

# The archetype of the apocalypse. Analysing the pandemics of racism, COVID-19 and climate change

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*Abstract:* What we are witnessing in the present time in human history, in the 2020's, is a vortex of intersecting pandemics – jolting revelations that are unfolding with a terrific energy and force – so much so that we cannot ignore them or escape them. These include the world-wide pandemics of racism, COVID-19 and climate change. This paper argues that all of these swirling pandemics are manifestations of the archetype of the apocalypse, which is constellating now in a very powerful way. Any one of these phenomena could swallow humanity whole as a species. Together they represent a seemingly overwhelming challenge for us to meet over the next century of life on earth. If humanity cannot meet the challenge of these combined negative forces, it could simply perish. A multi-layered intersecting set of challenges such as this has never yet occurred in human history. We must therefore be very alert to what is going on, and as to how we can consciously mediate these threats, both individually and collectively. It also presents an unprecedented opportunity for humanity to evolve and grow psychologically both individually and collectively, nationally and globally.

*Keywords:* apocalypse, archetype, climate change, pandemic, racial complex, racism, revelation

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## Introduction

When the summit of life is reached. When the bud unfolds and from the lesser the greater emerges, then, as Nietzsche says, ‘One becomes Two’, and the greater figure, which one always was but which remained invisible, appears to the lesser personality with the force of a revelation. He who is truly and hopelessly little will always drag the revelation of the greater down to the level of his littleness, and will never understand that the Day of Judgment for his littleness has dawned. But the man who is inwardly great will know that the long-expected friend of his soul, the immortal one, has now really come, “to lead captivity captive”; that is, to seize hold of him by whom this immortal had always been confined and held prisoner, and to make his life flow into that greater life – a moment of greatest peril!

(Jung 1954, para. 217)

Edward Edinger (1922-1996) tells us that it is important to look at the etymology of words. The first word in the title of this paper is ‘archetype’. An archetype is a pattern, ‘a primordial psychic ordering of images that has a collective or generalized quality; it can be understood therefore, to derive from the collective transpersonal objective psyche. That is one aspect of the archetype. The other aspect of the archetype is that it is a *dynamic agency*’ (Edinger 1999, pp. 1-2). In other words it is alive, psychologically speaking.

Jung (1921) tells us that the archetype or primordial image ‘is a self-activating organism endowed with generative power. The primordial image is an inherited organization of psychic energy, an ingrained system, which not only gives expression to the energetic process but facilitates its operation’ (para. 754). And so any archetype encountered will be both a primordial pattern and a dynamic living energy or agency.

The second word in this title, ‘apocalypse’, is a Greek word that is used to describe the ‘Book of Revelation’ in the Judeo-Christian Bible. On one level, apocalypse simply means revelation. But more specifically it refers to the ‘uncovering of what has been hidden .... The root is the verb *kalupto*, which means “to cover or to hide”; the prefix is the proposition, *apo*, which means ‘away from’. So apocalypse means to take the covering away’ (Edinger 1999, p. 3).

The World Health Organization (2020) defines an epidemic as ‘The occurrence in a community or region of cases of an illness, ... clearly in excess of normal expectancy’ (<https://www.who.int/hac/about/definitions/en/>) and a pandemic as ‘an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people’ (Kelly 2011, p. 1).

In my view, what we are witnessing in the present time in human history, in the 2020’s, is a vortex of intersecting pandemics – jolting revelations that are unfolding with a terrific energy and force – so much so that we cannot ignore them or escape them. These include the worldwide pandemics of racism, COVID-19 and climate change. And further I believe that all of these swirling pandemics are manifestations of the archetype of the apocalypse, which is constellating now in a very powerful way.

Any one of these phenomena could swallow humanity whole as a species. Together they represent a seemingly overwhelming challenge for us to meet over the next century of life on earth. If we cannot meet the challenge of these combined negative forces, humankind could simply perish. A multi-layered intersecting set of challenges such as this has never yet occurred in human history. We must therefore be very alert to what is going on, and to how we can consciously mediate these threats, both individually and collectively. It also presents an unprecedented opportunity for humanity to evolve and grow psychologically both individually and collectively, nationally and globally. As Jung stated:

Although the divine incarnation is a cosmic and absolute event, it only manifests empirically in those relatively few individuals capable of enough consciousness to make ethical decisions, that is, to decide for the Good. Therefore God can be called good only inasmuch as He is able to manifest His Goodness in individuals. His moral quality depends upon individuals. That is why He incarnates. Individuation and individual existence are indispensable for the transformation of God the Creator.

(Jung 1956/1975, p. 314)

The overarching question is, will there be enough individuals of a high enough moral quality, to bring more goodness than evil to bear in the world? The outcome in a positive scenario would be not to just preserve the planet for humankind but to constellate the individuation process of the world. For just as an individual psyche can evolve and consciously work with the living Psyche to achieve individuation, so too can a nation, and so too the entire world.

Edinger writes:

What does the apocalypse mean psychologically? My essential answer is: the 'Apocalypse' means the momentous event of the coming of the Self into conscious realization. Of course, it manifests itself and is experienced in quite different ways if occurring in the individual psyche or in the collective life of a group; but in either case, it is a momentous event – literally world-shattering. This is what the content of the Apocalypse archetype presents: the shattering of the world as it has been, followed by its reconstitution.

