

ERICH NEUMANN  
EUGENE ROLFE

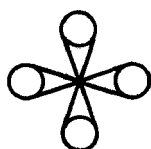
# The Essays of Erich Neumann

*Creative Man, Volume 2*



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ESSAYS OF ERICH NEUMANN

VOLUME 2

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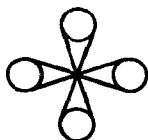
C. G. JUNG INSTITUTE OF SAN FRANCISCO

ERICH NEUMANN

*Creative Man*

FIVE ESSAYS

*Translated from the German by*  
Eugene Rolfe



BOLLINGEN SERIES LXI • 2

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## LIST OF PLATES

Following page 124. From etchings by Marc Chagall in vol. VIII, nos. 33/34, published by Editions Verve in 1956, with the title *La Bible illustrée by Marc Chagall*.

1. The Sacrifice of Isaac
2. Jacob's Return to Egypt
3. Moses' Investiture of Joshua
4. The Promise of Future Blessedness to Jerusalem

## EDITORIAL NOTE

The present volume is a sequel to a volume of Neumann's essays in translation, *Art and the Creative Unconscious*, published in 1959, during his lifetime. From the body of shorter writings not previously translated into English, the editors propose to form several additional selections of essays on the model of the 1959 volume.

The title, *Creative Man*, is that of the collection *Der Schöpferische Mensch*, published in Zurich (Rhein-Verlag) also in 1959. In it Neumann published for the first time "Georg Trakl—Person und Mythos," an essay whose aim was to illuminate creative existence by a concrete example. The other four essays in that volume, more general and theoretical in their application, were all originally given as Eranos lectures and expanded for republication; they will be translated in another volume.

Three short papers, on Jung, Freud, and Chagall, respectively, were first published in the German review *Merkur* in 1955, 1957, and 1958. The essay on Freud was previously published in a translation by Eva Metman in the *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 1956, and in *Spring*, 1957. That translation is here republished with considerable revision.

Neumann wrote commentaries on various of Kafka's writings in 1932, at a time when Kafka's work was still little known and before Neumann's first meeting with



#### EDITORIAL NOTE

Jung. Julie Neumann has stated: "As so much had been published on the subject in the meantime (up to the 1950s), he felt the need to become acquainted with at least some of the new work before he published his own commentaries. He was never able to carry out his plan. The one exception was the contribution that he prepared for *Geist und Werk* (1958)." That was a Festschrift for the seventy-fifth birthday of Dr. Daniel Brody, the founder of the Rhein-Verlag and publisher of the *Eranos Jahrbücher*, Neumann's *Die grosse Mutter*, and related works. To it Neumann contributed the commentary he called "The Cathedral Chapter," Part Two of the opening work in the present volume. Both our Parts One and Two were published in 1974 in the German journal *Analytische Psychologie*. Neumann in 1958 entitled his work "From the First Part of the Kafka Commentary: The Court"; we have instead used Kafka's title, *The Trial*, and have given the title "The Court" to Part One.

The prefatory article on Erich Neumann by Gerhard Adler was originally published in *Spring*, 1961. Dr. Adler, who was Neumann's close friend and the literary executor of his publications in English, has revised and slightly expanded it. His counsel in the preparation of the present volume is acknowledged with thanks.

The assistance of Wayne K. Detloff, M.D., Stanford Drew, Shändel Parks, and Virginia Detloff's work of preparing the index, are much appreciated.

For permission to quote, acknowledgment is gratefully made as follows: for quotations from Georg Trakl's poems, to Michael Hamburger and Christopher Middleton, and to Jonathan Cape Ltd., publishers of *Selected*

#### EDITORIAL NOTE

*Poems*, edited by Christopher Middleton; and to Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., Schocken Books Inc., and Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd., for quotations from *The Trial*, by Franz Kafka, Definitive Edition, Revised, translated by Willa and Edwin Muir, copyright 1937, © 1956, and renewed 1965 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Acknowledgment is also made, with appreciation, to M. Tériade for his kindness in permitting the reproduction of Chagall's etchings from *Verve*.



