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# An Introduction to Jung's Psychology: Archetypes

Contributed by Frieda Fordham

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Chapter 3: Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious

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The development of an attitude, either extraverted or introverted, and a function, is part of the process of living, of adapting ourselves to our world and making our mark in it. Unless there is some strong interference, we develop along the lines that are easiest to us, but we also like to 'put our best foot foremost'. This means that we usually develop our best function, be it thinking or intuition, feeling or sensation, and at the same time have a strong tendency to conform to what is expected of us, to respond to education and social pressure, to behave in an accepted way. In this process much that rightly belongs to the personality is lost, or rather it is not lost but has simply been pushed away into unconsciousness; in psychological terms it has been repressed. Small children left to behave naturally are often lustful, acquisitive, and aggressive, and show all the tendencies that the adult is supposed to have grown or been educated out of. But the mistake of most educators, parents, teachers, and others, is to believe that they have really changed the nature of the children in their care, while all that has happened is that the disagreeable or inferior tendencies have been pushed into the background and forgotten, yet live on in the adult. This forgetting is often so successful that we come to believe that we are exactly as we appear to be, sometimes with disastrous results. repressed tendencies belong to what Jung calls the personal unconscious, and far from withering away, as one might hope, they seem to be like neglected weeds that flourish in any forgotten corner of the garden.

The process of civilizing the human being leads to a compromise between himself and society as to what he should appear to be, and to the formation of the mask behind which most people live. Jung calls this mask the persona, the name given to the masks once worn by the actors of antiquity to signify the role they played. But it is not only actors who fill a role; a man who takes up a business or a profession, a woman who marries or chooses a career, all adopt to some extent the characteristics expected of them in their chosen position; it is necessary to do so in order to succeed. A business man will try to appear (and even to be) forceful and energetic, a professional man intelligent, a civil servant correct; a professional woman nowadays needs not only to appear intelligent but also well dressed, and a wife is required to be a hostess, a mother, a partner, or whatever her husband's position demands.

Society expects, and indeed must expect, every individual to play the part assigned to him as perfectly as possible, so that a man who is a parson ... must at all times ... play the role of parson in a flawless manner. Society demands this as a kind of surety: each must stand at his post, here a cobbler, there a poet. No man is expected to be both ... that would be 'odd'. Such a man would be 'different' from other people, not quite reliable. In the academic world he would be a dilettante, in politics an 'unpredictable' quantity, in religion a free-thinker - in short, he would always be suspected of unreliability and incompetence, because society is persuaded that only the cobbler who is not a poet can supply workmanlike shoes.<sup>(1)</sup>The persona is a collective phenomenon, a facet of the personality that might equally well belong to somebody else, but it is often mistaken for individuality. The actor or artist with long hair and casual clothes is looked on as someone unique - a personality - while often in fact he has simply adopted the dress and habits of all the other artists of his group. The friendliness and hospitality of Mrs. So-and-So the vicar's wife, seem to spring from her boundless good nature, but in reality she adopted these ways when she married her husband believing that 'a vicar's wife should be the friend of all who need her'. To some extent, it is true, people choose the roles for which they feel best fitted, and to this degree the persona is individual, but it is never the whole man or woman. Human nature is not consistent, yet in filling a role it must appear so, and is therefore inevitably falsified.

1. Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, par. 305. The persona, however, is a necessity; through it we relate to our world. It simplifies our contacts by indicating what we may expect from other people, and on the whole makes them pleasanter, as good clothes improve ugly bodies.

People who neglect the development of a persona tend to be gauche, to offend others, and to have difficulty in establishing themselves in the world. There is always the danger, however, of identifying oneself with the role one fills, a danger that is not obvious when the role is a good one and fits the person well. Yet we often say with some concern 'he plays a part' or 'she is not really like that at all', for we are at least partly aware of the danger of living in a way that is not true to our real natures. Perhaps some crisis will occur which calls for flexibility or a completely new way of reacting, or a human situation may be reached where the lack of a genuinely individual emotional response spells tragedy. Elizabeth Bowen describes such a situation in *The Death of the Heart*, where the adults in the story are so locked in their conventional roles that they fail completely to understand the needs of a sensitive adolescent girl. Another danger is that too rigid a persona means too complete a denial of the rest of the personality, and all those aspects which have been relegated to the personal or belong to the collective unconscious.

