

# The Ten Oxherding Pictures

## A Guide to Enlightenment



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Dean L. Frantz

Illustrated by Frederick Franck

1912-1913

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# The Ten Oxherding Pictures

## A Guide to Enlightenment

Dean L. Frantz

Illustrated by Frederick Franck

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To Marie  
My friend and lover  
companion and wife  
who for six decades  
has helped me to  
stay grounded

If you could only see your beauty,  
    for you are greater than the sun.  
why are you withered and shriveled in this prison of dust?  
A basketful of bread sits on your head  
    but you beg for crusts from door to door.  
you are more precious than both heaven and earth.  
you know not your own worth.  
sell not yourself at a little price,  
    being so precious in the eyes of God.

Rumi

## Acknowledgements

I wish to express my appreciation to the Toledo Center for Jungian Studies in Toledo, Ohio, for inviting me to present my seminar on the Oxherding Pictures.

I am also greatly indebted to Katherine Thompson for her transcript of that presentation, her additional research into the history of this unique series of pictures, and her timely encouragement and generous assistance without which this book would not have been possible.

I am also most grateful to Dr. Frederick Franck for his matchless rendering of the Oxherding Pictures, and his kind permission to use them here. However, their reproduction cannot begin to match the texture of the original drawings, which are located at Pacem in Terris, in Warwick, New York.

Appreciation is also due to Mr. Tom Healy, of Apple Press in Indianapolis, Indiana, for his editorial work and support of this project.

The verses which accompany the Oxherding pictures are found in the Manual of Zen Buddhism, by D.T. Suzuki, published by Grove/Atlantic.

Dean L. Frantz  
May 2003

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# THE TEN OXHERDING PICTURES

## Preface

If there is one idea that summarizes Jungian psychology in a nutshell, it is "the individuation process." Other schools of psychology have other terms for this inner journey, but I like Jung's term because it captures the essence of what it means to be a truly unique individual.

Each of us is created with certain innate possibilities, and the attempt to realize that potential within our lifetime is a never-ending challenge, and one which requires a kind of total commitment to a process. The dictionary defines process as "a series of actions or operations definitely conducing to an end." Thus the process of individuating is a journey, whose end is becoming what we were meant to become from the very beginning.

Jung's own definition of the individuation process was that it was a matter of relocating the center of gravity from the ego to the Self. This is a Herculean task equal to the twelve labors of Hercules in Greek mythology.

Anthony Stevens in Archetypes reminds us of the tension between the ego and the Self: "What we seem to be to ourselves is only a fraction of what there is in us to be. And as a result the Self is never satisfied: it knows that the ego could do better if it tried. For this reason, it never stops prompting and advising: it is forever tugging in new directions, always seeking to expand and readapt the habits and clichés of consciousness, sending us bad dreams and disturbing thoughts, making us question the value of things we hold dear, mocking our complacent pretensions to have 'arrived'. This is the secret of man's 'Divine discontent'. For all of us, so much more is 'planned for' than we can ever hope to realize in conscious actuality: our lives are crowded with lost opportunities." (1)

This book deals with the Oxherding pictures, which have their roots in Zen Buddhism. It is interesting that they are not listed in the Index to Jung's Collected Works, nor are the pictures to be found in that great body of literature. However, they represent in pictorial form, the essence of the individuation process, and as such, are worthy of our attention.

There are several series of the Oxherding pictures, some with four pictures, another with five, and two of them have ten pictures. All of them deal with the relationship between a boy and his ox.

Originally, the series served as a training guide for Chinese Buddhist monks. But the experience of searching for the Way is not confined to Zen followers. The search for the Way may take one to the ends of the earth--only to discover that it was within oneself all the time! The "treasure hard to attain" is difficult because we cannot see what we are looking for until we have found it--truly a paradox! Nothing could be more simple--or more profound--than searching for an ox and handling the beast once we have found him.

I have chosen the series of ten pictures created by my friend, Dr. Frederick Franck. The original stained glass paintings have a silk-like texture, which gives them a numinous quality. They are located at Pacem in Terris in Warwick, New York. Pacem in Terris is described in detail later in this book, but it is, in Dr. Franck's own words, a "trans-religious sanctuary", an "oasis of inwardness", filled with his creative sculptures of wood, stone, and steel, and it inspires people from all over the world who make a pilgrimage there.

Why is the number ten important? Because for Jung, ten suggested the beginning and the ending, the *Unus Mundus*, the totality. Here in these ten pictures is depicted the never-ending struggle between the ego and the Self, the search for one's totality, the journey into wholeness, and it is symbolized by what happens between a boy and his ox.

A Buddhist sage named Dogan wrote these words:  
If you want to do a certain thing,  
You must become a certain person.  
Once you have become that certain person,  
You will not care any more about doing that certain thing.

A monk went to a Zen master and said "I've been searching for the Buddha, but I do not know how to go on with my search." The Zen master replied "It's very much like looking for the ox when you are riding on the ox."

That's a paradox, but life itself is a paradox. Jung said: "From the middle of life onward, only he remains vitally alive who is ready to *die with life*." (2)

As we view these pictures, and reflect on their meaning, we will see the development and the changes in the relationship between the boy and his ox, which parallel the different stages of the individuation process.

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FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION.

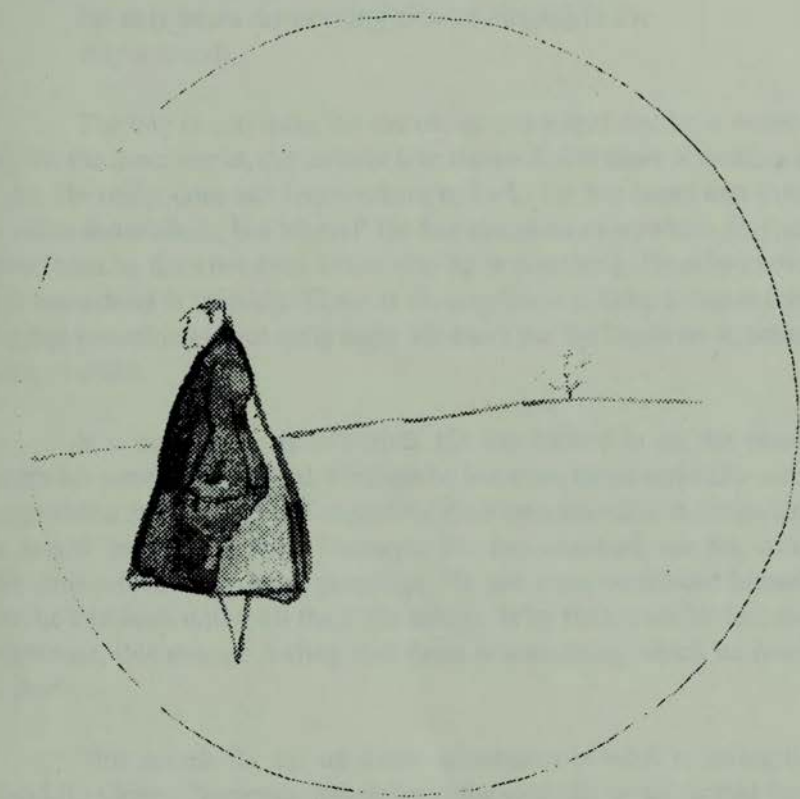
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↑ the oxherd has lost his ox



## SEARCHING FOR THE OX

Alone in the wilderness, lost in the jungle, the boy is  
    Searching, searching!  
The swelling waters, the far-away mountains, and  
    the unending path;  
Exhausted and in despair, he knows not where to go,  
    He only hears the evening cicadas singing in the  
    maple woods.

The boy is searching for the ox, or one might say, he is searching for the inner world, the interior life, the soul. But there is nothing in sight. He really does not know where to look. He has heard that there is value somewhere, but where? He has searched everywhere in vain, sometimes he does not even know why he is searching. He only knows that something is missing. There is an emptiness within, a vague feeling that something is not quite right. He can't put his finger on it, something is amiss.

It is not that he hasn't tried. He has looked in all the places where his peers have looked. Perhaps he has even taken seriously some suggestions from his parents regarding their own search in the hope that he might learn from their journeys. He has checked out the usual panaceas which the culture proposes. He has even convinced himself that he has been doing all the right things. Why then does he feel this emptiness, this strange feeling that there is something which he needs to find?

This search for the ox often culminates in what is called the Mid-Life Crisis. Someone has defined the mid-life crisis as that time when you have climbed rung by rung to the very top of the ladder, only to find that it is leaning against the wrong wall!

I can relate to this! I spent the first half of my life in a vocation which I found satisfying and meaningful. I thought I had reached the top of the ladder! Then came a moment when I was introduced to Jung's thought, and I realized that I was searching for an ox which I did not even know existed. That moment came when I took some of my dreams to Barbara Hannah. I shall never forget her piercing look and her pronouncement "Dean Frantz, if you do not cease what you are now doing, you will lose your soul."



The thought of leaving our newly built home, a good job where I enjoyed many benefits, and one from which I had expected to retire in due time, and embarking on a long and expensive training program at the Jung Institute in Zurich, from a rational, common sense point of view, made no sense at all. This was utterly crazy! But I knew there was an ox to be discovered, and it was the search for that ox which led me to Zurich over a period of several years, which eventually culminated in my leaving the known for the unknown.