(Edinger 1999, p. 5)

This does not mean that we have the potential to live in a perfect world, just as there are no perfect individuals. All individuals have a shadow and complexes, as do the nation and the world. But an individual can mature psychologically, integrate their shadow aspects and learn to mediate their complexes, and become more whole. That is the work we do as Jungian analysts working with our patients. And the work is often difficult, with many setbacks. And yet, it is possible with time and persistence and with Eros, with love.

And so too the nation, the United States of America, and the entire world have the collective ability as 'patients' to evolve their consciousness. Just like individuals within these societies, there exists an innate potential for psychological growth and maturity. But as always we must begin with an anamnesis, a looking back to see where the patient has been traumatized and where complexes have been formed. An honest assessment of where the patient is in their development is essential. And so it is here that we must begin.

## Slavery and racism

The definition of the word slave is ‘a person who is legally owned by someone else and has to work for that person’ (Cambridge Dictionary). The root of the word, Milton Meltzer (1994) tells us in his book *Slavery: A World History*, is a national name – Slav. The adaption of ‘Slav’ to ‘slave’ comes from the time when the Germans supplied the slave markets of Europe with captured “Slavs” ... a slave then is a man, woman, or child, who is the property of another. Property is something owned – land, goods, money – that to which a person has legal title ... and the owner has the exclusive right to possess, enjoy, and dispose of his property’ (ibid., p. 3).

To look back on the history of slavery is to affirm that a hell-like experience has occurred for many people, and this remains so even today. From the earliest times of agrarian societies, who had left their nomadic hunting-gathering world behind, it has made economic sense for slavery to exist, ethics aside. Meltzer (1994) states:

Where farming or herding had gone beyond this early stage, an agricultural people could produce far more than they needed, and this made the taking of slaves practical. Instead of killing the enemy, the victor enslaved him .... Enslaving the man also increased the pleasure of the victor, for the defeated man was humiliated and punished for daring to fight in the first place. ... As the desire for slave labour grew, there were always men eager to profit from it. Kidnapping and piracy became good business to meet a scarcity or satisfy a growing demand. The traffic in slaves became one of the earliest forms of commerce. Slaves were sent as commodities to wherever their muscle or skill, beauty or brains, would bring the highest price.

(ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 2-3)

For at least the last 10,000 years, from the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, Greece and Rome, slavery has existed. Later, slavery emerged again in medieval times in the Ottoman Empire of the Middle East and the Holy Roman Empire in Europe. It existed throughout the continent of Africa and in Islamic nations everywhere from the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD to the present. Later still, slavery peaked between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when the naval powers of Europe of that time, Portugal, Spain, England, France and the Netherlands, spread their imperialistic empires across the globe fuelled by the work and production of slaves and indentured servants.

It is often overlooked historically that there were about 300,000 indentured White men, women and children (slaves by any other name) brought to the New World from Britain between 1620 and 1770. But it was not until the widespread African and indigenous slavery of this time that we see the construction of racism as a concept in order to justify enslavement. This is something the European naval powers were particularly noted for in their

(some may say 'barbaric') attitude towards Blacks and indigenous American tribes as they 'colonized' the New World.

Slavery was also practised by many indigenous tribes in North America prior to the arrival of the European powers. Slavery by European masters began in North America with the establishment of the 13 original colonies of the United States, founded by England. Beginning in the mid-1600's, every one of the 13 colonies created laws which allowed for slavery with the blessing of Queen Anne of England, who took 20% of the profits of the slave-trade 'off the top' for her personal fortune.

The lucrative Atlantic Black slave trade was formed in a triangular fashion when English ships would first leave England for the Ivory 'western slave coast' of Africa loaded with goods to exchange for slaves, which were then transported across the Atlantic Ocean (called the 'middle passage') to the Caribbean sugar islands like Barbados and Trinidad and the 13 colonies in North America, where the slaves were unloaded and sold at auction. The ships would then return to England loaded with sugar, cotton and tobacco.

By the 1700's, Americans became very active themselves in the slave trade by sending out small ships from New England loaded with rum to exchange for Black slaves on the Ivory coast – which they then shipped back to the southern colonies like Georgia and South Carolina to be sold at auction and deployed to work on the cotton, tobacco, rice, and indigo plantations.

Meltzer (1994) reports:

Clearly, as in Britain and in France, the slave trade in New England earned much of the capital upon which her industrial revolution was built. By the time of the American Revolution the slave trade was the foundation of the region's economic life. "The vast sugar, molasses, and rum trade, shipbuilding, the distilleries, a great many of the fisheries, the employment of artisans and seamen, even agriculture – all were dependent on the slave trade .... With slaving gone, 5,000 seamen would be jobless, and 700 ships would rot at their wharves. Coopers, tanners, barrel makers, farmers, all would go broke. Stop the slave trade, the New England merchants cried, and we will perish.

(*ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 149)

By the time of the American Civil War that began in 1861, there were 4 million slaves in the United States, fully a third of the entire population, with the vast majority of them working on southern tobacco and cotton plantations. Meltzer (1994) reports, 'In 1825 American cotton production was more than 500,000 bales; by 1860 the figure was more than 5 million – a crop valued at \$200 million. Three-fourths of the world's cotton was coming out of the South' (Vol. II, p. 159).

