



# **The Black Sun: The Alchemy and Art of Darkness (Carolyn and Ernest Fay Series in Analytical Psychology)**

*Stanton Marlan*

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The black sun, an ages-old image of the darkness in individual lives and in life itself, has not been treated hospitably in the modern world. Modern psychology has seen darkness primarily as a negative force, something to move through and beyond, but it actually has an intrinsic importance to the human psyche. In this book, Jungian analyst Stanton Marlan reexamines the paradoxical image of the black sun and the meaning of darkness in Western culture.

In the image of the black sun, Marlan finds the hint of a darkness that shines. He draws upon his clinical experiences—and on a wide range of literature and art, including Goethe's *Faust*, Dante's *Inferno*, the black art of Rothko and Reinhardt—to explore the influence of light and shadow on the fundamental structures of modern thought as well as the contemporary practice of analysis. He shows that the black sun accompanies not only the most negative of psychic experiences but also the most sublime, resonating with the mystical experience of negative theology, the Kabbalah, the Buddhist notions of the void, and the black light of the Sufi Mystics.

An important contribution to the understanding of alchemical psychology, this book draws on a postmodern sensibility to develop an original understanding of the black sun. It offers insight into modernity, the act of imagination, and the work of analysis in understanding depression, trauma, and transformation of the soul. Marlan's original reflections help us to explore the unknown darkness conventionally called the Self.

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