

LIFTING THE VEIL



JANE KAMERLING
FRED GUSTAFSON

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Jane Kamerling

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Fred Gustafson

FOREWORD

Thomas Singer, M.D.

In her chapter “The Symbol of the Veil,” Jane Kamerling writes in this book of her seeing an Arab woman standing alone on top of a hill as night approached in the desert forty-five years ago: “Hidden under the robes that concealed her body was a world unknown to me.” This becomes the central, symbolic image of the authors’ quest of *Lifting the Veil*. Many meanings of this multivalent and potent symbol emerge in the journey to unveil to Westerners the foreign world of Arab Muslims. There is one potential, perhaps unintended, meaning of “Lifting the Veil” that occurred to me while reading this unique study. Could it be that the title of the book also boomerangs back onto the long veiled Jungian tradition of only looking at the world through our own very particular point of view—which is frequently quite blind and deaf to what is happening around us?

The point that I want to underline in this preface is that our own Jungian veil is being lifted in this book and others like it that are beginning to appear in our literature. This veil is our longstanding attitude toward the outer, collective world. Burned by his disastrous experience of speaking out on the rise of Nazism in the 1930s and his ill timed foray into discussing the still intriguing notion of national character, Jung and his followers for the next fifty years or so remained relatively quiet, perhaps even in retreat from, political, social, and cultural issues in favor of a primary, introverted focus on the individual and the individuation process. Most commentary about more collective matters used the theory of archetypes to explain what was happening in the psyche of the world. Over time, it has become rather tiring to me to see in our tradition how most collective events

are reduced to or interpreted as some appearance of the Shadow or the Self or the Hero or the Feminine. The mention of archetypal patterns in collective life has begun to sound to me as if we can't stop building our own theoretical Walmarts on the outskirts of increasingly homogenized urban and rural landscapes. As with globalization itself, the Jungian vocabulary for describing the world has become less and less meaningful as the particularity of place, landscape, history, economics, ethnicity, and every other distinguishing cultural characteristic gets ignored or glossed over in our universalizing, archetypal constructs.

This book reverses that trend by taking into account those levels of the psyche that Jung himself had outlined in a 1926 diagram of the psyche in which he displayed an almost geological/evolutionary vision of the psyche. At the very top of the diagram was the tiny ego, embedded in the family. In successive layers of the psyche as it plunged underwater, Jung indicated ever deepening realms in the following order: clans, nations, large groups (European man for example), primate ancestors, animal ancestors in general, and, at the very bottom of the human psyche lay the "central fire."

The vast middle range of the psyche which included everything between clans and large groups that Jung himself diagrammed in 1926 was mostly ignored by those next generations of Jungians who followed in his footsteps. Their emphasis has been on the individual above and/or the archetypal realm in the lower depths which presumably emanate out of the "central fire." I believe it is fair to say that the Jungians have mostly veiled themselves from taking into full consideration the reality and importance of the social, political, and cultural dimensions of the psyche as it resides in individuals, clans, tribes, nations, and the world.

This book is not only making an effort to unveil the world of Arab Muslims to the Western world, it is participating in the unveiling of Jungians and the Jungian point of view to a much broader way of

understanding the psyche of individuals and groups. It takes into account the vicissitudes of place, history, culture, and all those forces that shape the psyche of the collective and the individual.

If Jung was right that the human race hangs by the thin thread of the human psyche, exploring and understanding the cultural or social level of the psyche in all its complexities and differences is an essential undertaking in making that thread a little stronger. Our misadventures in the Middle East bare ample evidence to how costly it can be when we fail to understand how different Americans and other westerners are from much of the world. This book takes a big step in the direction of exploring and understanding these essential levels of the human psyche and I salute Jane Kamerling and Fred Gustafson for their effort at “lifting the veil.”

