

Jung looking at the stars¹: chaos, cosmos and archetype

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Taking as its starting-point an aphorism in *The gay science*, this paper examines Nietzsche's distinction between the (chaotic) 'total character of the world' and the (cosmic) 'astral order in which we live'. It relates this distinction, not only to Nietzsche's earlier claim in *The birth of tragedy* that 'it is only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* that existence and the world are eternally *justified*', but also, via Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, to Jung's concept of archetypal structures. Finally, it examines the case of one of Jung's patients, a young labourer suffering from schizophrenia; Jung's interest in Hölderlin; and his discussion of the Stoic concept of *heimarmene*.

Keywords: aesthetics; archetype; chaos; cosmos; Goethe; Nietzsche

In section 109 of *The gay science* (1882, 1887), the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) utters the following stern warning: 'Let us beware of thinking that the world is a living being' (Nietzsche, 1974, p. 167). This section, actually entitled 'Let us beware', continues as follows:

Let us beware of positing generally and everywhere anything as elegant as the cyclical movements of our neighbouring stars; even a glance into the Milky Way raises doubts whether there are not far coarser and more contradictory movements there, as well as stars with eternally linear paths, etc. The astral order in which we live is an exception; this order and the relative duration that depends on it have again made possible an exception of exceptions: the formation of the organic. The total character of the world, however, is in all eternity chaos – in the sense not of a lack of necessity but of a lack of order, arrangement, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever other names there are for our aesthetic anthropomorphisms. (Nietzsche, 1974, pp. 167–168)

How can this passage and its conclusions be squared with Nietzsche's well-known earlier claim in *The birth of tragedy* (1872) that 'it is only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* that existence and the world are eternally *justified*' (Nietzsche, 1968, p. 52 [§5]; cf. p. 141 [§24]), a claim to which he has alluded in the previous section of *The gay science* when he tells us that 'as an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still *bearable* for us') (Nietzsche, 1974, p.163 [§107])?² How can it also be squared with Jung's archetypal psychology?

Examined more closely, Nietzsche distinguishes in this passage between two 'universes': the first, 'the total character of the world', is indeed chaos, but the second, 'the astral order in which we live', is very much a cosmos or, as the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) would have called it, a 'cosmic

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epoch'.³ As the pre-Socratic thinker Anaxagoras pointed out, the rational world must be regarded as an organism (Brett, 1953, p. 41),⁴ an idea which we also find in Plato's *Timaeus*, where the world is described as 'a living creature endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God'.⁵ Closer to Jung's own time and intellectual environment, the same point is implicitly made by Kant in his third *Critique*, where he sets out the notion of 'teleological judgement', and explicitly recognized by Goethe in one of his aphorisms (Hecker, §444) when he writes that 'the rational world is to be considered as a great immortal individual, that incessantly brings about the necessary and thereby masters even chance' (Stephenson, 1986, p. 121).⁶ Nietzsche's aphorism continues:

Judged from the point of view of our reason, unsuccessful attempts are by all odds the rule, the exceptions are not the secret aim, and the whole musical box [*Spielwerk*] repeats eternally its tune which may never be called a melody – and ultimately even the phrase 'unsuccessful attempt' is too anthropomorphic and reproachful. But how could we reproach or praise the universe? Let us beware of attributing to it heartlessness and unreason or their opposites: it is neither perfect nor beautiful, nor noble, nor does it wish to become any of these things; it does not by any means strive to imitate humankind. None of our aesthetic and moral judgments applies to it. (Nietzsche, 1974, p. 168)

So although, in Nietzsche's view, no moral or aesthetic judgments are applicable to the world in the cosmic sense of the universe or *das All*, they *do* apply, however, in 'the astral order in which we live'; and it is *this* world that is 'justified' – a moral category – as an 'aesthetic' phenomenon.⁷ To put it another way, Nietzsche is highlighting the difference between seeing structures in the world, and seeing the world in a structured way – hence his point about 'the world' being 'justified' only 'as an aesthetic phenomenon': the world is justified, *because* it is (regarded as) beautiful.

