Reading Goethe at Midlife: Ancient Wisdom, German Classicism, and Jung


Full text not currently available from Enlighten.

Publisher's URL: http://www.springjournalandbooks.com/cgi-bin/ecommerce/ac/agora.cgi?p_id=03259&xm=on&ppinc=search2

Abstract

This book explores the history of the idea of the midlife crisis, using the writings of C.G. Jung and Goethe to investigate its relevance for today. Tracing how the "age of humankind" became "the stages of life," in which the midlife crisis represents a pivotal moment, Paul Bishop offers a detailed analysis of a paper by Jung on this subject. He then shifts the focus to Goethe's interest in Orphic wisdom, and one of Goethe's major later poems, "Primal Words. Orphic" (Urworte. Orphisch). Using Jungian ideas to explore the psychological implications of this poem, Bishop draws on Goethe's own commentary, and other background material, to uncover its vital message. Reading Goethe at Midlife reveals the remarkable symmetry between the ideas of Jung and Goethe. Jung's analysis of the stages of life, and his advice to heed the "call of the self," are brought into conjunction with Goethe's emphasis on the importance of hope, showing an underlying continuity of thought and relevant from ancient wisdom, via German classicism, to analytical psychology. Praise for Reading Goethe at Midlife At a time when many Jungians are turning to neuroscience to provide an external underpinning for Analytical Psychology, this scholarly book is very welcome: it returns to psychology's home territory, placing Jung firmly in a long cultural tradition. Impressively well-read in many fields extending from literature and the history of ideas to psychoanalysis and Jungian studies, Paul Bishop allows a text by Jung and a late poem by Goethe to mirror and enhance each other, demonstrating Jung's intellectual proximity to the tradition of German classicism. The wealth of "amplifications" that Bishop brings to the many themes treated allows us to experience a living reality - a continuity of ideas across different times and cultures. Wolfgang Giegerich, author of The Soul's Logical Life.
The Quotable Jung is an extremely useful volume for anyone coming to Jung for the first time."—Paul Bishop, author of Reading Goethe at Midlife: Ancient Wisdom, German Classicism, and Jung. "Brings all of Jung's ideas together in brilliant form. . . . [The Quotable Jung] plucks out Jung's best moments of clarity and organizes them in a way that makes Jung accessible to the uninitiated. . . . Unlike most compendiums, the selected quotes build on one another, providing a logical succession of ideas. One could read the book from cover to cover and acquire an advanced understan