# MANTHA

# Alchemies of the Cultural Turn



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## MANTHA (Sanskrit):

v. stir, churn, agitate

n. churning stick, stirred potion

Sources: McDonald, A. A. (nd.) A practical Sanskrit dictionary. Digital Dictionaries of South Asia: dsal.uchicago.edu; Narten, J. (1960). Das vedische Verbum math. *Indo-Iranian Journal*, *4*, 121-135.

# **Table of Contents**

Acknowled	vii	
Introduction		ix
Chapter 1	Reflecting on the cultural turn after Jung	1
Chapter 2	Raising the Titanic	25
Chapter 3	<b>Demonstrative Monsters</b>	53
Chapter 4	Heroes and Monstrous Hybridities	69
Chapter 5	Integration of Cogito and Cultura	91
Chapter 6	Elements of an Integration Model	107
Chapter 7	Alchemies of Creativity and Innovation	141
References	3	171
Appendix		187
Index		189

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-M. K. W. Buffalo August 2022

## Introduction

Regardless of one's intellectual or political inclinations, it seems clear that the Western psyche is off-kilter, polarized between a focus on the individual on one side and cultural consciousness on the other. What if this binary masks a deeper, emergent connectedness between psychological and social forces? In psychoanalytic studies, linguistics, educational research, organizational theory, Translation Studies, and other fields, there is a growing recognition of a reflexivity between human subjects (the learner, citizen, worker, etc.) and the vast variety of social network chains —both empirical and virtual—with which they engage. The epistemological ground of this perspective is the assumption of active, reflexive and often disproportionate dialogues between cogito and culture, mind and milieu, vestiges of an age-old metaphysical tension posed by the ancient Greeks: the One and the Many. On a related note, it was about halfway through this project that a dream image came to me through what C. G. Jung would call the transcendent function. This dream image had both an auditory and a visual component. I share it here both to illustrate the core energies that drive this book and as a way to promote your own alchemical processing as you turn the pages.

#### "Holes" and "Wholes"

Regarding the auditory component, the verbal message of the dream was something about holes and wholes, and it likely was inspired by Lory Pollina's (2013/2009) *Omega Point Project and the Noosphere* series of drawings in graphite, one of which is printed on the cover. Inspired by the Jesuit paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, this collection suggests to me that no vital system is completely sealed off. Pollina's method interchangeably layers and erases graphite, imbuing the circles with an analogous possibility for both orb-like volume and interiority: spheres and portals. Regarding the latter, my eyes are drawn to gropes for channels, finds the *holes in the whole*, and finding there a portal that connects me to a rich, expanded field – a *whole* in that hole. Paul Kugler (2002), a Jungian analyst who has reclaimed a linguistic focus in psychoanalytic studies, asserts that psyche privileges sound over semantic connections. Accordingly, he might suggest that there is something archetypally rooted in the phonetic contiguity of hole and whole. This metonymic language

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> According to Jung, the transcendent function "facilitates the transition from one psychic condition to another by means of the mutual confrontation of opposites" (CW11, para. 780).

x Introduction

play resonates somewhat with educationist Douglas Sloan's (1983/2008) notion of insight-imagination, a "participation of the whole person—in logical thinking, feeling and willing—in the act of cognition" (p. 69). Accordingly, over the course of this book, I challenge you, the reader, to find purchase in the play of these declarative statements, which respectively evoke two ways of perceiving the circularity of forms suggested in Pollina's work:

- The individual psyche is the hole in the whole (the circles are portals) and
- 2) Culture is the whole in the hole (the circles have an orb-like substance).

There is something in the homonyms of whole and hole that evokes two fundamental drives in the psyche that may have propelled human evolution and have perhaps been driven to extremes in the rise of the West: the need to belong (the whole in the hole) and the need to slip out into our own pathway (the hole in the whole). Certainly the trajectory of Western cultures has centered on the latter, jettisoned by an apparently innate curiosity in the human psyche, what the theoretical physicist and transdisciplinary studies scholar Basrab Nicolescu (1994), describes as "a gaping hole towards the unknown, from where comes a fascination for laws. Laws of the unknown" (p. 111). There are those who would describe this hole-portal as a sort of rabbit hole, one that runs the risk of untethering the human subject from a healthy sense of "wholeness" – both in a cultural as well as an ecological sense.

Accordingly, the current project entertains the possibility that there is something of an emergent *whole* in the hole, a new cultural direction in the making, and conversely, something of a likewise emergent *hole* in the whole, a flaw in the collective container suggesting the need to find a patch from some proximal system. As the reader will see and hopefully experience, one needs the other.

#### A vision of the churn

The paleontologist-priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1959/2008), who inspired the cover art of this book, visualized this phenomenon as a stable, *radial* force and off-shooting *tangents* in the trajectory of evolution. Both the Tao and Complexity Theory frame this phenomenon as a spiraling emergence fueled by the dance of attraction and repulsion. The move from the pervasive binary principle in Western culture to a blending churn, what I will refer to as a "mantha" a semantic borrowing from the Sanskrit *mantha*, depends on a change of preposition. Applying a bit of Jung's challenge to hold the tension of opposites, it becomes possible to confirm that the whole *and* the hole are interdependent. In other words, we need to value and cultivate blends of cultural stability and personal striving, substantive relatedness, and subjective space.

*Introduction* xi

In bringing Jung's thought into the discourse on cultural studies, what has been lacking is an alchemy to forge the right key, and the dream presented this in a most peculiar image. Having reflected on the binary of Jung's inwardfocused psychology set against more socially situated epistemologies, and by way of the transcendent function, the answer came vividly around 4:00 am in the form of a single dream image that provided much of the fuel for the work you are about to read. The image-symbol that materialized was a crucible mixing two substances: one light, one dark. Slowly the substances begin to churn one into the other, resulting in the emergence of the well-known symbol, the Tao, which blends these two energies: one stable and settled (Yin) and the other active and assertive (Yang). The questions posed by the images were clear and seemed to demand further exploration: Why does the story of the West seem perennially locked in polarized, binary thinking? Why the extremes? Speaking to ways out of the binary, Nicolescu (1994), suggests a sort of alchemical antidote: "One of the possible meanings of alchemy: transforming the binary structure of misunderstanding into the ternary structure of meaning" (p. 60). As we will see, this "ternary structure" is necessarily dynamic, pluralistic, and connective; in fact, one may argue it is not a structure at all but rather a sort of rhizome that branches into unexpected tangents. What if the A + B of this alchemy were not C but rather  $\infty$ ?

#### On Alchemy and variations of (pra)ma(n)tha

So, as the title of this work suggests, all leads back to and forward from alchemy, not in the literal or Jungian sense, but in a more expanded, transcultural frame. The contours of this cultural turn reflect a similar turn (culture turn) in Translation Studies (see Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990) and more recently in post-Jungian studies. Certainly, the history of alchemy studies reflects this transcultural quality. Stanton Marlan (2021) has traced Jung's work in alchemy and the origins of his concept of the Self back to collaborations with Richard Wilhelm in preparing the translation of *The Secret of the Golden Flower* for Western audiences (pp. 12-13, citing Wilhelm, 1931/1962). In comparing Western and Eastern conceptions of development, Marlan (2021) cites Kaway (1996), who underscores a contrast between the West's emphasis on the individual and linear pathways, on one hand, and the Eastern focus on nature and circularity on the other. Ultimately, it is concluded that "It is possible to view these processes from either style of consciousness" (p. 30). The Jungian union of opposites, the coniunctio, arguably occupies a central position in both frameworks, at least from Jung's perspective: "For Jung, Taoist alchemy and his approach to depth psychology both sought renewal of psychic life through a reconciliation of opposites, leading to a sense of Self as a harmonious whole in intimate relations with the Cosmos" (Marlan, 2021, p. 103).

xii Introduction

Returning to the dream, in the time leading up to the Tao image, my primary focus on bringing Jungian thought into conversations on personal and cultural change had centered on Prometheus, inspiration of educational innovations like *Promethean* interactive whiteboards, a figure who perhaps more than any other mythologem has concentrated meanings of human progress and striving. A deeper investigation led me back to depictions of the war between the Olympians and Titans and Aeschylus's Prometheus Unbound. In plowing through the old myths, I was surprised to find there a curiously overlooked and sublimely omnipresent Titaness, Themis. Depending on which version you follow, Themis was either portrayed as Prometheus's mother or wife, but in her own right, her contribution to the story of how Western culture emerged is of considerable (and arguably neglected) importance, illuminating the origins of this interplay of the hole and the whole and the One and the Many in ways that will be made evident in the chapters that follow. In direct contradiction to archetypal psychology's preference for Olympian psychology, it takes Titans to blend the binary, and the presence of Prometheus and Themis does not fade from chapter to chapter. Likewise, the monstrous is a compelling Greco-Roman trope that will be explored in-depth further on. The monstrous has a lot to demonstrate to us about the West's phenomenological binary of Self-Other.

