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## SYMBOLS OF THE TRANSFORMING EXPERIENCE IN VAUGHAN'S RELIGIOUS POETRY: AN APPROACH THROUGH ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

### 1

A. E. Blunden and E. C. Pettet, commenting on «Regeneration», one of Henry Vaughan's most significant accounts of the transforming experience, stress its private significance, considering it to be the record of Vaughan's discovery of religious faith.<sup>1</sup> In the light of Vaughan's conversion, claims Pettet, «Regeneration» is not the puzzling and obscure poem that has mystified many readers and critics:

following the guidance of its title, its significant position as the opening of *Silex Scintillans*, and the close parallel between its last stanzas and the conclusion of *The World*, we should never be in any serious doubts about its main theme. It is a poetic record of Vaughan's recovery –and in a large sense discovery– of religious faith; of his return to grace and his hope of election.<sup>2</sup>

According to Pettet, the obscurities of «Regeneration» arise only from its «allegorical intention» and its «largely private symbolism» but «once we have unravelled these allegorical "truths" the poem is readily accessible».<sup>3</sup> Pettet is right to some extent. «Regeneration» (as well as «Vain Wits and Eyes», «Vanity of Spirit», «The Night», «The World» and «The Retreat», to mention only a few other lyrics) can be discussed in the light of the poet's conversion. But emphasizing the private element in Vaughan's spiritual adventure may result in confining *Silex Scintillans* within limits which this poetry defies.

There is no doubt as regards the main theme of «Regeneration» and some of the «truths» it conveys; but the poem is *not* readily accessible, considering the peculiar nature of the mystical experience. Furthermore, Vaughan's religious poetry is both private and universal. Very often, however, the universal element transcends the private, and *Silex beco-*

mes the kind of poetry in which many age-old or archetypal aspects of the human experience manifest themselves.

On the private level this poetry deals with Vaughan's conversion, but on the universal level it deals with a very significant manifestation of the inward transforming experience, rebirth – rebirth being «an affirmation that must be counted among the primordial affirmations of mankind».<sup>4</sup> In the course of examining certain aspects of this experience, several concepts of Jungian psychology can prove useful and suggestive: they can «translate» the poet's language into a system of signs which is perhaps in tune with the consciousness of our time. Vaughan's poems are not museum pieces of religious poetry; instead, they are relevant to the distress of man in the space age, as they suggest our ability to be «other», to inhabit some wiser, transpersonal self, despite the totalitarian nature of the real.

## 2

It seems that Vaughan's treatment of the transforming experience corresponds in many of its stages to the process which Jungian psychologists and literary critics call «the process of psychic transformation» or «the process of individuation». In the largest part of *Silex* we witness the poet's agonizing effort to reach a higher state of consciousness by discovering the image of God in himself. The *imago Dei*, as Origen says, is «imprinted on the soul, not on the body» and is «invisible, incorporeal, incorrupt, and immortal»; it is the image «after whose likeness our inner man is made».<sup>5</sup> By the process of individuation Jung means «a living integration of consciousness and the unconscious». The goal of this process is the expansion of the field of consciousness, the maturation and enlargement of personality – the emergence of a wider personality, as a result of a creative contact between the ego, which constitutes a very small part of the psyche, and the «opposite» forces of the «other side». Thus, by the term «individuation» Jung denotes «the process by which a person becomes a psychological "individual"», an «indivisible unity or "whole"»:<sup>6</sup> the result of going through the individuation process successfully is «psychic wholeness». Jung speaks of

an ever-present archetype of wholeness which may easily disappear from the purview of consciousness or may never be perceived at all until a consciousness illuminated by conversion recognizes it in the figure of Christ.<sup>7</sup>

In Vaughan's religious verse and in the process of individuation we begin with an analogy drawn from nature – «every seed contains the mature fruit as its hidden goal»<sup>8</sup> – and with the conviction that «Paradise and Light» are not distant and inaccessible. The symbol of the «seed» and the metaphor of the growth of the plant are of the greatest importance in *Silex* and, as R. A. Durr says, «there is hardly a poem of Vaughan's which does not incorporate some element of his plant symbolism and such related images as shower, frost, pruning, dew, and so forth».<sup>9</sup> In «Regeneration» Vaughan mentions the «infant buds» (l. 7) that are destined to blossom even if they are temporarily «blasted» by the «surly winds» and the «frost within» (ll. 5-6). So is the human psyche which «whether aware of it or not, resisting or unresisting, is oriented toward its "wholeness"».<sup>10</sup> In Vaughan's religious poetry the «sunny seed» (in «Cook-Crowing») orientates the bird towards the «house of light» (l. 10). Despite the Fall, the seed abides in man:

Seeing thy seed abides in me,  
Dwell thou in it, and I in thee.

