

DENYING THE NAZI CONNECTION:

A REVIEW OF RONALD HAYMAN'S *A LIFE OF JUNG*

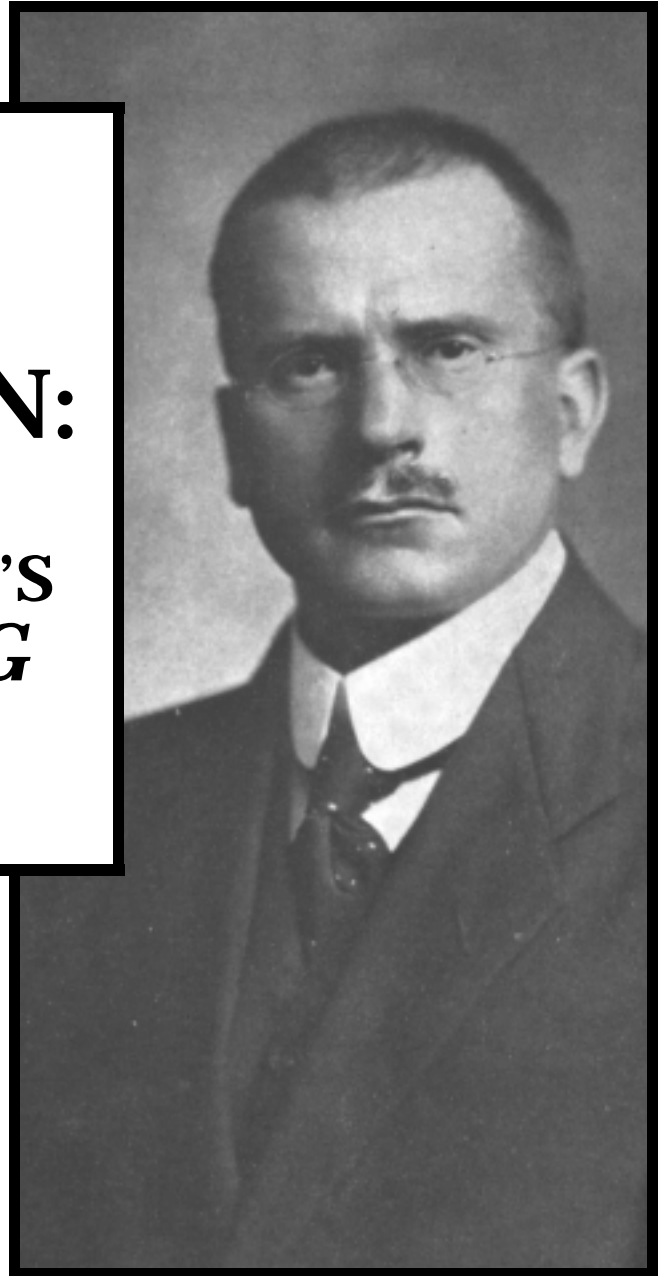
DAVID MURRAY

Ronald Hayman
A Life of Jung

Bloomsbury, London, 1999

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Why should libertarians be concerned about the work of C. G. Jung — a renegade associate of Freud, a psychotherapist and a key figure in the New Age sensibility? Because he was an antagonist of the Enlightenment, who promoted a philosophy of the self and of society which pretended to be liberatory yet was of its essence continuous with central features of National Socialist ideology. The obfuscation of Jung's complicity with barbarism, both by his avowed apologists and by sympathetic 'spiritually' inclined liberals, is



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FOR LIFE, LIBERTY AND PROPERTY

one of the disgraces of Western culture. The obfuscation in the case of Jung parallels that in the cases of Nietzsche and of Heidegger. The political motivation of this is clear: to deny that the philosophy of National Socialism was supported by people regarded in mainstream academia as major figures in European thought. What follows is a slightly expanded version of a review commissioned by the *Hampstead and Highgate Express*. It remains unpublished by them.

GOSSIP

Were *A Life of Jung* the biography of a general we would expect some appreciation of the man's military achievements. Carl Gustav Jung trained as a psychiatrist and presented himself as a healer; so — in a five hundred page book — we might reasonably expect some assessment of his therapeutic efficacy. None is forthcoming. But then, perhaps it is naive to expect such in a biography aimed at the psychonattering

classes. *A Life of Jung* is very like an adult education class on a famous philosopher, where the students are entertained with a gossipy romp through the author's life and handed out a buffet of phrases to be nibbled over.

