

## Polanyi Society Zoom Sessions

### “The Intersection of Michael Polanyi and Carl Jung “

Collin D. Barnes

April 23, 2022

Below are materials prepared for the Zoom session of April 23, 2022, as well as a recording of the session. The recording is approximately 1 1/4 hours long. Posted materials are for non-commercial use of scholars and students.

This Zoom discussion on the topic “The Intersection of Michael Polanyi and Carl Jung” was led by Collin Barnes, a psychology professor from Hillsdale College. A pre-publication copy of Barnes’ essay “Michael Polanyi’s Personal Knowledge as a Work of Alchemy in the Jungian Sense” was sent to those who registered. Requests for a copy of this pre-publication document should be sent to Collin Barnes ([cbarnes@hillsdale.edu](mailto:cbarnes@hillsdale.edu)).

You will find below at the bottom of the page a link for a recording of the session that is on the Zoom Cloud as well another link for as the same recording on the Polanyi Society website. The equipment on the Zoom Cloud recording is likely somewhat more sophisticated (e.g., the “fast forward” is easier to operate) than on your local machine which the recording on the Polanyi Society website will use. But the link for the Zoom Cloud recording will quit working at the point the Polanyi Society rental agreement ends. The link on the Polanyi Society website should, however, continue to operate using your local player.

Immediately below (i.e., preceding the links for the recordings) is the original posting with information about this Zoom session. It includes the Abstract of Barnes’ essay which was sent to registrants.

**Polanyi Society Zoom Presentation/Discussion  
April 23, 2022 11 a.m. Central Standard Time**

**The Intersection of Michael Polanyi and Carl Jung  
Collin Barnes**

This Zoom session will be led by Collin Barnes, a Hillsdale College social psychologist, who has written about Polanyi’s bearing on contemporary psychology and other issues in *Tradition & Discovery* ( Barnes, [2018](#), [2019](#), and [2022](#)). In recent years, Collin has pursued not only his interest in Polanyi’s ideas but his interest in the ideas of Carl Jung. This Zoom session does not purport to be the final word about how to put together the frameworks of Polanyi and Jung. It is, instead, an inquiry about places in which there seems to be possible complementarity. Those who register for this Zoom session will be e-mailed a pre-publication copy of Barnes’ article in a 2022 issue of *International Journal of Jungian Studies*, An abstract for this essay is below. This

essay will be used as a starting point for discussion. To register for this Zoom session, please send an e-mail to both Gus Breytspraak ([gus.breytspraak@ottawa.edu](mailto:gus.breytspraak@ottawa.edu)) and Phil Mullins ([mullins@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:mullins@missouriwestern.edu)).

### **Michael Polanyi's Personal Knowledge as a Work of Alchemy in the Jungian Sense**

*Collin D. Barnes*

**Abstract:** A climactic moment appears in Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge* when he describes the modern predicament of humanity as a second ejection from paradise triggered by the uneasy discovery that our knowledge cannot be justified objectively. Polanyi's philosophy is a response to the cataclysmic consequences of this second fall from grace. It seeks to establish a "balance of mind" grounded in the recognition that belief is necessary but it can be legitimated neither by objectivism nor is it properly regarded as a matter of arbitrary choice. Such themes are reminiscent of Jungian psychology and the process of individuation, yet there is no evidence that Polanyi appreciated this. That Polanyi nevertheless employs metaphors and addresses the growth of ideas suggests a connection to Jung's interest in the psychical transformations recorded by alchemists. It raises the possibility that while his work is evidently concerned with epistemology, it is, at another level, a highly sophisticated depiction of psychological growth—both for Polanyi, and for anyone who accepts his invitation to join the opus.

[April 23, 2022 Recording on the Zoom Cloud](#)

[April 23, 2022 Recording on the Polanyi Society website](#)