













The layers of existence are far too extensive than being circumscribed within the territorial integrity of signs. Jung goes beyond the limitations of the reading of our perceived reality through signs and highlights the significance of understanding a new and yet independent realm of existence, meaning making and sensibility i.e. the realm of symbols.

Illustrating the unreality of our reality, Tacey (2006) writes,

Our minds are conditioned to think that only what we can see and touch is real, but Jung questioned this view, and his psychology is a challenge to our understanding of reality. Jung was an unsettling thinker, because he introduced the notion that the evidence of our sense is illusory, and that common sense is nothing more than a construct of external conditioning. (12)

Revolutionizing the modes of thinking, Jung challenges the absolutism of the scientific discourse and their monarchical manifestations in endorsing the validity of the truth through logical positivism and linear forms of thinking. He yearns for a genuine search for knowledge and wisdom and opens up the possibility of exploring the genius of inspiration and intuition as real modes of knowing and learning.

We have become rich in knowledge, but poor in wisdom. The centre of gravity of our interest has switched over to the materialistic side, whereas the ancients preferred a move of thought nearer to the fantastic type. To the classical mind, everything was still saturated with mythology. (quoted in Tacey, 2006, 15)

On Jung's vital message, Tacey (2006) writes:

We tend to think of myths and religions as 'untrue' and of dreams as 'distortions of reality. But for Jung they are expressions of a truth that is truer than literal truth.

This is Jung's vital message, linking him to the 'perennial philosophy' and to wisdom traditions that originate from Heraclitus, Socrates and Plato. Socrates said truth is not self evident, and Jung would agree. What we see, and what we seem, is not the whole truth. Our knowledge is not reliable; it is partial and undermined by the fact that the unconscious has a separate truth dimension, of which we are mostly oblivious. Ironically, deeper truth resides in what we habitually dismiss as illusion, fantasy, myth and distortion. This may be one reason why, in an age governed by science and logic, our entertainment is saturated with fantasy, mythic stories and legends: a compensatory process has risen in popular culture.

The reason we have lost access to the deeper truth, for Jung, is that we have lost access to the symbolic language that discloses it. Our world-blinded consciousness has made a successful adaptation to external reality, but the cost has been an atrophy of our symbolic life. (15)

A Jungian understanding of education leaps beyond the monosemy and univocity and searches for multiplicities of meaning while celebrating multiple ways of knowing. This

understanding can be embedded in lesson planning, instructional materials, curriculum development, policy making and teaching strategies. For this, Jung's project of symbols complies with Ricoeur's understanding of language where inventiveness, novelty, creativity, and innovation unfold their creational power through a language that goes beyond the sign and sign oriented limitations.

On the power of such sign-escapist language, Ricoeur (1991) writes,

*My philosophical project is to show how human language is inventive despite the objective limits and codes which govern it, to reveal the diversity and potentiality of language which the erosion of the everyday, conditioned by technocratic and political interests, never ceases to obscure. To become aware of the metaphorical and narrative resources of language is to recognize that its flattened or diminished powers can always be rejuvenated for the benefit of all forms of language usage. (465)*

A Jungian understanding of symbols helps the educators understand the power of intuition and inspiration in enriching the modes of expressiveness; it is through these powers that creativity unfolds itself. Jung (1971) pinpoints the significance of such powers:

Every creative individual whatsoever owes all that is greatest in his life to fantasy. The dynamic principle of fantasy is play, a characteristic also of the child, and as such it appears inconsistent with the principle of serious work. But without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of imagination is incalculable. (63)

Bruner (1986) presented the narrative metaphor in sociology and focused on the interpretation of text in its broadest sense; culture, itself, was considered a text with multifarious layers of meaning. On the relationship between experience, narrative and meaning, Bruner (1991) indicates that "we organize our experience and our memory of human happening mainly in the form of narrative-stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on" (4).



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Jungian presentation of symbols protests against the overarching idolization of science in its linear and empirical exclusive version and challenges the unquestionably established paradigms that foster nothing but the transformation of learners into objects of control and conditioning. As Jung states, any approach “that satisfies the intellect alone can never be practical, for the totality of the psyche can never be grasped by the intellect alone” (1953, 76). He explains,

It cannot be the aim of education, to turn out rationalists, materialists, specialists, technicians and others of the kind who, unconscious of their origins, are precipitated abruptly into the present and contribute to the disorientation and fragmentation of society. (quoted in Frey-Rohn, 1974, 182)

A challenge against the subjugation of signs and its reductionism can be tracked down in and among the voices that break the reliance on the signs enchainment.

Bellah, R., Madison R. and Sullivan W. M. (1991), for instance, refer to a wide gap

between technical reason, the knowledge with which we design computers or analyze the structure of DNA, and practical or moral reason, the ways we understand how we should live... What we need to know is not simply how

to build a powerful computer or how to redesign DNA but precisely and above all how to do with that knowledge. (44)

A Jungian understanding of symbols would facilitate the process of teaching and learning with more depth and vigilance; it would help educators and the learners to openly examine and explore the taken-for-granted assumptions and critically look at the construction of knowledge. This understanding becomes sensitive on how language creates, constructs, transforms, and positions.