(ll. 23-24)

Adam before the Fall was an embodiment of God's image, as was Christ, the *Adam Secundus*, after the Fall.<sup>11</sup> Christ took upon himself a complete human soul, thus the memory of the God-image, the image of an image, still dwells within man in the Augustinian «Memory» or in the deep recesses of the Jungian «collective unconscious». Jung, paraphrasing Augustine, explains that «the God-image in man was not destroyed by the Fall but was only damaged and corrupted ("deformed"), and can be restored through God's grace».<sup>12</sup> In Vaughan's «Corruption» we read about «those early days» when man «shined a little» and «had some glimpse of his birth» (l. 4). The distant memory of the God-image still exists and makes him «long for home» and sigh «for Eden» and dream of the «bright days» (ll. 17-20). The remembrance of the original state of wholeness is preserved in the unconscious, or, in Vaughan's words, in the «root» that «hid under the ground survives the fall» («Disorder and Frailty», l. 29).

The rediscovery of this «root» or memory involves an inward – and backward – motion that leads towards the «starting-point», the inward journey called «introversion» by both mystics and psychologists.<sup>13</sup> Vaughan refers to his «backward steps» in surprisingly explicit terms:

O how I long to travel back  
 And tread again that ancient track!  
 That I might once more reach that plain,  
 Where first I left my glorious train,  
 From whence the enlightened spirit sees  
 That shady city of palm trees;  
 But (ah!) my soul with too much stay  
 Is drunk, and staggers in the way,  
 Some men a forward motion love,  
 But I by backward steps would move....  
 («The Retreat», ll. 21-30)

In «Rules and Lessons» he asks the reader to speed

And bring the same man back, thou wert at first.  
 Who so returns not, cannot pray aright,  
 But shuts his door, and leaves God out all night.  
 (ll. 81-84)

In «The Water-fall» Vaughan advocates the «descent» into the depths. The descent involves a temporary «death», a stage that precedes rebirth:

All must descend  
 Not to an end:  
 But quickened by this deep and rocky grave,  
 Rise to a longer course more bright and brave.  
 (ll. 9-12)

The descent, which is often symbolized by a voyage of discovery to unknown lands, is as old and as new as Homer's *Odyssey* and Tarkowsky's film *Stalker*, the Finnish national epic *Kalevala* and Dante's *Divina commedia*, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* and de Chirico's metaphysical painting, Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* and Schmidt's *The Book with Seven Seals*. As Jung writes, the *Nekyia*, the journey to



Hades,

[is] no aimless and purely destructive fall into the abyss, but a meaningful *katabasis eis antron*, a descent into the cave of initiation and secret knowledge.... The descent to the Mothers enabled Faust to raise up the sinfully whole human being – Paris united with Helen – that *homo totus* who was forgotten when contemporary man lost himself in one-sidedness.... This man stands opposed to the man of the present, because he is the one who ever is as he was, whereas the other is what he is only for the moment. With my patients... the *katabasis* and *katalysis* are followed by a recognition of the bipolarity of human nature and of the necessity of conflicting pairs of opposites.<sup>14</sup>

As in Augustinian meditation, one has to move first towards the deep caves of the soul and «into regions... that lie beyond sensory memories»,<sup>15</sup> But the more one is cut off from the roots of the unconscious the less possible the «return» is.<sup>16</sup> If the return is not often practised the archetypal images become more and more distant and «hazy»; they become, says Augustine,

so drowned againe, and so give us the slip, as it were, backe into such remote and privy lodgings, that I must be put againe unto new paines of meditation, for recovery of them to their former perfection... they must be *rallied* and drawn together againe, that they may bee knowne....<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, Vaughan's seed «soon as left, shrinks back to ill» («The Seed Growing Secretly», l. 18).

### 3

It is worth following Vaughan's «backward steps» in «Regeneration», a classic description and «a symbolical representation of Vaughan's journey on the Mystic Way». <sup>18</sup> From the first stanza of «Regeneration» we become aware of a tension between the «outer» and the «inner» man – between the surface aspects of personality and those aspects which lie hidden and are not yet developed:

It was high-spring, and all the way  
*Primrosed*, and hung with shade;  
 Yet, was it frost within,  
 And surly winds  
 Blasted my infant buds, and sin  
 Like clouds eclipsed my mind.  
 (ll. 3-8)

There is a contrast between seemingly irreconcilable worlds: surface and depth, the animal and the divine. Reconciliation between these pairs of opposites<sup>19</sup> will be brought about only after the pilgrim's diving into the unconscious, after «sinking inward upon the mind's resources, until all the evocative ramifications of the memory have been explored».<sup>20</sup> Exploring the «memory» means exploring the unconscious in order to discover the «hidden treasure» and restore the God-image.

