

C. G. Jung's Crisis and Renewal

by Greg Bogart

Editor's Note: This article was adapted from the author's book, *Planets in Therapy: Predictive Technique and the Art of Counseling* (Ibis Press, 2012).

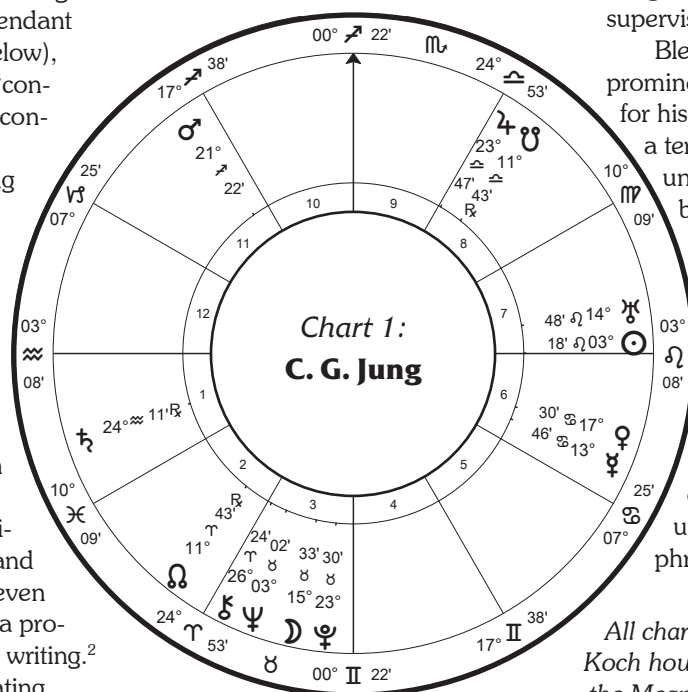
One of the most inspiring examples of consciousness transformation mediated by the combined influence of the outer planets is the story of Carl Gustav Jung's upheavals and awakening. While Uranus in Aquarius transited over his Ascendant, opposite his Sun–Uranus in Leo, and transiting Neptune was conjunct his Descendant and natal Sun (see **Chart 1**, below), Jung entered the period of his “confrontation with the collective unconscious.”¹ He was flooded with visions, prophetic and disturbing dreams, and psychic, paranormal phenomena. His fantasies and interior life became so intense that he felt compelled to withdraw into solitude, giving his unconscious mind free rein through drawing, painting, dreamwork, mythological studies, sculpting, and building with stones. He experienced visitations of an ancient Gnostic spiritual teacher named Philemon, and in January 1916 he penned “Seven Sermons to the Dead” through a process of channeling or automatic writing.² This was when Jung began creating

The Red Book, a revelatory, visionary, mystical text.

This period of psychological crisis was preceded by the crucial transits of 1907–08 when psychoanalysis was birthed through the collaboration of Jung and Sigmund Freud, during a major outer-planet phase: the opposition of Uranus in Capricorn and Neptune in Cancer. Uranus and Neptune were directly aligned with Jung's Mercury–