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TIMELINE OF HISTORICAL EVENTS

Early Second Millennium B.C.E.	Abraham, the father of the prophetic religions God gives the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai.
Essenes	Time of the Dead Sea Scrolls.
1000 B.C.E.	Jews led out of slavery to the Promised Land.
1500 B.C.E.	God gives law on Mt. Sinai.
500 B.C.E.	Writing of the Torah (Old testament).
586 B.C.E.	Promised Land conquered. Regained fifty years later (Greek Influence).
1000 B.C.E.	Conquered Promise Land (King David).
3rd Century B.C.E.	Jewish interpretive process - solidifying bible. Birth of Christ
70 C.E.	Destruction of second temple. Conquered by the Romans.
Late 1st Century	Gospels written by John and Paul.
234-634 C.E.	Sasanian Empire (Iran).
330 C.E.	Center of Catholicism transferred from Constantinople to Rome.
570 C.E.	Birth of Muhammad.
7th Century	Byzantine (Christian) and Persian (Zoroastrianism) Empires dominate the world.
610 C.E.	First revelation from Allah.
622 C.E.	Hijra-migration from Mecca to Medina - beginning of Islamic calendar.
632 C.E.	Muhammad's death. Caliphs (successors): first four called the <i>Rashidun</i> (rightly guarded).
632-634 C.E.	Abu Bakr
634-644 C.E.	Umar
644-656 C.E.	Uthman - murdered.
656-661 C.E.	Ali- murdered- prophets cousin, blood - relative beginning of split in Islam <i>Shi's</i> and <i>Sunnis</i> .
661-680 C.E.	Umayyad dynasty moved <i>Caliphate</i> to Damascus - 5th <i>Caliph</i> .

680 C.E.	Islam conquered North Africa (Tunasia, Algeria, Morocco to the Atlantic Ocean).
685 C.E.	Islamic borders widen to China.
713-1031 C.E.	Berbers conquered Spain beginning the Andalusian Empire.
750-1258 C.E.	Abbasids defeated Umayyads and re-established <i>Caliphate</i> in Baghdad.
846 C.E.	Islam sacked Rome.
8th Century	Islam conquered Spain, Portugal and invaded France.
9th Century	Islam conquered Sicily.
1000 C.E.	Conquered kingdom of Saba (pre-Islamic Yemen).
1096-1099 C.E.	1st Crusade - capture of Jerusalem.
1146-1148 C.E.	2nd Crusade - siege of Damascus fails.
1189-1192 C.E.	3rd Crusade - capture of Acre but fail to recapture Jerusalem.
1201-1204 C.E.	4th Crusade - conquer Constantinople.
1217-1221 C.E.	5th Crusade - attacked Egypt.
1057 C.E.	Fatimids conquer Egypt.
1187 C.E.	Salahadin victorious over Crusaders, Thirteenth Century - Muslims rule Russia, Vienna, Hungary and Eastern Europe.
13th Century	Gangis Khan conquered the Abbasids, expanded to Anatolia and the Mongols ruled until 1380.
15th Century	Russia expels Muslims.
1453 C.E.	End of WW 1 – Ottoman Empire.
1500-1722 C.E.	Safavid Dynasty (Persia).
1526-1738 C.E.	Mughal Dynasty (India).
1948 C.E.	Establishment of the State of Israel.
1979 C.E.	Islamic revolution in Iran.
1992 C.E.	First Iraq War.
2001 C.E.	Attack on the two World Trade Towers in New York (9-11).
2003 C.E.	Second Iraq War.

INTRODUCTION

Not Christian, or Jew or Muslim, Not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi, or Zen.

Not any religion

Or cultural system. I am not from the east or the west,

Not out of the ocean or up

From the ground, not natural or ethereal, not

Composed of elements at all.

I do not exist.

Am not an entity in this world. Or the next,

Did not descend from Adam and Eve or any

Origin story. My place is the placeless, a trace

Of the traceless.

Neither body nor soul.

I belong to the beloved, have seen the two worlds as one

And that one can call to and know.