Prior to the presentation of the dream image, I had also been reading Nicholas Gier's (2000) comparative study of Western and Eastern Titanism. Gier has reopened the Pandora's Box of the Prometheus's origins, from his Greek name, which translates to "forethought," to the Sanskrit *pramantha*, which is constructed on the root 'manth' (p. 63) and may be traced back to the Hindu Asuras, the Eastern parallel and possible progenitors to the Greek Titans, as sustained by Gier. We may easily ascertain that the *pramantha* is a sacred Vedic fire tool essential for performing the Agnyādheya (अग्न्याधेय) or "kindling of the sacred fire" one of seven sacrificial rites (Wisdom Library, 2021, February 27). The trail from pramantha to Prometheus, however, is a tricky one,² and it usually begins with evidence of a 'Zeus Prometheus' figure uncovered in the coastal Italian town of Thurii, which features the mythological figure holding a fire 'drill'.³ Historian and author Robert Graves (1960), alluding to the Bhagavata Purana, posits that the brothers Pramanthu and Manthu are

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  A. Nicholson casts doubt on such connections (personal communication, June 26, 2021). As we will see, there is no direct etymological or mythological path from East to West along the line of Prometheus.

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  See Graves (1960, p. 9); Kuhn, 1859/2015) though Jung (CW5), working from Kuhn's analysis, suggests that the Thuric "Προ-μανθεύs" is not directly tied to pramantha but rather constitutes a cognomen (nickname) (para. 208). Later, we will further question the 'drill' interpretation.

*Introduction* xiii

prototypes for Prometheus and Epimetheus, but indologist F. B. J. Kuiper (1971, in Moore, 2015) demonstrated how the Prometheus connection can be traced to a tenuous connection drawn by nineteenth-century German scholar Rudolph Roth and more confidently asserted by Adalbert Kuhn.

In the twentieth century, Kuhn's research, in particular, was adapted by the early psychoanalysts, starting with Karl Abraham, and taken up by Jung and his mentor Sigmund Freud. Abraham (1909/1913) interchanges Pramantha and Prometheus as if the connection between the mythologems is a given, and his focus is decidedly phallocentric: "matha (=the male genitals, 4 compare the Latin *mentula*)" (193, p. 45), characterizing the Prometheus myth as "a pure masculine saga" (p. 62), 5 and minimizing any prominent role for the feminine in matters of creation. Not surprisingly, the common thread in this German line of thought is a focus on the "masculine firestick" (Jung, 1911-12/1952/2014, para. 208) sense of *pramantha*, focusing on variations of *bore* and *born* in German. Abraham is directly credited for Freud's corresponding analysis of a young male patient's fixation with a bath nozzle, noted by Jay Geller (1999):

Perhaps, too, the word 'borer' ['Bohrer'] was not chosen without regard for its connection with 'born' ['geboren'] and 'birth' ['Geburt']. If so, the child could have made no distinction between 'bored' ['gebohrt'] and born ['geboren']. I accept this suggestion, made by an experienced fellow-worker, but I am not in a position to say whether we have before us here a deep and universal connection between the two ideas or merely the employment of a verbal coincidence peculiar to German. Prometheus (Pramantha), the creator of man, is also etymologically 'the borer.' (Cf. Abraham, *Traum und Mythus*, 1909, 98n.1, p. 368)

The full analysis is too involved to explore here, but Geller affirms Freud's conclusions, which center on an "entire network of Oedipal symptoms and phantasies" (p. 368).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>The comparison defies explanation. There is no such Greek or Sanskrit equivalent. In Sanskrit, a matha's meanings range from a hut to an educational center. See Monier-Williams (1988/1899, p. 730) for the full dictionary entry.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The following quote offers some more context: "There can be no doubt (for reasons that I cannot discuss in this place) that the magic wand signifies the symbolic representation of the male genitals. A quite similar symbol, the rod boring in the wooden disc, is the nucleus of the oldest form of the Prometheus saga. The procreating man appears in it as well in the form of a person (Pramantha) as also symbolically. The woman is only represented by the symbol of the wooden disc and in the saga is only casually mentioned" (Abraham, 2013, p. 62).

xiv Introduction

Jung, for his part, filters pramantha through his particular revision of Freudian psychoanalysis. The Swiss psychologist does not discount the sexual connotations; rather, he deduces underlying, archetypal roots of the libido, as evidenced in *Symbols of Transformation* (1911-12/1952/2014):

It is just possible that we owe the discovery of fire to some such regression to the presexual stage, where the model of rhythmic activity can co-operate effectively. The libido, forced into regression by the checking of instinct, reactivates the infantile boring and provides it with objective material to work on—fittingly called "material" because the object at this stage is the mother (*mater*). As I have pointed out above, the act of boring requires only the strength and perseverance of an adult man and suitable "material" in order to generate fire. Consequently, the production of fire may have originally occurred as the objective expression of a quasi-masturbatory activity.

(para. 227)

Nicolescu (1994) warns: "Avoid at all costs the formidable trap of confusing the meaning of history with the history of meaning" (p. 57). Echoing this aphorism, Jung ultimately and astutely discards the established etymologies of pramantha, concluding that "the line from pramantha to Prometheus does not go via the word, but more probably through the idea or image, so that Prometheus may in the end have the same meaning as pramantha. 6 Only, it would be an archetypal parallel and not a case of linguistic Transmission" (para. 208). Though ultimately tethered to the phallocentric 'boring' line of inquiry into the mythological roots of Prometheus, Jung acknowledges the etymological complexities undermining a direct line from East to West, and he is quite a bit more attentive to the role of the feminine in pramantha, as evidenced in his explication of the manthana, the Vedic sacrificial ceremony that reenacts the birth of the fire god, Agni, through the union of a fire stick and a bored piece of wood. Jung (para. 210) appears to mistake the corresponding tools for their mythologems. The two components (my corrections in parentheses) consist of a masculine boring tool called the *uttararani* (which symbolizes the Sun King Puravas) and a feminine receptor called the adhararani (which symbolizes the moon nymph Urvashi). The resulting spark is mythologically represented in Urvashi's utterance: the birth of the fire god Agni. In this ceremony, he discerns the archetypal sacred marriage here, the Greek hieros gamos (para. 214), and, though he does not reference the parallel here, the assessment parallels the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Jung inserts a rather lengthy footnote here, which features a churn and burn through various philologists and Greco Roman texts, extending the root, manth-, into everything from "mangle" [mengeln] to nouns like "mint" and a priapic "chin" and "mind."

Introduction xv

wedding of Sol and Luna in the Western alchemical *coniunctio*, the union of opposites depicted in *Aion* (Jung, 1959/1979) the *prima materia* of his notion of psychological individuation, but it is important to highlight some crucial differences. Luna, for example, is objectified as material (*prima materia*) to be worked through. The same could also be said of Yin in the Tao: both alchemies portray the feminine with a passive, earthy, and decidedly dark quality. In contrast, Urvashi is a lively feminine figure with a voice and a talent for dancing. It also is worth noting, in contradiction to the typical Western trope of a sunspirit-patriarch in the sky over the earth- and moon-bound matriarch, Pururavas is associated with the moon. Likewise, the butter "churn" sense of mantha offers a creamy, premium blend for the cultural turn that suggests something of the feminine, a reminder that the ingredients of change do not necessarily require the violent Hegelian sparks of upheaval.

And yet the mantha undeniably connects churn to burn, with all the attending phallic qualities of sticks and friction we have already discussed, though further analysis further attenuates this depiction and the associations with Prometheus. The German drill etymology of (pra)mantha, in spite of its compelling polysemy with birth and boring, requires a stop through Greece in order to complete the Pramantha-Prometheus connection. According to the classical Greek scholar Athanassios Vergados (2012), the Alexandrian philologist Hesychius attributed fire sticks —pyreia— to Hermes or Prometheus. Though there is obviously no direct etymology to connect the Greek pyreia to the Vedic (pra)math, there is a case for extending the Greek "to learn" ( $\mu\alpha\theta$ -) to "grasp, apprehend" (citing West, 2007, p. 273); this is a connotation noted by Jung that gets lost in the complex constellations of word associations inherited from his predecessors. On the matter of drill vs. stick, the main thread leading to the former seems to be rooted in Kuhn's (1959/2015) interpretation of Hesychius's reference to στορεύς, an option discarded by Morgan (1890) due to the association of the suffix -εύς with a person, although Vergados argues that there is room for this morpheme to denote a thing (presumably a drill vs. a driller). The more complicating factor, it would appear, is that στορεύς would have to encompass not only a drill tool made of laurel but also an "underlying piece" (p. 228) made of buckthorn. This "flat component" would have a non-drill referent in Greek "which would thus correspond to the 'flat' sea, rendered so by the γαληνοποιός"<sup>7</sup> (p. 228). Rather than denoting "drill," then, Vergados concludes that στορεύς "is the product of conflation" (p. 230), which further complicates a purely phallocentric perspective.