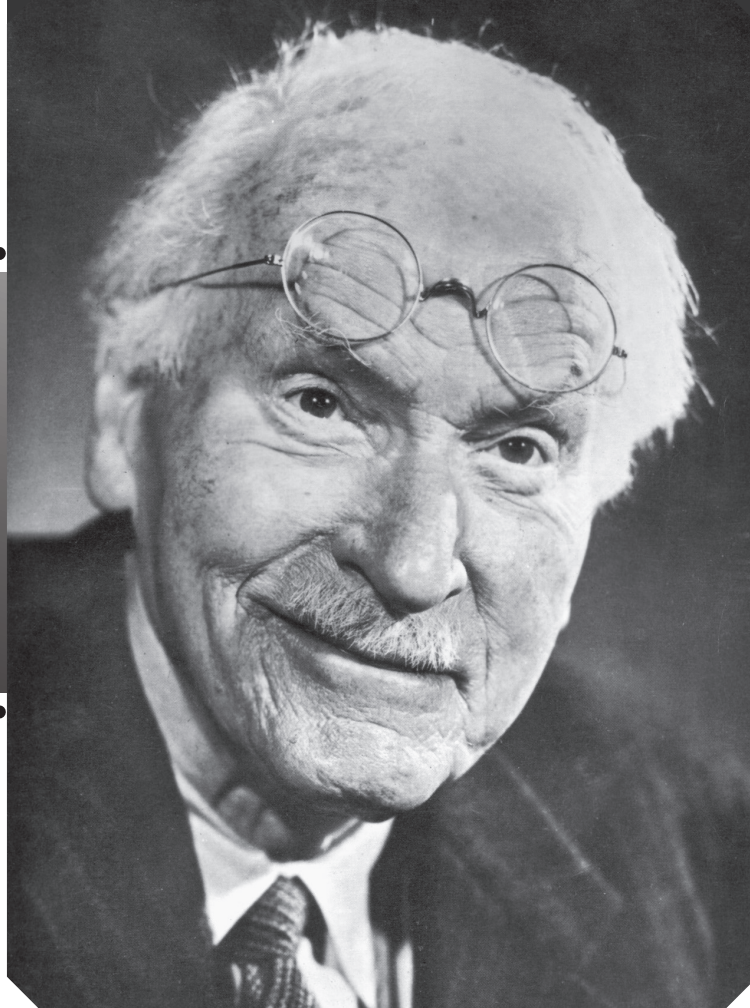
Venus conjunction in Cancer, in the 6th house, the realm of training and apprenticeship. Jung employed techniques of Freudian psychoanalysis as well as the Word Association Test, an intuitive and effective diagnostic tool. Jung related to Freud as his mentor, conducting an active and stimulating correspondence with him (Mercury and Venus). Also during this time, Jung worked as a psychiatrist at the Burghölzli asylum in Zürich, under the supervision of Dr. Eugen Bleuler.

Bleuler was Switzerland's most prominent psychiatrist, widely known for his writings on “schizophrenia,” a term he coined. Bleuler showed unusual devotion to his patients. A bachelor, he lived in the hospital and spent all his time with the patients, involved in their physical treatment and achieving close emotional contact with each one. He thus attained a unique understanding of mentally ill patients and their inner life, attempting to make sense of the supposedly “senseless” utterings and delusions of schizophrenics. Bleuler conceived the



All charts use Koch houses and the Mean Node.

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primary symptom of schizophrenia to be a loosening of associations, in a manner similar to what happens in dreams and daydreams. He used treatments that sometimes produced miraculous effects, such as resorting to the early discharge of apparently severely ill patients, or a sudden, unexpected transfer to another ward, or assigning a responsibility to the patient. He organized a system of work therapy and arranged the leisure time of his patients and the functioning of a human community in the mental hospital.³

Jung was trained in Bleuler's compassionate approach to mental illness under the transit of Neptune conjunct his Mercury. At the same time, Jung was experiencing his own loosening of associations as his unconscious life of dreams and fantasies became highly charged, and the state of his own mental health became questionable for a while. Throughout all this, genius was unleashed through his original theories and writings as Uranus awakened natal Mercury by opposition.

While Uranus opposed Venus and Mercury in the 6th house, Jung had many stimulating, changeable, and controversial relationships with patients, co-workers, trainees, and research assistants. During this period, he conducted an unorthodox psychoanalytic treatment

of Otto Gross, a prominent German psychoanalyst, who had been committed by his family to the Burghölzli asylum to undergo treatment for his mental disorder, drug addiction, and strange ideation that focused on his advocacy for polygamy. The work was unorthodox in that Jung and Gross stayed in a room together for up to twelve hours at a time, analyzing each other's dreams in a kind of mutual psychoanalysis. There was a certain manic excitement in the conversation between the two men, and Jung would soon confess to Freud the conflicts stemming from his own polygamous desires. This was also the time of Jung's brief involvement with Sabina Spielrein, a young patient who became his research assistant; she was romantically smitten with Jung and obsessed with fantasies of bearing his love child. This little *imbroglio* would strain his relationship with Freud, as well as his marriage. (See **Sidebar**, page 66.)