A very intelligent and articulate woman, in mid-life, once came into my office, plunked herself down, and her first question was "What the hell is life all about anyway?" It was obvious she was searching for her ox.

What this boy has lost is his own true self. The landscape is barren, it is bleak, the springs of life have dried up, and the water of life is no longer available. Jung has some comments about the water of life:

"We must struggle all the time to consolidate our consciousness and its attitude. But we soon discover that this praiseworthy and apparently unavoidable battle with the years leads to stagnation and desiccation of soul. Our convictions become platitudes ground out on a barrel-organ, our ideals become starchy habits, enthusiasm stiffens into automatic gestures. The source of the Water of Life seeps away. We ourselves may not notice it but everybody else does, and that is even more painful." (3)

When the Water of Life has seeped away, our thirst becomes so great that we search for that which will quench our thirst and restore life to us again. That is the ox for which we search.

Jung wrote: "About a third of my patients are not suffering from any clinically definable neurosis but from the senselessness and aimlessness of their lives. I should not object if this were called the general neurosis of our age. Fully two thirds of my patients are in the second half of life." (4)



In Face to Face, the BBC interview with Jung shortly before his death, he ends the interview with these pregnant words: "Man cannot stand a meaningless life." I have seen that moment many times, but I cannot forget the finality with which Jung spoke those words. We simply cannot stand a life without meaning.

A young doctor in his 30's, a talented organist who could have made music a career, gave up what promised to be a very successful career in Europe, and spent the rest of his life in Lambarene, Africa, bringing the benefits of modern medicine to native people. His name was Albert Schweitzer.

A successful attorney abandoned his lucrative law practice and invested the rest of his life in building houses for people who could not afford them. Today thousands of people who never thought they could afford a home, now own one, because of the vision of one man who created Habitat for Humanity. His name is Millard Fuller.

An incredible artist stopped painting for a living and began to paint his inner world. His name was Peter Birkhauser.

Another artist left the commercial art world, and created Pacem in Terris. His art hangs in twenty museums around the world, and his workshops on "The Zen of Seeing/Drawing" have inspired a generation of people to get in touch with their inner artist. He has written more than thirty books, and at 95, continues to draw and write. His name is Frederick Franck.

A woman, daughter of an English clergyman, read some of Jung's essays, and somebody advised her to go to a Freudian psychiatrist. She went to one, and after a half hour of what she termed "non-sense", left. Then she wrote to Jung and said "I would like to talk with you." He did not answer her letter. She wrote a second time. No answer. So she booked passage from England to Zurich. She made an appointment and saw Jung for the first time. She spent the rest of her life in Zurich, and became one of Jung's students and trusted colleagues. Her name was Barbara Hannah.

In Tuesdays with Morrie, a powerful story about a dying professor and his student, Mitch, from earlier years, Mitch thought he had everything he wanted from life. He was a young reporter, rushing around the world, reporting sporting events. Then on Ted Koppel's Nightline he saw his old professor, Morrie, being interviewed. He was dying. Mitch thought "That's my old professor. Perhaps I should go see him, but no, I'm too busy, I don't have time to see him." Then something said to him "You really ought to go see your old professor before it's too late."

He made an appointment to see Morrie, and as a result, he met with him every Tuesday morning until he died. He recorded their sessions, which are the basis for this very powerful book. Mitch discovered that this was his ox, the wisdom of his old professor. He didn't really know he was searching for his ox. He was much too busy to let something else into his life, but there was an innate quest for his ox, and it was his search for the ox which led him to his dying professor, and the wisdom which was Morrie's legacy.

The relationship between a person and their ox is often initiated by something totally unexpected or some seemingly insignificant event. As Jung says: "How often in the critical moments of life everything hangs on what appears to be a mere nothing." (5)

Searching for the ox. That's what it is all about.



2 He spies the tracks of the ox



## SEEING THE TRACES

By the stream and under the trees, scattered are the  
traces of the lost;  
The sweet-scented grasses are growing thick--did he  
find the way?  
However remote, over the hills and far away, the beast  
may wander,  
His nose reaches the heavens and none can conceal it.

He sees the footprints of the ox, which gives him a hint that somewhere there is an ox. The real ox is still far away, but there is hope. There are little hints and signs that somewhere, there is an ox.

There is no guarantee that he is going to find the ox, because some people follow the tracks and never find the ox. Not everyone has learned to see. Not everyone is willing to follow the tracks to see where they lead. But tracks suggest that there is something beyond which might be worth investigating.

Seeing is one of the things Frederick Franck teaches in his Zen of Seeing/Drawing workshops. He says that we do a lot of looking, we look through glasses, through telescopes, through camera lenses, but very few of us have learned how to really see.

I was in one of his workshops along with twenty other people. The rule of the day was silence. Then Dr. Franck said "I am going to give each of you a leaf, and I want you to draw that leaf."

I make no claim to be an artist, in fact, I raised questions as to why I was even in the workshop, and I found I was not alone in thinking that. Other people were asking themselves "Why am I here? I'm not an artist." But when he gave me a leaf, and asked me to draw it, my initial reaction was "There's no way I can draw a leaf and have it resemble the original object." Then after four hours, I realized that I had to feel what it was like to be a leaf, and to really see that leaf with my inner eye, not with my two eyes in my face.

When I began to see with the Third Eye, the Buddha Eye, the Inner Eye, I found that I could draw something that looked like a leaf. I was amazed! A Zen master said "The meaning of life is to see." When

we really see, instead of just looking, we initiate a whole new way of relating to what is around us. Seeing the tracks is the first step toward finding the ox.

Sir Laurens van der Post was one of Jung's closest friends. He has written wonderful books about his own inner journey. He once talked with a psychiatrist but reported later that the conversation didn't make much sense. Then he got acquainted with Jung. Van der Post said the first time he met Jung, he discovered it was not so much what Jung said, but he realized he was in the presence of an overpowering personality. He saw Jung as a great, wise old man and they became fast friends.

In Face to Face, Jung's last filmed interview, he describes a patient he had seen in a hospital. His patient had a vision of the sun, which moved from side to side in the sky, and hanging down from the sun was a tube which was the origin of the wind. Jung thought "This man is just crazy." But years later, Jung was reading some old manuscripts, and in one of them he found a prayer from Mithraism, in which the sun moved from side to side, and hanging down from the sun was a tube which was the origin of the wind!

Jung reasoned "That man knew something about an image which came from the collective unconscious. He was illiterate, had not gone to school, yet somehow this image appeared to him." For Jung, this was immensely exciting, because it suggested that as individuals, we are heirs of all that has gone before, and that we are in touch with a vast body of unconscious material which belongs to the whole human race.

When Jung was asked "Did that prove anything to you?" he answered, "No, but it gave me a hint, and I took the hint." Jung had seen the tracks of something, and when he followed the tracks, they led him to his major concept of the collective unconscious, one of his most important discoveries.

I spent two months in Zurich in 1969 at the Jung Institute. My mentors were Dr. Riklin, President of the Institute, and Barbara Hannah. It was my first real introduction to Jungian Psychology. I saw the tracks, but I said to myself "I have a good job as a faculty member at a very good college. When I took the position, I told myself that this



would be my last career change, and I would eventually retire with all the benefits provided by this position.”

So I rationalized my summer’s experience at the Jung Institute: “This has been a wonderful two months. I have learned so much, and what I have experienced will be of lasting benefit to me, but to go back to post-graduate studies and give up my college position makes no sense, especially at my age.” I was then fifty years old.

But I had seen the tracks, and two years later, I resigned my college job, and headed off to Zurich for four years, receiving my diploma when I was fifty-seven years old.

I am sure that some people thought Frantz is really crazy, to give up a great job and head towards an unknown future. But once you have seen the tracks, there is a tug to go further, to see what created the tracks, and where the tracks lead.

In the early part of the last century, a woman named Jane Addams saw the tracks even though she lived in a small town in Illinois. She went to Toynbee Hall in London where she learned how to deal with social problems. Although she came from a wealthy family, she saw the tracks. She returned to Chicago where many immigrants had come to live. Their living and working conditions were abysmal, and Jane Addams felt called to help them deal with the problems of living in Chicago. She found an old house on the west side of the Chicago Loop. It was owned by the Hull family and she converted it into a social services center, where she spent the rest of her life. Her work was honored by being the first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. A British observer commented that she was the only saint America ever produced.