This history must be the psychological starting point to understand just how pervasive and deep-seated the practice of slavery and racism was in North

America, until a mere 150 years ago. The abolition of slavery in European countries only began in earnest in the late 18th and 19th centuries, 1807 in England and by 1865 (in practical terms) across the whole of the United States of America. This is a very recent time, relatively speaking, compared with the full extent of world slavery that has been practised for centuries.

I say this not to justify slavery or racism, but rather to describe its deep roots across time and its pervasiveness across many cultures. If there is such a thing as a 'racial complex', as Jungian analyst Fanny Brewster (2020) asserts, and I believe that there is, it has some very deep and tangled roots within the American psyche. Such a deep-seated complex lets us know immediately that it will not be an easy complex to unearth and deal with therapeutically. To put it mildly, we could be beginning from a very low place psychologically speaking – much lower than what we might have hoped. But this is the stark reality, and it is only accepting this collective psychological state for what it is that will allow for later growth and transformation.

The year 1865, when slavery came to an end in the USA, is only six generations ago. Since that time, suppression of Black votes along with the suppression of their advancement in that society seems to have been reinforced in many actions, both legal and illegal. Many see this as beginning in the Reconstruction Era – post the American Civil War (1861-65), and the 'Jim Crow' local and state laws thereafter that were enacted in the southern states in particular.

As the editors of 'Jim Crow Laws 2021' in [www.history.com](http://www.history.com) state, 'The Jim Crow laws were a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. Named after a Black minstrel show character, the laws – which existed for about 100 years ... – were meant to marginalize African Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get an education or other opportunities' (p. 1). This left many Blacks in a position of indentured servitude on the southern plantations where they were formerly slaves. Incredibly, the Jim Crow laws lasted until 1968, a mere 50 years ago, only superseded by the passing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

All of this is important to note psychologically speaking, as it serves to educate us on the fact that the USA has only had 50 years of effective universal freedom on a foundation of 10,000 previous years of slavery and 400 years of slavery and racism in the United States from colonial times. Again, it informs us as to how deep rooted the problem is, and also how difficult it might be to work through it.

It also tells us something about how immature the United States is as a nation, psychologically speaking. Only six generations ago, half of the United States were willing to go to war to preserve the right to subjugate an entire ethnic population. When the Civil War was lost by the South, the dominant White ethnic group continued to disenfranchise the African American population through the Jim Crow laws. Ironically, these then enabled the White

population to criticise the Black population as being ignorant and lazy. But disenfranchising an entire ethnicity for 400 years, and then blaming them for their depraved state is akin to a denial and disassociation from reality, one that unfortunately persists in many places in America. This remains a large part of the American shadow that many individuals cannot or will not confront.

The roots of this schism can be traced back to the beginning of the country at its founding. As Heather Cox Richardson (2020) states in her book, *How the South Won the Civil War: Oligarchy, Democracy, and the Continuing Fight for the Soul of America*:

America began with a great paradox: the same men who came up with the radical idea of constructing the nation on the principle of equality also owned slaves, thought Indians were savages, and considered women inferior. This apparent contradiction was not a flaw though; it was a key feature of the new democratic republic. For the Founders, the concept that “all men are created equal” depended on the idea that the ringing phrase “all men” did not actually include everyone. In 1776, it seemed self-evident to leaders that not every person living in the British colonies was capable – or worthy – of self-determination. In their minds, women, slaves, Indians, and paupers depended on the guidance of men such as themselves. Those unable to make good decisions about their own lives must be walled off from government to keep them from using political power to indulge their irresponsible appetites. So long as these lesser people played no role in the body politic, everyone in it could be equal.

(*ibid.*, p. xv)

Cox Richardson (2020) surmises that for the Founders of the United States, equality was predicated on inequality, ‘That central paradox – that freedom depended on racial, gender, and class inequality – shaped history as the cultural, religious and social patterns of the new nation grew around us’ (pp. xv-xvi).

The United States are still trying to throw off this patriarchal foundation, some 250 years into them being a democratic republic. The sway of such ‘entitled White men’ seems most obvious in American politics. One only has to look at the make-up of the American Senate where men still outnumber women 3-1, and people of any minority are scarce.

Cox Richardson (2020) continues:

Thus, at times when it seems people of colour or women will become equal to white men, oligarchs are able to court white male voters by insisting that universal equality will, in fact, reduce white men to subservience. Both slaveholders in the 1850’s and Movement Conservatives a century later convinced white American men that equality for people of colour and women would destroy their freedom. Rallying their voters behind the idea that they were protecting the country’s founding principles, they took over the political system. Once in control of congress, the

White House, and the courts, they used the government to solidify their own control. Eventually class divisions emerged, and the wealthy turned on the poorer white men who had fuelled their rise to power. Convinced they alone should rule, this minority set out to destroy democracy.

(*ibid.*, p. xvi)

As the 2020 Presidential election in the USA approached, this was where the country still found itself. Many would see that the arguments made for dis-enfranchising people of colour were the same now as they were 150 years ago. Many Americans see one example of this in the 2020 election being the provision of one (and only one) drop box for printed ballots in the entire county of Harris, Texas, the third largest county in the entire country, which has a population of five million people in and around the city of Houston. This was carried out under the Republican Governor of the state, Greg Abbott (McCullough 2020). Could it be that such politicians are out to bend democracy in their favour, not to defend it?