First, last, outer, inner,

Only that breath breathing Human Being.

Rumi

The devastation and shock of 9/11 reached every community in America. It raised questions never before considered. Inspired by that event, research became critical to organize our thinking and make sense out of nonsense and organization out of chaos. Political literature addressing the dynamics leading up to the catastrophe of the collapse of the Twin Towers has been prolific as the urgency to understand the Islamic world has increased. International relations theory offers a variety of concepts of why and how nations may respond to one another for expansion, defense, or peace. These theories develop with objective quantifiable equations and leave no

room for immeasurable, subjective variables. Perception is one of those variables that cannot be left out of the equation when looking at what motivates nations and international diplomacy. As Jungian analysts, we wanted to contribute to this body of knowledge by analyzing an underlying psychological dynamic that fuels the conflict between the West and the Islamic world. To that end, we have distilled information from a variety of readings, interviews, documentaries and personal experiences in the Islamic world. This book attempts to bring some awareness to the unconscious and underlying dynamics that are reflected in the history and present day conflicts between the Islamic and Western worlds.

We argue that this tension and conflict are primarily derived from the repression of the feminine principle, thus relegating it to the cultural unconscious of the nations involved. According to Jung, the feminine principle is the knowledge that presides in the unconscious mind, the part of us that is unknown. In other words, both the Western and Islamic worlds have been dominated by a masculine oriented way of life. The feminine principle has then lived in the shadows of both cultures and has not easily been expressed for its own sake and, thus kept unconscious in both personal and collective psychology. We attempt, then, to integrate the personal and collective unconscious into consciousness with the hope of bringing our worlds a little closer through understanding. We can easily access the masculine part that is known to us but our actions often occur without the understanding of the psychology of the unconscious, the feminine aspect, that motivate that action. From a psychological perspective, *Lifting the Veil* calls for the emergence of the unknown aspects contained in the unconscious. Throughout this book, the veil is used as a symbol for what is hidden, what we do not know and urgently need to know.

The veil has emerged in the twenty-first century as an international symbol that holds a variety of meanings. The veil can be understood as merely the customary dress of Middle Eastern women,

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a religious expression, or a political statement. For some women donning the veil represents male dominance enforced by the threat of beatings or death, for others the veil signifies self-determination and independence in reaction to the threat of Western ideology impacting Islamic culture. The veil powerfully holds the polarity of attitudes and beliefs and invites the projections of the psychological complexes in both Western and Islamic societies. These negative shadow projections fuel external and internal conflict between and within each culture. The veil is not just a female garment to hide, protect, or humble Muslim women, but the curtain behind which resides the feminine principle, repressed in both East and West. Beneath the veil resides the unconsciousness of both cultures that become manifested in the politics of today.

To lift the veil of ignorance, it is necessary to understand both the Islamic and Western world views. Many Americans know virtually nothing about the history of the cultures, religions, and nations of the Islamic world. History classes in the United States are focused on American and European history and how Europe discovered, influenced, conflicted, and shaped American culture. The knowledge gaps, however, are wide about cultures other than European. Within that specific framework, everything the West knows about the world and its history tends to be viewed through a Western lens, influenced and molded within Christian ideology. All else is viewed as foreign and risks the possibility of being misunderstood since it seems different and is evaluated within our worldview.

The impact of 9/11 awakened our culture and brought a new awareness of our vulnerability. This event has challenged our perspective of ourselves, our culture, and our country, within the context of world conflict. The Western response to the tragic collapse of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was filled with fear and revenge as our sense of safety and security dissolved. How do we see ourselves in response to 9/11? The American dream is the acquisition of material goods, the ideals of democracy, personal

freedom, and technological achievement. We see ourselves as advent protectors of freedom heroically spreading freedom throughout the world. The image of freedom for all as well as liberating victims from tyrants and oppressors is contained in the one-sided view of the American cultural complex. The attack of 9/11 was an assault upon our fathers and their authority. The American culture was deeply traumatized, requiring defenses from deep within the cultural psyche to protect our profound wound. Most American knew little of Al Qaeda or why we were assaulted. We never asked about our contribution to the conflict but instead with the label of enemy, projected our own evil, primitive, and inferior aspects onto Al Qaeda. We identified with one side of the archetype, splitting off the negative side and attaching it to “them.”