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 $<sup>^7</sup>$  For readers unfamiliar with Greek characters,  $\gamma \alpha \lambda \eta v \sigma \pi o i \delta \varsigma$  a Google Translate phonetic transcription renders  $galinopoi \delta s$ .

xvi Introduction

#### (Pra)Mantha Phonetics

At the risk of boring further into a boring discussion of all these 'sticks and dicks' variants of (pra)ma(n)th, it bears pointing out the difference an 'n' makes. Johanna Narten (1960) was the first to posit the divergence between math- and manth-, noting that the former has a connotation of "a violent snatching" ["ein gewaltsames Entreißen"] (p. 123), and that the 'snatching' has more of a sense of being whisked away by the wind (p. 127), a correction to the general view tentatively presented by Roth (1855) and uncritically incorporated by his predecessors, that Mätarisvan, the Vedic wind god and alleged forerunner of Prometheus, stole fire from the gods for the benefit of man. She questions this interpretation (p. 133), and, as Kuiper (1971, in Moore, 2015) has noted, he actually stole for the gods and for the benefit of man. What a difference a preposition makes! More importantly, regarding the latter, Narten discerns a distinction between the math- focus on "whisking away" (as opposed to the literal "robbing" ascribed to the Promethean connotation) and mantha, which points to "the churning [whisking] of milk and butter, the mixing of a potion, etc., cf., or mantha, a 'stirring potion'" (Narten, p. 121, citing e.B.).8 It is also worth pointing out that Kuhn (1859/2015, p. 15) points out that the Greek  $\mu\alpha\nu\theta\alpha\nu$ o (manthano) means to learn, suggesting that the learning as grasping or apprehending holds up across the variants of ma(n)th.

So, after all this churn and burn and learning, a cursory glance at the notes in the appendix will confirm the mantha sense of butter churning in the dream image that launched this investigation, as well as a decidedly more feminine sense as the sort of churning ascribed to the fire ceremony, and the inclusion of the nasal phone [n] clearly predominates. In fact, the removal of n from pramantha (pramatha) has a tremendous impact on the meaning. In addition to being a masculine noun, it is ascribed to a class of demons attending on siva" (Monier-Williams, 1883, p. 238). S. Joshi, of the Western New York Hindu Center affirms that "'Pramathas' are a type of nondivine forces which we call the beings of falsehood that belongs to the subtle physical/vital world, and they impair/ harass any divine work going on in this terrestrial world. They are very low level (not like intelligent asura) beings of falsehood" (S. Joshi, personal communication, June 28, 2021). Not surprisingly, the range of meanings listed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Translation from German based on comparison of Computer-assisted translation technologies.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Kuhn (1959/2015) shares detailed descriptions of butter churning (citing Wilson, 1850/1949, I.28.4) and fire churning (citing Stevenson, 1842, p. VII) in India, which confirm a similar technique involving ropes and sticks, the former involving a circular motion and the latter centering on wrenching the string.

*Introduction* xvii

in an online Sanskrit dictionary (sanskritdictionary.com) includes tormenting, torturing, raping, slaughter, and other nasty deeds.

While it entails a somewhat incautious extrapolation, I would argue that the mix of sound and visual images in the dream fragment reflects Kugler's (2002) assertion that psyche privileges *phonetic* over semantic patterns, a finding derived from the word association tests made famous by Jung and Freud. Tossing the words around, sounding them out to myself, the connections were clearly there in the common thread of clustering and metathesis (exchange of phonemes) between nasal consonants /m/ and /n/ and the voiceless dental fricative  $/\theta/$  (as in the 'th' sound in *th*ought):

#### Mantha

#### **Prometheus**

#### **Themis**

In addition to the phonetic blending, the potential archetypal meanings provide an even more compelling connection that the dream image likely incorporated: Themis and Prometheus, as fundamental, complementary principles of change, emblematic of an energetic, dynamic churning or blending (*mantha*), rather than structured along fixed binaries. Such is the nature of language, and a related premise of linguistics is the blending of synchrony and diachrony. While synchrony, with its colorful dialects and linguistic innovations, centers on the phenomenon of language variation, as it manifests itself in current usage, diachrony takes in the bigger, evolutionary picture of how language evolves over time, in dialogue with changing circumstances on the social plane. The blending of both perspectives in linguistics is known as *panchrony*, which recognizes the blending of both ways of understanding language emergence (Silva-Corvalán, 2001).

#### A Mantha Roadmap

Having ventured down the rabbit hole of mantha, there is undeniable promise in its alchemy. Without necessarily privileging it over its close associates, the Tao and the coniunctio, mantha is a compelling tool for navigating the cultural turn after Jung. Blending sound and image, masculine and feminine, the One and the Many, smoothing and agitation, its very nature is constituted by an East-West confluence. Moreover, there are compelling connections, however tenuous, that point to deeper knowledge: Prometheus, the Titan who is closely associated with knowledge creation and innovation, and math-as-learning; these are key ingredients for churning change, and they are always grounded in language and culture. While acknowledging the "no-pain, no change" agitation sense of manth, inclusion of the "n" offers the possibility of wholeness in the

xviii Introduction

bored hole of the feminine, philologically and psychoanalytically speaking. The time has come to deepen explorations of the matriarchal feminine, so let us allow Urvashi, and her mythological counterpart, the Greek matriarch Gaia-Themis to have their say. Taken together, the myriad phonetic and semantic, as well as diachronic and synchronic variations of manth- furnish us with the *prima materia*—in alchemy, the raw material to be worked upon— to fuel this journey into alchemies of psychological and social change, this timeless dialogue between the One and the Many. Marlan (2021), with a bit of word play, describes the philosopher's stone, the ultimate attainment of alchemy, as "chaosmos," a notion that invokes a synergy of the One and the Many (p. 243). Indeed, Jung's "unifying diversity into oneness, chaos into cosmos, and suffering into healing and wholeness" (p. 234) connoted in the *mysterium coniunctionis* is constituted in this ancient Greek metaphysical trope. The trope is likewise constituted in Eastern non-duality, which is at ease holding the diversity of the Many and the unity of the One. 10

As may already be apparent, the approach I have adopted in this book is rhizomic, primarily rooted in Jung's spiral essay style, which Susan Rowland (2010) characterizes as a hermeneutic winding around text that "go[es] deeper and wider into historical origins and cultural analogies" (p. 32). This approach likewise blends intellect and imagination in ways that find favor with Camille Paglia's (2006) notion of imaginative academic critique and Douglas Sloan's (1983/2008) notion of insight-imagination. Insight-imagination not only informs the serpentine branches that unfold in the writing of the text; its reading constitutes an expansion of the rhizomes off the pages. To this point and invoking Jungian alchemy, Marlan (2021) argues that the act of reading constitutes a sort of alchemical prima materia, in itself, one that makes it possible for "imagination to play a greater role in the formation of our ongoing understanding and perception of the cosmos" (p. 1). Imaginative academic critique necessarily engages subjective speculation, and that subjectivity encompasses both inner and outer experiences. Consequently, we find intersections here with transdisciplinarity. As summarized in Declaration Three of the UNESCO conference on this emergent field, transdisciplinary studies seek "a dynamic exchange between the natural sciences, the social sciences, art and tradition" (Nicolescu, 2008, p. 258), and a central related focus centers on "an equilibrium between knowledge and being" (p. 63). A related notion is that knowledge cannot be arbitrarily excised from the knower.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Nicolescu (2008), for example, notes: "The western idea of unity in diversity and diversity through unity is isomorphic to the eastern idea of non-duality. Why set them in opposition to one another?" (p. 37).

Introduction xix

Of course, whenever the intellect and the imagination are in dialogue, there is always the danger of going to extreme, the greater risk perhaps being the latter. In this book, I will call attention to tragic consequences of failures of imagination, but flights of imagination are certainly equally perilous. Sloan (1983/2008) warns, for example, that uncritical analogy and association obfuscate otherwise serious scholarly investigation. In his defense of Wolfgang Giegerich's Hegelian discipline of logical negation, Greg Mogenson (2005) illustrates how Hegel's analytic and objective approach sought to correct Kant's synthetic and subjective path to truth: sometimes we take things into the subject that *may not be of it.* In my estimation, this is a risk worth taking.

In both my professional and personal life, this blended perspective on personal and cultural change has only recently come into full view, but it is at best a panchronous snapshot of an emergent process of being, knowing and growing: call it an -ing thing. Being human, we confront this opaque, deceptive presence of the Other, a phenomenon that Jungian psychology locates within the infinite Self and projected out into the milieu. As such, our connection to the Other may indeed be mirror-like, or as the phenomenologist of the Other, Emmanuel Levinas (in Peperzak, 1993) posits, perhaps we find ourselves overwhelmed by and subordinated to this overwhelming complexity and totality and infinity of the Other. The nature of our ego's relation to the Other may be, as Levinas suggests, an affinity to this alterity, or, as Teilhard de Chardin (1959/2008) asserts, the tether of Self-Other is tight and fluid as he alleged a continuity in all living things between the within and the without. In articulating his approach to transdisciplinary studies, Nicolescu (1994) likewise affirms: "Outside- great particle accelerators; within - the great accelerator of consciousness. "Outside" and "within" are merely two facets of one and the same reality" (p. 20).