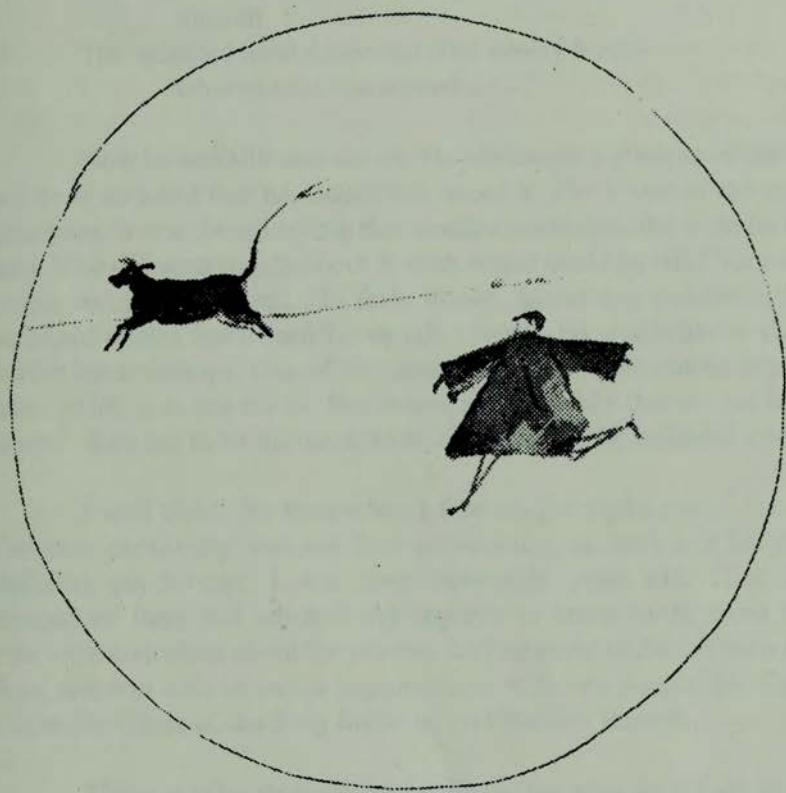
She could have lived a life of ease, she could have done anything with her wealth, but she chose to cast her lot with the dispossessed and poor of Chicago, because she had seen the tracks.

Helen Luke, the founder of Apple Farm in Michigan, died a few years ago, but left a legacy which was unique. She lived in England, and did her analytical work with Toni Sussman in London. She went to Zurich for a few months, and had an hour with Jung. In reporting on that hour, she said that Jung kept talking about America

and the problems of Americans. She said "That wasn't what I wanted to hear, why did he talk so much about America?" When she reported this to Toni Sussman, her analyst, Toni said "You are going to America." Helen responded "That's impossible. My mother is here, and I have two young boys. There are currency restrictions. I can't go to America."

A year or so later, Robert Johnson invited her to come to Los Angeles, and she went, later moving to Michigan because she had this vision of a center where Jungian psychology would be made available to seekers. Helen Luke saw the tracks, and followed them. Today, all of us are the richer because of the creative writings of Helen Luke which she has left us. But all of this happened because she saw the tracks of an ox.





3 he has seen the Ox!



## SEEING THE OX

On yonder branch perches a nightingale cheerfully  
Singing;  
The sun is warm, and a soothing breeze blows, on the  
bank, the willows are green;  
The ox is there all by himself, nowhere has he to hide  
himself;  
The splendid head decorated with stately horns--  
what painter can reproduce it?

Now he actually sees the ox. He has caught a glimpse of the ox, and he is so awed that he cannot talk about it. The vision of the ox is numinous. It is so breathtaking that words cannot describe what he has seen. If he did want to talk about it, with whom could he talk? Very few people would understand. He feels lonely. Something wonderful has happened to him, but he can't even talk about it. He would like to shout it from the housetops. One of the most moving and momentous experiences of life is to see the ox. But sacred moments like that are not to be shared: they are to be nurtured, to be cherished, to be reflected upon.

I well recall the time when I first caught a glimpse of the ox. The year previously was my first introduction to Jung and his life-changing psychology. I was then forty-eight years old. That first glimpse of Jung had whetted my appetite to know more about this man's creative ideas about the psyche. So I returned to Zurich for a few days, and was able to secure appointments with two people: Dr. Franz Riklin, President of the Jung Institute, and Barbara Hannah.

Those two hours were so numinous that even now I get goose bumps just thinking of them. My first appointment was with Dr. Riklin, and as we talked, I felt that he had learned my life history in sixty minutes, and asked questions which caused me to re-evaluate everything in my life that had gone before. After I left his office, I sat down near a fountain on the street. I was so overcome that I wept tears of joy, and could not move for a very long time. The next day I saw Miss Hannah, and again, I was overcome with emotion because I somehow knew that I had found something very precious. I did not know where it would lead me, but for now, it was enough that I had seen an ox.

The boy in the Oxherding series has followed the tracks of the ox, and now he sees the ox far away. He knows that this is what he has been searching for. This is the hero's journey. Having caught a glimpse of the possibilities, he begins the journey. At this point he is not aware of the dangers, the obstacles, the hurdles which must be surmounted. Those are not important. He only knows that the journey must be undertaken, regardless of the risks or the consequences.

Marie-Louise von Franz was invited to Bollingen by Jung, along with other Swiss young people. Jung was interested in knowing what Swiss young people were thinking about, so he invited these young people to spend a day with him at Bollingen, his retreat on the Lake of Zurich. It was a place where normally people were not invited, so this was a special occasion. At the time, von Franz was eighteen years old.

Jung told these young people about a vision of one of his patients. She had this vision of being on the moon, and she was accosted by a black man, who grabbed her and held her. Jung commented "This patient of mine was on the moon."

This struck von Franz as being unrealistic, and she said to Dr. Jung "But that's not possible, because no one has ever been on the moon." Jung replied "She was on the moon." And at 18, and perhaps with the brashness of youth, she thought "Now either this man is crazy or I don't understand what he is talking about."

After some reflection later, she realized that what Jung had been telling them was true: obviously this woman was not physically on the moon, but psychologically she was on the moon. So she learned a great truth from that experience--that there are different kinds of reality, and psychological reality is reality.

She had seen an ox. The rest is history. Dr. von Franz was Jung's most brilliant student, and assisted him in his research projects, translating, writing, and lecturing, and leaving a rich legacy of her own invaluable insights into Jungian psychology.

Our pioneer ancestors left the comfort and security of their homes in the East, and traveled west in ox carts across the hostile plains, and unfriendly mountains. The rigors of the westward migration are the

stuff of our own American history, but those hardy pioneers made the journey, and carved homes and farms out of the wilderness because they had seen an ox.

Angeles Arrien is probably the world's foremost authority on cross-cultural symbolism. She was a student at the Sorbonne in Paris, and someone said to her "You need to go back to Berkeley and study anthropology". She did, and now shares the results of her worldwide search for the common threads of symbols, because she saw an ox.

Martin Luther King saw the injustices done to people of his race, and said "I have to do something about this." That was his ox, his vision of facing the racism which had dominated American life for generations. Once he had seen the ox, he also saw the ox of non-violence, and knew that this was the only approach which would win the struggle against an entrenched system of segregation and racism. When he gave his speech "I Have a Dream" in Washington, he inspired others to also see the ox which had inspired him.

Robert Johnson is another whose writings in Jungian psychology have inspired others. In his autobiography Balancing Heaven and Earth he tells about an incident when he was only sixteen years old. He had his first job. It was factory work, hard work, in noisy, terrible conditions. He worked the night shift, which began in the evening and ended at 4 a.m. the next day. The first night on his new job, he was so tired when morning arrived, and he was so fed up with working in a noisy factory, that he said to himself "I have to find something beautiful. Somewhere in this world there has to be some beauty to counter the awful place where I work."

He drove his car up into the hills around Portland, Oregon. In the distance he could see the snowclad beauty of Mt. Hood, and the sun was rising on a beautiful landscape. In his own words "I saw a golden world." He had a vision of a different kind of world from that where he had spent the last eight hours. He said the vision lasted only about thirty minutes, and when he returned to his car, one of his tires was flat, so he was brought back to reality in a hurry! But he had seen an ox, and that was the beginning of his journey to share the vision of a golden world. Today his books are treasured, because he has been able to put into words his vision of a world where wholeness can be achieved.

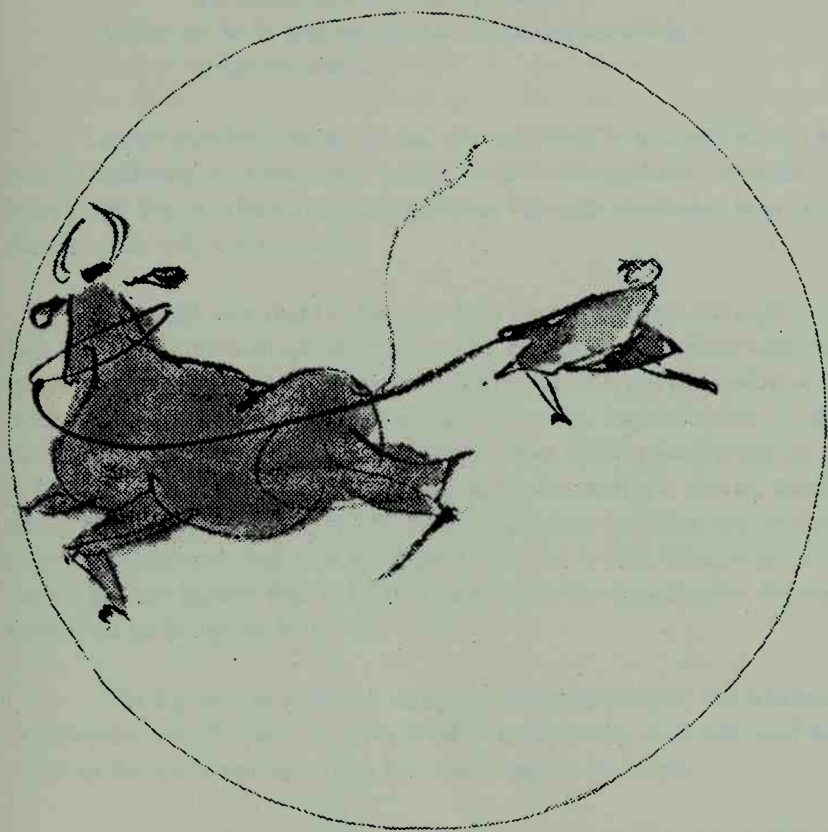
When Dr. Jung was pondering his choice of a career, he received an invitation to devote himself to internal medicine. He said that he might have done so had not something happened which removed all doubts about his future career.