For many in the United States, the subsequent election of Joe Biden has evaded any fate of the American democracy being permanently tarnished. But the country still has to reckon with the fact that Donald Trump had 74 million people vote for him (versus 81 million for Biden). The fact that Trump did not concede defeat quietly, but instead asserted there was widespread voter fraud, despite there being no evidence, suggests to Americans the deep trouble they could still be in.

Many Americans no longer trust in their government to run an honest election. The public's willingness to believe in conspiracy theories only adds to the confusion. The willingness of Americans to believe in conspiracy theories seems always to have been a part of the American psyche. And what has no doubt exacerbated this over the last 20 years is the embrace of social media, which can spread any rumour, true or false, globally overnight.

This in many cases has had the effect of replacing facts with mere opinion. And this can transform into an emotional feeling for the conspiracy holder, who 'knows that they are right' in spite of there being no evidence. This is the case as Jung puts it:

Rational argument can be conducted with some prospect of success only so long as the emotionality of a certain situation does not exceed a certain critical degree. If the affective temperature rises above this level, the possibility of reason's having any effect ceases and its place is taken by slogans and chimerical fantasies. That is to say a sort of collective possession results which rapidly develops into a psychic epidemic.

(Jung 1957, para. 490)



### The fallacy of race

The whole notion of race is fictitious as there is, scientifically speaking, only one race, and that is the human race (*Homo sapiens*). And all of the human race, no matter its ethnicity, shares 99.9 % of its genetics. As Thomas Parham (2008) states in the *Handbook of African American Psychology*:

It is a cultural rather than a racial analysis that best illuminates the psychology of a people .... Race is not a biological construction but rather a social construction, used not only to categorize people by degrees of melanin content in their skin but able also to stratify groups in some artificial social hierarchy that assigns worth, and access to opportunity and privilege, on the basis of skin colour.

(cited in Brewster 2020, pp. 6-7)

Of course, if one is going to practise slavery, then it only makes sense to justify it in any way possible since the brutality of it is far too real from which to hide. And so as Parham argues, a social construction was formed that darker-skinned people were inferior to lighter-skinned people.

The defining moment in the American experience was the Bacon Rebellion of 1676, when White indentured servants and Black slaves joined in a massive revolt in the Commonwealth of Virginia, led by Nathaniel Bacon. After this scare, the wealthy plantation owners, who also controlled the government, realized they needed to have a 'yeoman' or middle class of people on their side as a buffer to the servant class and the threat of their constant revolt. As Jordan & Walsh (2020) explain:

They played the race card. The status of the European servile class was upgraded and a sense of social superiority instilled. Meanwhile, the process of degrading non-whites was accelerated. Law after law deprived Africans and Native American of rights, while bolstering the legal position of European servants. In the space of twenty years, non-whites lost their judicial rights, property rights, electoral rights and family rights. They even lost their right to be freed if their master wanted to free them. In parallel, whites gained rights and privileges .... The notion of a 'white race' was promoted. Hitherto, the English had never applied colour to distinguish race. Now white servants, whose daily condition was little different from that of Africans, were taught that they belonged to a superior people.

(*ibid.*, p. 212)

Race then, can become a sort of grand conspiracy theory in reality, as there is absolutely no basis for it scientifically. But if one believes it, or rather prefers to believe it based upon personal opinion rather than the facts, it makes it much easier to accept treating a whole ethnicity of people in a very degrading way.

The wealthy White plantation owners of Virginia constructed a race hierarchy in the latter half of the 17th century simply because it was to their great advantage to do so. In the same way, one could argue that the wealthy oligarchs of today impose their will on the political and legal processes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Fanny Brewster (2020) says in her book *The Racial Complex: A Jungian Perspective on Culture and Race*:

The standard for creating a hierarchy of culture was established by white Europeans. We have lived with this standard for centuries. The idea of an established hierarchy of culture-value could only lead to division amongst different groups. The major problems, social, economic and psychological – is the way Africanists have been oppressed, tortured, and murdered into accepting the cultural belief system of the white hierarchy. Even further, why can't each culture have its own importance and worthiness based upon the intrinsic value placed on it by the culture which is indigenous to that particular culture?

(ibid., p. 64)

The hubris of any dominant White perspective is psychologically similar to an individual who is narcissistic. The attitude of such individuals is entitled, self-centred, and unreflective. They possess little empathy or compassion for others and are only concerned about reinforcing their own world view, in this case that of the dominant White culture.

Beginning with Columbus's first voyage to America in 1492, the arrival of the White European naval powers of Spain, Portugal, England, France and the Netherlands had devastating effects on all of America's indigenous peoples, both through massacres and often through diseases like smallpox that they brought with them from Europe. Later they started to bring in millions of Black slaves from Africa to work the plantations of North and South America and the Caribbean.

The shock and trauma of colonization, massacres (including genocide), slavery, and racism still resound today in the entire Western Hemisphere. And humanity is only just emerging out from under these immense prejudices – in fits and starts and with a considerable amount of backlash whenever gains are made in becoming more aware of the injustices of the past that continue to persist into the present.

### Racism today – Black Lives Matter

One could argue that it has taken 100 more years after the end of the American Civil War for any meaningful change to occur in the lives of Black people in America. And still there is a long, long, way to go. One example of this is how racism has become newly uncovered, at least for White people in 2020,

in the recent slayings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, to name only the most obvious.