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Jung calls that other side of ourselves, which is to be found in the personal unconscious, the shadow. The shadow is the inferior being in ourselves, the one who wants to do all the things that we do not allow ourselves to do, who is everything that we are not, the Mr Hyde to our Dr Jekyll. We have an inkling of this foreign personality when, after being possessed by an emotion or overcome with rage, we excuse ourselves by saying, 'I was not myself', or 'I really don't know what came over me'. What 'came over' was in fact the shadow, the primitive, uncontrolled, and animal part of ourselves. The shadow also personifies itself: when we particularly dislike someone, especially if it is an unreasonable dislike, we should suspect that we are actually disliking a quality of our own which we find in the other person.

I do not love thee, Dr Fell.  
The reason why I cannot tell.  
But this alone I know full well,

I do not love thee, Dr Fell. The shadow appears in dreams, personified as an inferior or very primitive person, someone with unpleasant qualities or someone we dislike.

The shadow is the personal unconscious; it is all those uncivilized desires and emotions that are incompatible with social standards and our ideal personality, all that we are ashamed of, all that we do not want to know about ourselves. It follows that the narrower and more restrictive the society in which we live the larger will be our shadow.

The shadow, since it is unconscious, cannot be touched by ordinary methods of education; it has remained much the same since infancy, when our actions were purely impulsive. It has probably remained much the same since man first walked the earth, for the shadow is the natural, i.e. the instinctive man.

The shadow is also something more than the personal unconscious - it is personal in so far as our own weaknesses and failings are concerned, but since it is common to humanity it can also be said to be a collective phenomenon. The collective aspect of the shadow is expressed as a devil, a witch, or something similar.

In choosing the word shadow to describe these aspects of the unconscious, Jung has more in mind than merely to suggest something dark and vague in outline. There is, as he points out, no shadow without the sun, and no shadow (in the sense of the personal unconscious) without the light of consciousness. It is in fact in the nature of things that there should be light and dark, sun and shade. The shadow is unavoidable and man is incomplete without it. Superstition holds that the man without a shadow (using the word in its ordinary sense) is the devil himself, while we ourselves are cautious with someone who seems 'too good to be true', as if we recognized instinctively that human nature needs the leaven of a little wickedness.

Jung, as a physician to whom people come in distress, has found it as useless to deny the shadow as to try to repress it completely. Man has, in his view, to find some way of living with his dark side; in fact his mental and physical health often depend on this. To accept the shadow involves considerable moral effort and often the giving up of cherished ideals, but only because the ideals were raised too high or based upon an trying to live as better and nobler people than we are involves us in endless hypocrisy and deceit, and imposes such a strain on us that we often collapse and become worse than we need have been. The irritability and lack of tolerance of the over-virtuous are well known; the sexual life of the very respectable citizen is sometimes startling, as the daily papers show, and crime appears in most unexpected quarters; these are all manifestations of the shadow. It certainly takes moral courage to realize that these aspects of human nature may be, and probably are, lurking within ourselves, but there is comfort in the fact that once a thing is faced and known, there is at least some possibility of changing it, whereas in the unconscious nothing changes. A man who is unconsciously hating his wife so much that he wants to kill her, may actually do so in a fit of rage - such situations are not unknown; but if he had previously recognized his violent feelings he would have had the opportunity either to wrestle with them or to try to change the situation which provoked them.

While some repression is a necessity of social life, the danger of repressing the shadow is that in the unconscious it seems to acquire strength and grow in vigour, so that when the moment comes (as usually happens) when it must appear, it is more dangerous and more likely to overwhelm the rest of the personality, which otherwise could have acted as a wholesome check. This is particularly true of those collective aspects of the shadow which are displayed when a mob riots and apparently harmless people behave in the most appallingly savage and destructive manner.

'The shadow', says Jung, 'is a moral problem which challenges the whole ego personality'; it is moreover a social problem of immense importance which should not be underestimated.. No one is able to realize the shadow without

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considerable moral resolution, and some reorientation of his standards and ideas. Jung hints that no redemption is possible without tolerance and love - attitudes that have proved fruitful in dealing with the social renegade, but that we do not usually think of applying in any constructive way to ourselves.

