

PREFACE

In our age we bear witness to the large-scale attempt made by the natural sciences to obtain an image of the unity underlying the cosmic structure: elementary particles synthesizing into atoms and molecules until they combine into ever more complex entities. As the ultimate consequence of these experiments, the manifestation of Spirit in the evolutionary process is expected to consecrate this unitarian world view.

True to its mission *Eranos* felt that the time had come to undertake a comprehensive review of the variety of attempts made to obtain a cosmic perspective. We therefore ventured into a multidisciplinary investigation concerning the plenitude of world images and the continuing mystery of cosmic oneness.

Irrespective of whether four elements are considered to be the basis for the manifest world, or whether the mind seeks to understand manifoldness in terms of the Yin-Yang dualism, or as the opposites of a female and male principle, the universe continuously finds new forms of expression in these testimonies to spiritual life. The world of the Sacred, music, and works of poetry represent the combined efforts of conceptual and intuitive imagination, with religious ideas and scientific thinking interacting in a great variety of ways. We hope that the 1975 Eranos Conference gives an adequate picture of the richness of human tradition.

1975 marks the centennial of C. G. Jung's birth date. We therefore welcome that Aniela Jaffé paid tribute to the man, who spoke

at fourteen of our Conferences between 1933 and 1951. Many of his leading ideas were first given shape at Eranos. Adolf Portmann's lecture "Das Lebendige in den Spiegeln der Naturforschung", which appeared on the programme, had to be cancelled. Since 1946, i.e., in 30 years, this was the first time that the biologist did not make his contribution to the Conference, which he was unable to attend for reasons of ill health.

Basel and Ascona, July 1977

Adolf Portmann
Rudolf Ritsema