On 23 February 2020, Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old Black man, was simply jogging through his coastal South Georgia neighbourhood when he was pursued by two armed White men (civilians, not police) in two pick-up trucks, who suspected Arbery of a nearby robbery. The armed White men chased Arbery down, detained him and then shot him to death. It took 74 days before charges were brought against the three men; and only after videos of the event became public (Fausset 2020).

Breonna Taylor, aged 26, was killed on 13 March 2020 by gunfire when police stormed her apartment in Louisville, Kentucky, during a 'no knock' drug raid to the wrong address. When her boyfriend, who had a licensed firearm, fired in defence of the home invasion, police fired on him and Breonna. She was shot 17 times and killed. One former officer in the case was indicted on a 'wanton endangerment' charge and two other officers were dismissed for their role in the shooting. No murder charges have ever been filed in the case, as there was not seen to be a sufficient legal basis for doing so by the prosecutors (Callimachi 2020).

Then on 25 May 2020, George Floyd was apparently resisting getting into a police car, after having been suspected of passing off a \$20 counterfeit bill at a store in Minneapolis. One senior officer, Derek Chauvin, then pinned him to the ground with his knee on his neck and held him there for almost nine minutes – until he stopped breathing. Chauvin had choked Floyd to death and it had been caught on camera. The footage quickly went viral worldwide (Hill et al. 2020).

The savagery of these deaths is stunning. And the outrage of all these acts lives on. These three incidents in 2020 solidified the belief amongst a majority of American citizens that systematic racism was alive and thriving in their country, 400 years after the beginnings of slavery and its brutalities. A Pew Research Center poll in early June of 2020 found that over two-thirds of American adults supported Black Lives Matter, including 60% of White Americans (Parker et al. 2020).

Systemic racism had been engineered into the design of the USA from its beginning, it having been written into its Constitution that Blacks are valued as being worth only three-fifths of a White person, known as the 'Three-Fifths Compromise'. That was in 1787, at the Constitutional Conference in Philadelphia. Ironically, Philadelphia means 'the city of brotherly love'.

Eighty years later, the American Civil War (1861-65) was fought between the North and Southern States, essentially to preserve the South's right to employ and expand slavery as a constitutional right. The South was soundly defeated after four bloody years and 700,000 men's deaths, by far the most deaths inflicted in any major American war. By comparison, about 50,000 American lives were lost in the Vietnam War.

Though the American Civil War was fought and won by the Northern States over 150 years ago, the evidence of racism within American society suggests

that it was never put to rest and is very much alive in the psyches of many Americans today. For many Whites, particularly in the South and mid-West, it seems like the Civil War never ended.

In more recent times, the fact that the USA had a Black President, Barack Obama, for 8 years (from 2008 to 2016) was a watershed moment. It signalled optimism that the country had reached a certain development in race relations and consciousness as a nation. But it also triggered a sense of deep insecurity in many Whites that their days of dominating American politics was over. And eventually this will come to pass in the United States demographically, as people of colour are estimated to become the majority sometime in the next 25 years.

What racists do not seem to understand is that this is not a 'zero sum game'. Their perspective seems to be that if the other person is getting more, they must be getting less. In other words, equality is a bad thing because it means they are going to have less money and influence and privilege, etc. But the reality is that all persons should be treated equally, and if so, no-one should lose anything, even the 'entitled' White person. It is only now that all are entitled to be treated well and without bias. The USA can only truly 'be free' as a nation when all of its citizens are treated equally, no matter their sex, skin colour, religion or sexual orientation.

But such attitudes seem to be a 'hard sell' to White supremacists within the United States, who prefer to project their shadow and evil onto the 'other' – those who look different from themselves or have different perspectives than they do. When Donald Trump became President in 2016, as Gray (2017) points out in *The Atlantic (online)*, they then had a leader who not only did not denounce them, but called them 'some very good people' after their rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August of 2017. Many in America would conclude that Trump consistently fanned the flames of racism throughout his Presidential campaign and that this continued unabated during his Presidency.

The fact that Trump had been a Democrat for most of his adult life, not a Republican could indicate that his only core value is to promote himself, to always be the centre of attention, to wield power and to get people to vote for him. He seems willing to support any individual or group who support him, regardless of who they are or what they represent. On 6 January 2021, Trump's supporters transformed into an angry mob who then attacked the Capitol buildings in Washington as Congress was ratifying the votes from the Presidential election. Five people ended up dying and politicians from both parties were terrorized. Trump, during the onslaught, tweeted a video telling his supporters he loved them and that they were very special people, whilst encouraging them to go home (Tan, Shin & Rindler 2021). His actions, which many see as spurring on his supporters to attack the Capitol, resulted in moves for a second impeachment of his Presidency, an historical first in the United States (Hook & Haberkorn 2021).

### Identity politics

In the USA, both the establishment Democratic and Republican parties discourage identity politics because they argue that it alienates the majority of people, and the majority are currently White. It could therefore be argued that Whites use identity politics to support policies that benefit them, whilst Blacks and people of colour are not treated the same way. Zerlina Maxwell (2020), an African American MSNBC political analyst explains in her book *The End of White Politics* that:

The term identity politics gets a bad rap from all sides, but it is absolutely the path to triumph for the Democratic Party. It requires an understanding of intersectionality of all our identities and how this intersectionality impacts all of our lives both individually and collectively ... we've always been doing identity politics in America; it's just that up to this point in time, white has been the only identity that mattered. We've defaulted to white as if that identity is neutral, as if it doesn't coincide with unearned benefits and a long history of divisiveness, trauma, and violence, as if white supremacy doesn't still exist in America. But identity politics isn't something that people of colour can opt out of.