Ha'iri (1992) questions the ubiquitous implications of signs and challenges the entrenchment of the sign oriented interpretation of knowing and their concentrated mobilization for searching the sensibility within the fences of linear form of thinking and logical positivism. He highlights the sensibility of mysticism as a way of understanding while substantiating and corroborating a wide spectrum of knowing. Ha'iri (1992) revolts against the Modern Western philosophy's exclusion of "claims of awareness from the domain of human knowledge" and substantiates the meaningfulness of what the Modern way of knowing brands "mere expressions of fervor or as leaps of imagination" (5).

When knowing is not just a gerund in the air, when knowing turns out to be in the words of Ha'iri Yazdi (1992) "being" and language becomes an "action" in the words of Habermas (1979), we may better understand the ontological aspect of signs in terms of their creation. With a focus on knowing as being, Ha'iri (1992) indicates,

...the inquiry into the nature of the relationship between knowledge and the knower can lead to the very foundation of human intellect where the word knowing does not mean any thing other than being. In this ontological state of human consciousness the constitutive dualism of the subject-object relationship is overcome and submerged into a unitary simplex of the reality of the self that is nothing other than self-object knowledge. From this unitary simplex, the nature of self-object consciousness can, in turn, be derived. (1)

According to Jung, with the expansion of signs and dissipation of symbols, fragmentation and disorientation grew with the ever increasing emergence of self-alienation. The disappearance of symbols from human life took away wholeness and thus fragmentation was associated with illness. Jung states,

It seems to me that, side by side with the decline of religious life, the neuroses grow noticeably more frequent. We are living undeniably in a period of greatest restlessness, nervous tension, confusion, and disorientation of outlook. (quoted in Tacey, 2006, 97)

On the spiritual dimension of healing and its connectedness to understanding the role of symbols, Jung says,

During the past thirty years, people from all the civilized countries of the earth have consulted me. Many hundreds of patients have passed through my hands, the greater number being Protestants, a lesser number Jews, and not more than five or six believing Catholics. Among all my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life.

It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill, because he had lost what the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook. This of course has nothing to do with a particular creed or membership of a church. (Psychotherapists or the Clergy, CW, 11, 490-509, quoted in Tacey, 2006, 85-86)

According to Jung, an education without attention towards the role and the implications of symbols, would lead to reductionism, parochialism, and consumerism. An understanding of the Jungian discourse of symbols would enhance the power of creativity and the gift of reflexivity. Jungian discourse of symbols would invite both the learner and the teacher to go beyond the mastery of signs and celebrate the mystery of symbols; it is a promising preamble to vivify the enthusiasm of searching for multiple ways of knowing and understanding.



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How can educators promote thinking if they are already enmeshed in limiting packages of signification? How can learners explore new horizons of thinking if they are extensively and frequently exposed to the availability and accessibility of the sign promoting discourses? How can the educational practices offer any depth if their layers of constitution are heavily ensconced in linear forms of engagement and positivist oriented approaches?

And how might learners learn to mindfully reconsider the correlation of the signifier and signified within the induced signification? If the learners are consistently influenced by the socially and politically imposed signified, can they search for the analysis of correlation between signifier and signified without being mindfully active?

On the description of some of these engagements, Lasn (1999) writes,

advertisements are the most prevalent and toxic of the mental pollutants. From the moment your radio alarm sounds in the morning to the wee hours of late-night TV, microjolts of commercial pollution flood into your brain at the rate of about three thousand marketing messages per day. Every day, an estimated 12 billion display ads, 3 million radio commercials, and more than 200,000 TV commercials are dumped into North America's collective unconscious. (18-19)

How can learners reflect on their positions and reexamine their connectedness socially, culturally and politically if they are bound to think through the sign inducing forms and orders?

A Jungian understanding of symbols brings awareness against the privatization of individuals, their placement into a universe of simulacra and their entrapment into the flamboyant spectacle that present themselves by the name of science.

Just as much as signs lead us to the ordinary transactions, recognition and understanding of symbols would provide profound reflexivity, deep contemplation and sensitivity towards the examination of modes of being. In the words of Tacey (2006) "The study of signs leads to semiotics, linguistics and discourse analysis. The study of symbols leads to mythology, religion and philosophy" (11).

Jung's discourse of symbols illustrates the vitality of poetry and poetic understanding; it illuminates the merit of intuition, inspiration, and mythical understanding. An understanding of Jung's symbols would explicate how a concentration on sign driven programs and their focus on linear thinking may divest the learners of voicing themselves and recognizing the value of their narratives, their "hills and valleys." It brings to life the inherent creativity that dwells within each individual, each child.