Interestingly, there is a similarity (a similar psychic pattern) between the pilgrim's adventure in «Regeneration» and the adventure of the hero in Frobenius' «whale-dragon myth».<sup>21</sup> There, the hero is devoured by a water monster and while the animal travels to the East the hero also travels in the monster's belly. When the water monster has glided to dry land, the hero cuts open the fish from within and slips out. In «Regeneration» we have the submersion of the conscious in the unconscious, the temporary return to the «womb of things» («Resurrection and Immortality», l. 27), to the «dark, and sealed up womb» («Come, come», l. 23).<sup>22</sup>

The contact with the contents of the unconscious may result in «healing» but at the same time it may be extremely dangerous and frustrating:

Stormed thus, I straight perceived my spring  
 Mere stage, and show,  
 My walk a monstrous, mountained thing  
 Rough-cast with rocks, and snow;  
 And as a pilgrim's eye  
 Far from relief,  
 Measures the melancholy sky  
 Then drops, and rains for grief....  
 (ll. 9-16)

The descent (entry into the belly of the monster) can prove fatal because having once entered the «depths», the pilgrim may never be able to cut open the «fish» from within and slip out (rebirth, individuation). Pettet, commenting on lines 11-12, says that «the pilgrim's walk is... an image... of appalling alienation from the true and natural order of things ("monstrous")», of something fearsome and even horrible».<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the description suggests something «horrible»: the monstrousness of the archaic, primordial, utterly strange, horrific fantasies and images that can now manifest themselves freely. In order to achieve «renewal» the pilgrim has to face the totality of himself, that is, both the «natural» and «unnatural» aspects of his psyche. In «The Hidden Treasure», in the course of the pilgrim's quest for «one thing» (the restoration of the God-image, «though purchased once before», l. 34), the sources of danger are the distracting «False stars and fire-drakes, the deceits of night» (l. 4) and in «The Proffer» danger comes from the «black parasites», «the flies of hell»

That buzz in every ear, and blow on souls  
Until they smell....

(ll. 15-16)

In «The Mutiny» the pilgrim wishes there were «a shorter cut» to bring him «home» instead of passing

through a wilderness,  
A sea, or sands and serpents....

(ll. 30-31)

One must always bear in mind that the horrors and dangers described above are of a psychic origin. Durr says, «as this journey is a spiritual progress, an inner work, so ultimately the traveler has most to fear from himself.... More dreadful than the night around us [is] the... darkness within us».<sup>24</sup> But the nature of these dangers may vary. They may correspond to sexual desires which are pushed back into the unconscious (repression) – in Walter Hilton's words «the desires of the flesh».<sup>25</sup> In analytical psychology they correspond to the «autonomous complexes», psychic fragments that temporarily obsess consciousness and behave like separate, independent beings. They were never repressed because they do not belong to the personal but to the collective

unconscious and have never previously existed on the conscious level. They seem «alien», as if they came from «outside»; they may «invade the conscious mind with their weird and unassailable convictions and impulses».<sup>26</sup> If the pilgrim, on his way to individuation, does not prove able to master the «flies of hell» of the unconscious, he is eventually devoured by them.

So sighed I upwards still; at last  
                                   'Twixt steps, and falls  
 Reached the pinnacle....  
                                   (II. 17-19)

Commenting on the above lines, Pettet remarks that the «pinnacle» does not seem to bear any specific significance.<sup>27</sup> This does not seem very likely, considering the strong sense of unity and continuity that runs throughout «Regeneration» (and throughout *Silex*). Firstly, climbing the «pinnacle» involves an upward motion and we know what this motion signifies elsewhere in *Silex*:

  trees, herbs, flowers, all  
 Strive *upwards* still, and *point him the way home*.  
   («The Tempest», II. 27-28, my italics)

And though the «pinnacle» does not occur elsewhere in *Silex*, we come across a number of «mounts» and «mountains». In «The Pilgrimage» we read:

So strengthen me, Lord, all the way,  
 That I may travel to thy Mount.  
   (II. 27-28)