The religious studies scholar Raimon Panikkar (1995), working from an ecosophical perspective, suggests that these syzygies of Self to Other, micro to macro, inner to outer, and other manifestations of what the ancient Greeks framed as the One and the Many<sup>11</sup> (a concept that will consume quite a few pages of this book to fully engage) are bound for a "radical metanoia" (p. 4), a profound transformation that highlights basic principles of relation: *sarvan-sarvātmakan*: "all is in relation to all" (p. 15). Alluding to the Upanishads, he asserts: "A mutual relationship prevails between each and every person, considered as a microcosm, and the totality of the universe as macrocosm" (p. 58). One side of the scale is not necessarily privileged over the other. For

 $<sup>^{11}</sup>$  Echoing Teilhard de Chardin, Panikkar (1995) posits a sutra that rejects "the dichotomy between the outward and the inward" (p. 17).

xx Introduction

example, the Many also manifests itself in the Machine, a scale that dwarfs a more microcosmic valuation of the individual (Man, or for our purposes, the One). In fact, the dwarfing of Man under Machine consciousness is one of the cornerstones of Panikkar's criticism of technocracy. Throughout this book, we will uncover a range of manifestations of the Many, from its "feel good" aspects to the Many of mass media, mobs, and all matter of mass hysteria.

Regardless of where we stand on this matter, the fact remains that the engine of Western 'progress,' fueled by binary divisions, rests upon the desecration of this Other. From the subjugation of the feminine and the natural world to conquest and colonization, the Other, elusive as it may be in terms of pinpointing and defining, has played a primary role in the subtext of the Western metanarrative. We will examine the many faces of the Other, from its origins in the Greco-Roman monstrous to Rowland's feminist and post-Lacanian critique of the Other. To play upon the sign over the door of Jung's consulting room in Kusnacht: "Bidden or unbidden, the Other is always present." 12

Over the past decade, I have begun to explore C. G. Jung's legacy in the context of sociocultural change, mainly in educational and organizational settings. As the reader will pick up, this is not easy terrain to navigate, particularly for me, given that the primary focus of my research and teaching has centered on ideas rooted in the Russian social psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, as well as grounded in the findings of social psychology and applied linguistics. Furthermore, my scholarship, to date, has more or less stayed within the conventional conceptions of research methodology: both quantitative and qualitative. Mainstream academia has left depth psychology behind, save for literary criticism, and even in psychoanalytic studies, C. G. Jung's thought lags far behind that of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. Modern higher education has primarily been driven by practical questions of *what* and *how*. Fundamental human questions of the elusive *Why?* are increasingly commonly relegated to Schools of Arts and Humanities, which have come under threat lately within the trend toward technical and vocational conceptions in academe.

The fundamental challenge posed in this work centers on putting the *why* together with the *what* and *how* of personal and cultural change. The more I have studied educational and organizational reform, the more my traditional rootedness in the dominant empiricist epistemologies of change have been offset by unexpected results that beg questions of why. In fact, where we look at questions of what or how, the data often point a trickster finger back at us: "Why?" Lines scramble into circles and spirals, small interventions produce

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Jung found this saying in Erasmus's Adagia: "Vocatus atque non vocatus deus aderit" (Bidden or not bidden, God is present).

Introduction xxi

huge changes, and in the case of teacher development, a tremendous amount of pre-professional development falls apart the instant teaching candidates sign a contract for their first teaching job. In the face of pressures to conform, I have seen many promising reflective practitioners cave into the more custodial concerns of school administrations.

Why is transformative change so elusive? There is a common cliché in educational research and methodology: "It's a mile wide and an inch thick." Shallow questions of how change occurs result in shallow constructs that paint impossibly reductive, linear, and usually confirmed ('data-driven') models that tell us extraordinarily little of the richness underneath the number crunches. In both qualitative and more complex statistical modeling, the data has been revealed to be in a dance; this dance of *emergence* seems to suggest deeper and more dynamic connectedness between the variables. Without getting too far ahead of ourselves, these dancers around the system, be it culture or cognition (or both), have been given such exotic names as 'strange attractors,' 'repellors,' and 'connected growers' that promote development and potential for growth and 'basins of attraction' draw us back to the status quo. Such terms, which recall the archetypes, suggest an imaginal richness normally shunned in the mainstream, and they point to an epistemological fullness that cries out for the depth of Jung's psychology.

At first glance, Jung's legacy presents promising and compelling answers to questions of why, and contrary to popular conceptions, they may hold the balance between the realms of fact and meaning. It is not accurate to write off Jung's interest in alchemy and religious traditions as originating from an uncritical perspective. A return to Jung, however, does present a number of complications. Jung was notoriously ambivalent about his legacy, and we will see this revealed in his fundamental distrust of all things collective that often led him to talk to himself rather than to submit his thought to communities of inquiry, save for the Eranos Conference and his admirable interviews with thinkers representing a variety of cultures and traditions worldwide, from yoga gurus to tribal elders. At the end of the day, Jung was an introvert who held the greater social milieu with a raised eyebrow, if not with utter contempt. The resulting binary between mind and milieu is currently being worked through in what I would call a cultural turn in Jungian studies, as evidenced in the rise of scholarship centered on cultural complexes and trauma. To stay with the Jung Classic brand will not do; it does not measure up to the emergentist move in natural and social sciences. Consequently, I will introduce the spirit of Jung to perspectives that are less hostile to socially situated approaches to cognition.

So, how do we re-vision Jung as blending the binary? According to Rowland (2002), in spite of the fact that Jung's thought emerged to compensate for binary thinking, a product of the Enlightenment's pervasive influence on Western

xxii Introduction

civilization, he himself was bound to it. Rafael López-Pedraza (1990; 2000a), in analyzing Jung's particular variety of cultural anxiety, affirmed that Jung failed to hold the tension between his Swiss brand of Protestantism, and the pagan-polytheistic side of his psyche. Calling ours the Age of Titanism, López-Pedraza suggested that we are all tethered to this sort of polarized thinking, which is rooted in monotheism and taken to the extremes, thanks to this all-or-nothing vortex of excess and vacuity rooted in the Titanic. Nevertheless, a mantha of Titanism opens unforeseen gateways, holes in the whole, and we would not be honoring Jung's legacy without going into the areas of greatest resistance.

In light of the current dominant position of Marxist-materialist and postmodern critique, it may be rightly argued that Jung and his legacy no longer have a place in scholarly discourse (Jensen, 2004). To the contrary, Paglia (2006) insists that Jung still has academic credentials, arguing that "his archetypes constitute the universal tropes and basic structures of epic, drama, folklore, and fairy tale" (p. 7). Furthermore, she is critical of feminist critique in the Freudian line. <sup>13</sup> Whether we base our inquiry on concrete, material facts or rational deductions, I am open to both interpretations, and furthermore, my hope is that by the last page of this book I will have convinced the reader that the stances are not contradictory at all. As a scholar of Soviet social psychologist Lev Vygotsky, I could look back on my own development as carried along an empirically grounded dialogic of semiotic tools that have steered my socialization. Or, in a Jungian and Levinian sense, I could ascribe some sublime alterity beyond my ego that guides this mental handiwork. Strictly following the prevailing zeitgeist in Jungian and archetypal psychology, I would honor the image and not corrode it with such things as notions and concepts. Following Vygotsky and mainstream educational research, I would not hesitate a bit to submit the image to the full measure of logical reduction and reduce that image to a trope. Neither extreme will do. The archetypal material of psychological and cultural change rises to something more than clichés, but I make no pretense that it rises to the rigor of scientific inquiry in the strictest sense. By the time I finished drafting this book, it was clear to me that such pristine adherence to one extreme or another is exactly what was being worked out in its production. Imagination and logic, as with a billion other binaries that pervade the Western psychological and cultural project, are ripe for blending.

In invoking the *coniunctio*, it is important to point out that the scholarly ground on which the *mysterium* was advanced has shifted. For example, the feminine has rightly claimed its authorship principle of mediation from the winged-foot male Olympian, and the feminine, itself, has been wrested from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> "British and American academic feminists took up French Freud via the pretentiously convoluted Lacan instead" (Paglia, 2006, p. 7).

Introduction xxiii

literal, biological reductions as the 'Male-Other' (Rowland, 2002). In agreement with Marlan (2005), the position adopted here is that the *mysterium* renders not empirically factual, static product; rather the emphasis is on dynamic, emergent process. In other words, the blending of opposites never renders a fixed product; it is always spinning, or in the Sanskrit sense of *mantha* as churning. In fact, because the Sanskrit *mantha* alchemy is free of the binary baggage associated with the *coniunctio*, it opens new hermeneutical spaces for this cultural turn after Jung. As with any growth, there must be sacrifice and pain;  $^{14}$  accordingly, it is important to point out that both the *coniunctio* and the various morphological variations of ma(n)th- suggest a high price for transformative personal and cultural change: churn, burn, split, death, slaughter, whisking away... a metaphorical maze that reminds us that change is hard. Very hard. That said, as pointed out in the preface as regards the variations of ma(n)th (inclinations of math- toward the masculine and mantha toward the feminine), it does not have to be violent.