We might compare Nietzsche's aphorism with the famous moment in Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meister's journeyman years* (1821) when the astronomer leads Wilhelm up to the observatory in the house of the mystical Makarie:

A most serene night, with all the stars shining and twinkling, surrounded the observer, who thought he beheld the great dome of the heavens for the first time in all its glory . . . Overwhelmed and amazed, he covered both eyes. The colossal [*Das Ungeheure*] ceases to be sublime [*erhaben*] it exceeds our power to understand, it threatens to annihilate us. 'What am I in the face of the universe?' he asked his spirit. 'How can I stand before it, stand in its very midst?' (Goethe, 1989, p. 177)

In this instance, does the (super)sublimity of his vision reside in an overarching architecture, or in its very absence? In other words, is it the order in the universe that crushes Wilhelm, or is it the thought of universal chaos?⁸

Whatever the case with Wilhelm Meister, a sense of the immensity experienced by someone looking at the night sky had earlier, as Goethe would have known, been registered by Kant, who was moved in his second *Critique* of 1790 to claim the sight was equal in 'wonderment and fear' to those inspired by contemplation of the moral law within: 'Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and reverence, the more often and the more steadily one reflects on them: *the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me*' (Kant, 1996, p. 269). For Kant, this response is intimately bound up with the sense of awareness of one's own existence: 'I do not need to search for them' – i.e. the starry heavens and the moral law – 'and merely conjecture them as though they were veiled in obscurity or in the transcendent region beyond my horizon; I see them before me and connect them immediately with

the consciousness of my existence' (Kant, 1996, p. 269). Similarly, Wilhelm Meister is prompted by the sight of the night sky to turn to a consideration of his inner self:

How can one confront the infinite except by gathering all one's spiritual forces, which are drawn in all directions, into the innermost, deepest part of one's being, by asking oneself: 'Have you the right even to imagine yourself in the midst of this eternally living order if there does not immediately manifest itself inside you something in continuous motion, revolving around a pure centre? And even if it would be difficult for you to find this centre in your own breast, you would recognize it because a benevolent, beneficent effect emanates from it and testifies to its existence.' (Goethe, 1989, p. 177; trans. modified)⁹

He regards the rising of the morning star, Venus, as nothing less than 'a great miracle', and he explains this miracle to the unsurprised astronomer by relating his dream of the transformation of the mysterious woman, Makarie, into a star:

Finally I saw amidst the parting clouds, in place of her glorious countenance, a star twinkling, which was steadily carried aloft, and through the opened vault of the ceiling joined the entire starry sky, which seemed to keep spreading and encompassing everything. At that moment you wake me . . . This real star, floating up there, takes the place of the dreamed one; it consumes the glory of the vision, yet still I gaze on and on, and you gaze with me, at what should actually have vanished from before my eyes together with the mist of sleep. (Goethe, 1989, pp. 179–180)

If, in this dream, Wilhelm comes to associate the morning star, Venus, with the mystical Makarie, then he also comes to realize – as another female character, Angela, explains – that there is 'a very special relationship between Makarie and the stars':

It is said of the poet that the elements of the visible world are buried in the depths of his nature, and have only to unfold gradually from within. Hence nothing in the world may come before his eyes that he has not already experienced intuitively. In the same way, it would seem, the conditions in our solar system existed within Makarie, completely innate from the beginning, at first dormant, then gradually developing, becoming increasingly clear. (Goethe, 1989, p. 182)

Through the characters in the second *Wilhelm Meister* novel, Goethe explores the implications of his doctrine of 'anticipation' (*Antizipation*) – stated as follows in conversation with Eckermann on 26 February 1824: 'Had I not the world already in my soul through anticipation, I should have remained blind with seeing eyes, and all experience and observation would have been unproductive labour', for 'the light is there, and the colours surround us; but, if we had no light and no colours in our own eyes, we should not perceive the outward phenomena' (Eckermann, 1998, p. 48). This doctrine is succinctly rearticulated later in the novel by another of its characters, Odoard: 'Any truly great ideal raises us above ourselves and lights us on our way like a star' [*Denn das wahre Große hebt uns über uns selbst hinaus und leuchtet uns vor wie ein Stern*] (Goethe, 1989, p. 382).

