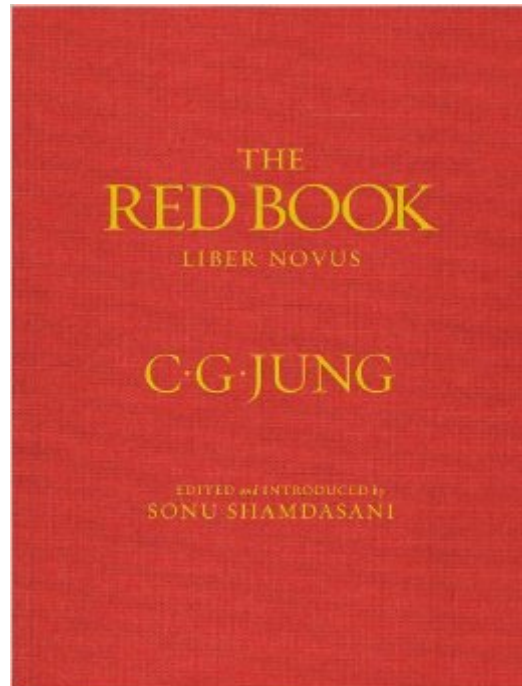


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The Red Book (Philemon)



Synopsis

The most influential unpublished work in the history of psychology. When Carl Jung embarked on an extended self-exploration he called his "confrontation with the unconscious," the heart of it was *The Red Book*, a large, illuminated volume he created between 1914 and 1930. Here he developed his principal theories of the archetypes, the collective unconscious, and the process of individuation that transformed psychotherapy from a practice concerned with treatment of the sick into a means for higher development of the personality. While Jung considered *The Red Book* to be his most important work, only a handful of people have ever seen it. Now, in a complete facsimile and translation, it is available to scholars and the general public. It is an astonishing example of calligraphy and art on a par with *The Book of Kells* and the illuminated manuscripts of William Blake. This publication of *The Red Book* is a watershed that will cast new light on the making of modern psychology. 212 color illustrations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 1913, a 40 year old world renowned psychologist suffers recurring dreams and visions of world catastrophe. His expertise as a psychiatrist working with incurable psychotics forces him to conclude that he is on a course to madness. His training as a scientist compels him to meticulously document what he imagines will be his unavoidable decline into insanity. With the outbreak of World War I, he experiences relief in the realization that the images that have haunted him over the prior ten months pictured not his own undoing, but that of the world. As the outer conflict unfolds, he

continues to record the process unfolding within his own psyche, which is reflective of the events in the larger collective. He continues the process until near the War's end, and then spends more than a decade devotedly elaborating, amplifying and illustrating the material that burst upon him during that time in order to render it comprehensible. The Red Book is not "personal" as we use that word now. It is "personal" in the sense that it details one individual's very unique experience of coming into relationship with what Jung termed the Self, and in prior times was referred to as God, but it is at the same time very impersonal, and actually universal, in cataloguing the drama inherent in any person's formation of that relationship. The book is at home with The Odyssey, The Divine Comedy, Goethe's Faust, and, as much as anything, The Red Book is Jung's response to Thus Spoke Zarathustra and to Nietzsche's proposition that for modern man, God is dead. The response is that God is neither dead nor to be found in outer religious, national or political containers, but is to be discovered and struggled with in the living of each individual life. A not uncommon dream is of stumbling upon a previously unknown addition or wing of one's dwelling, which addition is found to be many, many times the size of the existing structure, and to contain objects and treasures of previously unimaginable value, interest and numinosity. One is filled with awe and wonder at the new found wealth and possibilities. The experience of encountering The Red Book after spending 30 years in Jung's existing body of work is equally stupefying. That there could be so much more that Jung had to share and communicate about the human soul seems not just improbable, but impossible. Yet The Red Book is that much, much larger, more nuanced and tremendously numinous structure that is behind, under, around and the foundation for all of Jung's subsequent ideas, theories, publications and works. Extraordinary.

I HAVE the Red Book and am in the process of reading it. It is beyond description! This truly unique book represents the personal journal one courageous man took into the dangerous realm of the unconscious in search of an understanding of himself and the structure of the human personality in general. In the process, Jung regained his soul which was lost in the contemporary malaise of spiritual alienation. Liber Novus, as the book is called, represents a prototype of the individuation process, which is seen as the universal form of individual development. Jung was a psychiatrist who worked with schizophrenics. He intuited that their fantasies held meaning important for their healing and saw that some of the fantasies corresponded to mythological motifs. This curiosity lead Jung to his own decision to drop beneath consciousness to explore the realm of these fantasies, the realm of the "dead". He did this without chemicals or inducers but through a process he called active imagination. An inner world opened up to him to explore, which he documented in his writings and

paintings. The book itself is like a medieval manuscript created with great care. He worked on the book for 16 years, giving it to others to read and edit with the intention of it one day being published. Liber Novus is a book of wisdom and deserves to be studied. It invites the reader into the world of imagination--like the dream world. I have studied my dreams for years and the language is similar. It shows what we have to learn when we slow down and listen to the inner voices. I thank Jung for giving me a guide to the soul, or human personality--which ever language one prefers.

During over two decades reading Jung, this is the book I dreamed of some day seeing. Yes, it is incredible. But instead of adding to the many praises of the Red Book, let me comment on the editorial work that accompanies Jung's text. Sonu Shamdasani's Introduction is undoubtedly the best available biography of Jung, though focused in context on the critical central years of Jung's life. Shamdasani is a remarkable scholar, and he has spent over 13 years with the primary documents -- material never before made available to a scholar, documents including Jung's seven Black Book journals, the various draft manuscripts of the Red Book, Jung's own dream books and letters from the period, the amazing contemporary diary of Cary F. Baynes, and innumerable other previously unpublished (and largely unknown) primary sources. After Shamdasani's work, all previous biographical evaluations of this period are irrelevant. No researcher previously had access to the basic and extensive source material upon which a biography must be founded, and thus much of what was written in past decades was either pure speculation or blatant perfidy. BUT, you ask, why is it not in stock for shipment?? Because the publisher, Norton, was uncertain if this huge and expensive book would sell. The first printing was for only 5,000 copies! To the publisher's surprise, these sold out in pre-publication orders two months before the official release date of Oct 7, 2009. This is not an easy book to print, or reprint. Printing is done in Italy on over-sized museum quality papers, with superb binding. Unlike the average hard-cover book, ordering up another ten thousand copies of a book like this is not a simple matter. Once you hold the book, you will understand the issues involved in creating such a beautiful volume. Even the larger second printing sold out in pre-order, and was just becoming available for shipping at the end of November. The next printing will be available in December or later. Eventually the printers will catch up with demand, but it may take several more months. If you have not seen a copy in a bookstore, it is because they CANNOT GET A COPY from the publisher! So if you want it, order now...(May 2010 update -- We now have around 50,000 copies printed, and still lots of backorders, but production is catching up with demand. With the seventh printing the book should be in stock at most sellers. Sales have been amazing for a volume of this size and cost. For those looking for a helpful guide to

a reading of the book, search for the thirteen lecture audio series on "Jung and the Red Book" by Dr. Stephan A. Hoeller, available online. This lecture series has received great reviews from many students of Jung.) (December 2009 update -- Norton is now in the fifth printing, and still back-ordered a couple of months. The Red Book seems to have touched a soulful place in modern culture.)

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