Political and utilitarian policy making seem to prefer and design sign driven educational programs where engagements in deep critical thinking and creative examination of the assumptions are not encouraged or marginalized.

Warning against sign inducing programs, Morgan (2002) argues,

As students start to question "texts in the world," they also begin to question "texts in the mind." They come to recognize that they are not necessarily the sole authors of "commonsense" beliefs but are instead subjects produced through language and discourse. Such forms of understanding, from a poststructural perspective, are necessary to imitate attention and action on social inequalities whose persistence is sustained by their seeming naturalness. (156)

Jungian understanding of signs would offer the promise inherent when understanding, interpretation, is driven not by reading signs, but engaging in symbols which are

metonymic, mysterious, generative, and polysemic.

To Ricoeur (1991) “it is the task of poetry to make words mean as much as they can and not as little as they can” (449). In and through poetry, one may say, language can be liberated from the constrictions of sign driven discourse, and new layers of reality can be revealed. Ricoeur (1991) argues that “through this recovery of the capacity of language to create and re-create, we discover reality itself in the process of being created. So we are connected with this dimension of reality which is unfinished” (462).

Speaking on the role of metaphor and the process of becoming for language, Ricoeur (1991) describes the language of poetry and its significant role in making the reality: “language in the making celebrates reality in the making” (462). Making a distinction between the language of ordinary speech where the signs have established their authority and the language of poetry in dealing with reality, he remarkably presents a striking characteristic of ordinary language versus the language of poetry,

And the rest of our language in ordinary speech and so on has to do with reality as it is already done, as it is finished, as it is there in the sense of the closedness of what is, with its meaning which is already asserted by the consensus of wise people. (Ricoeur, 1991, 462)

Ricoeur (1991, 85) propounds that “with metaphor we experience the metamorphosis of both language and reality.” He does not submit to the pervasive discourse of signs and its clamorous quest for defining the reality in sign inducing exegesis. He says,

We could say that in scientific language there is an attempt to reduce as much as possible this polysemy, this plurivocity to univocity: one word-one sense. But it is the task of poetry to make words mean as much as they can and not as little as they can. Therefore, not to elude or exclude this plurivocity, but to cultivate it, to make it meaningful, powerful, and therefore to bring back to language all its capacity of meaningfulness. (1991, 449)

Ricoeur (1991) identifies the imperialism of the discourse of signs:

If it is true that poetry gives no information in terms of empirical knowledge, it may change our way of looking at things, a change which is no less real than empirical knowledge. What is changed by poetic language is our way of dwelling in the world. From poetry we receive a new way of being in the world, of orienting ourselves in the world. Even if we say with Northrop Frye that poetic discourse gives articulation only to our moods, it is also true that moods as well as feelings have an ontological bearing. Through feelings we find ourselves already located in the world. In this way, by articulating a mood, each poem projects a new way of dwelling. It opens up a new way of being for us. (85)

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A symbol-oriented educational program would immensely appreciate the invaluable presence of art and literature while sign-oriented pedagogy would cunningly ignore them. In support for the presence of such symbol promoting programs and their implications, Jung (1966) indicates,

The great secret of art and the creative process consists in the unconscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find the way back to the deepest springs of life. (82)

The mastery of signs produces an education where *techne* replaces *phronesis* and the questions of ethics and values become superannuated except for the flirtations that can cuddle the leisure time of the sign players. The mastery of signs dehumanizes the individual and promotes consumerism, utilitarianism, intellectualism, absence, fragmentation, and reductionism.

The hegemony of the sign and its underlying quest for power tends to sustain and reproduce voices that support the hegemonic predominance; voicing against the constituent rules of this hegemony would be considered as one of the most supercilious acts; the subtle indoctrination of signs silences the questioning of the mastery of signs.

The mystery of symbols would celebrate the power of inspiration, heart and spirit, imagination and intuition, mysticism and unconsciousness. Symbols link the earth to the sky and the mind to the heart. The mystery of symbols echo the tintinnabulation of connectedness, wholeness, belonging and togetherness, it calls for transcendence, it moves toward above and is brim with awe.

A symbolic understanding of symbols would follow the avenues of mysticism, the meanders of wonder, the wild meadows of reflective imagination and the dialectic of mindfulness and heartfulness. A symbolic understanding of symbols would promise an act of creativity.

The act of creativity is not searching for the sameness, is not in pursuit of congruence or compatibility, and is not moving towards convergence. Creativity is not bound to coherence, cohesiveness, conformity, correspondence or consistency in a sign oriented

paradigm. Creativity may represent an act of revelation where things are revealed in light of creativity and unconsciousness as it can be an act of disclosure where things are cryptically and yet creatively presented. Creativity is not dutifully at the service of the recognized order as it is not respectful of the relationships and their establishment within the government of signs. Creativity may bring chaos and disorder but this chaotic situation is only as a result of a comparison between the act of creativity and the previously identified system of order within the plane of signs.

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