In «The British Church» we encounter the «mounts of spices» (l. 20); in «Fair and young light!» the «everlasting, spicy mountains» (l. 50); and in «Man's Fall, and Recovery» the «everlasting hills» (l. 1). In these lyrics the «mount», the «mountains», the «hills» are symbols of the «Emergent Consciousness». Similarly, the «hill», or the «pinnacle», symbolizes «a newly attained, higher, and more solid situation of consciousness, the birth of a "new world"».<sup>28</sup>



... where placed  
I found a pair of scales,  
I took them up and laid  
In the one late pains,  
The other smoke, and pleasures weighed  
But proved the heavier grains....  
(ll. 19-24)

Pettet, Durr and Garner<sup>29</sup> have discussed in detail Vaughan's controversial use of the emblematic «pair of scales» in connection with Quarles's use of the emblem and almost all possible implications of the image in the context of «Regeneration». However, an alternative interpretation of the image does not necessarily contradict the views of these critics: the pilgrim has to pass through another trial so as to prove how important «regeneration» is for him and what he can offer in return. The pilgrim offers both the «smoke» of his pleasures and the «late pains». In a sense, he offers the totality of himself, both the «lower» and the «higher» self of Neoplatonism,<sup>30</sup> the conscious and the unconscious, the «divine» and the «animal» elements. This is a significant «sacrifice» to the «altar» without which the pilgrim will be unable to progress. But weighing «pleasures» and «late pains» is also an act of «recollection and recapitulation of past history... an act of concentration of all... psychic energies which again and again acts like magic».<sup>31</sup> Thus, weighing is both a sacrifice and a psychic device.

With that, some cried, Away; straight I  
Obeyed, and led  
Full east....

(II. 25-27)

Pettet suggests that the voices («Away»), «though they may be angelic, are probably of no particular significance, merely a narrative device».<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the voice, rather than the «voices», is primarily a successful narrative device since it leads the pilgrim towards the East. But it seems to be more than just a device.

## 4

During the transforming experience one encounters the symbols of the individuation process.<sup>33</sup> Such symbols are «the Friend», «the Wise Old Man», «the Child», «the Hero-Saviour», or the more abstract symbol of the *mandala*. These archetypal images are generally understood as «mediators» that may further the transition between consciousness and the unconscious. If wisely employed, they can show the way to rebirth and individuation.

The «Friend» is «the other within», the «other person is ourselves – that larger and greater personality maturing within us», the «inner friend of the soul».<sup>34</sup> The pilgrim-Friend relationship is analogous to the one between the pair of Dioscuri, Leda's twin sons, Kastor and Polydeukes. One of the twins is mortal, the other immortal, and the immortal one is closer to the image of God. The individuation process strives to approximate the one to the other (the «mortal» self to the «larger and greater personality») but this is not easy because the «other person» seems «strange and uncanny». The «inner man» can be friendly or not and this depends entirely on ourselves.<sup>35</sup> Augustine is on friendly terms with his «inner man», his *psychagogue*, and therefore says of him: «I love a kind of light, and melody... and embracement, when I love my God, the light, melody... embracement of my inner man».<sup>36</sup> In «Regeneration» the Friend is present from the beginning (as are the «infant buds») but the pilgrim acknowledges his existence and authority only after the trial on the pinnacle («Away; straight I / Obeyed», ll. 25-26): the Friend will show him the way to the East, the exit from the «belly» of the «monster», and will help him on his way to the «surface», to the «fair, fresh field», to the «Virgin-soil» (l. 29).

The archetypal image of the Wise Old Man can manifest itself in various ways during the individuation process. As a symbol it is an expression of the collective and age-old experience and wisdom of mankind (*logos*). For this reason the Wise Old Man appears as an ancient figure, as priest, sage, philosopher, alchemist, necromancer, magician, etc.<sup>37</sup> Generally he is connected with the transforming experience and the discovery of the «hidden treasure» within one's self or even «outside» (i.e. the discovery of the philosopher's stone).

In Vaughan's religious lyrics he is «holy *Job*» («Palm-Sunday», l. 44), «*Elias*», who is fed by ravens and angels, or «*Abraham*», who is familiar with the angels and in whose tent the «winged guests»

Eat, drink, discourse, sit down, and rest  
Until the cool, and shady *even*....

(«Religion», ll. 15-16)

In «Jacob's Pillow, and Pillar» he is «blessed *Jacob*» (l. 41). In «Regeneration» Jacob is connected with the discovery of the «hidden treasure» and the knowledge that can miraculously transform. His function as a symbol of transformation is that of the mediator between two different levels of consciousness or between the animal and the divine. Being a «friend of God», he is connected with the archetype of wholeness. In the following lines wholeness is «*Jacob's bed*»:

A Virgin-soil, which no  
Rude feet ere trod,  
Where (since he stepped there,) only go  
Prophets, and friends of God.