The tension of opposites inherent in the conjunctio and relevant to our sense of mantha, necessarily leads to border crossings, collisions with the other sides of poles, a phenomenon Jung (1990/1921, p. 426) referred to as enantiodromia. Enantiodromia, the eruption into consciousness of one side's other, resonates with the pramantha, churning out a spark where the soul needs a "wake-up call." Enantiodromia is engaged whenever we step out of known ways of interpreting and negotiating meaning and into others. Anyone who has dedicated a significant amount of time and effort in adapting to another language and its cultures will attest to an onslaught of binaries: individualistic and collectivistic, conquerors and colonized, to name but a few. What is this fundamental binary that pervades Western psychology and sociology? The human species seems prone to go to extremes. As conveyed in the cauldron's Tao image and the *mantha*, this binary may not be driven by some tangible, stable structure, but rather an energetic, emergent process. Borrowing from the New Physics, let us call it that particle AND (as opposed to 'or') wave phenomenon. What if there really is no binary? What if alleged opposites, rather than constituted as fundamental, are instead seen as a prima materia in need of cultivation? As Jung asserted: "everything rests on an inner polarity; for everything is a phenomenon of energy. Energy necessarily depends on a preexisting polarity, without which there could be no energy" (1966, pp. 74-75). There is a lot of generative energy in this *conjunctio*, and quite possibly, therein lies a way out of the decay and destruction that are the byproducts of a West lost to extremes.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> "There is no coming to consciousness without pain" (Jung, Baynes, & Baynes 1928/2006, p. 193).

xxiv Introduction

In Promethean (or *Pramathian?*) defiance of warnings in analytical and archetypal psychology to the contrary, we dare to go through the door to the East opened by Gier and (pra)mantha this tension of belonging and branching off in Western narratives. By dint of enantiodromia, anywhere a polarity emerges, there is the perfect place for a mantha. Starting with the premise that there is still value in Jung's project, this work takes aim at the one-sided anti-Titanic, anti-collective threads in (post-) Jungian thought and supports emergent studies of cultural complexes and trauma. Those *ancestral elements* that Jung uncovered in his dream cellar<sup>15</sup> are still very much present and we need to follow those presences—the living archetypes—with fresh insight and imagination and open to the possibility that archetypes are not static structures but rather energies that emerge along the rhizome of psyche and culture.

An interdisciplinary hermeneutic is helpful as a de-centering tool, opening up a blending Other to rock the West's essentialist "Self-Same" binary off its axis. Likewise, we seek to expand and de-center Jungian and archetypal conceptions of psychological and cultural change, submitting them to the mantha. Whether it serves as a linguistic and cultural benchmark, given that this manth- morpheme and its variants are evidence that the Promethean engine of the West was, albeit errantly, fueled by Eastern meanings.

So, this *mantha* (churn) or blending of the Western binary follows a structure that reflects Teilhard de Chardin's (1959/2008) rhizome metaphor for evolution. Accordingly, having established the alchemical connections between East and West, the book is structured to subsequently reflect further on the cultural turn after Jung. Focusing on cultural complexes and traumas, we will broadly outline related symptoms in contemporary Western contexts because it makes sense, however imperfect, to 'do the work' prior to writing off any attempts to deepen our inquiry.

The following chapters then closely examine Western roots in Greco-Roman mythology, with a focus on the emergence of the first binaries, including Olympians vs. Titans, patriarchs vs. matriarchs, and heroes vs. monsters. A closer examination of Titans and monsters will reveal early cracks in Western binaries that continue to radiate through the rise of Western civilization after Greece and Rome.

From there, we will branch out into current epistemologies of psychological development, pedagogy, and ways to better navigate the increasing speed with which technology and innovation transform personally and culturally, sometimes blurring lines between creativity and innovation. Greco-Roman

 $<sup>^{15}</sup>$  We will explore this material further on, in more depth; the term has origins in a 1925 lecture (Jung, 1925/1989, p. 36) and is based on a dream involving a cellar.

Introduction xxv

concepts like the One and the Many, Titanism, Mythos and Logos will likewise be paired with more modern academic concepts and constructs from a diversity of disciplines.

Finally, a Pratimantha (afterword of sorts) will broadly reflect on the major concepts we have subjected to the mantha. Accordingly, new directions will emerge, including a possible place at the table for depth psychology in the discourse on transdisciplinarity.

With the cultural turn after Jung in mind, this is a book about change in blended perspective. As you "churn" the pages, submitting your own experiences of personal and social change to the *mantha*, I have no doubt that new and unanticipated possibilities and directions for this discourse will emerge.

# PAGES MISSING FROM THIS FREE SAMPLE

#### androgyny, 19 Α antecedent variables, 144, See Abjection, 66, See Kristeva, Julia Diffusion of Innovations Acmon, 26 antisemitism, 5, See cultural Activity Theory, 103, 153, See complex Vygotskyan, See Sociocultural Aphrodite, 81, See Olympians Theory Apollo, 27, 34, 55, 70, 152, 158, See adaptation, 18, 153, 154, 155, 156, Olympians 157, 158, 159, 160, 162 archetypal, 12, See archetype Aeschylus, xii, 30, 31, 32, 34, 40, archetypal psychology, xii, xxii, 2, 43, 44, 46, 59 25, 27, 29, 34, 41, 56, 60, 74, 75, Affordances, 115, See Ecological-76, 84, 96, 147 Semiotic Linguistics archetype, 10, 23, 44, 54, 56, 64, 72, African. See African Americans 75, 76, 81, 104, 127, 134, 145, African American, 5, 14, See 166 African-American cultural Aristotle, 26 trauma, See African-American, Aristetolian, 101 See African Arjuna, 75, See Africanized, 4, See African Artemis, 27, 75, See Olympians Afro-Caribbean, 16 Asimov, Isaac, 72, 85, 171 Age of Reason, 95, See rationalism Asuras, xii, xvi, 141, 187 Agni, xiv, 37, 42, 141, 187 Athena, 87, See Athene Agnyādheya, xii Athene, 44, 45, 46, 55, 63, 64, 65, agora, 24, 39, See Themis 73, 75, 87, 142, 148, 159, See Agora (Themis), 147 Olympians Athens, 73, 74, 89 alchemist, 114, 135, See alchemy alchemy, xi, xviii, xxi, xxiii, 2, 20, Atlas, 76, See Titans Authentication, 111, 117, 122, 128, 25, 60, 91, 96, 104, 107, 113, 131, 132, 135, 141, 165, 166, See Integration Model 167, 168, 169, 175, 176, 177, 179 authoritarian, 8, 10, 14, 164 authoritarian complex, 10, See Alcioneus, 55, See Gigantes Alien ship, 67 Authoritarian Aliens, 69, See Cameron, James autonomy, 47, 95, 111, 112, 126, Analytical psychology, 3, 22, See 178

Aztec, 12, 13

Jung, C. G.

**Empire** 

ancient Roman, 87, See Roman

## $\mathbf{B}$

basins of attraction, xxi, See Dynamic Systems Theory bearded mothers, 54, See monsters Benjamin, Walter, 78 Bhabha, 121, 131, 171 binary, xi, 4, 9, 16, 22, 37, 38, 45, 75, 92, 95, 104, 105, 128, 131, 150, 161, 168, 169 binary (Western), ix, x, xi, xii, xx, xxi, xxiii, xxiv, 1, 13, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 47, 48, 50, 51, 56, 58, 61, 65, 73, 87, 89, 96, 132, 133, 134, 138, 147, 153, 159, 162, 165 blended, xix, xxv, 43, 58, 76, 95, 96, 145, 153, 155, 162 Bloom's Taxonomy, 104 border, xxiii, 11, 14, 19, 66, 124 Borges, Jorge Luis, 15 Brewster, Fanny, 3, 4, See Africanized, African Brooks, David, 126 Brotherhood (the), 15 Butterfly Effect, 136, See Dynamic Systems Theory

#### $\mathbf{C}$

Campbell, Joseph, 69, 86

Cantigas, 60, See Madonna

Cartesian Rationalism, 96, See
rationalism

Celmis, 26

Celtic, 16

Chilean isolation complex, 10, See
Cultural Complexes

Chomsky, Noam, 18, 92, 93

Christian Church, 75, See
Christianity

Christianity, 75

churning, 133, See Mantha Cicero, 77 Circe, 89, 167 Claremont de Castillejo, Irene, 64, 65, 172 classical Greece, 73, See ancient Greece CofP, 117, See Community of Practice cogito, ix, 1, 17, 18, 20, 48, 60, 63, 91, 96, 97, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105, 111, 113, 169, See Descartes coincidentia oppositori, 11, See Coniunctio Collective (the), x, xxi, xxiv, 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 39, 44, 48, 50, 70, 75, 94, 95, 96, 99, 103, 105, 114, 115, 118, 119, 125, 127, 130, 133, 135, 136, 145, 147, 150, 152 Collective Complex, 150, See Collective (the) collective unconscious, 5 Community of Practice, 108, 112, 116, 117, 120, 121, 122, 127, 158, See Lave and Wenger Community of Practice, 108 competencies, 117, 122, 128, See Integration Model Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS), 153, 156, 181, See CAS Conant, J. B., 138 coniunctio, xi, xv, xviii, xxii, xxiii, 17, 21, 24, 28, 33, 38, 49, 51, 63, 81, 110, 121, 133, 138, 141, 153, 159, 162, 168, 169 connected growers, xxi contra naturam, 10, 18, 84, 148 contrasexual, 19, 165