Behind Nietzsche, Goethe and Kant lies a tradition that reaches as far back as the neo-Platonic philosopher Plotinus (204–270). In his second Ennead, Plotinus proposed the following argument:

Surely no one seeing the loveliness lavish in the world of sense – this universal symmetry, this vast orderliness, the Form which the stars even in their remoteness display – no-one could be so dull-witted, so immovable, as not to be carried by all this to recollection, and gripped by reverent awe in the thought of all this, so great, sprung from that greatness.

Not to answer thus could only be to have neither fathomed this world or had any vision of that other. (Plotinus, 1956, p. 149)¹⁰

Then again, earlier still, the celebrated astronomer and geographer Ptolemy (second century CE) is said to have declared, in a famous passage preserved in the *Greek anthology*:

I know that I am mortal, a creature of a day; but when I search into the multitudinous revolving spirals of the stars my feet no longer remain on the earth, but, standing by Zeus himself, I take my fill of ambrosia, the food of the gods. (Paton, 1925–1927, vol. 3, p. 320)¹¹

As Pierre Hadot has pointed out, the idea of ‘traversing in imagination the immensity of space, following the motion of the stars, but also directing one’s gaze down toward the earth and observing the behaviour of humankind’ constitutes what he calls an *exercice spirituel* of the kind that can be found variously in Plato, Epicurus, Lucretius, Philo of Alexandria, Ovid, Marcus Aurelius and Lucian (Hadot, 2001, p. 262).

I mention this rich intellectual tradition because it reminds me of how, in the final pages of the original British edition of Jung’s contribution to that popular and strikingly illustrated presentation of his main theses, *Man and his symbols* (1964), a reproduction of Rembrandt’s *Philosopher with an Open Book* (1633) is juxtaposed with a photograph of the Milky Way. The text – written by Jung, or by the editor? – that accompanies these two images tells us: ‘The inward-looking old man provides an image of Jung’s belief that each of us must explore his [or her] own unconscious. The unconscious must not be ignored; it is as natural, as limitless, and as powerful as the stars’ (Jung, 1964, p. 103). Perhaps Nietzsche, standing as he does at the end-point of a tradition stretching back via Goethe and Plotinus to the pre-Socratics, can open up a helpful perspective from which we can approach the internal cosmos of the Jungian collective unconscious.

According to the philosopher of symbolic forms, Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945), astrology was, like alchemy, an expression of a form of thought he called ‘mythical identity-thinking in the form of substance’ (Cassirer, 1955, p. 66). However, for Cassirer astrology was much more than ‘just’ myth. ‘Astrology, taken in a purely formal way’, Cassirer wrote, ‘is one of the greatest and most daring attempts ever made by the human mind to develop a systematic–constructive view of the world’ (Cassirer, 1969, p. 35).¹² As John Michael Krois has explained, what most interested Cassirer about astrology was ‘the fact that in astrology the mythic concept of fate survives’ so that, ‘by systematizing the “forces” of mythic thought, astrology is actually a kind of middle thing between myth and science’ (Krois, 1987, p. 93).

In *The individual and the cosmos in Renaissance philosophy* (1927), Cassirer analysed the shift away from the astrological conception of fate or destiny inaugurated by the New Humanism (Cassirer, 1963). Elsewhere in his writings, Cassirer sought confirmation for his philosophical view of culture, turning in volume 3 of *The philosophy of symbolic forms* to a consideration of aphasia, agnosia and apraxia. ‘The philosophy of symbolic forms’, Cassirer argued, is seeking ‘not so much common factors in *being* as common factors in meaning’; and ‘hence’, he concluded,

‘we must strive to bring the teachings of pathology, which cannot be ignored, into the more universal context of the philosophy of culture’ (Cassirer, 1957, p. 275). Hence Jung’s interest in matters pathological and astrological is, among twentieth-century thinkers, by no means unique to him, and is typical of a broader trend in the thought of the previous century.¹³

Now, one of Jung’s case studies mentioned in his writings – in this case, *Symbols of transformation* (1952) – involves a young male labourer who came to him suffering from schizophrenia. (As far as I am aware, Jung does not discuss this case in further detail elsewhere.) According to Jung, the early symptoms of this patient consisted of the feeling that he had a ‘special relation’ to the sun and the stars (Jung, 1952, para. 624, n. 15). In Jung’s account of the patient, ‘the stars became full of meaning for him, he thought they had something to do with him personally, and the sun gave him all sorts of strange ideas’. Jung notes that one ‘very often’ finds in schizophrenics ‘this apparently quite novel feeling for nature’ (Jung, 1952, para. 624, n. 15).