In preparation for his state examination, he read a textbook on psychiatry, even though his experience with psychiatric lectures and clinics left him bored. However, in the preface to this book, the author called the psychoses "diseases of the personality." Jung wrote in his autobiography: "My heart began to pound. I had to stand up and take a deep breath. My excitement was intense, for it had become clear to me, in a flash of illumination, that for me the only possible goal was psychiatry." (6)

In that moment, Dr. Jung saw his ox, and from that moment on, he never wavered in his decision to devote his life to psychiatry and dealing with the challenge of mental illness.

Now the boy in this series has seen an ox. The ox appears to be running away, but the ox has been seen.





4. He catches the Ox

It is a very common mistake to suppose that the only way to get a good result is to work hard. In fact, the only way to get a good result is to work smart.

The first step in getting a good result is to know what you want. You must have a clear idea of your goal and what you are willing to do to achieve it. Then you must plan your work carefully, so that you can do it in the most efficient way possible.

Next, you must execute your plan. This means that you must do what you have planned to do, and you must do it well. You must be careful and thorough in your work, and you must not let anything distract you from your goal.

Finally, you must evaluate your work. You must look at what you have done and see if it is what you wanted. If it is not, you must find out why and try to do better next time.

It is not always easy to get a good result, but it is not impossible. If you follow these steps, you will be able to get the best possible result from your work.



## CATCHING THE OX

With the energy of his whole being, the boy has at  
last taken hold of the ox:  
But how wild his will, how ungovernable his power!  
At times he struts up a plateau,  
When lo! he is lost again in a misty impenetrable  
mountain pass.

After you have seen the ox, the next step is to catch him. The boy's relationship to the inner world is now strengthened because he has caught the ox. But having caught him, his next challenge is to rope the ox so he will not get away.

To make sure that he does not lose the ox, he throws a rope over him and holds on with all his might. The boy does not know what the future will bring, he has no way of knowing what his relationship with the ox will require, or what the ox will do to him, because after all, the ox has a mind of his own. He only knows that having caught the ox, it is terribly important for him to hang on and not allow the ox to get away. His vision of the ox, which in the beginning was faint and scarcely discernible, now has real substance. The ox is real. This is no illusion. The boy knows that if he does not seize the opportunity, he will lose it, so he hangs on to the ox.

The ox will be different things to different people, but whenever you have caught your ox, you need to hang on for dear life, and not listen to the siren voices which are clamoring to be heard.

Anyone who catches an ox will hear voices like these: "Don't be silly, only an idiot would do what you are contemplating." Or this platitude "Use common sense, be practical." Or "What will people think?" "Don't be ridiculous, it's never been done before." Or the oft repeated refrain of the old patriarch in Fiddler on the Roof -- "Tradition." "Don't tamper with tradition, if it was good enough for our ancestors, it's good enough for us."

But the greatest of human achievements belong to those who, having seen the ox, catch him and hang on.

Marie and Pierre Curie conducted hundreds of experiments before they finally discovered radium. They were tempted to give up, but they had seen the ox, and were determined to persist until their laboratory finally yielded the secret which has changed the face of modern science.

Thomas Edison almost gave up in despair after his filaments in light bulbs continued to burn out. Then he decided to try heating his filaments in a vacuum, and the light bulb was born. He knew that somehow light could be produced from electricity and he caught his ox. Edison once said that inspiration is 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration!

The Wright brothers had a little bicycle shop in Dayton, but they dreamed of the day when men could fly through the air like birds, so they studied aerodynamics, and observed the flights of birds until they felt they could build a plane which would actually fly. Never mind that the first flight at Kitty Hawk only lasted twelve seconds, and flew 125 feet at 35 miles per hour. The editor of the Dayton Daily News refused to pay twenty cents for a telegram informing him that people had flown for the first time. The Wright brothers had seen an ox, and now they had caught it. Today we fly all over the world, and take for granted that planes weighing many tons can fly over oceans and deliver their passengers safely to continents half way around the world. And it has been only a hundred years since that first historic flight. All because two brothers saw an ox, caught him, and roped him so he could not get away.

Dr. Menninger visited the Mayo Clinic and was impressed with their facilities for dealing with physical illness. Then he asked himself why there should not be comparable facilities for mental illness. He had seen an ox, and caught it by returning to Topeka, Kansas, where he founded the Menninger Clinic, which today is a model for treating mental illness.

Sometimes the ox does not want to be caught. He snorts and paws the earth, trying to shake off the rope which restrains him. Some timid souls will ask "Is it really worth it? Why am I putting myself through all this struggle, when I could just forget it and not be bothered?" Once one has caught the ox, thoughts like this are almost guaranteed "This may get nasty before this is over. I could be more com-

fortable if I would just forget I ever saw the ox.” Another familiar refrain is “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.” Or “Nobody can fault me if I give up now because at least I tried.”

But once the ox has been caught and tamed, that is the time to hold on. In the 60's, it was just another day in Montgomery, Alabama when a black woman sat in the front of the bus and disregarded the driver's demand that she move to the back of the bus where colored people were supposed to sit. Rosa Parks said “My feet are tired. I'm going to sit in the front of the bus.” That was the beginning of the civil rights revolution in America, which changed forever the segregated society which had been America's millstone since our nation's founding.

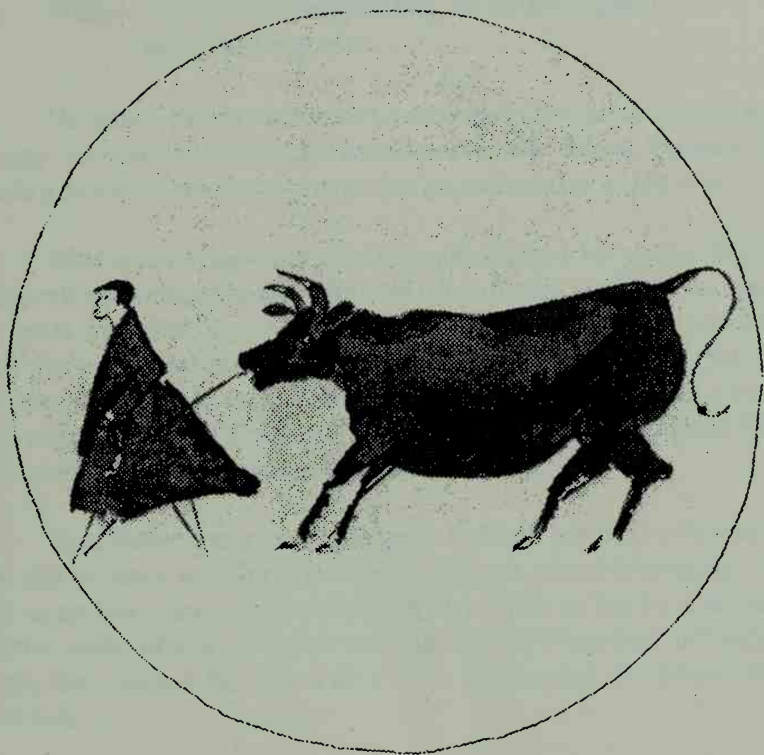
Joan of Arc was a woman who had seen her ox, and she caught it. She had a vision of her calling, she knew what she had to do. Now that took some courage, to be a woman of her stature in a patriarchal society. In a drama depicting her life, someone remarked to a French soldier that Joan was crazy. He replied “We could do with a few crazy people. Look where the sane ones have landed us.”

Frederick Franck is a great artist whose paintings reflect the very essence of life. For the first part of his life, he was part and parcel of the contemporary art world. Then he decided to leave that world, and strike out on his own. He said “I don't want to be part of that commercial world any more. I am going to draw and not be consumed with the materialism of commercial art.”

Dr. Franck and his wife walked through the streets of Warwick, New York, and saw an abandoned house. It was in shambles, but he had seen an ox. When they decided to buy the old house and renovate it, they caught the ox. The neighbors thought the Francks were crazy, and they knew they were right when the Francks not only bought the old house, but also an abandoned water mill which was full of garbage.

But Dr. Franck, who spent four years on the staff of Albert Schweitzer in Africa, who had three earned doctorates, found a man who helped him remove 1200 wheelbarrow loads of garbage from the old mill. Then they set about building an auditorium which is dedicated to Pope John XXIII, and named it Pacem in Terris.

Frederick Franck created an "Oasis of Inwardness" which he filled with his sculptures, where people can come to reflect on what it means to be truly human and find the peace which they have not found elsewhere. Dr. Franck had this enormous vision, so having seen the ox, he caught him, roped him, and today his is one of the most human voices to be heard, in contrast to the tired and meaningless cliches which are so often repeated *ad infinitum, ad nauseum*.



5. He has tamed the ox





## HERDING THE OX

The boy is not to separate himself with his whip and  
tether

Lest the animal should wander away into a world of  
defilements;

When the ox is properly attended to, he will grow pure and  
docile

Without a chain, nothing binding, he will by himself  
follow the oxherder.