## ON ERICH NEUMANN: 1905-1960

Erich Neumann died on November 5, 1960, in Tel Aviv. The news of his death—forewarned though I had been when I saw him in London only three weeks before—seemed inconceivable. So powerful was his mind, so inexhaustible seemed the reserves of his personality, so warm and generous his friendship, that it just did not seem possible that all this vitality and creativeness should have so suddenly come to an end.

I had been associated with Erich Neumann in a friendship of nearly forty years, dating back to our early student days in Germany. Even then, as a student and a young man, his creative personality asserted itself. We belonged to a circle of friends who were deeply interested in all the problems of life for which Germany after the First World War was a focal point: among them, philosophy, psychology, the Jewish question and, last but not least, poetry and art. How many nights did we not spend in intense and endless discussions on every possible aspect of existence! And there was no aspect to which the depth and width of Neumann's approach together with his passionate nature did not contribute some original and creative answer.

Poetry and art: to many it will come as a surprise to hear that Erich Neumann's first creative works were a long novel, *Der Anfang (The Beginning)*—a story, as we would now say, of *nigredo* and individuation, one

chapter of which was published in Germany in 1932—and many beautiful poems. Even then he was interested in the creative process; another of his early writings (1933) was a commentary on the novels of Franz Kafka, at that time still relatively unknown. His interest in poetry and art sprang from a profoundly artistic temperament; his two last books in English, *Art and the Creative Unconscious* and *The Archetypal World of Henry Moore*, are witnesses of his creative participation in the artistic process. There are also various other essays on art and poetry that have not yet appeared in English; their publication is now projected.

The other pole of his creativity was Judaism: without being in any way orthodox, he had his deepest roots in the Jewish heritage, particularly its mystical side. He was strongly influenced in his outlook by Hasidism, the great eighteenth-century continuation of cabalistic thought. Long before the advent of Hitler, Neumann felt strongly related to the renewal of Jewish life in Israel (then Palestine), so that his emigration in 1934 to Tel Aviv was far from being forced on him by external political circumstances. To him Israel became a true home, and he never regretted his decision to settle so far away from the centers of European learning. Furthermore, a great deal of his early work was devoted to problems of Jewish psychology. His dissertation for the degree of doctor of philosophy<sup>1</sup> was on a mystical philosopher of the eight-

1. Diss., U. of Erlangen, 1927: "Johann Arnold Kanne: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der mystischen Sprachphilosophie"; published the same year in Berlin, with the subtitle "Ein vergessener Romantiker."

eenth and nineteenth centuries who, a Christian, had been profoundly influenced by Jewish esoteric thought. There exists also a beautiful interpretation of the Jacob and Esau myth from the early thirties, which he never published because it seemed to him still incomplete.

Although his early studies had been focused on philosophy, he soon became more and more interested in psychology. It was characteristic of his thoroughness and his vitality that, once he had decided to take up psychology as a profession, he started medical training, which he finished in 1933. It was this that prepared him for his crucial encounter with C. G. Jung in 1934, prior to his emigration to Palestine. Here, in Jung's approach, he found the dynamic focus of his various interests and gifts. Analytical psychology provided the instrument that helped him to translate his creative insight into practical work with other people, and for them. It was a meeting of the greatest importance: the results of Erich Neumann's relationship with Jung are by now part of the history of analytical psychology.

Had it not been for the intervening years of the war, we would have heard much earlier of Erich Neumann's work. He utilized these years of enforced isolation for a great variety of studies which, after the war, blossomed into an enormous burst of creative activity. In 1947 he visited Europe again for the first time. My family had rented a summer house in Ascona, where we all met and where I had the good fortune to introduce him to Olga Froebe-Kapteyn. This meeting started a most fruitful collaboration between the two: as early as 1948 Erich Neumann gave his first Eranos lecture, "Der Mystische

Mensch" ("Mystical Man"), and he returned every year, soon becoming one of the most important figures at Eranos. His thirteen papers published in the *Eranos Jahrbuch* show the continuous progress of his thought; lectures like the one "On the Moon and Matriarchal Consciousness" or "The Psyche and the Transformation of the Planes of Reality" opened up new psychological vistas.