However, the Islamic culture, too, feels defeated and threatened after years of war between tribes and countries, Western colonialization and exploitation and the reality of globalization that threatens the stability of traditional Islamic society. Islamist figures have arisen as the archetypal defense of the collective wounded spirit.¹ Imaged by Osama Bin Laden, the *Mujahideen*, Khomeini, Arafat as well as the multitude of terrorist organizations, the characteristics of avenger and restorer become incarnated. The cultural memory of the lost *Caliphate*, world dominance and superior Islamic civilizations keep the longing to recreate the glory of a past time that compensates for the powerlessness felt today. The West becomes engaged as the rival defender of justice, freedom for all and God. Islamists protect the continuity and survival of Islam. The dynamics of cultural complexes are unleashed creating violence and destruction. All this hides behind the veil of righteousness and absolute truth.

1 Thomas Singer, “Cultural Complex and Archetypal Defenses of the Group Spirit: Baby Zeus, Elian Gonzales, Constantine’s Sword, and Other Holy Wars.” *The San Francisco Jung Institute Library Journal: Culture & Psyche*, Vol. 20 (2002), pp. 5-28.

Introduction

Without a historical reference, the Islamic world is perceived through these kinds of Western projections, with little understanding of origin or direction. The unknown Islamic world is characterized, then, as a one dimensional black and white, right or wrong society, and judged within the limited scope of what is known to us and what we value. For this reason, we begin this book with an overview of Islamic history, trying to familiarize ourselves with some of the possible perceptions of the Islamic world which are shaped by their past. Jung offers a unique and helpful way to think about this conflict.

History provides the cultural conditioning which forms individual and cultural identity. In Jung's psychology, anything that threatens or conflicts with that ego position, whether it is the ego identity of an individual or a nation is called the shadow. The content of the shadow is mostly unknown and includes all the ideas and concepts that seem foreign and threatening to the ego or its identity. When the ego is threatened by the contents of the shadow, this content is projected outside of oneself onto another. The object of the projection is known as "the other." "The other" becomes a magnet for uncomfortable shadow projections casting all the negative darkness onto an unknown foreign person, place, or culture. Having a historical knowledge reduces the possibility of projecting shadow. History reveals common themes across cultures, emphasizing humanity's similarities.

Knowledge of history unfolds patterns as well as context. The conflict between the Christian and Islamic worlds, for example, did not start with 9/11 but are evident as far back as the Crusades. Although history is not stagnant but continuously moves forward, it also has a circular and repetitive motion—commonly referred to as "history repeating itself." All of history, all cultures, societies, and individuals have influenced each other over time and have borrowed from one another, exchanging ideas, technology, and genes. Therefore, the whole of humankind is all interrelated historically, not

confined to its own time or place while constantly changing, interacting, destroying and creating.

Generally speaking, patterns in religion have swung widely throughout history between the strict and literal interpretation of Scriptures to these same Scriptures capable of flexible dialogue and observance. Political values have moved from individual freedom to authoritarian regimes and back again. Societies all over of the earth have dominated the world stage for periods of time, being the forerunners of change and/or the oppressors through conquest. Concepts such as humanitarianism and tolerance have flourished or been repressed over the centuries. Cultures, which have lived interdependently with a focus on human welfare and education, may regress to societies where isolation, prejudice, and militancy are the prevailing beliefs.