He tames the ox. It seems so easy now, but getting there was not easy. At times it seemed he would never tame the ox, because the ox was a beast of enormous power and he had a mind of his own.

Now is the time when many people despair because of all the hard work and relentless discipline which is required. When we listen to a great musician, it seems so effortless, but behind that beautiful music lie hours and hours of dogged practice. When Jascha Heifetz flew to a performance and had to change planes, he would find a room in the airport where he could practice for his concert later that day. That is the kind of discipline which is required in oxherding.

Bob Feller was one of the great baseball pitchers of his time. How did he learn to control the ball and put it where he wanted? He lived on an Iowa farm, and his father drew a circle on the barn and said "Hit the center of that circle." It was that kind of discipline, of herding his ox, that created the Bob Feller who confounded the batters who faced him.

So the ox has been tamed. He seems docile enough, but you don't let him out of your sight. It is a time for vigilance, for keeping in touch with that which is represented by the ox.

One of my mentors in my analytical training was Barbara Hannah. It never ceased to amaze me--how she honored and trusted the unconscious as a creative, redeeming activity of the psyche. Quite in contrast to Freud's idea that the unconscious was the garbage heap of the psyche.

When in the course of my analysis, my ego had certain ideas about the direction my life should take, she would caution me "Don't do anything foolish or reckless. Wait until you see what the unconscious has to say about it. Perhaps you will have a dream, or some synchronistic event, or active imagination which will give you the guidance you seek."

I recall especially one critical period in my analysis when I felt I simply could not proceed in the direction suggested by the unconscious. My ego was digging in its heels and protesting vociferously. But Miss Hannah uttered a simple but firm ultimatum: "If you are not able to follow the lead of the unconscious, as indicated by your dreams and active imagination, then our analytic work is finished!"

My ox was the unconscious. For the first time in my life, I discovered a force in me which enabled me to live on a different level than I had ever done before.

The relationship between the boy and his ox has been changed. There is mutual respect and trust. They are comfortable with each other. As a result, both are enriched.

A few years ago I heard the poetry of Rumi for the first time. This was an ox of which I had been totally deprived in the seven decades of my existence. That first poem sent me on a search to learn more about this 12th Century Sufi poet. His poetry has often quenched my thirst. It's as if I cannot get enough of his poetry, so rich with pregnant images. So I now have stacks of books of his poetry, and I read everything I can about this holy man whose poems open new vistas of our relationship to love, and the Divine.

If one herds the ox carefully, and nurtures the relationship, then new possibilities emerge. There is a priceless story about Jung. A doctor with a practice in a remote mountain district of Switzerland asked Jung to see a simple girl of the hills whom he thought was going insane. Jung saw her and realized that she did not need a sophisticated analytical treatment. He talked to her quietly in his study and concluded that all she suffered from was that her community had poured scorn on all the simple beliefs, ideas, customs and interests which were natural to her, and which had wilted under the attack.



He got her to talk about all the things she had enjoyed as a child. Almost at once he saw a flicker of interest in what had appeared to be the burned out ashes of herself. He was so excited by her quickened spirit that he joined in the singing of her nursery songs and her renderings of mountain ballads. He even danced with her, undeterred by any thought of how ridiculous this might appear to orthodox medical practitioners. At the end of a few days, the girl was fully restored to a state of honor with herself, and he sent her off in high spirits to her home. She never again regressed. The results appeared so miraculous that the doctor wrote to Jung and asked him how it happened. Jung wrote back "I did nothing much. I listened to her fairy tales, sang with her, and the job was done." The doctor was never convinced that Jung was not pulling his leg.

One of the truly great books of recent years is What does it mean to be human? It had its origin in a discussion in a Greenwich Village cafe where people were pondering the really important questions of our time. What they finally settled on was this question. They felt that this was the ultimate question, which preceded all others in importance. If we can define what it means to be human, then many of our thoughts and actions will be affected and perhaps changed radically. The underlying motif of this book is that to be human requires a respect and reverence for life.

Frederick and Claske Franck undertook the editing of this book, with more than a hundred responses to this question, from people around the world, half a dozen of whom were Nobel Prize winners. The first edition was completely sold out, which says something about the relevance of the question and the interest it aroused. The world appears to have been waiting for a thoughtful response to what must surely be one of the most profound questions of our day.

The world is desperately in need of this important idea of "reverence for life" which was the great theme of Dr. Schweitzer's whole life. This was the ox which had been caught and herded by Dr. Schweitzer in his books and in his spoken words. The story is told that Adlai Stevenson was visiting Dr. Schweitzer in Africa. As they sat in the gathering dusk, the mosquitoes were especially obnoxious, and Adlai kept swatting them, and Dr. Schweitzer gently admonished him, "I know the little creatures are making you miserable, but you don't have to use the Seventh Fleet to deal with them." This reverence for all

life was the ox which Dr. Schweitzer had caught and herded, so his name is inextricably linked with this moving idea that all life is sacred and to be revered.

It happened because an ox had been seen, caught, and herded.



6 he rides home on the ox, playing his flute



## COMING HOME ON THE OX'S BACK

Riding on the animal, he leisurely wends his way  
home:

Enveloped in the evening mist, how tunefully the  
flute vanishes away!

Singing a ditty, beating time, his heart is filled with  
a joy indescribable!

That he is now one of those who know, need it be  
told?

This is a time of pure bliss and utter serenity. The ox has been tamed and the oxherder rides home playing his flute. This time is more in keeping with what we know about Zen, rather than what we experience in Western civilization.

It's difficult for most of us to understand this. It's a state of being and there must have been times when the oxherder's friends thought he was crazy, spending his time pursuing the ox, catching the ox, when life offered so many other options, so many practical, down-to-earth things. After all, his friends reasoned, life is not to be wasted chasing after fantasies and rainbows. One has to keep one's feet on the ground. But this is the moment of great inner peace, and this is the payoff. It is a time when one discovers insights that would otherwise not be seen. It is a time when one does not get caught in the ups and downs of the daily headlines, or fret about situations over which one has no control.

It is a time when one has the best of all possible worlds. Such a person was Peace Pilgrim, whom I met many years ago. Her true name was not known, nor did she reveal her family history when she decided to claim Peace Pilgrim as her name and vowed not to eat until she was given food, nor to rest until someone gave her shelter. Her goal was to walk 25,000 miles for peace, peace in the world, and inner peace. When I first met her, I was astonished to find that this little wisp of a woman had such strength. Her message was simple but forthright, and she met her critics with a gentleness seldom seen when people assailed her mission and what they assumed to be her naive attitude.

It was obvious that she had captured her ox, and was now riding home on the ox's back, playing her flute for all who would listen.

Johannes Scheffler, whose pen name was Angelus Silesius, wrote some verses in the 17th century, which came to him during three days of intense illumination. Those verses are filled with the most penetrating insights about the inner life, because he was riding home on the ox's back.

Nicholas von der Flue, also known as Bruder Klaus, was a monk in Switzerland with a wife and ten children. He had a series of visions, which called him to leave his family about the age of 50, and the rest of his life was lived near a river in Switzerland, where he devoted himself to meditation and reflection. I am sure that many of his friends thought he was utterly crazy, but his insights have led others to understand the nature of the Godhead. He had captured his ox, and in the last half of his life he rode home on the ox's back. He was the only Swiss canonized as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church.

Coming home on the ox's back. This is the moment of payoff. It's when you struggle through graduate and post-graduate school and finally receive your diploma. It is a time of sheer ecstasy, when the past is forgotten. The reading, the research, the deadlines, the grades, all are forgotten, and you live in the moment. It's like climbing a mountain, when you stand on the summit, and forget the hazards, the difficulty, and the frustrations of climbing that mountain. When you finally arrive at the topmost peak, and look down on the valley below, you stand on the summit in exhilaration for having survived the dangers of the arduous climb, and achieved your dream of conquering the mountain.

Something of this feeling must come to a candidate for public office, who, after shaking thousands of hands, kissing millions of babies, and eating tons of chicken finally comes to the election and wins his office. That is the moment when he rides home on the ox's back.

Joseph Campbell said "If you follow your bliss, you will always have it, but if you follow money, you may lose it some time." When Joseph Campbell returned from Europe during the Great Depression, he talked to a colleague who advised him to enroll in a university and get a Ph.D. Campbell thought about it, then he said "To hell with it." He went to Woodstock, read mythology for years, and then began his teaching career. Now we remember Joseph Campbell as the greatest interpreter of mythology in our time. He had caught his ox, and rode home on the ox's back.



Dr. Benjamin Carson is one of the head pediatricians at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He is one of the finest brain surgeons in America. His mother was one of 27 children. She was black, and poor. But, said Dr. Carson, "She insisted that we read books and would not let us watch TV. We had to submit book reports to her even though she couldn't read them. When I was in school, I barely passed. I got C's all the time, and was known as the one that was always causing trouble." But somewhere along the way, he saw a vision, went to medical school, and now is a famous brain surgeon. He was the first doctor to successfully separate Siamese twins joined at the head. Dr. Carson captured his ox, and now rides home on the ox's back.







¶ The Ox has become invisible



THE END OF THE WORLD

## THE OX FORGOTTEN, LEAVING THE MAN ALONE

Riding on the animal, he is at last back in his home  
Where lo! The ox is no more; the man alone sits  
serenely.