We cannot evaluate his work here. But a glance at the various titles is sufficient to give an idea of the scope of his creative genius. In 1949 his first published book, *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic* (tr. 1969), showed the impact which the idea of psychological wholeness had made on a deeply ethical person. To him, self-realization seemed to impose a new ethical outlook and an obligation beyond all conventional ethical concepts. The same year saw the publication of his first great book, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (tr. 1954), a landmark in analytical psychology. This book—with its bold scheme to illustrate the phases in the development of human consciousness by the interpretation of basic mythologems—put him immediately in the forefront of analytical psychologists. For a number of years his interest in feminine psychology became more and more the focus of his attention. "On the Moon and Matriarchal Consciousness" and his lecture to the Zurich Psychology Club that same year on "The Psychology of the Feminine" were followed in 1952 by his graceful commentary, *Amor and Psyche* (tr. 1956) and in 1955 by his second outstanding work, *The Great Mother*. Later essays are contained in *Art and the Creative Unconscious* and *The*

*Archetypal World of Henry Moore*, both published in 1959; in these, his interests in feminine psychology and creative art are beautifully blended. Along with his lectures at Eranos there went a continuous activity as a lecturer: in Switzerland where he became a patron of the C. G. Jung Institute, in the Netherlands, in Germany, and most of all in his beloved Israel, where he conducted regular seminars and started a group of Jungian psychologists. Numerous articles in a variety of journals show the range of his mind, and his lecture at the First International Congress of Analytical Psychology (Zurich, 1958) supplied a program for future research by building a bridge between the personalistic genetic view and the transpersonal archetypal aspects of the psyche.

Erich Neumann was the one truly creative spirit among the second generation of Jung's pupils, the only one who seemed destined to build on Jung's work and to continue it. This was, I feel, due not only to his fertile and inexhaustible mind, but to the fact that his work did not spring from his intellect but from a deep and living contact with the unconscious sources of creativity. To him, working on his unconscious material was a regular and indispensable part of life; if he did not spend the evenings and nights of his over-full working days in writing, he would give them to active imagination and to the consideration of his dreams.

Those who knew him not only as a psychologist, lecturer, or writer, but as a friend, have experienced his immense gift for friendship. His marriage was the most beautiful expression of his unique and deep gift for relationship. To his colleagues, his death left a gap in ana-



lytical psychology difficult, indeed, to fill; to his friends, his death was an irredeemable loss.

But it would be wrong to close on this negative note. When he was told, in London in October 1960, of a medical diagnosis that left little hope, both he and his wife faced it with a courage and acceptance which was in itself the measure of the man and his spirit. All that mattered to him then was to concentrate on the essentials and to return to Israel, where he wanted to die. He consulted the Chinese *Book of Changes*, and received an answer that will be a comfort to all of us, giving, as it were, the essence of his life and achievement. It was Hexagram 14, Possession in Great Measure, with the judgment, "Supreme success." In the commentary to this hexagram we read: "Possession in great measure is determined by fate and accords with the time. . . . It is done by virtue of unselfish modesty. The time is favorable—a time of strength within, clarity and culture without. Power is expressing itself in a graceful and controlled way. This brings supreme success and wealth." And as if to make it clear that a final stage had been reached, there was no moving line.

Erich Neumann died at the height of his creative powers, and his death cut short many more projects in his mind. His posthumous—and sadly unfinished—monograph *The Child*, dealing with the "Structure and Dynamics of the Nascent Personality," first published in 1973, bears witness to his creativity, undiminished to the last.

His loss to analytical psychology is enormous. But

ON ERICH NEUMANN

there is some comfort in the fact that the importance of his work is more widely recognized than ever and that the influence of his ideas is constantly growing. Of this the present edition of his essays bears significant witness. May this undertaking make his writings known to ever wider circles and help spread the enormous potentialities inherent in his thought.