Having to some extent described the realm of the shadow we can now pass deeper into the unconscious - in fact into the collective unconscious - but before going farther it is necessary to make a distinction between men on the one hand and women on the other. So far the term 'man' has been used for convenience in describing both man and woman, for each sex has equally a persona and a shadow, the only difference being that a man's shadow is personified by another man, a woman's shadow by another woman. It has already been said that the unconscious complements the conscious standpoint; to carry this farther, the unconscious of a man contains a complementary feminine element, that of a woman a male element. These Jung calls respectively the anima and the animus. It may seem paradoxical to suggest man is not wholly man nor woman wholly woman, yet it is a fairly common experience to find feminine and masculine traits in one person. The most masculine of men will often show surprising gentleness with children, or with anyone weak or ill; strong men give way to uncontrolled emotion in private, and can be both sentimental and irrational; brave men are sometimes terrified by quite harmless situations, and some men have surprising intuition or a gift for sensing other people's feelings. All these are supposedly feminine traits, as well as more obvious 'effeminacy' in a man. This latent femininity in a man is, however, only one aspect of his feminine soul, his anima. 'An inherited collective image of woman exists in a man's unconscious,' says Jung, 'with the help of which he apprehends the nature of woman.'<sup>(1)</sup>

1. Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, par. 301 But it is only woman as a general phenomenon that man apprehends in this way, for the image is an archetype, a representation of the age-old experience of man with woman, and though many women will conform, at least outwardly, to this image, it in no way represents the real character of an individual woman.

The image only becomes conscious and tangible through the actual contacts with woman that a man makes during the course of his life. The first and most important experience of a woman comes to him through his mother, and is most powerful in shaping and influencing him: there are men who never succeed in freeing themselves from her fascinating power. But the child's experience has a marked subjective character; it is not only how the mother behaves, but how he feels she behaves that is significant. The image of his mother that occurs in each child is not an accurate picture of her, but is formed and coloured by the innate capacity to produce an image of woman - the anima.

Later the image is projected on to the various women who attract a man in his lifetime. Naturally this leads to endless misunderstanding, for most men are unaware that they are projecting their own inner picture of woman on to someone very different; most inexplicable love affairs and disastrous marriages arise in this way. Unfortunately the projection is not something that can be controlled in a rational manner; a man does not make projections, they happen to him. 'Every mother and every beloved is forced to become the carrier and embodiment of this omnipresent and ageless image, which corresponds to the deepest reality in a man.'<sup>(1)</sup> This image of a woman, because it is an archetype of the collective unconscious, has attributes that appear and reappear through the ages, whenever men are describing the women who are significant to them. In different eras the image may be slightly changed or modified, but some characteristics seem to remain almost constant; the anima has a

1. Aion (C.W., 9, ii), par. 24. timeless quality - she often looks young, though there, is always the suggestion of years of experience behind her. She is wise, but not formidably so; it is rather that 'something strangely meaningful clings to her, a secret knowledge or hidden wisdom'.<sup>(1)</sup> She is often connected with the earth, or with water, and she may be endowed with great power. She is also two-sided or has two aspects, a light and a dark, corresponding to the different qualities and types of women; on the one hand the pure, the good, the noble goddess-like figure, on the other the prostitute, the seductress, or the witch. It is when a man has repressed his feminine nature, when he under-values feminine qualities or treats women with contempt or neglect, that this dark aspect is most likely to present itself. Sometimes she appears to be faery-like or elfin in character and has the power to lure men away from their work or their homes, like the sirens of old or their more modern counterparts. She appears again and again in myth and literature as goddess and as 'femme fatale', 'The face that launched a thousand ships', 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci'; or in fairy-tales as the mermaid, water sprite, or nymph, who entices a man under the water where she lives so that he must love her for ever or be drowned.

The compelling power of the anima is due to her image being an archetype of the collective unconscious, which is projected on to any woman who offers the slightest hook on which her picture may be hung. Jung considers her to be the soul of man, not soul in the Christian sense, as the essence of the personality and with the attribute of immortality, but 'I soul' as primitives conceive it to be - namely, a part of the personality. To avoid confusion, therefore, Jung uses the word anima instead of soul; psychologically it implies the 'recognition of the existence of a semiconscious psychic complex, having partial autonomy of function'.<sup>(2)</sup> The anima carries spiritual values, and so her image is projected not only on to pagan goddesses, but on to

1. 'Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious' (C.W., 9,1), par. 64

2. Two Essays, para. 302. the Virgin herself, but she is also near to nature and charged with emotion. She is 'chaotic urge to life',<sup>(1)</sup> she is a seductress, she is 'My Lady Soul',<sup>(2)</sup> and she is also the beckoning fair one luring men on to love and

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despair, to creative activity and to doom. She is in fact as thoroughly inconsistent as the woman in whose form she is always personified, and in describing her Jung usually chooses a dramatic and mythological approach as conveying 'the living processes of the psyche' (3) far more accurately than any abstract scientific formula.