Yet, even in the gossip, there is enough here to put Herr Jung in the dock along with L. Ron Hubbard and the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Hayman shows us that Jung preached at his patients, exploited the rich ones and sexually abused several of his women clients. He even — at the age of 43 — boasted to a patient that his young mistress, Toni Wolff, was a real goer. Incidentally, part of the po-facedness of this book is the omission from its photograph section of that wonderful group photo at the 1911 Congress of the International Psychoanalytic Association showing cute Toni next but one to the prim Frau Jung.

THE JUNG OF THE GREEN MOVEMENT

Hayman's overall 'reading' of Jung is the familiar one of the media consensus — typically his actual *reading* is intellectually shallow. It is as follows: Jung is a crucial figure in the "turning point" in Western "Being" from allegedly "Nineteenth Century" reductive materialism towards a new spiritual awareness. With him the "Yang" of masculinist totalitarian rationalism has come to the terminal point of its historical cycle; he is a node through which flows forth the "Yin" of a redemptive feminine relationship to the world. This is the Jung of the Green Movement, of such *Guardian* pundits as Walter Schwarz and Ian McEwan, of much 'Humanistic' therapy and the 'Growth Movement'.

JUNG'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

What disqualifies this book as a serious contribution to the assessment of Jung is that the author is unable to relate the devastating factual evidence he produces about Jung to his overall hagiographical image. For example, he tells us that as late as December 1944 Jung's Zurich analytical psychology club decided to impose a quota on its number of Jewish members.

Jung's political philosophy is central to any assessment of his theories — and it is at the theoretical, not the personal or organisational, level that Jung's relation to Antisemitism must be comprehended. Hayman is weak here, as he is on many theoretical issues. For example, he claims that it was only in response to Jung's notion of the Collective Unconscious that Freud advanced the idea that psychic material could be biologically inherited — in fact, Freud accepted this from 1893.

Part of the appeal of Jung is that he seems to speak of ideals, of essences and of spirituality, but does so in terms that are earthy, homely and commonsensical. He presents himself as the solid peasant, in touch both with the soil and with mountain peaks. It is significant that one of the staples of Nazi rhetoric was this weaving together of the "spiritual" with the

"everyday". (On this, see Adorno's *The Jargon of Authenticity*, which discusses the language of NSDAP member Martin Heidegger, author of *Being and Time*, another admirer of the peasant and a favorite writer for academically fashionable Deconstructionism.) Nothing could be clearer, on a reading of Volume 10 of *The Collected Works* than that Jung's view of Jews was that of *Mein Kampf*. For example:

"The Jews have this peculiarity in common with women; being physically weaker, they have to aim at the chinks in the armour of their adversary."
(para. 353)

He shared with National Socialism the beliefs that black Africans had childish mentalities; women were biologically unsuited to serious intellectual work; the mass of humanity was a rabble needing strong leadership; true leadership was inspired by superhuman powers; modernist art was pathological and Enlightenment rationalism was a spiritual tumour which needed excision.

Hayman does not deal with these issues. He does not even make the usual excuse that here Jung merely "slipped up". (This was Jung's own phrase in 1947 for his earlier view that the NSDAP was a force for German spiritual revival.) But then, neither does he even consider why anyone should be interested in this charlatan.

NEW AGE NONSENSE

But *A Life of Jung* does provide a mine of facts as to why Jung is *symptomatically* important. Because, as well as sharing all the major ideological components of National Socialism, his work is a Lego set of New Age nonsense. It uses a rhetoric of anti-science and anti-materialism, yet parasitises on modern physics. It drones on about the contrast between the allegedly materialistic West and the Spiritual East. (Hayman is good on the gap between Jung's philosophical appropriation of the East and his actual ignorance of Asian thought and history.) It uncritically promotes the category of harmony and is premised on the axiom that the genders have opposed, yet complementary, psychic essences.

NATIONAL SOCIALISM WAS NOT AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE MUTATION

Yet Hayman's book is *itself* symptomatically important. How is it that liberals have made themselves 'collectively unconscious' of the plain statements in Jung? Because to do so would be to accept that National Socialism was not an incomprehensible and random mutation of European civilisation, but was the response of a social group which felt its world threatened by cultural and political revolution. Should this situation recur, then we will again see the real meaning of the mandala, the Yin-Yang and the rest of the neo-Romantic drivel of which Jung is our most seductive and poisonous proponent.