Gerhard Adler

*London, November 1960 / April 1978*

WORKS BY ERICH NEUMANN  
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

*The Origins and History of Consciousness.* Tr. by R.F.C. Hull. New York/Princeton (Bollingen Series XLII) and London, 1954.

*The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype.* Tr. by Ralph Manheim. New York/Princeton (Bollingen Series XLVII) and London, 1955.

*Amor and Psyche: The Psychic Development of the Feminine.* Tr. by Ralph Manheim. New York/Princeton (Bollingen Series LIV) and London, 1956.

*Art and the Creative Unconscious.* Tr. by Ralph Manheim. New York/Princeton (Bollingen Series LXI) and London, 1959.

*The Archetypal World of Henry Moore.* Tr. by R.F.C. Hull. New York/Princeton (Bollingen Series LCVIII) and London, 1959.

*Depth Psychology and a New Ethic.* Tr. by Eugene Rolfe. New York and London, 1969.

*The Child.* Tr. by Ralph Manheim. New York and London, 1973.

## CREATIVE MAN

The following essay originated as far back as 1933—i.e., a year before Neumann's first meeting with Jung, which was to have such a decisive impact on his later work. It is all the more remarkable that in this essay—really still the product of Neumann the philosopher, and not of Neumann the analytical psychologist—all the basic ideas of analytical psychology—for example, the complex, the archetype, the shadow, the anima, and the self—are either already included or else, as it were, can be glimpsed between the lines. The reader should bear in mind that Kafka was still a relatively unknown author in Germany at the time this essay was written and that very little of the great flood of publications about him which is available today existed at that period. Subsequently, as Erich Neumann's wife explained to me, her husband always hesitated to publish this essay in its original form; he intended to revise it and to bring it into line with the latest results of Kafka scholarship before he incorporated it into his collected works. His early death prevented the fulfillment of this project, so that the essay on Kafka remains a historical document from the early work of this distinguished analyst.

—Hans Dieckmann

# I

## KAFKA'S "THE TRIAL": AN INTERPRETATION THROUGH DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY

If a man does not judge himself, all things judge him,  
and all things become the messengers of God.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslau

### I

#### THE COURT

Joseph K. has been arrested. The whole thing is enigmatic. The prosecutor and the charge are unknown. It is not even certain that a charge has been made. Proceedings have been instituted: that is all. By a person unknown versus Joseph K. Nobody knows what has

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"Franz Kafka: Das Gericht; Eine tiefenpsychologische Deutung," *Analytische Psychologie* (Berlin), v:4 (1974). The forenote is extracted from foreword to the same publication. For other details, see the editorial note to the present volume.

Quotations from *The Trial* are based on the translation of Edwin and Willa Muir (New York: Knopf; and London: Secker and Warburg, 1937; revised by E. M. Butler, 1956).

happened. The warders who have been sent out and the Inspector who duly informs K. of the arrest are none of them responsible. They act and carry out instructions, but have no idea why this should have happened to K. The way K. accepts the arrest is as enigmatic as the arrest itself. The surprising thing is that he gives in. He holds up his coat "as if displaying it to the warders for their approval"—it is as if he has "in a way admitted the strangers' right to an interest in his actions." After suddenly becoming the center of a completely unintelligible happening, which was in flat contradiction of all normal reality, he says, "Certainly, I am surprised, but I am not by any means very surprised."

He protests, he is ironical, he regards the whole thing as a joke, he is quite sure it must be a mistake; yet more astonishing than anything that happens is the way in which Joseph K. recognizes and accepts the trial, and even to some extent realizes what he is doing. He does not want to dress, yet he does so, he wants to call an advocate, yet he does not do so, he protests against everything—and then gives in.

He is always concerned to retain his superiority, yet underneath he is permeated by a growing fear. But that is not true! *He* is not afraid. He, Joseph K., is convinced that you have only to clear away the disorder in the household and "every trace of these events would be obliterated and things would resume their usual course." And yet secretly something in him *is* afraid, something is in a state of such panic fear that when the warders leave him alone, he is surprised, because he "had abundant opportunities to take his life."