The anima is expressed in a man's life not only in projection upon women and in creative activity, but in fantasies, moods, presentiments, and emotional outbursts. An old Chinese text says that when a man awakens in the morning heavy or in a bad mood, that is his feminine soul, his anima. She disturbs the attempt to concentrate by whispering absurd notions in his ear, spoils the day by creating the vague, unpleasant sensation that there is something physically wrong with him, or haunts his sleep with seductive visions; and a man possessed by his anima is a prey to uncontrollable emotion.

The animus in women is the counterpart of the anima in man. He seems to be (like the anima) derived from three roots: the collective image of man which a woman inherits; her own experience of masculinity coming through the contacts she makes with men in her life; and the latent masculine principle in herself.

The masculine principle - that is, the masculine element in women - found very positive expression in women's activities during the war years, when it was made clear that they could fill adequately most positions previously reserved for men. But only an abnormal situation brings out such manifestations; there is a contemporary movement towards a wider range of activity for women, but generally this activity is better expressed in a domestic milieu, or in one that bears some relationship to it, e.g. teaching, nursing, social

1. 'Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious', par. 64.

2. The Swiss poet Carl Spitteler - quoted in *Aion*, par. 25.

3. *Ibid.* work, &c. 'Personal relations are as a rule more important and interesting to her than objective facts and their interconnections. The wide fields of commerce, politics, technology and science, the whole realm of the applied masculine mind she relegates to the penumbra of consciousness; while on the other hand, she develops a minute consciousness of personal relationships, the infinite nuances of which usually escape the man entirely.'(1)

In other words, it is usually (though not always) the case that a woman's thinking and a man's feeling and emotion belong to the realm of the unconscious. The anima produces moods, the animus produces opinions, resting on unconscious assumptions instead of really conscious and directed thought.

As the mother is the first carrier of the anima image for the boy, so the father embodies the animus image for the girl, and this combination seems to exercise a profound and lasting fascination over her mind, so that instead of thinking and acting for herself she continually quotes father and does things in father's way, even late into life.

In the course of normal development the animus becomes projected on to many male figures, and when this projection has been made, a woman takes for granted that a man is as she sees him (i.e. in the guise of the animus), and it is almost impossible for her to accept him as he really is. This attitude can be very troublesome in personal relationships, which only go smoothly so long as the man conforms to the assumptions that the woman is making about him. The animus can be personified as any male figure, from the most primitive to the most spiritual, depending on the state of a woman's development. He can even appear in dreams as a boy, and is often heard simply as a voice.

Another peculiarity of the animus, as distinct from the anima, which is always seen as one woman, is its tendency to be expressed as a group of men. (2) To quote Jung:

1. *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, par. 330.

2. A particularly good example of this occurs in H. G. Wells's novel *Christina Alberta's Father*.

The animus is rather like an assembly of fathers or dignitaries of some kind who lay down incontestable, 'rational', ex cathedra judgements. On closer examination these exacting judgements turn out to be largely sayings and opinions scraped together more or less unconsciously from childhood on, and compressed into a canon of average truth, justice, and reasonableness, a compendium of preconceptions which, whenever a conscious and competent judgement is lacking (as not infrequently happens), instantly obliges with an opinion. Sometimes these opinions take the form of so-called sound common sense, sometimes they appear as principles which are like a travesty of education: 'People have always done it like this', or 'Everybody says it is like that'.(1) This critical judgement is sometimes turned on the woman herself as an over-active conscience, giving her feelings of inferiority and stifling initiative. At other times it is directed on the people round her in a thoroughly destructive and indiscriminating fashion. She will then criticize her neighbours, tear strangers' characters to pieces without a shred of real evidence, or make disparaging remarks to her family or the people with whom she works on the grounds that 'it is good for them'. 'I believe in calling a spade a spade' or 'I don't believe in spoiling them' are typical animus statements. An intelligent and educated woman is just as much a victim of this animus

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power as her less-educated sister. The latter will quote the daily paper or some vague body called 'They' to support her convictions - 'They say it's so' or 'I saw it in the paper' while the former will rely on some authoritative body; the university, the Church, the State, or perhaps some book or historical document. In either case if her opinion is questioned she will become argumentative and dogmatic. This side of a woman craves power, and however gentle and adaptable she may be in her everyday life, she becomes tyrannical and aggressive once her animus side is aroused, and is quite blind to any reason. Because of this animus activity it is really difficult for a woman to think in an unprejudiced way. She needs to be always on her guard against the inner voice which is continually telling her that

1. Two Essays, par. 332.

Page 57 'it should be this way' or 'they ought to do that', and which makes it impossible for her to see things as they really are.