(ll. 28-32)

The childhood motif is very prominent and significant in Vaughan's religious poetry. The child is a symbol of promise, of renewal, of a new attempt. In *Silex* childhood is the «dear, harmless age»,

An age of mysteries! Which he  
Must live twice, that would God's face see....

(«Child-hood», ll. 35-36)

Being «spotless and fresh», it embodies the possibility of renewal and healing for the leper:

Go leper, go; wash till thy flesh  
Comes like a child's....

(«St Mary Magdalen», ll. 69-70)

Following the «ancient track», the pilgrim goes back to the state of childhood (as in psychoanalysis). This «retreat» is neither as J. B. Leishman claims, «a desire to return to a former biological stage»,<sup>38</sup> nor as T. S. Eliot believes, a sign of weakness and immaturity:

We can all, if we choose to relax to that extent, indulge in the luxury

of reminiscence of childhood; but if we are at all mature and conscious, we refuse to indulge this weakness to the point of writing and poetizing about it...<sup>39</sup>

Eliot fails to recognize that the «return» to childhood is not, in Vaughan's case, an unhealthy withdrawal from the world of adults, a stagnation, but a stage in a very significant process. As Durr has it, «“childhood” in Vaughan is the symbol of spiritual attainment, not an indication of emotional regression».<sup>40</sup>

The significance of the Christ symbol in *Silex* is too complex to be adequately discussed in just a few paragraphs. Therefore, only some of the basic functions of this symbol will be considered.

In analytical psychology Christ corresponds to the archetype of the Hero-Saviour in sharing some of its basic characteristics.<sup>41</sup> There are a multiplicity of meanings and themes that can be related to the figure of Christ as Hero-Saviour, but the characteristic theme of this figure is the quest, the deliverance, the discovery, the great deed<sup>42</sup> which correspond to Christ's self-sacrifice and his descent into hell that aimed at the redemption of the dead. Thus, the contact of consciousness with the archetype of the Hero-Saviour marks a stage of the individuation process. Christ as hero opens the way of return to God, that is, to wholeness or to the God-image that the pilgrim is trying to «remember».

Christ is also a symbol of the self in its totality, William James's «real being», as well as a symbol of reconciliation between the opposites (animal - divine, body - soul). Jung says that

The cross [that Christ as Hero had to bear]... is *himself* [Christ], or rather *the* self, his wholeness, which is both God and animal – not merely the empirical man, but the totality of his being, which is rooted in his animal nature and reaches out beyond the merely human towards the divine.<sup>43</sup>

«The Word», Augustine says, «took on complete manhood, as it were, in its fullness: the soul and body of a man».<sup>44</sup>

In Vaughan's religious verse, Christ's blood becomes an agent of transmutation, a «potion» of immortality, another symbol of transformation (mediator) that leads to the «marriage» of the soul (the Spouse) to Christ (the Bridegroom and symbol of wholeness). In «The Dedication» the pilgrim's heart is fertilized by Christ's «all-quickenning blood»:



Some drops of thy all-quickenning blood  
 Fell on my heart; those made it bud  
 And put forth thus, though Lord, before  
 The ground was cursed, and void of store.  
 (ll. 5-8)

Similarly, in «Regeneration» we find images of fertility after the pilgrim has spied the «Virgin-soil»:

Here, I reposed; but scarce well set,  
 A grove descried  
 Of stately height....  
 (ll. 33-35)

And in «L' Envoy» Christ's blood becomes the final and decisive symbol that leads to wholeness, this time expressed in a triumphant vision of the unity of mankind:

And cement us with thy son's blood,  
 That like true sheep, all in one fold  
 We may be fed, and one mind hold.  
 (ll. 46-48)

But apart from Christ, the symbols of wholeness and totality of the self often take more abstract form in *Silex*. Such symbols are the *mandalas*, the «uniting symbols» which represent «the basic order of the psyche as a whole»,<sup>45</sup> the primal unity of the soul and the psychic centre or nucleus. As Jung says,

Age-old magical effects lie hidden in this symbol, for it is derived from the «protective circle».... It has the obvious purpose of drawing a *sulcus primigenius*, a magical furrow around the centre, the temple or *temenos*... of the innermost personality, in order to prevent an «outflowing» or to guard... against distracting influences from outside.<sup>46</sup>