(ibid., p. 21)

Maxwell's (2020) reasoning is that in order to defeat the Republican party and the White supremacists who support it, there has to be a broad coalition of people of colour and those Whites who are anti-racist on the Democratic party side. The demographics support the fact that if this coalition is solid and enough of them get out to vote, they can defeat the Republicans every time, as was just witnessed with the Biden/Harris victory in 2020.

### The trauma of racism and slavery

Psychologically, the most recent 'uncovering' of racism in the USA has revealed that it has rarely as a nation truly confronted this huge shadow in its psyche – the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's being the major exception. And while America may not be unique in being a racist country, it is unique in its seeming ability to consistently suppress the fact that it is a racist country and has been from the outset.

This denial and suppression of reality also does not enable any healing process to take place, as it does not even acknowledge that there is a problem to begin with. Instead, what Americans find is that myths and legends of American goodness are continually told and retold, never touching on the dark and pervasive shadow of racism. As Zerlina Maxwell (2020) points out:

Racial injustice is something that people of colour experience every day. White Americans know they aren't treated the way Black Americans are treated. Privilege doesn't mean that you're a racist. It means you are enjoying some benefits because of the colour of your skin, and you never even had to think twice about it. It's about the things you don't have to think about – that's the benefit of your skin colour.

(ibid., pp. 55-56)

As a privileged White male living in California, I can attest to this everyday reality. I do not ever have to give my ethnicity a second thought, because I belong to the dominant White ethnic group. This is not the case for many of my suburban neighbours who are Black, Hispanic and Asian in ethnicity. I have to consciously reflect on what their reality may be and the fact that it may be very different from my everyday reality. Similarly, in the consulting room, I have to be empathetic to what my Black, Latinx, Indigenous, or Asian patients' (and their ancestors') life experience has been that may be very different from my own experience and that of my English and Irish ancestors, given our ethnic and cultural differences.

While it may be uncomfortable for those in the White majority to reflect on race and privilege, the time has come to do just that. And it is heartening to see that scores of discussion groups have arisen in response to *Black Lives Matter* across the country. These discussion groups reflecting on race and privilege have opened up within schools, colleges and universities, private non-profit organizations, for-profit corporations of all descriptions and formally and informally within many communities. It is a starting point for some greater understanding and healing to occur. And this is hopeful. And it is a necessary complement to attacking institutional racism wherever it exists on a political level.

In the meantime many White people continue to resist, repress and deny the effects of racism and slavery, while Black people continue to deal with these issues on a daily basis. The trauma of slavery and racism is only beginning to be reckoned with in American society by both Blacks and Whites. As Fanny Brewster (2020) writes:

The suppression, repression and amnesia of racial complexes has contributed to the wounding of our American psyche in terms of how we have continued over centuries to inflict physical and psychological pain, because of a constructed idea regarding differences due to ethnicity .... American slavery was a horrific event that lasted for centuries. Unfortunately, we continue to live out our fears through racial complexes expressed many times through racist actions.

(ibid., p. 20)

What strikes me in this quote is the fact that American slavery was ‘*a horrific event that lasted for centuries*’ [my italics]. But, of course, it was not just one event but a series of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of events, which we actually refer to as a process. Again, in this case, a series of hundreds of thousands of events connected to slavery and racism, a process which is still going on today unabated. The image of Derek Chauvin, a White policeman, choking to death the Black man, George Floyd, while knowingly being taped on video, has a barbarism to it that many shall not soon forget.

Black people know the reality of racism because they live it every day. White people know it only if they can reflect on the reality of racism within the American shadow, and that is just not possible for some White people to look at. It is too painful and uncomfortable. And for many, it is much easier to just deny it, suppress it, or pretend it does not exist.

Joy DeGruy (2005) states in her book *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome*:

Slavery was an inherently angry and violent process .... It’s no wonder we’re angry. Even when we’re feeling good, an ever-present anger resides just below our surface. Anger at the violence, degradation and humiliation visited upon ourselves, our ancestors and our children; anger at the misrepresentation and trivialization of our history and our culture and, finally, anger at living in the wealthiest nation in the world and not having equal opportunity access to its riches.

(cited in Brewster 2020, p. 32)

The continued lack of opportunity, as expressed in the reality of living in poor neighbourhoods, children attending schools with inadequate learning resources, and of not being able to have easy access to high quality jobs, contributes to a re-traumatization through institutional racism on a daily basis, reinforcing already existent racial complexes within Black society.

### The racial complex

Fanny Brewster’s (2020) book examines a Jungian perspective on race beginning with a discussion of Jung’s statement in his essay titled ‘The complications of American psychology’, where he says:

Just as the coloured man lives in your city and even in your houses, so also he lives under your skin, subconsciously. Naturally it works both ways. Just as every Jew has a Christ complex, so every Negro has a white complex and every American (white) a Negro complex. As a rule the coloured man would give anything to change his skin, and the white man hates to admit he has been touched by the black.