During 1911–12, while transiting Saturn conjoined Pluto in the 3rd house, Jung's mind was illuminated through his studies of Gnosticism and

alchemy. I believe that Pluto also influenced Jung's 4th house, because Pluto is in the fourth sign from the Ascendant and in the 4th house from the perspective of the Equal house system and Whole Sign houses. While Saturn transited Pluto, Jung delved into his family genealogy and ancestral heritage and experienced marital discord and domestic upset, echoing the estrangement of Jung's own parents during his childhood (Pluto in the 4th house: the family). Saturn conjunct natal Pluto is a transit that often evokes the archetype of the shadow, the encounter with a difficult or hidden side of others and ourselves. At this time, Jung experienced Freud as increasingly rigid and dictatorial, and he felt stifled under the oppression of the tyrannical father. He encountered Freud's controlling, patriarchal traits, his unwillingness to yield an inch to Jung in their theoretical disagreements, and Freud's somewhat paranoid obsession with the idea that Jung harbored a death wish toward him. There was also tension between them for another reason: Freud disapproved of Jung's

From *A Most Dangerous Method*

For a riveting account of this period in Jung's life, see John Kerr, *A Most Dangerous Method: The Story of Jung, Freud, and Sabina Spielrein* (Vintage, 1994). (The film version of Kerr's book, *A Dangerous Method*, was released in September 2011.) According to Kerr, Otto Gross was the son of Hans Gross, a prominent professor, considered the founder of criminology and "a force in European sociology ... Gross was in no little conflict with his ... father. Alarmed at his son's behavior, which was passing beyond eccentricity into his own special area of competency, outright criminality, Gross senior had been trying for months, for everyone's protection, to get his son committed to a hospital" (p. 186). Jung was assigned to his case.

Otto Gross was described by Freud's official biographer, Ernest Jones, as "a 'genius' with 'penetrating powers of divining the inner thoughts of others.' An extremely brilliant man, Gross never lacked for influential followers throughout his short life. His novel psychiatric and psychological theories were debated by the best intellects of his day. He ... appeared as a character in a half-dozen novels. In Munich he split his time between Kraepelin's clinic, where he had one of the prized assistantships, and the cafés of the Schwabing district, Munich's answer to Greenwich Village, where he conducted impromptu psychoanalyses into the night ... Gross wanted a world where monogamy did not exist, where all patriarchal authority had been overthrown [in favor of] communal living and self-exploration" (pp. 186–187). He was in trouble over several scandals involving female patients, one of whom committed suicide. Also, "Gross was addicted to both cocaine and morphine ... [T]he erosion of Gross' personality had only just begun and his intellect and charm were still intact. It could have been said about him as it was once said of Lord Byron: he was mad, bad, and dangerous to know. Gross and Jung hit it off famously right from the start" (p. 187).

Jung saw Gross as his psychic "twin brother" and dedicated himself to analyzing and curing this important new patient. "Jung devoted every free hour and then some to the care of this intriguing man ..." (p. 187). Eventually, "Gross was able to turn the tables so that what transpired was equally an analysis of Jung" (p. 188). Sabina Spielrein wrote this about Jung in one of her letter-drafts of spring 1909: "Now he arrives, beaming with pleasure, and tells me with strong emotion about Gross, about the great insight he has just received (i.e., about polygamy); he no longer wants to suppress his feeling for me, he admitted that I was his first, dearest friend, etc., etc. (his wife of course excepted), and that he wants to tell me everything about himself" (cited by Kerr, pp. 191–192). In all of this, one sees expressions of transiting Uranus opposite Jung's Venus and Mercury.

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unprofessional behavior with Sabina Spielrein, while Jung had been aware since 1907 that Freud was having an affair with his wife's sister.⁴ These, too, were manifestations of the Plutonian shadow. Freud and Jung were becoming increasingly uncomfortable with each other.