Though the red sun is high up in the sky, he is still  
Quietly dreaming,

Under a straw-thatched roof are his whip and rope  
Idly lying.

Now the oxherder no longer needs the insights he has gained. He doesn't have to proclaim anything. It is a time for reflection, for introspection. He feels at one with the cosmos. He is satisfied, he does not lament things which he didn't accomplish, he is just content to be where he is.

In Memories, Dreams, Reflections, Jung wrote in his chapter "Late Thoughts", as he looks back over the years and reflects on eight decades of his life: "I am satisfied with the course my life has taken. It has been bountiful, and has given me a great deal. How could I ever have expected so much? ...I have learned amazing things from people, and have accomplished more than I expected of myself...I feel a solidity underlying all existence and a continuity in my mode of being...When Lao-Tzu says 'All are clear, I alone am clouded', he is expressing what I now feel in advanced old age. Lao-tzu is the example of a man with superior insight who has seen and experienced worth and worthlessness, and who at the end of his life desires to return into his own being, into the eternal unknowable meaning. The archetype of the old man who has seen enough is eternally true. At every level of intelligence this type appears, and its lineaments are always the same, whether it be an old peasant or a great philosopher like Lao-tzu. This is old age, and a limitation. Yet there is so much that fills me: plants, animals, clouds, day and night, and the eternal in man." (7)

So the ox has been forgotten, and the boy is left alone with his thoughts. This can be the time when one looks back with an objectivity which was not possible earlier. There are no demands to be met, no deadlines, no structures to restrain one, no expectations to cause anxiety, no pressures from one's peers.

This describes a time in the life of Dag Hammarskjöld, one time Secretary General of the United Nations. In the last few years of his life he wrote some remarkable poetry and insights into the nature of life. His book, Markings, is a wonderful record of the inspiration of his later years. It is his reflections on the life of the soul, his inner life, his ox. The legacy he has left us is not his work with the United Nations, remarkable and creative as that was, but this book in which he describes his own inner journey.

When I spent a summer at the Jung Institute, I saw a remarkable painting in the office. I inquired about the artist and was told that his name was Peter Birkhauser. I wrote to him and inquired whether it would be possible to see him. His response came shortly before I had to return home, so I forgot about it. Several years later, when I was searching for a subject for my thesis which was required for graduation, I wrote again to Mr. Birkhauser. He immediately granted my earlier request to talk with him about his life and his paintings. The upshot was that I was granted the privilege of using his creative life and his unique art as the subject of my thesis. I had seen an ox, and had caught and herded the ox.

At one time, Peter Birkhauser craved to be known as a great artist. That was his ox. He told me "I wanted to be known as a great artist. I wanted my paintings to be hung in the great art museums of the world." But in the middle of life, when he could no longer paint the outer world which held such a fascination for him, his energy was depleted, his inability to paint resulted in depression, and a classic mid-life crisis. Then he had this dream. He was locked into a cell in the basement of the Kunsthaus, the art museum in Zurich, where he had hoped his paintings would be exhibited. A voice said to him "You will not be released from your prison until you have found a new religious attitude."

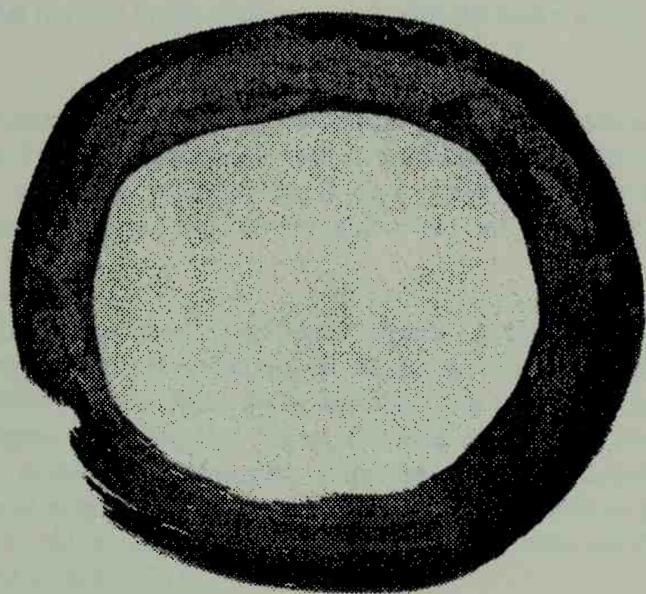
Birkhauser once told me "I have given up wanting to be known as a great artist. I am no longer eager to be known in that way. All I want to do is to paint as I am led by the unconscious." So he spent the last half of his life painting his inner world, his dreams, and his visions. He was committed to his ox, which he had caught and tamed. I knew him only in the last few years of his life, but those were years in which he was alone with his thoughts and his reflections. For him it was a time of great serenity and inner peace. Together we planned a book of his

paintings which would demonstrate to people the power of the unconscious, and how the artist's creative paintings could lead people to find meaning in the depths of their own lives. Light from the Darkness, the visible record of Birkhauser's remarkable talent, has helped many persons discover the reality of the psyche.

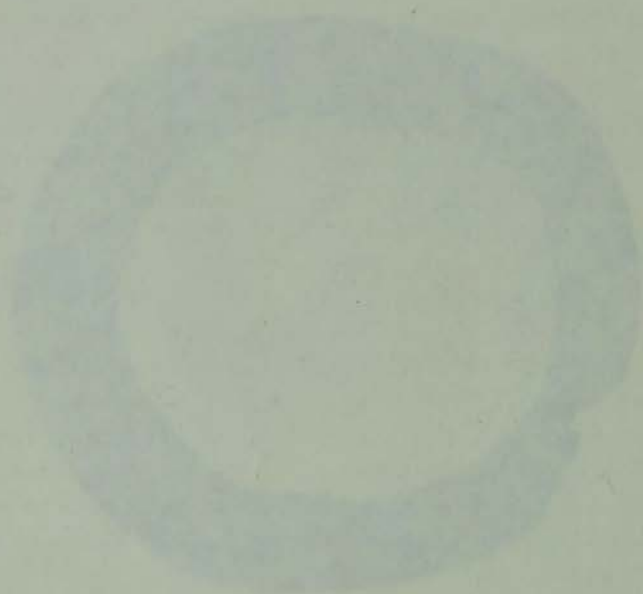
During the last three decades, I have presented to audiences all across our country the life and paintings of Peter Birkhauser. Many people have been awed by learning about this artist, and have been deeply moved by the archetypal themes of his paintings. But that particular ox has now vanished, and I am left alone with the memories of the wonderful reception I always received when I spoke about the artist and showed slides of his paintings. My last lecture on Birkhauser was presented to the C.G. Jung Center at Houston, Texas, where a wonderful collection of his paintings is enshrined in their lecture room. This ox has been one of the greatest chapters of my life, but all that is now behind me, and I rest serene, knowing that I no longer need to tend this ox.







8. both Ox and oxhorn have disappeared



## THE OX AND THE MAN BOTH GONE OUT OF SIGHT

All is empty--the whip, the rope, the man and the  
Ox:

Who can ever survey the vastness of heaven?  
Over the burning furnace ablaze, not a flake of snow  
can fall:

When this state of things obtains, manifest is the spirit  
of the ancient master.

Now both the ox and the man are gone. There is nothing to be seen. What remains is the circle, the uroborus, the snake which eats its own tail.

Again, this is difficult to understand for those of us who live in the West. For those who want objective results, and things you can measure, and weigh, and calculate, this goes against the grain. It is not a time for doing, it is a time for being. But this can be the best time of life.

The Taoist word "Forgotten" indicates a psychological state of being empty, a state of non-doing, or letting be, which, as Jung points out, is quite different from doing nothing: "We must be able to let things happen in the psyche. For us, this is an art of which most people know nothing. Consciousness is forever interfering, helping, correcting, and negating, never leaving the psychic processes to grow in peace. It would be simple enough, if only simplicity were not the most difficult of all things." (8)

The circle here is the *temenos*, the sacred circle, the mandala. It is the protecting Self within which everything else resides.

Someone has pointed out that there are three main stages in life: from birth to 35 we face ego tests and challenges, from 35 to 58 we reclaim our authentic self, and after 55 is a time for compassion and wisdom. It is a time when both the ox and the man are gone, and all that remains is the circle, the symbol of wholeness and order, the centeredness and groundedness which is after all the *summum bonum* of existence.

Here are some verses from Angelus Silesius which express in poetic image this oxherding picture where both the man and the ox are no longer visible.

Nothing keeps you bound  
except your Me--  
Until you break  
its chains, its handcuffs,  
and are free.

We keep so busy talking,  
we are so keen to act  
that we forget  
that in the heart  
lies all we need  
untapped, intact.

He who turns the senses  
to the Light that is his center  
hears what no ear can hear  
sees where no light can enter.

Unless you find paradise  
at your own center,  
there is not  
the slightest chance  
that you will enter. (9)

I think that this is what Jung called the *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, a time when the usual supports of life are gone. It is like the weightlessness encountered by astronauts, when the usual boundaries of life have disappeared. It is a time when the ego is forced to give up what it has achieved. It is a time, as Jung reminds us, when the center of gravity has moved from the ego to the Self.

Another way to describe this is what the alchemists meant by the Hieros Gamos, where all the opposites have been resolved, and there is a sacred marriage, or a merging of the opposites into a new unity.