Jung juxtaposes this specific case from his clinical experience with his discussion of the German Romantic poet Friedrich Hölderlin (1770–1843) and, in particular, with the following lines from one of the early poems, ‘To Nature’ (*An die Natur*):

To the sun my heart before all others
 Turned as though he heard my every cry,
 And it called the stars its little brothers,
 As it called the spring God’s melody . . .

[*Da zur Sonne noch mein Herz sich wandte,
 Als vernähme seine Töne sie,
 Und die Sterne seine Brüder nannte
 Und den Frühling Gottes Melodie*].¹⁴

In his footnote where he discusses this case of the young male schizophrenic, Jung suggests there might be a connection between these lines and the mystic identification with the stars in the Mithraic liturgy (cf. Jung, 1952, para. 130), and he provided a psychological explanation for this identification:

Separation and differentiation from the mother, ‘individuation’, produces that confrontation of subject and object which is the foundation of consciousness. Before this, humankind was one with the mother; that is to say, it was merged with the world as a whole. It did not yet know the sun was its brother; only after the separation did humankind begin to realize its affinity with the stars. (Jung, 1952, para. 624, n.15; trans. modified)

Working on the assumption that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, Jung argues that, just as the young infant has to undertake a dialectical process of alienation (as subject, from the world as object) in order to attain a (conscious) sense of affinity with that objective world, so humankind as a whole has had to sacrifice its unconscious oneness with the world in order to achieve self-consciousness. In Part One of *Symbols of transformation*, Jung had spoken of how, thanks to Mithraism and Christianity, ‘all the strongest impulses of human beings – which formerly had flung them from one passion to another and seemed to the ancients like the compulsion of evil stars, *heimarmene*, or like what we psychologists would call the *compulsion of libido*’ – became harnessed to ‘that higher form of social intercourse symbolized by a projected (“incarnate”) idea (the Logos)’, and thus could be ‘made available for the maintenance of society’ (Jung, 1952, para. 102; trans. modified).¹⁵

In fact, Jung claims elsewhere that it is the task of culture to provide the mechanisms for just such a transformation or conversion of psychic energy, arguing that ‘when nature is left to herself, energy is transformed along the line of its natural “gradient”’, and that ‘in this way natural phenomena are produced, but not “work”’. Accordingly, for Jung, ‘it is culture that provides the machine whereby the natural gradient is exploited for the performance of work’ (Jung, 1928, para. 80). More precisely, the psychological mechanism that transforms energy is, according to Jung, ‘the symbol’ (Jung, 1928, para. 88), and that is why, in *Transformations and symbols of the libido*, he described the symbol as ‘the bridge to all the greatest achievements of humanity’ (Jung, 1911–1912, para. 353).

In psychological terms, this means that ‘when the libido remains fixed in its most primitive form it keeps human beings on a correspondingly low level where they have no control over themselves and are at the mercy of their affects’ (Jung, 1952, para. 644).¹⁶ On the assumption that ‘the psychological situation of late antiquity’ corresponds to the early years of infant life, Jung claims that such mythological figures as the snake that kills the horse, or the hero who sacrifices himself of his own free will, are ‘mythological figures born of the unconscious’ that represent an all-important moment of psychological development:

To the extent that the world and everything in it is a product of thought, the sacrifice of the libido that strives back to the past necessarily results in the creation of the world. For someone who looks backwards the whole world, even the starry sky, becomes the mother who bends over him and enfolds him on all sides, and from the renunciation of this image, and of the longing for it, arises the picture of the world as we know it today . . . From this most simple fundamental thought, which perhaps appears strange to us only because it is conceived according to the *principle of desire and not the principle of reality*, results the significance of the cosmic sacrifice. (Jung, 1952, para. 646; 1911–1912, para. 666)

In terms of the aphorism from Nietzsche’s *The gay science* with which we began, ‘the whole world’ (i.e. ‘the total character of the world’) – ‘even the starry sky’ (i.e. ‘the astral order’ in a cosmological sense) – becomes, ‘for someone who looks backward’, ‘the mother who bends over him and enfolds him from all sides’, and only renunciation of (the desire for) this image gives rise to ‘the picture of the world as we know it today’ (i.e. the lived world as ‘the astral order’).