The animus has a positive function, however; there are times when a woman needs the courage and aggressiveness he represents, and he is useful if she can prevent him running away with her; the opinions produced by him are too generalized, and therefore inapplicable to any particular situation, but if a woman really attempts to understand them critically she may find something of value in them. The animus can in fact stir her to search for knowledge and truth, and lead her into purposeful activity, if she can learn to know him and delineate his sphere of activity.

Both the animus and the anima are mediators between the conscious and the unconscious mind, and when they become personified in fantasies, dreams, or visions they present an opportunity to understand something of what has hitherto been unconscious. Jung, as has already been said, takes dreams seriously. They are 'the voice of' nature', and not only a voice, for they also have an effect on us. The most curious and apparently meaningless dreams can usually be understood if given the right kind of thought and consideration, while some present such a clear Picture that there is little difficulty in grasping something of their meaning if one is prepared to try. If one studies visionary or dream figures closely and notes any correspondence with people already known, or with figures of myth and poetry, or characters from books or plays, one may gather some idea of the significance of the dream figure for oneself, and a hint of its unconscious influence.(1)

This is a tremendous gain, for the personality becomes freer and less subject to irrational and unseen influences. Moreover, relationships with other people become easier, for they can be seen as they are, instead of figures on whom we have draped our fancies and endowed with every possible and impossible characteristic, i.e. on whom we have projected ourselves.

1. The question of the understanding and interpretation of dreams is expanded in Chapter 6. The influence of the anima and animus is far more difficult to grasp than that of the persona or the shadow. Most people know someone who is so completely 'persona' that they cannot fail to see its effects, and the shadow is sufficiently obtrusive to be recognized when pointed out. The anima and animus are, however, elusive, and only a certain number of people can understand what is meant by them. Neither can they be completely integrated into consciousness; something of them remains always shrouded in mystery in the dark realm of the collective unconscious. A man, for instance, by accepting and learning to know his anima, may become more receptive, or he may develop his intuition or his feeling, but he cannot possess himself of those qualities which are projected on to goddesses or on to the Virgin. They may be present in him as mercy, benevolence, healing, creativeness, and so on; but they are not really subject to his will - they work sometimes even in spite of it - and they cannot be called up just when he desires. The same is true of women who can acquire the enterprise or develop the thinking which belongs to them in a personal sense, but can never possess as their own that aspect of the masculine spirit which belongs to the collective unconscious and manifests itself as something beyond the purely personal.

Anyone, however, who has learnt to know something of the anima or animus will have gained both knowledge of him or herself, and of the forces which activate other human beings; he or she will have plumbed something of the depths of the collective unconscious, but will be far from having exhausted this great ocean, which is, so far as we know, limitless. There is no question of draining the unconscious, or of clearing out its contents. The archetypes which may emerge from it are innumerable, and all one can do is to delineate and become familiar as far as is possible with those which seem to have the greatest significance and most powerful influence on us.

After the anima and animus the two archetypes which are likely to become influential in a person's life are those of the old wise man and the great mother Jung sometimes calls the old wise man the archetype of meaning, but since he appears in various other forms - for instance as a king or hero, medicine man, or saviour - one must clearly take the word 'meaning.' in its widest sense.

This archetype represents a serious danger to personality, for when it is awakened a man may easily come to believe that he really possesses the 'mana', the seemingly magical power and wisdom that it holds. It is as if the fascination of

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the anima had been transferred to this figure, and the one Possessed by it feels himself endowed with great (perhaps esoteric) wisdom, prophetic powers, the gift of healing, and so on. Such a man may even gather a following, for in extending his awareness of the unconscious up to this point he has in fact gone farther than others; moreover, there is a compelling power in an archetype which people sense intuitively and cannot easily resist. They are fascinated by what he says, even though on reflection it often proves to be incomprehensible. But the power can be destructive and can compel a man to act beyond his strength and capacity; he does not really possess the wisdom, which is in fact a voice from the unconscious, and needs to be subjected to conscious criticism and understanding for its true value to become accessible. If a man believes he is voicing his own thoughts and expressing his own powers, when really some idea is emerging from the unconscious, he is in danger of possession and of megalomania. (The lunatic who thinks that he is king or is in communication with the great ones of the earth is an extreme example of the same kind of thing.) If, however, the man can quietly 'listen' to the voice of the unconscious and understand that the power works through him - he is not in control - then he is on the way to a genuine development of personality.