Core Integration, 116, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 135, See **Integration Model** Cortez, 12, 13 Crafter, 147 Creative Problem Solving, 143, 144, 155, 158, *See* Creativity Creative Studies, 118, 143, 144, 153, 162, See Creativity creativity, 9, 14, 48, 56, 67, 77, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 170, 181, 184 Creed, 31, 40, 63, 65, 66, 67, 70, 73, 85 Cronos, 7, 27, 28, 30, 40, 41, 45, 48, 56, See Titans CS, 155, See Creative Studies CsofP, 108, See Communities of Practice, See Communities of Practice Cuauhtémoc, 13, See Mexican cultural trauma cultural anxiety, 15, 16, See López-Pedraza cultural change, xii, xx, xxii, xxiii, 23, 143 cultural complex, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 14, 150 Cultural Complex, 7, 8 cultural complexes, xxi, xxiv, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 47, 51, 53, 54, 72, 82, 83, 84, 89, 95, 96, 107, 130, 136, 165, See Cultural Complex cultural disarmament, 92, See Raimon Panikkar cultural trauma, 9, 11, 18 Cultural Trauma, 8 culture, ix, x, xii, xvii, xix, xxi, 1, 2, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23,

26, 30, 33, 34, 45, 51, 53, 56, 69, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 84, 87, 91, 92, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 109, 110, 111, 113, 121, 122, 124, 126, 128, 129, 132, 134, 136, 137, 151, 152,154, 155, 156, 158 cultured man, 18, 20, 137, See Jung, C. G. Cupid, 72, See Eros

#### D

Cyclopes, 27, 41, 55

Dactyls, 26, 55, See Titans Daimon, 8, See Daimon-protector Daimones, 7, 56 Daimon-Protectors, 7, See cultural complexes Daimons, 7, See Daimones Damnameneus, 26 De contempt mundi, 57, See Pope Innocent III death mothers, 76, See Great Mother Death of a Salesman, 126 Delphi, 34 Descartes, 1, See cogito Deucalion, 40 diachrony, xvii, 81, 82 Diffusion of Educational Adaptations Model, 157, See Warford Diffusion of Innovations Model. 144, See DIM, See Innovation Dike, 44 DIM, 144, See Diffusion of Innovations Model Dionysian, 17, See Dionysus Dionysus, 10, 17, 28, 63, 83 Dobson, 118, 119, 124, 125, 133, 137

Doña Marina, 13, See Malintzín, See Malinche Doom, 39 Dörnyei, Zoltan, 127 dragon, 71, See Monsters DST, 76, See Dynamic Systems Theory duende, 147, See Dionysian, López-Pedraza, Rafael Dynamic Systems Theory, 76

#### $\mathbf{E}$

Earth (the), 27, 34, 54, 56, 57, 61, 66 Earth Mother, 67, See Great Mother, See Gaia Earthly, 57, See Earth Eastern, xii, xxiv, 84, 165 Ecological-Semiotic Linguistics, 119, See van Lier, Leo Educational reform, 1, See educational change ego, xix, xxii, 7, 19, 23, 25, 43, 48, 75, 87, 96, 98, 112, 113, 118, 123, 126, 127, 130, 131, 134, 135, 151 Elemental, 29, See titanism Ellison, 15, See African-American cultural trauma empirical, 94, See empiricism Empiricism, 92, 93 enantiodromia, xxiii, 20, 125, 126 engagement, 111, 122, 128, See Integration Model Engineers, 61, 63, 64 Enlightenment, xxi, 4, 16, 20, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 91, 93, 94, 95, 96, 110, 132, 133, 151 Eros, 72, 148 E-SL, 103, See Ecological-Semiotic Linguistics

excess (Gigantes), 55 excess (Littau), 37, 38, 160, 165 excess (patriarchy), 51 excess (titanic), 17, 25, 26, 29, 49, 74 excess (Zeus Order), 65 Exodus 20:5, 8, *See* Old Testament

## F

fascistic, 48, See fascism Father Birth, 56, 141, See patriarchy Father Right, 56, See patriarchy feminine (the), xx, xxii, 9, 28, 30, 51, 54, 58, 59, 61, 63, 66, 69, 70, 75, 79, 81, 85, 86, 148, 159 feminist, xx, xxii, 13, 19, 26, 46, 49, 50, 51, 61, 72, 87, 94, 159 fidelity, 78, 79, See translation (monstrous) foreignization, 79, See translation (monstrous) foreignized, 79, See Other (the) foresight, 45, 49, 50, 51, 163 FourSight, 158, See Creative Problem Solving Frankenstein, 58, 60, 61, 63, 64, 68, 81, 82, 83, 84, 107, 149, See Shelley, Monstrous Freak, 81 Freud, Sigmund, xx, xxii, 5, 32, 40, 48, 50, 65, 70, 80, 94, 146 Freudian, xxii, 9, 62, 65, 66, 70, See Freud, Sigmund futurism, 33, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 49, 50, 154

## G

Gaia, 26, 32, 33, 34, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 51, 53, 55, 56, 58, 60, 61, 63,

64, 65, 68, 69, 76, 79, 80, 85, 88, 134 Gaia-Themis, xviii, 45, 46, 51, 58, 74, 141, 169, See Great Mother García Lorca, Federico, 152 Ge Themis, 34, See Gaia-Themis, Themis Geertz, Clifford, 99 gender, 19, 26, 31, 51, 53, 61, 75, 81, 85, 88, 133, 134, 135, 172 General Medical Society of Psychotherapy, 5 Gerson, 13, 14 Giegerich, Wolfgang, xix, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 41, 48, 49, 59, 61, 65, 94, 95, 98, 111, 119, 129, 131, 132, 133, 134, 151, 152, 154, 159, 162, 164 Gier, Nicholas, xii, xxiv, 27, 31, 33, 44, 63, 64, 148, 165 Gigantes, 26, 53, 55, 63, *See* (the) monstrous Gigantomachia (Gigantomachy), 53, 54, 55, 66, 69, 76, See (the) monstrous global. See Globalization global humanities, 15 Globalization, 7, 80 gothic feminine, 50, 59, 60, See Rowland, Susan Great Mother, 30, 43, 45, 49, 53, 58, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 68, 70, 76, 77, 78, 79, 85, 86, 87, 148, 163, See Gaia Great Mothers. See (The) Great Mother great room, 3, See Cultural

Complexes

Greco-Roman, xii, xx, 9, 53, 58, 60,

67, 69, 72, 73, 80, 87, 146 Greek myth. *See* Greek mythology Greek mythology, 31, 34, 85, *See*Mythology
Greek polytheistic pantheon, 15, *See* polytheism
griffins, 54, *See* Monsters

#### Η

habitat, 115, See Ecological-Semiotic Linguistics harpies, 54, See Monsters Harrison, 7, 23, 26, 33, 34, 39, 40, 44, 46, 48, 64, 87 Hecate, 47, 76, 167, See hecaterian hecaterean. See Hecate hecaterian. See Hecate Hegel, xix Hegelian. See Hegel Heidegger, 97 Heideggerian, 97, See Heidegger Helios, 27, See Titans Henderson, 3 Hephaestus, 26, 33, 63, 67, 142, 148, 151, 159, *See* Olympians Hephaistian. See Hephaestus Hephaistian monstrosity Hephaestus. See Monstrous, Olympians Hephaistos. See Hephaestus Hera, 30, 31, 33, 46, 55, 63, 67, 70, 75, 76, 148, *See* Olympians Herakles, 33, 55, 69, 72, See Heroes Hercules. See Herakles Hermaphrodite, 19 Hermes, 19, 33, 39, 42, 43, 81, 141, 158 hero's journey, 71, 81, See heroic, See Heroes Herodotus, 165 heroes, 24, 30, 48, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 134

heroic, 48, 68, 70, 71, 72, 75, 76, 86, 98 heroic ego. See Heroes heroism. See heroic Hesiod, 44, 53, 85 Hidden Third, 18, 59, 104, 132, 168, 169 hieros gamos, 188 higher education, xx, 138 Hillman, James, 2, 8, 16, 18, 24, 25, 27, 41, 49, 50, 59, 60, 74, 75, 84, 96, 98, 99, 101, 124, 125, 135, 147 Hitler, 4 Homer, 34, 39, 44, 48, 89 Homeric, 55, 75, See Homer Homeric Hymns. See Homer homonomy (vs. autonomy), 47, 126 horror, 51, 54, 58, 65, 66, 67, 70, 77, 79, 80, 87, 148 human capital, 137, See Marxism Humanities (the), xx, 89 hybrid, 54, 55, 69, 79, 80, 81, 85, 86, 87, 89 Hymn of the Kouretes, 7, 32, 33, 46 hypermasculinity, 29, See Titans

#### I

Identification, 121, 127

Iliad, 39, 46, 48, 75

imaginative academic critique,
 135, See Paglia, Camille
individuation, 1, 2, 15, 17, 18, 19,
 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 50, 69, 70, 72,
 75, 76, 80, 86, 88, 93, 94, 96, 97,
 99, 100, 105, 107, 111, 114, 125,
 126, 133, 135, 152, 165, See
 Jung, C. G.
Industrial Age, 60, 61, 62, 148, 151

Inner Core Authentication, 129, See Integration Model innovation, xii, xvii, xxiv, 1, 24, 41, 45, 47, 48, 62, 67, 77, 124, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 170, 177, 181, 182, 184 innovative. See innovation Innovator. See innovation integration, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 84, 88, 89, 91, 92, 95, 98, 99, 100, 103, 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 137, 138, 144, 164 Integration Hypothesis (the), 116 Integration Model, 97, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 128, 139, See integration Introjection, 105 Invisible man, 15 Irigaray, Luce, 37, 38, 47, 66, 132, 166, 175 Ixion, 4