The psychological mechanism that enables this ‘sacrifice’ to be made is what Jung calls ‘regression’. According to Jung, it is a process that, in the case of the poet Hölderlin, was never brought to completion. At least, this is the sense I give to Jung’s gloss on Hölderlin’s famous lines from the end of ‘Patmos’:

... shamefully
A mighty force wrenches the heart from us,
For the heavenly each demand sacrifice

[... *schmählich*
Entreißt das Herz uns eine Gewalt,
Denn Opfer will der Himmlischen jedes]

For on these lines he comments that ‘this recognition, that one must give up the retrospective longing which only wants to resuscitate the torpid bliss and effortless-ness of childhood, *before* the “heavenly ones” wrench the sacrifice from us (and with it the entire individual), came too late to the poet’ (Jung, 1952, para. 643).¹⁷ Given

the citation of precisely these lines in *Memories, dreams, reflections*, where they are related to a consideration on the role in Jung's life of his *daimon*, and given the successful outcome of Jung's 'confrontation with the unconscious', it would seem that this recognition did not come too late to Jung (Jung & Jaffé, 1962, p. 390). Did it, however, come too late for Jung's patient? Unfortunately, Jung gives us no further details.

As Jung takes care to emphasize in this work, as in others,¹⁸ psychological development requires a new attitude to, but not a rejection of, sexuality: 'Such a sacrifice', i.e. of the desire for the mother, 'can only be accomplished through whole-hearted dedication to life', he argues, adding: 'That such a step includes the solution, or at least some consideration, of the sexual problem is obvious enough' (Jung, 1952, para. 644).¹⁹

In *Transformations and symbols of the libido*, Jung draws a parallel with the Christian teaching that a man should leave his family and with Christ's discussion with Nicodemus, in which regression was given a symbolic meaning. The coincidence of the desire for rebirth with the incest taboo is thematized in St John's Gospel when an incredulous Nicodemus asks Christ: 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?' (Jung, 1911–1912, para. 342–343). Unlike Freud, of course, Jung puts the emphasis on the psychological consequences of resistance to the incest taboo and, more specifically, its activation of the imagination. 'The resistance to the incest prohibition makes the phantasy inventive', he argues, and the incest taboo is shown to have cultural consequences for the life of the imagination; or, as Jung puts it, 'the libido becomes *spiritualized in an imperceptible manner*' (Jung, 1911–1912, para. 342). The same idea is expressed in Jung's quasi-biblical paraphrase of John 3: 6: 'Think not carnally', i.e. think not literally, 'or thou art carnal, but think symbolically, then thou art spirit' (Jung, 1911–1912, para. 345). If Jung has a gospel, then this is it: think symbolically, because 'this compulsion toward symbolism' proves itself to be, as Jung says, 'extremely educative and developing' (Jung, 1911–1912, para. 345).

On the basis of this analysis of the symbolic meaning of regression, Jung argues in *Symbols of transformation* that 'both tendencies' – i.e. separation from the family, and the desire for rebirth – 'serve the same goal, namely that of freeing human being[s] from family fixations, from weakness and uncontrolled infantile feelings' (Jung, 1952, para. 644; trans. modified). If regression (to the unconscious) – and return from it! – are not successfully achieved, Jung adds, and 'if [we] allow [our] libido to get stuck in a childish milieu, and [do] not free it for higher purposes', then '[we] fall under the spell of unconscious compulsion . . . reproducing all over again, and in defiance of [our] vital interests, the same dependence and lack of freedom which formerly characterized [our] relations with [our] parents' (Jung, 1952, para. 644; trans. modified).²⁰ And then, as the Stoics put it, our fortunes and fates fall from the stars . . .