Edward Edinger has commented that this state of being will probably never be fully realized until we die. He thinks that is the

moment when all conflicts are resolved, and there is a new totality and oneness which has never before been achieved.

Jung offers some interesting thoughts about death: "Death is indeed a fearful piece of brutality; there is no sense pretending otherwise. It is brutal not only as a physical event, but far more so psychically: a human being is torn away from us, and what remains is the icy stillness of death.....From another point of view, however, death appears as a joyous event. In the light of eternity, it is a wedding, a *mysterium coniunctionis*. The soul attains, as it were, its missing half, it achieves wholeness. On Greek sarcophagi the joyous element is represented by dancing girls, on Etruscan tombs by banquets. When the pious Cabbalist Rabbi Simon ben Jochai came to die, his friends said that he was celebrating his wedding. To this day it is the custom in many regions to hold a picnic on the graves on All Souls' Day. Such customs express the feeling that death is really a festive occasion." (10)

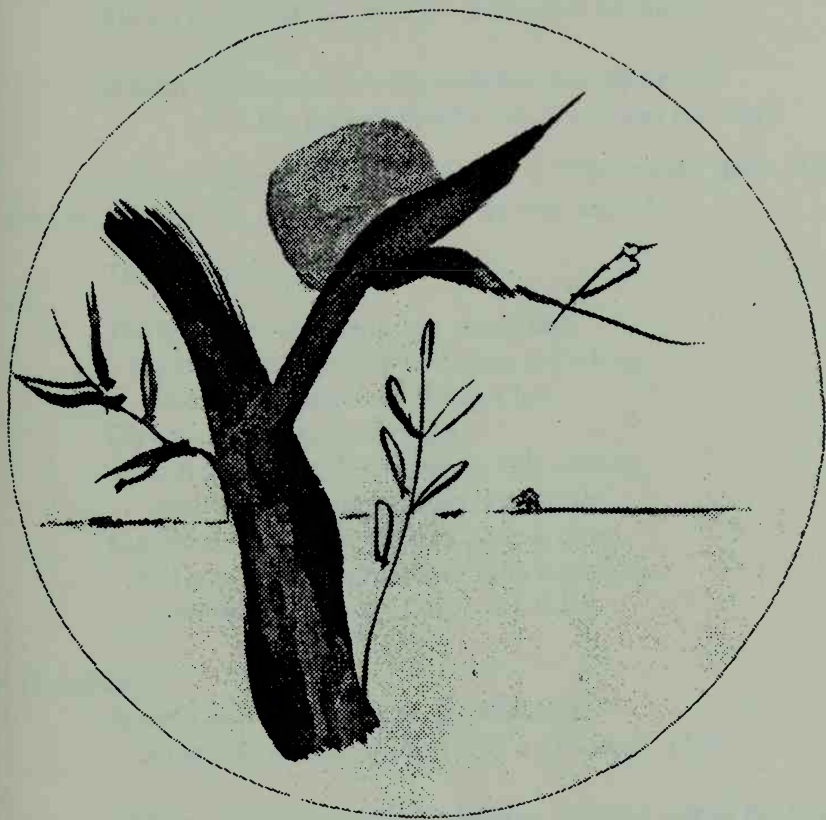
Another way of describing the state depicted in this picture is the attainment of our Buddha nature. "More than twenty-five hundred years ago, a man who had been searching for the truth for many, many lifetimes came to a quiet place in northern India and sat down under a tree. He continued to sit under the tree, with immense resolve, and vowed not to get up until he had found the truth.

At dusk, it is said, he conquered all the dark forces of delusion; and early the next morning, as the planet Venus broke in the dawn sky, the man was rewarded for his age-long patience, discipline, and flawless concentration by achieving the final goal of human existence: enlightenment.

At that sacred moment, the earth itself shuddered, as if 'drunk with bliss,' and, as the scriptures tell us: 'No one anywhere was angry, ill or sad; no one did evil, none was proud; the world became quite quiet, as though it had reached full perfection.' This man became known as Buddha." (11)

The sacred moment for us is when we achieve our Buddha nature, when we are enlightened because we have found our own true self.





*g. returned to The Origins*





## RETURNING TO THE ORIGIN: BACK TO THE SOURCE

To return to the Origin, to be back at the Source--

Already a false step this!

Far better it is to stay at home, blind and deaf, and  
without much ado;

Sitting in the hut, he takes no cognizance of things  
outside,

Behold the streams flowing--whither nobody knows;  
And the flowers vividly red--for whom are they?

Another translation of that last line is "The stream flows of its own accord, and the flower is red upon its own accord."

The Tao-te-Ching puts it this way:

Thirty spokes converge on a single hub,  
but it is in the space where there is nothing  
that the usefulness of the cart lies.

Clay is molded to make a pot,  
but it is in the space where there is nothing  
that the usefulness of the clay pot lies.

Cut out door and windows to make a room,  
but it is in the space where there is nothing  
that the usefulness of the room lies.

Therefore,

Benefit may be derived from something,  
but it is in nothing that we find usefulness. (12)

This is a time when the oxherder is satisfied just to be. It is a time of great wisdom. It was not for nothing that in his later years Jung was known as the Wise Old Man of Kusnacht. He had garnered so much wisdom through his lifetime, and when he was old people recognized that the distilled wisdom of his experiences was incarnated in this man who had lived so long and so meaningfully.

A very famous man once went to see Jung, and after he had talked with Jung, a friend asked him "How did you find Jung?" The man responded "He rather surprised me. I thought he would be so erudite that I could not understand what he was saying, but, you know, he just talked good common sense."

This return to the source, the origin, was what Jung realized in his old age when he wrote in his autobiography: "Life has always seemed to me like a plant that lives on its rhizome. Its true life is invisible, hidden in the rhizome. That part that appears above ground lasts only a single summer. Then it withers away--an ephemeral apparition. When we think of the unending growth and decay of life and civilization we cannot escape the impression of absolute nullity. Yet I have never lost the sense of something that lives and endures underneath the eternal flux. What we see is the blossom, which passes. The rhizome remains." (13)

T.S.Eliot has written these moving lines about returning to the Source:

What we call the beginning is often the end,  
And to make an end is to make a beginning.  
The end is where we start from.  
Every phrase and every sentence is an end  
                    and a beginning,  
Every poem an epitaph.....  
We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time. (14)

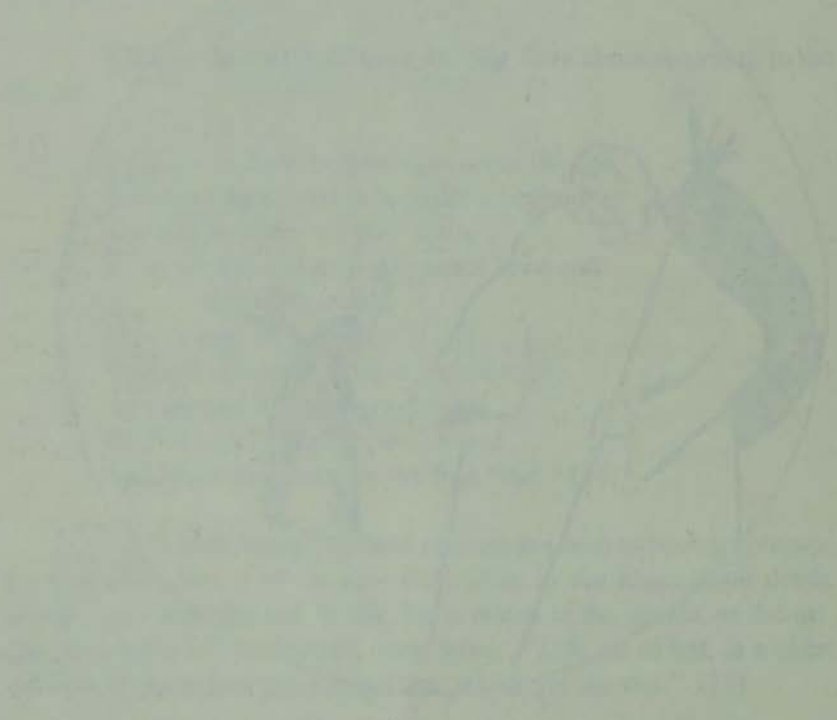
When both beginnings and endings are seen as having common ground, this gives a whole new dimension to our ideas about death. Death is not then the end of life, but a return to the source, to the origin. In a letter of condolence, Jung wrote: "Life, so-called, is a short episode between two great mysteries, which yet are one." (15)

This is a time of life when the ego is no longer the dominant factor in the psyche, when the center of gravity is moved from the ego to the Self. Jung saw the Self as being both the center and the circumference of the psyche. An ancient description of God is that being whose center is everywhere, and circumference is nowhere. The Origin contains both beginnings and endings. When in later life, we return to that original Source from which life was derived, then the circle of life is complete.



*10 bestowing blessings*

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the smell of the sea. It was a salty, fresh scent that I had never experienced before. The sun was shining brightly, and the waves were crashing against the shore. I felt a sense of freedom and adventure as I walked along the beach. The sand was soft and warm under my feet. I looked out at the vast ocean, feeling a small part of myself merging with the vastness of nature.



I had heard that the beach was beautiful, but I didn't realize how much I would love it. The sound of the waves was soothing, and the view was breathtaking. I had never seen so many seagulls before. They were flying all around me, some landing on the sand and others soaring in the sky. I felt like I was in a dream. The beach was so peaceful, and I had never felt so at home in a new place. I had found a little piece of paradise.