When Uranus moved into a conjunction with Jung's Ascendant and an opposition to his Sun in Leo, his problems with Freud increased; this was due to Jung's interest in religion, esoteric philosophies, mythology, and paranormal realities, which were anathema to Freud, who decisively rejected and disdained Jung's innovations. Jung also had doubts about Freud's theory of sexuality, believing that sexuality was not the only expression, or goal, of the libido. In his view, the unconscious psyche sought wholeness through a union of opposites and had a spiritual, centering, ordering tendency, which he called the Self — evident in dream images of a divine child, jewel, cross, mandala, a Christ or Buddha figure, or other numinous symbolism that Jung considered equivalent to personal "God images." As these transits continued, the severing of ties between the two men became irrevocable, and Freud broke off their correspondence in early 1913. In the year or two after 1913, Jung's whole center of gravity shifted, and he was on his own in the Uranian free space of self-discovery and identity reconstruction.

Following the break with Freud, Jung embarked upon an inner journey that ultimately allowed him to find a deep center and unfold his unique identity and creativity (Sun in Leo). During 1913–14, as Saturn transited through Gemini and the 5th house, Jung retired from teaching, resigned his positions in the international psychoanalytic movement, and took time off. It wasn't exactly a vacation, but he allowed himself to play like a child and became very involved in his writing (Gemini) and creativity (5th house). Inwardly, Jung felt somewhat unhinged and disoriented. With his professional life and his psyche in chaos, he was in deep waters, beginning a five-year phase that has been called a "creative illness" and a "breakdown."⁵

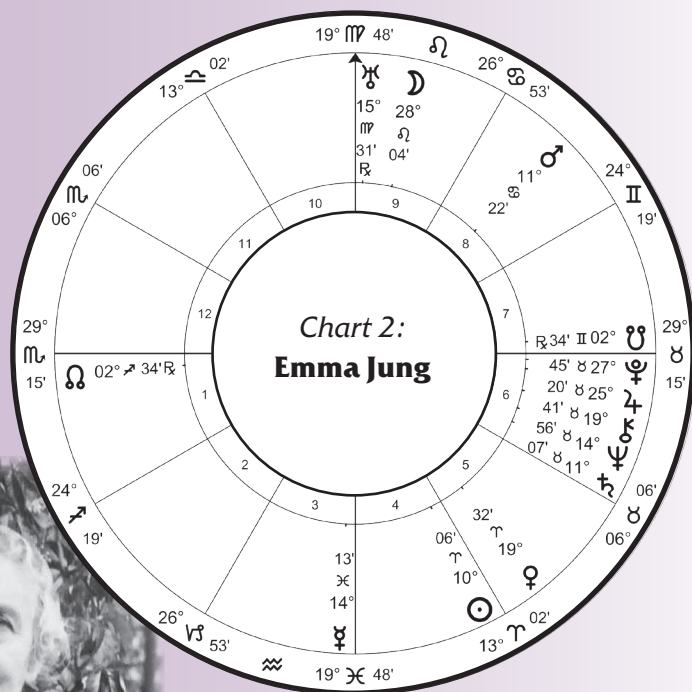
From August 1916 to June 1918, while Neptune was conjunct Jung's Sun and Descendant, he entered a period of dissolution of identity. This transit marked the deepening of a process of intensified inner life that had been in progress for several years, as material from the deep unconscious began to emerge through powerful dreams and fantasies, psychic premonitions, and Jung's immersion in the study of mythology, alchemy, astrology, and Gnosticism. As early as October 1913, Jung had dreamed of a "monstrous flood" descending upon Europe and of "the whole sea turned to blood." In the spring of 1914, he had had a thrice-repeated dream of "an arctic cold wave" causing death and desolation. Jung later considered these to be premonitions of the outbreak of World War I.⁶ At times, he felt that he was on the edge of a psychosis, yet he consciously surrendered to the inward-moving

Emma Jung's love made it possible for her husband to individuate through an unconventional marriage and approach to love (Uranus in his 7th house).

flow of imagery and symbolism that flooded him during Neptune's high tide. He yielded to the unconscious and decided to follow it wherever it would lead him.

