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| Was He or Was He Not?On Jung, Racism and anti-SemitismBenjamin NagariLondon*The shadows surrounding Jung are going* *to linger anyway, for they want us to pay*  *psychological attention to them*[[1]](#footnote-1)1. **Racism**

In an article titled Jung: A Racist the author, a London based psychoanalyst Farhad Dalal challenges a painful point in Jung’s writing, of which our subject is only a part. Dalal calls for attention in regard of Jung’s global racism.[[2]](#footnote-2) It takes only a glimpse into his points and one’s basic integrity to discover a deep embarrassment and great perplexity right at his opening argument: In the ‘growth movement’ one hears constant accolades on Jung. He is revered for several things. He is said to be the father of Transpersonal Psychology; the man who unified the human race through his concept of the collective unconscious, and then connected the human race to the greater cosmos; it is said that he is the great equaliser and the great unifier; that his philosophy is that of balance and humility. And it is true that he has done these things, but only in part and at a cost, the cost being not only a retention but also a reinforcement of the status quo and the iniquities contained therein.[[3]](#footnote-3)Jung – defies Dalal, armed with endless quotations of the Master – equates the contemporary black man to the prehistoric man, black consciousness to the white’s unconscious, and the adult black’s psyche to that of a white infant. The abundance of quotes in Jung’s collected works makes it quite impossible to ignore Jung’s down-looking arrogance, disguised as ‘empirical findings’. His observation on the development of consciousness from the unconscious treads through a ‘fine’ observation between Europeans and Non-Europeans, the former often referred to as ‘We’ as opposed to ‘They’ or the ‘Others’ (accidentally??). The following quote is just an ‘empirical’ appetizer:In all that flimsiness and vain tumult one is conscious of immeasurable age with no history. After all why should there be recorded history? In a country like India one does not really miss it. All her native greatness is in any case anonymous and impersonal, like the greatness of Babylon or Egypt. History makes sense in European countries, where, in a relatively recent barbarous and unhistorical past, things began to take shape. Castles, temples, and cities were built, roads and bridges were made, and the people discovered that they had names, that they lived somewhere that their cities multiplied and that their world grew bigger every century…[[4]](#footnote-4)At the same time Jung scorns and degrades Eastern cultures, their customs and feelings, while praising their philosophical perceptions, more likely to be understood by the European, of course… After all, the Eastern individual, the Hindu in the following case, is nothing but:…too fond of ease and coolness. He wears a long piece of cotton cloth wound round and between his legs. The front of his legs is well covered, but the back is ridiculously bare. There is something effeminate and babyish about it. You simply cannot imagine a soldier with such garlands of cloth between his legs. Many wear a shirt over this or a European jacket. It is quaint, but not very masculine. The northern type of costume is Persian and looks fine and manly. The garland type is chiefly southern, perhaps because of the matriarchal trend which prevails in the south. The 'garland' looks like an overgrown diaper. It is an essentially unwarlike dress and suits the pacifist mentality of the Hindu perfectly.[[5]](#footnote-5)In order to assert his ‘empirical findings’ biologically he states elsewhere thatFor though a child is not born conscious, his mind is not a *tabularasa.* The child is born with a definite brain, and the brain of an English child will not work like that of the Australian black fellow but in the way of the modern English person.[[6]](#footnote-6)Accordingly, and due to Jung’s ‘meaningful’ encounters with tribe individuals[[7]](#footnote-7) we may infer that the Bushmen, the Arab, the Algonii tribesman and the Hindu can not ever change, being under that biological dictate that dooms them to eternal ‘primitiveness’. And if the English child’s brain is different from the black Australian’s, then there is only one little step further left in observing the differences between the Christian brain and the Jewish one…1. **Anti-Semitism**

In my view, the most complex problem reflecting in Jung’s though is his religious obsession, which leaves heavily stained marks throughout his entire philosophical and scientific endeavour.[[8]](#footnote-8) Despite his individual attempts to find a way out of the religious blunder (which turned religious dogma against him, being regarded as a heretic), he remained deeply (and dogmatically) enslaved to Christian supremacy. Reading through the endless quotations in Dalal’s article and in Jung’s writings may reveal an often mixed up usage of the terms ‘We’, ‘Europeans” and ‘Christians”. With all his attempts to free himself, he remains captivated in the darkest Christian myths. His understanding of other cultures is heavily filtered by religion; and since Christianity is the supreme religion in his perception, there is no wonder that other cultures are depicted as inferior. Terms such as Race, Culture and Religion mix into one, and so the Arian race, European culture and Christian religion amalgamate into a new coin of the supreme species. Hence the enlightening explanation thatIn regard to my opinion that the Jews probably do not create their own forms of culture, this opinion rests upon (1) historical facts, (2) the fact that the specific cultural contribution of the Jew achieves its clearest results within the circle of a host-culture, where the Jew frequently becomes the very carrier of this culture, or its promoter. This task is in itself so specific and so demanding that it is hardly to be conceived that any individual Jewish culture could arise alongside it.[[9]](#footnote-9)One may only wonder where did he gather those facts from…Apparently, the below quoted sentence, ending the above quoted paragraph is much more worrying than his twisted ‘historical facts’:I cannot discover anything anti-Semitic in this opinion.[[10]](#footnote-10)Not only can he not find anything Anti-Semitic in his ‘scientific’ opinion, but any sign of Anti-Semitism is nothing but the Jew’s own fault:The Jew truly solicits anti-Semitism with his readiness to scent out anti-Semitism everywhere. I cannot see why the Jew, like any so-called Christian, is incapable of assuming that he is being personally criticized when one has an opinion about him. Why must it always be assumed that one wants to condemn the Jewish people? Surely the individual is not the people? I regard this as an inadmissible manner of silencing one's adversary.[[11]](#footnote-11)It is not the intention of this article to quote *all* of Jung’s racist and Anti-Semitic input. The interested reader is referred to Jung’s Collected Works, Dalal’s article and the Lingering Shadows article compilation. These may provoke a decent soul to reflect.1. **Reflections, thoughts and nightmares**