Admittedly, K. never loses control. He always knows

immediately when his thoughts are absurd; he also knows, in relation to Frau Grubach, how he really ought to have behaved, and what really ought to have been done; he is very conscious and superior—yet at the same time he is surprised that the events of that morning should have made him consider giving notice to Frau Grubach, and he is frightened by the house-porter's son in the street doorway. What shows him up more than anything, though, is the sympathy shown him by Frau Grubach and the tears in her voice as she begs him, "Don't take it so much to heart, Herr K."

Yet the strangest thing of all is not K.'s unconscious fear, but his feeling of guilt, which breaks through over and over again. It is true that K. says—and we have no reason to doubt his sincerity here—that he "cannot recall the slightest offense that might be charged against him"; yet unexpectedly, out of some deep level inaccessible to his conscious awareness, the cry breaks out in his conversation with Frau Grubach, "If you want to keep your house respectable you'll have to begin by giving me notice!" And then in a flash the thought struck him, "Will she take my hand?"

The relationship with Fräulein Bürstner, too, which is initiated so abruptly that it is almost like an assault, is really an attempt to escape and an appeal for help and protection. The scene of his arrest, which he has just said he regards as "a pure figment," in fact haunts him to such an extent and is so "horrible" that he feels obliged to repeat it as though he were under a compulsion. He broods more and more over the warders' statement that there can be no question of the Court's making a mistake; yet we are also told that "before going to sleep he



thought for a little while about his behavior; he was pleased with it, yet surprised that he was not still more pleased."

Again and again we meet with the same kind of division. We never hear of K. taking steps of any kind to throw light on the nature of the events which have overtaken him. We are told, it is true, that "he was always inclined to take things easily, to believe in the worst only when the worst happened, to take no care for the morrow even when the outlook was threatening"; yet his complete indifference about the nature of his arrest, the lack of interest, which permits of no attempt to gather information or to make enquiries, is conspicuous. Corresponding to this impassivity but in a more active mode is the matter-of-fact way in which K. sets out to keep his appointment with the Examining Magistrate. He mobilizes all the usual protests and cynical defenses—but he goes. Just on the decisive issue, he accepts. Everything else is an arabesque around the basic fact of his obedience, while at the same time K. himself remains unconscious of this basic fact and his conscious attitude is still obsessively negative.

Externally, this division reveals itself in the way in which K. "knows" the time of his appointment, although he has not been directly informed about it. He "wants" to arrive late, without noticing that this intention clearly implies an exact knowledge of the time when he is in fact expected. He does not notice that his faulty intention corresponds to an enigmatic knowledge of the appointed time. Typical of K. is the feeling of innocence to which he clings; he is convinced that he has not been told when he ought to come. His "knowledge" is not real; how can

he know when he has not been told? K. does not suspect for a moment that this "unreal" knowledge actually determines, although negatively, his intention to arrive late. Here the split psychology produces a grotesque compromise: K. finally *runs* in order to arrive "on time"! In this act of running, his knowledge of the right time has broken through once again; he obeys neither his knowledge nor his counterintention to disobey it.

The curious way in which K. finds the Interrogation Commission provides us with another enigma. As he wishes "to get a chance of looking into the rooms," he enquires after a nonexistent "joiner called Lanz." He rejects the idea of asking for the room occupied by the Interrogation Commission because that might injure his reputation. The result is a long and pointless expedition through the house. The plan which at first seemed so practical declares its independence of his purpose. "In this way" K. was finally "conducted over the whole floor." He already intends to go home, but turns back again, for the first time with real resolution, and the watchword "a joiner called Lanz," with which he now knocks on the door of the first room, leads him, surprisingly and inexplicably, to the Interrogation Commission. He is not told that a joiner called Lanz really lives there, yet in answer to his question he is immediately shown the right way. It is as if his intention, which is now genuine, to find the Interrogation Commission has made the watchword "a joiner called Lanz" transparent, so that, in spite of this question and in fact directly *through* it, his meaning is understood and he is shown the way he is trying to find.