## ENTERING THE CITY WITH BLISS-BESTOWING HANDS

Bare-chested and bare-footed, he comes out into the  
marketplace;  
Daubed with mud and ashes, how broadly he smiles!  
There is no need for the miraculous power of the gods,  
For he touches, and lo! The dead trees are in full  
bloom.

The oxherder is dressed in ordinary clothing. He does not stand out in the crowd. He walks down Main Street, and doesn't need to do anything. The trees burst out into blossom as he walks by. He is a true saint, in every sense of the word.

D.T. Suzuki, the foremost interpreter of Zen Buddhism to the West, in commenting on this picture, writes: "And now having moved through the stage of emptiness, and also having seen god in the world of nature, the individual can see God in the world of men. Enlightened mingling in the marketplace with 'wine-bibbers and butchers' (publicans and sinners), he recognizes the 'inner light' of 'Buddha nature' in everyone. He doesn't need to hold himself aloof nor to be weighted down by a sense of duty or responsibility, nor to follow a set of patterns of other holy men, nor to imitate the past. He is so in harmony with life that he is content to be inconspicuous, to be an instrument, not a leader. He simply does what seems to him natural. But though in the marketplace he seems to be an ordinary man, something happens to the people among whom he mingles. They too become part of the harmony of the universe." (16)

So here is this old man, with his big belly, his begging bowl, and his staff. He does not try to be unique, he is unique. He walks through his city, and everywhere he walks, things bloom.

An older woman once worked analytically with me. She only came to know Jung late in life, but for her, knowledge of Jung and his penetrating insights into the psyche, were the water of life. She found in Jung what she had been searching for all her life. She now lives in a home for retired people. She told me "People seek me out and ask questions. I do not go around talking about Jung, but somehow people sense that I have something to offer in response to their questions about life." She is a living example of the oxherder. She has become so wise and compassionate that people are touched by her presence.



Jung once said that if we find some kind of equilibrium in our lives, we are bound to affect everyone we meet. I have a photograph of Jung, taken when he was wearing what he called his "Bollingen uniform." He wears some old baggy pants, and leans on his cane, looking for all the world like a Swiss peasant farmer. Here he is no longer the famous psychiatrist who received many honors and degrees, not the author of many books, the lecturer at prestigious universities, the founder of a new psychology which changed forever the way we view the psyche, but as he once described himself-- "an old man in modest harmony with nature." He had lived so long, and so wisely, that he was now bestowing bliss on everyone who came within his orbit.

A Sufi once said "I was a revolutionary when I was young. My prayer was 'Lord, give me the energy to change the world.' As I approached middle age I had not changed a single soul. I changed my prayer to 'Lord, give me the grace to change those around me, my family and my friends.' Now that I am an old man, my prayer is 'Lord, give me the grace to change myself.' If I had prayed this from the beginning, I would not have wasted my life."

There is an Eastern story about the gods who created the universe. They created the stars, the sun and the moon, the seas, mountains, and then they created human beings. At the end they created Truth. At this point, however, a problem arose: where should they hide Truth so that humans would not find it right away? They wanted to prolong the adventure of finding Truth. One of the gods suggested putting it on top of the highest mountain. Another god suggested hiding it in the depths of the sea. Still another opted for hiding Truth far out in space, and another said they should hide it on the dark side of the moon. But one of the wisest of the gods said "No, we will hide Truth inside the heart of human beings. That way, they will look for it all over the universe without being aware that it is inside them all the time".

Rilke describes the kind of person who bestows bliss on those around him in these pregnant lines:

Have patience with everything unresolved in your heart  
And try to love the questions themselves.  
Don't search for the answers,  
which could not be given to you now,  
because you would not be able to live them.



And the point is, to live everything,  
Live the questions now,  
Perhaps then, someday far in the future,  
you will gradually, without even noticing it,  
live your way into the answer. (17)

The Vietnamese poet, Thich Nhat Hanh, writes:

You, the richest person on Earth,  
who have been going around begging for a living,  
stop being the destitute child.  
Come back and claim your heritage.  
We should enjoy our happiness  
and offer it to everyone.

Cherish this very moment.  
Let go of the stream of distress  
and embrace life fully in your arms. (18)

Joseph Campbell once attended an international conference on religion in Japan. He overheard another delegate, a social philosopher, ask a Shinto priest "We have been to many of your ceremonies and have seen many of your shrines, but I do not understand your theology." The Japanese priest paused as if in deep thought, then he answered "We don't have a theology. We just dance."

T. S. Eliot writes:

At the stillpoint of the turning world, Neither flesh nor  
fleshless, Neither from nor towards; at the still point,  
there the dance is, But neither arrest nor movement. And  
do not call it fixity, Where past and future are gathered.  
Neither movement from nor towards. Neither ascent nor  
decline. Except for the point, the still point, There would  
be no dance, and there is only the dance. (19)

In the end, what matters is only the dance. Forgotten now are the risks of catching and taming the ox. Doing has been replaced by being. As someone has said, "Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived."

As Jung looked back over his life in retrospect, he wrote: "When people say I am wise, or a sage, I cannot accept it. A man once dipped a hatful of water from a stream. What did that amount to? I am not that stream. I am at the stream, but I do nothing. Other people are at the same stream, but most of them find they have to do something with it. I do nothing. I never think that I am the one who must see to it that cherries grow on stalks. I stand and behold, admiring what nature can do.

There is a fine old story about a student who came to a rabbi and said 'In the olden days there were men who saw the face of God. Why don't they any more?' The rabbi replied 'Because nowadays no one can stoop so low.' One must stoop a little in order to fetch water from the stream." (20)

As I look back over the eight decades of my life, I feel very fortunate that I have been privileged to have known so many people who have been the incarnation of the oxherder archetype. I ask myself "How could I have been so fortunate, to have known so many men and women who have bestowed on me such bliss, who, as they traveled on their journeys, found life blossoming around them".

These are the persons who have brought meaning into my life. They are the ones who have transcended the ordinary, who have brought me face to face with the infinite, who have gifted me far beyond what I expected, or even deserved. I still recall those moments, now more than a quarter century removed, when I first met two Jungian analysts. I was so awed by their wisdom and compassion, that my life took a 180 degree turn from that moment, and has never been the same since. My exposure to those "oxherders" was a defining moment for me, because they opened doors to my own ox, and shaped the second half of my life in ways I never dreamed. For that I shall be forever grateful.

Life is an incredible journey. The metaphor of the oxherder and his ox is one of the most meaningful I have ever discovered to portray what happens to us on the journey. When we enter into a relationship with the ox, we must needs go through all the stages depicted in this series of pictures. At the end, if we have been faithful to the process, and trusted it, we will find a bliss, a wholeness, and a peace which words cannot describe. Then not only will we be blessed, but we will be a blessing to others.

Here is a Zen prayer which I have found meaningful:

With infinite gratitude for all things past,  
With infinite service for all things present,  
With infinite responsibility for all things future.



## Footnotes

- 1  
Archetypes, p. 142
- 2  
The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, CW 8, par. 800
- 3  
Symbols of Transformation, CW 5, par. 553
- 4  
The Practice of Psychotherapy, CW 16, par. 83
- 5  
The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, CW 9.1, par. 408
- 6  
Memories, Dreams, Reflections, pp. 108-109
- 7  
Ibid., pp. 358-359
- 8  
Alchemical Studies, CW 13, par. 20
- 9  
The Book of Angelus Silesius, pp. 128, 97, 98, 83
- 10  
MDR, op. cit., pp. 314-315
- 11  
Glimpse after Glimpse, February 1
- 12  
Tao-te-Ching, p. 70
- 13  
MDR, op. cit., p. 4

- 14  
Complete Poems and Essays of T. S. Eliot, pp. 144-145
- 15  
Letters, Vol. 1, p. 483
- 16  
Manual of Zen Buddhism, p. 134
- 17  
Letters to a Young Poet, pp. 34-35
- 18  
Call Me By My True Names, p. 168
- 19  
Eliot, op. cit., p. 119
- 20  
MDR, op. cit., p. 355

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## About the Oxherding Pictures.....

This unique series of pictures is rooted in Zen Buddhism, and depicts the search for one's true Self. These pictures are a moving commentary on the human condition, and the awakening from darkness to enlightenment. Although these pictures are centuries old, they still speak to us today about the various stages of our coming to terms with that which makes us truly human, and the latent potential within each one of us. They serve as a guide to our discovery of those essential steps which enable us to claim our special vocation as human beings.

## About the Author....

Dean L. Frantz earned his first graduate degree in theology and in the first half of his life was involved in religious vocations. Then in mid-life, through a series of remarkable synchronicities, he was introduced to the psychology of C.G. Jung. This led to his spending four years as a student at the C.G. Jung Institute in Zurich, Switzerland, where he received his diploma in 1977. Since then, he has been engaged in private practice in Fort Wayne, Indiana. His book credits include collaboration with Peter Birkhauser in *Light from the Darkness*, and editing two books of the writings of Barbara Hannah: *The Cat, Dog and Horse Lectures*, and *The Inner Journey*. His resume is included in *Who's Who in America*, and *Who's Who Among Human Service Professionals*. He is a member of the International Association for Analytical Psychology.

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