In Vaughan's poetry the various «circles» and «rings» seem frequently to serve the above function of the mandala. (Note that in the Renaissance the circle was an image of perfection and completeness.) On his way to

the «surface» the pilgrim often encounters such symbols of wholeness that are usually connected with his attempt to make order out of the psychic chaos that surrounds him during the most dangerous stages of the individuation process. The *mandala* is a sign of the pilgrim's re-approach to the God-image, because its appearance corresponds to the awakening of the «original order» that existed in the caves of the pilgrim's psyche from the beginning of his journey. As Jung says, the appearance of the *mandala* signifies the sensing of a «center of personality, a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy». <sup>47</sup>

In Vaughan's *Silex* the circle encloses the pilgrim's precious «invisible estate». But the motion towards this «estate» – the deep centre of the psyche – is spiral<sup>48</sup> and one starts from drawing the circumference, the magical protective furrow around the temple of the soul. In «Regeneration» the circumference is represented by a grove

whose branches met  
And mixed on every side;  
I entered, and once in  
(Amazed to see 't,)
   
Found all was changed, and a new spring  
Did all my senses greet....  
(ll. 35-40)

The shape of the *mandala* becomes more distinct in the next stanza. Here it takes the form of the «sun», the oldest *mandala* of mankind and a symbol of Jesus for the early Christians:

The unthrift Sun shot vital gold  
A thousand pieces,  
And heaven its azure did unfold  
Chequered with snowy fleeces....  
(ll. 41-44)

The image of the sun has a double function. It is primarily the centre of a metaphor drawn from an alchemical process (the sun brings about the transmutation of base metals). At the same time it is also a *mandala* that helps to bring about the «transmutation» of the soul.

## 5

The poet's symbolism is more than «private». But neither the present approach, nor any other, can make Vaughan's treatment of the inward transforming experience «readily accessible». As Itrat-Husain says, «symbolism is a sign for something which could not be expressed in any other way»;<sup>49</sup> and Vaughan makes this point clear when, in his preface to *Silex*, he writes:

In the *perusal* of it, you will (peradventure) observe some passages, whose *history* or *reason* may seem something *remote*; but were they brought *nearer*, and plainly exposed to your view, (though that (perhaps) might quiet your *curiosity*) yet would it not conduce much to your greater *advantage*.<sup>50</sup>

«In the *perusal* of it» Vaughan's symbols of grace and predestination have been translated into archetypal patterns and autonomous complexes. But this is never enough since, as Jacobi has aptly argued, speaking of myths of all kinds,

it has not been possible, and it will never be possible, to translate this into abstract concepts, into a discursive language. The only appropriate expression for it remains the image, the symbol. Thus every man and every period give the symbols a new guise, and the «eternal truth» that the symbol communicates speaks to us in undying splendor.<sup>51</sup>

## NOTES

All quotations from Vaughan's lyrics are taken from the 1976 Penguin edition of *The Complete Poems*.

1. «To examine [«Regeneration»] in detail is a pleasant obligation upon Vaughan's admirers, for it seems to be the definite record of his passing from the circle of wits and revellers into the spiritual world». Edmund Blunden, *On the Poems of Henry Vaughan* (London: Richard Cobden - Sanderson, 1927), p. 20.
2. Pettey, *Of Paradise and Light: A Study of Vaughan's «Silex Scintillans»* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1960), p. 104.
3. Ibid.
4. C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, eds. H. Read, M. Fordham and G. Adler, 2nd edn (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 116.
5. Origen, *In Genesim homiliae*, I, 13 (Migne, P. G., vol. 12, col. 155), quoted in C. G. Jung, *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, eds. H. Read, M. Fordham and G. Adler (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), pp. 37-38.
6. See Jolande Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the Psychology of C. G. Jung*, trans. Ralph Manheim (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), p. 113, and S. J. Iliopoulos, *That Other Self: Yeats, Jung, and the Literary Psychology of the Double* (Athens: Parousia, 1993), p. 55.
7. Jung, *Aion*, p. 40.
8. Jacobi, p. 115.
9. R. A. Durr, *On the Mystical Poetry of Henry Vaughan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 31.
10. Jacobi, p. 115.
11. See Jung, *Aion*, p. 37.
12. Ibid., p. 39.
13. R. A. Durr, «Vaughan's Theme and Its Pattern: "Regeneration"», *Studies in Philology*, LIV (1957): 20. To the best of my knowledge, Durr is the only critic who draws general parallels between the Vaughanian transforming experience and the Jungian psychic process.
14. Quoted in Iliopoulos, p. 88.
15. L. L. Martz, *The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne, and Milton* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 23.
16. See P. W. Martin's discussion of the process of individuation in *Experiment in Depth: A Study of the Work of Jung, Eliot and Toynbee* (Boston, London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), pp. 164-87, and especially pp. 168-70.
17. St Augustine, *Confessions*, London, 1912, 10th Book, 11, quoted in Martz, p. 24. We also read: «... were I for some short space of time to cease to call to mind, they are again... buried and glide back...». St Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. E. B. Pusey (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1843), p. 192.
18. Itrat - Husain, *The Mystical Element in the Metaphysical Poets of the Seventeenth Century* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1948), p. 214.
19. For a more detailed discussion of the role of opposites in the process of psychic transformation see Martin, pp. 139-61. See also George Parfitt, *English Poetry of the Seventeenth Century* (London: Longman, 1985), p. 49: Vaughan conceives union with