The archetype of the great mother acts in a parallel way on a woman. Anyone possessed by this figure comes to believe herself endowed with an infinite capacity for loving and understanding, helping and protecting, and will wear herself out in the service of others. She can, however, also be most destructive, insisting (though not necessarily openly) that all who come within her circle of influence are 'her children', and therefore helpless or dependent on her in some degree. This subtle tyranny, if carried to extremes, can demoralize and destroy the personality of others.

Jung calls possession by these archetypes 'inflation', indicating that the person so possessed has been, as it were, blown up by something too big for himself, something that is not really personal at all, but collective. In H. G. Wells's Christina Alberta's Father there's a good example of such an inflation, though it has not come about through an extension of consciousness and the assimilation of the anima, but through what Jung aptly terms 'an invasion from the collective unconscious': 'Mr Preemby, a midget personality, discovers that he is really a reincarnation of Sargon, King of Kings. Happily, the genius of the author rescues poor old Sargon from pathological absurdity, and even gives the reader a chance to appreciate the tragic and eternal meaning in this lamentable affray. Mr Preemby, a complete nonentity, recognizes himself as the point of intersection of all ages past and future. This knowledge is not too dearly bought at the cost of a little madness, provided that Preemby is not in the end devoured by that monster of a primordial image which is in fact what nearly happens to him.'(1)

The feeling of godlikeness, of being a superman, which comes through inflation is an illusion. We may for a brief time possess phenomenal courage, or be infinitely wise or forgiving, but this is something 'beyond ourselves', and something that we cannot muster at will. We do not really understand the forces that move human beings in this way, and an attitude of humility in the face of them is absolutely necessary. But if the ego can relinquish some of the belief in its own omnipotence, a position can be found somewhere between that of consciousness with its hardly-won values, and unconsciousness with its vitality and power, and a new centre of personality can emerge, differing in its

1. Two Essays, par. 284 nature from the ego-centre. Jung calls this new centre of personality 'the self'.(1)

The ego, he says, can only be regarded as the centre of the conscious, and if it tries to add unconscious contents to itself (i.e. collective contents, not the personal unconscious or shadow which does belong to the ego) it is in danger of destruction, like an overloaded vessel which sinks under the strain. The self, however, can include both the conscious and the unconscious. It appears to act as something like a magnet to the disparate elements of the personality and the processes of the unconscious, and is the centre of' this totality as the ego is the centre of consciousness, for it is the function which unites all the opposing elements in man and woman, consciousness and unconsciousness, good and bad, male and female, &c., and in so doing transmutes them. To reach it necessitates acceptance of what is inferior in one's nature, as well as what is irrational and chaotic.

This state cannot be reached by a mature person without considerable struggle; it implies suffering, for the Western mind, unlike the Eastern, does not easily tolerate paradoxes. For the Indian 'everything, highest and lowest, is in the (transcendental) Subject' i.e. the Self. In Chinese thought the concept of Tao is also all-inclusive, and the development of the Golden Flower, or Immortal Spirit body (the highest aim of Chinese Yoga), depends on the equal interplay of both the light forces (Yang) and the dark forces (Yin). (2)

It was contact with the Eastern mind that illuminated for Jung many of the secrets of the unconscious and led him to formulate in The Secret of the Golden Flower the concept of the self. But he does not suggest that we should imitate the East in any way - to do so would be to become ridiculous, and like trying to wear every day a gorgeous fancy dress.

1. The term 'self' is not used by Jung as in everyday speech, but in the Eastern manner, where as Atman, Purusha, Brahman, it has been a familiar philosophical concept from time immemorial. In Hindu thought the self is the supreme principle, the supreme oneness of being.

2. Cf. R. Wilhelm, in *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (1962), pp. 11 -12. 'That painstakingly forged instrument, the will'; and the vast body of knowledge laboriously acquired by the physicist, the chemist, the natural scientist, and so on, are not to be lightly thrown overboard.