On his arrival, K. is informed that he is an hour and

five minutes late; and it turns out that the appointment has in fact been fixed at the time which was "known" to K. The way in which K. finds the Interrogation Commission as soon as he really looks for it, and the agreement between the time fixed by the Court and his own inner knowledge actually belong to the same context. In the first place, we have the remarkable phenomenon of the "adaptability of the trial." The trial seems to fit in with K. When he is not really looking for the room and his reputation is more important to him than finding it, the room is not to be discovered, though K. wanders right through the house; yet the moment he starts looking in earnest, he finds the Commission behind the first door. On the other hand, though no appointed time has been given K., it turns out that the time he himself has fixed as "correct," the time which he "knew," is in fact "valid" for the authorities. It is quite clear that if K. had fixed a later hour, that too would have been valid for the Court.

At first sight this may sound improbable, but in fact it is the only conceivable way in which it is possible for us to explain how K. succeeded in locating the Commission at all by the use of such a watchword as "a joiner called Lanz." In itself, the verbal formula is completely irrelevant: it is simply a symbol for K.'s intention "to find or not to find" as the case may be. The only reality here is his own inner attitude; this is what shines through the transparency of the watchword. The adaptability of the Trial means precisely that it turns up wherever K. is looking for it and is not to be found wherever he does not look for it. And vice versa, this same adaptability implies that the Trial is always to be found where K.

inwardly "places" it, "knows" it to be, "looks for" it, and "wills" it to be. The procedure of the Trial fits in with the accused. The location of the room is just as much determined by K. as the time of the interrogation. K. even suspects this when he plays with the notion that if the Court is attracted by the guilt of the accused, the Interrogation Commission ought really to be located on the particular flight of stairs which he himself happens to choose. This knowledge of K.'s is also derived from that layer of his mind which in some quite unspecified sense knows him to be guilty. As long as he obeys the dictates of his reputation, his ego-consciousness, this knowledge possesses no validity and is in fact false—and so he wanders through the house. But when he really looks for the Interrogation Commission, he is obeying the deep layer in himself and knows that he is accused and that he is guilty; and then the correctness of his knowledge is at once confirmed and the Commission is behind the first door that he happens to choose.

The delay involved in K.'s arriving too late corresponds to his failure to take the Trial seriously. If K. had arrived at what he "knew" was the right time, and if he had at once really tried to find the Interrogation Commission, the Interrogation Chamber would certainly have been located on the particular flight which K. had happened to choose, behind the first door which he had happened to open. The phenomenon of the "adaptability of the Trial" also provides us with evidence that the Court "overlaps" the ordinary workaday world of outer reality; it does not collide with it, but is in a strange way "resident in its midst." In spite of all its concreteness the

Trial does have an air of "unreality" about it, in the sense, that is, that there is a marked discrepancy between it and "ordinary" reality. No doubt that is what Frau Grubach meant when she said, "This arrest . . . gives me the feeling of something very learned."

The intermediate sphere in which the Trial takes place is determined by the behavior of the accused; yet the Court again carries the day against the accused precisely because the accused "gives in." The adaptability of the Trial and the reality of K.'s inner knowledge are interdependent. K. has an inkling of this as he implies when he tells the Interrogation Commission later on, "It is only a Trial if I recognize it as such." As we have just seen, the Trial is "there" when K. recognizes it, and is not there when he only pretends to look for it, i.e., when he does not take it seriously or recognize it.

Here we encounter an extremely significant relationship of interdependence between the arrested man and the prosecuting authority, which will occupy us at length later on. Yet no less striking, in the same context, is the split in K.'s own psychology, which is responsible for his half-conscious, half-unconscious recognition of the Trial, and also for a diametrically opposite attitude. This opposite attitude, which regards the whole thing as an incredible and improbable joke, is the ruling constellation that dominates K.'s ego-consciousness, and is shown quite clearly by his behavior before the Investigating Commission.

He completely fails to recognize his real situation, appears in the guise of a reformer, an accuser and even a chairman, and finally strikes the table with his fist and