This Neptunian period was also characterized by introversion and uncertainty caused by the erosion of friendships and professional relationships (Neptune transiting the 7th house). Former colleagues became rivals and enemies; his 7th-house alliances were totally overturned. Jung had become highly controversial and was shunned and scorned by the Freudians. Many of Freud's followers and Jung's former colleagues (for example, Karl Abraham) viewed Jung as peculiar, egotistical, and arrogant (Sun–Uranus in Leo). For his part, Jung probably felt that Freud and his other adversaries were themselves quite arrogant and unruly.

During this Neptune transit to Jung's Descendant and 7th-house Sun (and also transiting Uranus opposite Sun–Uranus), his marriage was in some disarray, largely due to the fact that Jung was engaging in emotional and erotic discourse not only with his wise and steady wife, Emma, but also with Toni Wolff, his *anima* muse.⁷ These relationships ultimately flowered in mutual devotion during Neptune's transit of his 7th house. I consider Emma Jung a highly inspiring personality. She remained devoted to her husband while he appeared to go completely off the deep end, preoccupied with channeling the spirits of deceased Gnostic gurus. And he was in love with another woman. Although it must have been extremely difficult for her, Emma embodied Uranian openness, adaptability, and the purest Leo loyalty and dignity, expressing both her Leo Moon and her husband's Leo Sun in his 7th house. (See **Chart 2** and **Sidebar**, at right.) She was ultimately able to accept Toni Wolff as a friend, ally, and family member. Emma's love made it possible for Carl to individuate through an unconventional marriage and approach to love (Uranus in his 7th house). She went on to become a highly accomplished analyst and author of scholarly papers as well as her masterpiece, *The Grail Legend*. As Jung entered stormy seas, Emma and Toni accompanied



Emma Jung

Emma's five-planet conjunction of Saturn, Neptune, Chiron, Jupiter, and Pluto shows the immense, concentrated power of her chart and her personality, her spiritual clarity, and her wisdom. With her Sun–Venus conjunction in the 5th house, Emma's chart portrays her as a warm, affectionate woman who was very involved with her five children.

Her Moon in Leo square the Ascendant and also square Jupiter–Pluto indicates that she was a strong matriarch. With her Mercury–Uranus opposition near the MC/IC axis, Emma was herself a free thinker and innovator in the field of depth psychology and mythology. The conjunction of Pluto, Jupiter, and the South Node at her Descendant depicts her husband, C. G. Jung, a powerful, influential, and world-transforming personality who lived an underground life as an alchemist, astrologer, and student of esoteric knowledge. With five planets in Taurus, Emma had quite a bit of money, which was of great benefit to the couple during the period when Jung largely withdrew from public life and devoted himself, for several years, to his inner imaginal journey.

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him to the edge of his sanity and into the radiant experiences that inspired all of his mature theories and ideas.

During his years of transformation, Jung worked steadily on a leather-bound folio of writings and artwork that became known as *The Red Book*.⁸ After being kept locked in a vault following Jung's death in 1961, this work was finally revealed to the public and published in 2009. In one of the most striking paintings in *The Red Book*, Jung depicted scenes of a city in somber earth tones, with details of sailboats, smokestacks spewing smoke, and soldiers with rifles taking part in target practice and manning walled towers — in short, a modern city engaged in industrial production, commerce, and the machinery and strategy of war. Above all this, a little man called Phanes — the divine child, symbol of the emergent Self (the internal order and wholeness encompassing the opposing forces within the personality) — sits with a huge cross mandala over his head, surrounded by a shimmering kaleidoscope of multi-colored light exploding into expansive radiance. This was Jung's apocalyptic vision of impending violence and destruction, a premonition of war, but it was also a vision of his own awaken-

Jung's story illustrates the meaning of the Uranus opposition to its natal position as a phase of awakening and self-liberation.

ing and of an awakening humanity. It is intensely resonant with our own current moment of history. The years of 1914–15 also featured a transiting Saturn–Pluto conjunction in Jung's 5th house. This painting gave expression to the immense power implied by the symbolism of Saturn–Pluto. From the fall of 1913 through the spring of 1915, Jung was also experiencing transiting Pluto at 1° Cancer semi-square the natal Moon, intensifying his emotional experience of the volcanic, turbulent, and transformative powers emerging from the collective unconscious, as well as marking this period as a crisis of death and rebirth.