## J

Jeremiah 31:29, 8, See Old

Testament

145, 146, 151, 152, 155, 156, 158, 162, 165, 175, 176, 179 Jünger, Friederich Georg, 16, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 41, 42, 45, 47, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 64, 76, 80, 138, 148, 149, 150, 151, 154, 156, 162, 163, 164 Jungian, ix, xii, xxi, xxii, xxiv, 3, 4, 5, 9, 15, 19, 22, 23, 26, 28, 31, 45, 56, 58, 67, 70, 81, 84, 86, 88, 89, 93, 96, 100, 101, 104, 105, 110, 111, 118, 125, 126, 129, 131, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 144, 145, 146, 147, 150, 151, 152, 153, 156 (Post-) Jungian, 22, 97, 138 Jupiter. See Zeus

#### K

Kabeiro, 26, See Great Mother Kabeiroi, 26, 30, 50, 55, 57, 142, See Titans Kant, Immanuel, xix, 93 Kantian. See Kant, Immanuel katabasis, 110 katastrophe,, 131 Kerényi, Carl, 26, 29, 30, 31, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 60, 62, 63, 73, 141 Kimbles, 3, 7, 8, 14, 21, 22, 110, 130 Kipling, Rudyard, 129, 130 Kirsch, 5, See Cultural Complex Kourete, 7, 33, 46, 47, See Cultural Complexes Kramsch, Claire, 131 Kristeva, Julia, 45, 66 Kristevan, 40, See Kristeva, Julia Kronos. See Cronos Kugler, Paul, ix, xvii, 146

#### L

La Llorona, 73, See monstrous feminine La Serrana, 73, See monstrous feminine Lacan, Jacques, xx, xxii, 40, 69, 70 Lacanian. See Lacan, Jacques Lave and Wenger, 107, 108, See Communities of Practice legitimate peripheral participation, 119, See Communities of Practice Lehr-Rottman, 10, See cultural trauma Levinas, Emmanuel, xix, 48, 143 Levinian. See Levinas Levi-Strauss, Claude, 146 Leviticus 19:33, 8, See Old Testament Leviticus 19:34, 8, See Old Testament LGBT, 19 limes, 11, 165, See cultural trauma Linkage Model, 155 literal, 78 literalness. See literal (translation) Littau, Karin, 37, 38 Logos, 16, 60, 61, 62, 162, 164, See rationalism Logos-Mythos continuum. See Logos López-Pedraza, Rafael, xxii, 2, 6, 15, 16, 17, 19, 25, 28, 30, 34, 41, 43, 44, 49, 56, 60, 75, 76, 81, 124, 126, 134, 136, 147, 149, 151, 158 Luna, 46, 133

## M

machismo, 10, 13, *See* Cultural Anxiety

MacIntyre, 157 Metamorphoses (Ovid), 46, 72, 88, Madonna, 14, 60, See Great 180 Mother Metamporphoses (Ovid), 72 Malinche, 12, 13, 14 Mexico, 12, 13, 83, 171 malinchista complex, 13, 14, See Michán, 12, 13 Cultural Complexes Middle Passage, 14, See African Americans, See African-Malintzín. See Malinche mantha, iii, x, xvi, xvii, xxiii, xxiv, American cultural trauma xxv, 2, 10, 18, 26, 28, 37, 38, 43, milieu, 20, See Collective (the) 45, 49, 51, 53, 69, 75, 76, 82, 89, Miscegenation, 12 91, 92, 95, 97, 100, 104, 107, misogyny, 75, See Patriarchal Moctezuma, 12, 13, See Mexican 110, 111, 125, 128, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, cultural trauma Modernism, 134, 145 141, 142, 145, 155, 159, 162, 163, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, Mogenson, Greg, xix, 85, 94 Moira, 45, 48, 87, See Great 187, Mantle Integration'. See Mother, See Moirae Integration Model Moirae, 46, See Moira monotheism, xxii, 8, 9, 16, 23, 25, Many (the), 3, 9, 21, 40, 46, 47, 48, 51, 59, 60, 83, 85, 86, 92, 95, 100, 41, 48, 49, 50, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 63, 64, 69, 75, 79, 131, 132, 134, 133, 134, 135, 138, 145, 147, 164, 167 150, 174 mare tenebrosum, 156 monotheistic, 58, See monotheism Marlan, Stantan, xi, xviii, xxiii, 6, monsters, 24, 53, 69, 70, 72, 73, 76, 47, 89, 104, 113, 143, 166, 168, 79, 85, 86, 134, 142 169, 179 monstr-, 77, See monstrous (the Marxism, 10, 89, See cultural monstrous (the), xii, xx, 12, 26, 53, trauma 54, 55, 56, 58, 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, Marxist, 11, 96, 101, 103, 110, 134, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 150, 156 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, Mass movements, 4 148, 166 Mātariśvan, 42, 141 monstrous feminine, 89, See Mater, 69, See Great Mother feminine (the) monstrum, 82, See monstrous materialism, 89, 94, 96, 103 matriarchal feminine. See (the) moon, 30, 44, 165, See (the) feminine feminine matriarchy, 24, 32, 33, 69 Medusa, 27, 72, 87, 88, See Morgan, 4, 23 mortifactio, 131, See Alchemy Monsters Medusan horror. See horror Mother Complex, 78, See Great Memories, Dreams, and Mother Reflections. See Jung, C. G.

Mother Earth, 64, 85, See Great Mother Mother Nature, 62, See Great Mother Mother of Sorrows, 14, See African Americans Mother Russia, 10, See Russia mother tongue, 78, 79, 80, 81, See Great Mother motherhood, 55, See Great Mother mudroom, 3, See Cultural Complexes Myers-Briggs, 144, See Jung, C.G. mysterium coniunctionis, 20, 25, See coniunctio Mythologically, 154 Mythology, 147 Mythos, 16, 41, 49, 59, 61

#### N

Narcissism, 29 Narten, Johanna, iii, xvi, 42, 43, 180, 187, 188 National Socialism, 6, See antisemitism, See Nazism, See Nazi natural sciences, 94, See STEM Nature, 43, 45, 62, 79, 88, 114 Nazi, 5, 10 Nazism. See Nazi Neumann, Erich, 2, 3, 5, 9, 19, 30, 31, 33, 46, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 65, 67, 71, 75, 76, 85, 87, 92, 95, 110, 136, 147, 148, 162, 163, 165, 180 New World, 87 Nicolescu, Basrab, x, xiv, xviii, xix, 7, 9, 16, 22, 46, 59, 81, 91,

104, 131, 132, 150, 155, 161, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 180,

181, 184, *See*Transdisciplinary (Studies)
Noels, Kim, 101
Noll, Richard, 3
Nordic, 16

#### 0

Odyssey, 34, 39, 89 Okeanos, 27, 33, See Titans Old Testament, 8, 9, 41 Olympian, xii, xxii, 25, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 56, 58, 60, 75, 85, 148, Olympians, xii, 26, 27, 32, 33, 40, 54, 67, 71, 74, 88, 134, 141, 154 Olympic gods, 27, See Olympians Omega Point, 157, See Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre One and the Many, 1, 21, 24, 48, 49, 51, 83, 91, 130, 142, 162 Ong, Walter, 35, 36, 37, 80, 135, 160, 180 Opus Contra Prima Cultura, 2, 18, 84, 89, 95, 96, 107, 135, 136 Opus Oppositorum, 95 ordinance, 33, 40, 43, See Themis Osborne, Alex, 144, See Creativity Other (the), xii, xix, xx, xxiii, xxiv, 3, 8, 18, 19, 20, 23, 48, 51, 53, 59, 69, 75, 78, 79, 83, 84, 85, 97, 101, 105, 111, 120, 129, 135, 137, 164, 165 Othering, 19, 24, 53, 164, See Other (the) Otherness. See Other (the) Outer Core Integration, 112, 121, See Integration Model Ovid, 40, 46, 72, 86, 87, 88