Although these ideas appear conflicting, according to Jung, they are really opposite sides of a polarity that represent the “whole.” In other words, each side of cultural conflicting opposites both project shadow and are the recipients of shadow projections. Yet, these shadow projections, though dangerously exaggerated in content, carry elements of truth. The difficult task is to extract that truth which each projection carries. To whatever extent this is possible, the paradigm of innocence/guilt, victim/perpetrator dissolves. Individual human beings and cultural collectivities, according to this model, must strive for wholeness. For wholeness to exist, the shadow must be integrated into consciousness or ego. Therefore, at any given time or place within the framework of one side of the polarity, other alternative manifestations automatically exist that will compensate for the current view. Again, for example, if a person or culture leans too far to the masculine view of life, the feminine will have a compensatory demand to be accepted into the conscious worldview. Acceptance of both establishes a sense of wholeness. The integrated totality, which is a third non-polarized possibility, fills out the circle towards wholeness. The end result is neither a domination of one

nor the other polarity but the union of both. The world, a nation, a culture, a society or an individual all contain conflicting parts, conscious or not, longing for integration against the forces of separation.

Each individual, then, represents a microcosm of opposing views and feelings that can be experienced as both positive and negative. To the Western worldview, the Islamic world frequently feels foreign and in opposition to a Western lifestyle. This Western shadow is projected onto the unknown “other,” the Islamic world, which then accommodates us by relieving us of our responsibility for integrating that part of ourselves.

Our work as individuals, societies, and members of a world of humanity is to become more conscious. To that end, we need to understand ourselves psychologically both personally and within the context of our culture. We need to integrate the foreign parts that have been split off and demonized in the “other.” This book hopes to direct our attention towards gaining that awareness. First, as mentioned above, we will try to give a concise overview of history that is relevant to the issues of today. Included is the making and falling of nations, the development of Islam and the economic influence as the world interconnects through the pressure of globalization. We introduce a psychological framework, described by Carl Jung, in which to view the individual within the world and then expand that paradigm by explaining the psychology of collective groups and societies. Using symbols that are bigger than life and that hold collective psychologies, we try to illustrate the dynamics presently being played out between the East and West. The book dances between archetypal images that express our common emotional views and experiences, on the one hand, and the facts that surround and feed the archetypal manifestations on the other.

We conclude with the image of Sheherazade, the hero, the image of wholeness and redemption of the feminine, who, single-handedly,

Lifting the Veil

lifts the veil to consciousness thus reintegrating all the lost parts. To integrate all the parts does not necessarily mean to transcend or evolve to a higher being or society. It is unknown how the world would look if all individuals or societies would take back shadow projections and tolerate differences. It may only mean that some individuals might expand knowledge of themselves by exposure and reaction to that otherness. To that end, this book is a journey of lifting the veil to what threatens our psyche and explore what is hidden.

GLOSSARY

abaya - A black coat with arm slits that falls from the top of the head to the ankles. Persian Gulf countries.

Allah - God

Andarun - The women's quarters.

Ayatollah - The reflection of God.

Burca/Burka/Burqa - A face mask made of leather or stiff fabric covers entire face except eyes. Seen in Gulf countries.

Caliph - A successor to the prophet Muhammad. Literally, one who comes after.

Caliphate - The institution of Islamic government.

Chador - A square of fabric that falls from the top of the head to the ankles, held closed under the chin. Iran and Lebanon.

Fatwa - A legal opinion of decision on religious law.

Fatiha - The opening prayer said 5 times a day.

Hadith - A saying of the Prophet Muhammad or a saying about him by his contemporaries.

Hajj - A pilgrimage to Mecca required of all Muslims once in a lifetime.

Hijab - Literally means curtain. Dress that follows Islamic principles.

Harem - It means forbidden, where women reside.

Hijrah - The journey from Mecca to Medina – July 16, 622.

Imam - The leader of community prayers.

Islam - It literally means submission.

Islamic Salvation Front - A Muslim liberation organization – Algeria.