Some many ‘first generation Jungians’, those who knew or encountered the man, and some of the next generation Jungians, those who knew those that knew and/or encountered him, have been struggling and wriggling with the distressful thoughts and words of the man. Some have been trying to protect him by means of ‘clarification’: his words were put out of context, and altogether he was a known Jew lover; a true Righteous Gentile. Others, who found it unacceptable to agree with the above, partially admitted his Anti-Semitic remarks, but tried to ‘exonerate’ them as being a part of the *zeitgeist*, the spirit of the time. I am afraid that some of those disregarded the sad fact that that very zeitgeist had given birth to Nazism, Hitler and the resulting Holocaust. Some of the more contemporary generation, those remote of the man and his direct followers are now willing to fully admit – Jung indeed *was* Anti-Semitic. ‘Lingering Shadows’ shows this division clearly.Personally, I belong myself with the latter. There is no dilemma in me whether he was or was not. Any person expressing views of the above quoted nature, whether his words have been ‘put out of context’ or he is ‘only’ expressing his zeitgeist is regarded racist and/or Anti-Semitic, even if he is the revered Carl Gustav Jung himself. We live in an era whose negative streak is the ‘politically correct’, where things are said by appropriateness code. Only that the politically correct is nothing but a fig leaf, and like any other garment it is susceptible of fashion changes – however 'correct' was it yesterday is not necessarily today’s. For this reason I would also avoid searching into the circumstances and the motivation of those apologizing, defending or hiding. My ‘private’ politically correct is what I can feel ‘in my bones’, whether ‘appropriate’ or not.Jung the man **was**. Racist and Anti-Semitic. Yet at the same time he was the founder of one of the most solid and formidable psychological theories, that of the Collective Unconscious and its Archetypes. Only that his unification of the World Soul by finding the mutual to its difference can not coincide with his personal racism; it can only contradict it. One might describe it as spitting into the well one drinks from; an ‘own goal’. This own goal falls straight to the willing hands of every racist on this planet, who will gladly use it whether bluntly or with a politically correct sophistication.Being an Israeli and a Jew who lives in Europe I can watch very closely how the viper of Anti-Semitism is raising its head left right and centre. Racial words coming from public figures find their way rapidly to the politically correct and through the media (which is full of those) to the public, awaiting the word of the media gods. And yes, we are dealing with the very same Europe/Christianity/We mentioned by Jung.As in any theory of psychology (which is an ever-developing discipline) it is the right of any generation and its individuals to accept, disagree, develop and contradict those or another parts of it. This is the living dynamics of the human thought. But these parts of racial and patronizing tones must be defied by intellectual integrity; unless one accepts and agree with them. One should doubt anyone's integrity and intellect in such an event. Taking no stand and just waiting for the 'unpleasant' thoughts-of-the-past to sink in the oblivion of history will not work. It is our duty to defy them and make sure they are not acceptable; it is our obligation to the next generations of Jungians, those who are far ahead of the man himself, to make sure they do not fall into the snare of the old guru's blunder. Personally, I regard myself as a "part-time Jungian". I endorse the collective unconscious and its archetypes view and way of life. It is true that I do not accept *every* part of that elaborate theory, and along with many contemporaries I try to express my reservations academically, through great admiration for its solid foundation. Jung the man is rarely included in my elaboration. I have managed to expel his dark side from my considerations while vowing to do whatever it takes to ensure that the next generations of Analytical Psychology are not infected.Benny Nagari is a composer, and holds a Master degree in Jungian and Post-Jungian Studies at the University of Essex, UK. |

1. Andrew Samuels, “*National Socialism, National Psychology and Analytical Psychology”,* in Lingering Shadows – Jungians, Freudians and Anti-Semitism. Shambhala, Boston and London 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Farhad Dalal, “*Jung: A Racist”.* British Journal of Psychotherapy 4: 263-279,1988. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., p. 263 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. C. G. Jung, Collected Works Vol. 10, p. 517 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. C. G. Jung, Collected Works Vol. 10 p. 521 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. C. G. Jung, *Collected Works,* Vol. 18, p. 4 I [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Jung’s generalizing ‘anthropological’ observations following his travels to Africa and India are drawn from brief encounters with few single individuals, as testified by him in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Culminating in Jung’s postulate of the Religious Function in man, a view I wholeheartedly resent. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Jung’s letter to a ‘Jewish pupil and friend’ from May 1934. Ernest Harms, “*Carl Gustav Jung: Defender of Freud and the Jews”* in Lingering Shadows (see note 1) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)