making generalizing statements grounding his therapeutic language in an implicitly gnostic metaphysic without remainder, thus rendering Jesus as Savior and Christian public worship optional, if not also the latter as a waste of time. Which goes a long way to explain why, through the years, a number of pastor counselees of mine have wondered why they should not give up pastoring for full-time Jungian counseling.