- Ijtihad** - The independent reasoning used by a jurist to apply *Sharia* to contemporary circumstances.
- Jahiliyya** - The age of ignorance—used for pre-Islamic period and today to describe societies not Islamic.
- Jalabiyya** - A neck to ankle coat worn by women; a loose fitting robe worn by men.
- Jihad** - The holy effort of struggle; war to defend Islam.
- Ka'ba** - A structure built by Adam, rebuilt by Abraham with Ishmael—the most sacred mosque in Mecca.
- Koran** - (also spelled *Qur'an*) It literally means to recite. The holy book of Gods message to Muhammad—written 650 A.D.
- Madrassa** - An Islamic school.
- Meuzzin** - One who sings the call to prayer.
- Mujahedin** - Muslim fighters in Afghanistan.
- Mullah** - A clergyman—religious leader.
- Muslim** - It literally means “one who submits.”
- Niquab** - A veil that completely covers the face.
- Purdah** - A screen or curtain used to keep women separate from men or strangers thus keeping women in seclusion.
- Rashidun** - The four “rightly guided” caliphs, successors of Muhammad: Abu Bakr, Umar ibn Al-Khattab, Uthman ibn Affan and Ali ibn Abi Talib.
- Roosarre** - A head scarf—Iran.
- Salwar-kameez** - A tunic worn over pants—India, Pakistan.
- Sharia** - It literally means “road to the water” referencing Islamic law.
- Shehada** - The first pillar of Islamic religion.
- Shiite** - A group developed in seventh century over a controversial split of who should be *Caliph*. The *Shi* are followers of Ali ibn Abu Taleb, Muhammad’s cousin and

son-in-law (husband to Fatima, the prophet's daughter), believing he was the legitimate successor of Muhammad because he was a descendant of the prophet. They are the majority in Iran, Iraq, Dubai and Bahrain; otherwise, they are the minority in other Muslim countries.

Sunnah - The traditions of the prophet—his behaviors, approved of behaviors, and actions done in his presence without disapproval.

Sunni - It literally means one who follows Muhammad's tradition or orthodox Muslim.

Sura/Surah/Surat - A division in the *Koran*. It can be approximately referred to as a paragraph or chapter, although these terms are sometimes avoided, as the suras are of unequal length.

Taloq - It means divorce. A husband announces he wants a divorce three times and the divorce is done.

Ulema - Religious scholars who interpret Islamic law.

Ummah - The Muslim community worldwide.

Wahabism - A puritanical, ultraconservative movement founded in 1740s in Saudi Arabia by Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab. Women are denied many rights because of strict interpretation of *Koran* and *Hadith*.

Zakkat - Charity, a requirement of the 5th pillar.

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The veil is not just a female garment to hide, protect, or humble Muslim women, but the curtain behind which resides the *feminine principle*, repressed in both East and West. Beneath the veil resides the unconsciousness of both cultures that become manifested in the politics of today.

The veil has emerged in the twenty-first century as an international symbol that holds a variety of meanings. The veil can be understood as merely the customary dress of Middle Eastern women, a religious expression, or a political statement. For some women donning the veil represents male dominance. For others the veil signifies self-determination and independence in reaction to the threat of Western ideology. The veil powerfully holds the polarity of attitudes and beliefs and invites the projections of psychological complexes in both Western and Islamic societies, fueling conflict between and within each culture.

To lift the veil of ignorance, it is necessary to understand both the Islamic and Western world views. Many Westerners know little about the history of the cultures, religions, and nations of the Islamic world. History classes in the U.S. are focused on American and European history and how Europe discovered, influenced, conflicted, and shaped American culture. Within that specific framework, everything the West knows about the world and its history tends to be viewed through a Western lens, influenced and molded within Christian ideology. All else is viewed as foreign and risks the possibility of being misunderstood since it seems different and is evaluated within our limited worldview.

From a historical and psychological perspective, *Lifting the Veil* explores and expands our knowledge of Islam, and the repressed *feminine principle* within both Eastern and Western cultures.



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