Instead, on Jung's account, we must *realize* that, in the infinite starry sky, we see the image of the mother; we must *renounce* that image; and thus we free ourselves from 'compulsion by the stars' (the Stoics' *heimarmene*) and inhabit a world organized for own 'higher cultural purposes' (Jung, 1952, para. 415). Or, in terms of the passage from Nietzsche cited earlier, we leave behind us 'the total character of the world', which is 'in all eternity chaos', and enter, via an understanding of the archetype, the 'cosmic epoch' (Whitehead, 1978), 'the astral order, in which we live', and 'the world . . . justified as an aesthetic phenomenon'. In the words of

Zarathustra, 'one must have chaos in one, to give birth to a dancing star' (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 46).

In 384 Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, the prefect of Rome, launched a protest against the decision of the Emperor Valentinian II to remove the altar of Victory from the hall of the Senate. Defending the institutions of paganism against a new and intolerant religion – Christianity – he cried:

We gaze up at the same stars, the sky covers us all, the same universe encompasses us. What does it matter what practical system we adopt in our search for the truth? Not by one avenue can we arrive at so tremendous a secret.²¹

What interested Jung in Christianity was what interested him in paganism – that is, its symbolic content. The transformation of these symbols was, for him, as significant as the 'symbols of transformation'. As he remarked in his Eranos lecture of 1934, 'since the stars have fallen from heaven and our highest symbols have paled, a secret life holds sway in the unconscious', and 'that is why we have a psychology today, and why we speak of the unconscious' – for 'all this would be quite superfluous in an age or culture that possessed symbols' (Jung, 1934/1954, para. 50).

Nietzsche's point is likewise that 'formerly the spirit was not engaged in rigorous thinking, its serious occupation was the spinning-out of forms and symbols', whereas now 'serious occupation with the symbolic has become a mark of a lower culture' (Nietzsche, 1986, pp. 13–14).²² It would be a mistake to see archetypal psychology – which, in certain respects, is now a key part of our 'popular culture' – as revealing anything about the world, in the sense of 'the total character of the world' (which is 'in all eternity chaos'), for what it shows us is how we, as humans, construct our 'astral order' around us. At the end of the aphorism from *The gay science*, Nietzsche reinforces his distinction between the (chaotic) 'total character of the world' and the (cosmic) 'astral order in which we live' by dismissing the notion of laws in nature – scientific and physical laws, as well as moral or religious laws – and by calling for a new conception of nature. This renunciation of an old way of viewing the world becomes, in turn, the basis for a new conception of humankind, too:

Nor does [the universe] have any instinct for self-preservation or any other instinct; and it does not observe any laws either. Let us beware of saying that there are laws in nature. There are only necessities: there is nobody who commands, nobody who obeys, nobody who trespasses. Once you know that there are no purposes, you also know that there is no accident; for it is only beside a world of purposes that the word 'accident' has meaning . . . But when shall we ever be done with our caution and care? When will all these shadows of God cease to darken our minds? When will we complete our deification of nature? When may we begin to 'naturalize' humanity in terms of a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature? (Nietzsche, 1974, pp. 168–169)²³

It is to this project of a 'naturalization' of humanity that Jung's work may be seen to contribute. Without wishing to be too oversimplified (or even simplistic), we could say that Jung offers a psychology that examines the construction of meaning in our lives by means of (archetypal) symbols (so it would be incorrect to assume that these symbols refer to anything transcendent or outside the sphere of humankind).²⁴ The

point here is that Jung wishes us, not see archetypes (structures) everywhere, but see everything archetypally (in terms of structure).