(Jung 1930, para. 963)

Brewster (2020) states that:

As an Africanist individual I do not have a white complex as Jung stated because I wish to be white. I have a cultural racial complex that embodies all that I have inherited due to this life – personal associations, the lives of my ancestors and archetypal patterns of all that has come before ... (and later). Growing up African American means that there are racial lessons to be learned at a very early age. The lesson of skin color differences bring with them sociological and psychological wounds and trauma of racism. This is a fact of living in America.

(*ibid.*, pp. 19-20)

Brewster (2020) goes on to write that it is only through a personal analysis of a person's shadow and complexes that we can individually become more conscious of our racial complexes. I completely agree. It is also a commitment to an often long and arduous process of introspection and dialogue (between an analyst and a patient) that enough people must undergo to make a real difference going forward. But analytical psychology offers a real hope to the world in a time of desperate need of greater psychological maturity by both individuals and the collective American society.

White people do not have to think about racism every day because it is not a personal problem. But the recent 'uncovering' of deep and systematic racism within American society has raised the awareness of a majority of the nation. Hopefully, this new consciousness can be consolidated and assimilated into the American psyche. It figures to be a long and difficult process, as these biases have long been baked into its psyche. It will take a lot of conscious effort by a majority of Americans to get to the roots of racism and to reimagine a society which will be fair to all. But there is no alternative to this. And 'dragging our feet' collectively will only exacerbate the pain and suffering of the patient, the American psyche.

Brewster (2020) sums up in a hopeful way when she says:

I think the beauty of analytical psychology is that it oftentimes provides the answer to our suffering. The remedy is in the poison. I believe that Jungian psychology is a psychology of discovery. The path will usually be in the form of a labyrinth – it will of course not be easy. The acceptance of this fact and the actual experience of both suffering and joy of life – both the pain of the complex, and the numinosity of the divine Self, can continue to offer hope.

(*ibid.*, p. 23)

I do not know if it will take 40 more years or 400 more years for the United States to meaningfully confront and begin to assimilate this huge shadow of racism and slavery and mediate its racial complex. But if it begins to honestly



confront it and discuss it, as it has begun to do, and seriously analyse it, individually and collectively, it may be able to make a good start in the next 40 years. There is no other alternative to heal the American psyche. And that work needs to begin now. With concerted hard work and Eros this could become truly apocalyptic, helping to redeem the American psyche and making the United States all the more whole – *E Pluribus Unum* ('Out of many, one' from the Great Seal of the USA).

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#### TRANSLATIONS OF ABSTRACT

Ce dont nous sommes témoins à l'heure actuelle dans l'histoire de l'humanité, dans les années 2020, est un vortex de pandémies qui s'entrecroisent – des révélations choquantes qui se déploient avec une énergie et une force formidables – tellement que l'on ne peut les ignorer ou leur échapper. Cela inclue la pandémie mondiale de racisme, la COVID-19, et le changement climatique. Cet article soutient que toutes ces pandémies tourbillonnantes sont des manifestations de l'archétype de l'apocalypse, qui se constelle en ce moment de manière très puissante. Chacun de ces phénomènes pourrait avaler l'humanité toute entière en tant qu'espèce. Ensembles ils représentent un défi apparemment insurmontable auquel nous avons à faire face durant le siècle à venir de la vie sur terre. Si l'humanité ne peut pas faire face au défi de ces forces négatives combinées, elle pourrait tout simplement périr. Un tel ensemble - de défis qui s'entrecroisent sur plusieurs niveaux – ne s'est encore jamais produit dans l'histoire humaine. Ainsi nous devons être très vigilants à ce qui se passe, et à comment nous pouvons consciemment opérer une médiation de ces menaces, à la fois individuellement et collectivement. Cela représente également une opportunité sans précédent pour que l'humanité évolue et grandisse psychologiquement à la fois individuellement et collectivement, au niveau de la nation et globalement.

*Mots clés:* apocalypse, révélation, complexe racial, racisme, pandémie, changement climatique, archétype

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Was wir gegenwärtig in der Geschichte der Menschheit in den 2020-er Jahren erleben ist ein Wirbel sich überschneidender Pandemien - aufrüttelnde Enthüllungen, die sich mit einer enormen Energie und Kraft entfalten - so sehr, daß wir sie nicht ignorieren oder ihnen entkommen können. Dazu gehören die weltweiten Pandemien von Rassismus, COVID-19 und des Klimawandels. In diesem Beitrag wird argumentiert, daß all diese brodelnden Pandemien Manifestationen des Archetyps der Apokalypse sind, der sich jetzt auf sehr mächtige Weise konstellierte. Jedes dieser Phänomene könnte die gesamte Menschheit als Spezies verschlingen. Zusammen stellen sie eine scheinbar überwältigende Herausforderung dar, der wir uns im nächsten Jahrhundert des Lebens auf der Erde stellen müssen. Wenn die Menschheit die Herausforderung dieser kombinierten negativen Kräfte nicht bewältigen kann, könnte sie einfach zugrundegehen. Eine vielschichtige Reihe sich überschneidender Herausforderungen wie diese ist in der Geschichte der Menschheit noch nie aufgetreten. Wir müssen daher sehr aufmerksam sein, was vor sich geht und wie wir diese Bedrohungen sowohl einzeln als auch gemeinsam bewußt vermitteln können. Es bietet sich auch eine beispiellose Gelegenheit für die Menschheit, sich sowohl individuell als auch kollektiv, national und global zu entwickeln und psychologisch zu wachsen.