Jung's intensive inner work culminated in the formulation of the core ideas of analytical psychology, such as individuation, the psychological types, the relations between the ego and the unconscious, and the archetypes, or

“dominants,” of the collective unconscious, including the great mother, the hero, the divine child, the wise old man, the anima and animus, the trickster, the persona, the shadow, and the wounded healer.⁹ Jung's story illustrates the meaning of the Uranus opposition to its natal position as a phase of awakening and self-liberation, and of Neptune transiting conjunct the Sun as a spiritualizing of identity and entry into the archetypal dimension. These events led Jung to drink from the well of the unconscious, whose fountain would fully quench his thirst.

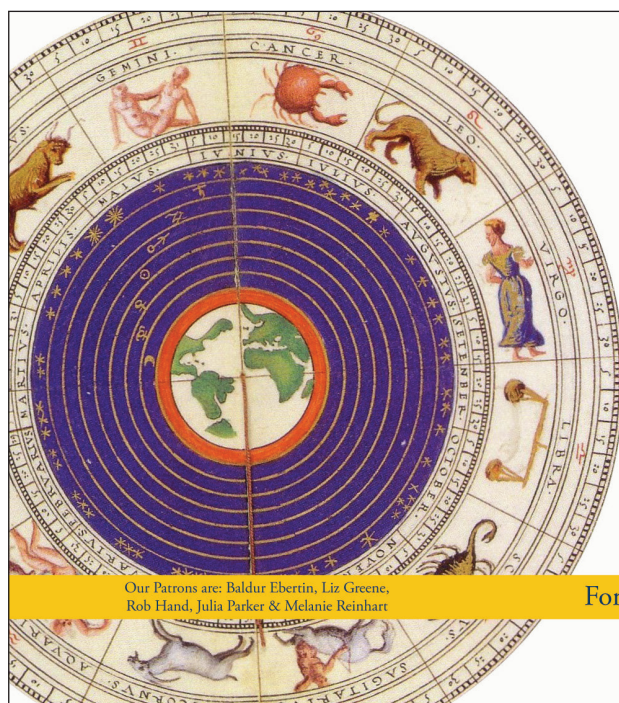
Chart Data and Sources

C. G. Jung, July 26, 1875; 7:29 p.m. SZOT; Kesswil, Switzerland (47°N36', 09°E20'); C: rectified from the time of 7:32 p.m., given by Jung's daughter, Gret Baumann, to place the Sun on the Descendant.

Emma Jung, March 30, 1882; 10:45 p.m. SZOT; Schaffhausen, Switzerland (47°N42', 08°E38'); AA: birth record, “grandson quoted a document.”

References and Notes

1. C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Vintage, 1961, ch. 6.
2. S. Hoeller, *The Gnostic Jung and the Seven Sermons to the Dead*, Quest Books, 1982.
3. My account of Bleuler's work is adapted from H. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*, Basic Books, 1970.



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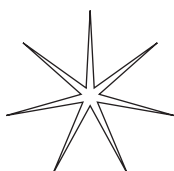
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4. P. Homans, *Jung in Context*, University of Chicago Press, 1978, pp. 53–54.
5. See Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, op. cit.; and M. Goldwert, “Jung’s breakdown,” in *Wounded Healers*, University Press of America, 1992, pp. 81–91.
6. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, pp. 175–176.
7. D. Bair, *Jung: A Biography*, Little Brown, 2003.
8. C. G. Jung, *Liber Novus: The Red Book*, W. W. Norton & Co., 2009.
9. See my discussion of the archetypes in Greg Bogart, *Dreamwork and Self-Healing: Unfolding the Symbols of the Unconscious*, Karnac, 2009.

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