In another passage from Goethe, we find again the image of the stars, here used in a different context to symbolize the outcome of what one might call, in Jungian terms, the successful ‘individuation process’; as a symbol, that is, for the unity of being and becoming as the goal of the individual – and, in this sense, as nothing less than the ‘goal’ of the universe itself:

When man’s nature functions soundly as a whole, when he feels that the world of which he is part is a huge, beautiful, admirable and worthy whole [*einem großen, schönen, würdigen und werten Ganzen*], when this harmony gives him pure and uninhibited delight, then the universe, if it were capable of emotion, would rejoice at having reached its goal [*Ziel*] and admire the crowning glory of its own evolution. For, what purpose would those countless suns and planets and moons serve, those stars and milky ways, comets and nebulae, those created and evolving worlds, if a happy human being did not ultimately emerge to enjoy unconsciously existence [*wenn sich nicht zuletzt ein glücklicher Mensch unbewußt seines Daseins erfreut*]?²⁵

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Notes

1. For the stimulus to this title, see Bowie (1998).
2. For further discussion of this point, see Bishop and Stephenson (2005).
3. ‘Here the phrase “cosmic epoch” is used to mean that widest society of actual entities whose immediate relevance to ourselves is traceable. This epoch is characterized by electronic and protonic actual entities, and by yet more ultimate actual entities which can be dimly discerned in the quanta of energy’ (Whitehead, 1978, p. 91). I thank Roger Stephenson for bringing this passage to my attention.
4. See, too, the account given in Diogenes Laertius, *Life and opinions of the famous philosophers*, Part II, chapter 3; cited in Dumont (1953, p. 615).
5. *Timaeus*, 30 c (Plato, 1989, p. 1163). Cf. ‘It is Anaxagoras who is said to have first asserted that reason, the organising principle of the world, gave order to Chaos, thus becoming an immanent controlling force within the Cosmos’ (Stephenson, 1986, p. 158).
6. Here too, however, Nietzsche warns: ‘Let us beware of thinking that the world is a living being. Where should it expand? On what should it feed? How could it grow and multiply?’ (Nietzsche, 1974, p. 167). Yet later, in his *Nachlass* notes subsequently published as *The will to power*, Nietzsche shows us ‘the world’ in his ‘mirror’, revealing it as

a monster of energy, without beginning, without end; . . . a sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing, eternally flooding back . . .; out of the simplest forms striving toward the most complex, out of the stillest, most rigid, coldest forms toward the hottest, most turbulent, most self-contradictory, and then again returning home to the simple out of this abundance . . .; this, my *Dionysian* world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying. (Nietzsche, 1967, p. 550 [§1067])

7. Compare with the lines spoken by Lynceus the Watchman in Act 5 of *Faust*, Part Two:

A beauty eternal
In all things I see,

And the world and myself
Are both pleasing to me.

Oh blest are these eyes,
All they've seen and can tell:
Let it be as it may –
They have loved it so well.

[*So seh ich in allen
Die ewige Zier,
Und wie mir's gefallen,
Gefall ich auch mir.*

*Ihr glücklichen Augen,
Was je ihr gesehn,
Es sei, wie es wolle,
Es war doch so schön!*

(*Faust II*, ll. 11296–11303; Goethe, 1994, pp. 214–215). According to one reading, as Pierre Hadot has pointed out, the word *Zier* corresponds here to the Greek term *kosmos*, which means both 'order' and 'ornament' (Hadot, 2008, p. 132; cf. Friedrich & Scheithauer, 1989, p. 274).

8. Pierre Hadot relates this passage to the eighteenth-century themes of the sublime and the 'sacred shudder', as well as to Goethe's remarks on our experience of the 'primordial phenomenon' or *Urphänomen* (Hadot, 2006, pp. 278–279).
9. Wilhelm's experience constitutes, as we shall see, an example of the 'spiritual exercise' categorized by Pierre Hadot as 'the view from above' (Hadot, 2008, pp. 142–144).
10. *Enneads*, 2.9 §16. For further discussion, see Hadot (1997, p. 49).
11. *The Greek anthology*, Book 9, no. 577. I thank Graham Whitaker for confirming the reference for this passage. For discussion of the attribution of this text, see Page (1981), pp. 112–114. More recently, the French biologist Henri Laborit has written:

There is an essential difference between an intersubjective rapport located in a cultural space and what you feel when you are alone at sea on a beautiful, starlit night, amazed at the splendour and the immensity of the cosmos, feeling yourself completely enveloped in this global space, without being able to do anything else than participate, and there will never be words to describe that. (*Le Monde du dimanche*, 24 April 1983; cited in Hadot, 2001, p. 280)