## P Paglia, Camille, xviii, xxii, 5, 58, 135 panchrony, xvii, 81, 82 Pandora, 50, 64 Panikkar, Raimon, xix, xx, 1, 35, 49, 57, 91, 92, 150, 151, 160, 167, 172, 180 Pantheon, 16, 84 Parnes, Sidney, 144, See Creativity Paterson, 145, See Williams, William Carlos patriarchal. See patriarchy patriarchy, 9, 10, 14, 23, 24, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 41, 43, 44, 46, 48, 50, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 78, 79, 81, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 92, 148, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167 Peircean semiotics, 112 Peking Man, 145, See Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre Pentheus, 10, See cultural trauma perfektion, 150, 151, 156, 160, 161 Persephone, 46, 47, 80 phylogenesis, 102 Plato, 88, 181 Phaedrus, 88 Pliny the Elder, 54 Plutarch, 53 Pollina, Lory, ix, See Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre polytheism, 16, 25, 50, 60, 64, 131, 134 polytheistic, 16, 25, See polytheism Pope Innocent III, 57, See patriarchy

popolocas, 12, See Mexican cultural

trauma

Popovic and Popovic, 11 Porphyirion, 55, See Gigantes Poseidon, 27, See Olympians post-human, 82, 85 pramantha, xii, xiii, xxiii, 147 Pramantha, xiii, xv pratimantha. See mantha Pre-Columbian, 16 prima materia, xviii, xxiii, 88, 91 primitivistic, 5 Private speech, 121, See Sociocultural Theory Prohibition, 17, See Cultural Anxiety projection, 23, 24, 34, 43, 83, 111, 164 Promethean, xii, xxiv, 1, 17, 29, 42, 43, 44, 50, 61, 63, 70, 142, 157, 158, 163, See Prometheus Prometheus, xii, xiii, xiv, xv, xvi, xvii, 21, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 68, 73, 74, 76, 92, 124, 134, 141, 142, 147, 148, 149, 151, 154, 158, 159, 160, 163, 165, 167, 171, 177, 178, 182, 187, 188, See Titans Prometheus Bound, 30, 31, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 47, 59, *See* Aeschylus Prometheus Interactive Whiteboard. See Innovation. Prometheus Prometheus Unbound, xii Psyche, 19, 65, 71, 72, 76, 138 psychic wounds, 9, 10 psychopath, 125, See psychopathy, titanism psychopathy, 125, See psychopath puer, 43 Pyrrha, 40

Python, 55

## Q

Quaternity, 88, *See* Neumann, Erich Quebecois, 80, 82 Quetzalcoatl, 12

#### R

R&D. See Research and Development race biases, 4 radial, 51, See Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre rationalism, 59, 60, 91, 92, 93, 95, 98, 99, 101, 102, 103, 104, 110, 113, 116, 129, 133, 134, 136, 137, See Chomsky, Descartes reception (Raimon Panikkar), 66, 167 repellors, xxi Research, Develop and Disseminate, 142 Resistance Theory, 115, See Marxism Rhea, 7, 32, 46, 51, 54, 56, 60, See Great Mother rhizome, xxiv rhizomic, 97, See rhizome Rogers, Everett, 144, See Innovation Diffusion of Innovations, 144 Roman Empire, 11 Romantics, 41 Rousseau, 114 Rowland, Susan, xviii, xx, xxi, xxiii, 4, 5, 6, 16, 19, 23, 26, 32, 45, 47, 50, 59, 61, 70, 94, 95, 96, 127, 129, 132, 133, 134, 136, 152, 160, 181 Russia, 10, 48, 177

Ryan, Richard, 100, 101, 105, 111, 112, 116, 126, 128

#### S

Sanskrit, iii, xii, xxiii, 84 Schellinski, 8, 9, 18 School, 17, See education Scott, Ridley, 61, 64, 66 SDT, 101, See Self-Determination Theory Selene, 30, See Titans Self-Determination Theory, 100, 101, 109, 111, See SDT Semetsky and Ramey, 100, See education Shadow, 4, 18, 21, 23, 28, 131, See Jung, C. G. Shamdasani, 3 She-Bear, 11, See Ursa Major Shelley, Mary, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 82, 83, 84, 107 Singer, 3, 7, 8, 19, 21, 22, 24, 39, 51, 110, 130 Skinner, B. F., 92, 93 Sloan, Doug, x, xviii, xix, 135 smysl, 131, See Vygotsky, Lev sociocultural theory of mind, 22, 96, 100, See Vygotsky, Lev Socrates, 59, 88, 89 Sol, 133 Sommers, Claire, 88, See Monstrous Sophia, 58, 61, See Great Mother Sphinx, 54, 86, See Monsters Spiritual Mother, 86, See Sophia St Jerome, 78 Stein, 7, 55, 56, 61, 63, 67, 70, 148 STEM, 60, 123 strange attractors, xxi, 76, 159, 166, See Dynamic Systems Theory

Symbol, 97, See Jung, C. G. symbolic capability, 133, 137, See Integration Model symbolic competency, 112, 118, 121, 122, 128 synchrony, xvii, 81, 82 syzygy, 48

#### T

tangent, 166 tangential, 51, See Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre Tao, x, xi, xxiii, 135, 165 Tao(ism), 113 Tarde, Gabriel, 144 technical, 149, See Innovation technicalism, 156, 164 technician, 138, 148, 149, 163 technology, xxiv, 16, 24, 26, 41, 49, 57, 59, 64, 85, 149, 150, 151, 154, 155, 156, 158, 164 Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre, vii, ix, x, xix, xxiv, 1, 47, 76, 145, 146, 147, 154, 158, 166 *Teras*, 53, *See* Monstrous (the) Terrible Mother, 75, 79, 85 The Ecology Hypothesis, 113, See Integration Model the Many, xviii, xx, 1, 2, 37, 38, 45, 46, 53, 74, 89, 128, 131, 132, 137, 146, 159, 161, 162, 163 the One, 1, 12, 21, 24, 46, 47, 48, 51, 59, 83, 85, 91, 92, 95, 100, 107, 129, 130, 133, 134, 138, 142, 145, 147, 149, 162, 163, 165 the One and the Many, ix, xii, xviii, xix, 1, 2, 10, 20, 21, 36, 37, 38, 48, 69, 73, 74, 78, 91, 92, 107, 137, 141, 143, 161, 163, 165 the Self, 19, 83, 97, 126, 127, 147, 151, 165

The Strata Hypothesis, 116, See Integration Hypothesis (the) The Tempest, 87 Themides, 34, See Themis, See Themis Themis, xii, xvii, 21, 23, 26, 29, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 53, 58, 59, 60, 68, 92, 134, 142, 147, 154, 155, 159, See Gaia-Themis, See Great Mother Third Space, 18, 121, 122, 131, 133, 169 Thirdness (semiotics), 129 Thuric, xii, 188 Titan, 44, See titanism titaness, 44, See titanism Titanic, xxii, xxiv, 12, 17, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 34, 41, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 56, 58, 60, 61, 68, 83, 85, 89, 98, 149, 159, 164, See titanism titanic feminine, 65, See titaness titanic sweat, 151, See titanism titanism, xii, xxii, 15, 16, 17, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 41, 45, 49, 51, 53, 54, 57, 61, 65, 148, 150, 163, See Titanic Titanomachia, 26, See Titans, See titanism Titans, xii, 10, 17, 24, 26, 27, 28, 32, 34, 40, 53, 54, 55, 63, 83, 134, 137, 142, 149 tlatoani, 13 Toffler, 156 totalitarianism, 10 Toury, 82 transcendent function, ix, xi, 17, 20, 97, 114, 118, 121, 128, 131, 134, 135 transdisciplinary, xviii, xix, 46, 59, 81, 91, 154, 161, 166, 168, 169,

170

transdisciplinary (studies), xviii, 16, 18, 168, 180 transformative learning, 105, 118, 119, 124, 125 translation, 15, 17, 25, 57, 68, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 166, 173 translation studies, 168 trauma, xxi, xxiv, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 24, 54, 82, 83, 84, 95, 136, See cultural trauma trickster, xx Turner, 11 21st Century Learning Standards, 137 Typho, 88, See Typhon Typhon, 80, See Typhon-Teras

## U

Typhon-Teras, 67, 80, See Gigantes

un-Othering, 85, *See* Other (the) *Unus Mundus*, 100 Uranus, 26, 33, 41, 45, 48, 54, 55, 56 Ursa Major, 11 Urvashi, xiv, xviii, 28, 37, 131, 141, 170, 187

#### V

van Lier, 101, 102, 111, 112, 113, 115, 116, 118, 119, 133, 136

Vedic (Vedas), xii, xiv, xv, xvi, 2, 18, 28, 37, 42, 135, 141, 162, 187

Vehar, 152, 153

visionary, 113, 128, 129, 137, 152

Vygotsky, Lev, xx, xxii, 22, 96, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 109, 110, 118, 122, 128, 131, 133, 134, 136, 156

Vygotskyan, 101, 102, 125, See

Vygotsky, Lev

## W

War on Drugs, 17, See Cultural Anxiety Warford, Mark K., 47, 80, 123, 124, 157, 182 Web of Inclusion (Sally Helgesen), 157 Webster, Noah, 80, 81, 82, 98 West, x, xi, xii, xxiii, xxiv, 1, 8, 9, 17, 20, 24, 26, 27, 28, 48, 50, 58, 60, 74, 84, 94, 98, 130, 164, 165 Western, ix, x, xii, xx, xxi, xxii, xxiii, xxiv, 2, 4, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 45, 46, 48, 50, 56, 57, 59, 60, 69, 78, 79, 83, 84, 85, 87, 91, 134, 136, 146, 147, 148, 165, 166 Western civilization, xxii, 23 Western culture, 56, See Western civilization Western psyche, 4 wholeness, 19, 164, 165 Williams, William Carlos, 145, 161 Wilson, E. O., xvi, 93, 143, 146, 147, 167, 184 Wise Counselor, 60, See Themis womb, 63, See feminine Wotan, 130, See Jung, C. G.

## X

xenophobia, 10

## Z

Zentralblatt für Psychotherapie, 5 Zeus, 7, 10, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 47, 48, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 87, 89, 149, 159, See Olympians

Zeus Order, 60 znachenie, 131, See Vygotsky, See Vygotsky, Lev Zoja, 12, See Mexican cultural trauma