Science is the tool of the Western mind, and with it one can open more doors than with bare hands ... it obscures our insight only when it claims that the understanding it conveys is the only kind there is. The East teaches us another, broader, more profound, and higher understanding - understanding through life.... The usual mistake of Western man when faced with this problem of grasping the ideas of the East is ... [to turn] his back on science and, carried away by Eastern occultism, take over Yoga practices word for word and become a pitiable imitator. (Theosophy is our best example of this.) (1)Jung makes it clear that his concept of the self is not that of a kind of universal consciousness, which is really only another name for the unconscious. It consists rather in the awareness on the one hand of our unique natures, and on the other of our intimate relationship with all life, not only human, but animal and plant, and even that of inorganic matter and the cosmos itself. It brings a feeling of 'oneness', and of reconciliation with life, which can now be accepted as it is, not as it ought to be.

It is as if the guidance of life had passed over to an invisible centre ... [and there is a] release from compulsion and impossible responsibility that are the inevitable results of participation mystique.(2)Jung watched the growth of this new centre o"personality in scores of his patients before attempting to formulate it in this way. It should not be thought, however, that all who choose to submit to the process of analysis have this experience or reach this state of development. For many people it is enough to free themselves from their unconscious childish dependence, to be relieved of a distressing symptom through the recognition of its cause, or to have worked out a new and

1. Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (C.W., 13), pars. 2-3.

2. *Ibid.*, pars. 77-8.more satisfactory adaptation to life. But there are some who are forced to take full account of the unconscious, who must find a way to know and accept its life side by side with that of consciousness, who must in fact integrate it in such a way that their personality is whole. For, paradoxically, the self is not only the centre, but represents the whole in; making a unity out of' tile contradictions of his nature, all that is felt to be good, and all that is felt to be bad; maleness and femaleness, the four functions of thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition: the conscious and the unconscious.

'The self", says Jung, 'is not only the centre but also the whole circumference which embraces both conscious and unconscious; it is the centre of 'this totality, just as the ego is the centre of the conscious mind.'(1)

The experience of the self is archetypal, and it is portrayed in dreams and visions by many and varied images, all of which may be called archetypes of the self. To those unfamiliar with the language of dreams this wide variety of images may seem confusing, but one must remember that the unconscious is never precise in the way that consciousness needs to be.

If [it speaks] of the sun and identifies with it the lion, the king, the board of gold guarded by the dragon, or the power that makes for the life and health of man, it is neither the one thing nor the other, but the unknown third thing that finds more or less adequate expression in all these similes, yet - to the perpetual vexation of the intellect - remains unknown and not to be fitted into a formula.(2)A child is a frequent symbol of the self, sometimes a divine or magical child, sometimes an ordinary figure, or even a ragamuffin. The endless preoccupation of myth and folklore with the child motive, and the high place it occupies in many religions, and especially in Christianity, throw considerable light on the meaning of the child as a symbol of the self. At the other extreme come the figures of Christ and of Buddha,

1. *Psychology and Alchemy* (C.W., 12), par. 44.

2. 'The Psychology of the Child Archetype' (C.W., 9, i), par. 267. which in Jung's view are the most highly differentiated expressions of the archetype of the self yet reached by mankind.(1)

The self can also develop in dreams from an animal, or an egg; it is found expressed as a hermaphroditic figure (all obvious symbol of completeness) or again as 'the treasure hard to attain'. In this case it is often a jewel (especially a diamond or pearl), a flower, a golden egg or ball, or a chalice. Geometric figures such as the circle, the wheel, and the square, and anything fourfold, from the cross with equal arms to the homely symbol of four nuts arranged upon a plate, also appear frequently as symbols of the self.

These concentrically arranged figures are often known as 'mandalas'. Mandala is a Sanskrit word meaning magic circle, and its symbolism includes all concentrically arranged figures, all radial or spherical arrangements, and all circles Or squares with a central point. It is one of the oldest religious symbols (the earliest known form being the sun wheel), and is found throughout the world. In the East the mandala whose form is fixed by tradition) is used ritualistically in Lamaistic and Tantric Yoga as an aid to contemplation. There are Christian mandalas, dating from the early Middle Ages, showing Christ in the centre with the four evangelists and their symbols at the cardinal points. Historically, the mandala served as a symbol representing the nature of the deity, both in order to clarify it philosophically, and for the purpose of adoration.