12. Translated in Krois (1987, p. 93).
13. For further discussion of Jung and Cassirer, see Pietikäinen (1999); Verene (2002); Bishop (2004); and Liard (2007, pp. 227–234). In an aphorism from the first volume of *Human, all too human* (1878), Nietzsche is sceptical, not just about astrology, but also about 'what is related to it' – that is to say, about religion, aesthetics and, above all, morality. 'It is probable', Nietzsche writes, that 'the objects of the religious, moral, and aesthetic sensations belong only to the surface of things, while humans like to believe that here at least they are in touch with the world's heart [*das Herz der Welt*]', but this is a delusion (Nietzsche, 1986, p. 14).
14. Translated according to Jung (1952, para. 624). On Hölderlin's poem 'Man' (*Der Mensch*) Jung offers the following commentary:

Hölderlin is mainly concerned with the Dionysian nature of man: the vine is his nurse, and his ambition is to 'resemble eternal Nature, mother of gods, the terrible'. The 'terrible Mother' is the *mater saeva cupidinum*, unbridled and unbroken Nature, represented by the most paradoxical god of the Greek pantheon, Dionysos, who significantly enough was also Nietzsche's god. (Jung, 1952, para. 623)

15. Compare with Jung (1911–1912, para. 122).
16. Compare with Jung (1911–1912, para. 664).
17. Compare with Jung (1911–1912, para. 664). Jung held this poem by Hölderlin in great affection, for in its 1802 version, he wrote, ‘the primitive thoughts of myth, the suggestions clad in symbols, of the sun-like death and resurrection of life, again burst forth’ (Jung, 1911–1912, para. 650). For further discussion, see Bishop (1995, pp. 100–101).
18. For further discussion, see Bishop (2002).
19. Compare Jung (1911–1912, para. 664).
20. Compare Jung (1911–1912, para. 664).
21. Symmachus, *Relationes*, No. 3, §10 (Barrow, 1973, p. 41). As Ilsetraut and Pierre Hadot remind us, the image of the open sky and the stars constitutes a symbol for a spirit of generosity and religious tolerance which has been lost since the end of Greco-Roman antiquity and yet, it might be argued, remains today more necessary than ever (Hadot & Hadot, 2004, p. 211).
22. *Human, all too human*, I, §3.
23. For discussion of the acceptance of necessity – i.e. the affirmation of fate – as the *tragic* insight that links Nietzsche with Spinoza and Goethe, see Bishop (2006). Compare, too, with Nietzsche’s ambition, formulated in *Beyond good and evil* (1886), to ‘translate humankind back into nature; to become master over the many vain and overly enthusiastic interpretations and connotations that have so far been scrawled and painted over that eternal basic text of *homo natura*’ (Nietzsche, 1968, p. 351 [§230]).
24. On the German radio programme *Redefreiheit*, the theologian and psychoanalyst Eugen Drewermann recently compared the archetypes to stained-glass windows (*Kirchenfenster*), because they ‘belong to the building we ourselves have made’ (*gehören zu dem Gebäude, das wir selbst gemacht haben*):

None of the images in stained-glass windows shows us the sun or the reality outside, yet it is only when the light floods in from outside that we see the images, and it is only through the images that we see the brightness outside. That is what the archetypes are like: they reflect a desire that, on this earth, never ends [*Keines der Bilder in den Kirchenfenstern zeigt uns die Sonne, zeigt uns die Wirklichkeit draußen, aber indem das Licht von draußen hindurchflutet sehen wir überhaupt die Bilder und nur durch die Bilder sehen wir die Helligkeit draußen. So ähnlich ist es mit den Archetypen: sie reflektieren eine Sehnsucht, die auf dieser Erde nie zu Ende kommt*]. (Drewermann, 2008)

25. ‘Winckelmann and his age’ (1805) (Goethe, 1986, p. 101; trans. modified). For discussion of this passage in relation to the Goethean ideas of the ‘joy of being’ (*Freude des Daseins*) and the ‘joy in being’ (*Freude am Dasein*), see Hadot (2008, pp. 240–245).

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