- God «in terms... of dichotomies between earthly life... and heavenly». Nevertheless, as Crist argues, «That the sphere of Being is a world of contraries or diversities striving to come into living unity is an insight fundamental to the artistic endeavor in general and to the literary theory of many poets and thinkers». Robert Crist, «Charioteers of Fire: The Consilience of Derrida, Blake, and Dickinson», A paper read at «Culture Agonistes: Text Against Text», Hellenic Association for American Studies – Faculty of English Studies, University of Athens, 25-28 May 2000.
20. Martz, p. 25. Martz discusses Vaughan's characteristic «triad» (Bible - Nature - self) in the context of the Augustinian quest for the God -image. (See pp. 17-18.) In this essay I am concerned with the third part of this «triad», i.e. the pilgrim's effort to unite the «scarce remembered», half-broken pieces of this image. See «Vanity of Spirit», ll. 13-16.
  21. Jacobi, p. 179. The book from which Jacobi collected the «whale - dragon myth» is Frobenius' *Das Zeitalter des Sonnengottes*, Berlin, 1904.
  22. Vaughan's direct reference is to the «tomb».
  23. *Of Paradise and Light*, p. 106.
  24. *On the Mystical Poetry of Henry Vaughan*, p. 68.
  25. «These enemies are principally the desires of the flesh and vain fears which arise in your heart because of the corruption of human nature». Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection*, p. 198, quoted in Durr, *On the Mystical Poetry of Henry Vaughan*, p. 68.
  26. C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, eds. H. Read, M. Fordham and G. Adler, 2nd edn (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 14.
  27. *Of Paradise and Light*, p. 106.
  28. Jolande Jacobi, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*, 7th edn (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), plate 4.
  29. See Pettet, p. 107, Durr, *On the Mystical Poetry of Henry Vaughan*, pp. 84-85, and Ross Garner, *Henry Vaughan: Experience and the Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), p. 49.
  30. W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 5th edn (London: Methuen, 1921), p. 205.
  31. Eva Metman, «C. G. Jung's Essay on "The Psychology of the Spirit"», *The Guild of Pastoral Psychology*, 49 (December 1947): 10.
  32. *Of Paradise and Light*, p. 107.
  33. See Martin, pp. 92-114, and Jacobi, *The Psychology of C. G. Jung*, pp. 113-16.
  34. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, p. 131.
  35. Ibid.
  36. St Augustine, *The Confessions*, p. 186. See also Martin, p. 242: «Henry Suso, the fourteenth-century mystic, found it that it was a figure of that kind that impelled him to make the return».
  37. See Martin, p. 95.
  38. See Durr, *On the Mystical Poetry of Henry Vaughan*, p. 14.
  39. T. S. Eliot, «The Silurist», *The Dial*, 83 (1927): 260-61.
  40. Durr, *On the Mystical Poetry of Henry Vaughan*, p. 20.
  41. «The birth of the hero is typically of the stupendous kind, with wonders attending – signs in the heavens and prophecies on earth» (the star in Christ's birth). Martin, p. 104.
  42. Ibid.
  43. C. G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, eds. H. Read, M. Fordham and G. Adler (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), p. 303.
  44. St Augustine, *Sermo CCXXVII*, 4 (Migne, P. L., vol. 38, col. 1124), quoted in Jung, *Aion*, p. 39.

45. Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol*, p. 115. Perhaps the most impressive of Vaughan's *mandalas* is found in «The World (I)»: «I saw Eternity the other night / Like a great *Ring* of pure and endless light, / All calm, as it was bright, / And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years/ Driven by the spheres / Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world / and all her train were hurled...». Moving towards the centre of Vaughan's «*Ring*» we discover that its focus is Christ; the Lord of the Tetramorph occupies the centre of the Christian mandala.
46. C. G. Jung, *Alchemical Studies*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, eds. H. Read, M. Fordham and G. Adler (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 24.
47. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, p. 357.
48. C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, trans. R. F. C. Hull, eds. H. Read, M. Fordham and G. Adler, 2nd edn (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 217.
49. Husain, *The Mystical Element in the Metaphysical Poets*, p. 214.
50. Henry Vaughan, *The Complete Poems*, ed. A. Rudrum (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1976), pp. 142-43.
51. Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol*, p. 118.

## ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

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*Σύμβολα της μεταμορφωτικής εμπειρίας στη θρησκευτική ποίηση του Vaughan: Προσέγγιση μέσω της Αναλυτικής Ψυχολογίας*

Πολλοί κριτικοί υπογραμμίζουν τον αυτοβιογραφικό χαρακτήρα της θρησκευτικής ποίησης του Henry Vaughan, και ιδίως του ποιήματος «Regeneration». Δίνοντας όμως μεγάλη έμφαση στο αυτοβιογραφικό στοιχείο, στο πλαίσιο της μεταστροφής του Vaughan προς τη Χριστιανική πίστη, οι κριτικοί περιορίζουν τη θρησκευτική του ποίηση εντός ορίων τα οποία αυτή υπερβαίνει. Στο παρόν κείμενο εξετάζεται η παγκοσμιότητα (και η διαρκής επικαιρότητα) του έργου του Vaughan με αναφορά σε μεγάλο αριθμό ποιημάτων του και ιδίως στο «Regeneration». Η μέθοδος που χρησιμοποιείται είναι η γιουνγκιανή αναλυτική ψυχολογία, ως ένα συνεπές ερμηνευτικό «σύστημα» το οποίο ίσως βρίσκεται πιο κοντά στη συνείδηση του σημερινού ανθρώπου και αναδεικνύει την αξία της θρησκευτικής ποίησης του Vaughan για τον αναγνώστη στον εικοστό πρώτο αιώνα. Εκ παραλλήλου, γίνονται αναφορές στο έργο του Ωριγένη και, ιδίως, του Αυγουστίνου, στον οποίο συχνά παραπέμπει ο Jung.

Το κείμενο εστιάζεται στη μεταμορφωτική εμπειρία, όπως αυτή παρουσιάζεται στην ποίηση του Vaughan, και στην ομοιότητά της με τη διαδικασία που ο Jung αποκαλεί «πορεία της εξατομίκευσης» (process of individuation) ή «διαδικασία της ψυχικής μεταμόρφωσης». Ο αρχέγονος, αρχέτυπος χαρακτήρας της μεταμορφωτικής εμπειρίας στο έργο του Vaughan «μεταφράζεται» στην γιουνγκιανή γλώσσα της «κατάδυσης» στα βάθη του συλλογικού ασυνειδήτου, στη συνάντηση με δαιμονικές εικόνες, «αυτόνομα συμπλέγματα» και «ψυχικά θραύσματα» που συμπεριφέρονται ως ανεξάρτητα όντα, απειλώντας την παντοδυναμία του «εγώ». Επίσης τα σύμβολα που χρησιμοποιεί ο ποιητής ανάγονται στα μεταμορφωτικά σύμβολα που αναδύονται κατά την γιουνγκιανή διαδικασία («Φίλος», «Γερο-σοφός», «Παίδι», «Ήρωας-Σωτήρας» κ.α.), τα οποία διευκολύνουν τη δημιουργική επαφή με το ασυνείδητο και εντέλει την ανασυγκρότηση του αδιάσπαστου «ψυχολογικού Εαυτού» (Jung), του «πραγματικού όντος» (William James), του ανθρώπου («*homo maximus*», «*vir unus*»).

Ωστόσο, όπως επισημαίνεται στο τελευταίο μέρος του κειμένου, η προσπάθεια να εξηγηθεί με ψυχολογικούς όρους το «μυστήριο» της μεταμορφωτικής εμπειρίας στην ποίηση του Vaughan έχει σχετική μόνο αξία (ισχύει ή δεν ισχύει στα πλαίσια του ερμηνευτικού συστήματος, ή της «ποιητικής» που επελέγη, όπως θα παρατηρούσε ο Ronald Barthes) και δεν αποσκοπεί στην αποκάλυψη κάποιας απόλυτης αλήθειας.