Jung found the mandala symbolism occurring spontaneously in the dreams and visions of many of his patients .(2) Its

1. Psychology and Alchemy, par. 22. 'We can see this from the scope and substance of all the pronouncements that have been made about Christ; they agree with the psychological phenomenology of the self in unusually high degree, although they do not include all aspects of this archetype.' It is not to be thought that this statement implies anything other than a psychological fact, namely that the unconscious produces images of a Christ-like and a Buddha-like character. This point will be discussed further in the chapter on Psychology and Religion.

2. The Secret of the Golden Flower, Wilhelm and Jung. A series Of 400 dreams in which the mandala symbolism occurs is studied in Psychology and Alchemy. appearance was incomprehensible to them, but it was usually accompanied by a strong feeling of harmony or of peace. The mandala was sometimes drawn or painted, in which case it frequently took an abstract geometric form, and at other times seen as a vision (either waking or in a dream) or danced. If dancing a mandala strikes the reader as strange, he need only remember the many examples of ritual dances, or even of folk-dances, where there is a circling round a central point, a withdrawal to the four corners, and an advance to the centre. Mandala visions may occur as the outcome of what Jung calls 'active imagination' which is a technique of 'intense concentration on the background of consciousness, that is perfected only after long practice'.(1) Here is an example from a long sequence given by a woman patient:

I climbed the mountain and came to a place where I saw seven red stones in front of me, seven on either side, and seven behind me. I stood in the middle of this quadrangle. The stones were flat like steps. I tried to lift the four stones nearest me. In doing so I discovered that these stones were the pedestals of four statues of gods buried upside down in the earth. I dug them up and arranged them about me so that I was standing in the middle of them. Suddenly they leaned towards one another until their heads touched, forming something like a tent over me. I myself fell to the ground and said, 'Fall upon me if you must! I am tired'. Then I saw that beyond, encircling the four gods, a ring of flame had formed. After a time I got up from the ground and overthrew the statues of the gods. Where they fell, four trees shot up. At that blue flames leapt up from the ring of fire and began to burn the foliage of the trees. Seeing this I said, 'This must stop. I must go into the fire myself so that the leaves shall not be burned.' Then I stepped into the fire. The trees vanished and the fiery ring drew together to one immense blue flame that carried me up from the earth.(2) It is not possible to go fully into the meaning of this vision, but at least the reader will recognize the idea of a mid-point which is reached with effort and by accepting danger, and notice that the quadrangle and the circle are important features.

1. Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, par. 366.

2. Ibid. A more abstract vision is that of the world clock, which was recorded by a young intellectual, who had come to Jung With a severe neurosis. An interesting point is that this young man was only seen by Jung for a short interview, after which he recorded his dreams and visual experiences for five months with a pupil - a woman doctor who was then a beginner - and then continued his observations alone for another three months. The possibility of Jung's influence on the material he produced was thus reduced to a minimum.

The vision was as follows:

There is a vertical and a horizontal circle, having a common centre.... It is supported by the black bird. The vertical circle is a blue disk with a white border, divided into  $4 \times 8 = 32$  partitions. A pointer rotates upon it. The horizontal circle consists of four colours. On it stand four little men with pendulums, and round about it is laid the [golden] ring.(1) This vision produced a feeling of sublime harmony in the patient, and is of such interest that it has been the subject of much research on Jung's part.(2)

But mandala symbolism may also be simpler and less dramatic than these two examples: a dream of a square with a fountain in the centre and people walking round the fountain, or of a square garden with a circular flower-bed in the middle, or something equally everyday, can have a like significance, though the impact it makes on the dreamer may not be so marked.

Jung found that the experience which was ultimately formulated in the mandala pattern was typical of people who were no longer able to project the divine image -- i.e. to find God somewhere outside themselves - and so were in danger of inflation. The round or square enclosures seemed to act like magically protective walls, preventing an outburst and a disintegration, and protecting an inward purpose. There was a similarity in them to the sacred places that in ancient times were often made to protect the God, but the significant fact

1. 'Psychology and Religion' (C.W., 11), par. 111.

2. Recorded also in Psychology and Alchemy. about a modern mandala is that it rarely if ever contains a god in the centre) but instead a variety of symbols, or even a human being. A modern mandala is therefore an involuntary confession of a peculiar mental condition. There is no deity in the mandala, nor is there any submission or reconciliation to a deity. The place of the deity seems to be taken by the wholeness of man.(1)

1. 'Psychology and Religion', par. 139. © Frieda Fordham 1953, 1959, 1966. Penguin Putnam Books, London.