*Schlüsselwörter:* Apokalypse, Enthüllung, Rassenkomplex, Rassismus, Klimawandel, Archetyp

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Ciò a cui stiamo assistendo in questa fase della storia dell'umanità, negli anni 2020, è un vortice di pandemie che si intersecano – scuotendo delle rivelazioni che si dipanano con terrificante energia e forza – così tanto che noi non possiamo ignorarle o fuggirle. Queste includono le pandemie globali di razzismo, COVID-19 e cambiamento climatico. Questo articolo ipotizza che tutte queste pandemie siano manifestazioni dell'archetipo dell'apocalisse, che si sta ora costellando in modo molto potente. Ciascuno di questi fenomeni può inglobare tutta l'umanità come specie. Messi insieme rappresentano una sfida apparentemente insostenibile per noi nell'incontro con il prossimo secolo di storia sulla terra. Se l'umanità non riesce a sostenere la sfida di queste forze negative combinate, potrà semplicemente soccombere. Un set di cambiamenti che si intersecano a molti livelli quale questo non si è mai verificato prima nella storia. Perciò noi dobbiamo fare molta attenzione a ciò che si sta muovendo ed a come noi possiamo consciamente affrontare queste minacce, sia individualmente che collettivamente. Questo rappresenta anche una opportunità senza precedenti per l'umanità per evolvere e crescere psicologicamente, sia individualmente che collettivamente, come nazioni e come globalità.

*Parole chiave:* apocalisse, rivelazione, complesso razziale, razzismo, pandemia, cambiamento climatico, archetipo

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В настоящее время, в 2020 году мы являемся свидетелями вихря пересекающихся пандемий в человеческой истории – необычайных откровений, разворачивающихся с потрясающей энергией и силой. Этот процесс настолько силен, что мы не можем его игнорировать или избежать. Он включает в себя пандемии расизма, коронавируса и

изменения климата. В статье обосновывается точка зрения, что эти бушующие пандемии – проявления архетипа апокалипсиса, который констеллируется сейчас в очень мощной форме. Любое из этих явлений может проглотить человечество как вид целиком. Все вместе они представляют собой, казалось бы, непреодолимую задачу, которую нам предстоит решить в следующем столетии жизни на земле. Если человечество не сможет найти ответ этим объединенным негативным силам, то оно может просто погибнуть. Такой многослойный пересекающийся набор сложных задач еще никогда не стоял перед человечеством за всю его историю. Мы должны быть очень внимательны к происходящему, осознанно регулировать эти угрозы на индивидуальном и коллективном уровне. Человечество оказалось перед лицом беспрецедентной возможности психологического роста и развития как индивидуального, так и коллективного, как национального, так и общемирового.

*Ключевые слова:* апокалипсис, откровение, расовый комплекс, расизм, пандемия, изменение климата, архетип

Lo que estamos atestiguando en el presente de la historia humana, en el año 2020, es un vórtice de pandemias entrecruzadas – revelaciones que sacuden y se despliegan con tremenda fuerza y energía – tanto que no podemos ignorarlas ni escapar de éstas. Estas incluyen la pandemia mundial del racismo, el COVID-19 y el cambio climático. El presente trabajo argumenta que todas estas turbulentas pandemias son manifestaciones del arquetipo del apocalipsis, el cual se está constelando en la actualidad de manera poderosa. Cualquiera de estos fenómenos podría tragarse a la humanidad entera como especie. Juntas representen un aparentemente abrumador desafío para nosotros, a confrontar durante el próximo siglo de vida en la tierra. Si la humanidad no puede afrontar los desafíos de estas fuerzas negativas combinadas, podría simplemente perecer. Nunca ha ocurrido en la historia humana, una intersección de desafíos como éstos, en múltiples niveles. Tenemos que estar muy alertas respecto a lo que está pasando, y sobre cómo podemos conscientemente mediar estas amenazas, ambas individual y colectivamente. También presenta una oportunidad sin precedentes para que la humanidad pueda evolucionar y crecer psicológicamente, tanto individual, como colectivamente, nacional y globalmente.

*Palabras clave:* apocalipsis, revelación, complejo racial, racismo, pandemia, cambio climático, arquetipo

天后原型。分析关于种族主义、新冠、及气候变化的流行病。

我们在2020年代的当下所见证的人类历史，是一个相互交联的流行病的漩涡——令人震惊的多个启示录正在展开，携带着可怕的能力和力量——它们那么强烈以至于我们无法忽视或逃离它们。这包括全球的种族主义、新冠病毒和气候改变的流行病。本文认为，所有这些漩涡中的流行病，都是启示录原型的表现，此刻正以强烈的方式聚集。这些现象中的任何一个都可以把全人类吞没。它们在一起，代表了一个看起来对我们来说淹没性的挑战，我们在地球生活的未来一个世纪都将面临这种挑战。如果人类不能面对这些合并在一起的消极力量，很容易就枯萎了。在人类历史上还未经历过这样多重交织的挑战。我们必须对正在发生的事情保持足够的警觉，以及警觉于我们

作为个体与集体，如何可以有意识地斡旋于这些威胁之间。这也给人类呈现了一个史无前例的机会，去获得个体、集体、国家、全球的心理进化和发展。

关键词：启示录，揭示，族情结，种族，流行病，气候变化，原型

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